# Job Vacancies 2021

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JOB VACANCIES 2021

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## **Abbreviations**

: Academic Qualifications
: Diploma & Professional Qualification
: Minimum Qualification
: Professionals, Managers, Executives & Technicians
: Primary & Below
: Secondary
: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics

# Job Vacancies 2021

### 1 Introduction

1.1 The Manpower Research and Statistics Department (MRSD) publishes job vacancy numbers on a quarterly basis in its labour market reports. The number of job vacancies provides a measure of labour demand. When related to the number of unemployed persons, it also offers a sense of how easy or hard it is to find employment at any given time.

1.2 Every year, MRSD also releases a detailed report on job vacancies. The report analyses in detail the type and nature of positions that employers are looking to fill, the type of jobs in demand, and difficulties in filling these jobs. The findings from the report are based on a comprehensive survey carried out in September of each year. In the 2021 survey, a total of 14,340 establishments employing 1,809,900 employees responded to the survey, yielding a response rate of 85.0%.

### 2 Overall Hiring Trends In 2021

#### Proportion of new positions among job vacancies trended up slightly from 2018

2.1 Newly created positions<sup>1</sup> made up 44% of all job vacancies in 2021. This proportion has been on a slight uptrend from 2018 (42%) when the data was first collected. The proportion of vacancies for new positions was higher in growth industries (such as *Information & Communications, Financial & Insurance Services,* and *Professional Services*) than in service or production related industries (such as *Manufacturing, Food & Beverage Services,* and *Accommodation*).

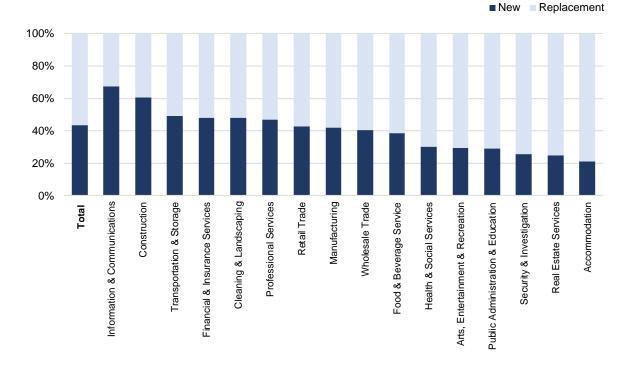


Figure 1: Distribution (%) Of Job Vacancies By Type Of Vacancy

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> These are positions that are created as a result of business expansion of its existing functions (e.g. opening of new outlets), or new roles that the firms are hiring for due to restructuring or development in new business areas.

#### Slight uptick in demand for non-PMET roles, reflecting border restrictions

2.2 Among the vacancies, PMET roles formed the majority (53%). However, the proportion of non-PMET vacancies has crept up since 2020, in particular for *construction labourers* and *electrical & electronic equipment assemblers*. This reflected the closure of borders which temporarily restricted the inflow of migrant workers who are usually hired to fill such roles.

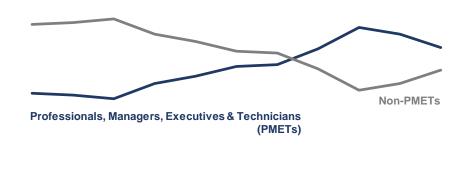


Figure 2: Distribution (%) Of Job Vacancies By Broad Occupational Groups

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
PMETs	40.8	40.2	39.2	43.4	45.4	47.9	48.5	52.7	58.4	56.7	53.0
Non-PMETs	59.2	59.8	60.8	56.6	54.6	52.1	51.5	47.3	41.6	43.3	47.0

Source: Labour Market Survey, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM

#### Slight decline in vacancies for remote work

2.3 There was a slight decline in the share of vacancies which involved work that could be done remotely, from 35% to 31%. This reflected the higher proportion of vacancies from industries and occupations where remote work was not prevalent (e.g. *industrial & production engineers* and *electrical & electronic equipment assemblers* in Manufacturing, and *civil engineers* and *construction labourers* in Construction). At the same time with the resumption of workplace activities, fewer employers offered remote work options for occupations which usually require face-to-face interactions or on-site presence (e.g. *operations officers in Food & Beverage Services* and *commercial & marketing sales executives*).

