# Workday Report: As AI Changes Work, Europe's Employees Are Staying Put. One Third Say It's Because They Feel Stuck.

*Employee Retention in Every European Market Studied Tops the Global Average, but Low Promotion Rates and Stalled Internal Moves Suggest Many Workers See Few Opportunities*

**BARCELONA, November 19, 2026 —** Workday Rising EMEA –Workday, Inc., the trusted agentic platform for HR, finance, and IT, today released its 2026 European Workforce Report. The report finds that European employees stay with their employers longer than workers elsewhere, but that stability may not reflect commitment. Every European market analysed has a higher two-year retention rate than the global average of 69.6%, led by Germany at 78.8%. Yet more than a third (34%) of workers in the UK, France, and Germany say they feel stuck in their jobs because the job market is weak.

Many of these workers also feel less supported by their employers. Just 54% say their employer cares about them as a person, compared with 59% globally. And while 75% say they know which skills they need to succeed, fewer (62%) say their employer is helping them build the skills they will need next.

The findings arrive as AI begins to change the work inside many European companies. For business leaders, the question is whether the people who are staying believe they have a future there. Most workers in the UK (75%), France (88%), and Germany (88%) say they have received AI training from their employer. But fewer than four in 10 in the UK (37%), France (36%), and Germany (39%) expect AI to create new opportunities in their careers.

"Europe's companies are holding on to their people, and on paper that looks like a strength," said Angelique De Vries-Schipperijn, president, EMEA, Workday. "But when a third of workers say they're staying because they feel stuck, leaders should hear that as a warning. AI is changing many jobs, and the people who stay need to see where they fit in what comes next."

## Why Workers Feel Stuck

The chance to advance their careers varies widely across Europe. In Spain, 2.9% of employees received a promotion, compared with 8.1% globally. The UK and France had the highest promotion rates in Europe, at 7.2% and 7.1%, but both were still below the global average. Sweden's rate was 5.3%.

Workers who try to move up inside their companies often run into obstacles. Among employees in the UK, France, and Germany who pursued an internal role or promotion in the past year, nearly a quarter (24%) said the selection process was unfair. About one in five (21%) said the opportunity was paused, withdrawn, or changed, and 18% said their manager did not support the move.

Many employees are also working through significant change at the same time. Nearly four in 10 (39%) said their company had reorganised in the past year, and nearly a third (32%) said open positions had been left unfilled.

## More Applicants, Slower Hiring

For workers who look elsewhere, the competition is stiff. European employers receive an average of 82 applications per job offer, compared with 69 globally. Switzerland had the most at 104 applications per offer, followed by Germany at 89.

A bigger pool of candidates has not made hiring faster. In Germany, filling a role took an average of 95 days, which is 35 days longer than the global benchmark of 60. Employers say the problem is finding the right match. Among hiring decision-makers in the UK, France, and Germany, 33% said jobs stay open because applicants lack the required skills, and 36% pointed to differences over pay, location, or flexibility.

## Most Job Seekers Use AI, but Fewer Say It Led Them to Apply for More Jobs

AI is now a normal part of looking for work. In the UK, France, and Germany, 84% of job seekers said they used AI in their search. But only 34% said AI led them to apply for more jobs, compared with 42% globally.

The findings push back on the idea that AI is mainly a tool for sending out more applications. Most European job seekers use it, but only about a third say it changed how many jobs they went after.

## A Stable Workforce Isn't Always a Committed One

The risk for businesses is mistaking a workforce that stays for one that believes in its future. Employees who feel trapped can become less engaged and less open to change, and they may leave when the job market improves. As AI changes how companies operate, a workforce that is willing to grow with the business matters more than one that simply stays.

The report points to where employers can start. They can make internal moves fair and visible, help people build the skills they

already say they need, and show employees where their roles are headed as the work changes.

**For More Information**

- Read the 2026 European Workforce Report.
- Explore why European businesses may be overlooking opportunities to develop and promote talent from within as they struggle to fill open roles.
- Dive deeper on what the findings mean for the UK, Germany, and France.

**About the Report**
The 2026 European Workforce Report draws on de-identified data from companies using Workday Human Capital Management, Workday Recruiting, and Workday Peakon Employee Voice, alongside two global surveys conducted by Harris QuestDIY.

Workforce data covers employers with at least 250 employees, using quality filters and matched reporting periods to analyse hiring, promotions, workforce growth, and retention. Findings include country-level comparisons across European markets, including Germany, France, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the UK.

The report also incorporates findings from a September 2026 survey of 6,001 employees and business leaders, including approximately 1,780 decision-makers, and an August 2026 survey of 5,944 workers examining AI use at work and in job searches. Both surveys were conducted across the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, France, and Germany. European survey findings in this release reflect respondents in the United Kingdom, France, and Germany. Global comparisons reflect all six countries surveyed.

**About Workday**
Workday operates at the heart of the enterprise – HR, finance, and IT – where the margin for error is effectively zero. By tightly coupling AI with the context, guardrails, and trusted processes that run the business, Workday goes beyond AI that assists with work to agents that are capable of driving measurable outcomes. More than 11,500 organisations worldwide, including more than 65% of the Fortune 500, trust Workday to deliver. For more information about Workday, visit workday.com.

© 2026 Workday, Inc. All rights reserved. Workday and the Workday logo are trademarks of Workday, Inc. All other brand and product names are trademarks or registered trademarks of their respective holders.

**Forward-Looking Statements**
This press release contains forward-looking statements including, among other things, statements regarding Workday's plans, beliefs, and expectations. These forward-looking statements are based only on currently available information and our current beliefs, expectations, and assumptions. Because forward-looking statements relate to the future, they are subject to inherent risks, uncertainties, assumptions, and changes in circumstances that are difficult to predict and many of which are outside of our control. If the risks materialise, assumptions prove incorrect, or we experience unexpected changes in circumstances, actual results could differ materially from the results implied by these forward-looking statements, and therefore you should not rely on any forward-looking statements. Risks include, but are not limited to, risks described in our filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission ("SEC"), including our most recent report on Form 10-Q or Form 10-K and other reports that we have filed and will file with the SEC from time to time, which could cause actual results to vary from expectations. Workday assumes no obligation to, and does not currently intend to, update any such forward-looking statements after the date of this release, except as required by law.

Any unreleased services, features, or functions referenced in this document, our website, or other press releases or public statements that are not currently available are subject to change at Workday's discretion and may not be delivered as planned or at all. Customers who purchase Workday services should make their purchase decisions based upon services, features, and functions that are currently available.

---

https://en-gb.newsroom.workday.com/2026-11-19-Workday-Report-As-AI-Changes-Work,-Europes-Employees-Are-Staying-Put-One-Third-Say-Its-Because-They-Feel-Stuck