LABOUR FORCE IN SINGAPORE 2024

1. Introduction

1.1 The report on the Labour Force in Singapore[4] provides insights from the Comprehensive Labour Force Survey (CLFS). Unlike the Monthly Labour Force Surveys, the CLFS is run annually with a larger sample size, measuring a wider range of labour market indicators. The breadth and depth of information from the CLFS enables a comprehensive review of the labour market performance of the resident population, in relation to longer-term structural trends. This report also includes findings on own account workers and training from the Labour Force Supplementary Surveys.

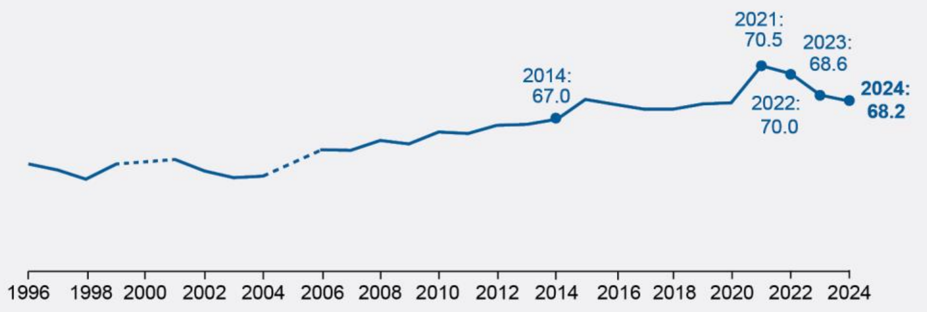
2. Labour Force

Singapore's labour force participation rate declined further due to ageing, but remains high compared to other major cities

2.1 The labour force participation rate for residents aged 15 years and over declined for the third consecutive year, falling to 68.2% in 2024. While participation rose in most age groups, the growing share of seniors, who have lower participation rates, contributed to this decline. With the population ageing, this trend is expected to limit workforce growth. The rate had peaked in 2021, driven by temporary pandemic-related jobs. In 2024, 37.3% of residents aged 15 years and over were 55 years or older, up from 36.8% in 2023 and 29.2% in 2014.[5]

Chart 1 Labour force participation rate of residents aged 15 years and over

Per Cent



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

Note: The Comprehensive Labour Force Survey was not conducted in 2000 and 2005 due to the conduct of the Census of Population 2000 and General Household Survey 2005 by the Singapore Department of Statistics.

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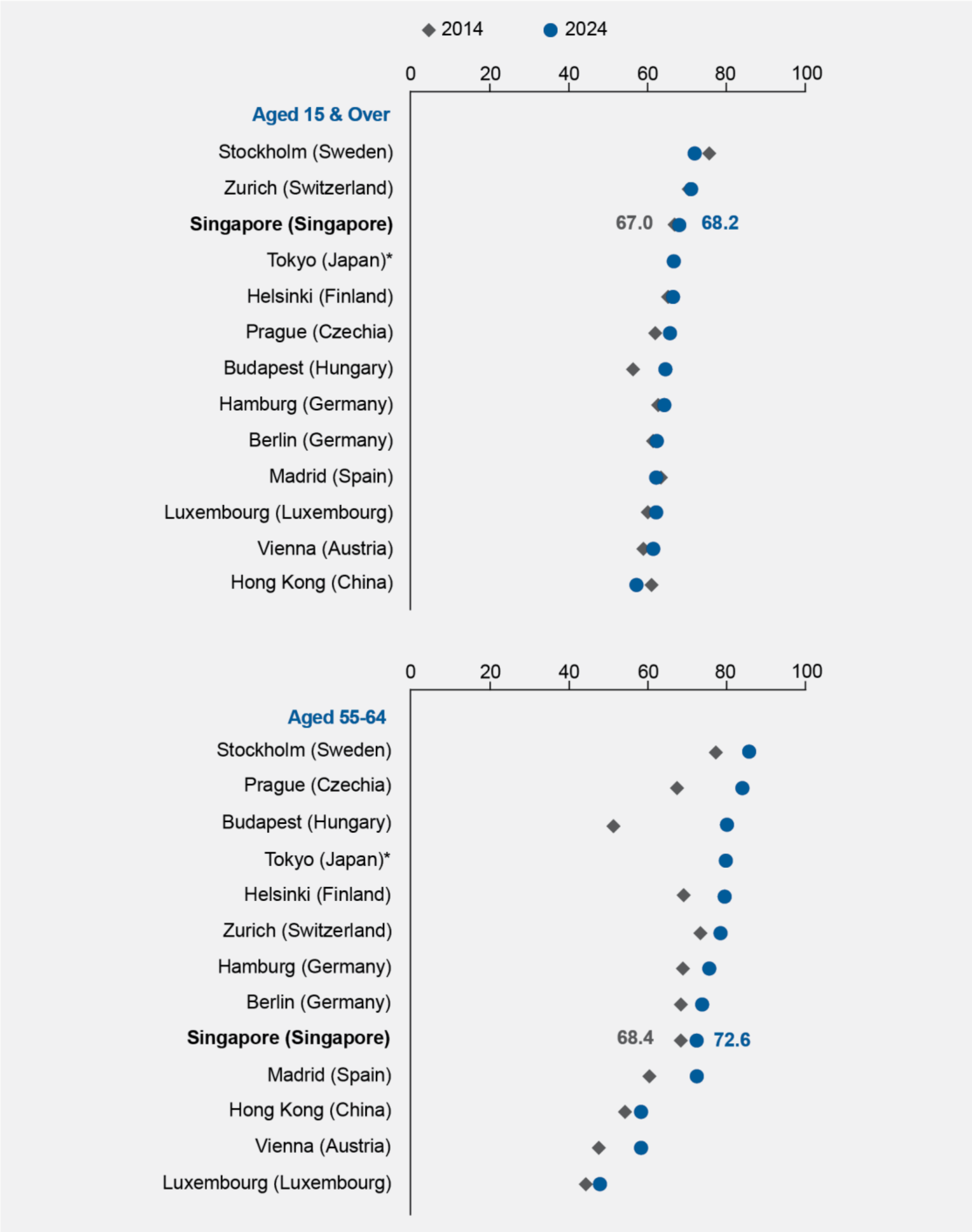
[4] Data in this report are for June periods and pertain to residents (comprising Singapore citizens and permanent residents) aged 15 years and over, unless stated otherwise.

[5] Source: Singapore Department of Statistics.

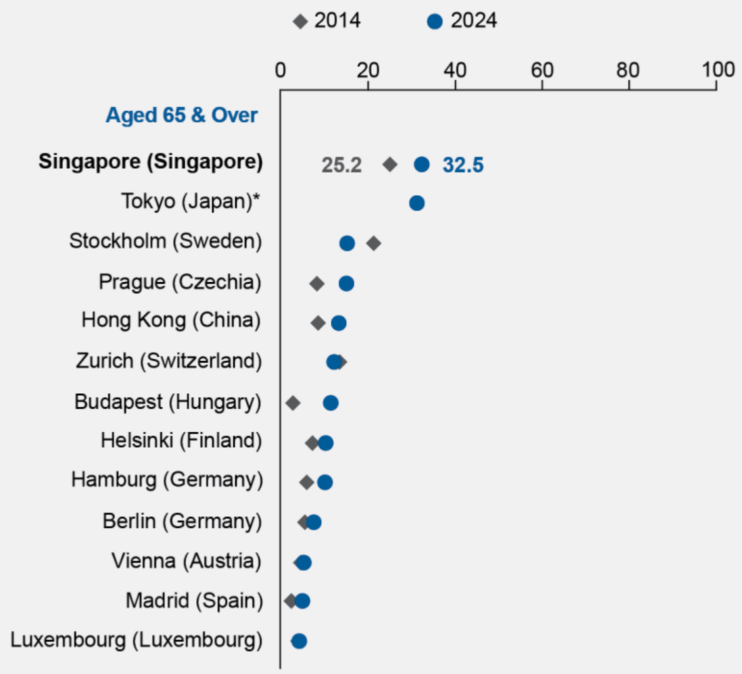
2.2 Despite a gradual decline in recent years, Singapore's labour force participation rate remains higher than many other major cities with ageing populations. In addition, Singapore ranks highly for labour force participation amongst seniors in other cities.[6]

Chart 2 Labour force participation rate in Singapore and other major cities

Per Cent



[6] The comparison is made with cities in high-income countries that also have ageing populations.



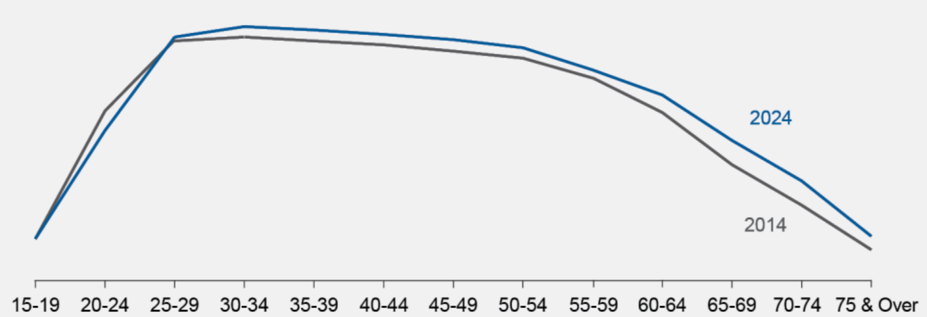
Sources: Singapore: Comprehensive Labour Force Survey, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM
Other Cities: National Statistical Agencies, Eurostat Database

Notes: (1) Data for Singapore are for 2014 and 2024, while that for other cities are for 2014 and 2023 (latest available) except that for Tokyo (Japan) which are for 2020.
(2) * - Data for Japan for the earlier time period is not available.

2.3 Over the last decade, the labour force participation rate rose across most age groups, with the largest increases observed among seniors aged 65 to 69 years and 70 to 74 years. Although the labour force participation rate of youths aged 20 to 24 years declined over the decade, it was because more of them were pursuing further studies and they had delayed their entry into the workforce.[7]

Chart 3 Resident labour force participation rate by age

Per Cent



	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	65-69	70-74	75 & Over
2014	12.3	61.8	89.0	89.9	88.8	87.1	84.7	81.8	74.3	61.2	41.2	25.7	8.4
2024	12.8	54.3	90.1	94.1	92.8	91.1	89.1	86.0	77.5	67.9	50.5	35.0	13.8

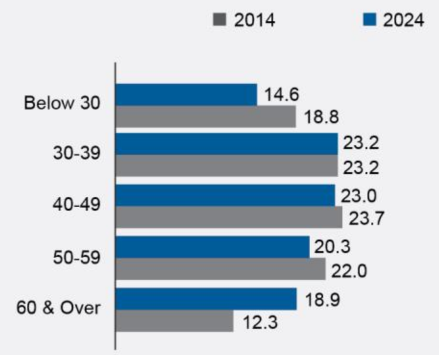
Source: Comprehensive Labour Force Survey, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM

[7] Among the resident population aged 20 to 24 years, 42.0% were outside the labour force pursuing their education or training in 2024. This share was higher than 34.7% in 2014.

2.4 The resident labour force is ageing.[8] The proportion of seniors aged 60 years and over rose from 12.3% in 2014 to 18.9% in 2024, reflecting their increasing share in the population and initiatives that enhance their employability.[9] Conversely, the share of younger residents aged below 30 years in the labour force declined from 18.8% in 2014 to 14.6% in 2024, reflecting their decreased share in the population due to falling birth rates and a delayed entry into the workforce due to further studies.

Chart 4 Profile of the resident labour force by age

Per Cent



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

Note: Data for each year may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

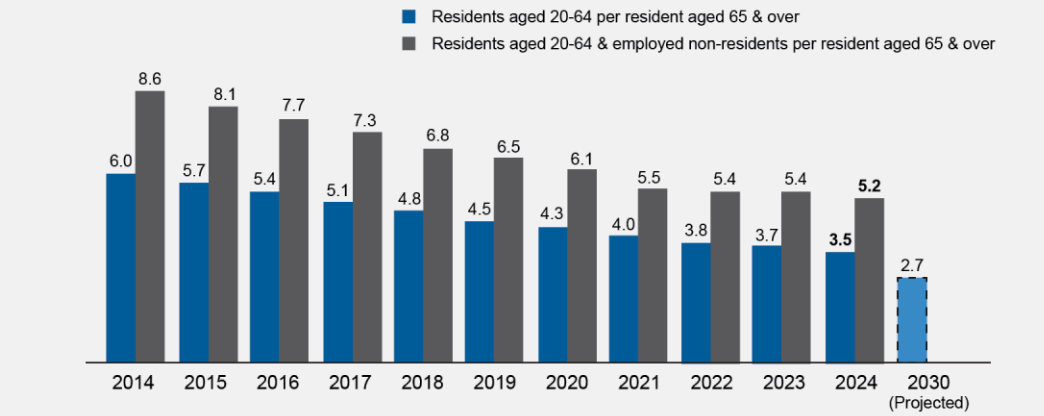
[8] The median age of the resident labour force has risen from 43 years in 2014 to 45 years in 2024.

[9] These include the Career Conversion Programmes where eligible senior workers can undergo training with up to 90% salary and course fee support. Senior workers who require additional assistance can also tap on career coaching and guidance services offered by Workforce Singapore (WSG) and NTUC's Employment and Employability Institute (e2i).

Resident old-age support ratio has declined over time

2.5 With population ageing, the number of residents supporting our elderly population has fallen. The resident old-age support ratio[10] – which relates the number of residents aged 20 to 64 years to elderly residents aged 65 years and above – has almost halved from 6.0 in 2014 to 3.5 in 2024; and this ratio is projected to decrease further to 2.7 in 2030.[11] The inclusion of non-resident workers increases the ratio to 5.2 per elderly resident in 2024,[12] offering some relief to the economic pressures of an ageing population.

Chart 5 Old-age support ratio



Source: Administrative Records compiled by Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM, and Singapore Department of Statistics
Note: Data on employed non-residents exclude migrant domestic workers.

Female representation in the resident labour force rose

2.6 Over the decade, females across most age groups saw significant increases in the labour force participation rate due to their rising educational profile[13] as well as progressive workplace practices (e.g. flexible work arrangements) and programmes (e.g. Workforce Singapore's herCareer initiative) that support women to stay in or return to the workforce. The labour force participation rate of prime working-age males also remained high.

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[10] The old-age support ratio provides a rough indication of the number of persons who are potentially economically and socially supporting elderly people.

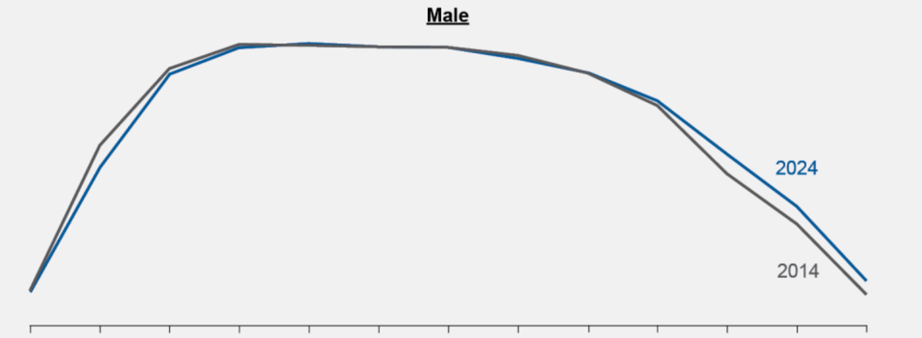
[11] Source: Singapore Department of Statistics.

[12] Source: Estimates derived using non-resident employment data from administrative records compiled by Ministry of Manpower's Manpower Research & Statistics Department, and population data from the Singapore Department of Statistics.

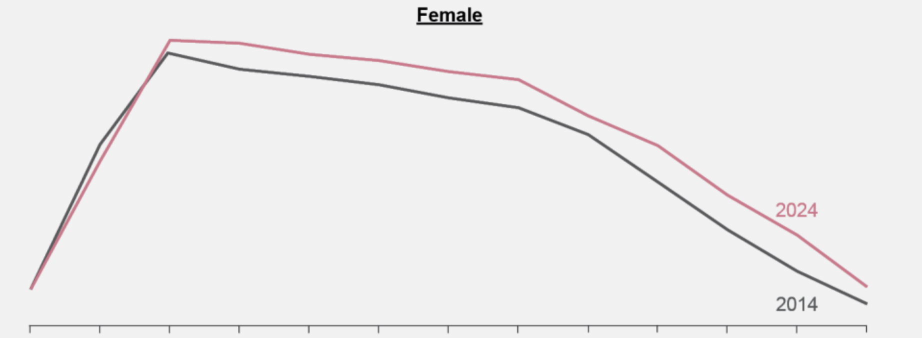
[13] The tertiary-educated formed 49.8% of females aged 15 years and over in 2024, an increase from 38.3% in 2014.

Chart 6 Resident labour force participation rate by age and sex

Per Cent



	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	65-69	70-74	75 & Over
2014	14.9	63.6	89.4	97.5	97.2	96.8	96.4	93.8	87.5	77.0	54.1	37.3	13.6
2024	15.7	55.7	87.2	96.4	97.8	96.7	96.5	92.8	87.9	78.6	60.7	43.2	18.2



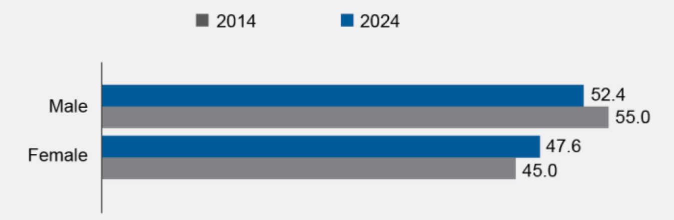
	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	65-69	70-74	75 & Over
2014	9.6	59.8	88.6	83.3	80.9	78.1	73.7	70.4	61.4	45.5	29.5	15.6	4.7
2024	9.6	52.7	93.0	92.0	88.3	86.2	82.5	79.8	67.7	57.7	41.1	27.7	10.4

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

2.7 Reflecting females' increased labour force participation, the share of females in the resident labour force rose from 45.0% in 2014 to 47.6% in 2024.

Chart 7 Profile of the resident labour force by sex

Per Cent



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

Note: Data for each year may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Employment rate increased among prime-age and senior residents

2.8 In age groups where the labour force participation rate rose, the employment rate has also increased, showing that the labour market was able to absorb the increased entry of residents into the labour force.

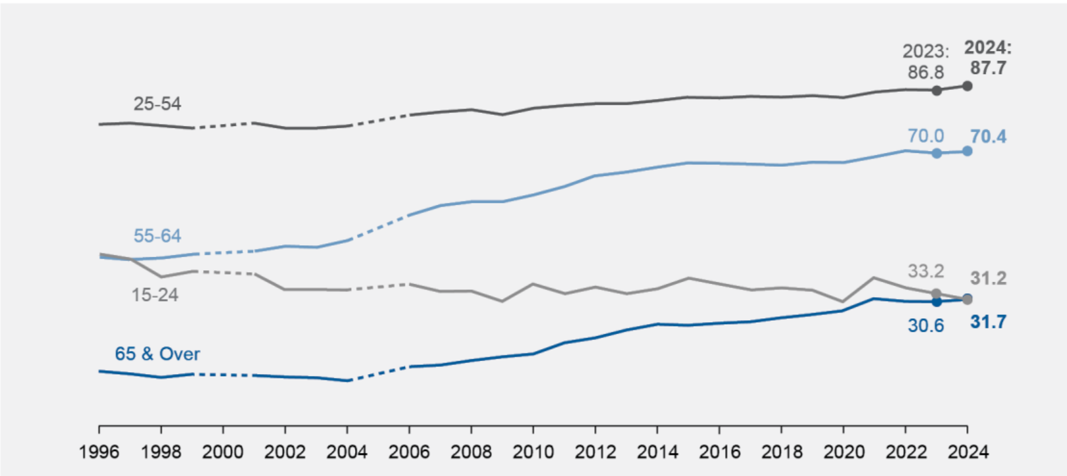
2.9 The employment rate for prime-age residents (25 to 54 years) rose from 86.8% in 2023 to 87.7% in 2024. This increase was seen across all five-year age groups, with the biggest jumps in the 25 to 29 and 50 to 54 age ranges. For residents aged 55 to 64, the employment rate has been increasing over the long term, and rose from 70.0% in 2023 to 70.4% in 2024. The overall rise in employment rate for residents aged 25 to 64 was driven by an increase in female employment, which rose from 76.6% in 2023 to 78.3% in 2024, narrowing the gender gap (males: 89.0% in 2023, 88.8% in 2024).

