



CHRO
ASSOCIATION

HR Policy
Global

Uncertainty & the rise of the regional HR leader

ALAN WILD

CHRO Association
Singapore Meeting
June 2026

Today's global challenges

- ✓ MAGA, tariffs & America(ns) first
- ✓ Pandemics, natural disasters and wars
- ✓ Supply chain risk – the employment model to the workforce model
- ✓ Immigration
- ✓ Artificial Intelligence
- ✓ Population ageing
- ✓ Union strategies & workforce voice
- ✓ Speed of change
- ✓ Long term shifts in competitiveness

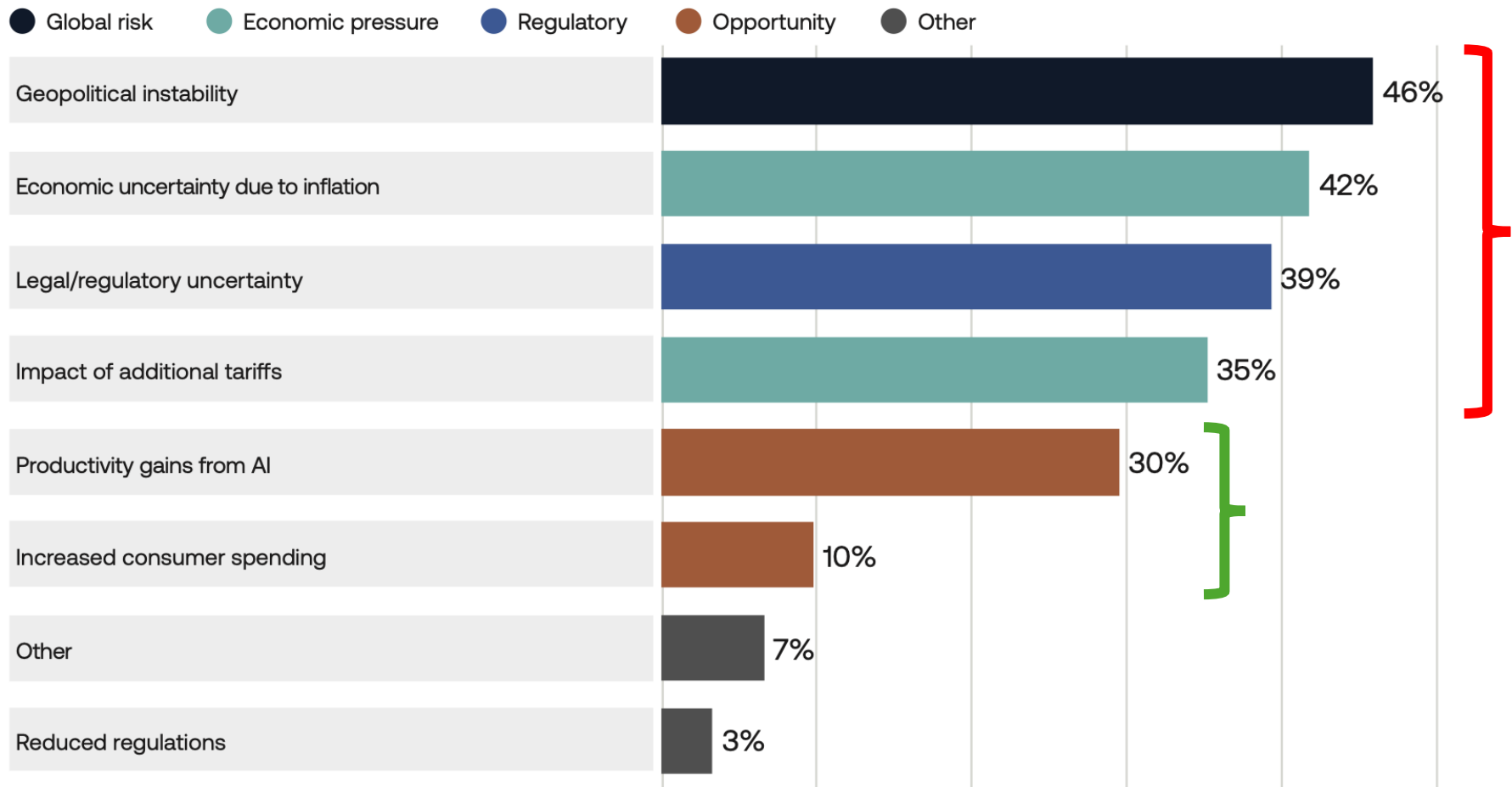
UNCERTAINTY

From
PLANNING
to
ADAPTABILITY

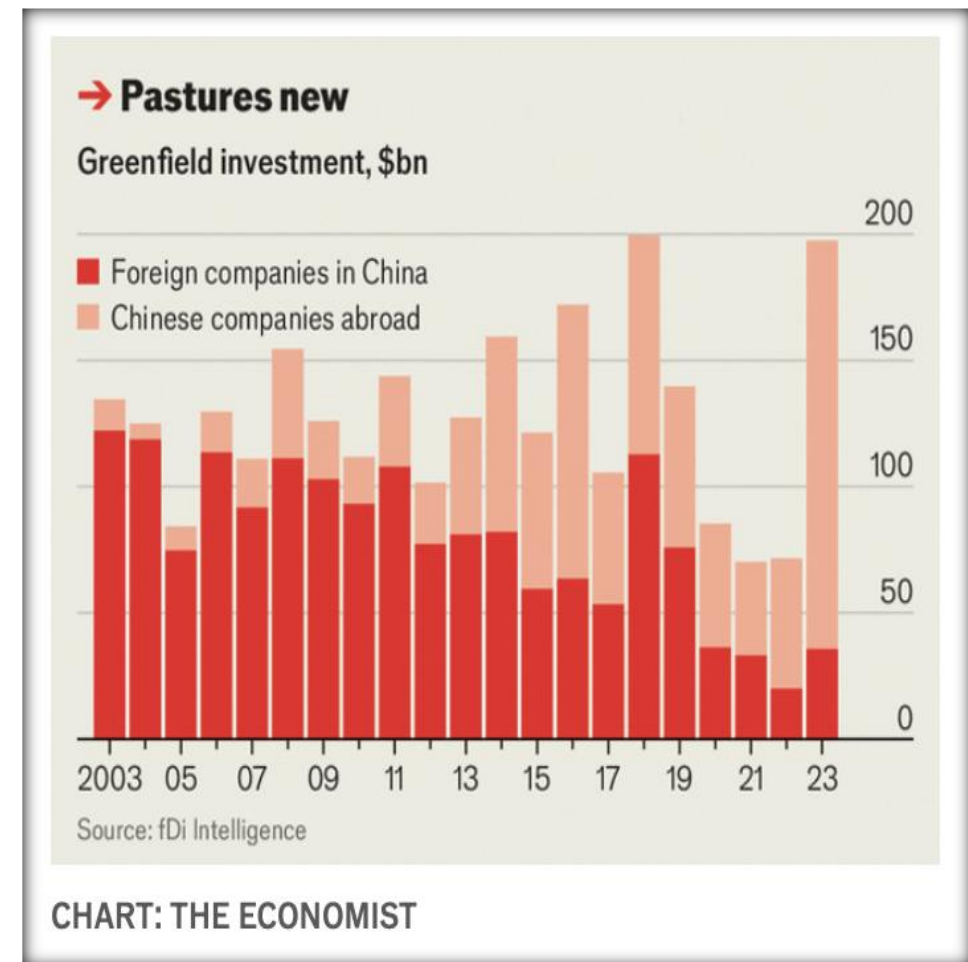
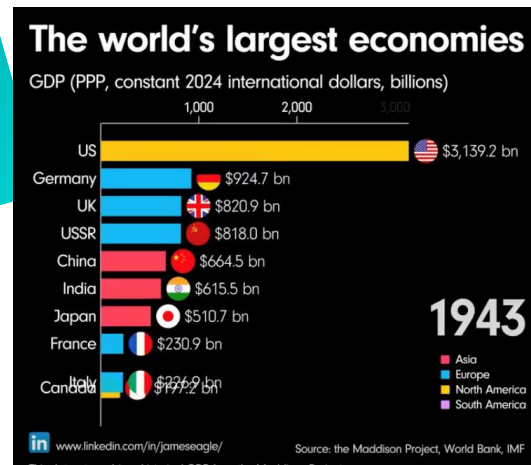
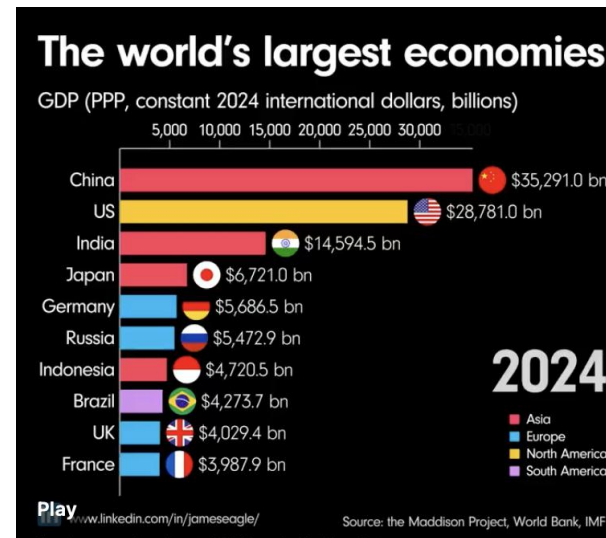
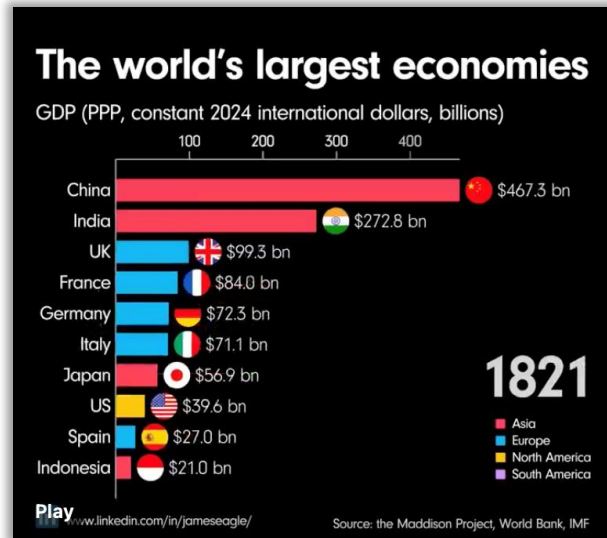
CHRO Association survey



