Labour Force in Singapore 2025: Job Mobility and Job Change Outcomes of Residents

OVERVIEW

Monitoring job mobility patterns and outcomes provide insights into workforce adaptability and resilience as Singapore navigates demographic shifts, technological changes, and evolving skills demand. Job mobility continued to ease – consistent with a labour market normalising from post-pandemic churn. This may also reflect greater worker caution amid external economic uncertainties in 2025. However, the quality of job moves remained healthy. Among younger and mid-career job switchers, a high share saw real wage increases after a job change, signalling that opportunities for upward transitions remained accessible. As job switchers tend to be more motivated by potential advancement opportunities in their new roles than job stayers, strengthening career guidance and clearer progression pathways will aid in maximising human capital potential.

FINDINGS

Fewer workers changed jobs, in line with easing labour market tightness and reduced labour turnover

Job switching eased further in 2025, with the proportion of employed residents who changed jobs in the past year declining from 7.6% in 2024 to 6.2% in 2025. This is part of the gradual downtrend over the recent three years, as job switching peaked in 2022 amid a tighter labour market following the post-COVID reopening of businesses. The decline in job switching may also reflect greater caution among workers amid external economic uncertainties in 2025.[1]

Job switching rates that are persistently too high or low may signal challenges in staff retention or low worker confidence in securing better jobs. While direct comparable data on job switching rate are not common due to differences in coverage of workers and the period considered, Singapore's job switching rate is on par with the job-to-job transition rate across OECD countries (average: 7%).[2]

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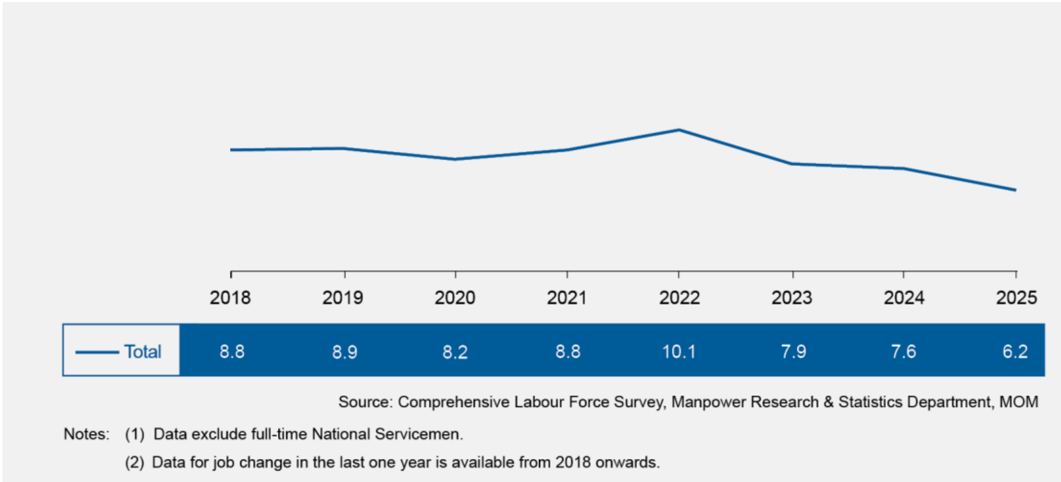
[1] The proportion of employed residents actively looking out for new jobs has declined from 7.3% in 2024 to 6.2% in 2025.

[2] Source: Garda, Paula (2016), "The Ins and Outs of Employment in 25 OECD Countries", OECD Economics Department Working Papers No. 1350, OECD Publishing.

Chart 1 Proportion of employed residents who had changed jobs in the last one year

