

Standardisation for job related proficiency assessments in Switzerland

The human risk perspective - Survey Results

January 2023

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in employment

SNV
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1. Introduction

Initiated by a request from the **Swiss Federation for Psychologists (FSP)**, the **Swiss Association for Standardisation (SNV)** has set up an **interdisciplinary national project (INB/NK 3168)** to develop a standard for the implementation of job-related proficiency assessments in Switzerland.

The aim is to create a Swiss **reference service norm** and to establish a **best practice** that will ensure the best possible outcomes **for job related proficiency assessments** as well as **transparency and equal treatment for candidates** that are the subject of such assessments.

The company **Aequivalent**, Switzerland's largest provider and digital platform for employment screening, has been asked to participate as a **technical partner** to this interdisciplinary project and contribute with its expertise in **employment screening** and **(human) risk management**.

In the period from October 2021 to March 2022, a **survey** was broadcasted **and interviews** were conducted by the SNV in collaboration with Aequivalent in order to collect further empirical data about employment screening in Switzerland, from stakeholders at public authorities, NGOs, NPOs, industry and commerce.

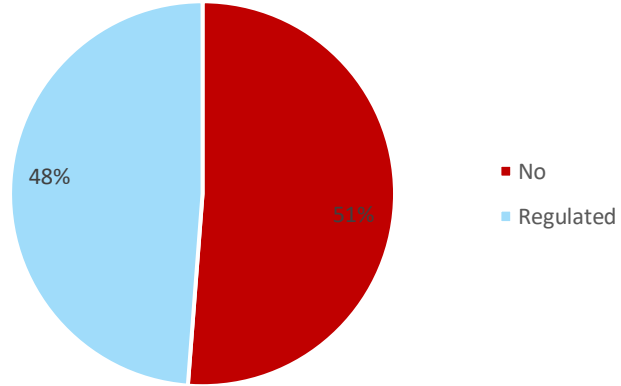
The survey was received by 882 swiss based public and private organisations that are operating within diverse industries. The results reported hereafter allow to better analyse the **most common (best) practices in employment screening from a human risk mitigation perspective** and the **support for the establishment of a standard**.

2. Survey audience

Survey	●	Sent to 882 swiss based organisations
Response rate	●	42 surveys returned (5% response rate)
Organisations	●	<p><u>Headquarters</u>: 88% swiss-german, 5% swiss-french, 7% international</p> <p><u>Industry</u> : 14% Financial services, 12% Health Care; 12% Government, 10% Banking, 10% Human Ressources, 7% NGO, 25% Other (IT, Consulting, Security; Engineering; FMCG; Defense, Transportation; Energy; Education)</p> <p><u>Organisation Type</u>: 64% Private organisations, 36% Public organisations</p> <p><u>Size</u>: 56% with more than 250 employees, 37% with 51 to 250 employees, and 7% with less than 50 employees</p> <p><u>Borderworkers</u> : 61% with more than 5% of borderworkers, 39% with less than 5% of borderworkers</p>
Respondents	●	<p><u>Discipline</u>: 71% HR, 12% C-level, 6% Risk Management, 5% Compliance/Legal , 3% Security, 3% Information Security</p> <p><u>Language</u>: 34% german, 56% french, 10% english</p>

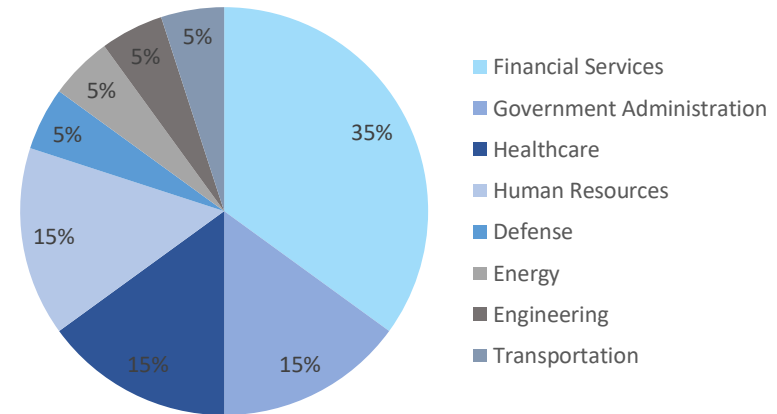
3. Survey Results – Human Risk Management

Is your industry subject to standards / regulations for Human Risk management with regard to employment screening ?



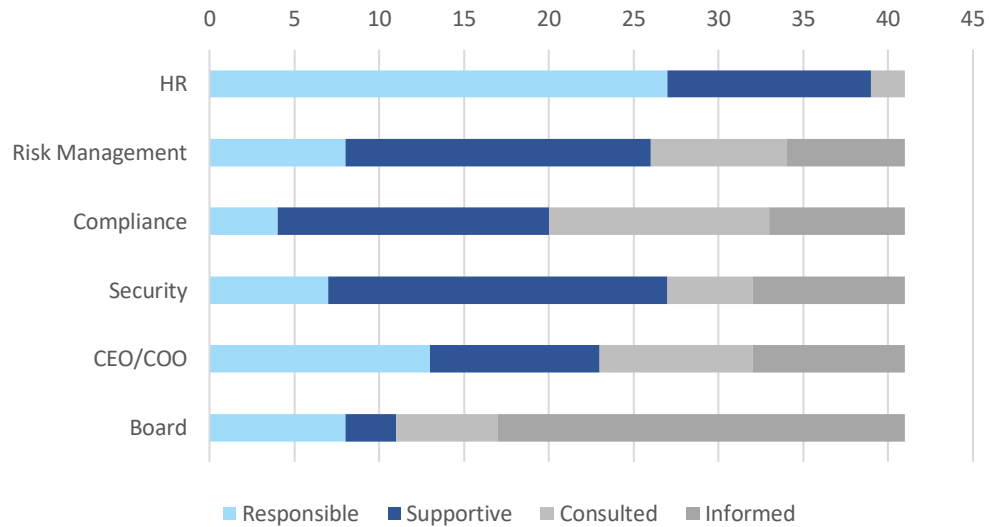
- 48% of respondents' organisations are subject to human risk management standards or regulations.

- The regulated organisations represent a rather large diversity of industries.



3. Survey Results – Human Risk Management

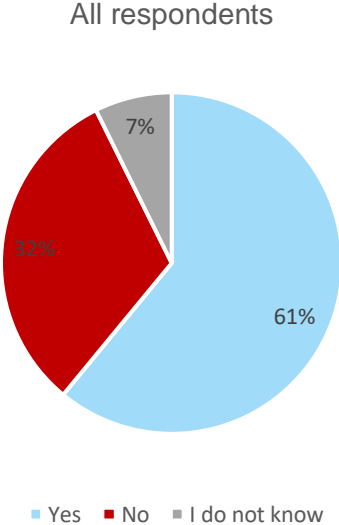
Which department is **OPERATIONALLY** responsible for managing "human risks" in your organization ? What roles play other departments ?