HR Policy
Global



Long term shifts in competitiveness



APACs economic prospects

- ✓ Asia will lead global economic growth from 2025 to 2035
- ✓ The World Bank 15 highest growth economies contains EIGHT APAC countries

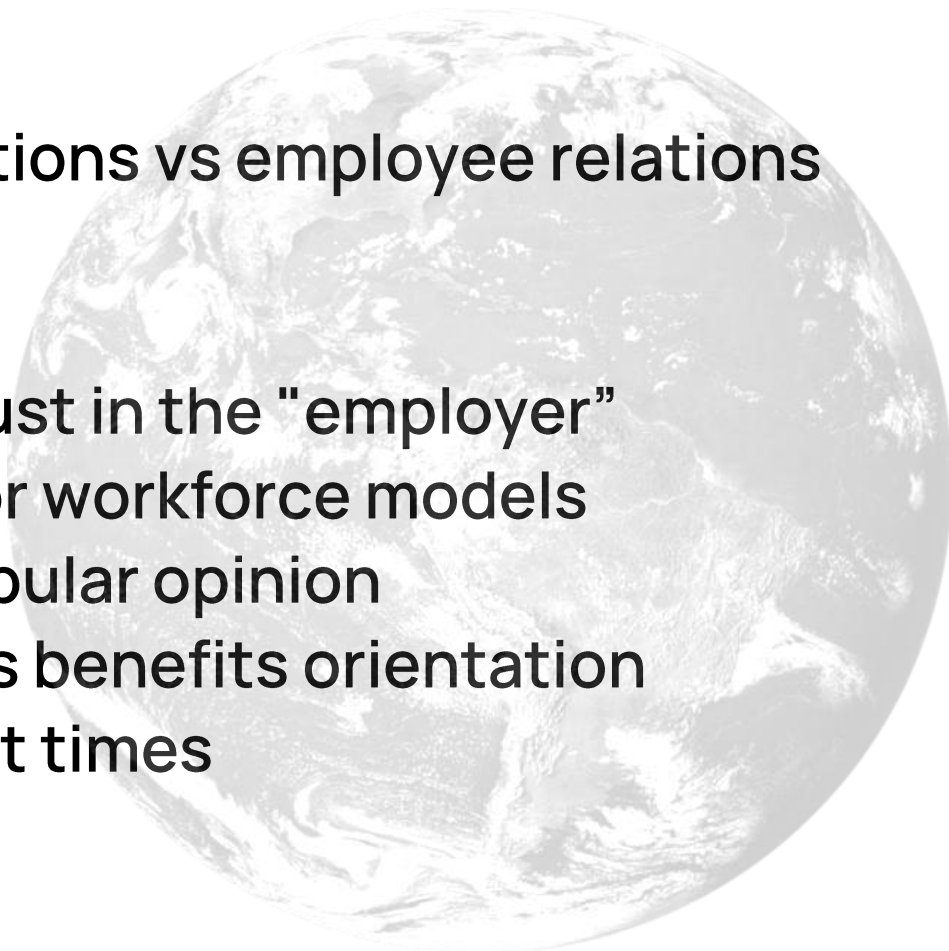


China
Malaysia
Indonesia
Bangladesh
Philippines
Vietnam
India
Australia

Diverging economic models require different HR approaches



Regional differences matter

- 
- ✓ Unions & employee voice ... labor relations vs employee relations
 - ✓ AI ... trust, speed & adaptability
 - ✓ Culture ... the Meyer model
 - ✓ Maturity ... trust in the “system” vs trust in the “employer”
 - ✓ Supply chain ... employment models or workforce models
 - ✓ Immigration ... economic needs vs popular opinion
 - ✓ Pay & benefits ... Cash is king model vs benefits orientation
 - ✓ Ageing ... different regions at different times

