

The State of HR Competencies: Analyzing Outcomes from the 500+ Participant Challenge

Overview

HR professionals need a diverse skillset to effectively manage human capital. However, according to [AIHR](#) only 21% of recruiters have sufficient knowledge to become future-ready.

To confirm or deny this assessment and identify common pain points in the industry, we launched an [HR Challenge](#), engaging over 500+ participants from diverse sectors and backgrounds.

This white paper presents a comprehensive analysis of the findings from the challenge and addresses critical aspects of human resource management.

We delve into the most pressing issues faced by HR professionals, including talent acquisition, employee engagement, and labor law compliance, and hope to offer organizations seeking to navigate the complexities of modern HR a viable roadmap.

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Methodology

Our scenario-based HR Challenge was designed to gather insights from recruiters regarding their practices and understanding in key areas of human resource management.

The methodology employed in this challenge involved structured questioning, data collection and analysis to evaluate participants' responses across four critical blocks related to HR functions.

- ✓ **Target audience:** The challenge targeted HRs from various industries, ensuring a diverse representation of experiences and perspectives.
- ✓ **Scenario development:** Each block of questions was based on realistic scenarios that HR professionals may encounter in their roles. These scenarios were crafted to reflect common challenges and decision-making processes relevant to each topic area.
- ✓ **Relevance:** Scenarios were designed to be applicable to various organizational contexts, ensuring that participants could relate their responses to their own experiences.

Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire consisted of four blocks, each focusing on a specific area of HR:

- 1. Recruitment and Candidate Evaluation.** Questions centered on best practices for attracting talent, evaluating candidates, and making hiring decisions.
- 2. Onboarding and Employee Engagement.** This block explored strategies for effective onboarding processes and methods to enhance employee engagement from day one.
- 3. Talent Management and Development.** Questions addressed approaches to talent development, performance management, and succession planning.
- 4. Labor Law Compliance.** This block assessed participants' knowledge of relevant labor laws, compliance requirements, and ethical considerations in HR practices.

Response Collection

Participants were engaged in a free [HR Certification](#). They answered questions in a multiple-choice format, with each question designed to have one correct answer and several distractors.

Each time a participant was allowed to make up to 3 mistakes.

The entire challenge was conducted without a specified timeframe, allowing participants to complete the questionnaire at their convenience.

Data Analysis

For each block, the percentage of correct answers was computed as follows:

$$\text{Correct Answers Percentage} = \left(\frac{\text{Number of Correct Answers}}{\text{Total Questions in Block}} \right) \times 100$$

The percentages from each block were compared to identify trends in knowledge and practices across different areas of HR.

We also tried to detect the most difficult question in each block by calculating the percentage of wrong answers for each question and comparing these values.

Participants who failed received feedback on their performance, along with resources and recommendations for improving their practices based on their results.

Additionally, we analyzed voluntarily provided information regarding the participants' backgrounds using public and proprietary company registers like Crunchbase and Tracxn to facilitate a comprehensive analysis.

We also used traffic analytics tools to retrieve the traffic data from the challenge exit forms and determine the geographics of our respondents.

NOTE!