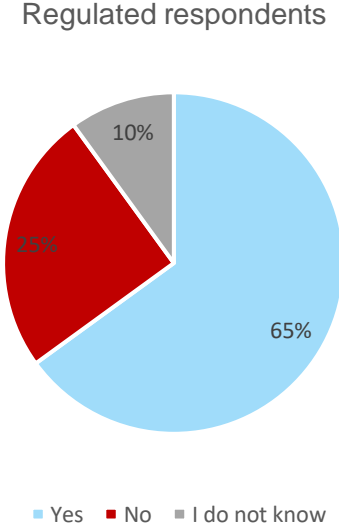
- HR is held operationally responsible for Human Risk management in the majority of organisations (64%).
- C-level Executives come in second (31%), followed by Risk Management (19%) and Board-members (19%).
- Risk management, Compliance and Security sometimes drive Human Risk Management but are seen mainly as supportive.

3. Survey Results – Human Risk Management

Does or did your organisation’s strategic risk management function specifically review Human Risks ?



- 61% of all respondents indicate their organisation specifically reviewed Human Risks.

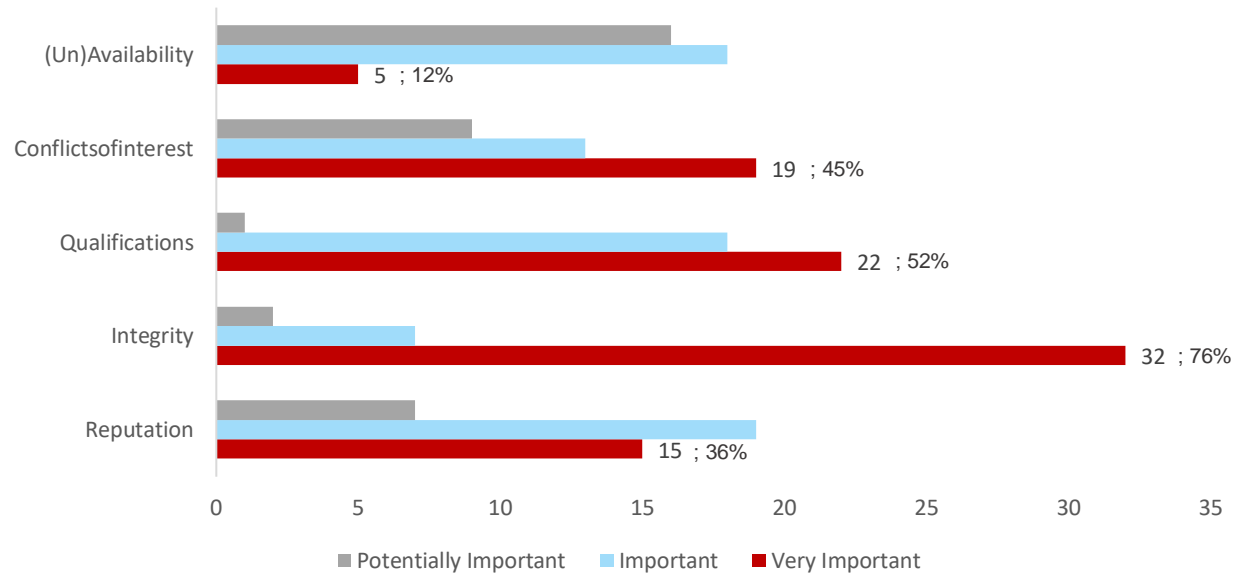


- 65% of respondents from a regulated industry reviewed Human Risks.



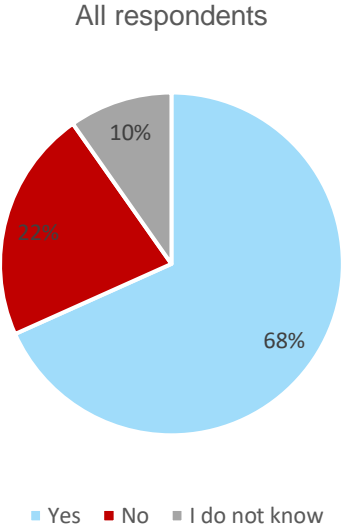
3. Survey Results – Human Risk Management

How would you rate the importance for your organisation of the following (background/risk) elements when hiring and employing people ?

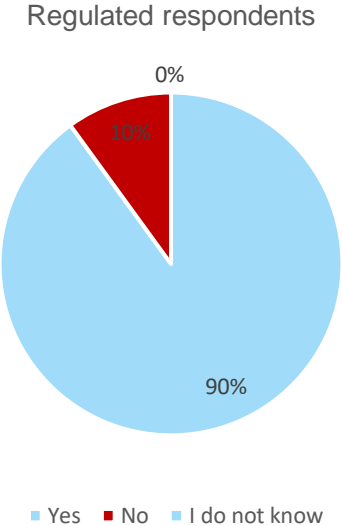


- From 5 selected human risks, integrity is most often selected as “very important” risk to mitigate for during employment screening procedures (76%).
- Qualifications (52%) and Conflicts of interest (45%) are selected as «very important» by approximately half of the respondents.

Did your organisation define a list of sensitive functions or roles ?



- 68% of all respondent’s indicate their organisation defined a list of sensitive functions,



- 90% of the regulated respondents defined a list of sensitive roles.



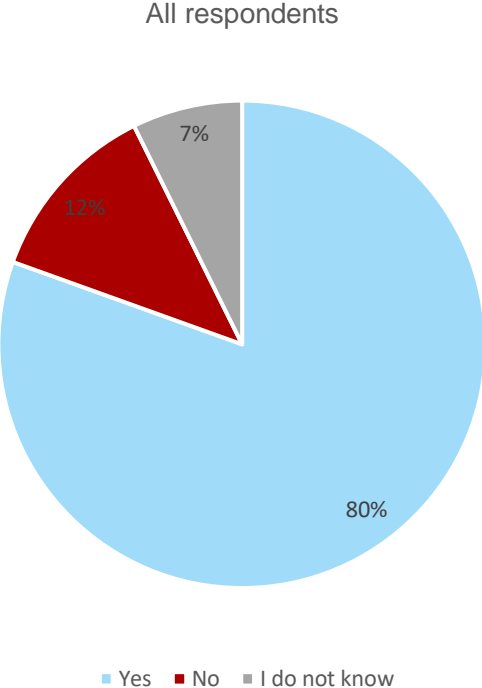
3. Survey Results – Human Risk Management

What defines if a role is particularly sensitive or "at risk" ?



- The top 5 factors estimated to make a position at risk:
 - Access to financial resources (91%)
 - Decisionmaking powers (83%)
 - Legal reponsability (83%)
 - Access to strategic infracture (78%)
 - Access to client data (67%)
 - Security-related functions (67%)

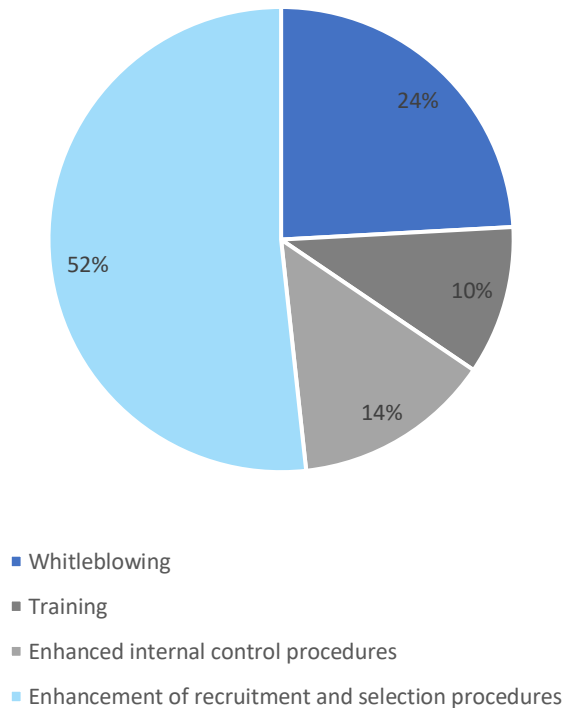
Did your organisation define policies or procedures to reduce Human Risk within your organisations, more specifically for sensitive functions or roles ?



