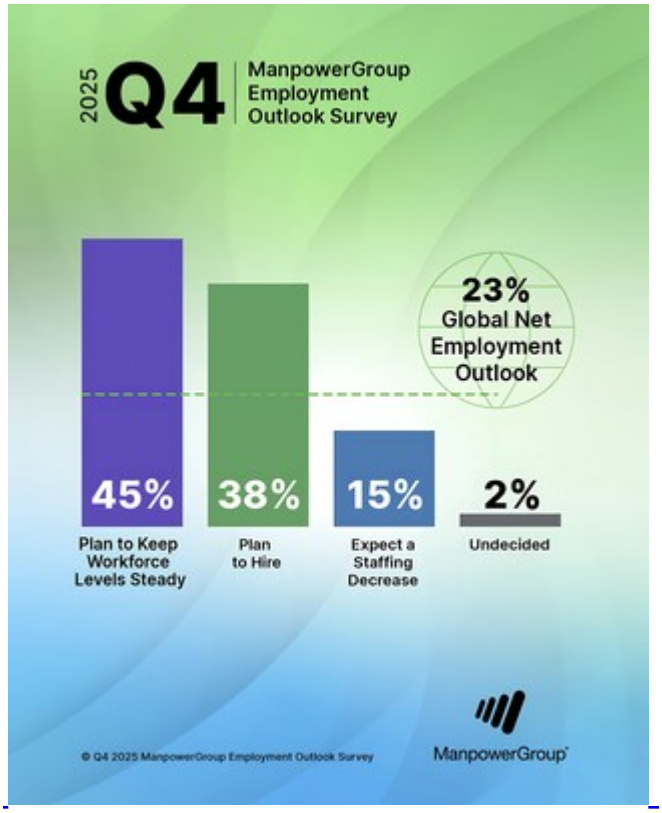
Global Hiring Plans Cautious in Q4 with 45% of Employers Expecting to Maintain Headcount

September 9, 2025 at 9:01 AM EDT

MILWAUKEE, Sept. 9, 2025 /PRNewswire/ -- Global employers are continuing a careful approach to hiring in Q4, with 45% planning to maintain current workforce levels—the highest since early 2022—as organizations balance capturing growth opportunities with mitigating economic uncertainty.



This measured shift sees 38% of employers planning to add staff while 15% expect reductions, resulting in a Net Employment Outlook (NEO) of 23%, down one point from Q3 and two points year-over-year, according to ManpowerGroup's latest Employment Outlook Survey of more than 40,000 employers across 42 countries.

Among those adding staff to close out 2025, business expansion drives the largest share of hiring at 39%, though employers are increasingly focused on specific capabilities rather than broad workforce growth. Nearly one in four (24%) planned hires are focused specifically on technological advancement, a priority that varies by region, reaching 36% in India and 33% in China compared to 27% in both the United States and the UK.

"We continue to see underlying stability with cautious outlooks into Q4 in many labor markets as employers hold onto their skilled workers and take a targeted approach to hiring the specialized skills that will give them the competitive edge in the months ahead," said Jonas Prising, ManpowerGroup Chair & CEO. "This isn't simply about hiring less, it's about hiring more selectively, maintaining organizational resilience, and shaping workforces that can adapt to a changing environment."

Employers continue to face talent challenges, with nearly half (46%) citing attracting qualified candidates as their biggest hurdle. However, the global talent shortage has shown gradual improvement, easing from a record-high of 77% in 2023 to 74% in 2025, suggesting a slight increase in talent availability. Retention strategies are gaining prominence, with 39% pointing to improved work-life balance as the most effective approach.

Among companies reducing staff, one-third (33%) attribute the decision to economic uncertainty. Yet, since ManpowerGroup began tracking this metric in Q2 2025 to better understand workforce reduction drivers, the data shows a positive trend as economic concerns have eased somewhat moving from 35% to 33%.

Sector and Regional Trends

Sector Highlights:

- **The Information Technology (36%) sector reports the most optimistic hiring plans**, followed by Financials and Real Estate (29%), and Transport, Logistics and Automotive (24%).
- **Employers in Communication Services (19%), Consumer Goods & Services (20%), Energy & Utilities (20%), and Healthcare and Life Sciences (20%)** report the most cautious hiring plans.

- **Mid-sized Organizations (+29%)** report the most confident hiring intentions.

Regional Hiring Plans:

- **Asia Pacific (APAC)**: Leading globally with an Outlook of 30%, unchanged quarter-over-quarter and strengthening four points year-over-year. This result extends APAC's position as the strongest region for hiring — a trend largely sustained since early 2021.
    - India (40%) leads regional confidence, ranking second globally, while China (34%) continues to show strong hiring intentions. Hong Kong (6%) remains the most cautious in the region.

- **The Americas**: Posting the second-strongest Outlook at 25%, with hiring intentions weaker by three points both quarter-over-quarter and year-over-year. Historically, the Americas sit between APAC and Europe and the Middle East in hiring strength, though they briefly led all regions in 2021–2022 as the post-pandemic recovery accelerated.
    - Brazil (36%), Costa Rica (35%), and the U.S. (28%) report the strongest regional hiring intentions while Argentina reports the weakest global Outlook at 5%.

- **Europe and the Middle East**: Employers report the lowest global hiring expectations at 18%, flat quarter-over-quarter but down four points year-over-year. Europe and the Middle East has consistently trailed APAC and the Americas for most of the past four years, reflecting ongoing macroeconomic uncertainty.
    - The United Arab Emirates leads the region at 45%, followed by Ireland (29%) and the Netherlands (28%). Meanwhile, the UK (11%) and France (13%) continue to face challenges with Hungary (8%) and Romania (9%) posting the weakest Outlooks.

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

ABOUT THE SURVEY
The ManpowerGroup Employment Outlook Survey, now in its 62nd year, 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.

ABOUT MANPOWERGROUP
ManpowerGroup® (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, Experis, and Talent Solutions – 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.

For more information, visit www.manpowergroup.com, or follow us on LinkedIn, Facebook, and Bluesky.

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.

View original content to download multimedia:https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/global-hiring-plans-cautious-in-q4-with-45-of-employers-expecting-to-maintain-headcount-302550446.html

SOURCE ManpowerGroup

John Julitz, +1 (414) 502-9314, john.julitz@manpowergroup.com