

2023 Global Talent Competitiveness Index celebrates a decade of pioneering talent insights

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Switzerland, Singapore and the United States rank Top 3.

European countries continue to dominate the Top 25. For the first time, Japan drops out from Top 25, replaced by South Korea.

A decade's worth of data and analyses: 2023 report contains six predictions for the future of talent competition.

Fontainebleau (France), Singapore, Abu Dhabi, San Francisco, 7 November 2023 — Switzerland, Singapore and the United States firmly retain their leading positions as the world's most talent competitive countries, according to the Global Talent Competitiveness Index (GTCI) 2023.

This year, Denmark, the Netherlands, Finland, Norway, Australia, Sweden and the United Kingdom make up the rest of the Top 10.

European countries continue to dominate the Top 25, with 17 of them ranked. Beyond Europe – Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Arab Emirates, South Korea, and Israel join the top 25. UAE has moved up from 25th to 22nd while Japan dropped out, replaced by South Korea (24th).

Looking back at the past decade, one significant highlight is that the top ten countries have largely remained the same. Remarkably, eight of the top ten countries this year were also in the inaugural top ten in 2013.

Several of the largest emerging economies are among the best improvers over the past decade: Notable examples include: China has moved from being a talent mover to a talent champion; Indonesia is one of the countries with the greatest strides in talent competitiveness over the past decade; Mexico has moved from being a talent laggard to a talent mover; and Brazil has progressed may well soon categorise as a talent mover.

Titled "What a difference ten years make - and what to expect for the next decade", the GTCI 2023 is published by INSEAD, in collaboration with Descartes Institute for the Future, and the Human Capital Leadership Institute. The 10th edition of the report covers 134 countries around the world across all income groups.

Positioned as the leading comprehensive annual benchmarking report, the GTCI measures how countries and cities grow, attract and retain talent. It provides a unique resource for decision makers to understand the global talent competitiveness picture and develop strategies to boost their economies.

Global Talent Competitiveness Index (GTCI) 2023 – Top 25 Ranking

Rank Country
1 Switzerland
2 Singapore

- 3 USA
- 4 Denmark
- 5 Netherlands
- 6 Finland
- 7 Norway
- 8 Australia
- 9 Sweden
- 10 United Kingdom
- 11 Luxembourg
- 12 Ireland
- 13 Canada
- 14 Germany
- 15 Iceland
- 16 Belgium
- 17 Austria
- 18 New Zealand
- 19 France
- 20 Estonia
- 21 Malta
- 22 UAE
- 23 Czech Republic
- 24 Korea, Rep.
- 25 Israel

What will talent competitiveness look like in the next ten years?

The 10th year edition of this report boldly offers a 'time capsule' of six key messages, to be confronted to the talent reality of 2033.

1. Talent competitiveness will gain even more importance as a critical element of competitiveness, innovation and geo-political soft power for nations, cities and organisations.
2. Talent competition will grow fiercer. As uncertainties and international tensions will continue to accumulate (in trade, in investment, in politics and diplomacy), there will be growing talent wars.
3. The world of work will further transform, driven by evolving expectations from younger generations, new economic models and emerging technologies like AI.
4. Cities and regions will pioneer new talent strategies and innovation. Quality of life and sustainability will be a critical asset for those aiming at becoming talent hubs.
5. Global talent-focused policies will be crucial to prevent tensions and harness human and technological potential for a better, more sustainable and equal world.
6. Skills and education will remain vital tools to empower workers to make meaningful contributions to

their economies and societies.

Drawing the lessons from ten years of GTCI

In its 10th edition, the GTCI 2023 celebrates its remarkable milestone of a decade of pioneering talent insights. Over that period, six major trends have emerged :

1. Talent inequalities remain high among countries: One of the most recurrent themes has been that the global talent competitiveness landscape is fraught with inequalities. Poorer economies do not perform as well on the talent scene as richer economies have. Despite significant progress made by some of the largest emerging economies such as India and China, the wealth/talent correlation remains strong.
2. Talent inequalities also die hard within societies: Despite progress in reducing gender gaps, women continue to face unequal pay and limited career growth. While Covid-19 thwarted the process, pushing some to irreversible levels, the post-COVID recovery may deepen them further. AI and new work practices are changing the job landscape, affecting both unskilled and highly skilled workers.
3. COVID has deeply altered the global talent landscape: During the COVID years, national and organisational talent strategies have been challenged to adapt to a dramatically changed environment for education, work, and activity. The new practices adopted will contribute to a new normal and a new world of work is emerging and evolving. For talent, 'quality of life' is increasingly important, and this trend might possibly accelerate in subsequent years.
4. Cities and regions play increasingly important roles in talent: Global City Talent Competitiveness Index (GCTCI) repeatedly emphasised how cities had been able to deploy original and effective talent strategies, and how 'second-tier' cities were increasingly successful at deploying talent policies.
5. Growing uncertainties hamper brain circulation: The recent period (as well as the one that is lying ahead) has not offered fertile ground for one of the most positive trends identified by GTCI before COVID, namely 'brain circulation'. Although international travel has resumed, persistent uncertainties and geopolitical tensions continue to hinder direct (face-to-face) cooperation and limit talent cross-fertilisation.
6. New generations are reshaping the world of work: An increasing proportion of new generations, especially the higher educated, didn't necessarily prioritise high-demand skills. Many look for meaningful jobs where they can contribute to society or desire a healthier work-life balance. Gigs and short-term contracts have also become the new norm for a growing number of workers.