- 80% of participants have declared their organisation has defined procedures to reduce Human Risk for sensitive roles.



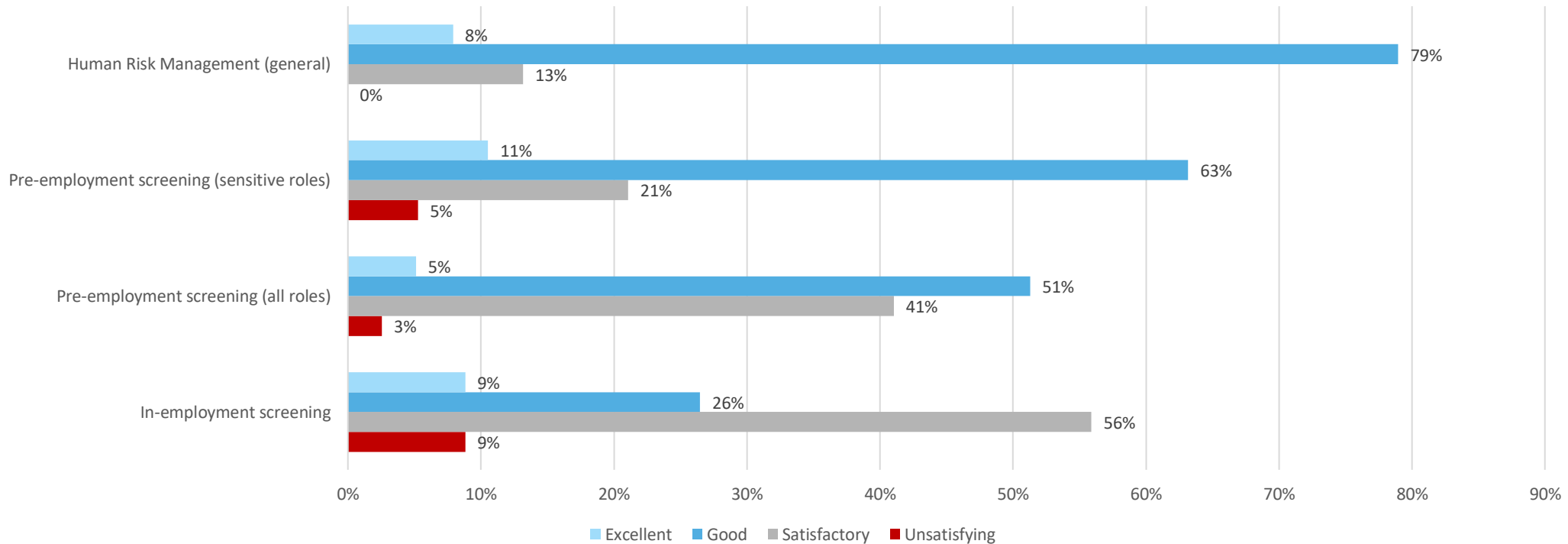
What type of policies and procedures did you put in place for sensitive functions or roles ?



- 52% of companies (which specifically defined policies for human risk management) indicate they use **enhanced recruitment and selection procedures**.
- Whistleblowing is the second most commonly used method (24%).

3. Survey Results – Human Risk Management

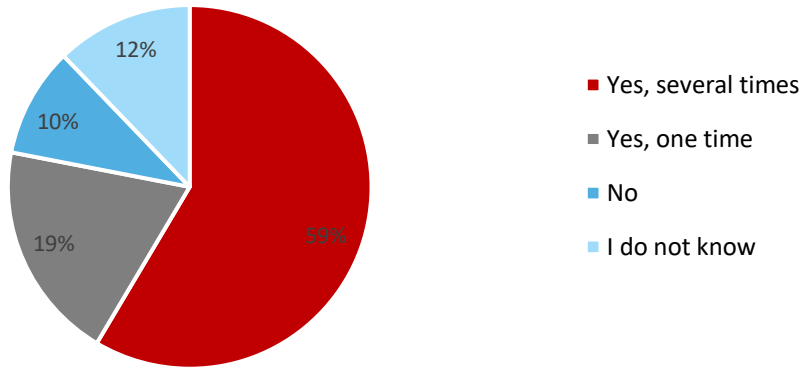
How would you rate your internal policies and procedures?



- The majority of participants (87%) rate their internal Human Risk policies and procedures as «Good» or «Excellent»
- For pre-employment screening, 56% consider their internal policies and procedures as «Good» or «Excellent». This increases to 74% for sensitive roles.
- For in-employment screening policies, only 26% consider their policies as “Good” ; the majority (56%) deem it to be «Satisfactory»

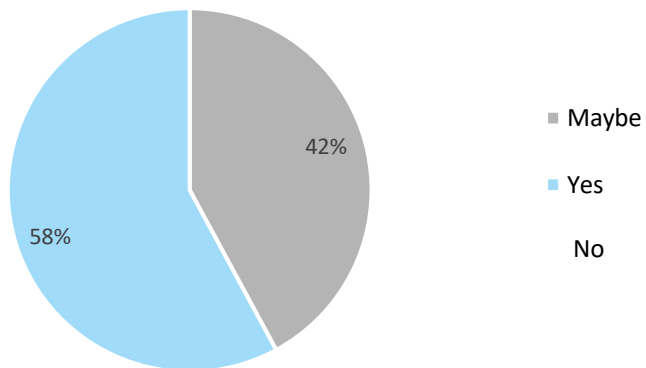
3. Survey Results – Human Risk Management

Did your organisation have any bad experiences with hiring ?



- 78% has had a bad experience with hiring
- 59% has experienced this several times.

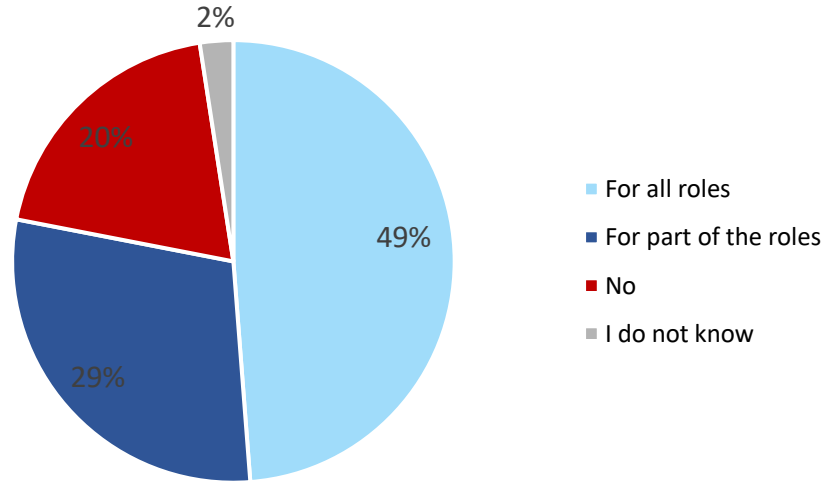
Would you appreciate the development and availability of standards or guidelines for pre- and in-employment screening ?