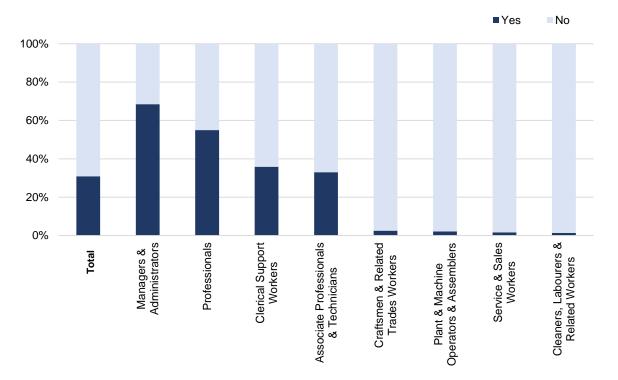


Figure 3: Distribution (%) Of Job Vacancies By Whether Work Can Be Done Remotely

# Reflecting the tight labour market, the share of vacancies unfilled for six months or more rose

2.4 With a tighter labour market, the proportion of job vacancies unfilled for six months or more increased to 35% in 2021, from 27% in 2020.<sup>2</sup> Before this, the proportion had been on a broad downtrend from 2014.

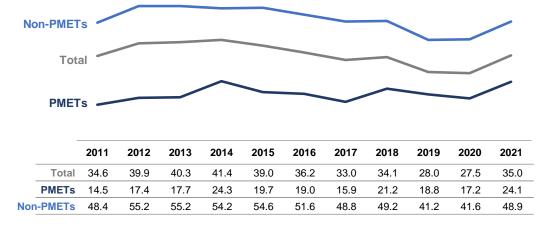


Figure 4: Proportion (%) Of Job Vacancies Which Were Unfilled For At Least Six Months

Source: Job Vacancy Survey, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM

2.5 The majority (79%) of non-PMET positions that were unfilled for extended periods were in *Manufacturing, Construction, Food & Beverage Services, Cleaning & Landscaping* and the trade-related sectors of *Transportation & Storage* and *Wholesale & Retail Trade.*<sup>3</sup> *Construction labourers, cleaners, shop sales assistants, waiters,* and *heavy truck & lorry drivers* were common non-PMET jobs that were harder to fill. In particular, *Manufacturing* and *Construction* (which faced labour shortages due to migrant worker inflow restrictions) made up 35% of non-PMET vacancies unfilled for extended periods in 2021. This was up from 24% a year ago. The shortages are expected to abate when border restrictions ease further.

2.6 For non-PMET positions that have been unfilled for extended periods, employers usually indicated reasons such as *physically strenuous job nature, unattractive pay,* and *poor working conditions*. This suggests a mismatch in employers' and job seekers' expectations on employment conditions. Employers who face difficulties filling vacancies can tap on schemes such as the Support for Job Redesign under the Productivity Solutions Grant. These schemes are designed to help businesses transform existing work processes and improve the pay and working conditions to make jobs more attractive to job seekers.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> In past years when the ratio of job vacancies to unemployed persons was above 1 (e.g. 2011-2015, 2018), the proportion of vacancies which were unfilled for extended periods ranged from 34% to 41%. The 2021 percentage remained in this range.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Top industries' share of non-PMET vacancies unfilled for six months or more in 2021: 22% from *Construction*, 17% from *Transportation & Storage*, 13% from *Manufacturing*, 10% from *Food & Beverage Services*, 8% from *Retail Trade*, 6% from *Cleaning & Landscaping*, and 4% from *Wholesale Trade*. The remaining vacancies were distributed across several industries.

2.7 For PMETs, growth sectors of *Information & Communications, Financial & Insurance Services, Professional Services,* and *Health & Social Services* collectively accounted for 49% of the positions unfilled for at least six months in 2021.<sup>4</sup> While resident employment grew steadily in these sectors, it was insufficient to meet the rising demand for such workers. Employers indicated a shortage of candidates with the necessary skills and work experience, in particular for positions where incumbents rely on specialised technical knowledge (e.g. *software, web & multimedia developers, systems analysts*) as well as increased competition from other employers <sup>5</sup> for positions such as *audit associate professionals* and *registered nurses*.

2.8 To alleviate difficulties in hiring, employers could consider a "plug-train-play" approach rather than a "plug-and-play" approach. The government supports employers and workers to reskill to take on new job opportunities, through the SGUnited Mid-Career Pathways Programme and Career Conversion Programmes.

