



A PEOPLECENTRIX ANALYSIS · CURATED BY TANGUY DULAC · 2026 EDITION

2026 HR Trends & Priorities

A cross-publisher analysis of the year's HR agenda

10

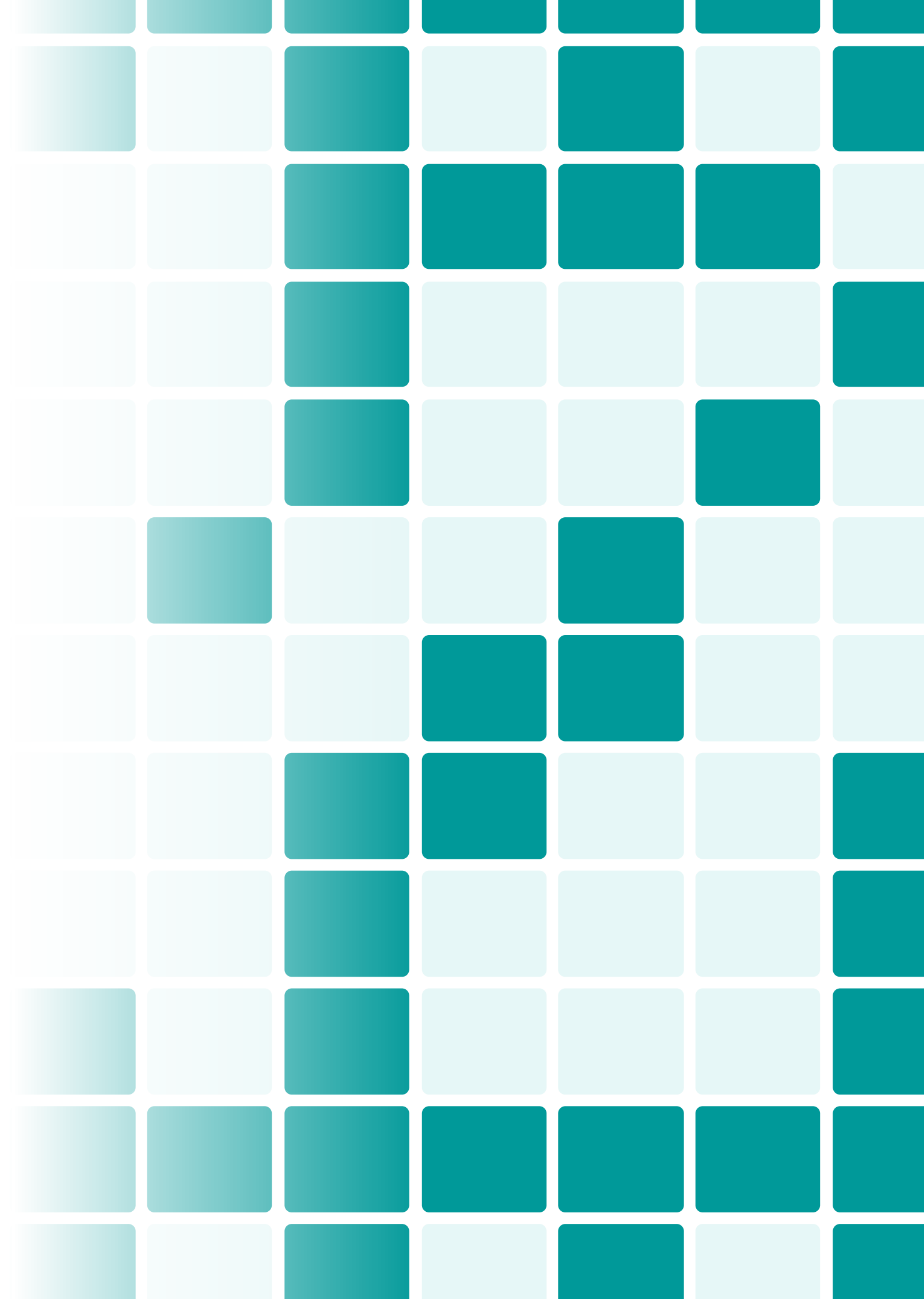
publishers

20

themes

64

trends mapped





2026 HR Trends & Priorities

Reading: sources = publishers raising the theme (the ranking metric); trends = total statements. Themes 11–20 on the next slide; three themes had no 2026 coverage.