- 58% would appreciate the development and availability of standards / guidelines for employment screening.
- 42% replied maybe
- 0% replied that they would not appreciate to have standards available.

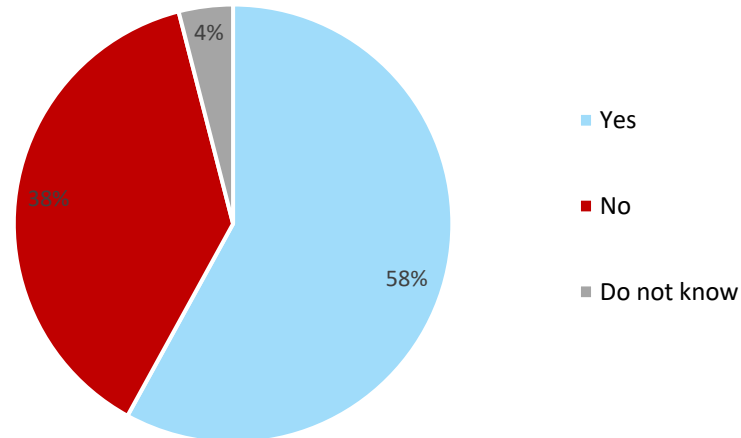
3. Survey Results – Pre-employment screening - formalisation

Did you formalize a process of pre-employment screening in your organisation ?



- 78% of participants have a type of pre-employment screening formalised in their organisation :
 - 49% for all roles
 - 29% for part of the roles

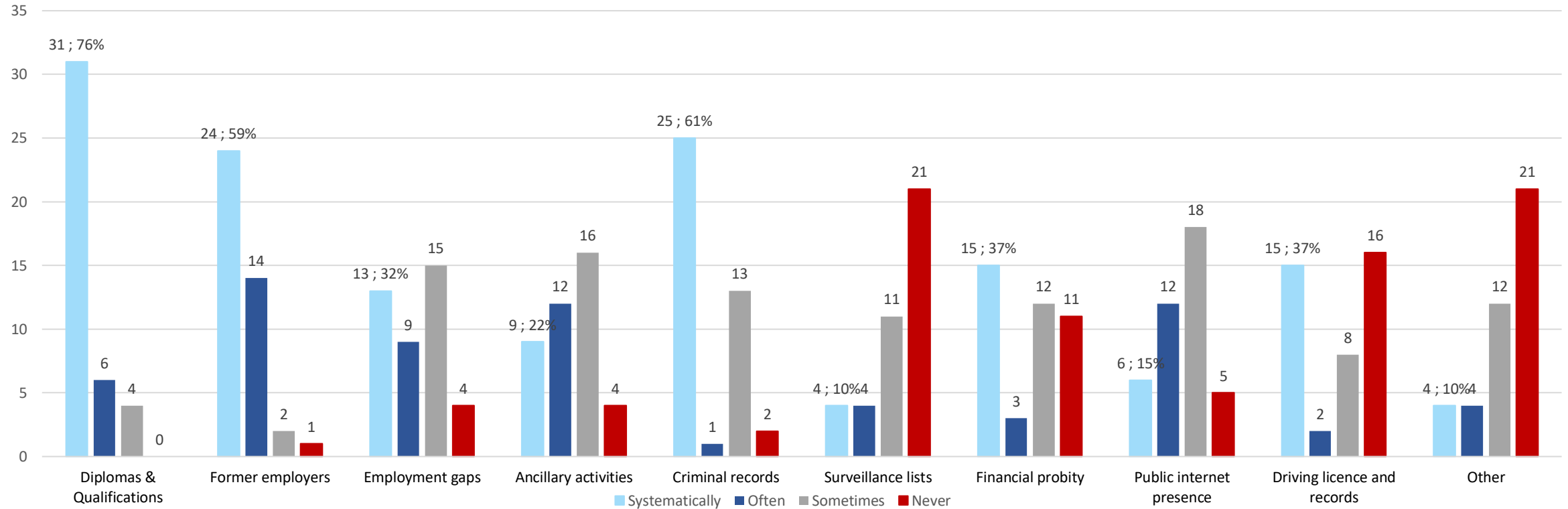
Are external contractors or consultants subject to the same procedures as internal employees?



- 58% of participants indicate that external workforce is subject to identical procedures

3. Survey Results – Pre-employment screening - verifications

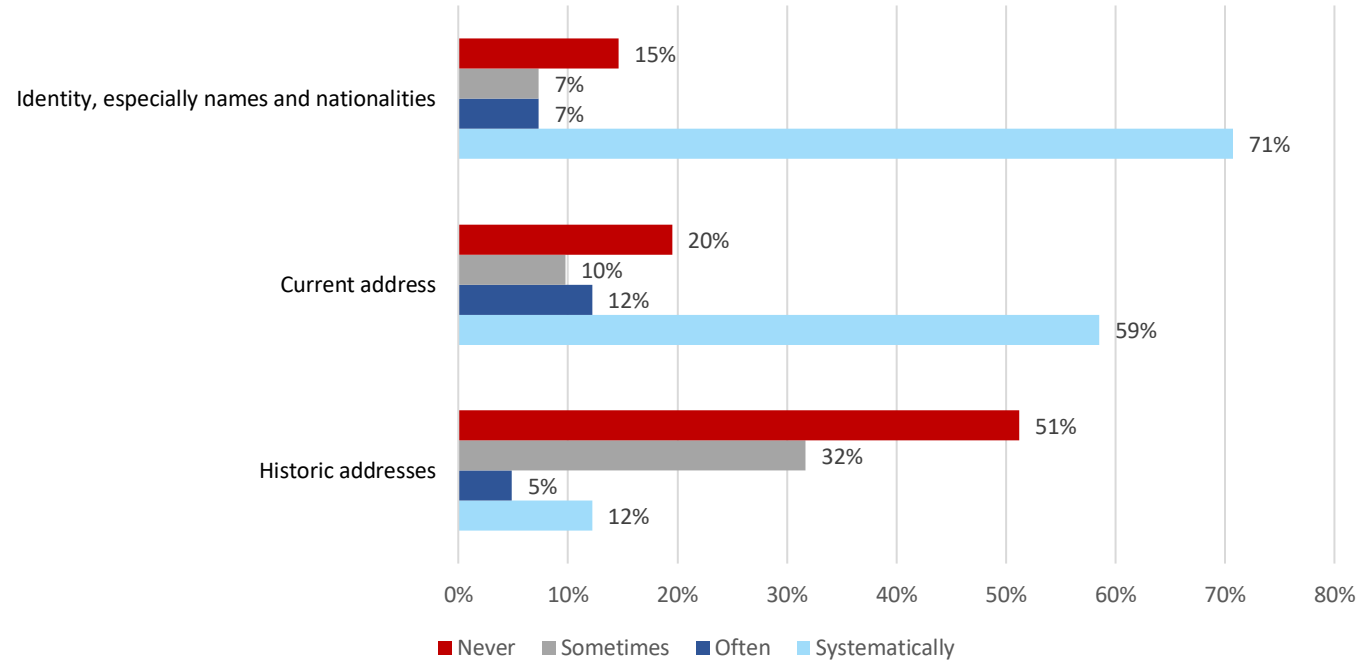
What elements do you verify during the recruitment process, more specifically for sensitive functions or roles?