Felipe Monteiro, Co-author of the report, Academic Director of the GTCI and INSEAD Senior Affiliate Professor of Strategy, said: "This has been an exciting and eventful decade for the global talent scene (and beyond). With support and contribution from the business sectors and global employers, GTCI has established itself as a global reference on the Talent Competitiveness stage."

Bruno Lanvin, Co-author of the report, Distinguished Fellow at INSEAD and Founder and President of

Descartes Institute for the Future, declared : “For the past 10 years, GTCI has been at the forefront of benchmarking and analytical thinking in the areas of labour markets, work organisation and talent flows. It is now time to look at the future. Talent competition will be one of the pillars of the next age of globalization. Our collective ability to make the world less unequal, and the planet more sustainable will depend heavily on our capacity to grow, attract and nurture the right talents.”

Doris Sohmen-Pao, Chief Executive Officer of the Human Capital Leadership Institute (HCLI), the Knowledge Partner of the GTCI this year, said, “The GTCI Index highlights and focuses on factors that support human capital. Improvements in each lever of the index, not just in the overall rankings, should be celebrated. While there has been minimal movement in the rankings over the past 10 years, there have been rapid changes in talent management across industries. This is especially so within companies as they respond to technological transformations, the pandemic, as well as the drive for sustainability. We imagine the next decade will see more visible changes in the rankings—with countries in Asia advancing in competitiveness mirroring growth across the industry. This increase in the ability to attract, retain, and grow human capital should be seen as a win for all.”

About INSEAD, The Business School for the World

As one of the world’s leading and largest graduate business schools, INSEAD brings together people, cultures and ideas to develop responsible leaders who transform business and society. Our research, teaching and partnerships reflect this global perspective and cultural diversity.

With locations in Europe (France), Asia (Singapore), the Middle East (Abu Dhabi), and North America (San Francisco), INSEAD's business education and research spans four regions. Our 165 renowned Faculty members from 41 countries inspire more than 1,300 degree participants annually in our Master in Management, MBA, Global Executive MBA, Specialised Master’s degrees (Executive Master in Finance and Executive Master in Change) and PhD programmes. In addition, more than 10,000 executives participate in INSEAD Executive Education programmes each year.

INSEAD continues to conduct cutting-edge research and innovate across all our programmes. We provide business leaders with the knowledge and awareness to operate anywhere. Our core values drive academic excellence and serve the global community as The Business School for the World. More information about INSEAD can be found at www.insead.edu.

About Global Talent Competitiveness Index (GTCI)

The GTCI report is published annually by INSEAD, the Business School for the World, in partnership with Descartes Institute for the Future and Human Capital Leadership Institute (HCLI). The report is a comprehensive annual benchmarking report that measures how countries and cities grow, attract and retain talent. It provides a unique resource for decision makers to understand the global talent competitiveness picture and develop strategies to boost their competitiveness. The 2023 report covers 134 countries across all groups of income and levels of development. More information can be found [here](#).

About Descartes Institute

Because the current times are complex, because the future has become more difficult to anticipate, and because our decoding grids and navigation instruments require constant upgrading, the mindset of René Descartes stands out as one of the most powerful tools we can use to be future ready. To do this, we need

to combine two core qualities, namely (1) offer innovative ways to look at tomorrow while building on proven facts and measurable realities, and (2) doing so by constantly challenging established ways of describing the world, and offering new bridges between various areas of thoughts, culture and ways to see the world.

Our thirty years of experience in dealing with the highest levels of government and business management, and our reputation in building global indices and innovative benchmarks in future-critical areas such as technology, innovation and talent is our strongest asset to help private and public organizations to be more future-ready. Visit our website for more information.

About Human Capital Leadership Institute (HCLI)

The Human Capital Leadership Institute (HCLI) is a renowned centre of excellence in Asia, dedicated to accelerating leadership and strategic human capital management capabilities.

Through Asia-specific research and insights, industry-relevant executive development programmes, and fostering networks between thought leaders in business, government, and academia, HCLI aims to cultivate global leaders with a deep understanding of leading in Asia and develop Asian leaders with the ability to lead on a global stage.

For more information on the GTCI, or to speak with a representative from INSEAD, please contact Alexandre Lopez at BlueSky Education on alex@bluesky-pr.com or call on +44 (0)1582 797959.