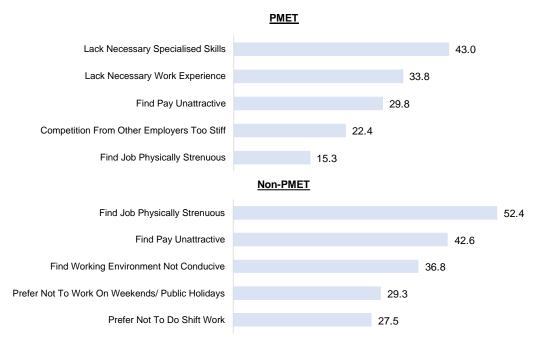
	PMET		Non-PMET
1	Software, Web & Multimedia Developer	1	Construction Labourer
2	Audit Associate Professional	2	Cleaner
3	Registered Nurse & Other Nursing Professional	3	Shop Sales Assistant
4	Systems Analyst	4	Waiter
5	Commercial & Marketing Sales Executive	5	Heavy Truck & Lorry Driver

#### Figure 5: Top Positions Unfilled For At Least Six Months

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Top industries' share of PMET vacancies unfilled for six months in 2021: 20% from *Professional Services*, 12% from *Health* & *Social Services*, 12% from *Information* & *Communications*, and 4% from *Financial* & *Insurance Services*. The remaining vacancies were distributed across several industries.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Among hard-to-fill PMET vacancies, there was an increase in the proportion of vacancies for which employers indicated that competition from other employers was a key reason for not being able to find suitable PMET workers (from 18% in 2020 to 22% in 2021).

#### Figure 6: Top Reasons For Job Vacancies That Were Hard To Fill By Residents (%)



Source: Job Vacancy Survey, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM

#### Notes:

(1) Establishments are allowed to indicate more than one reason for vacancies being hard to fill by residents.

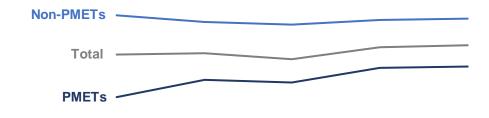
(2) Figures are expressed as a proportion of the hard to fill vacancies.

#### More employers are assessing job applicants not just based on qualifications alone

2.9 For 73% of vacancies in 2021, academic qualifications were not the main determinant for hiring. This proportion has been on the rise, with a more pronounced increase observed for PMETs.

2.10 For the majority of such vacancies where qualifications were not the main determinant, candidates' skill-sets and work attitude were the key considerations instead. So long as candidates have the minimum required qualifications, their skill-sets and work attitude will be the main deciding factors. Hence, having relatively higher qualifications does not mean a candidate is automatically considered ahead of his or her counterpart with lower qualifications.

Figure 7: Proportion (%) Of Job Vacancies For Which Academic Qualifications Were Not The Main Consideration



	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Total	67.1	68.1	64.7	71.5	72.6
PMETs	42.0	52.2	50.6	59.5	60.2
Non-PMETs	90.3	86.7	84.8	87.9	88.4

Source: Job Vacancy Survey, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM

Note: Data are available from 2017 onwards.

## 3 Jobs And Skills In Demand

### Strong growing demand for STEM professionals – in IT and engineering roles

3.1 As digital technologies play a pivotal role in today's economy, IT and multimedia development roles such as *software, web & multimedia developers* (2<sup>nd</sup> among top PMET job vacancies) and *systems analysts* (4<sup>th</sup>) remained highly sought-after jobs. *Network, communications & infrastructure managers* (28<sup>th</sup>), *graphic & multimedia designers & artists* (45<sup>th</sup>), as well as *database designers & administrators* (52<sup>nd</sup>) also saw a rise in demand. These vacancies typically require the incumbent to possess knowledge of programming languages (e.g. Java, Python and C#) and common software development processes to understand, design, monitor and improve technical systems. As such niche skills were essential for these roles, employers were willing to offer higher pay to fill these positions.<sup>6</sup>

3.2 Engineering professionals and technicians were also jobs highly in demand. This cuts across the engineering field spectrum, ranging from *electronics engineers* (7<sup>th</sup>) to *civil engineering technicians* (14<sup>th</sup>). These occupations generally require job-specific working experience, and the minimum wage employers were prepared to offer ranged from \$1,800 for *civil engineering technicians* to \$4,000 for *electronics engineers*.

3.3 There was a stable and large pool of job openings for business development and sales, such as **commercial & marketing sales executives** (1<sup>st</sup>) and **business development managers** (6<sup>th</sup>). These roles remain crucial as firms adapt to changes and seek out new business opportunities.