Per Cent

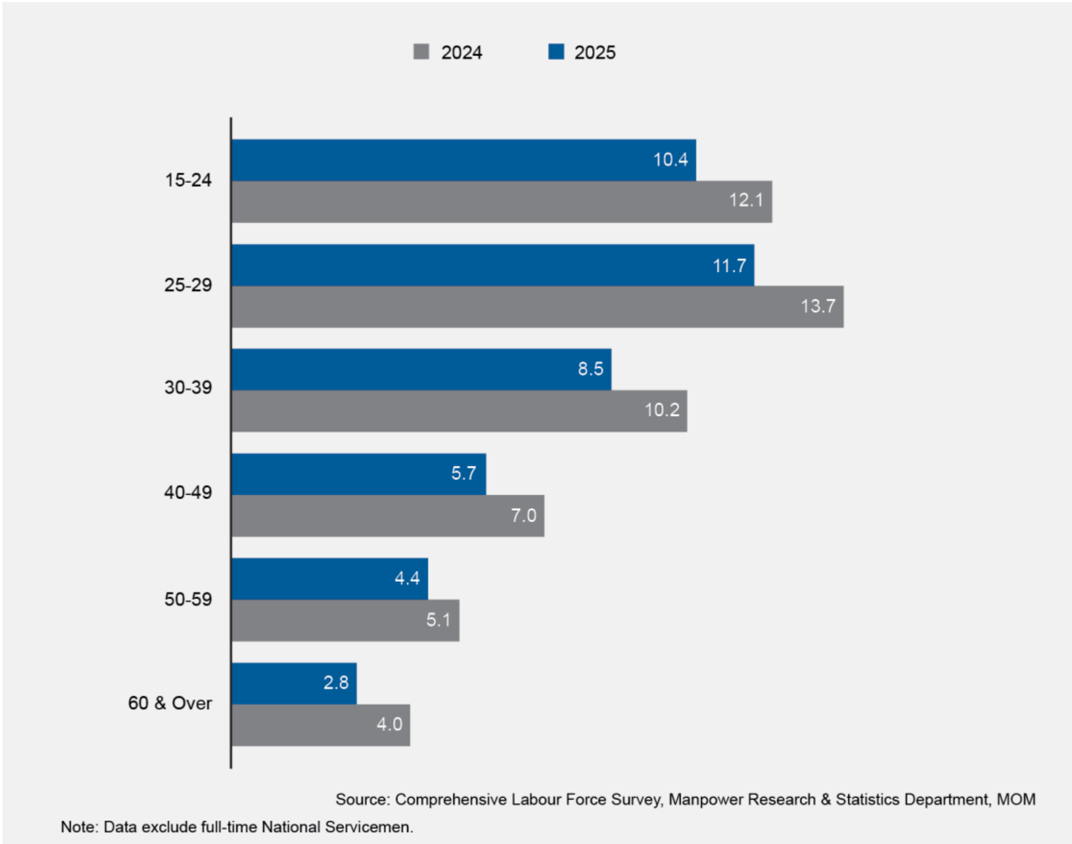


The decline in job switching was observed across all age groups, suggesting that more workers are staying in their current positions. The decrease was most pronounced for younger residents aged 25 to 29 (from 13.7% in 2024 to 11.7% in 2025), who tend to switch jobs more frequently than the older age groups as they explore career options. This suggests that while they are more opportunistic and mobile, they tend to be more sensitive to cyclical hiring. The more cautious stance from employers could have contributed to the lower mobility among younger workers in 2025.

For older workers who tend to have stayed in the same job for a longer period, it is crucial to empower them to stay relevant in a changing job market so that they can move into roles where they continue to contribute productively while pursuing work that aligns with their preferences.

Chart 2 Proportion of employed residents who had changed jobs in the last one year by age

Per Cent



Job switching has eased across most sectors, particularly in *Accommodation*, *Administrative & Support Services*, and *Retail Trade*. This is likely due to better staff retention and reduced reliance on manpower.[3] There were also decreases in job switches in the outward-oriented sectors of *Information & Communications*, *Financial & Insurance Services*, and *Professional Services*, which typically see high mobility. While these sectors typically offer attractive compensation packages to attract and retain workers, job switching may have eased in 2025 due to a few high-profile workforce restructurings and more cautious hiring sentiments amid economic uncertainty.

[3] From 2Q 2024 to 2Q 2025, the average monthly recruitment rate declined (from 3.1% to 2.6%) while the average monthly resignation rate held steady (2.1%) in *Accommodation*. The rates declined in *Administrative & Support Services* (3.3% to 2.8% for recruitment rate, 2.3% to 1.9% for resignation rate) and *Retail Trade* (2.7% to 2.2% for recruitment rate, 2.2% to 1.9% for resignation rate). Source: Labour Market Survey, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM.

Chart 3 Proportion of employed residents who had changed jobs in the last one year by current industry

Per Cent

Source: Comprehensive Labour Force Survey, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM

Note: Data exclude full-time National Servicemen.