2.10 The employment rate for youths aged 15 to 24 continued to decrease from a peak of 37.2% in 2021[14] to 31.2% in 2024, as more youths chose education or training over work. Despite this decline, the 2024 rate remains within historical norms. Generally, youths have lower employment rates compared to adults aged 25 to 54 or 55 to 64, as most are still in school or training.

2.11 The employment rate for seniors aged 65 and over improved to 31.7% in 2024, following declines in the past two years. More seniors were employed across various industries, notably *Administrative & Support Services*, *Food & Beverage Services*, and *Transportation & Storage*. These sectors tend to employ less-educated seniors.

Chart 8 Resident employment rate by age

Per Cent



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

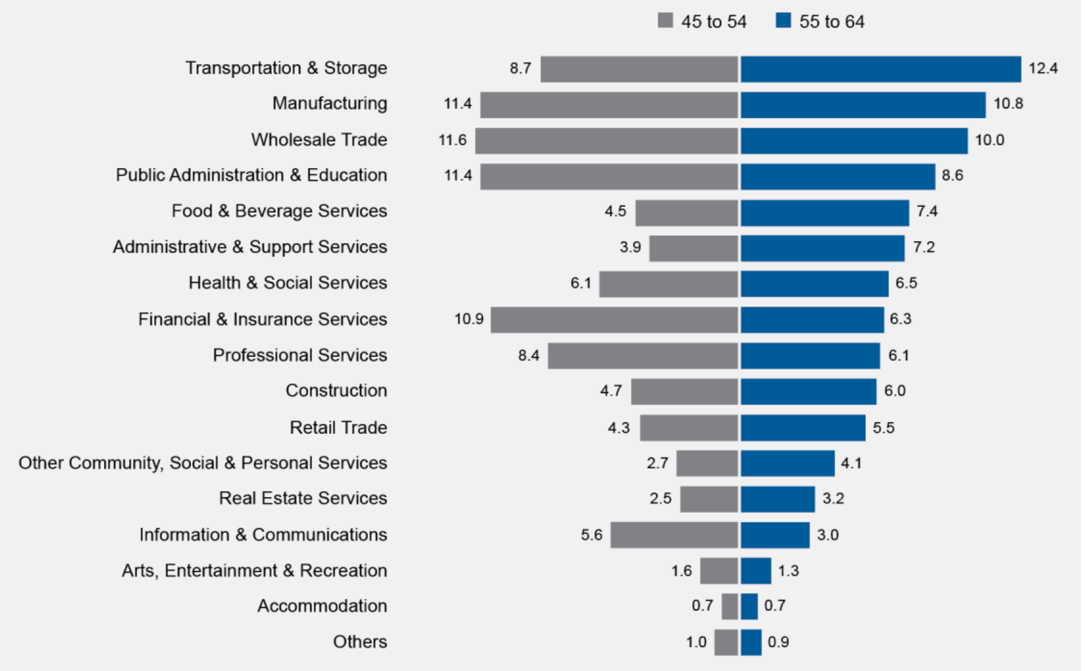
Note: The Comprehensive Labour Force Survey was not conducted in 2000 and 2005 due to the conduct of the Census of Population 2000 and General Household Survey 2005 by the Singapore Department of Statistics.

[14] The 2021 peak for youths' employment rate was due to more students taking temporary or part-time jobs during COVID-19, which returned to normal once physical classes resumed.

2.12 As future senior cohorts are expected to be more educated,[15] they are likely to be employed in higher-growth industries, which have a higher concentration of professionals, managers, executives & technicians (PMETs).[16] Apart from *Transportation & Storage*, residents aged 55 to 64 today commonly worked in *Manufacturing* (employing manufacturing managers, sales managers, for example), *Wholesale Trade*, and *Public Administration & Education*. These too were the sectors which residents aged 45 to 54 commonly worked in, in addition to *Financial & Insurance Services* and *Professional Services*.

Chart 9 Industry profile of employed residents aged 45 to 64 years, 2024

Per Cent



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

Note: Others include Agriculture, Fishing, Quarrying, Utilities, and Sewerage & Waste Management.

[15] In 2024, 68.9% of employed residents aged 45 to 54 were tertiary educated, nearly double the 38.7% among those aged 55 to 64.

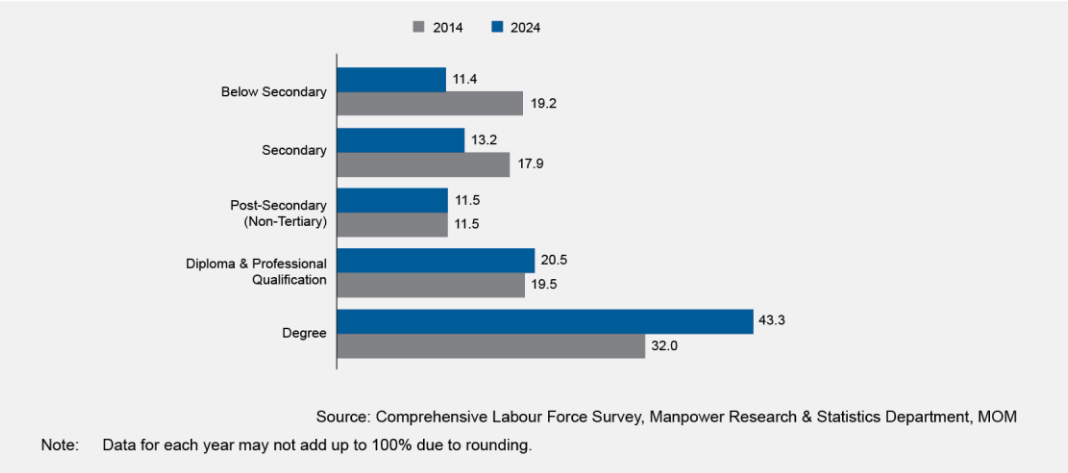
[16] In 2024, 70.9% of employed residents aged 45 to 54 and 47.4% of those aged 55 to 64 held PMET roles.

Degree graduates formed a larger share of the labour force and continued to see good employment outcomes

2.13 The labour force has become more educated over the decade. In 2024, more than six in ten (63.8%) residents in the labour force had tertiary qualification (i.e. a degree, diploma or professional qualification), higher than the 51.5% in 2014. This increase was mainly driven by degree holders, whose share in the labour force rose from 32.0% in 2014 to 43.3% in 2024.

Chart 10 Profile of the resident labour force by highest qualification attained

Per Cent



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

Note: Data for each year may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

2.14 Degree holders are highly employable. The employment rate of degree holders aged 25 to 64 rose to 88.8% in 2024, after broadly stable rates for most of the preceding five years.[17]

Chart 11 Employment rate of resident degree holders aged 25 to 64 years

Per Cent

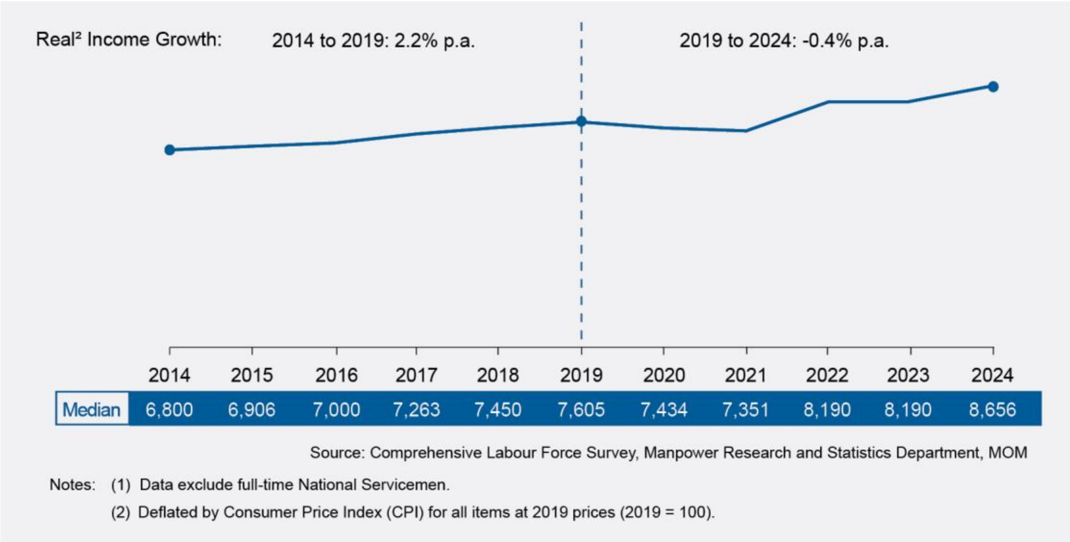
Source: Comprehensive Labour Force Survey, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM

[17] The last time employment rate among resident degree holders aged 25 to 64 was higher was in 2001 (88.9%), more than two decades ago.

2.15 The median income for full-time employed degree holders increased to $8,656 in 2024 from 2023 ($8,190), as more degree holders took up higher-skilled and higher-paying professional, managerial & executive (PME) roles.[18] While their median income grew faster in nominal terms in the recent five-year period (2019-2024: 2.6% per annum (p.a.)) compared to the preceding five-year period (2014-2019: 2.3% p.a.), it dipped by 0.4% p.a. in real terms from 2019 to 2024 due to higher inflation. However, over the longer term of a decade (2014 to 2024), real median income of full-time employed degree holders has grown (0.9% p.a.).

Chart 12 Median gross monthly income from employment (including employer CPF contributions) of full-time employed resident degree holders

Dollars



2.16 Employment rates among young graduates aged 25 to 29 from local institutions of higher learning were broadly stable over the decade, notwithstanding some variations from year to year. The downtrend in employment rate for young local polytechnic diploma holders was because more of them deferred entry into the labour force to further their studies.[19] The median income of young graduates in full-time employment[20] has increased over the decade, even after adjusting for inflation.[21]

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[18] The share of PMEs among full-time employed resident degree holders increased from 78.1% in 2023 to 79.8% in 2024.

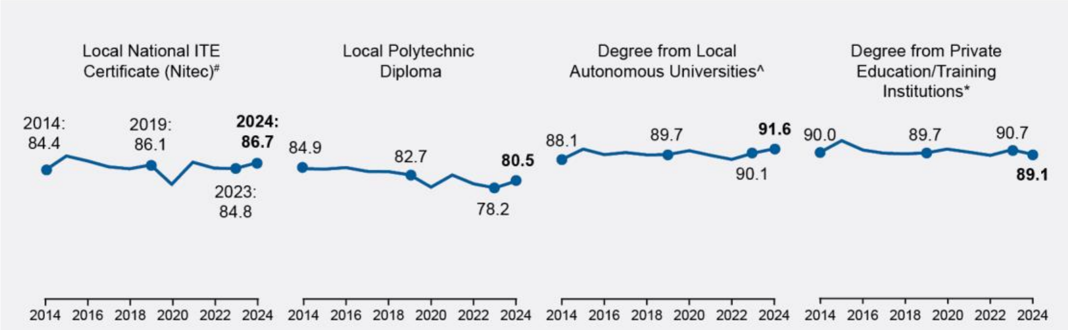
[19] 13.2% of local polytechnic diploma holders aged 25 to 29 in 2024 were outside the labour force to pursue education/training, up from 7.5% in 2014.

[20] In 2024, a large majority (95.9%) of employed graduates aged 25 to 29 (excluding full-time National Servicemen) from local institutions of higher learning (IHLs) (i.e. with degree, polytechnic diploma and Nitec) were in full-time employment. These employed graduates were predominantly employees on permanent contracts (85.7%), with the remaining being employees on fixed-term contracts/casual/on-call employment (8.9%), or self-employed (5.4%).

[21] Median income of full-time employed graduates aged 25 to 29 from local IHLs increased in real terms for those with Nitec & related qualification (1.7% p.a.), polytechnic diploma (0.7% p.a.), degree from local autonomous universities (1.0% p.a.), and degree from private education/training institutions (0.7% p.a.).

Chart 13 Employment rate of residents aged 25 to 29 years from local institutions of higher learning

Per Cent

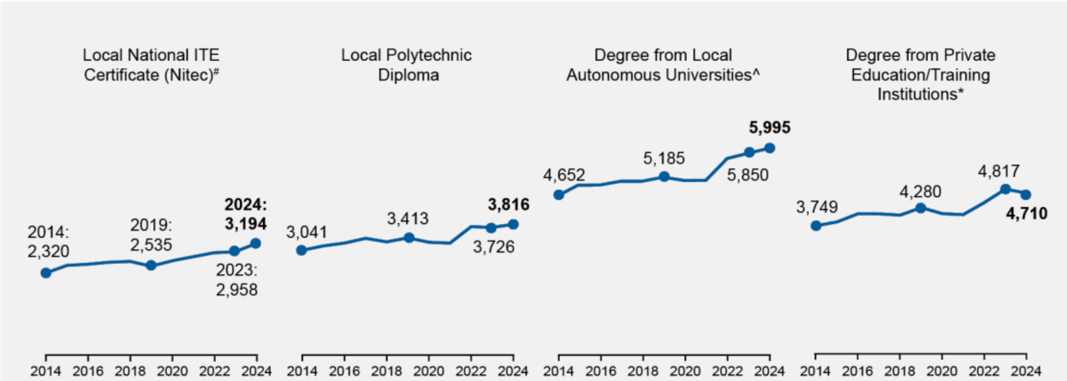


Source: Comprehensive Labour Force Survey, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM

Notes: (1) # – Includes Higher Nitec and Master Nitec.
(2) ^ – Includes qualifications awarded by overseas partner universities/institutions of the Singapore Institute of Technology.
(3) * – Includes qualifications awarded by their overseas partner universities/institutions.

Chart 14 Median gross monthly income from employment (including employer CPF contributions) of full-time employed residents aged 25 to 29 years from local institutions of higher learning

Dollars



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

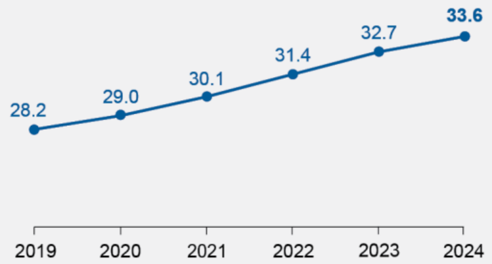
Notes: (1) Data exclude full-time National Servicemen.
(2) # – Includes Higher Nitec and Master Nitec.
(3) ^ – Includes qualifications awarded by overseas partner universities/institutions of the Singapore Institute of Technology.
(4) * – Includes qualifications awarded by their overseas partner universities/institutions.

Employment rate of persons with disabilities continued to increase

2.17 The employment rate of persons with disabilities aged 15 to 64 years has increased steadily to 33.6% in 2024, from 32.7% in 2023 and 28.2% in 2019.[22] This increase reflects more support for employers to hire and train persons with disabilities through schemes such as the Enabling Employment Credit and the Open Door Programme, with the aim to raise the employment rate of persons with disabilities to 40% by 2030.

Chart 15 Two-year moving average of resident employment rate of persons with disabilities aged 15 to 64 years

Per Cent



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

Notes: (1) Data on the employment outcomes of persons with disabilities are collected from 2018/2019 onwards.
(2) The use of two-year moving averages is to smooth out year-on-year fluctuations in the data due to a relatively small number of persons with disabilities.

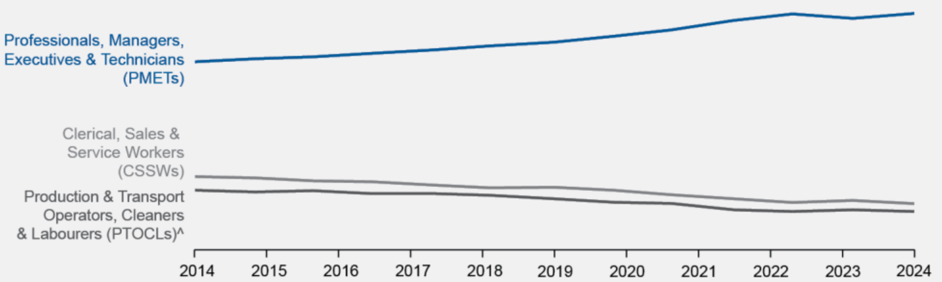
[22] Based on two-year moving averages, i.e. average for 2023 and 2024 compared with average for 2022 and 2023, and 2018 and 2019.

Higher proportion of employed residents held PMET job

2.18 The proportion of PMETs among employed residents rose from 62.6% in 2023 to 63.7% in 2024. This increase continues a long-term trend, driven by improvements in the workforce's educational qualifications.[23] Between 2014 and 2024, the number of employed residents in PMET roles grew, particularly in sectors like *Financial & Insurance Services*, *Health & Social Services*, *Information & Communications*, and *Professional Services*.

Chart 16 Employed residents by occupation

Per Cent



	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
PMETs	53.5	54.4	55.2	56.2	57.0	58.4	59.9	62.1	63.6	62.6	63.7
CSSWs	24.4	24.2	23.4	22.8	22.9	22.2	21.1	20.2	19.3	19.8	19.1
PTOCLs^	22.1	21.4	21.4	21.0	20.2	19.4	19.1	17.6	17.2	17.6	17.2

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

Notes: (1) Data are classified based on Singapore Standard Occupational Classification (SSOC) 2020. Data before year 2020 which were coded based on earlier versions of the SSOC were mapped to SSOC 2020 as far as possible to facilitate data comparability.

(2) ^ – Includes Agricultural & Fishery Workers and Workers Not Elsewhere Classified.

(3) Data for each year may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

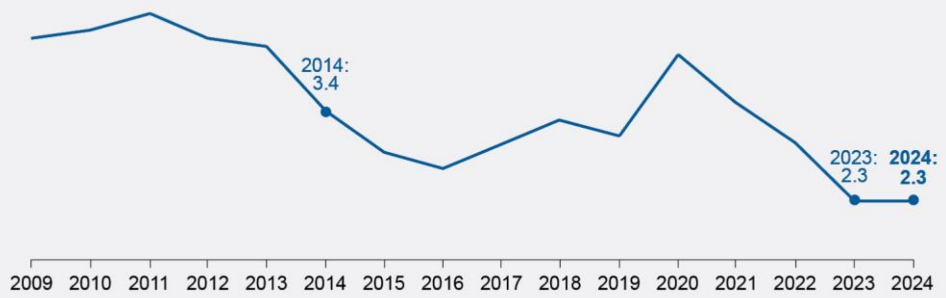
[23] The proportion of the tertiary-educated among employed residents has risen from 51.5% in 2014 to 63.8% in 2024.

Time-related under-employment rate remained low

2.19 The resident time-related under-employment rate held steady at the low rate of 2.3% in 2024. The time-related under-employment rate was lower than a decade ago (2014: 3.4%), across groups by age and education especially among seniors and the less educated. While the tight labour market has capped time-related under-employment, the expansion of the Progressive Wage Model (PWM) and other initiatives to uplift wages could also have reduced the need for lower-wage workers in part-time jobs to work more hours in return for higher pay.