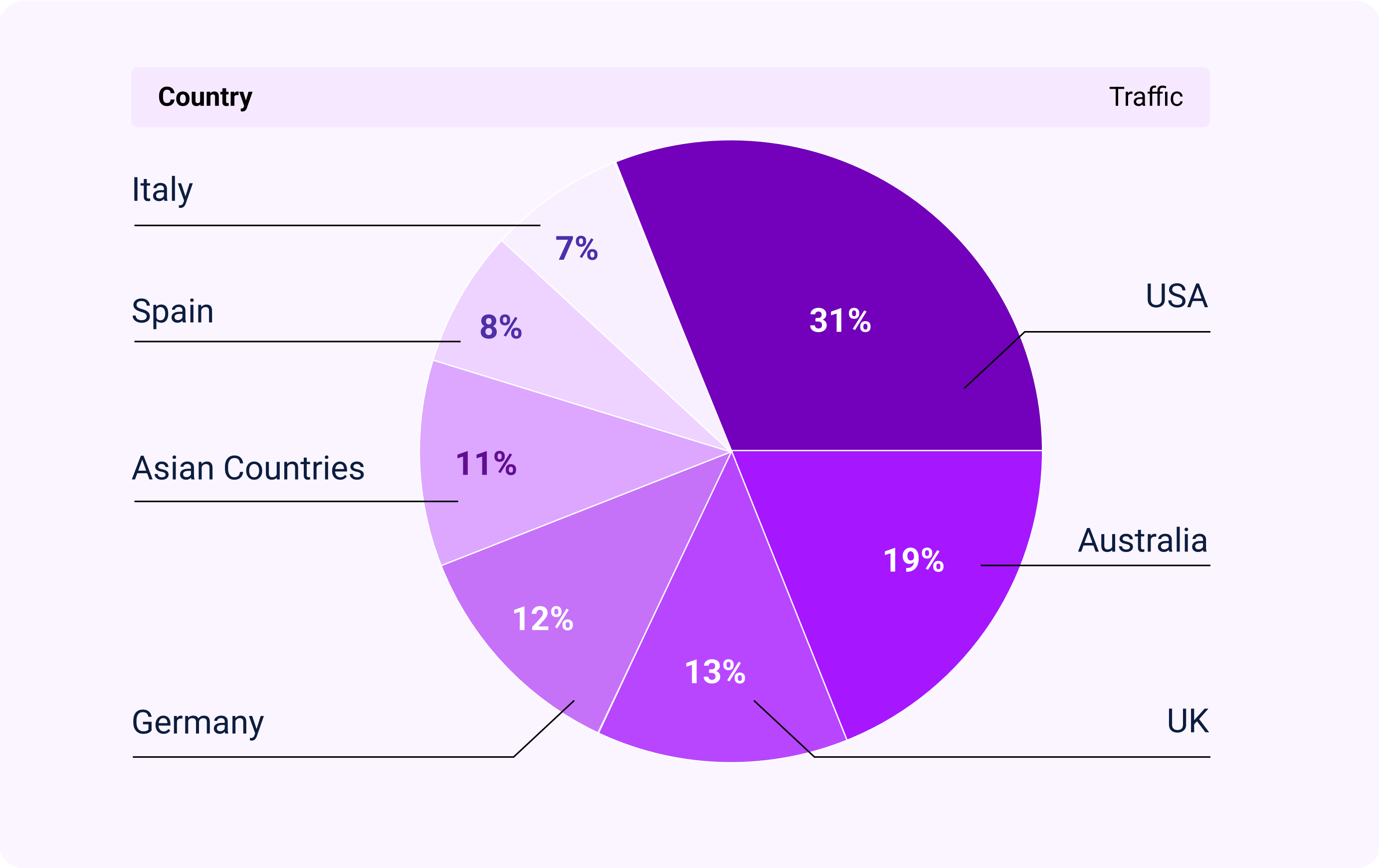
It is important to note that during the implementation of the challenge methodology, we encountered a couple of limitations that may affect the interpretation of our findings:

1. We were unable to account for participants utilizing Virtual Private Networks (VPNs) when determining their geographic locations. This could potentially skew our understanding of regional skill distributions and demographic insights, as users may have appeared to be located in different regions than their actual physical presence.
2. Additionally, not all participants' companies could be found in the relevant business register. This limitation may impact our ability to analyze the results in relation to specific industries or organizational contexts, as we could not fully verify the affiliations of all respondents.
3. For participants who passed the simulation multiple times, we only calculated the results from their first attempt. Subsequent attempts were not included in the final analysis.