3.4 Albeit modestly, demand rose for administration professionals such as *management & business consultants* (8<sup>th</sup>), *human resource consultants* (42<sup>nd</sup>), and *policy administration professionals* (65<sup>th</sup>). Demand for these occupations doubled from five years ago to make up 3% of all vacancies in 2021.

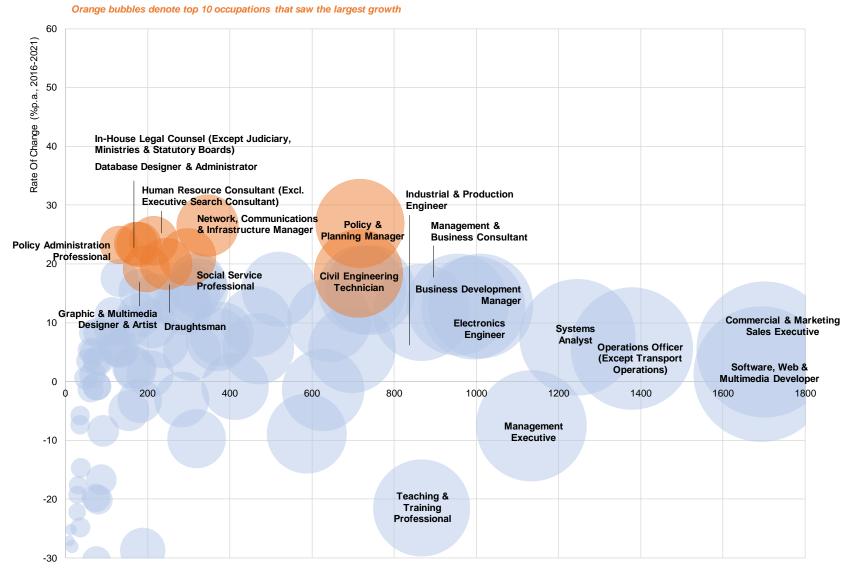
<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> For example, employers were prepared to offer at least \$5,000 for software, web & multimedia developers, and database designers & administrators in 2021.

Figure 8: Top Ten PMET Job Vacanci	ies, 2021
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RANK, 2021	OCCUPATION	RANGE OF WAGES ESTABLISHMENTS PREPARED TO OFFER	COMMON MIN QUAL	ACAD QUAL NOT THE MAIN CONSIDERATION	TOP SKILLS REQUIRED*	COMMON WORKING EXPERIENCE
1	Commercial & Marketing Sales Executive	2,610 • 4,000	Dipl. & Prof Qual	•	Persuasion Social Perceptiveness Negotiation	Job Specific
2	Software, Web & Multimedia Developer	5,000 O● 8,000	Degree		Programming Complex Problem Solving Judgement and Decision Making	Job Specific
3	Operations Officer (Except Transport Operations)	2,360 👁 3,300	Dipl. & Prof Qual	•	Coordination Time Management Management of Personnel Resources	Job Specific
4	Systems Analyst	4,500 ○···● 7,500	Degree	•	Systems Analysis Complex Problem Solving Systems Evaluation	Job Specific
5	Management Executive	2,600 ••• 5,065	Dipl. & Prof Qual	•	Judgement and Decision Making Coordination Complex Problem Solving	None required
6	Business Development Manager	5,575 O● 9,400	Degree		Complex Problem Solving Judgement and Decision Making Active Learning	Job Specific
7	Electronics Engineer	4,000 ○● 6,500	Degree		Complex Problem Solving Systems Analysis Judgement and Decision Making	Job Specific
8	Management & Business Consultant	5,865 ○…● 9,000	Degree	•	Complex Problem Solving Systems Analysis Judgement and Decision Making	Job Specific
9	Industrial & Production Engineer	3,400 ○ ● 5,500	Degree		Complex Problem Solving Judgment and Decision Making Active Learning	Job Specific
10	Teaching & Training Professional	2,800 O 7,800	Degree		Instructing Active Learning Complex Problem Solving	Industry Specific

• Indicates occupations where academic qualifications were not the main consideration for at least 60.2% (PMET average) of the vacancies in 2021.

\* Occupations are mapped to the O\*NET database of occupational information. Skills commonly needed across these jobs and not shown separately include critical thinking and active listening skills.