Chart 17 Resident time-related under-employment rate

Per Cent



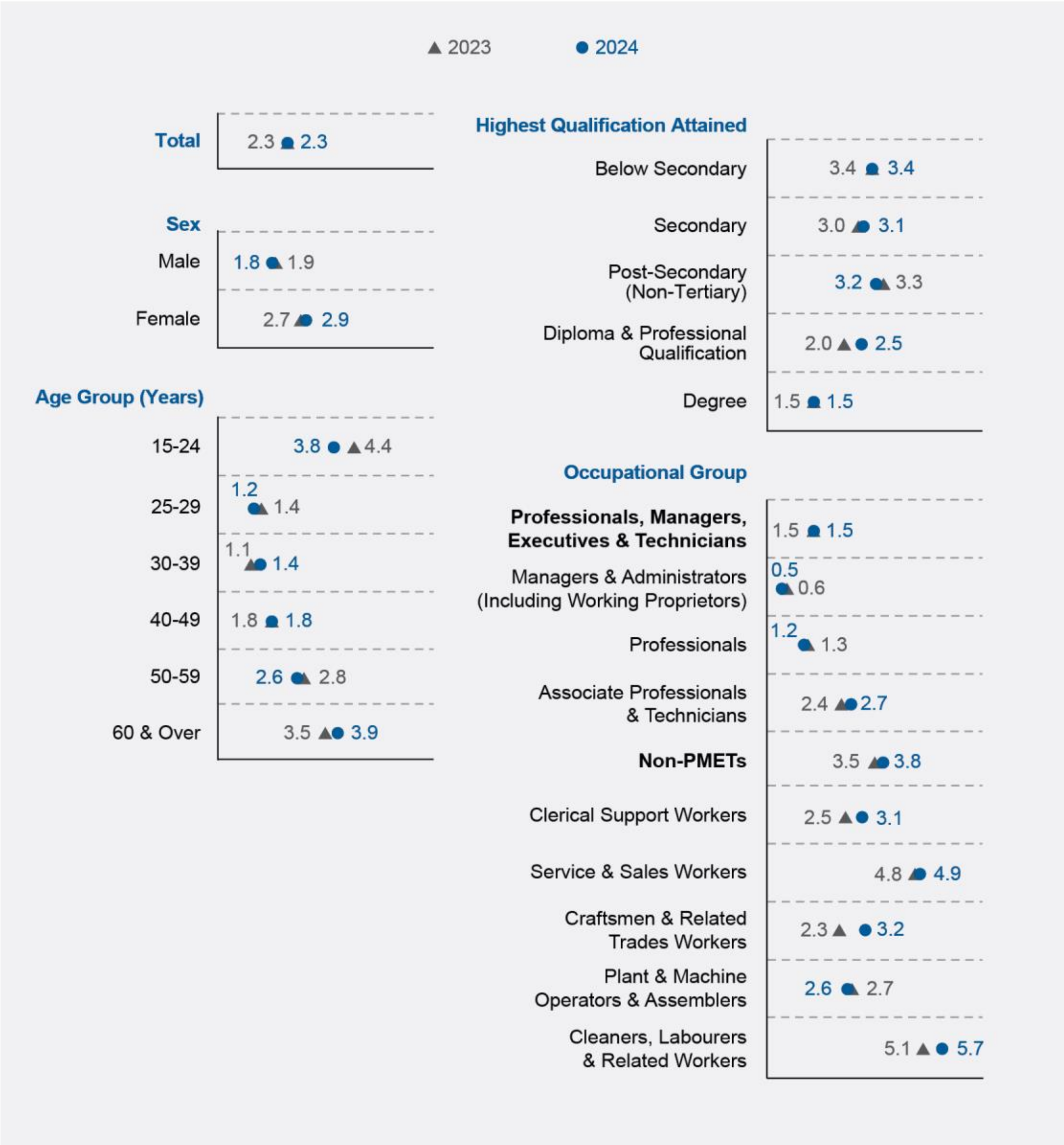
Source: Comprehensive Labour Force Survey, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM

Note: Comparable data series starts from 2009 onwards, when the definition of part-time employment was revised to align with the corresponding change in the Employment Act.

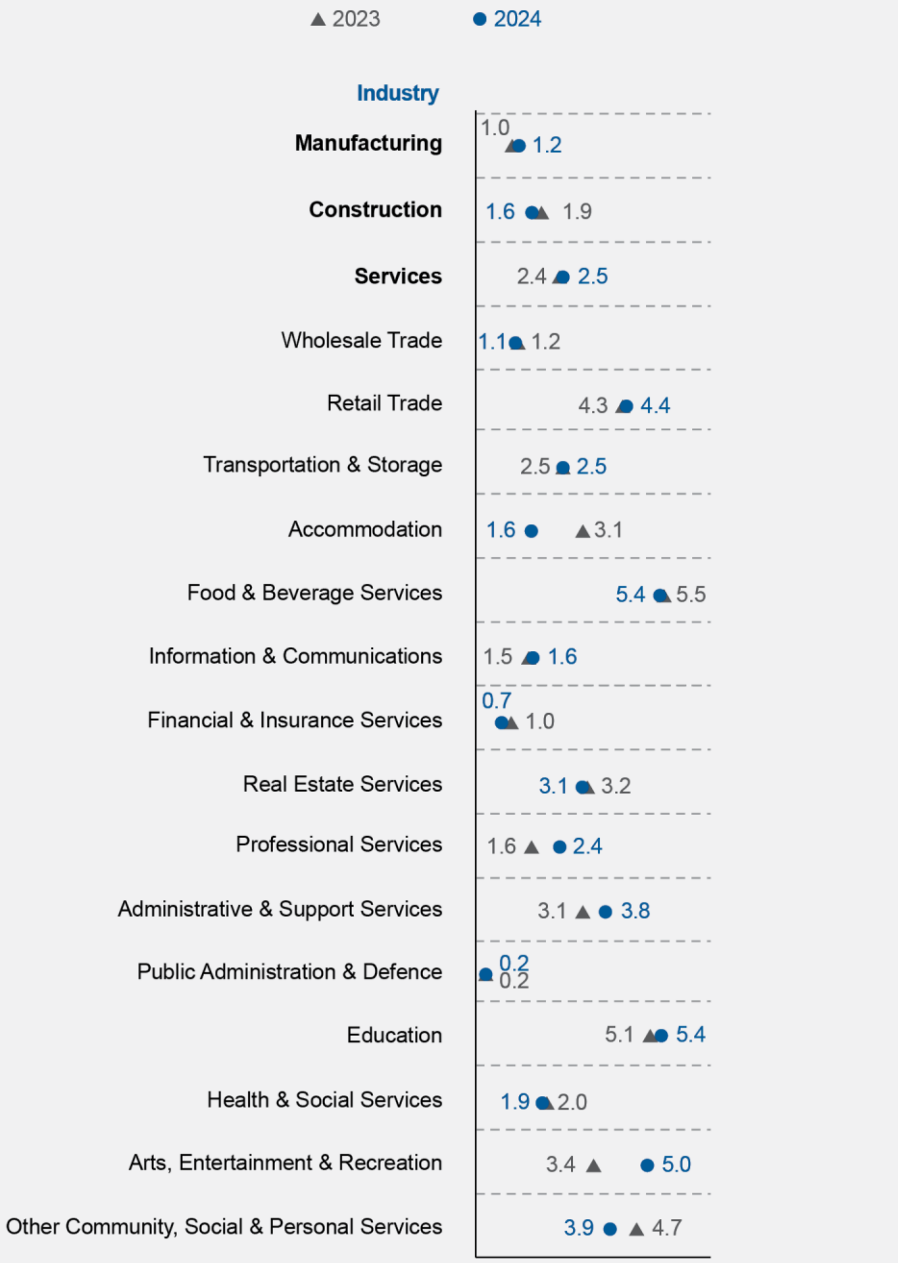
2.20 Over the past year, certain groups of workers experienced an increase in time-related under-employment. This followed a sharp drop from 2022 to 2023, when the recovery of tourism and construction boosted job demand. The sectors affected included *Professional Services*, *Administrative & Support Services*, and *Arts, Entertainment & Recreation*. Specific job categories impacted were *clerical support, craftsmen & related trades*, and *cleaners, labourers & similar roles*. Despite the recent rise, their time-related under-employment rates remained lower than the historical average.[24]

Chart 18 Resident time-related under-employment rate by characteristics

Per Cent



[24] The time-related under-employment rate in 2024 was lower than the historical average (2009 to 2024) in *Professional Services* (2024: 2.4%; historical average: 2.7%), *Administrative & Support Services* (3.8%; 4.9%), and *Arts, Entertainment & Recreation* (5.0%; 8.3%); and for *clerical support workers* (3.1%; 3.4%), *craftsmen & related trades workers* (3.2%; 3.8%), and *cleaners, labourers & related workers* (5.7%; 9.3%).



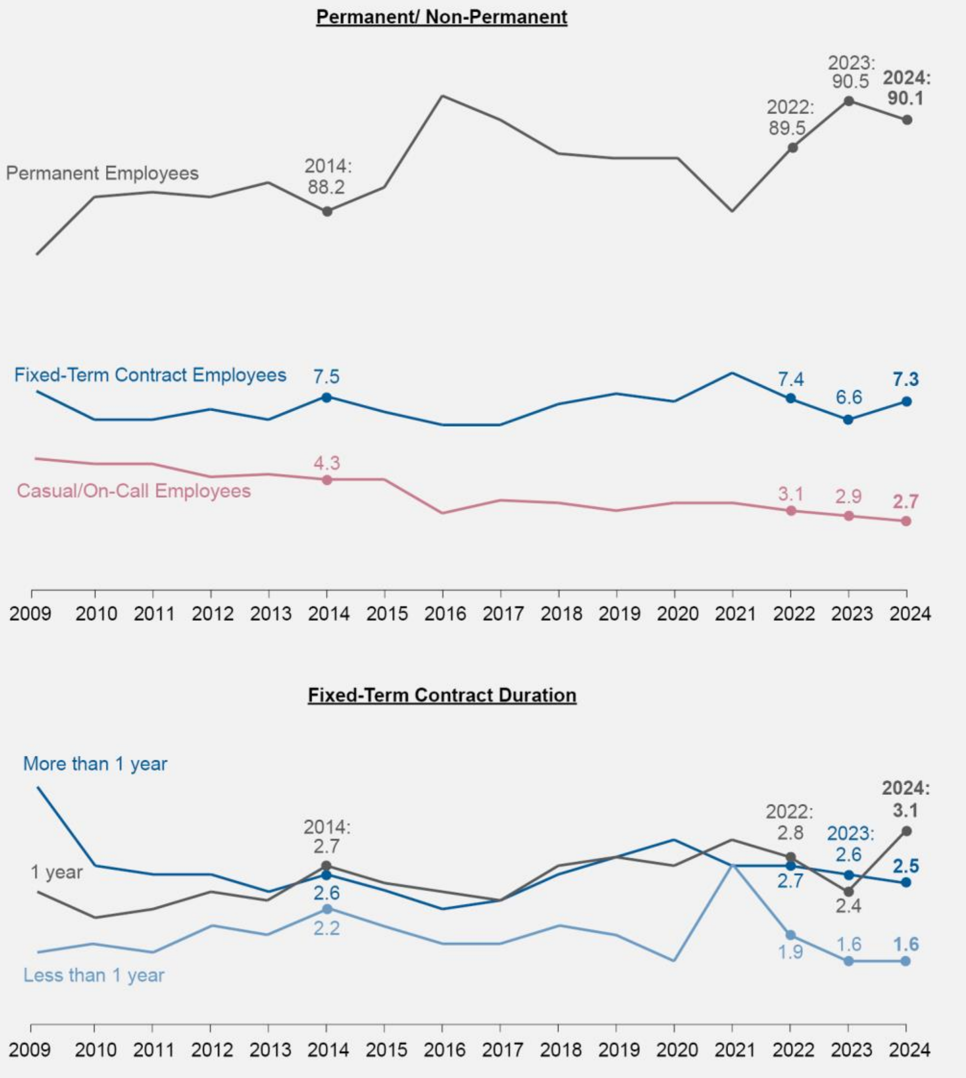
Source: Comprehensive Labour Force Survey, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM

Vast majority of resident employees are in permanent positions

2.21 In 2024, permanent employees made up 90.1% of employees, slightly down from the peak of 90.5% in 2023, but still one of the highest levels in the past decade. Casual or on-call workers continued to represent a small portion of employees, with their share decreasing further to 2.7%. Meanwhile, there was an increase in the proportion of fixed-term contract employees, mainly due to an increase in employees on one-year contracts.

Chart 19 Incidence of resident employees by type of employment

Per Cent



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

Notes: (1) Data exclude full-time National Servicemen.
(2) Incidence refers to employees in the specific category as a percentage of all resident employees.
(3) Data may not add up due to rounding.

2.22 The rise in fixed-term contract employees was most notable among those aged 15 to 24 years and 60 years and over. For youths, this is largely due to students in employment or those just starting their careers. For seniors, the increase is driven by individuals taking on new jobs or being re-employed, rather than reflecting greater job insecurity. Fewer seniors were in casual or on-call roles,[25] and the proportion in permanent employment remained high.[26] Among individuals aged 25 to 29, the share of fixed-term contract employees stayed relatively stable. This stability was also observed among degree holders (remaining at 8.5%) and diploma/professional qualification holders (increasing slightly from 9.6% in 2023 to 9.8% in 2024).

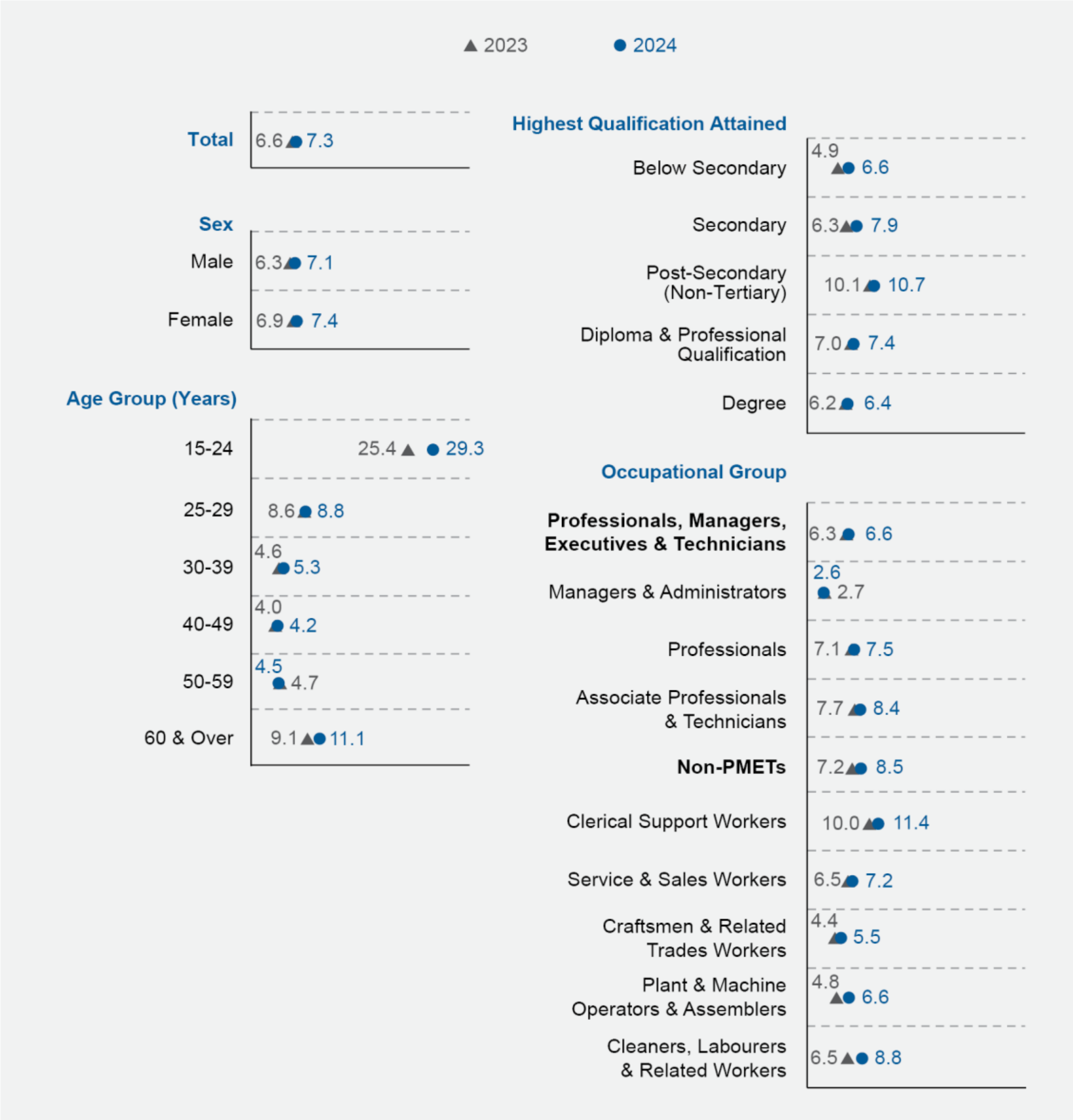
2.23 From 2023 to 2024, the share of resident employees on fixed-term contracts remained relatively stable across most industries. However, certain sectors saw increases, particularly in *Arts, Entertainment & Recreation* and *Accommodation*, likely due to a higher demand for temporary workers in roles related to events and conventions. The *Education* sector also experienced a notable rise, with more employees on fixed-term contracts, particularly those lasting one year or more.

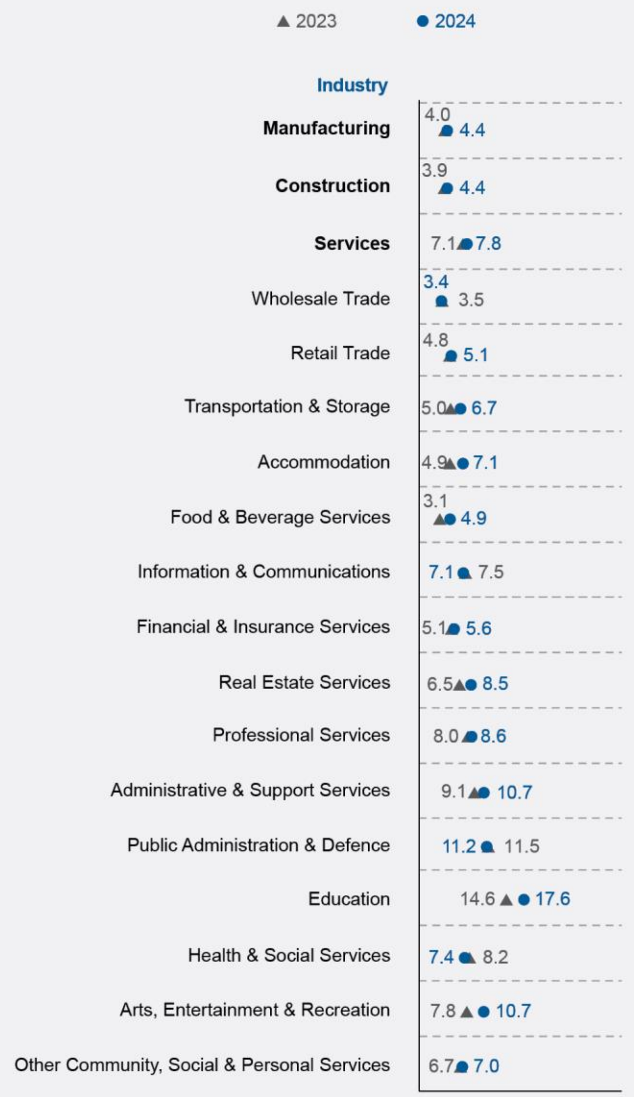
[25] From 2023 to 2024, the proportion of resident employees aged 60 years and over in causal/on-call positions declined from 7.8% to 6.1%.

[26] In 2024, 82.9% of resident employees aged 60 years and over were employed in permanent positions.

Chart 20 Incidence of fixed-term contract employees by characteristics

Per Cent





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

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

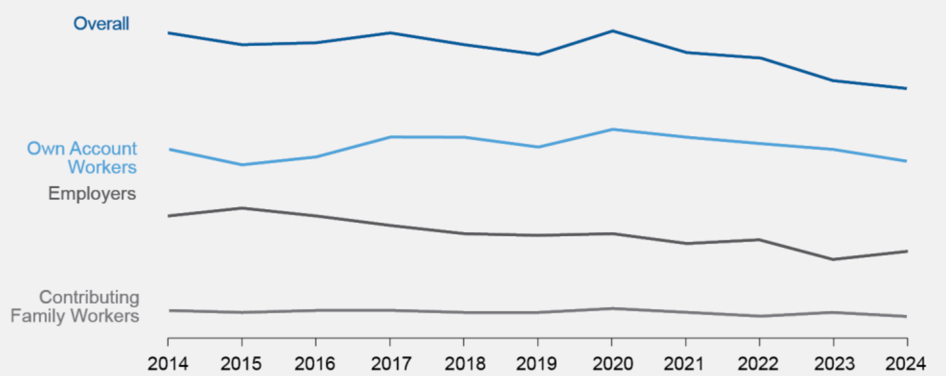
(2) Incidence refers to fixed-term contract employees as a percentage of resident employees in the respective categories.