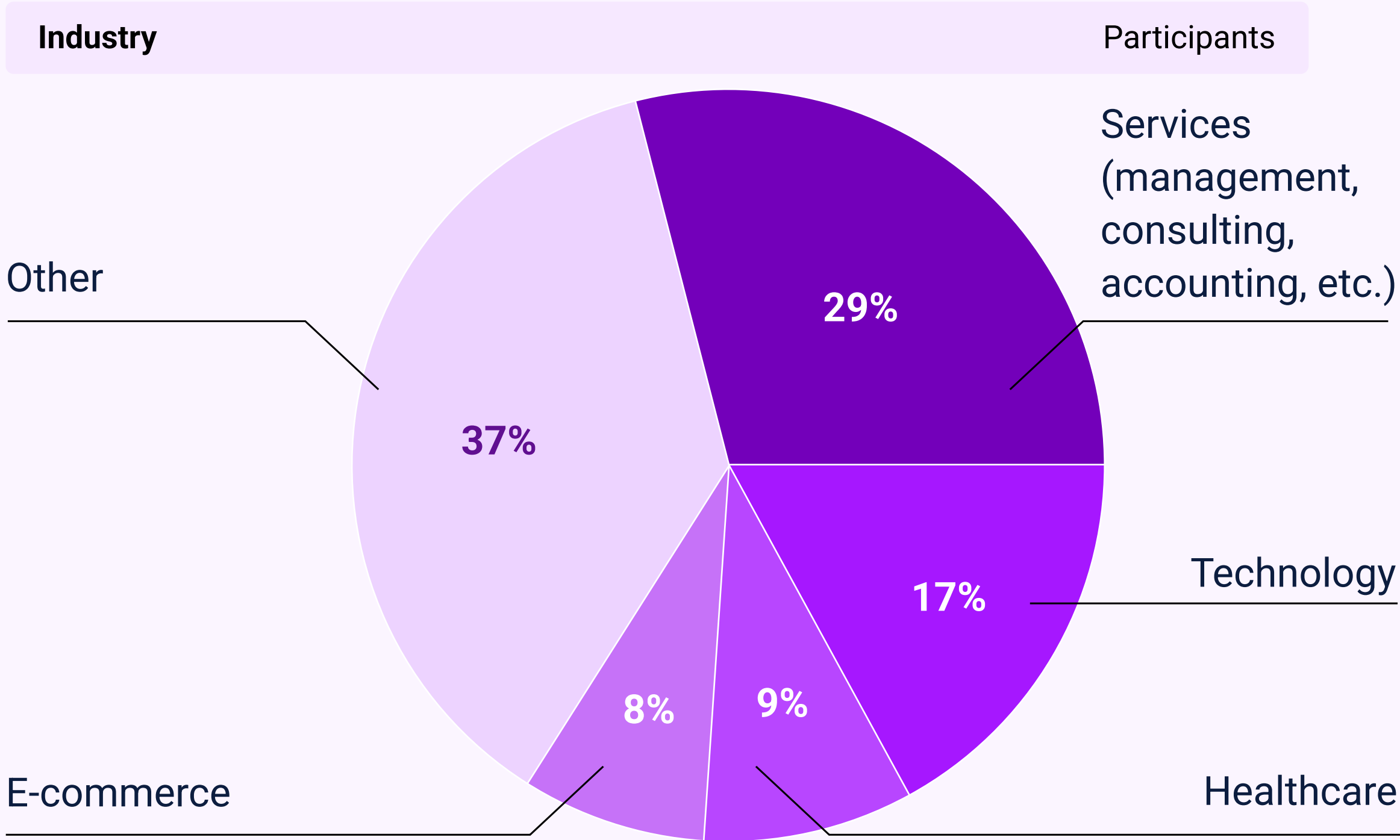
HR Challenge Participants

Demographics

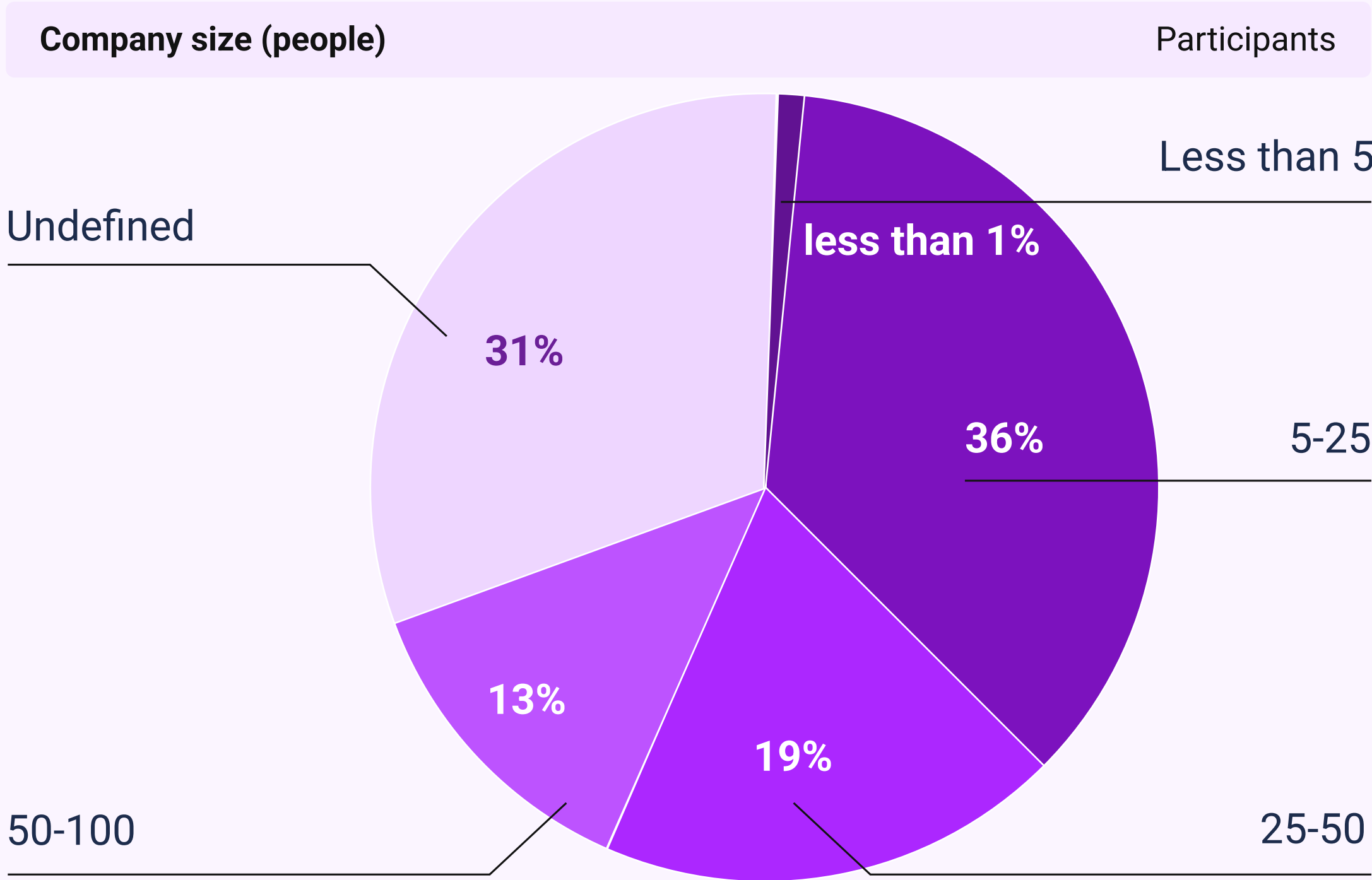
Challenge Participants' Locations



Challenge Participants' Industries



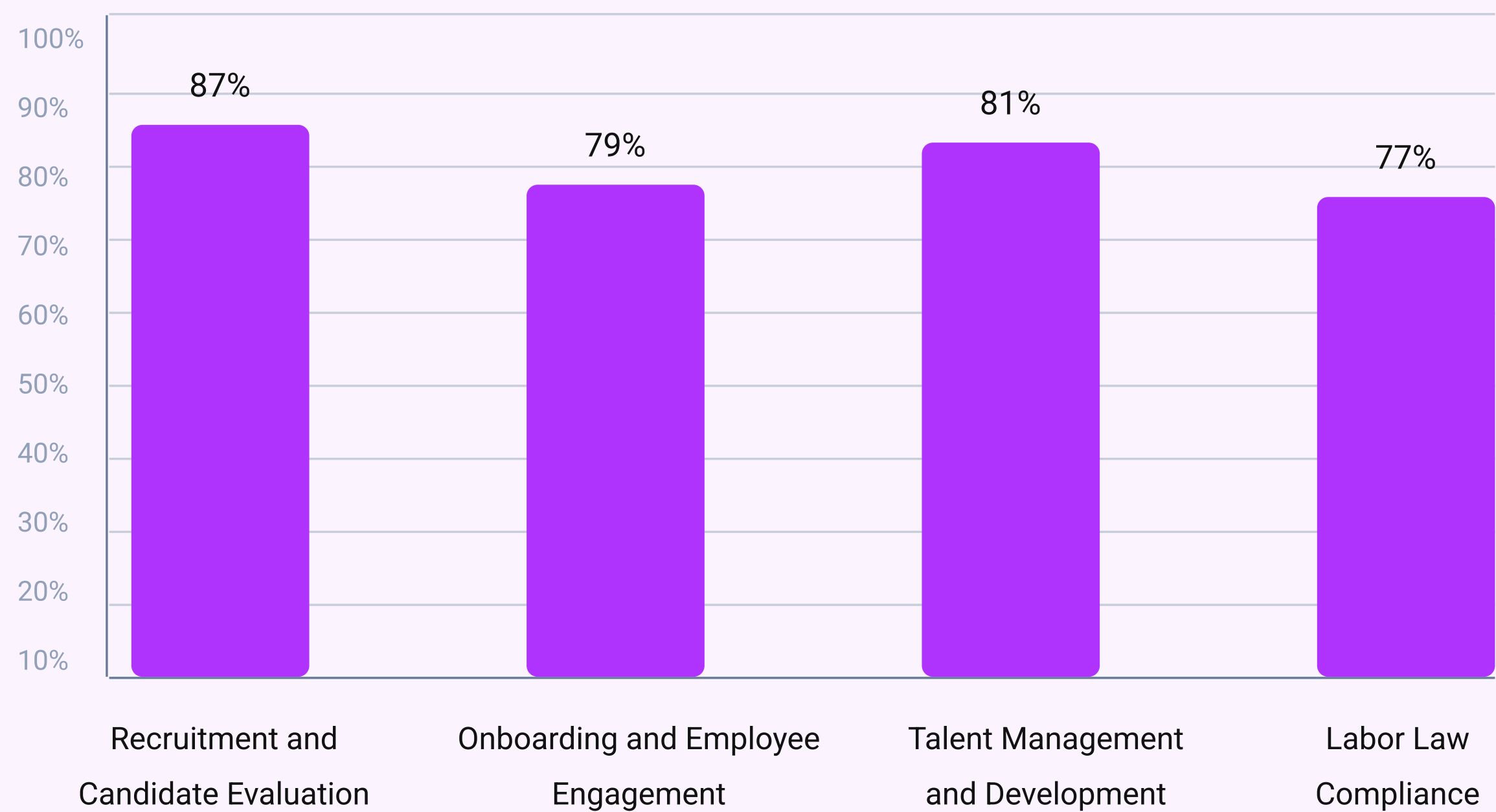
Challenge Participants' Company Sizes



HR Skills Evaluation Challenge

Results

HR Skills Rating



The Most Difficult Questions for Modern HRs

Section	Question	Question % of wrong answers
Recruitment and Candidate Evaluation	A candidate is overqualified for the position but shows strong interest. How should you proceed?	21%
Onboarding and Employee Engagement	A team leader reports that a new hire is disengaged despite completing all onboarding sessions. Which action would most likely re-engage the new hire?	29%
Talent Management and Development	A department shows high turnover among mid-level employees. What is the best approach to address this?	17%
Labor Law Compliance	A new labor regulation requires changes to your company's leave policy. What should be your next step?	31%

Key Takeaways

1. The demographics of the respondents align with studies identifying countries and industries that offer the best job opportunities for HR professionals. This correlation underscores the relevance of our Certification Test in these thriving markets.