#### Figure 9: PMET Job Vacancies Which Saw An Increase/ Decrease In Demand From 2016 To 2021

Size of bubble represents job vacancies in 2021

3.5 Among non-PMET job openings, *construction labourers* (1<sup>st</sup>) were most in demand in 2021, as border restrictions placed on migrant worker inflows resulted in increased manpower shortages. *Cleaners* (3<sup>rd</sup>) and *security guards* (6<sup>th</sup>), occupations covered under the Progressive Wage Model (PWM), were also common unfilled jobs. To enhance the appeal of these positions, employers were prepared to offer more, on par with the amount earned by existing employees. The pay offered for *cleaners*, in particular, had edged up from 2020. Consumer-facing roles such as *shop sales assistants* (2<sup>nd</sup>) and *waiters* (5<sup>th</sup>) also remained highly in demand. In the longer term, these jobs are expected to attract more applicants, when wages improve under the expanded sectoral PWMs which will cover the food services and retail sectors by 2023.

3.6 There was an increase in demand for *electrical & electronic equipment assemblers* (9<sup>th</sup>), *packing/bottling/labelling machine operators* (21<sup>st</sup>), and *production clerks* (30<sup>th</sup>), occupations typically found in *Manufacturing*, where travel restrictions have constrained the inflow of migrant workers.

3.7 The rise in e-commerce has led to a nascent demand for transport-related occupations, such as *heavy truck & lorry drivers* (8<sup>th</sup>), *car, van & light goods vehicle drivers* (11<sup>th</sup>), and *transport clerks* (37<sup>th</sup>). 2021 saw an increase in the salary offered for driver-related occupations.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> The minimum in the range of salaries offered rose from \$2,000 to \$2,300 over the year for *heavy truck & lorry drivers*, and rose from \$1,700 to \$2,000 for *car, van & light goods vehicle drivers*.

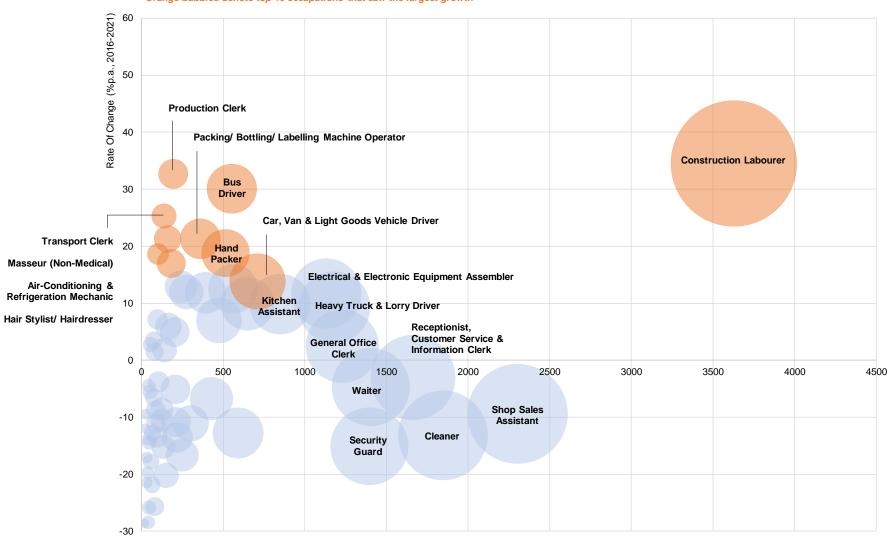
RANK, 2021	OCCUPATION	RANGE OF WAGES ESTABLISHMENTS PREPARED TO OFFER	COMMON MIN QUAL	ACAD QUAL NOT THE MAIN CONSIDERATION	TOP SKILLS REQUIRED*	COMMON WORKING EXPERIENCE
1	Construction Labourer	800 O● 1,600	Pri & Below	•	Critical Thinking Social Perceptiveness Coordination	General Working Experience
2	Shop Sales Assistant	1,400 ०● 1,838	Sec	•	Persuasion Service Orientation Social Perceptiveness Negotiation	None required
3	Cleaner	1,400 🗢 1,700	Pri & Below	•	Coordination	None required
4	Receptionist, Customer Service & Information Clerk	1,900 ○● 2,500	Sec		Service Orientation Social Perceptiveness Coordination	General Working Experience
5	Waiter	1,700 • 2,200	Pri & Below	•	Service Orientation Social Perceptiveness Coordination	None required
6	Security Guard	2,200 • 2,600	Pri & Below	•	Critical Thinking Coordination Social Perceptiveness	None required
7	General Office Clerk	2,000 O● 2,762	Dipl. & Prof Qual		Critical Thinking Social Perceptiveness Time Management	General Working Experience
8	Heavy Truck & Lorry Driver	2,300 O● 3,000	Pri & Below	•	Operation and Control Operation Monitoring Time Management	General Working Experience
9	Electrical & Electronic Equipment Assembler	1,200 ⊶ 1,800	Pri & Below	•	Judgement and Decision Making Operation Monitoring Critical Thinking Coordination	None required
10	Kitchen Assistant	1,700 O- 2,400	Pri & Below	•	Social Perceptiveness Coordination Service Orientation Time Management	None required