- Diplomas and qualifications, criminal records, former employers, financial probity and driving records, are most often systematically verified.
- Public internet presence, ancillary activities (conflicts of interests) and employment gaps are often or sometimes verified as well.
- Surveillance lists and driving licence & records are never verified by most applicants.

3. Survey Results – Pre-employment screening - authentication

Do you verify if the following employee data and documents are correct, complete and authentic ?

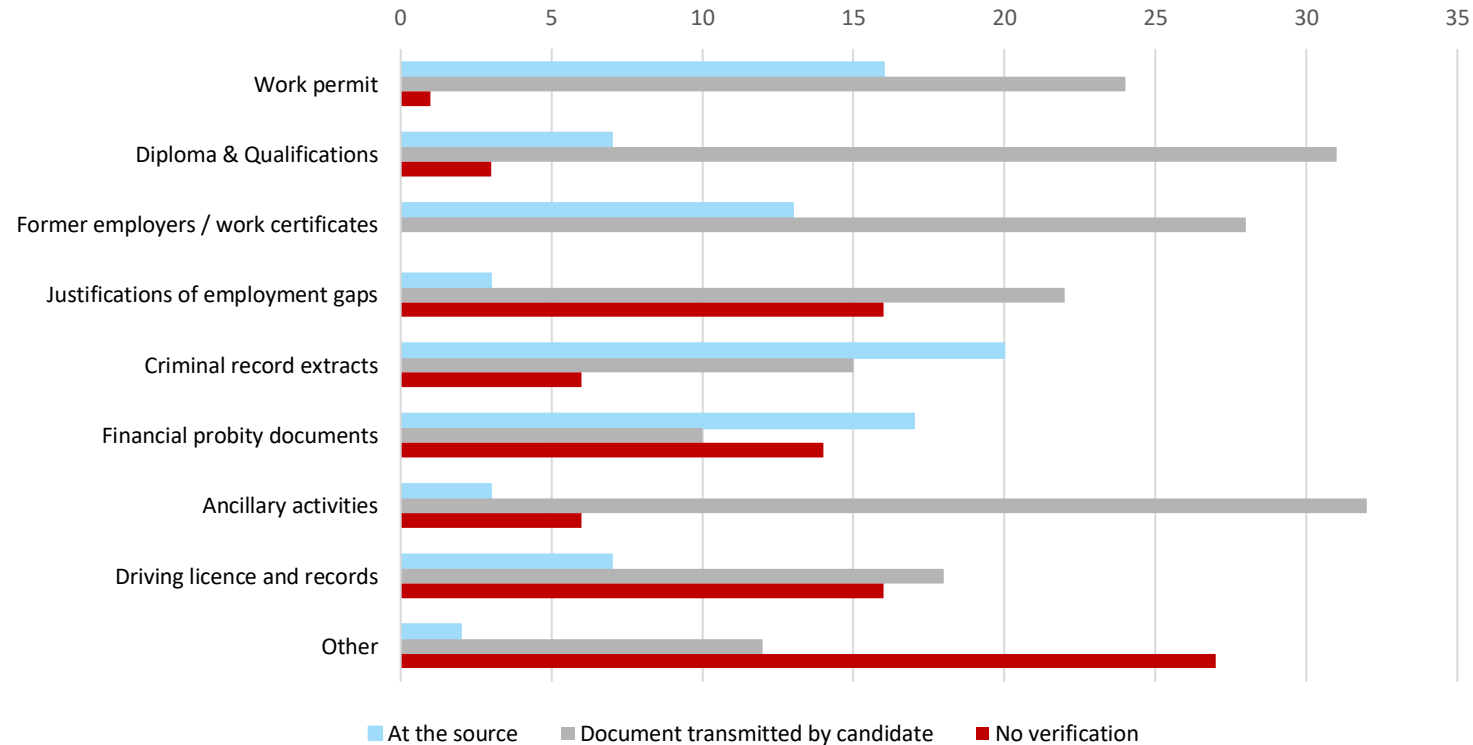


- Identity (71%) and current address (59%) are most often systematically checked.
- Address history is however rarely verified*.

* Integrity statistics show that 50% of applicants have a non-compliance regarding an outstanding debt at a former address.

3. Survey Results – Pre-employment screening – authentication

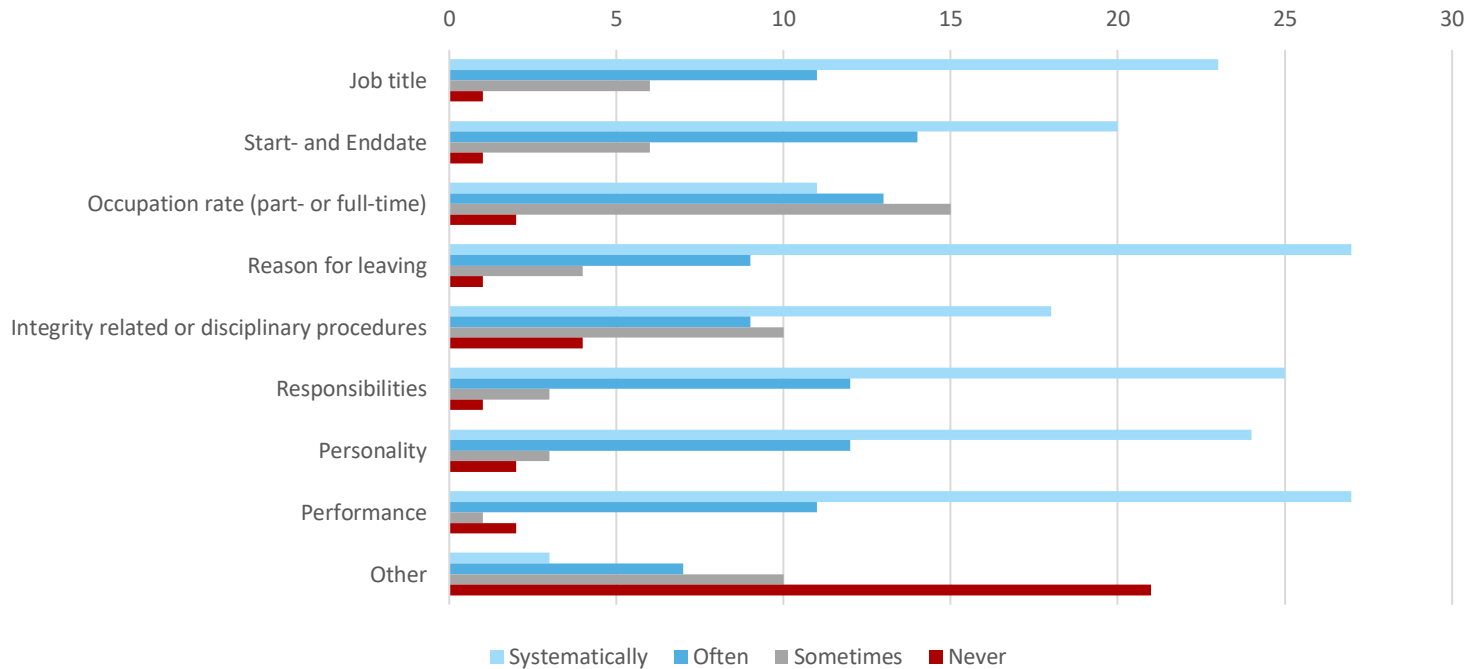
When you verify the following elements in a candidate dossier, do you verify a document transmitted by the candidate or directly at the source that has issued the document ?