2. A low number of HR professionals from smaller companies participated in the challenge, as expected, as organizations with fewer than five employees typically do not require dedicated HR personnel and often outsource these functions.
3. All respondents demonstrated a solid understanding of recruitment and talent development practices, indicating a strong foundation in these critical HR areas.
4. Proficiency in onboarding and compliance was notably lower. This is understandable, as
 - onboarding involves collaboration across various stakeholders, which can lead to neglected responsibilities;
 - the majority of the respondents work for small and mid-sized companies and may struggle with compliance due to limited resources and expertise in staying updated with legal requirements.

Extra Derivations

Our certification test also revealed some tendencies in how HR professionals respond to challenges.

We found the most popular wrong answers for the difficult questions in each block.

Though this data can't be considered truly statistical due to our inability to establish direct correlation between the specific wrong answer and overall HR knowledge, we provide some of our findings for your review.

Question: A candidate is overqualified for the position but shows strong interest. How should you proceed?

Based on the preferred wrong answers, we can see that many HR professionals tend to dismiss overqualified candidates instead of exploring potential growth opportunities within the organization.

Question: A team leader reports that a new hire is disengaged despite completing all onboarding sessions. Which action would most likely re-engage the new hire?

Here we detected a tendency to delay the integration of disengaged new hires rather than provide mentorship, which may reflect a cautious approach but also hinder further employee involvement.

Question: A department shows high turnover among mid-level employees. What is the best approach to address this?

Respondents found it challenging to navigate situations where high-performing employees wished to transfer to another department. Often, HR professionals approved such requests without thoroughly investigating the reasons or attempting to retain the employee.

Question: A new labor regulation requires changes to your company's leave policy. What should be your next step?