Share of self-employed declined further due to fewer own account workers

2.24 The share of self-employed residents declined from 12.2% in 2023 to 11.8% in 2024, driven by a drop in own account workers (8.7% to 8.1%) and, to a lesser extent, contributing family workers (0.4% to 0.2%). Meanwhile, the proportion of resident employees rose to 88.2% in 2024, up from 87.8% in 2023 and 85.3% in 2020. This shift reflects both increased job openings[27] and a growing preference for the stability and benefits offered by employee roles.

Chart 21 Proportion of self-employed among employed residents

Per Cent



	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Overall	14.6	14.0	14.1	14.6	14.0	13.5	14.7	13.6	13.3	12.2	11.8
Own Account Workers	8.7	7.9	8.3	9.3	9.3	8.8	9.7	9.3	9.0	8.7	8.1
Employers	5.3	5.7	5.3	4.8	4.4	4.3	4.4	3.9	4.1	3.1	3.5
Contributing Family Workers	0.5	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.6	0.4	0.2	0.4	0.2

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

Note: Data for "own account workers", "employers" and "contributing family workers" may not add up to the overall figure due to rounding.

[27] The number of job vacancies (seasonally adjusted) reached a high of 124,400 in March 2022, having trended upwards from a low of 41,800 in June 2020. The number has since eased but remained high at 81,200 in June 2024, compared to the pre-pandemic range of around 50,000 to 60,000 job vacancies.

Number of resident primary own account workers decreased further

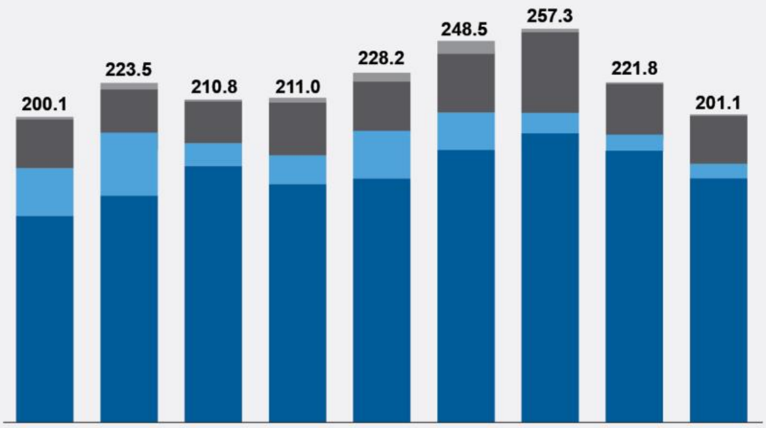
2.25 Since 2016, the Labour Force Supplementary Survey has been conducted annually to collect data on residents engaged in own-account work. With its extended reference period covering the entire year, rather than just a week, the survey provides a more accurate picture of the prevalence and experiences of these workers.

2.26 There were 201,100 residents who did own account work as a regular form of employment over the one-year period ending mid-2024, of which the large majority were regular primary own account workers (i.e. workers who did own account work as their main job and livelihood). The number of regular primary own account workers has declined from 187,800 in 2023 to 169,000 in 2024, and they made up 6.8%[28] of all employed residents in 2024. Among them, the proportion who did it on a preferred basis remained high over the year at 94.1%. Most preferred this work arrangement for the flexibility in working hours and location etc. (47.3%) and the freedom in choice of work (30.4%) associated with own account work, and for greater control over their career (17.7%).

2.27 There was also a small segment who did own account work on the side (secondary own account workers: 32,100), a decline from the preceding year (34,000). Among those who chose this work arrangement, the flexibility (42.1%) and freedom (24.5%) associated with own account work were some of the top reasons for their choice. In addition, some of these secondary own account workers were using own account work to complement their current lifestyle and main job, such as to earn income with their spare time (32.5%) or spend more time with family (23.2%).

Chart 22 Resident regular own account workers

Number ('000)



	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Primary	**166.8**	**190.9**	**182.1**	**174.8**	**190.9**	**201.8**	**202.7**	**187.8**	**169.0**
Preferred	134.6	147.9	167.3	155.1	158.9	177.7	188.6	176.8	159.0
Non-Preferred	32.2	43.0	14.8	19.6	32.0	24.1	14.0	11.0	9.9
Secondary	**33.3**	**32.6**	**28.7**	**36.3**	**37.3**	**46.8**	**54.6**	**34.0**	**32.1**
Preferred	31.8	28.9	27.4	34.4	31.9	38.8	52.6	33.0	31.0
Non-Preferred	s	3.7	s	s	5.4	8.0	s	s	s

Source: Supplementary Survey on Own Account Workers, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM

Notes: (1) Data refer to residents in own account work as a regular form of employment for the 12-month period ending the middle of the year.

(2) "s": Data suppressed due to small number covered.

(3) Data may not add up due to rounding.

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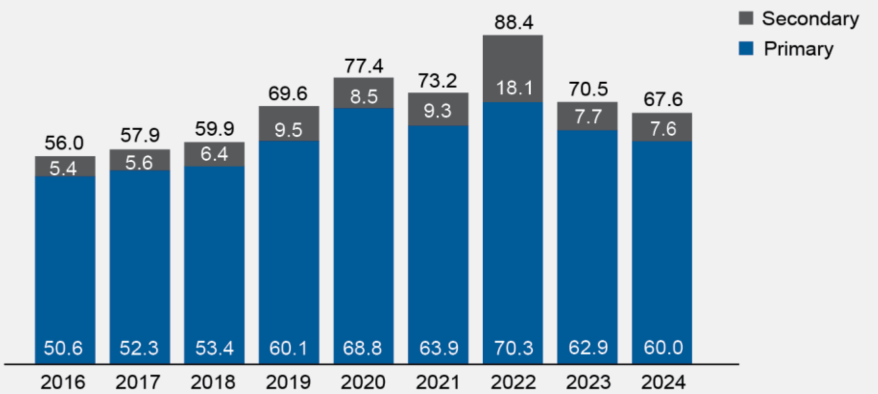
28 The estimate is derived based on the number of regular primary own account workers, as a proportion of total resident employment (average over 12 months ending the middle of the year).

Number of resident platform workers fell

2.28 Platform workers are own account workers who have an agreement with a platform operator[29] to provide ride-hail or delivery services to users for the platform operator and from this, derive payment or benefits in kind. Their work arrangement with platforms could resemble those of employees.[30] Such jobs include *taxi drivers* (20,800 in 2024), *private-hire car drivers* (31,800), and *delivery workers* (15,300). Overall, the number of regular platform workers decreased from 70,500 in 2023 (or 2.9% of all employed residents) to 67,600 (or 2.7%) in 2024.[31] This decline was driven by *taxi drivers* (from 22,200 to 20,800) and *private-hire car drivers* (from 33,600 to 31,800). There could be fewer who did such platform work regularly as increased salaried work opportunities could have prompted these platform workers to take up salaried jobs as their regular job.

Chart 23 Resident regular platform workers

Number ('000)



Source: Supplementary Survey on Own Account Workers, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM

Notes: (1) Data are based on all regular platform workers (preferred and non-preferred).
(2) Data may not add up due to rounding.

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29 Platform operators are companies that enter into agreements with users to provide ride-hail or delivery services, utilise data to automate decisions affecting platform workers (such as task assignment and remuneration per task), and impose rules, requirements or prohibitions on these workers.

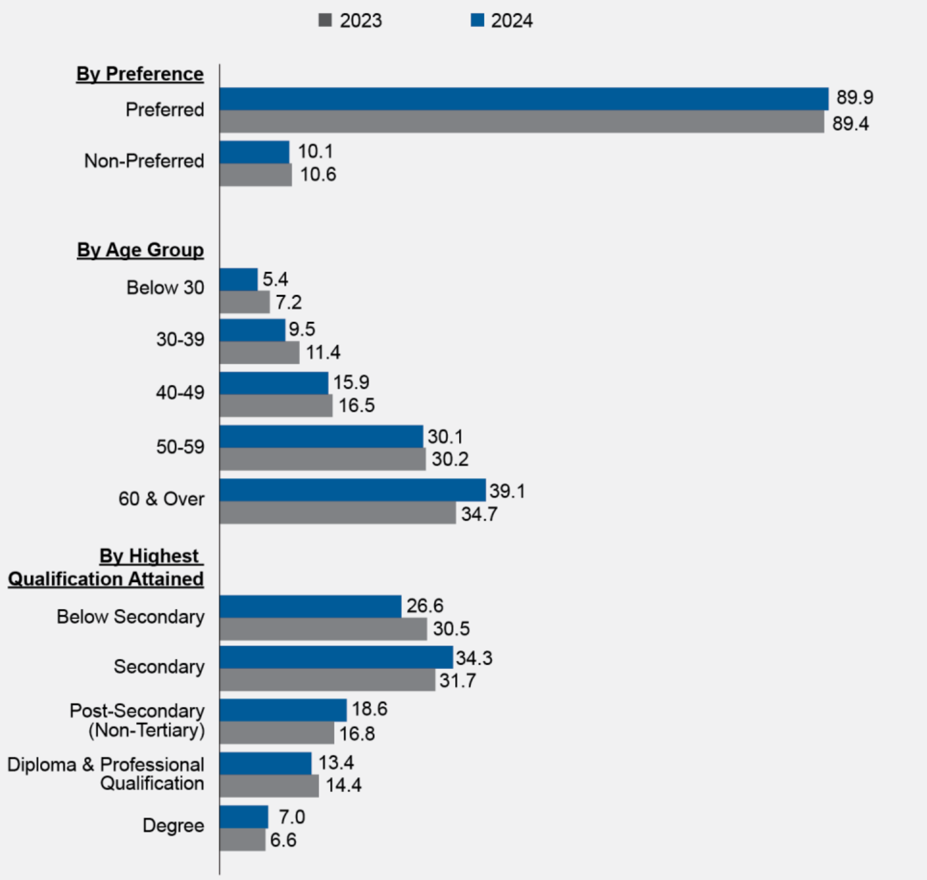
30 Platform workers are subject to the control of platform operators, for example, on work assignments and payment rate. The recently passed Platform Workers Bill will also strengthen protection for platform workers in three key areas: housing and retirement adequacy through Central Provident Fund (CPF) contributions, financial compensation for work-related injuries, and a legal framework for representation.

31 The number for the specific occupations (i.e. taxi drivers, private-hire car drivers, delivery workers using online matching platforms) may add up to more than the total number of platform workers, because an individual can have more than one occupation.

2.29 Majority of regular primary platform workers preferred to be engaged in this work arrangement (89.9%). Seniors aged 60 years and over and the non-tertiary educated continued to form the larger share of these platform workers, and their share has increased from 2023 to 2024. As seniors phase into retirement, they may take on platform work as it offers flexibility in working hours.

Chart 24 Resident regular primary platform workers

Per Cent



Source: Supplementary Survey on Own Account Workers, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM

Note: Data for each characteristic may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

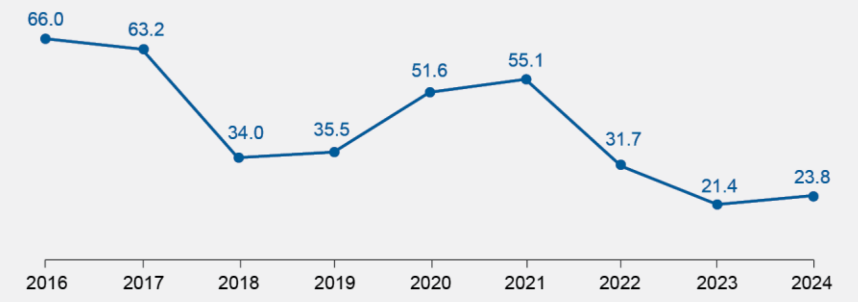
Proportion of regular own account workers who faced challenges fell over the years

2.30 The share of regular own account workers who faced challenges in 2024 (23.8%) remained significantly lower than before the pandemic (35.5% in 2019), despite increasing slightly from 2023 (21.4%). Barring increases during the pandemic years, this proportion has declined over the longer term (from 66.0% in 2016 to 23.8% in 2024). This decline reflects continuing collective efforts from the government and tripartite partners in addressing key issues faced by own account workers, such as concerns regarding healthcare, retirement, payment-related disputes, and loss of income in the event of work injury.[32]

[32] Recommendations from the Tripartite Workgroup on Self-Employed Persons have been implemented since March 2018. Additionally, the recently passed Platform Workers Bill will strengthen protection for platform workers in the key areas of housing and retirement adequacy, financial compensation for work-related injuries, and a legal framework for representation.

Chart 25 Resident regular own account workers who faced challenges with own account work

Per Cent



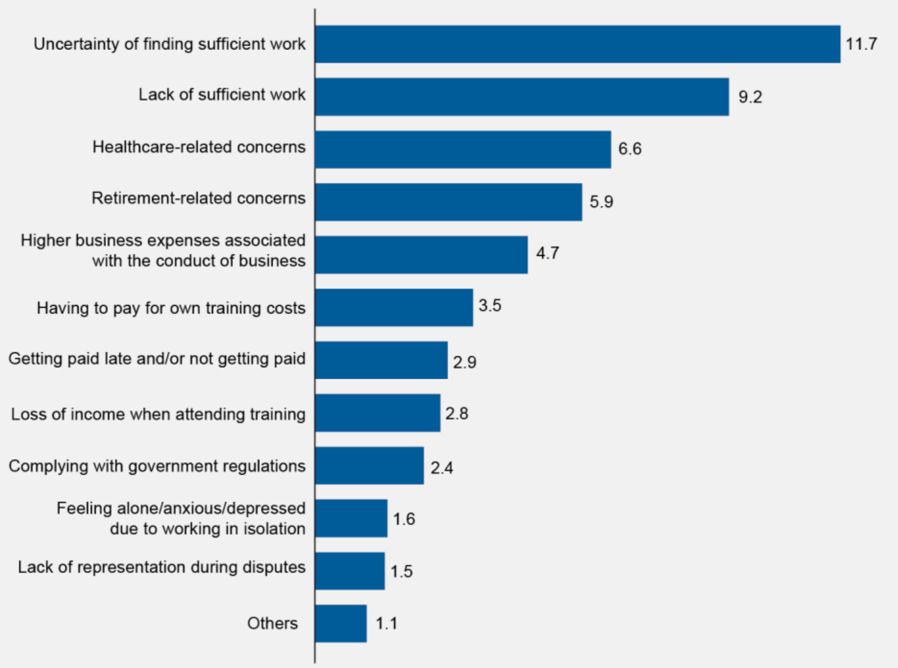
Source: Supplementary Survey on Own Account Workers, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM

Note: Data are based on all regular own account workers (primary and secondary own account workers).

2.31 Uncertainty of finding sufficient work (11.7%) and lack of sufficient work (9.2%) were the top challenges faced by own account workers in 2024. These two challenges, together with healthcare- and retirement-related concerns, have been the most common areas of concern among own account workers over the years.

Chart 26 Challenges faced by resident regular own account workers, 2024

Per Cent



Source: Supplementary Survey on Own Account Workers, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM

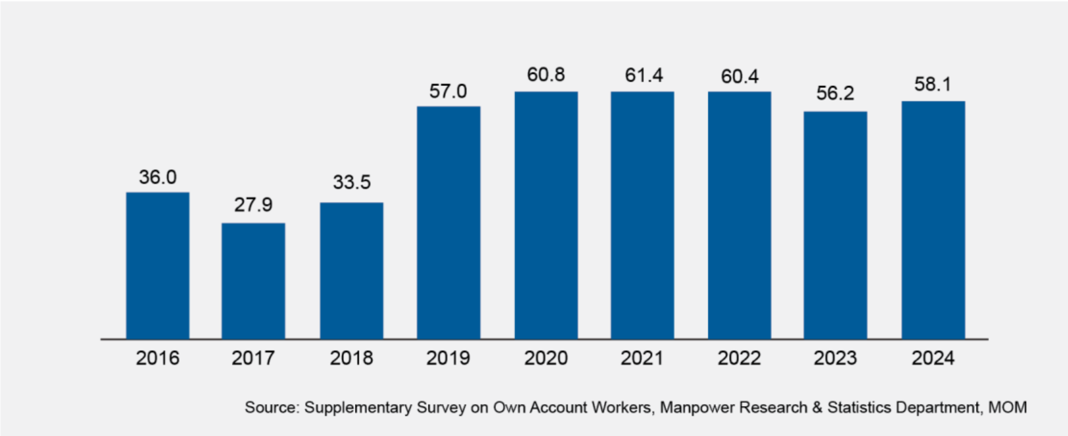
Notes: (1) Data are based on all regular own account workers (primary and secondary own account workers).
(2) Each worker may indicate multiple concerns.
(3) Concerns cited by less than 1% of own account workers are not separately reflected here.

Online channels are now a common way of advertising or obtaining business for own account workers

2.32 With the rising prevalence of digitally-enabled business models such as online matching platforms, the overall adoption of digital tools by regular primary own account workers remained high. 58.1% of them utilised online channels to advertise or obtain business in 2024, including 36.6% who took up work via online matching platforms.[33] The proportion has been relatively stable at around 60% in more recent years when mobile applications and websites became common tools for digital services.

Chart 27 Usage of online channels for resident regular primary own account workers

Per Cent

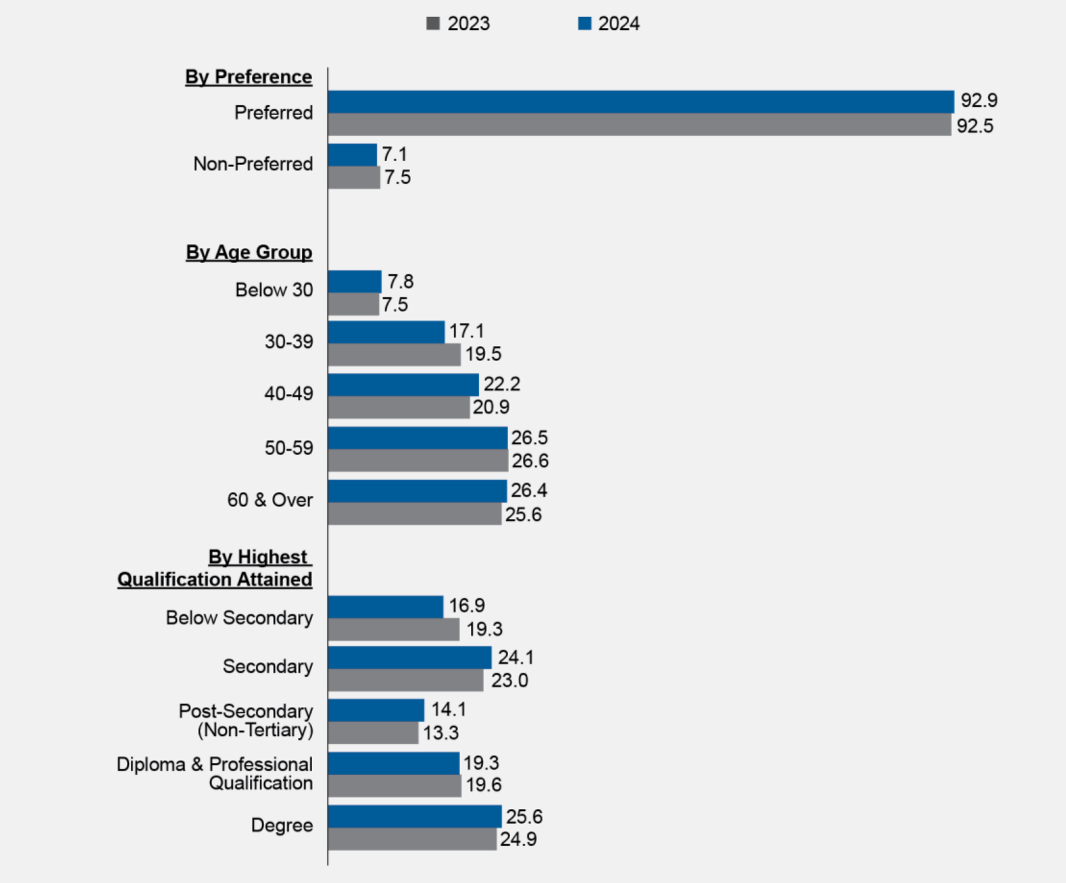


[33] In this report, online matching platforms refer to labour sharing platforms that serve as intermediaries to match or connect buyers with workers who take up piecemeal or assignment-based work. Such platforms could be either websites or mobile applications, covering services such as ride-hailing, goods/food delivery, creative work, etc. At present, there is no globally standardised statistical definition for digital platform employment. Singapore is collaborating with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) to develop internationally agreed statistical definitions on digital platform employment.