- Criminal record extracts, financial probity documents, work permits, former employers and diplomas and qualifications are most often verified at the source (light blue = dominant).
- For ancillary activities, activities during employment gaps and driving records are more often relied on documents or déclarations (red = dominant).

3. Survey Results – Pre-employment screening – reference checks

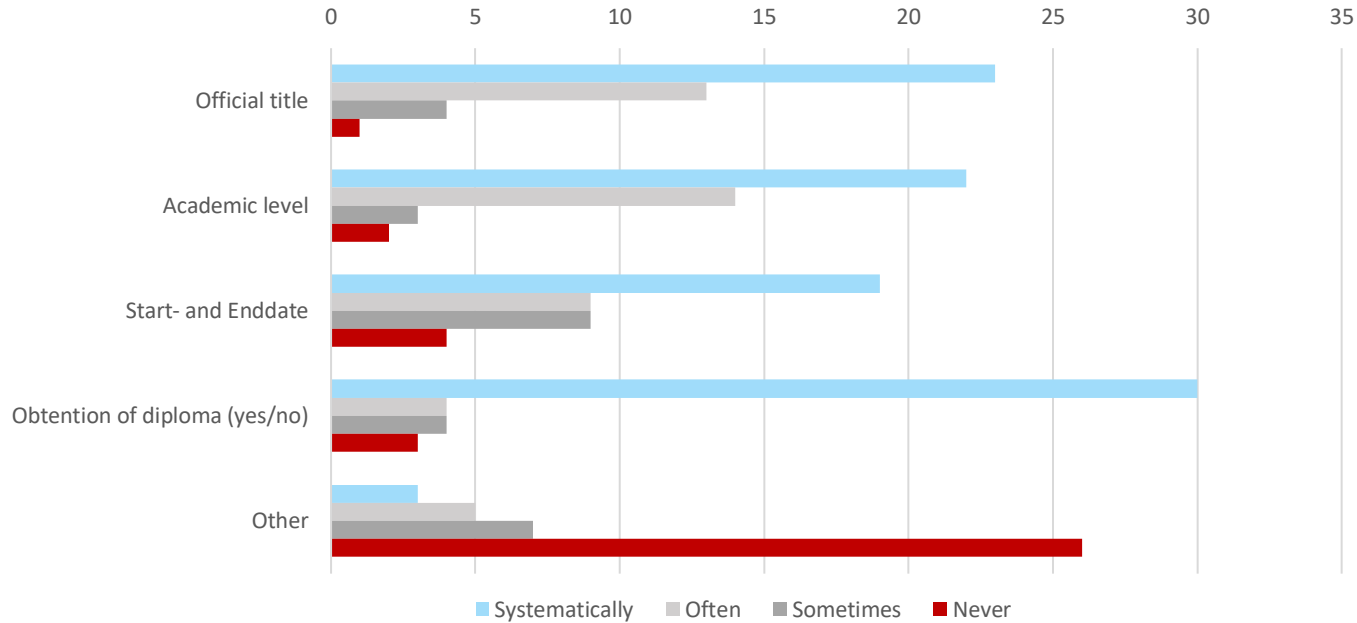
If you verify references with former employers, what candidate information do you verify with them ?



- The reasons for leaving (69%), performance (69%) and responsibilities (63%) are most often verified during reference checks.
- Job title, start- and enddate, personality and integrity or disciplinary related procedures are verified systematically in more than 40% of the organisations.

3. Survey Results – Pre-employment screening – diploma checks

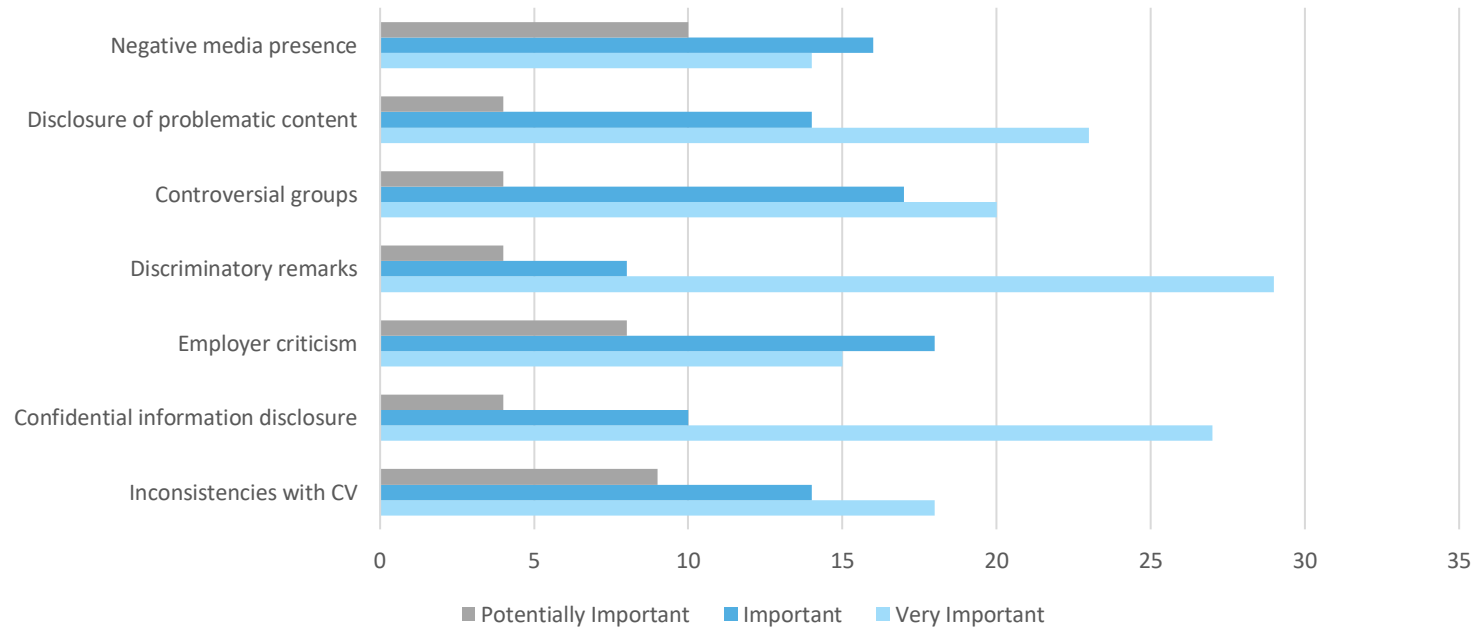
When you verify diplomas and qualifications, what do you check ?



- The obtention of the diploma (72%) is checked most systematically when verifying diplomas and qualifications.
- Official diploma title (55%), academic level (52%) and start- and enddate (45%) are verified systematically in more than 40% of the organisations.

