

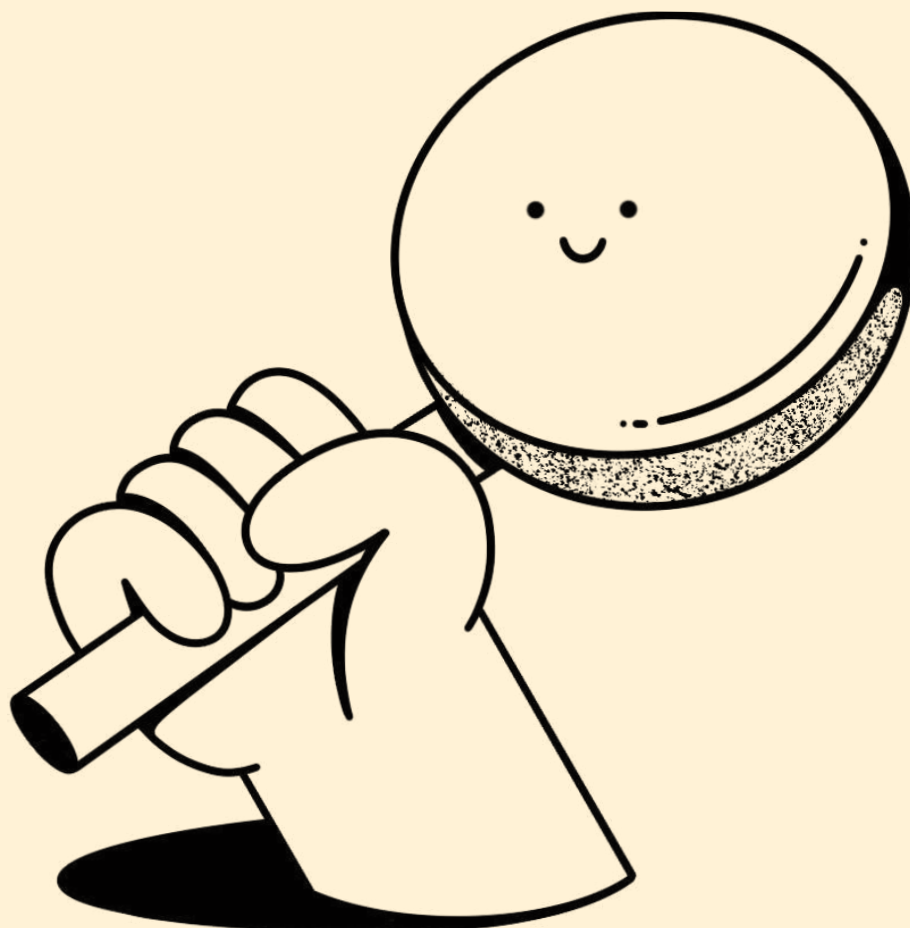
The State of Global Hiring 2026

A synthesis of global labor research
and front-line hiring patterns



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Introduction

Finding talent across borders is easier than ever. Making it work — consistently, compliantly, and without slowing the company down — is where most teams still struggle.

In 2026, companies aren't debating whether to hire globally anymore. They're trying to figure out how to do it without stitching together recruiters, EORs, contractors, and internal fixes that don't talk to each other.

This playbook reflects what we see every day at Fronted:

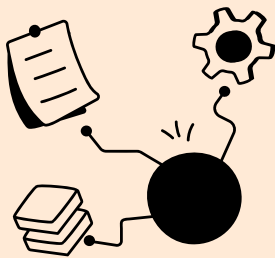
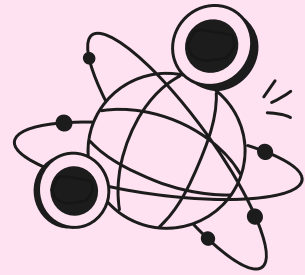
- why companies turn to global hiring in the first place
- where global hiring breaks down once things scale
- how recruitment, employment models, and team design actually interact
- what founders and investors should expect next
- what patterns are emerging as global hiring matures

The findings are based on aggregated Fronted customer data, observed recruitment and employment outcomes, and direction trends across regions and roles.