Theme				AIHR	BCG	David Green	Deloitte	Gartner	i4cp	McKinsey	McLean	Mercer	SHRM	Sources / trends
Broad consensus 5+ sources	1	HR Value & Operating Model	AI	2	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	1		9 / 12
	2	Skills & Workforce Agility	AI	1	1	1	1		1		2		1	7 / 8
	3	Work Redesign & Human-AI Collaboration	AI			1	2	1	1			1		5 / 6
Emerging 3–4 sources	4	AI Adoption & Transformation	AI	2	1				1				1	4 / 5
	5	People Analytics	AI			1			1		1	1		4 / 4
	6	Leadership & Management Development	AI			2		1			1			3 / 4
	7	Organisational Culture					1	1			2			3 / 4
	8	Talent Acquisition & Mobility	AI						1	1			1	3 / 3
	9	Employee Experience, Engagement & Retention	AI			1				1		1		3 / 3
	10	Workforce Models & Flexibility	AI				1		1				1	3 / 3

1 trend 2 trends 3 trends not covered AI AI-led theme



What the Data Says

Three readings of the same evidence — what ten publishers said, why they agree, and what to do with it.

01 THE SIGNAL

What did ten publishers actually say?

AI framing went from 11% to 75% in a single year.

The story is not what the agenda added. It is what it dropped to make room.

02 THE NOISE

Why do ten publishers all say the same thing?

The tell is displacement — a real shift adds, a fad substitutes.

The reports map the conversation, not the workplace. Useful — until you mistake it for the room.

03 THE FILTER

So what do you do with it?

Four of ten board-approved objectives sat inside the consensus top ten.

The map was half right, and nothing in it said which half.

THE SIGNAL <https://www.peoplecentrix.eu/blog/hr-trends-priorities-2026-the-heatmap-the-signal-1/3>

THE NOISE <https://www.peoplecentrix.eu/blog/hr-trends-priorities-2026-the-heatmap-the-noise-2/3>

THE FILTER <https://www.peoplecentrix.eu/blog/hr-trends-priorities-2026-the-heatmap-the-filter-3/3>



How we built it

20 themes

64 trends

10 sources

3 themes with no coverage

- 1Collect each publisher’s 2026 HR outlook.
- 2Extract every trend verbatim, in the source’s own order.
- 3Map each to the 20-theme framework (v2) — borderline calls flagged; trends with no home set aside.
- 4Treat AI as a cross-cutting lens, flagged per trend — not a separate bucket.
- 5Rank by breadth; visualise the top 10 as a theme × source heatmap.

Below the top 10 — the full ranked field

Rank	Theme / topic	Sources / trends	Status
11	Diversity, Equity & Inclusion	3 / 3	Emerging
12	Strategic Workforce Planning	2 / 2	Emerging
13	Change Management	2 / 2	Emerging
14	Responsible AI, Data & Governance	2 / 2	Emerging
15	Performance Management & Productivity	1 / 1	Single-source
16	Pay, Reward & Benefits	1 / 1	Single-source
17	Sustainability / ESG	1 / 1	Single-source
18	AI in HR	—	No coverage
19	Wellbeing & Resilience	—	No coverage
20	Workforce Demographics & Labour Market	—	No coverage

All 64 trends mapped within the 20-theme framework (v2); ranks 18–20 drew no 2026 coverage. Ties broken by total trends, then framework order.

Ranking metric

Breadth — distinct sources raising a theme (ties broken by total trends). Frequency shows as cell intensity.