2.33 Reflecting the profile of own account workers in general, those using online channels were mostly in the ages of 50 and over (50 to 59 years: 26.5%; 60 years and over: 26.4%), and the non-tertiary educated (55.1%).

Chart 28 Resident regular primary own account workers who used online channels

Per Cent



Source: Supplementary Survey on Own Account Workers, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM

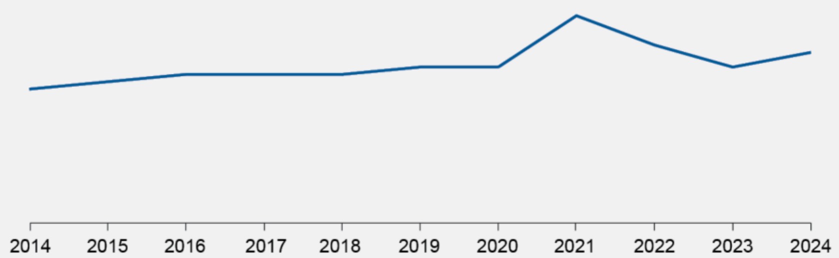
Note: Data for each characteristic may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

The proportion of workers who held multiple jobs edged up slightly but remained low

2.34 Multiple jobholding remained uncommon in Singapore, with 3.0% of workers in 2024 holding more than one job. This proportion has increased slightly from 2023 (2.8%), with the increase more pronounced among the self-employed (from 5.5% in 2023 to 6.8% in 2024) than employees (from 2.4% to 2.5%).

Chart 29 Proportion of employed residents holding multiple jobs

Per Cent



	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Proportion	2.5	n.a.	2.7	n.a.	2.7	2.8	2.8	3.5	3.1	2.8	3.0

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

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

(2) n.a. - Not available as data on multiple job holders was not collected in these years.

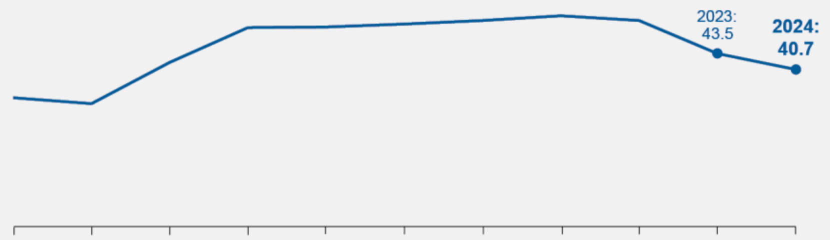
3. Training

Training participation among resident labour force continued to fall from the high during pandemic

3.1 The training participation rate[34] of the resident labour force declined to 40.7% in 2024, continuing the fall from the high in 2021 (49.9%) when more took up online training or e-learning during the pandemic. The decline in training participation rate among the labour force, along with the recent rise in proportion of residents outside the labour force who were attending education or training,[35] reflects an inclination among trainees to be fully engaged in training, which could allow for deeper learning in a subject matter. For example, those who were upgrading their skills or education may do so through full-time programmes instead of taking short courses and working at the same time.

Chart 30 Training participation rate of resident labour force

Per Cent



	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Rate	36.0	35.0	42.0	47.9	48.0	48.5	49.1	49.9	49.1	43.5	40.7

Source: Supplementary Survey on Adult Training, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM

Note: Training participation rate is defined as the proportion of residents aged 15 to 64 in the labour force who had engaged in some form of job-related structured training or education activities over the 12-month period ending June.

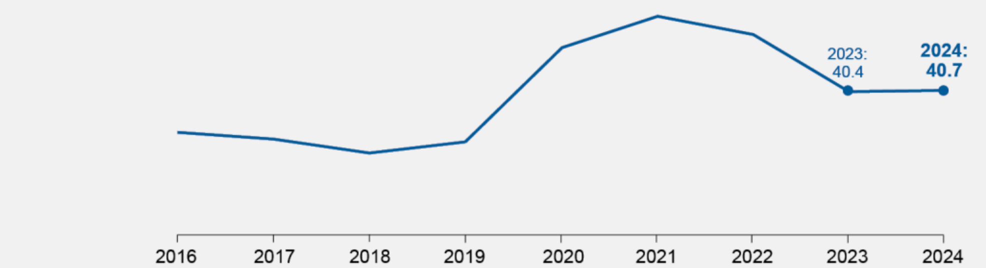
[34] This refers to the training participation rate over the 12-month period ending June of the respective years. Data in this section pertain to those aged 15 to 64 years.

[35] Among residents aged 15 to 64 who were outside the labour force, the share who indicated that they were in education or training has risen from 42.1% in 2021 to 47.0% in 2024. This reflects increases among younger residents aged 15 to 39.

3.2 Digital training methods continued to be an essential part of the training landscape, even after the post-COVID recovery when workers have adjusted to in-office work activities and no longer require extensive training support. The proportion of trainees who participated in training online in 2024 (40.7%) remained higher than pre-pandemic levels (30.0% or below). This trend is likely to remain as online training allows for greater flexibility in venue, class size, and timing, as well as lower organising costs.

Chart 31 Proportion of structured training attendees who participated in online training

Per Cent



	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Proportion	30.0	28.3	24.8	27.6	51.5	59.4	54.8	40.4	40.7

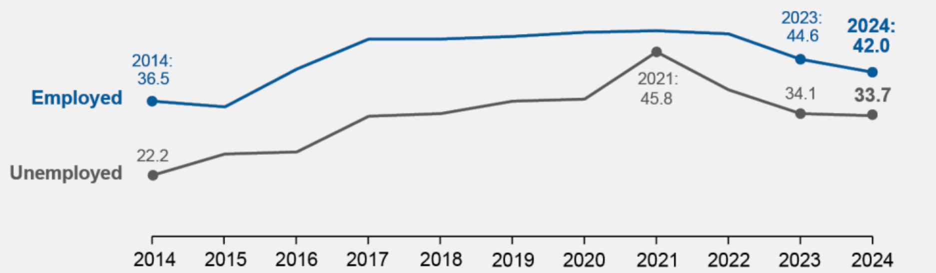
Source: Supplementary Survey on Adult Training, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM

Notes: (1) Figures are based on residents in the labour force who have attended structured training.
(2) Data pertaining to online training was collected from 2016 onwards.

3.3 Training participation rate declined for the employed (from 44.6% in 2023 to 42.0% in 2024). It dipped for unemployed residents (from 34.1% to 33.7%), moderating from the larger declines in the past two years from the all-time high in 2021.[36] Nevertheless, training participation across both groups have increased from the levels in 2014, reflecting collective efforts to encourage upskilling, reskilling, and continuous learning among workers and job seekers.

Chart 32 Training participation rate of resident labour force by labour force status

Per Cent



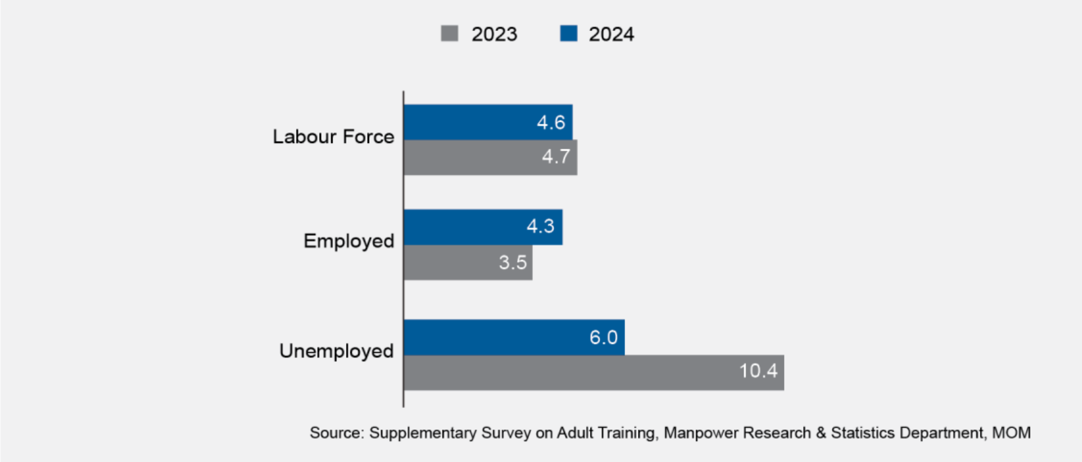
Source: Supplementary Survey on Adult Training, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM

[36] Following the immediate post-pandemic resurgence in hiring in 2021, more job seekers could have attended training to gain industry exposure, skillsets, and networking opportunities for new jobs or to boost their chances of finding employment.

3.4 Besides the overall decline in training participation rate of the labour force, the overall training intensity[37] also dipped from 4.7 days in 2023 to 4.6 days in 2024. This was driven by a significant decline in training intensity among the unemployed (10.4 days to 6.0 days), while the employed saw an increase (3.5 days to 4.3 days). Among unemployed non-trainees, more indicated that they did not know what skills to pick up or improve on, suggesting that job seekers may require more support in identifying key skillsets for training to stay relevant to job demands. Not considering the need to go for training and family commitments were other top reasons for not attending training among the unemployed.[38] The recently launched CareersFinder feature on MyCareersFuture portal, which provides personalised job and training recommendations to job seekers, could guide the unemployed in finding suitable training courses and improving employability.

Chart 33 Training intensity of resident labour force by labour force status

Days



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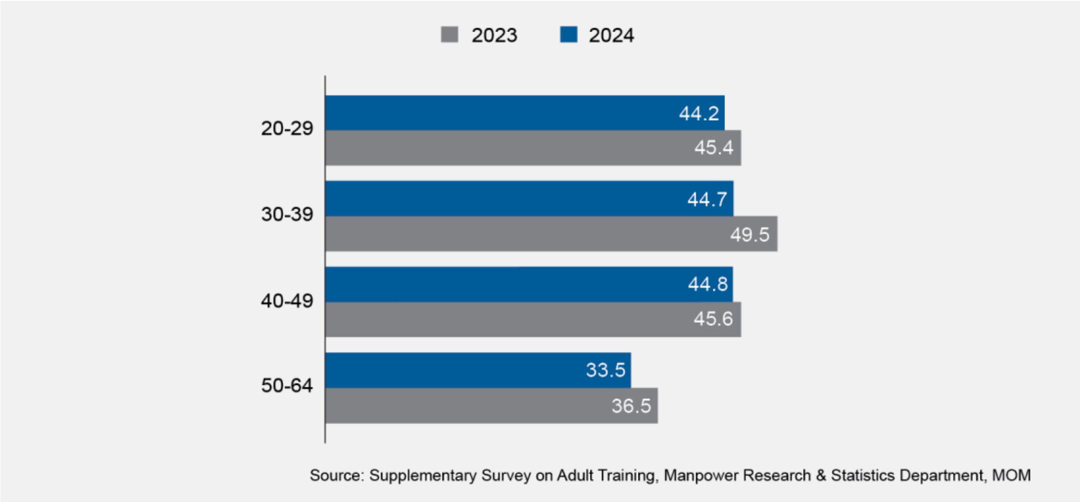
37 Training intensity is measured by the average number of training days per adult in the labour force.

38 Among unemployed non-trainees, the percentage who indicated that they did not know what skills to pick up or improve on increased from 5.9% in 2023 to 15.1% in 2024. Not considering the need to go for training (from 19.0% to 23.4%) and family commitments (from 20.0% to 17.4%) were the other top reasons for not attending training.

3.5 The training participation rate fell across all age groups, with larger declines seen among those aged 30 to 39 (49.5% in 2023 to 44.7% in 2024) and 50 to 64 (36.5% to 33.5%). Over the year, more non-trainees in both age groups indicated that they did not know what skills to pick up or improve on, or that they did not consider the need to attend training. Collective efforts by agencies to upskill the workforce, such as Workforce Singapore (WSG) and SkillsFuture Singapore (SSG), will help provide greater career guidance and accessibility to job-related learning opportunities particularly for the mature and older workers.

Chart 34 Training participation rate of resident labour force by age group

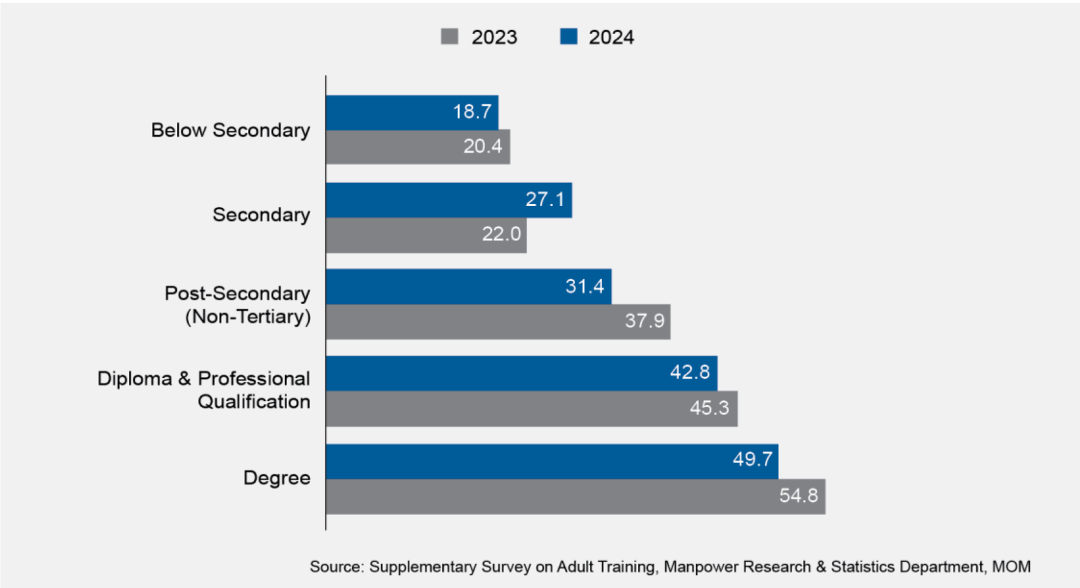
Per Cent



3.6 Training participation has declined across all educational groups, except those with secondary qualifications. Tertiary educated residents remained more likely to participate in training in 2024 (degree: 49.7%; diploma & professional qualification: 42.8%). To access good job opportunities and achieve income growth, there is a need for the less educated to keep up with training and close the skills gap with the better educated.

Chart 35 Training participation rate of resident labour force by highest qualification attained

Per Cent

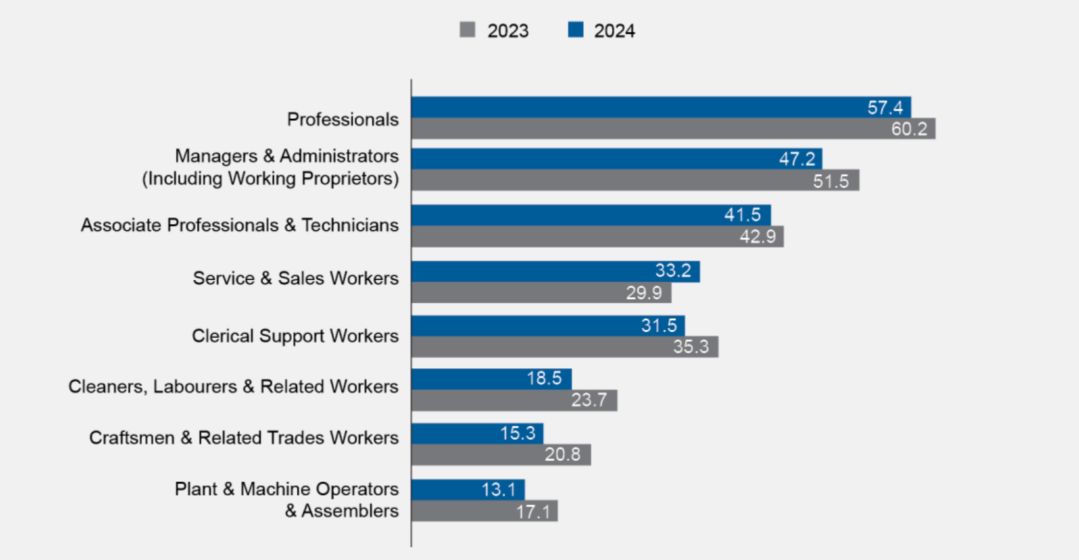


3.7 Mirroring the decline in training participation among the young and tertiary-educated, the training participation rate fell across all PMET occupational groups, with the largest decline observed among *managers & administrators* (from 51.5% in 2023 to 47.2% in 2024). Despite so, PMETs remained more likely than non-PMETs to participate in training, as their jobs tend to require a wider range of skills. Training remains a key pathway for all, including non-PMETs, to gain skills to increase the potential for career and wage progression.

3.8 Among non-PMETs, the training participation rate fell across all occupational groups, except *service & sales workers* whose participation increased (from 29.9% in 2023 to 33.2% in 2024). The higher training participation was contributed by increases seen among *service & sales workers* in *Retail Trade* (from 25.0% to 36.1%) and *Food & Beverage Services* (from 27.8% to 34.3%), which are recently covered under the PWM,[39] reflecting efforts to upgrade the skills of workers in these sectors. Conversely, *cleaners, labourers & related workers* (from 23.7% to 18.5%) and *craftsmen & related trades workers* (from 20.8% to 15.3%) saw the largest declines in training participation rate. Going forward, the expansion of the PWM will help to further boost training of more non-PMETs (e.g. clerks, drivers, sales workers) and uplift their wages.

Chart 36 Training participation rate of employed residents by occupation

Per Cent



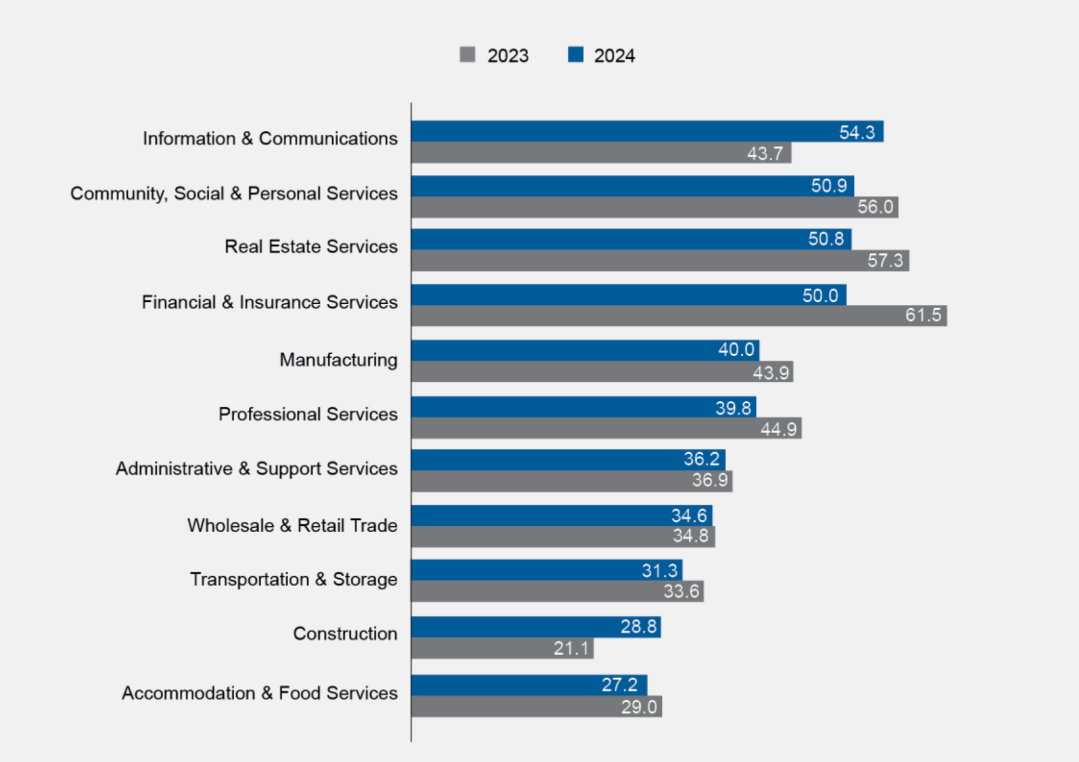
Source: Supplementary Survey on Adult Training, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM

[39] The PWM requirements came into effect for the *Retail Trade* sector from 1 September 2022, and for the *Food Services* sector from 1 March 2023.