The Global Hiring Reality

Global hiring is no longer experimental

A majority of companies coming to Fronted are making their first or second global hire, not running fully distributed teams yet. Global hiring is happening earlier, but still cautiously.

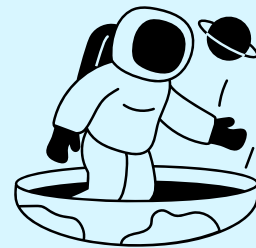


Strategy usually follows necessity

They start with a single urgent role they can't fill locally. Global hiring is driven by necessity first — strategy comes later.

Role clarity beats location

Roles that required re-scoping or expectation alignment early in the process were significantly more likely to succeed long-term than roles hired “as-is.”



Employment model decisions are often delayed — and costly

Many companies initially choose contractors for speed, then switch to employment once the role becomes core. Early model misalignment is one of the most common sources of friction we see.

One global hire often leads to more

After a successful first hire, companies are far more likely to:

- Hire again internationally
- Expand into additional countries



Why Companies Turn to Global Hiring (and What Breaks First)

Companies rarely describe their initial problem as “global hiring.” They describe symptoms: stalled hiring, rising risk, internal confusion, or pressure to move faster with fewer resources.

Common triggers we see:

- 👉 “We can’t find this skill locally”
- 👉 “Hiring here is too slow”
- 👉 “We need to move without increasing burn”
- 👉 “Investors expect global reach”



The mismatch we see

What companies think the problem is	What’s usually underneath
“We need global talent”	Role ambiguity
“We need speed”	Misaligned employment model
“Compliance is scary”	Fragmented vendors
“We need flexibility”	Unclear hiring intent

A simple failure taxonomy

- 👉 Fragmented tools and vendors
- 👉 Poorly scoped roles
- 👉 Late employment model decisions
- 👉 Compliance anxiety slowing execution



The Global Recruitment Reality

Global recruitment succeeds less because of geography, and more because of clarity.

Across Fronted-supported roles, the strongest predictor of success is not location, but role definition, expectations, and hiring intent.

A [global survey](#) found that **three out of four employers were struggling to fill roles in 2025**, indicating widespread talent scarcity across industries. [A separate analysis](#) showed **66% of recruiters worldwide reported it has become harder to find qualified talent over the past year**.

Multiple employer surveys and talent-market analyses show persistent difficulty filling certain roles globally:

1. Tech & Data Roles



Roles like software developers, cybersecurity analysts, cloud engineers, and data scientists are repeatedly cited as among the toughest to staff because demand far outpaces supply.

2. Healthcare Professionals



Nurses, clinical technicians, allied health roles, and specialists remain in short supply — especially in aging economies with high healthcare demand.

3. Sales & Business Development



Specialized sales roles combining technical product understanding with strategic relationship-building are increasingly hard to fill. The global talent bottleneck is no longer about access, it's about capability.

4. Leadership & Management



Experienced middle and senior management who can lead hybrid/remote teams with strong communication skills also remain in short supply across markets.

Across industries and regions, companies are investing in new technologies, expanding into new markets, and rethinking how they operate. Yet one constraint shows up consistently, regardless of size or sector: the right skills are increasingly hard to find, develop, and retain.

Recent global labor data points to a structural shift in the workforce. Skills are changing faster than organizations can adapt, hiring behavior is becoming more cautious, and talent mobility remains limited. The result is a growing mismatch between what companies need and what local labor markets can realistically supply.

The data below outlines how skill scarcity, role volatility, and hiring patterns are reshaping global hiring decisions, and why many companies are being pushed to look beyond traditional, local-first talent strategies.

These role-level shortages are not isolated issues. They're symptoms of deeper structural shifts in the labor market.