3. Survey Results – Pre-employment screening – e-reputation checks

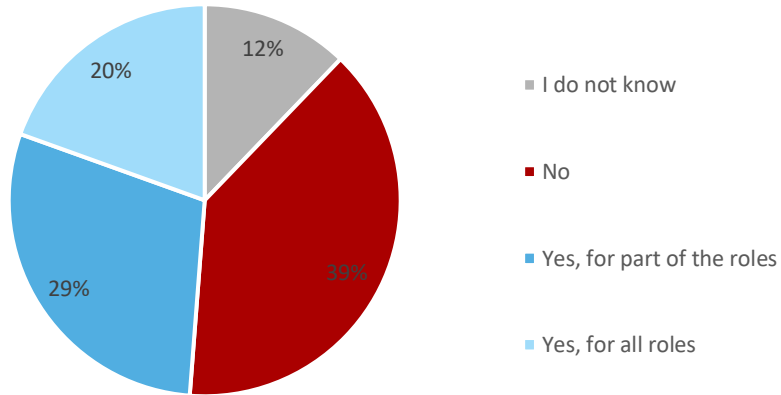
How do you evaluate the following elements in a candidate's public internet profile?



- None of the 7 e-reputation elements suggested by the survey is considered as not important.
- The absence of discriminatory remarks (73%) and confidential information disclosure (68%) are most often as «very important» during employment screening.
- The absence of problematic content (54%), inconsistencies with CV (48%) and being part of controversial groups (48%) are considered as very important by more than 40% of the organisations.

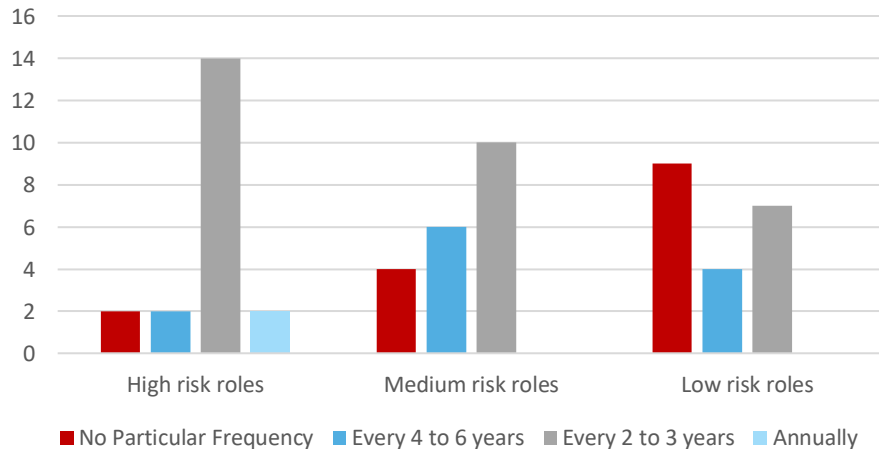
3. Survey Results – In-employment screening

Did you formalize a process of periodical re-screening for employees in your organisation ?



- 49% of respondents has a process of re-screening in place, 29% for part of the roles and 20% for all roles
- 12% of respondents does not know if a re-screening policy is in place at their organisation.

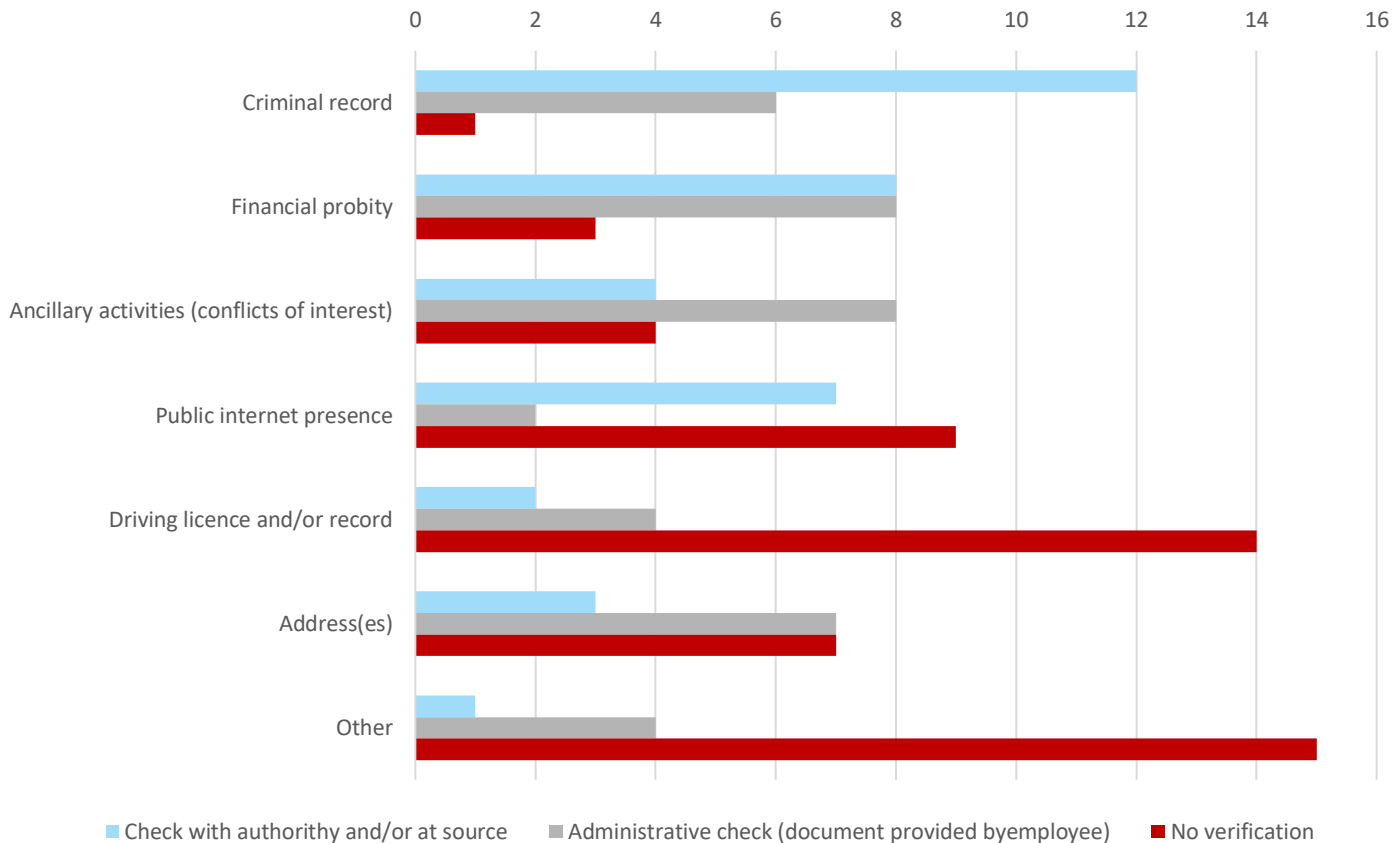
With what frequency do you re-screen your employees ?