3.9 There was a broad-based decline in training participation rate across all industries except *Information & Communications* (from 43.7% in 2023 to 54.3% in 2024) and *Construction* (21.1% to 28.8%). Workers in *Information & Communications* and *Financial & Insurance Services* are amongst those who are more likely to participate in training, as they are in keener need to enhance their skills to remain employable amid rapid technological changes and business transformation in these industries.

Chart 37 Training participation rate of employed residents by industry

Per Cent



Source: Supplementary Survey on Adult Training, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM

Majority of employed residents experienced benefits from training

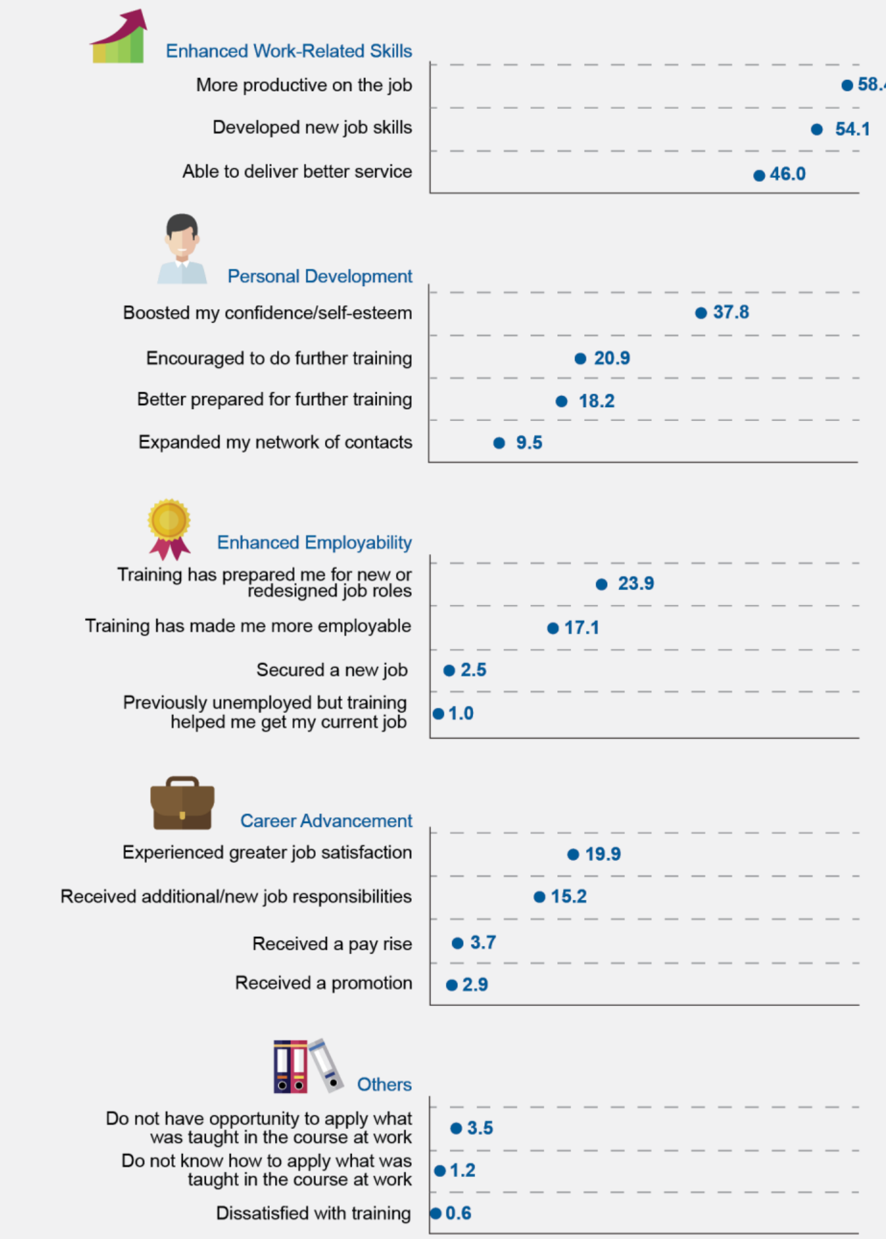
3.10 The majority (92.0%) of employed trainees reported having at least one tangible outcome of attending training. These trainees assessed that training has helped them become more productive on the job (58.4%), develop new skills (54.1%), and deliver better service (46.0%). A significant proportion also indicated that training has prepared them for new or redesigned job roles (23.9%).

3.11 Workers were less likely to indicate positive outcomes associated with career and wage progression, such as a pay raise (3.7%) or promotion (2.9%), immediately post-training. These outcomes are typically tied to improved work performance that is sustained over time. As a sizable group of trainees (15.2%) were assigned additional or new job responsibilities post-training, they are likely to see higher wages or a promotion over time.

3.12 Training has also brought about intangible benefits to employed workers, such as boosting their confidence or self-esteem (37.8%) and encouraging them to do further training (20.9%). These outcomes may raise work productivity.

Chart 38 Training outcomes of employed residents, 2024

Per Cent



Source: Supplementary Survey on Adult Training, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM

Notes: (1) Figures are based on employed trainees.

(2) Respondents can indicate more than one training outcome.

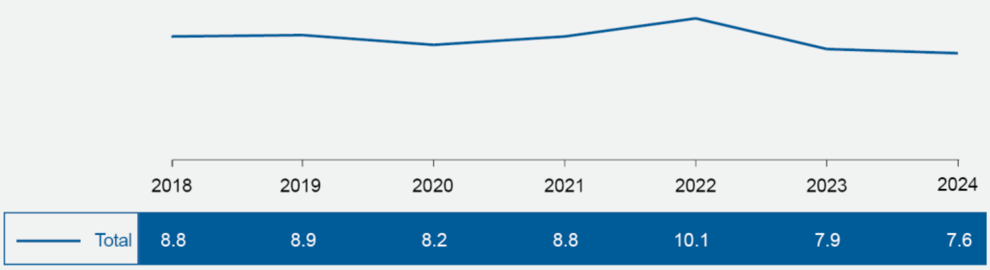
4. Job Mobility and Tenure

Proportion of workers who changed jobs has decreased

4.1 The proportion of employed residents who changed jobs in the past year decreased to 7.6% in 2024, following increases in 2021 and 2022 during the early stages of the post-pandemic recovery. This decline may be due to more workers staying in their current jobs as hiring slowed after the initial surge following the COVID-19 crisis.

Chart 39 Proportion of employed residents who had changed jobs in the last one year

Per Cent



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

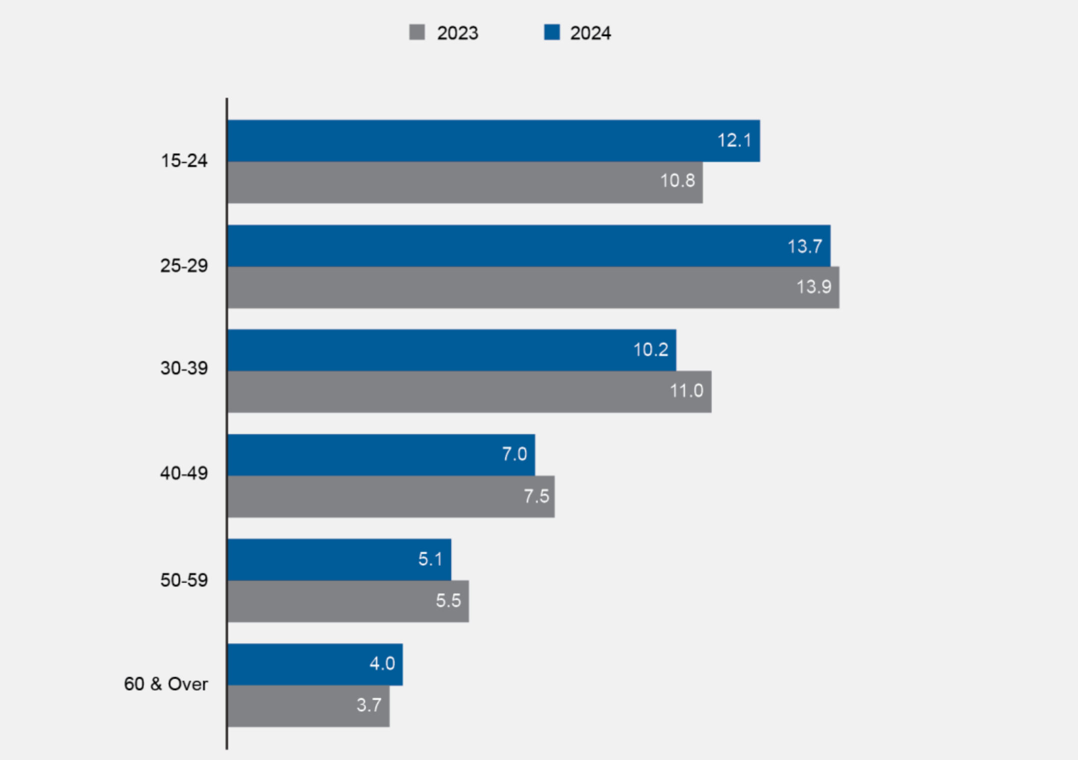
Notes: (1) Data exclude full-time National Servicemen.

(2) Data for job change in the last one year is available from 2018 onwards.

4.2 Job changes were more common among younger workers. The share of those aged 15 to 24 years who changed jobs increased from 10.8% in 2023 to 12.1% in 2024, although it remained lower than the pre-COVID level of 14.2%. This age group tends to switch jobs more frequently early in their careers to explore different opportunities and find a better job fit; or take on temporary roles while studying or during school breaks. In contrast, job change rates were stable or decreased for other age groups, including those aged 25 to 29, many of whom have completed higher education, indicating that more workers in these age groups are staying in their current positions.

Chart 40 Proportion of employed residents who had changed jobs in the last one year by age

Per Cent



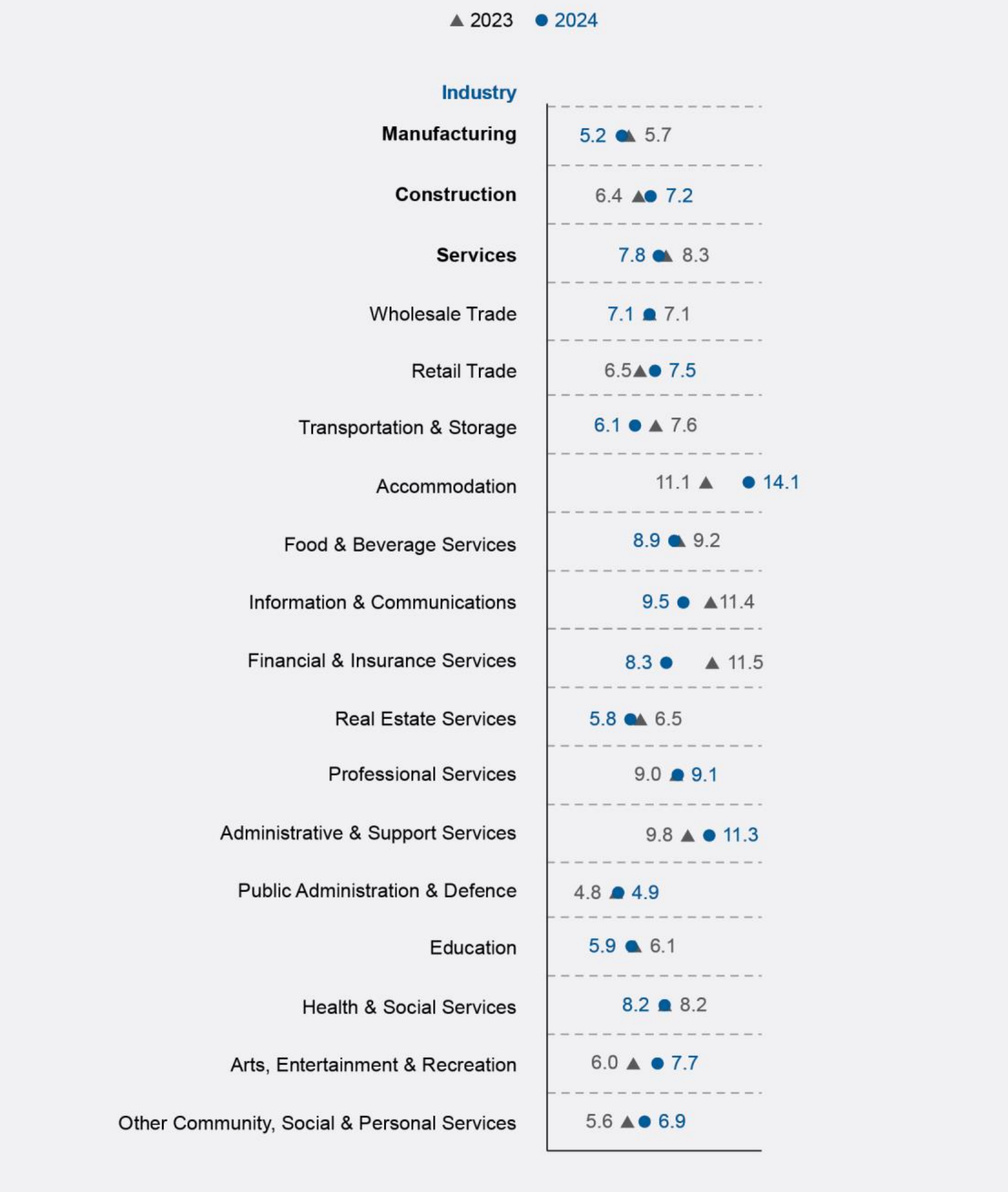
Source: Comprehensive Labour Force Survey, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM

Note: Data exclude full-time National Servicemen.

4.3 As hiring stabilised and employers filled job openings, the rate of job change declined across various industries, including *Financial & Insurance Services* and *Information & Communications*. However, tourism-related sectors such as *Accommodation*, *Arts, Entertainment & Recreation*, and *Retail Trade* saw an increase in job switching, driven by stronger demand for workers due to a rise in international visitor arrivals.

Chart 41 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

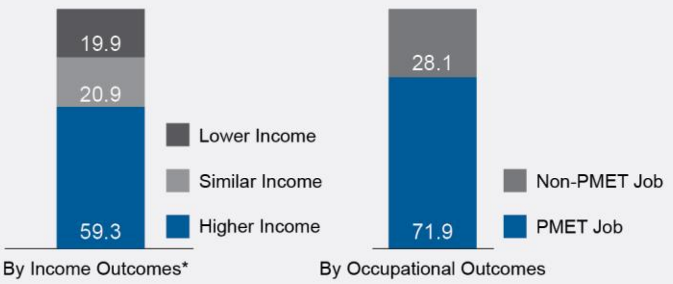
Note: Data exclude full-time National Servicemen.

Majority of resident employees who switched jobs moved into more productive sectors and higher-skilled roles, and consequently experienced increases in their incomes

4.4 The majority of full-time resident employees aged 25 to 64 years who transitioned to different industries experienced income increases, as they were generally hired into higher-skilled positions in more productive sectors like *Financial & Insurance Services*, *Information & Communications*, and *Professional Services*. Over the longer term, resident workers have moved into these more productive sectors. Between 2014 and 2024, the proportion of employed residents in these sectors grew.[40]

Chart 42 Full-time resident employees aged 25 to 64 years who changed industries in the last one year, 2024

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 2019 prices (2019 = 100).

(4) Data may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

[40] From 2014 to 2024, the proportion of employed residents increased from 7.9% to 10.1% in *Financial & Insurance Services*, 4.2% to 5.9% in *Information & Communications*, and 7.3% to 8.3% in *Professional Services*.

4.5 Industry switchers whose real wages increased were more likely to be younger, degree holders, and PMETs. They were also more likely to have switched to more productive sectors[41], such as *Financial & Insurance Services*, *Professional Services*, or *Wholesale Trade*. Facilitating job switches to more productive sectors and helping workers build up the skills required for such jobs can help more workers earn higher wages.

4.6 While a minority (19.9%) of industry switchers received lower income in their new job, most of them were keen in the job (92.2%), on par with industry switchers whose income rose (91.7%). They commonly found the work in the new job interesting/meaningful (33.1%; 33.3%). Being able to utilise their skills in the job (29.0%; 34.6%) and pay meeting their expectations (28.0%; 40.0%) were the other top reasons cited by industry switchers with real income decreases, even as the proportions were lower than those with real income gains.

Chart 43 Profile of full-time resident employees aged 25 to 64 years who changed industries in the last one year by income outcomes, 2024

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 2019 prices (2019 = 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).

[41] "More productive industries" refer to industries where the value-added per worker is above half of the industries in 2023, i.e. *Manufacturing*, *Wholesale Trade*, *Transportation & Storage*, *Accommodation*, *Information & Communications*, *Financial & Insurance Services*, *Real Estate Services*, and *Professional Services*.

BOX ARTICLE: INDUSTRY SWITCHERS IN SINGAPORE

INTRODUCTION

The proportion of employed residents who changed jobs in the past year decreased to 7.6% in 2024, following an increase in job-switching during 2021 and 2022, when the post-pandemic recovery was still in its early stages.

This article explores the profile of workers who switched industries in the past year, their income changes, and whether moving to more or less productive industries affects wage outcomes. The findings indicate that workers who switched to more productive sectors were more likely to see higher income gains. Encouraging workers to transition into more productive industries can foster a cycle of increased productivity and higher wages across the economy.

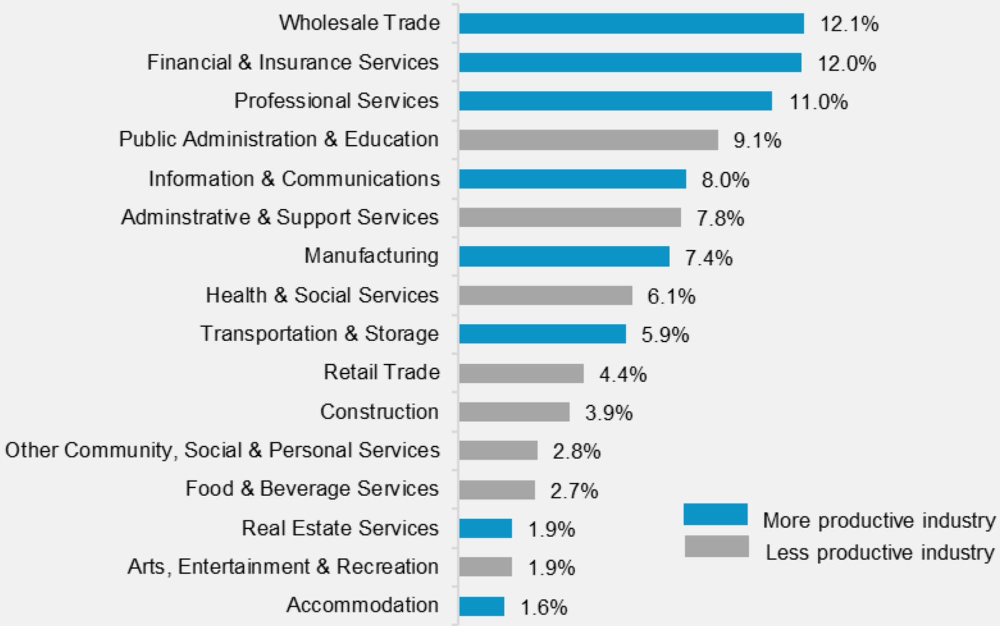
FINDINGS

Six in ten industry switchers moved into more productive industries, which typically pay better, including two in ten who were previously from a less productive industry

Six in ten (59.9%) full-time resident employees aged 25 to 64 who switched industries in 2024 shifted to one of the more productive industries[42], including *Wholesale Trade* (12.1%), *Financial & Insurance Services* (12.0%) as well as *Professional Services* (11.0%). More productive industries are typically externally oriented. Competitive remuneration is a feature of these industries as they need to attract the talent to seize growth opportunities globally.

[42] In this article, we define "more productive industries" as industries where the value-added per worker is above half of the industries in 2023.