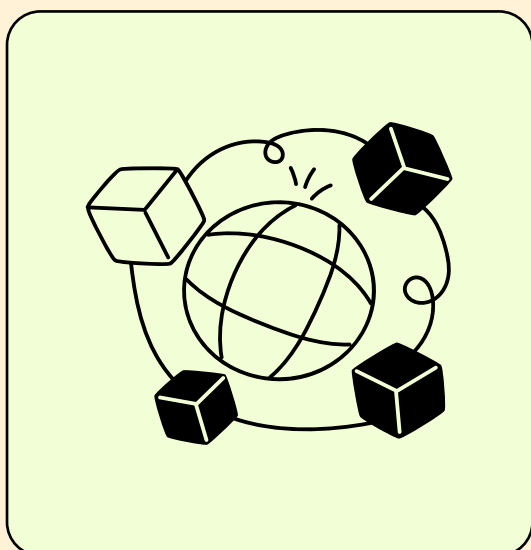
What's driving the global talent bottleneck

1. Skills gaps remain one of the biggest barriers to business transformation

According to the [World Economic Forum's Future of Jobs Report 2025](#), employers around the world continue to struggle with talent shortages:

- **63% of employers cite skill gaps as a major barrier to business transformation over the next 5 years**

This means that even as companies adopt new AI tools and expand, not having the right skills is a structural constraint, not a temporary one.



2. Almost 40% of core workforce skills will change by 2030

The [WEF report](#) projects that

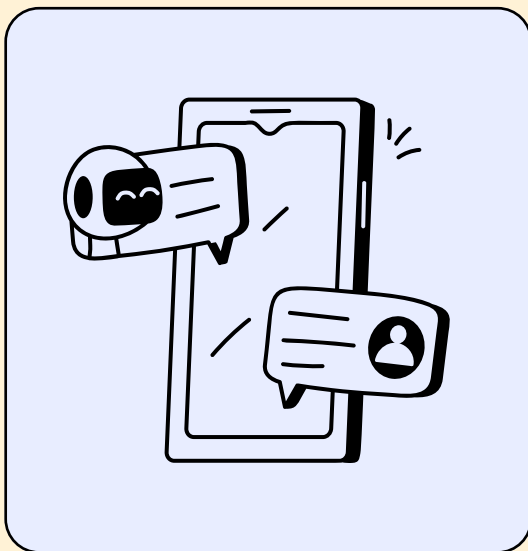
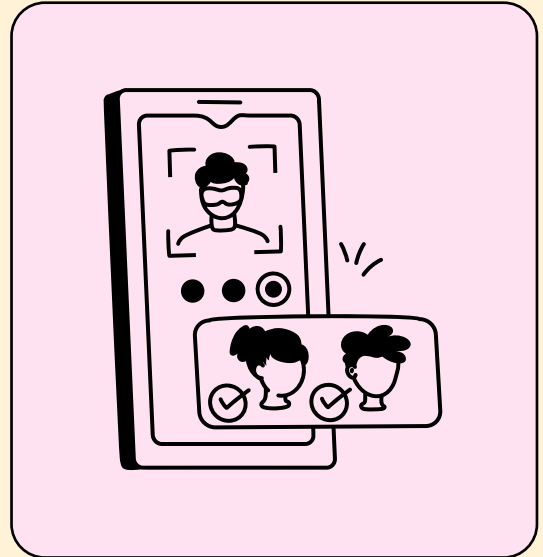
39% of current core skills will become outdated or transform by 2030,

underscoring the pace of disruption.

3. Demand is rising for both technological and human-centric skills

Reports based on WEF data show employers are prioritizing both technical skills (AI, data, digital literacy) and “human” skills (leadership, resilience, adaptability) —

highlighting a widening gap between available talent and what companies need.



4. Hiring patterns are more cautious overall

LinkedIn's Economic Graph data shows that hiring has slowed below pre-pandemic levels in many markets, suggesting companies are being more selective and strategic in how they build teams.

This slower hiring environment increases the premium on finding the right skills quickly, especially for hard-to-fill roles like tech and revenue functions.