Labor relations vs employee relations

Labor Relations



**Maximize management
decision making autonomy**

Employee Relations



**Deliver high levels of
employee commitment**

Employee Experience

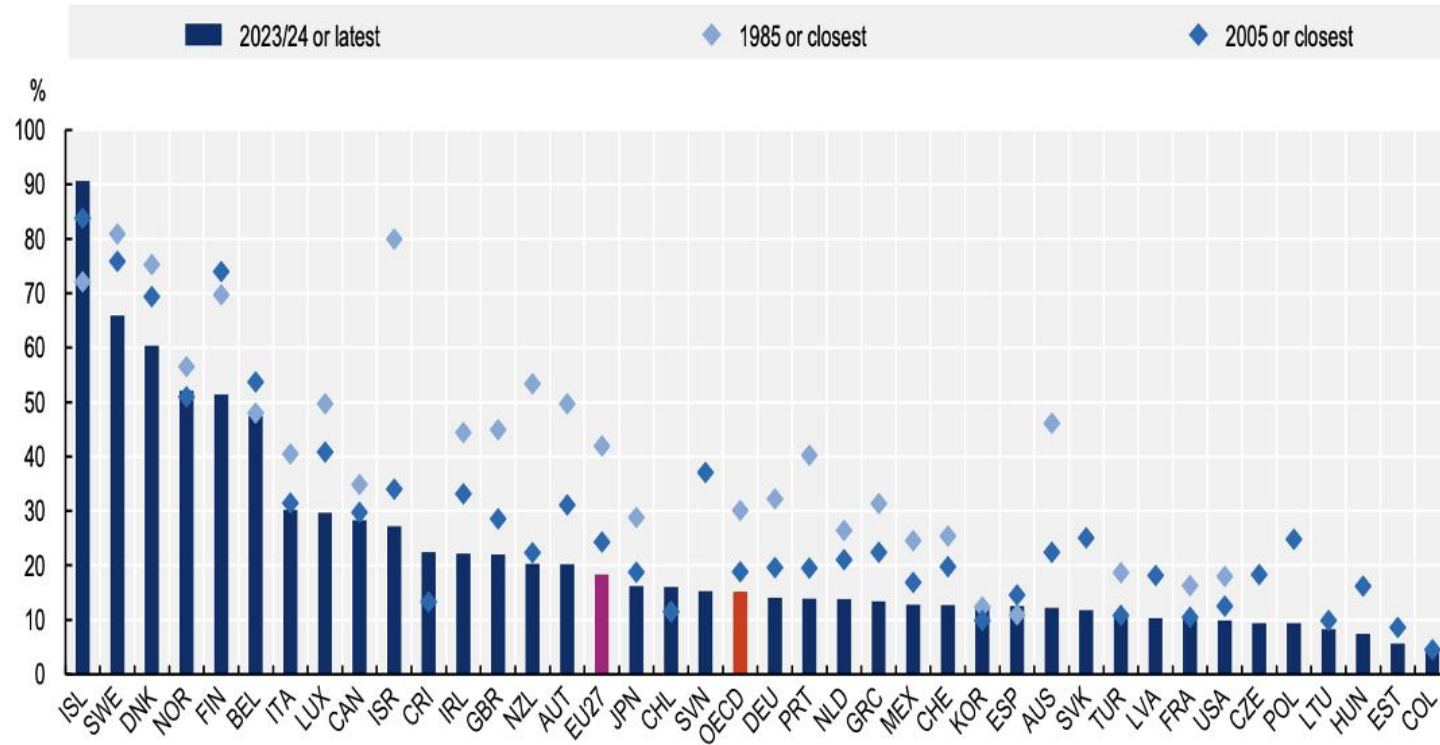


Fix issues - “Fair and Fast”



Union membership crisis

Percentage of employees, 1985, 2005 and 2023/24 or latest year available



Unions shift from
"bottom up"
organizing to
"top down"
organizing

TOP DOWN – external led

- Corporate campaign