#### Figure 10: Top Ten Non-PMET Job Vacancies, 2021

• Indicates occupations where academic qualifications were not the main consideration for at least 88.4% (Non-PMET average) of the vacancies in 2021.

\* Occupations are mapped to the O\*NET database of occupational information. Skills commonly needed across these jobs and not shown separately include active listening skills.

#### Figure 11: Non-PMET Job Vacancies Which Saw An Increase/ Decrease In Demand From 2016 To 2021



Orange bubbles denote top 10 occupations that saw the largest growth

Size of bubble represents job vacancies in 2021

## 4 Concluding Remarks

4.1 The number of job vacancies reached an all-time high in 2021, as employers and workers continue to adjust to the easing of safe management measures and rapidly evolving economic conditions. Like other economies recovering from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, record high job vacancies coincided with a growth in resident employment and falling unemployment.

4.2 The majority of vacancies were for PMETs, but the proportion of non-PMET vacancies has trended up since 2020, in particular for *construction labourers* and *electrical* & *electronic equipment assemblers*. Domestically, the pandemic has accelerated the trend towards digitalisation, leading to greater demand for technological skills. IT and multimedia development roles remained highly sought after. Engineering professionals and technicians were also in demand, and there was firm hiring for business development and sales positions.

4.3 Going forward, with the relaxation of social gathering measures, consumerfacing industries may face persistent strain as some time is required to bring in the necessary manpower. For *Manufacturing* and *Construction*, labour shortages are expected to abate as travel restrictions ease further and employment recovers to pre-COVID levels.

#### Appendix

## SURVEY COVERAGE & METHODOLOGY

#### Introduction

The Job Vacancy Survey, 2021 was conducted by the Manpower Research and Statistics Department of the Ministry of Manpower under the Statistics Act (Chapter 317). The survey was conducted from 3 November 2021 to 21 January 2022.

#### Objective

The survey was conducted to collect comprehensive information on job vacancies in the various industries by detailed occupations. The survey also asked employers on (i) the gross monthly wage the establishment is prepared to pay for the job vacancies; (ii) the requirement of skills, relevant working experience, minimum qualification required; and whether the vacancies were (iii) unfilled for at least six months, and (iv) hard to fill by residents.

#### Coverage

The survey covered private sector establishments each with at least 25 employees and the public sector comprising government ministries, organs of state and statutory boards. A total of 14,340 establishments employing 1,809,900 employees responded to the survey, yielding a response rate of 85.0%.

#### Methodology

The survey was conducted using mail questionnaires. Respondents could submit their returns online or by email, with clarifications made over the phone.

#### **Reference Period**

The reference date for the survey was 30 September 2021.

#### **Data Collected**

Establishments were asked to provide information pertaining to the job vacancies in their establishments:

- Job title
  - Number of vacancies
  - Minimum qualification required
  - Whether the position was newly created
  - Whether the position could be done remotely
  - Whether academic qualifications were the main consideration in selecting candidates
- Whether working experience was required
- Whether vacancies were unfilled for at least 6 months
- · Reasons for vacancies that were hard to fill by residents
- Gross wage organisation was prepared to pay

#### Classification

The industries of the surveyed establishments were classified according to the Singapore Standard Industrial Classification (SSIC) 2015. Descriptions of job vacancies were classified according to the Singapore Standard Occupational Classification (SSOC) 2020, while the classification of minimum qualification was based on the Singapore Standard Educational Classification (SSEC) 2020.

#### **CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS**

#### **Job Vacancy**

This refers to the number of unfilled posts for which the establishment is actively recruiting employees from outside the establishment. It excludes positions for which the employees have been appointed, but not yet commenced duty, and positions open only to internal transfers, promotions, etc.