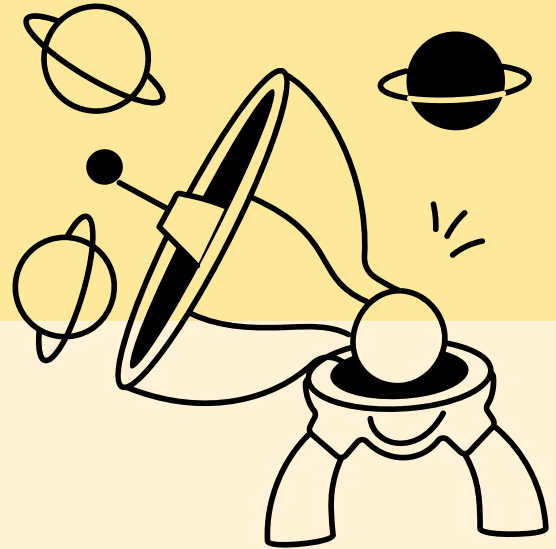
In this environment, reliance on a narrow set of local talent pools increases risk, pushing companies to diversify hiring sources in order to access scarce skills more efficiently.

What This Means for Global Hiring

These labor market signals - slow hiring growth, rising skill obsolescence, and dual demand for technical + human competencies - all point to **a widening gap between what companies need and what talent markets can supply locally.**

This fuels the need for:

- ✓ broader geographic sourcing
- ✓ clearer role design
- ✓ smarter employment models
- ✓ reskilling and upskilling strategies



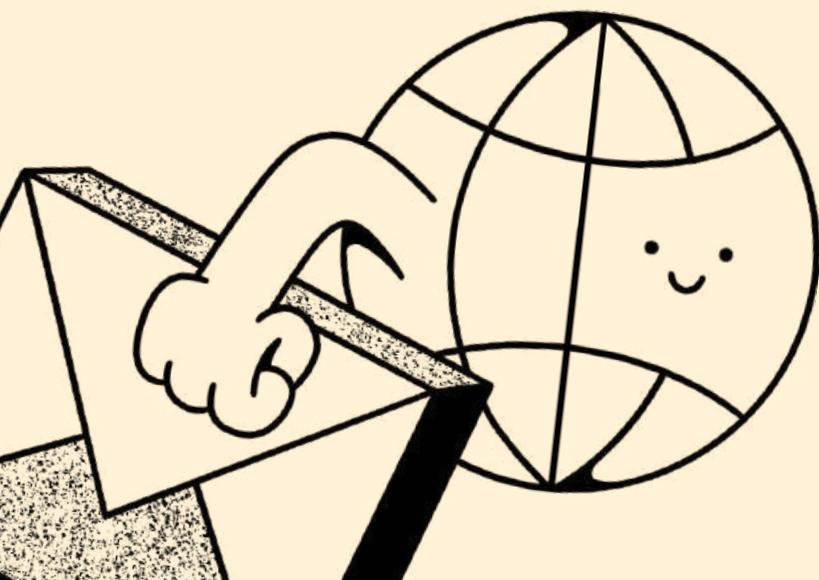
Hiring solutions in Practice

Choosing a hiring and employment model is often treated as a legal decision. In practice, it is a strategic one, with long-term implications for retention, performance, and cost.

By the time companies reach global hiring, the idea is no longer the problem. Execution is. What we consistently see is not a lack of ambition, but fragmented decisions:

- 👉 recruitment handled in one place
- 👉 employment outsourced elsewhere
- 👉 talent support treated as an afterthought

This is where global hiring slows down. Fronted was built to close that gap.



Why Fronted: Designing Global Hiring as a System

Most providers focus on a single layer of global hiring.

Fronted brings recruitment, employment, and talent care into one operating model, so companies can hire globally without rebuilding the system every time they grow.

What this looks like in practice:

1. Hiring with Clarity



Global hiring fails most often when roles are copied from local job descriptions without adjustment. We work with companies to:

- 👉 pressure-test role scope
- 👉 clarify expectations early
- 👉 align the role to how the company actually operates

Then we run a precision-led global search, not volume hiring.