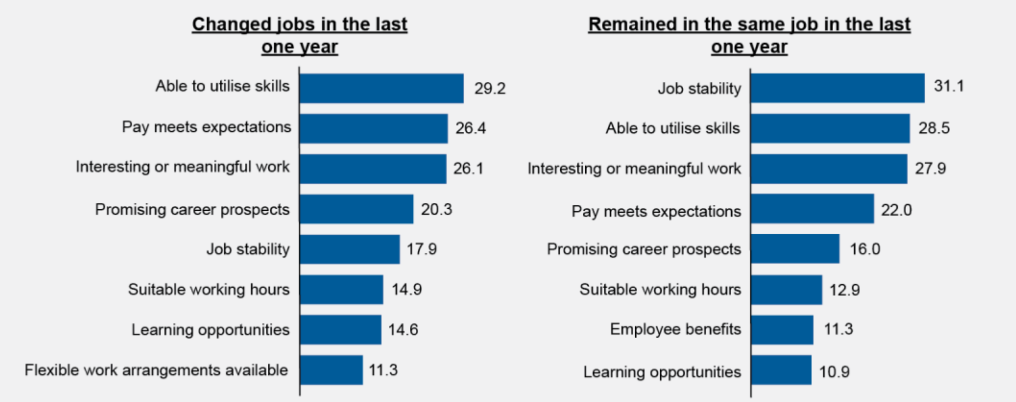
Job switchers were more motivated by professional development opportunities when taking on jobs, while more job stayers valued job stability

Being able to utilise their skills in the role and interesting/meaningful work were among the top reasons for being keen on their current jobs among both job switchers and job stayers. These factors, which were more commonly cited than other factors including employee benefits and suitability of working hours, suggest that the match between an individual's skills and motivations and the job role is more crucial to the typical job seeker.

For job switchers, they were more likely than job stayers to be drawn to potential advancement opportunities in their new roles, with a higher share taking on their current jobs due to the pay (26.4%; 22.0% among job stayers), career prospects (20.3%; 16.0%), and learning opportunities (14.6%; 10.9%) offered compared to those who remained in the same job over the past year. Meanwhile, a higher share of job stayers was keen on their current jobs for the job stability (31.1%; 17.9% among job switchers). Overall, the findings point to diversity in aspirations and individuals making choices of meaningful careers aligned with their personal goals.

Chart 4 Common reasons for being keen on current job among resident employees, 2025

Per Cent



Source: Comprehensive Labour Force Survey, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM

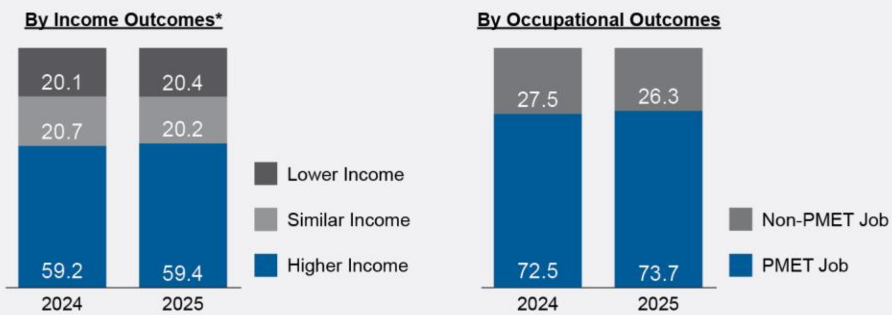
Notes: (1) Data exclude full-time National Servicemen.

(2) Respondents can indicate more than one reason for being keen on current job.

Majority of job switchers continued to see higher income from their job change

While job switching has eased, the quality of job moves remained positive. Close to six in ten full-time resident employees aged 25 to 64 years who changed jobs in the past year experienced real income increases,[4] suggesting continued opportunities for upward mobility as they were generally in higher-skilled positions in more productive sectors such as *Financial & Insurance Services*, *Professional Services*, and *Information & Communications* after their job change. Over the last decade, more residents have moved into these more productive sectors and their proportion in these sectors grew.[5]

Chart 5 Full-time resident employees aged 25 to 64 years who changed jobs in the last one year
Per Cent



Source: Comprehensive Labour Force Survey and Administrative Records, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM

Notes: (1) Data exclude full-time National Servicemen.
(2) * – Based on real income changes at the 5% threshold. Those with "higher income" experienced real income growth of at least 5%, and those with "lower income" experienced real income declines of at least 5%.
(3) Real income data are deflated by Consumer Price Index (CPI) for all items at 2024 prices (2024 = 100).
(4) Data are classified based on Singapore Standard Occupational Classification (SSOC) 2024. Data before year 2025 which were coded based on earlier versions of the SSOC were mapped to SSOC 2024 as far as possible to facilitate data comparability.
(5) Data may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

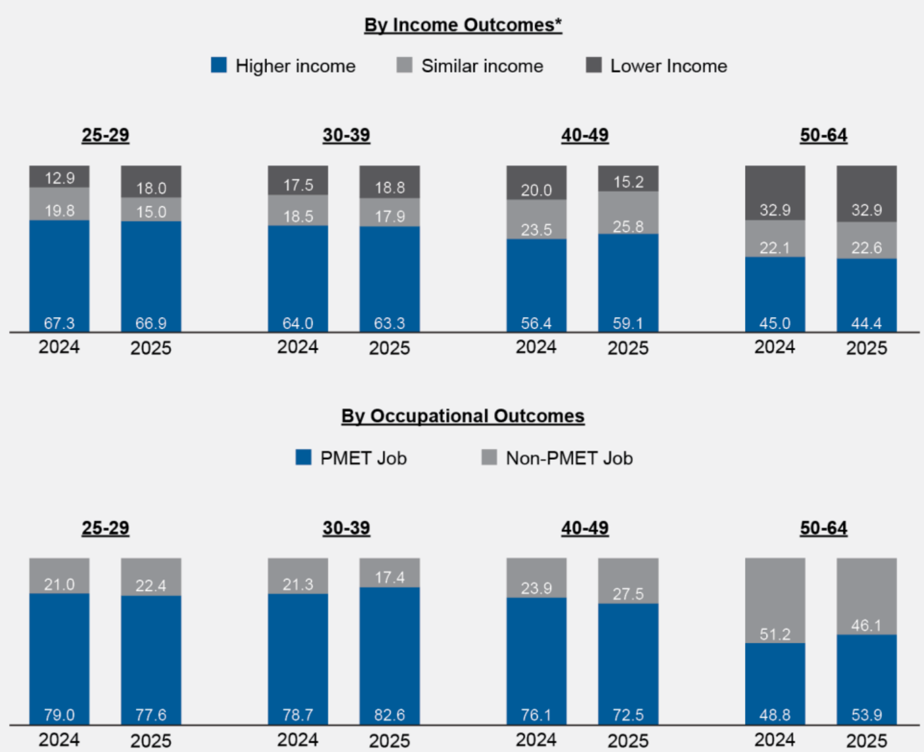
[4] In comparison, real wage gains are less common among job stayers. Among full-time resident employees who have stayed with their employer for at least a year, about one in four had a real total wage increase of at least 5% in 2024. Source: Survey on Annual Wage Changes, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM.

[5] From 2015 to 2025, the proportion of employed residents increased in *Financial & Insurance Services* (7.8% to 9.9%), *Professional Services* (from 7.8% to 8.1%), and *Information & Communications* (4.0% to 5.4%).

Among younger and mid-career job switchers, the quality of job switches remained favourable in 2025, with a high share in PMET jobs or experiencing a wage increase after a job change. These were broadly similar to the corresponding shares in 2024. For older job switchers aged 50 to 64, they were less likely to see positive job change outcomes than younger age groups. This could reflect a step-down in job role as they balance personal priorities and work at later career stages. Older job switchers were more likely to be keen on their current job for the suitable working hours (15.7%) compared to the young, on top of common reasons such as meaning and interest in the work, skills utilisation, and suitable pay.[6]

Chart 6 Full-time resident employees aged 25 to 64 years who changed jobs in the last one year by age

Per Cent



Source: Comprehensive Labour Force Survey and Administrative Records, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM