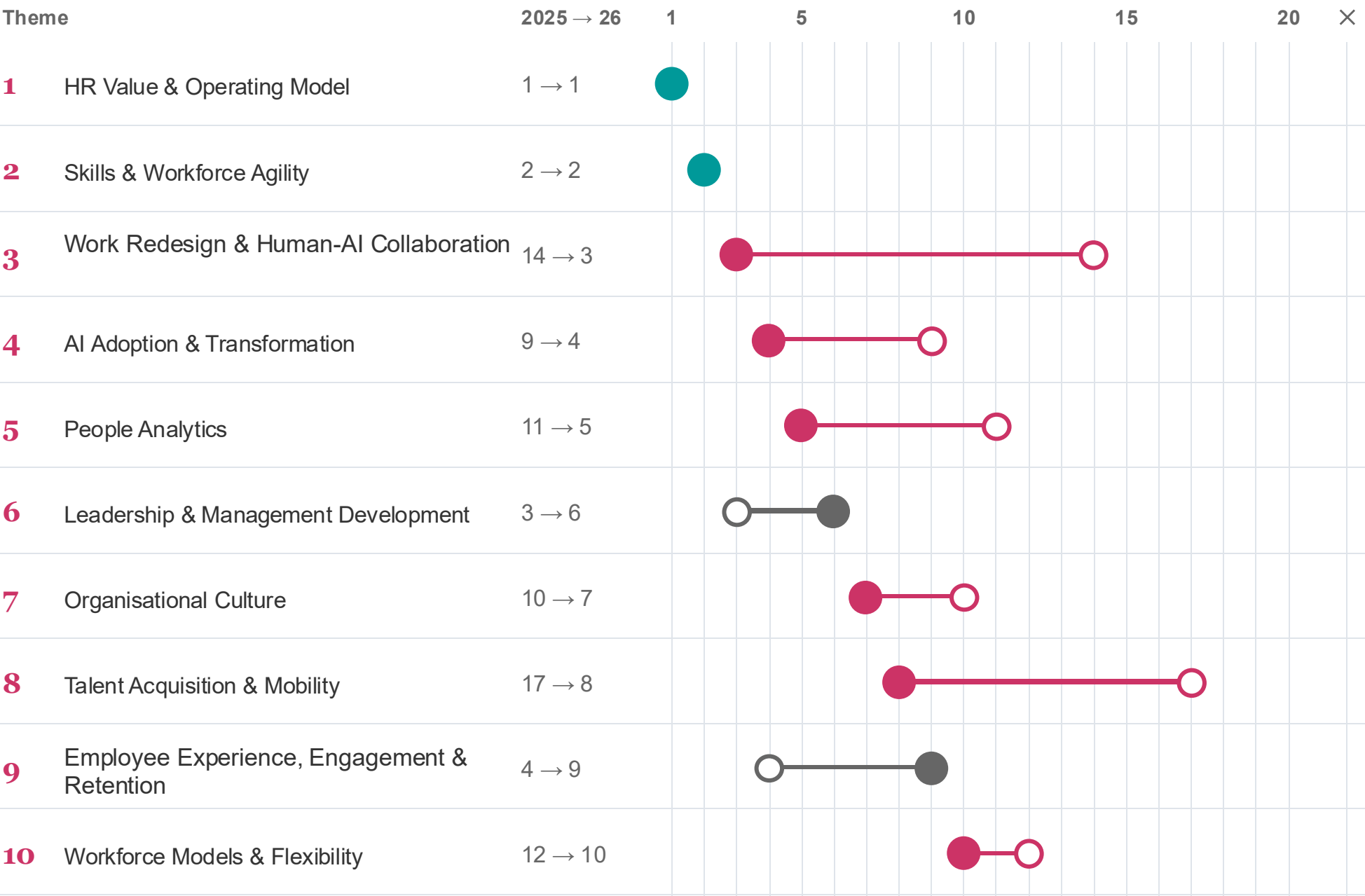
Scope

10 sources assessed; McKinsey HR Monitor 2026 added on publication (June 2026).



Trends 1 to 10

Breadth rank, 2025 → 2026 (1 = broadest).



