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Singapore Employers Embrace Flexible Workforce Strategies as Job Market Cools: Latest ManpowerGroup Employment Outlook Survey

- Almost a third of employers (32%) now use temporary workers for specialized short-term tasks, closing the gap with permanent employees (29%).
- Singapore's Net Employment Outlook (NEO) for Q4 2025 stands at +20%, weakening by 17% from Q3 2025 and 31% year-over-year.
- Across the sectors, the Transport, Logistics and Automotive industry report the strongest Outlook of +48%—increasing 60% from the previous quarter and 9% year-over-year.
- Nearly half of employers in Singapore (45%) plan to maintain current staffing levels in Q4, with 38% indicating that their existing teams are sufficient to meet business goals.

SINGAPORE (9 SEPTEMBER 2025) – Employers in Singapore take a cautious approach to hiring and embrace flexible workforce strategies amid continued global trade uncertainty, according to the latest ManpowerGroup Employment Outlook Survey.

Employers report an active but cooling job market in the fourth quarter of 2025, with the Net Employment Outlook (NEO) coming in at +20%—weakening by 17% from Q3 2025 and 31% year-over-year. Additionally, of the 524 employers in Singapore surveyed about their Q4 hiring plans, almost half (45%) plan to maintain current staffing levels, while 37% plan to hire and 17% anticipate a decrease in their staffing levels.

Used internationally as a bellwether of economic and labor market trends, the NEO is calculated by subtracting the percentage of employers who anticipate reductions in staffing levels from those who plan to hire.

Globally, Singapore ranks second for its employment expectations in the Transport, Logistics & Automotive sector, beating the sector average by 24 points.

Employers in Singapore cited several key reasons for maintaining current staffing levels. More than a third of employers (38%) said their existing teams are sufficient to meet business goals, 29% reported no major projects or expansions planned, another 29% are focused on retaining current staff, and 29% are adopting a wait-and-see approach amid economic uncertainty.

“Employers in Singapore are taking a measured approach to hiring amid ongoing global trade uncertainties. Many are choosing to maintain current staffing levels, confident that their existing teams can meet business goals while they monitor economic developments.

Although overall hiring sentiment has softened, the Transport, Logistics and Automotive sector shows strong momentum—largely driven by Singapore’s strategic role as a global logistics hub. Notably, the sector ranks second globally for employment expectations, outperforming the global average by 24 points. However, it remains to be seen whether this momentum will be sustained as global trade dynamics continue to evolve,” comments Ms. Linda Teo, Country Manager of ManpowerGroup Singapore.

Besides employment Outlooks, the Singapore report also explores how employers are navigating talent challenges.

- **Flexible workforce strategies gain traction:** Almost a third of employers (32%) utilize temporary workers for specialized short-term tasks, narrowing the gap with permanent employees (29%). Employers are also more likely to use temporary workers for seasonal or surge support (34%), compared to 30% for permanent staff.
- **Core roles remain anchored in permanent staffing:** Employers continue to rely on permanent employees for operational support (59%), administrative tasks (51%), and customer service (51%).
- **Employers are struggling to attract qualified candidates,** with 50% identifying it as their top talent acquisition challenge. This is followed by difficulties in filling complex technical roles (34%) and improving the candidate experience (30%).
- **Employers in Singapore feel confident in their hiring processes,** with 58% indicating that they are effective in selecting the right people for the right roles. Only 5% rated their hiring process as poor.
- **Work-life balance leads retention strategies:** 56% of employers in Singapore identify work-life balance and workload as the most effective retention strategy. This is especially prominent in the Financials & Real Estate sector, where 67% of employers prioritize it to retain talent.

Ms. Teo adds, “We’re seeing a shift in how Singapore’s employers are approaching workforce planning. The growing use of temporary talent alongside continued reliance on permanent staff reflects a strategic rebalancing—one that blends stability with flexibility to help organizations stay competitive in today’s volatile environment. This signals a deeper rethink of how work gets done, as organizations build more resilient, future-ready teams.”

Employment Outlooks Across the Asia Pacific and the Middle East

- Leading globally with an Outlook of +28%, unchanged quarter-over-quarter and strengthening 22% year-over-year.
- UAE (+45%) leads regional confidence, ranking first globally, while India (+40%) and China (+34%) continue to show strong hiring intentions.
- Hong Kong (+6%) remains the most cautious in the region.

To view complete results for the Q4 2025 ManpowerGroup Employment Outlook Survey, visit: www.manpowergroup.com.sg/meos. The next survey will be released in December 2025 and will report hiring expectations for the first quarter of 2026.

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ABOUT THE SURVEY

The ManpowerGroup Employment Outlook Survey is the most comprehensive, forward-looking employment survey of its kind, used globally as a key labor market indicator. The Net Employment Outlook (NEO) is derived by taking the percentage of employers anticipating an increase in hiring activity and subtracting from this the percentage of employers expecting a decrease in hiring activity.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

Survey responses were collected from July 1-31, 2025. Size of organization and sector are standardized across all countries and territories to allow international comparisons.

FORWARD LOOKING STATEMENTS

This report contains forward-looking statements, including statements regarding labor demand in certain regions, countries and industries, and economic uncertainty. Actual events or results may differ materially from those contained in the forward-looking statements, due to risks, uncertainties and assumptions. These factors include those found in the Company's reports filed with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), including the information under the heading "Risk Factors" in its Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2024, whose information is incorporated herein by reference. ManpowerGroup disclaims any obligation to update any forward-looking or other statements in this release, except as required by law.

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ABOUT MANPOWERGROUP

[ManpowerGroup](http://www.manpowergroup.com)® (NYSE: MAN), the leading global workforce solutions company, helps organizations transform in a fast-changing world of work by sourcing, assessing, developing, and managing the talent that enables them to win. We develop innovative solutions for hundreds of thousands of organizations every year, providing them with skilled talent while finding meaningful, sustainable employment for millions of people across a wide range of industries and skills. Our expert family of brands – [Manpower](http://www.manpowergroup.com), [Experis](http://www.experis.com), and [Talent Solutions](http://www.talentsolutions.com) – creates substantially more value for candidates and clients across more than 70 countries and territories and has done so for more than 75 years. We are recognized consistently for our diversity – as a best place to work for Women, Inclusion, Equality, and Disability, and in 2025 ManpowerGroup was named one of the World's Most Ethical Companies for the 16th time – all confirming our position as the brand of choice for in-demand talent.