Recruitment action to fill a post includes advertising in newspapers, posting notices on Internet (e.g. online job banks), making 'word of mouth announcements', soliciting employees through employment agencies or job fairs, contacting or interviewing job applicants.

#### **Gross Monthly Wage**

This refers to the sum of the basic wage, overtime payments, commissions, allowances, and other regular cash payments. It is before deduction of employee Central Provident Fund (CPF) contributions and personal income tax and excludes employer CPF contributions, bonuses, stock options and other lump sum payments-in-kind.

#### Minimum Qualification Required

The minimum qualification required are classified into one of the following categories:

**Primary & below** refers to those who never attended school, have pre-primary/kindergarten education, or primary education with or without Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE) certificate or equivalent, or Certificate in Basic Education for Skills Training (BEST) 1-4, or at least 3 Workforce Skills Qualifications (WSQ) Statements of Attainment in Workplace Literacy and Numeracy (WPLN) at Level 1 or 2 (e.g. under Employment Skills System (ESS), Employability Skills (ES)).

**Lower secondary** refers to those with secondary education without a General Certificate of Education (GCE) Ordinary ('O')/Normal ('N') Level pass or equivalent, or have Certificate in Worker Improvement through Secondary Education (WISE) 1-3, or basic vocational certificates (including Institute of Technical Education (ITE) Basic Vocational Training), or at least 3 WSQ Statements of Attainment in WPLN at Level 3 or 4 (e.g. under ESS, ES).

**Secondary** refers to those who have at least 1 GCE 'N'/'O' Level pass, or have National ITE Certificate (NITEC) (Intermediate) or equivalent (e.g. National Technical Certificate (NTC) Grade 3, Certificate of Vocational Training, BCA Builder Certificate), or have ITE Skills Certificate (ISC) or equivalent (e.g. Certificate of Competency, Certificate in Service Skills) or at least 3 WSQ Statements of Attainment in WPLN at Level 5 and above (e.g. under ESS, ES), or other certificates/qualifications of equivalent standard.

**Post-secondary (non-tertiary)** refers to those who have at least 1 GCE Advanced ('A')/ Higher 2 ('H2') Level pass or other certificates/qualifications of equivalent standard. It also includes those who have NITEC (e.g. Post NITEC, Specialist NITEC, Certificate in Office Skills, National Technical Certificate Grade 2, National Certificate in Nursing, Advanced Builder Certificate), or have Higher NITEC (including Certificate in Business Skills, Industrial Technician Certificate and other polytechnic certificates), or Master NITEC or equivalent (e.g. National Technical Certificate Grade 1). This group also includes WSQ Certificate/Higher Certificate/Advanced Certificate or equivalent, International Baccalaureate/High school diploma or other advanced certificates (e.g. Singapore Institute of Management (SIM) certificates).

**Diploma & professional qualification** refers to those who have Polytechnic diploma, or Polytechnic advanced diploma (including Polytechnic advanced/post/specialist/management/ graduate diploma), and those who have qualifications awarded by professional bodies, or National Institute of Education (NIE) diploma, ITE diploma and other diploma qualifications (e.g. SIM diploma, LaSalle-SIA diploma, Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts (NAFA) diploma, WSQ diploma and WSQ specialist diploma).

**Degree** refers to those who have Bachelor's Degree, or Postgraduate Diploma (including NIE postgraduate diploma), WSQ graduate certificate, WSQ graduate diploma, Master's, or Doctorate.

## FEEDBACK FORM

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3.	How do you find the I	ength of the report?				
	Too detailed	Just right	T	oo brief		
			Excellent	Good	Average	Poor
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# **OTHER RELEASES**





# UPCOMING ...

Labour Market Advance Release First Quarter 2022	28-29 Apr 2022*
Report On Wage Practices 2021	25-31 May 2022*
Labour Market Report First Quarter 2022	13-17 Jun 2022*
Singapore Yearbook Of Manpower Statistics 2022	30 Jun 2022

# **PAST** ....

Job Vacancies 2021	1 Apr 2022
Labour Market Report 2021	14 Mar 2022
Labour Market Advance Release 2021	28 Jan 2022
Labour Force In Singapore 2021	28 Jan 2022
Labour Market Report Third Quarter 2021	15 Dec 2021
Labour Force In Singapore Advance Release 2021	1 Dec 2021
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