Chart A1 Distribution of full-time resident employees aged 25 to 64 years who switched industries in the last one year by current industry, 2024



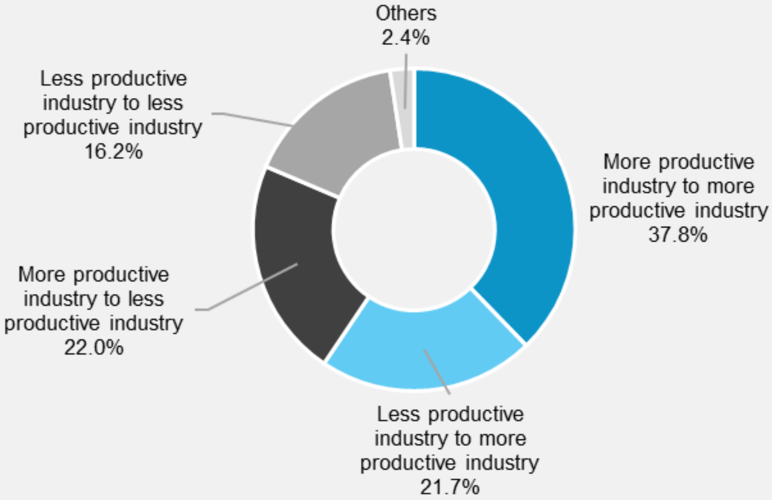
Source: Comprehensive Labour Force Survey, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM

Notes: (1) Data exclude full-time National Servicemen.
(2) Data may not add up to 100% due to rounding and the exclusion of Others industries (Agriculture, Fishing, Quarrying, Utilities and Sewerage & Waste Management).

More workers transitioned within productive industries. In 2024, 37.8% moved from one more productive sector to another, such as from *Professional Services* or *Information & Communications* to *Financial & Insurance Services*, or from *Manufacturing* to *Wholesale Trade*. This reflects the abundance of opportunities in growth sectors and the transferrable skills that facilitate these moves.

21.7% of industry switchers moved from less productive to more productive industries, reflecting significant personal and professional growth. These transitions, often involving upskilling or leveraging transferable skills, resulted in better opportunities. Examples include transitions from *Construction* (less productive) to *Professional Services* (more productive), or *Retail Trade* (less productive) to *Wholesale Trade* (more productive). These shifts are also supported by industry linkages, such as the role of *Professional Services* in supporting construction projects with services like surveying and design.

Chart A2 Full-time resident employees aged 25 to 64 years who switched industries in the last one year by type of industry change, 2024



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

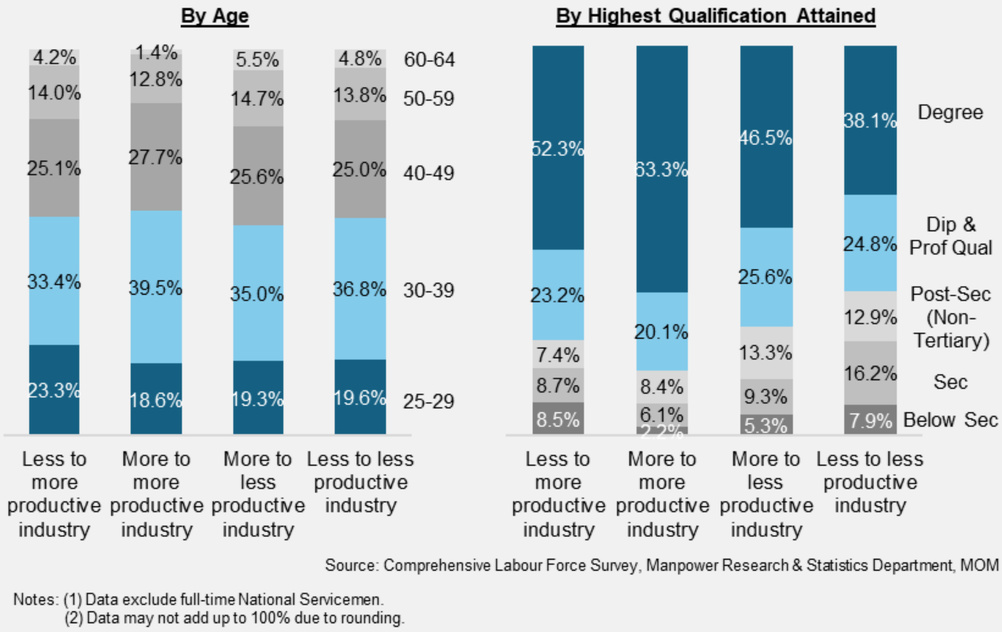
Notes: (1) Data exclude full-time National Servicemen.
(2) Data may not add up to 100% due to rounding.
(3) Others refer to those who switched from/to other industries (Agriculture, Fishing, Quarrying, Utilities and Sewerage & Waste Management).

Industry switchers who moved into more productive sectors tend to be younger, degree holders and PMETs

Industry switchers tend to be younger, with more than half in their late 20s or 30s, and another quarter in their 40s. Younger workers, particularly those aged 25 to 29, are more likely to move from less productive to more productive industries. This could be due to early career choices in less productive sectors, followed by moves to more productive industries after upgrading their skills and gaining experience.

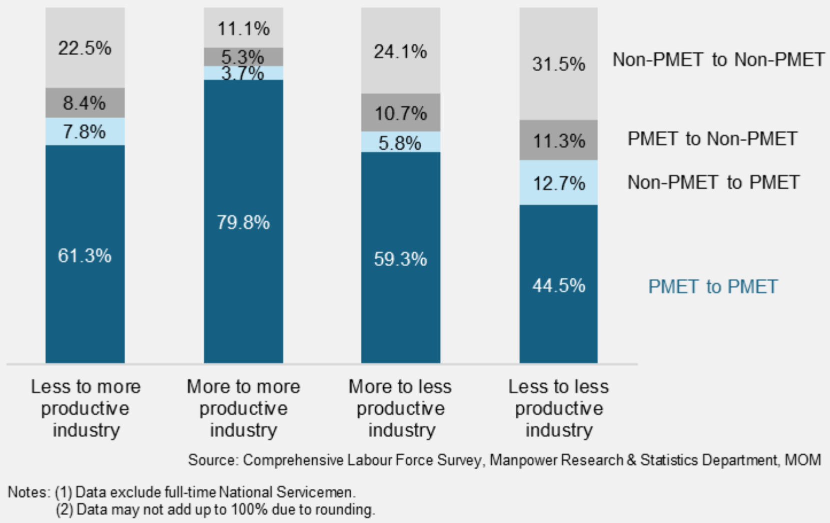
Reflecting the higher concentration of PMET jobs in more productive sectors, the majority of industry switchers who moved to these sectors hold degrees. Conversely, degree holders are less likely to switch to less productive industries, where jobs tend to require fewer skills.

Chart A3 Full-time resident employees aged 25 to 64 years who switched industries in the last one year by age and highest qualification attained, 2024



Most industry switchers are PMETs, especially for those who transition between more productive sectors, where around 80% of movers shifted between PMET roles. These workers are well-positioned for industry changes. However, switches from non-PMET to PMET roles are less common in transitions to more productive industries. To enable workers in less skilled jobs to access opportunities in higher-productivity sectors, industry-relevant skills training could be encouraged.

Chart A4 Full-time resident employees aged 25 to 64 years who switched industries in the last one year by type of occupation change, 2024

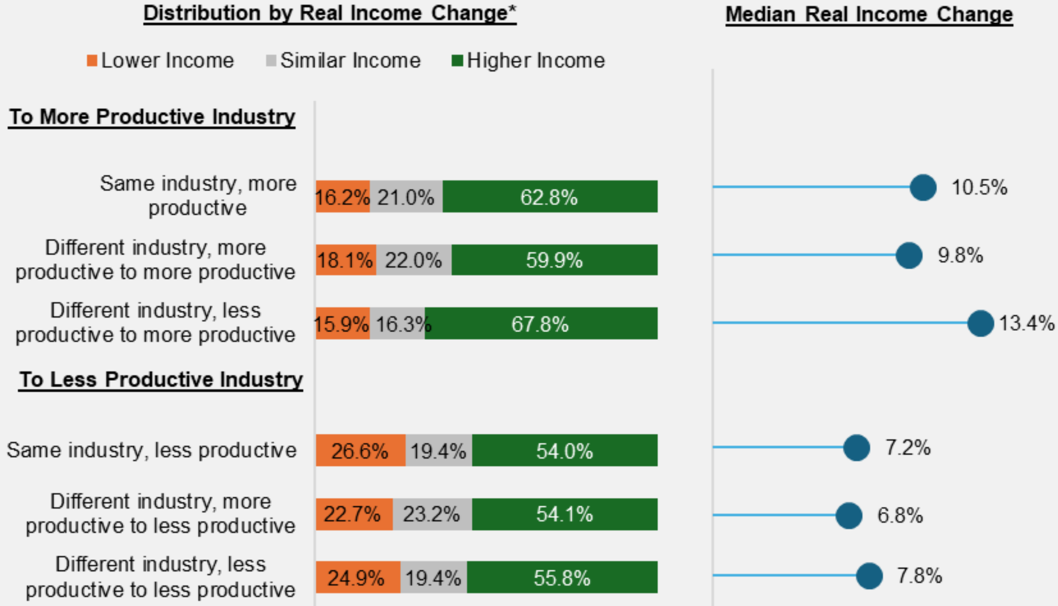


Workers who switched industries experienced favourable wage outcomes, especially those who moved to more productive sectors

The majority of industry switchers experienced real income gains, particularly those who moved from less productive to more productive sectors. Income outcomes for industry switchers were comparable to those of individuals who changed jobs within the same industry.

The median real income change was higher for those entering more productive industries compared to those entering less productive ones. Moving to more productive industries not only enhances earning potential but also helps future-proof careers in a rapidly evolving economy.

Chart A5 Income outcomes of full-time resident employees aged 25 to 64 years who changed jobs in the last one year, 2024



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 wth "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 2019 prices (2019 = 100).
(4) Distribution data may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

CONCLUSION

Workers who moved to more productive industries saw higher income gains, with 59.9% transitioning to sectors like *Wholesale Trade* and *Financial Services*. Notably, 21.7% shifted from less productive to more productive industries, indicating professional growth. Industry switchers tend to be younger, degree holders, and primarily PMETs. Overall, industry switches, especially to more productive sectors, led to positive wage outcomes and career growth. Training for non-PMET workers could help them access better opportunities.

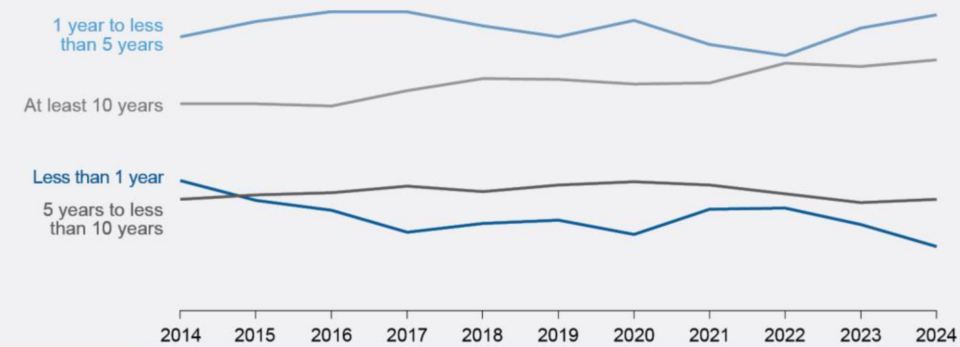
Job tenures are rising

4.7 Employees are staying longer in their jobs, with the average (mean) job tenure increasing from 7.3 years in 2014 to 8.0 years in 2024. The share of employees who had worked for at least ten years in their current job increased to 31.4% in 2024, extending the broad uptrend over the last decade. There was a corresponding decline in the share of employees with a tenure of less than one year, falling to 14.4% in 2024. The increase in share of employees who had been in their job for at least ten years was seen among those in their 40s, 50s, and 60s and over. This reflects sustained collective efforts in keeping workers employable and relevant to changing job demands, such as through training, re-skilling, and policies such as the Retirement and Re-employment Act to support seniors who wish to continue working stay employed.

4.8 The longer-term rise in share of employees who have been in their jobs for at least ten years was more pronounced in domestically-oriented *Construction*, *Administrative & Support Services*, and *Education*. These sectors could offer more job stability than outward-oriented sectors, which are more influenced by global economic trends and the need to restructure their businesses to stay competitive.

Chart 44 Distribution of resident employees by years in current job

Per Cent



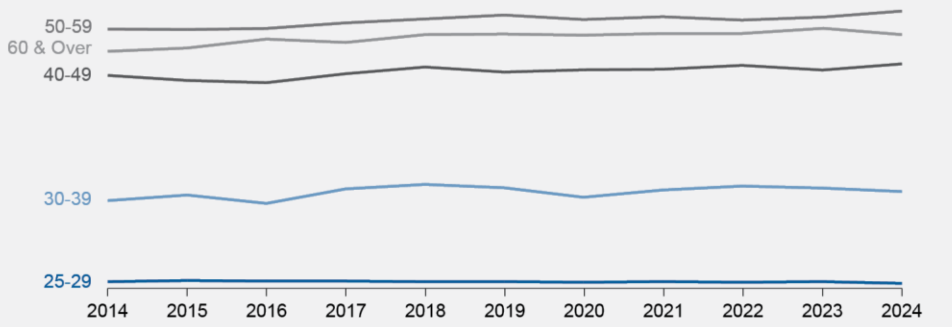
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Less than 1 year	20.4	18.6	17.7	15.7	16.5	16.8	15.5	17.8	17.9	16.4	14.4
1 year to less than 5 years	33.5	34.9	35.8	35.8	34.5	33.5	35.0	32.8	31.8	34.3	35.5
5 years to less than 10 years	18.7	19.1	19.3	19.9	19.4	20.0	20.3	20.0	19.2	18.4	18.7
At least 10 years	27.4	27.4	27.2	28.6	29.7	29.7	29.2	29.3	31.1	30.8	31.4

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

Notes: (1) Data exclude full-time National Servicemen.
(2) Data for each year may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Chart 45 Proportion of resident employees who had worked for at least 10 years in their current job by age

Per Cent



	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
25-29	0.6	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.6	0.5	0.7	0.4
30-39	15.1	16.1	14.6	17.2	18.0	17.4	15.7	17.0	17.7	17.5	16.8
40-49	37.5	36.6	36.2	37.8	39.0	38.1	38.5	38.6	39.3	38.5	39.6
50-59	45.8	45.7	45.9	46.9	47.6	48.3	47.5	48.0	47.4	48.2	48.9
60 & Over	41.8	42.4	44.0	43.4	44.8	44.9	44.7	45.0	45.0	45.9	44.8

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

Notes: (1) Data exclude full-time National Servicemen.
(2) The proportion of youths aged 15-24 who had worked for at least 10 years in their current job was nil or negligible, and hence not plotted in the chart.

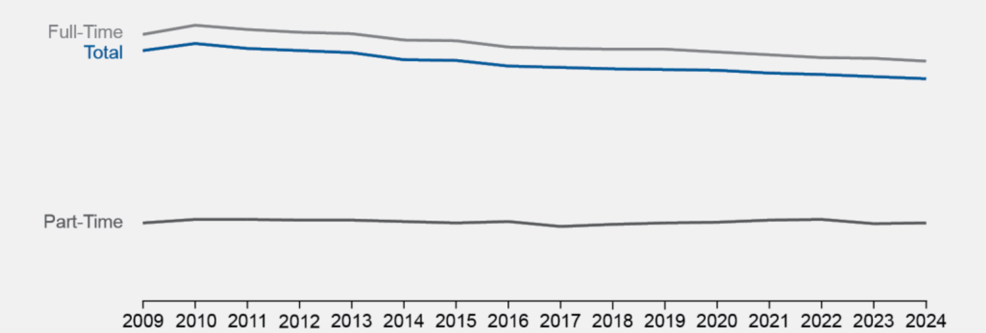
5. Usual Hours Worked

Average usual hours worked continued to decline

5.1 In 2024, the average weekly hours worked by employed residents declined to 41.6 hours, driven by a reduction in hours among full-time workers, who make up the majority of the workforce. Part-time hours remained stable. This decline in work hours is part of a long-term trend (which is also observed in other advanced countries), mainly due to reduced hours for full-timers.[43] Contributing factors include the shift to a more regular workweek,[44] decreased excessive work hours,[45] and improved efficiency through training, technology, and flexible work arrangements.[46]

Chart 46 Average (mean) usual hours worked per week of employed residents by nature of employment

Hours Per Week



	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Total	45.6	46.6	45.9	45.6	45.3	44.3	44.2	43.4	43.2	43.0	42.9	42.8	42.4	42.2	41.9	41.6
Full-Time	47.9	49.2	48.6	48.2	48.0	47.1	47.0	46.1	45.9	45.8	45.8	45.4	45.0	44.6	44.5	44.1
Part-Time	21.1	21.6	21.6	21.5	21.5	21.3	21.1	21.3	20.6	20.9	21.1	21.2	21.5	21.6	21.0	21.1

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

Note: Data exclude full-time National Servicemen.

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[43] A report by the European Commission ("Labour Market and Wage Developments in Europe Annual Review 2023") found that since 2008, the average number of hours worked per worker has been steadily decreasing in the European Union and in the majority of the Member States. The decline was driven by the reduction in weekly hours worked by full-time employees and self-employed persons.

[44] The proportion of full-time employees who worked a five-day workweek increased from 44.3% in 2008 to 56.1% in 2022. Source: Conditions of Employment Survey, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM.

[45] The proportion of full-time employed residents who usually worked more than 48 hours a week has continued to decline to 16.9% in 2024, from 17.3% in 2023 and 28.4% in 2014. From 2023 to 2024, a decrease was observed across most industries, notwithstanding some upticks in *Arts, Entertainment & Recreation*, *Financial & Insurance Services*, *Professional Services*, *Information & Communications*, *Construction*, and *Administrative & Support Services*.

[46] Efforts to improve productivity through job redesign and upskilling of workers are supported by initiatives such as Workforce Singapore's Support for Job Redesign under Productivity Solutions Grant and Career Conversion Programme, and the PWM. The Tripartite Guidelines on Flexible Work Arrangement Requests, which took effect from 1 December 2024, also supports more flexible time use that can raise worker's productivity.

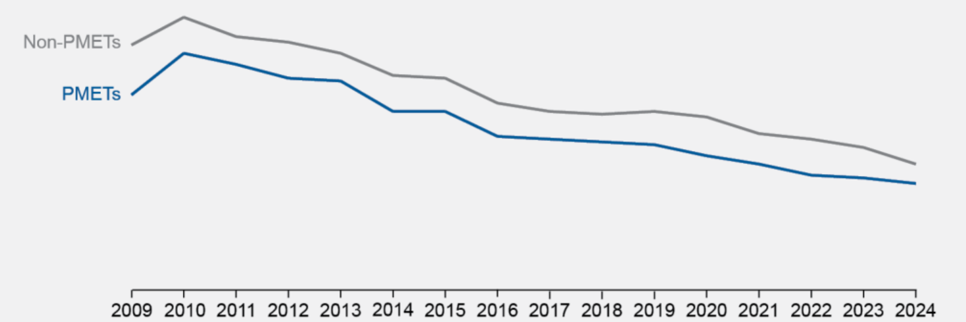
Both PMETs and non-PMETs working full-time saw steady decreases in work hours

5.2 Over the decade, sustained declines in the average weekly usual hours worked among full-timers were observed for both PMETs (from 46.5 hours in 2014 to 43.9 hours in 2024) and non-PMETs (from 47.8 hours to 44.6 hours).

5.3 While non-PMETs still worked longer hours than PMETs, non-PMETs experienced a greater reduction in usual weekly hours worked (from 47.8 hours to 44.6 hours) than PMETs (from 46.5 hours to 43.9 hours) over the last ten years. There was a more pronounced decline in usual weekly hours among *service & sales workers*, as well as workers in the *Food & Beverage Services* sector.

Chart 47 Average (mean) usual hours worked per week of full-time employed residents by occupation

Hours Per Week



	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
PMETs	47.1	48.6	48.2	47.7	47.6	46.5	46.5	45.6	45.5	45.4	45.3	44.9	44.6	44.2	44.1	43.9
Non-PMETs	48.9	49.9	49.2	49.0	48.6	47.8	47.7	46.8	46.5	46.4	46.5	46.3	45.7	45.5	45.2	44.6

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

Note: Data exclude full-time National Servicemen.