● Rising / New ● Falling ● Held (±1) ○ 2025 rank

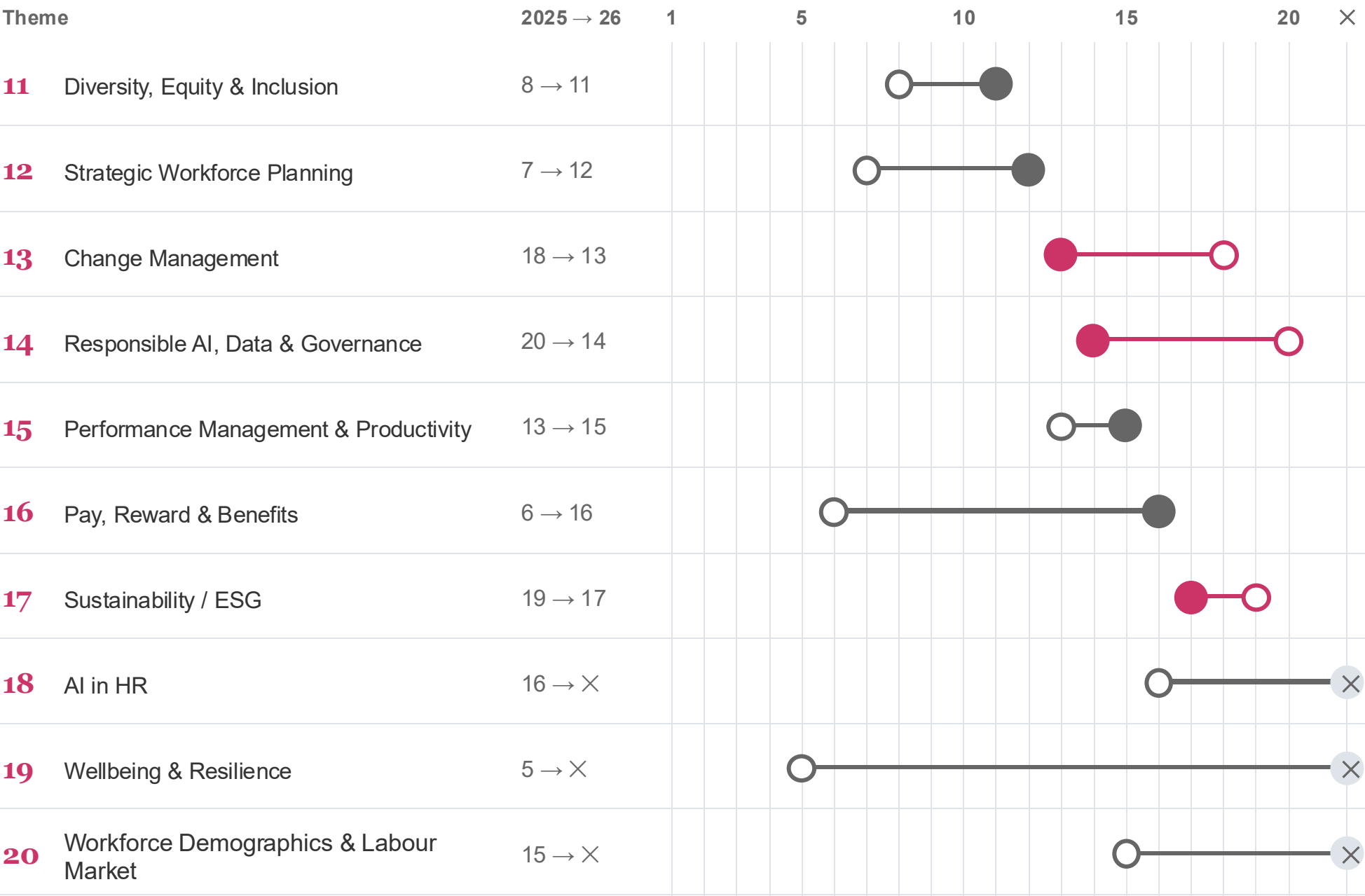
What the graph says

HR Value & Operating Model and Skills hold #1–#2 in both years. Four themes climbed in from outside the 2025 top 10 — Work Redesign (14→3), People Analytics (11→5), Talent Acquisition (17→8) and Workforce Models (12→10) — while EX & Engagement slid (4→9). Ranks are within-year; the 2026 roster adds BCG, so this tracks relative standing, not absolute volume.



Trends 11 to 20

Breadth rank, 2025 → 2026 (1 = broadest).



● Rising / New ● Falling ● Held (±1) ○ 2025 rank

What the graph says

The lower half is where the field thinned. Pay, Reward & Benefits fell hardest (6→16) and DEI slipped out of the top 10 (8→11), while Change Management (18→13) and Responsible AI, Data & Governance (20→14) edged up. × marks the three themes with no 2026 coverage at all: AI in HR (from #16), Wellbeing & Resilience (from #5) and Workforce Demographics, Labour Market & Society (from #15). Ranks are within-year; the 2026 roster adds BCG.