- Re-screening is most commonly done every 2 to 3 year

3. Survey Results – In-employment screening - verifications

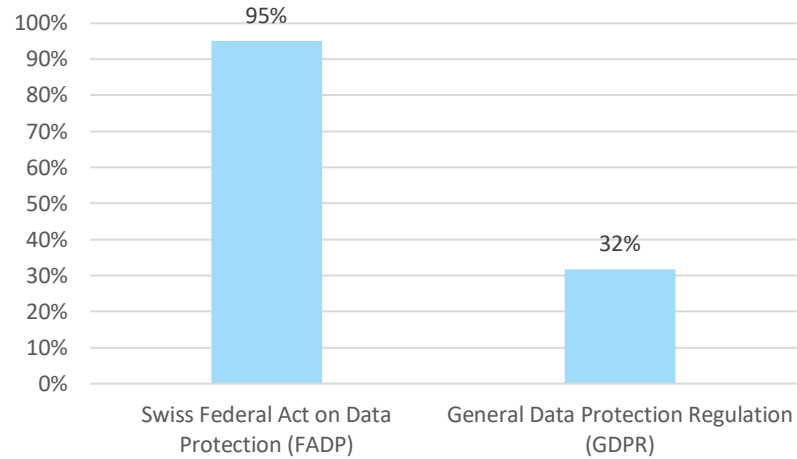
During the periodical employee re-screening process, what do you verify and how ?



- The most verified elements during a rescreening are criminal record (90%), financial probity (80%) and ancillary activities (60%).
- Address and public internet presence are verified by more 40% of the organisations during rescreening.

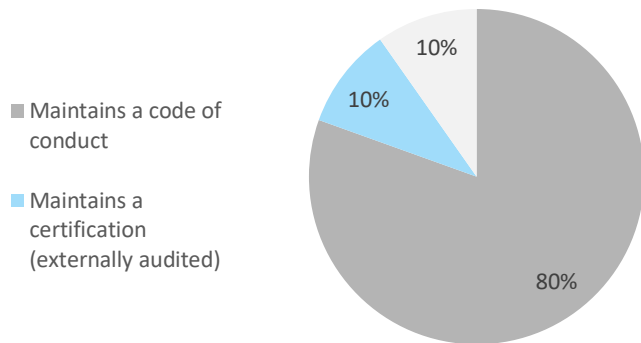
3. Survey Results – Data protection and information security

In terms of data protection, when it comes to employment screening, does your organisation comply with:



- 95% of the participating companies indicate they comply with the Swiss Federal Act on Data Protection (FADP)
- 32% comply with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

In terms of information security policies and procedures, my organisation:



- The majority, 80% of respondents, answered that their organization maintains a code of conduct.
- Only 10% of the organisations maintains a certification in information security.

4. Conclusions

Conclusion 1

The survey results support the decision to propose a standard for employment screening in Switzerland.

Conclusion 2

The survey gives a good indication of what elements are considered as most important during employment screening from a human risk perspective.

Conclusion 3

The survey highlights most common (best) practices in employment screening in Switzerland.

5. Recommendations

Recommendation 1:

Integrate the human risk management perspective and best practices in employment screening in the swiss standard for job related proficiency assessments.

Recommendation 2:

Prescribe the establishment of a list of sensitive functions within each organisation, as a function of their exposure to the organization's strategic (most important) human risks.

Recommendation 3:

Use the list of sensitive functions as a reference to define the application of (different levels of) standardised employment screening programmes during the job related proficiency assessments.

Recommendation 4:

To include the verification of integrity (76% of respondents consider this as a very important human risk element) as a standard verification during job related proficiency assessments for highly sensitive functions. This can be done through the document analysis method which is specifically mentioned in the standard.

Recommendation 5:

The establishment and use of a standard checklist in order to comply with regulations and best practices in terms of employee experience, data protection and information security during employment screening for job related proficiency assessments.

5. Recommendation – Job evaluation - Example Human Risk Score Card

Industry:

Organisationname:

Jobtitle:

Department:

Function attribute	Strategic Risk Level (0-3)	Function Risk Level (0-3)	Total Risk Level
Compliance with organisation's legal responsibilities	3	3	9
Access to strategic infrastructure (IT, Buildings, ...)	0	0	0
Access to customer data	2	2	4
Access to financial resources	0	0	0
Access to employee data	0	0	0
Interaction with vulnerable people	0	0	0
Representative responsibilities	1	3	3
Decision-making powers (> XXX CHF)	0	0	0
Security-related function	0	0	0
Leadership	3	3	9
Other: ...	0	0	0
Highest score	3	3	9

Risk level	Score
No Risk	0
Low Risk	1
Medium Risk	2
High Risk	3

Risk Group	Highest Score Total Risk Level	Screening Programme
High Risk Role	7-9	Executive
Medium Risk Role	4-6	Standard
Low Risk Role	0-3	Basic

6. Recommendation - Standardising employment screening programmes as a function of the risk level - example

Verifications	Pre-employment			In-employment	
	Basic	Standard	Executive	Update	Update +
ID or passport	●	●	●	●	●
Current address	●	●	●	●	●
Address history	●	●	●	●	●
Work permit	●	●	●	-	-
Diploma	●	●	●	-	-
Professional qualification	-	-	●	-	-
Work experience	Last 2 employers	Last 5 years, at least 2 employers	Last 10 years	-	-
Employment gap analysis	-	●	●	-	-
Criminal record	●	●	●	●	●
Global watchlists	-	●	●	-	-
International due diligence	-	-	●	-	-
Financial probity	●	●	●	●	●
Conflicts of interest	-	-	●	-	●
Internet profile	-	●	●	-	-

5. Recommendation – Establish and use of a standard checklist to comply with regulations and best practices in terms of data protection, employee experience and information security

❑ Risikoanalyse

- ❑ Strategisch (mit Risk Management und Compliance)
- ❑ Kategorisierung von Stellen

❑ Definition von Screening-Programmen

- ❑ Pre-employment
- ❑ In-employment
- ❑ Externe Mitarbeiterinnen und Mitarbeiter

❑ Prozessentwurf

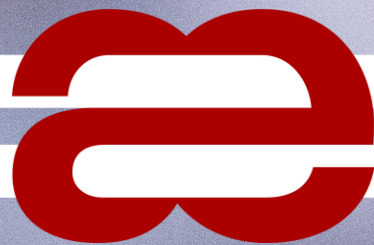
- ❑ Vor oder nach Vertragsunterzeichnung
- ❑ Frequenz der Updates
- ❑ Verantwortung für externe Mitarbeiter / Berater
- ❑ Vertragliche Klauseln & Formalisierung Einverständnis
- ❑ Analyse der Ergebnisse und Konsequenzen
- ❑ Richtlinien für den Umgang mit Daten

❑ Optimierung der Candidate Experience

- ❑ Kommunikation (Stellenausschreibung, erstes Gespräch, Anfang des Prozesses)
- ❑ Transparenz über den Prozess und die Überprüfungen (Erläuterungen, FAQs)
- ❑ Begleitung - Unterstützung
- ❑ Objektivität und Fairness bei der Behandlung
- ❑ Feedback

❑ Interne Kommunikation

- ❑ Unterstützung durch das Management
- ❑ Erläuterung bei den Stakeholdern (insbesondere Line-Management)
- ❑ Schulung von Personalvermittlern / HR-Teams
- ❑ FAQ: Warum / Wie / Von wem?
- ❑ Rechtliche Grundlagen / Richtlinien



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