- Employee “advice” centers
- Community meetings
- Issue trawling
- Targeting in external strikes and protests

BOTTOM UP – internal led

- Escalation of individual grievances
- Complaints against management
- One off and rapid protests
- Engagement data
- Performance & productivity deterioration
- Local engagement in external strikes and protests

STRATEGY

Inoculation

Employee
Experience
activity on
steroids

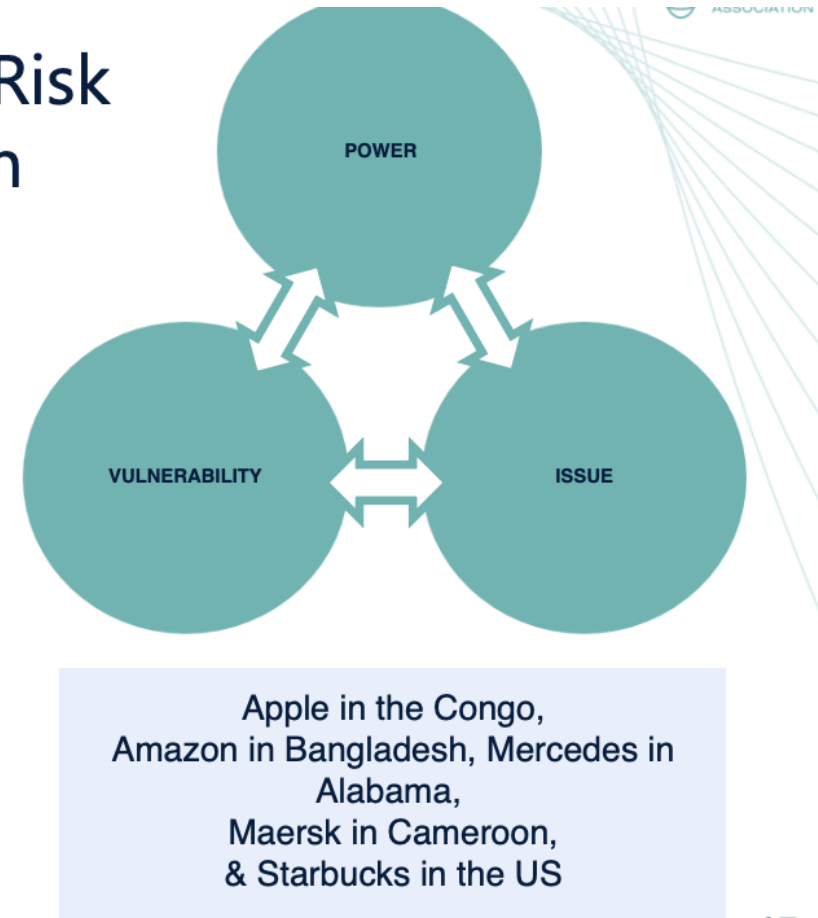
Root Cause
Establish and
deal with issues