Notes:
(1) Data exclude full-time National Servicemen.
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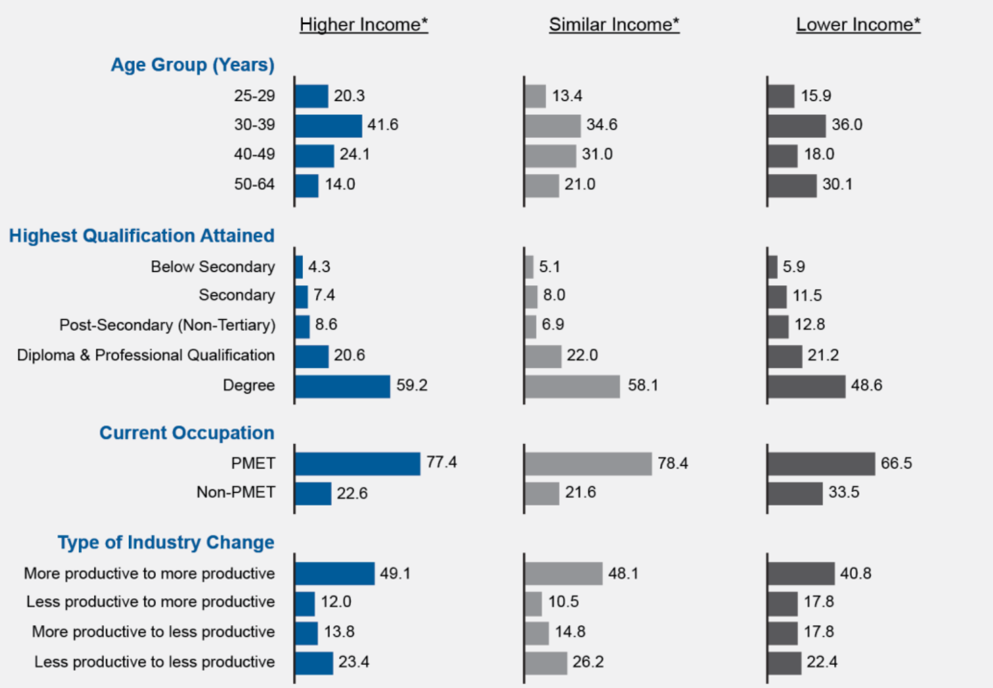
6 In 2025, among full-time resident employees aged 50 to 64 who changed jobs in the last one year, 22.5% were keen on the job due to interesting/meaningful work, 29.0% due to the ability to utilise their skills in the job, and 26.0% due to pay meeting expectations.

In terms of the profile of job switchers, those who experienced real wage increases were more likely to be younger, degree holders, and PMETs. They were also more likely to have taken up positions in more productive sectors[7] such as *Financial & Insurance Services*, *Professional Services*, and *Information & Communications*. Facilitating job switches to more productive sectors and helping workers build up the relevant skills can help more workers earn higher wages.

While a small segment (20.4%) saw lower income in their new job, the vast majority of them were keen on their job (87.4%). Apart from common reasons for taking on the work such as interesting/meaningful work (26.8%) and skills use (25.3%), job switchers who moved to a job with lower pay could be motivated by other valued aspects in their new jobs, such as suitable working hours (15.3%), work location (12.0%), and flexibility in work schedule (11.6%).

Chart 7 Profile of full-time resident employees aged 25 to 64 years who changed jobs in the last one year by income outcomes, 2025

Per Cent



Source: Comprehensive Labour Force Survey and Administrative Records, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM

Notes: (1) Data exclude full-time National Servicemen.

(2) * – Based on real income changes at the 5% threshold. Those with "higher income" experienced real income growth of at least 5%, and those with "lower income" experienced real income declines of at least 5%.

(3) Real income data are deflated by Consumer Price Index (CPI) for all items at 2024 prices (2024 = 100).

(4) Data by age/highest qualification attained/current occupation may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

(5) Data for type of industry change may not add up to 100% due to rounding and the exclusion of Others industries (Agriculture, Fishing, Quarrying, Utilities and Sewerage & Waste Management).

[7] "More productive industries" refer to industries where the value added per worker is above half of the industries in 2024, i.e. *Manufacturing*, *Wholesale Trade*, *Transportation & Storage*, *Accommodation*, *Information & Communications*, *Financial & Insurance Services*, *Real Estate Services*, and *Professional Services*.

CONCLUSION

In line with easing labour market tightness, job mobility has trended lower. However, the quality of job matching remained strong – six in ten job switchers experienced real income gains, and high shares of younger and mid-career job switchers were in PMET positions or saw wage increases after a job change. This suggests continued opportunities for upward mobility and that workers can achieve meaningful career progression through job changes. As workers are incentivised to make job changes with prospects of better pay and job-skill matches, strengthening career guidance and clearer progression pathways will aid in maximising human capital potential.