Sources

Publisher	Report	Year
Academy to Innovate HR (AIHR)	<i>HR Priorities 2026 Report: Market signals, strategy shifts, & steps to lead the AI-powered workforce.</i> Written by Dr. Marna van der Merwe with contributions from Erik van Vulpen and Dr. Dieter Veldsman.	2026
Boston Consulting Group (BCG)	<i>Creating People Advantage 2026: Four Power Moves for the CHRO.</i> Written by Philipp Kolo, Jens Baier, Frank Breitling, Fang Ruan, Suketu Shah, Peck Kem Low, Anthony Ariganello, Aida Troncoso, Lucas van Wees, Amy Dufrane, Ulrik S. Brix, and Kai Helfritz.	2026
Deloitte	<i>2026 Global Human Capital Trends: From tensions to tipping points: Choosing the human advantage.</i> Written by Shannon Poynton, Jason Flynn, Nic Scoble-Williams, Victor Reyes, David Mallon, and Sue Cantrell.	2026
Gartner	<i>2026 Gartner Strategic HR Priorities for CHROs: Trends Impacting Chief HR Officers in 2026.</i>	2026
Green, D.	<i>12 Opportunities for HR in 2026: Building Organisations That Thrive in the Agentic Age.</i>	2026
Institute for Corporate Productivity (i4cp)	<i>2026 Priorities & Predictions: C-Suite Perspectives from i4cp’s Boards.</i> Foreword by Kevin Oakes.	2025
McKinsey & Company	<i>HR Monitor 2026: A comprehensive benchmark survey of workforce and HR trends across Europe, the United States, and China.</i>	2026, June
McLean & Company	<i>Trends HR 2026: Leading Through Change: Human-Centric and Future-Ready.</i> Based on the HR Trends Survey 2026.	2026
Mercer	<i>Global Talent Trends 2026: Driving exponential performance: Solving the human-machine equation.</i>	2026
Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM)	<i>SHRM 2026: Trends and Predictions.</i> Published by HR Quarterly.	2026



Methodology Summary

Publisher	Report	Primary method	Sample size	Geographies	Respondent profile
AIHR	AIHR HR Priorities 2026	Secondary synthesis + internal survey	1,500+ HR professionals (internal AI survey); secondary data from multiple external sources	Global (primarily US/European external sources)	HR professionals; secondary data from broader exec surveys
BCG/WFPMA	BCG/WFPMA Creating People Advantage 2026	Proprietary quantitative web survey + regression analysis	n = 7,115	115 countries/administrative regions	HR and business leaders (all seniority levels); 25 industries
Deloitte	Deloitte 2026 Global Human Capital Trends	Quantitative survey (with Oxford Economics) + qualitative interviews	3,000 leaders (core survey); 6,000 workers/managers/executives (supplemental); 50+ executive interviews	15 countries	Business and HR leaders + employees/managers/executives
Gartner	Gartner 2026 Strategic HR Priorities	Annual quantitative CHRO survey	n = 426 CHROs	4 global regions; 23 industries	CHROs exclusively
David Green	David Green 12 Opportunities for HR in 2026	Expert synthesis + community crowdsourcing	N/A (qualitative)	Global	People analytics leaders; CHROs; Digital HR Leaders Podcast network; Insight222 research community
i4cp	i4cp 2026 Priorities & Predictions	Invitation-only executive board input	Not disclosed (C-suite HR leaders)	Global	CHROs, CLTOs, Total Rewards, Talent Acquisition, People Analytics, Future of Work board members
McKinsey	McKinsey HR at a Turning Point / HR Monitor 2026	Annual quantitative benchmark survey	~1,300 HR professionals; ~5,500 employees	10 countries (8 European + US + China)	HR professionals + employees
McLean & Company	McLean & Company HR Trends 2026	Quantitative survey	n = 1,626	Global, multiple industries	HR and leadership respondents
Mercer	Mercer Global Talent Trends 2026	Quantitative multi-stakeholder survey	~12,000 (9,250 employees; 1,650 HR leaders; 825 C-suite; 100 investors)	16 geographies; 16 industries	C-suite executives, HR leaders, employees, investors
SHRM	SHRM 2026 Trends and Predictions	Multiple quantitative surveys (CEO, CHRO, HR professional, worker panels)	116 CEOs; 129 CHROs; 1,856 HR professionals; 2,079 U.S. workers; 2,094 HR professionals (Talent Trends)	Primarily U.S. (global for CHRO survey)	CEOs, CHROs, HR professionals, U.S. workers



The trends tell you what everyone is talking about.
Your evidence tells you what is true.

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