Questions related to leave policies posed the biggest challenge. Most of our test participants decided to rely on employees to manage changes and limited themselves to the new policy announcement. While practical, it could expose the organization to legal risks without proper consultation.

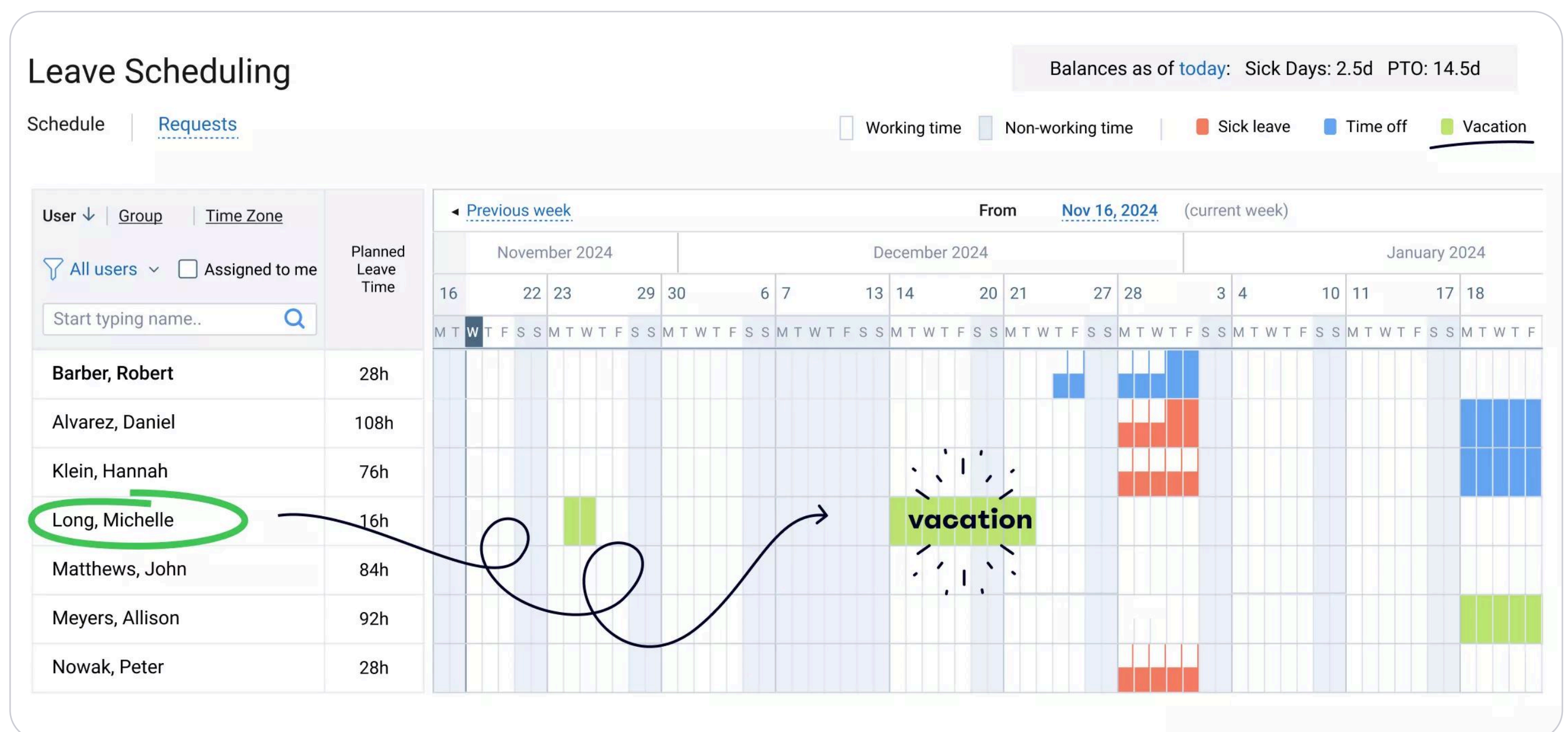
Conclusion

Understanding the trends in modern HR can inform your future training programs and contribute to your automation choices.

For example, [actiPLANS](#) can help you ensure compliance by streamlining leave management, automating HR workflows, and providing PTO usage reports.

The software allows you to tailor the leave management process to your company's needs and standards, ensuring agreement between internal policies and state regulations.

It also guarantees that all employees are fully aware of how their leave is accrued and are informed of any changes applied.



Try free