Supply chain risk



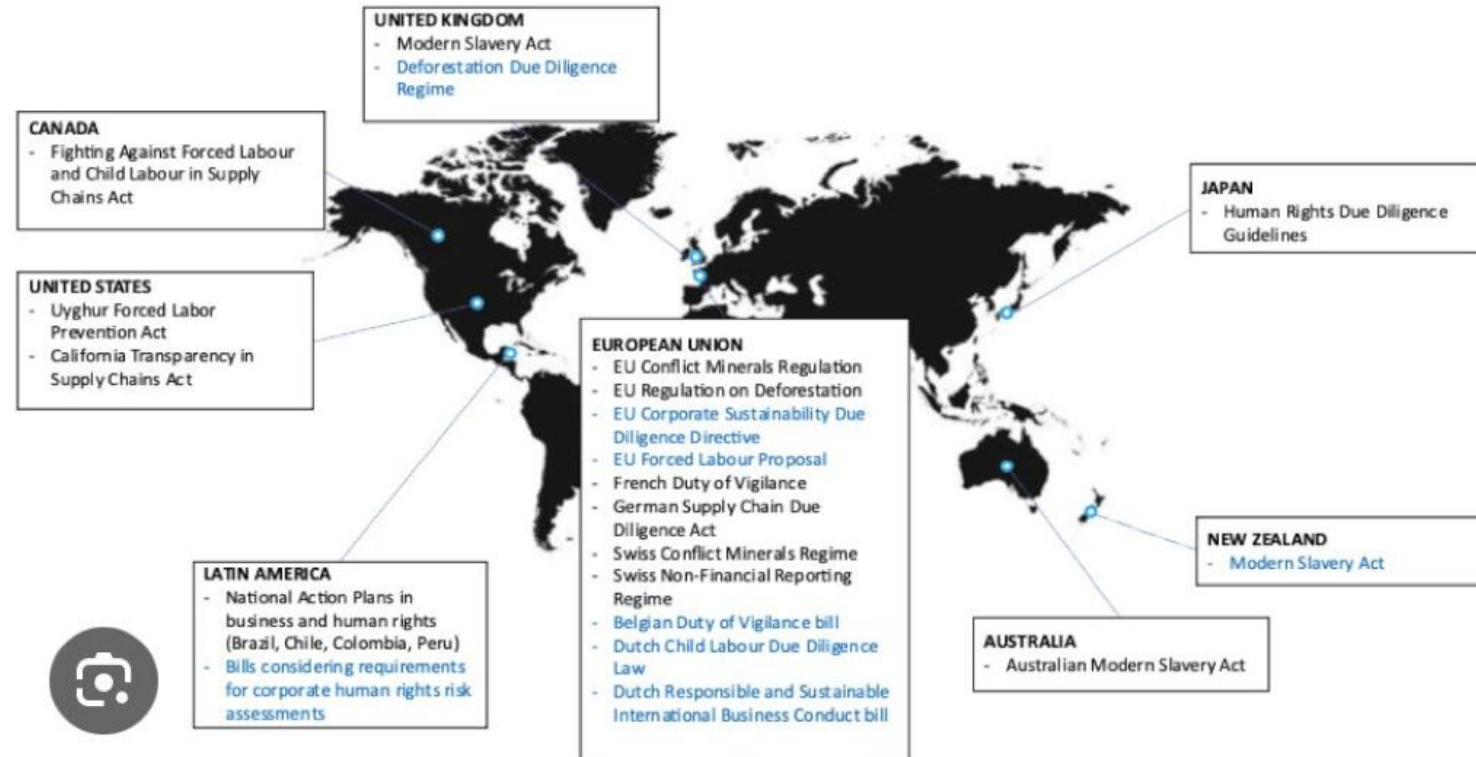
Organizing (and Reputation) Risk in the US May be Elsewhere in Your Geography

- Trade union resurgence – or new tactics in the face of falling membership
- Top-down activism assisted by new hard and soft laws
- Jurisdiction shopping
- Triangulation ... objective, leverage point, power base



Supply chain risk ... shift to the workforce model

... from "Soft Law" to "Hard Law"



Population ageing



Europe
North America
LATAM
APAC
MEA

APAC split

- ✓ Japan and Korea high risk
- ✓ South and East Asia much lower.
- ✓ BUT current birth rates in SEA will hit hard in coming years

What does this mean for HR & ER?

- ✓ Speed, adaptability and flexibility > > at individual and collective levels
- ✓ Regional variability matters even more > > stronger regional leaders with decision making authority