Outcome:

Fewer mis-hires, clearer expectations, and roles that hold as the company scales.

2. Employment That's Predictable by Design



Employment models shouldn't introduce uncertainty. Fronted handles:

- 👉 compliant employment
- 👉 payroll and benefits
- 👉 local labor requirements

All managed end-to-end, in the countries where talent lives. This removes the handovers, delays, and "who owns this?" moments that slow teams down.

Outcome:

Lower risk, less internal admin, and a professional experience for both founders and employees.

3. Talent Care That Protects Retention



Global hiring doesn't fail at onboarding — it fails when people feel disconnected or unsupported six months in. We treat talent care as part of the system:

- 👉 clear contracts
- 👉 accurate payroll
- 👉 fast, human support

No payroll surprises. No escalation loops.

Outcome:

Higher retention, faster ramp-up, and stable global teams.

Where Companies Hire with Fronted

Fronted supports companies hiring across all over the world— from **Nordic markets to Southern and Eastern Europe, the UK, and selected global hubs**. We are growing where we offer our support.



We made our first hire with Fronted and have since scaled the company to 60 people in just 18 months. They listen, they find the right people, and they are fast and flexible. Fronted has enabled us to scale faster and will continue to be a key partner going forward.



Martin Jensen
CEO, PropFirmMatch



Prop Firm Match

Outcomes After the First Global Hire

The first global hire is rarely the finish line. It's the moment global hiring becomes a repeatable capability.

Across companies expanding beyond their home market, the same shift happens within the first year:

- 👉 Speed improves because teams stop reinventing the process
- 👉 Confidence rises because compliance becomes “known,” not “unknown”
- 👉 Cost becomes more predictable once the model is chosen early and managed consistently
- 👉 Retention stabilizes when the employment experience feels reliable, not improvised

The biggest outcome isn't just “we hired someone abroad.” It's we now know how to do it again.

Quick guide to our hiring solution models

Fronted supports companies hiring across all over the world— from **Nordic markets to Southern and Eastern Europe, the UK, and selected global hubs**. We are growing where we offer our support.



Recruitment

Whether you're hiring in one country or across multiple markets, we help you make confident hiring decisions through structured, global search — not volume-driven sourcing.

[See more here](#)



EOR (Employer of Record)

Best when the person is a core team member and you want full compliant employment in their country. Fronted becomes the legal employer, while you manage day-to-day work.

[See more here](#)



COR (Contractor of Record)

Best when you need to engage contractors compliantly, reduce misclassification risk, and keep contractor management clean and consistent.

[Read more about COR here](#)

What Global Hiring Leaders Optimize For

Most conversations about global hiring focus on where to hire.

In practice, the companies that scale global teams optimize three things:

1. Role design before sourcing

They treat role definition as a risk-control mechanism. Clear scope prevents churn, misalignment, and endless recalibration.

2. Employment model decisions early

They choose the right model upfront instead of starting fast and “fixing later.”

3. Integrated ownership

They reduce vendor sprawl.
One system. One accountable partner. Fewer handovers.

This is the difference between global hiring as a one-time project and global hiring as infrastructure.

2026 Signals: Where Global Hiring Is Going

The next phase of global hiring is less experimental and more intentional. Here's what we're leading:

- 👉 Fewer vendors, more integrated systems
- 👉 Less geographic arbitrage, more role precision
- 👉 Higher expectations from investors (global readiness becomes table stakes)
- 👉 A higher bar for global team design (not just hiring, but operating well)
- 👉 Employment model choices moving earlier in strategy

Fronted is built for companies that want to hire seriously in the Nordics, and expand globally without stitching together five tools and three vendors.

We operate deeply in Nordic markets, and support hiring and employment across other key regions as companies scale (including markets like the UK, US, Europe, and the Philippines).

If you're hiring internationally and want:

- 👉 **clearer role definition**
- 👉 **the right employment model**
- 👉 **compliant execution without handovers**
- 👉 **and a stable experience for the person you hire**

Fronted can help.

[Reach out to learn more](#)