6. Income

Real incomes rebounded from 2023 as nominal income growth strengthened and inflation eased

6.1 Nominal incomes[47] continued to increase, and at a pace faster than the preceding year. The nominal median (P50) gross monthly income of full-time employed residents grew from $5,197 in 2023 to $5,500 in 2024. This represents a 5.8% growth over the year, higher than the 2.5% growth in the preceding year. At the 20th percentile (P20), nominal income was $3,026 in 2024, a 7.1% increase from 2023 ($2,826). This increase was also higher than the 1.7% growth seen from 2022 to 2023.

6.2 With stronger nominal income growth and an easing of inflation[48], real incomes grew at both the median (P50) (3.4%) and P20 (4.6%) in 2024 after a decline in the preceding year (P50: -2.2%, P20: -3.0%). The real income growth in 2024 was close to the average growth rates seen in the years preceding COVID-19 (2014-2019: 3.8% p.a. for P50, 4.4% p.a. for P20) when inflation was lower.

Income growth at the 20th percentile outpaced the median, narrowing the income gap between P20 and the median

6.3 Income growth was also inclusive, with the P20 income growing faster than the median. This was supported by initiatives that aim to uplift lower-wage workers, such as the PWM and the National Wages Council's recommendation on the quantum of wage increase for lower-wage workers. As a result, the P20 to P50 income ratio[49] improved to 0.55 in 2024, from 0.54 in 2023 and 2019, and 0.52 in 2014. Greater income increases at P20 are expected in the coming years, as increases in nominal wage requirements under the PWM are gradually implemented.[50]

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[47] Refers to gross monthly income from employment (including employer CPF contributions) of full-time employed residents.

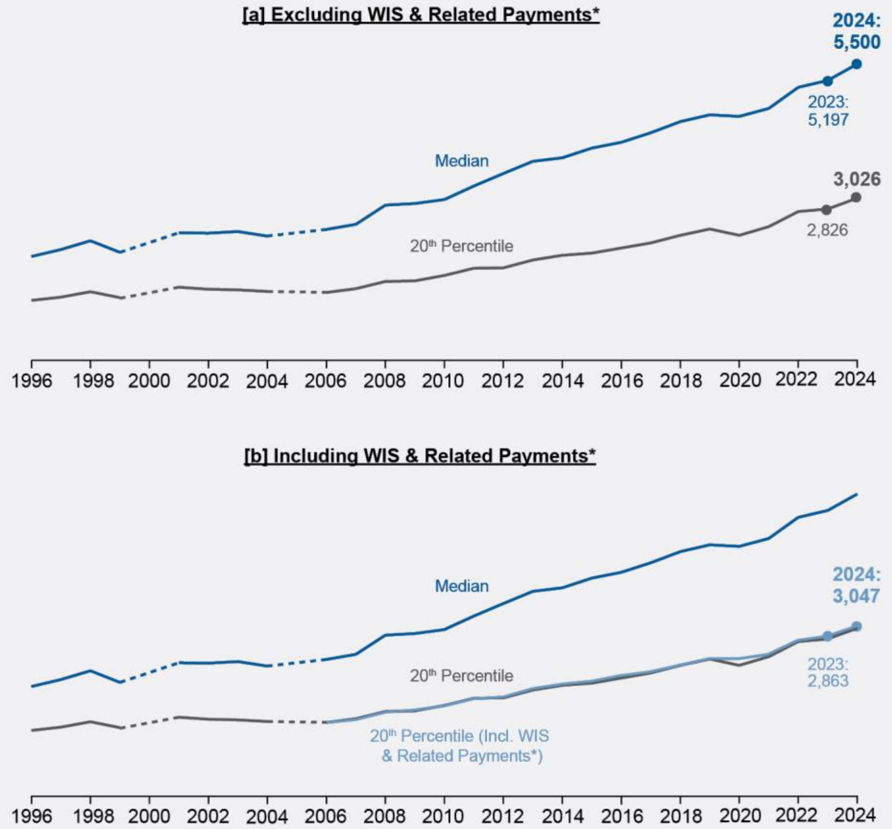
[48] The Consumer Price Index for all items increased by 2.4% in 2024, moderating from the increase of 4.8% in 2023. Source: Singapore Department of Statistics.

[49] This refers to the ratio of the 20th percentile income to the median income of full-time employed residents (including employer CPF contributions).

[50] From 2022 to 2028, the nominal PWM wage requirements (excluding employer CPF) for the various PWMs will increase at a rate of up to 10.8% per year.

Chart 48 Gross monthly income from employment (including employer CPF contributions) of full-time employed residents

Dollars



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

Notes: (1) * – Refers to Workfare Income Supplement (WIS), Workfare Special Payment (WSP), Workfare Bicentennial Bonus, Workfare Bonus and Workfare Special Bonus, which started from 2006.

(2) Data exclude full-time National Servicemen.

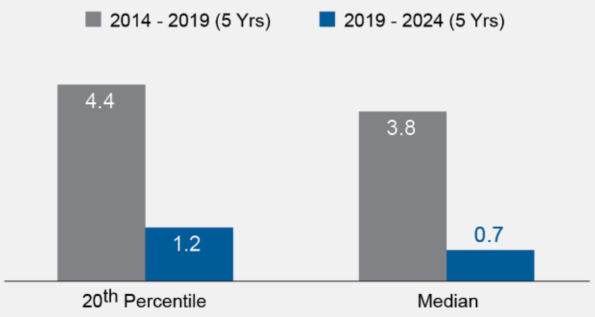
(3) The Comprehensive Labour Force Survey was not conducted in 2000 and 2005 due to the conduct of the Census of Population 2000 and General Household Survey 2005 by the Singapore Department of Statistics.

Singapore's real income growth outperformed major advanced economies

6.4 Real income growth from 2019 to 2024 (P20: 1.2% p.a., P50: 0.7% p.a.) was slower than in 2014 to 2019 (P20: 4.4% p.a., P50: 3.8% p.a.), as higher inflation in the last five years has eroded sustained growth in nominal incomes. Despite this, Singapore outperformed many economies on real income growth from 2019 to 2024, including major advanced economies.

Chart 49 Annualised change in real* gross monthly income from employment (including employer CPF contributions) of full-time employed residents

Per Cent Per Annum

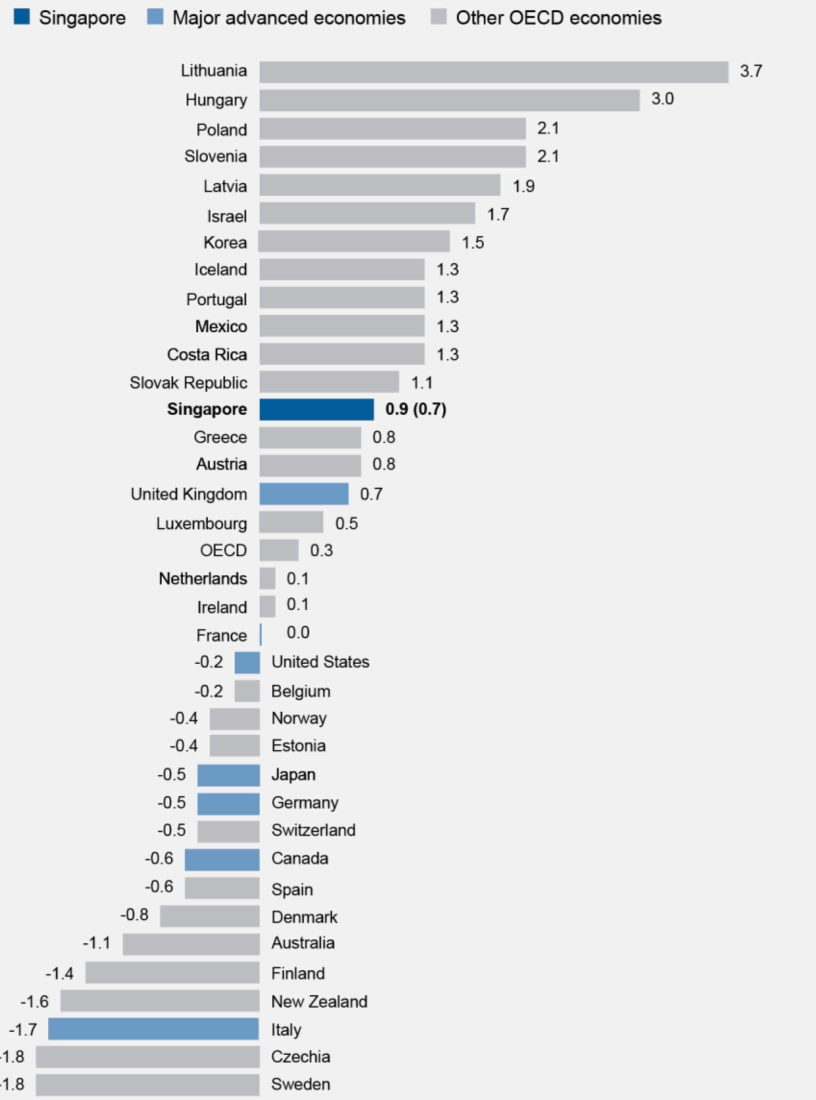


Source: Comprehensive Labour Force Survey, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM

Notes: (1) Data exclude full-time National Servicemen.
(2) * – Deflated by Consumer Price Index (CPI) for all items at 2019 prices (2019 = 100).

Chart 50 International comparison on annualised change in real incomes, 2019 to 2024

Per Cent Per Annum



Source: Singapore: Comprehensive Labour Force Survey, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM
OECD countries: OECD Employment Outlook 2024, OECD

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

(2) The income data presented here for Singapore excludes employer's CPF contribution for comparability with income data from other countries. Singapore's real income growth (including employer CPF contribution) is in brackets. For Singapore, income data is based on median (headline measure for monitoring income growth) while that for other countries is based on mean. The takeaway is broadly similar when using mean.

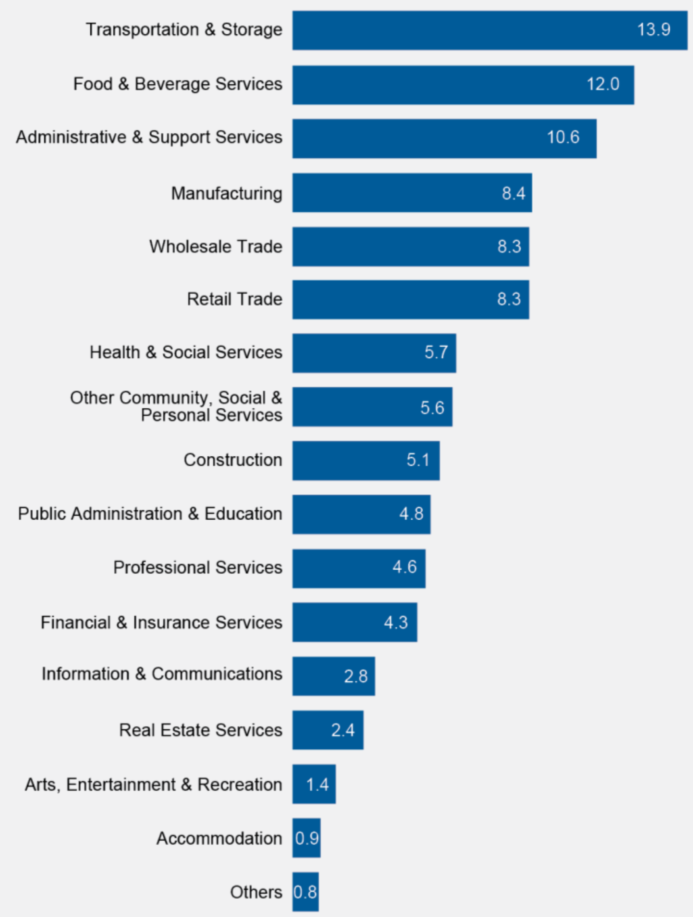
(3) Real income data for Singapore are deflated by Consumer Price Index (CPI) for all items at 2019 prices (2019 = 100).

(4) Data on the annualised change in real incomes for OECD countries is recalculated from the cumulative percentage change in real wages (since Q4 2019 to Q1 2024 or latest) shown in OECD Employment Outlook 2024. OECD is the unweighted average of 35 OECD countries (not including Chile, Colombia and Türkiye).

6.5 There were 417,200 lower-wage[51] workers in 2024, of which nearly one in five (19.6% or 81,900) were self-employed and four in five (80.4% or 335,300) were employees. Lower-wage workers were most commonly employed in *Transportation & Storage* (13.9%) (e.g. taxi drivers, private-hire car drivers), *Food & Beverage Services* (12.0%) (e.g. food/drink stall assistants, hawkers/stall holders, waiters), and *Administrative & Support Services* (10.6%) (e.g. cleaners, security officers).

Chart 51 Distribution of full-time employed residents with gross monthly income from employment (excluding employer CPF contributions) at or below $2,708 by industry, 2024

Per Cent



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

Notes: (1) Data exclude full-time National Servicemen.
(2) Others include Agriculture, Fishing, Quarrying, Utilities and Sewerage & Waste Management.
(3) Data may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

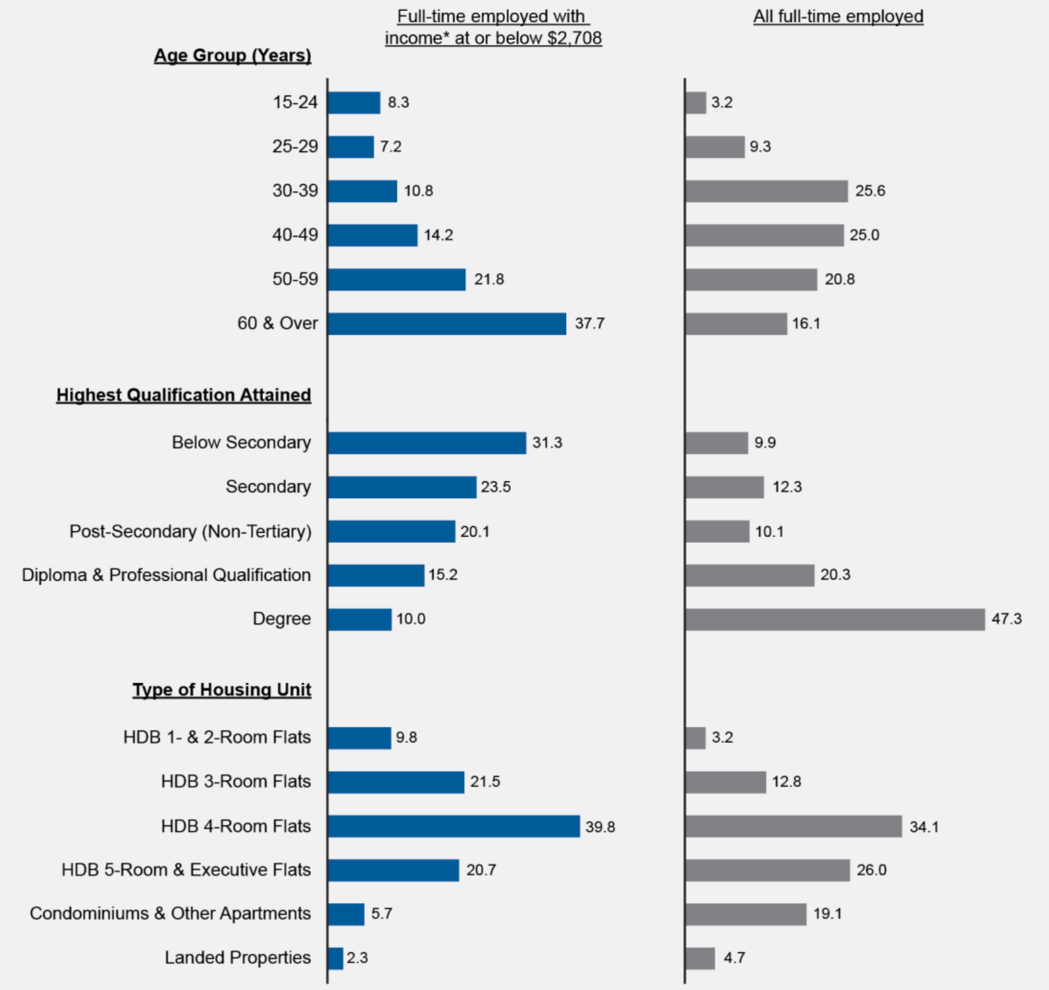
[51] Proxied by full-time employed residents earning less than or equal to the 20th percentile gross monthly income (excluding employer CPF contributions), which was $2,708 in 2024.

6.6 More than half of lower-wage workers were aged 50 and over (50 to 59: 21.8%; 60 and over: 37.7%), or with secondary (23.5%) or below (31.3%) qualifications. The share of older and less educated was also higher among lower-wage workers than among full-time employed residents. As there were less opportunities to pursue post-secondary education in the 1960s and 1970s, older workers today tend to be less educated, and this could explain their higher likelihood of earning lower wages. Focusing on reskilling and upskilling lower-wage workers will help them stay employable and earn higher wages. Besides programmes under Progressive Wages which strengthen support for lower-wage workers to take on higher-paying jobs through structured progression pathways that improve their skills and productivity, the Workfare Income Supplement (WIS) and Workfare Skills Support schemes also help lower-wage workers meet their retirement and upskilling needs.

6.7 A higher proportion of lower-wage workers were staying in HDB 1- to 4-room flats compared to full-time employed residents. Government assistance such as U-Save and Service & Conservancy Charges rebates help cushion the impact of rising cost of living, with those residing in smaller HDB flats benefitting more.

Chart 52 Distribution of full-time employed residents by age group, highest qualification attained and type of housing unit, 2024

Per Cent



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

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

(2) * – Based on gross monthly income from employment (excluding employer CPF contributions).

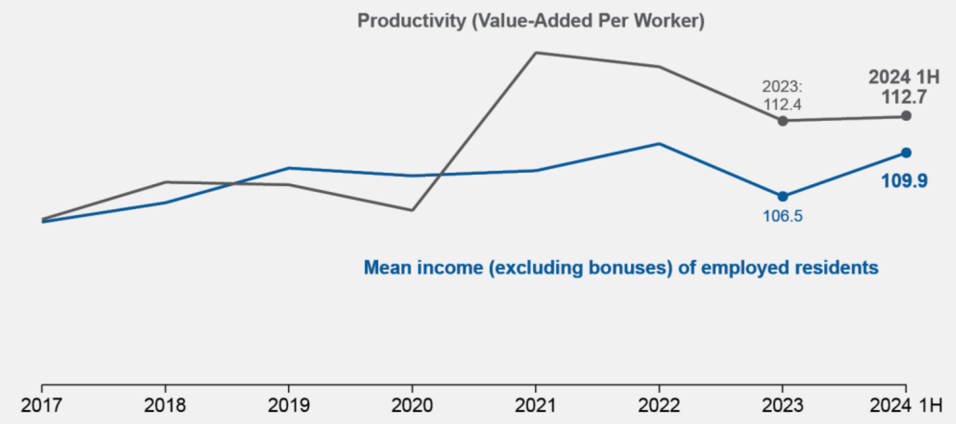
(3) Data by age/highest qualification attained may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

(4) Data by type of housing unit do not add up to 100% as it includes other types of housing unit not shown, e.g. non-HDB shophouses.

6.8 Over the medium term, income growth was supported by productivity growth (measured by real value added per worker), although the productivity-income gap has narrowed in the first half of 2024. Efforts to boost productivity and upskill the workforce will increase the ability of businesses to be more profitable and to raise workers' wages.

Chart 53 Indices of real mean gross monthly income from employment and real labour productivity (value added per worker)

2016 = 100



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

Productivity: Singapore Department of Statistics

Notes: (1) Based on gross monthly income from employment including employer CPF contributions and excluding bonus.

(2) Indices of real income and productivity are obtained by deflating real mean gross monthly income from employment and real labour productivity (value added per worker) by 2016 levels (2016 = 100).

(3) Real income levels are obtained by deflating nominal income levels by Consumer Price Index (CPI) for all items at 2019 prices (2019 = 100).

(4) Real productivity levels as measured by value-added per worker in chained (2015) dollars.

BOX ARTICLE: A CLOSER LOOK AT INCOME PROGRESSION

INTRODUCTION

The Ministry of Manpower (MOM) publishes income growth data for the median and 20th percentile each year, alongside employment indicators such as the unemployment rate and labour force participation rate, to give an overview of the employment outcomes of Singapore's workforce. However, this data does not show how individual workers' incomes have changed over time.[52] This article looks at how workers' incomes have evolved, comparing trends in the last three years (2021-2024) vs an earlier three-year period (2016-2019).[53]

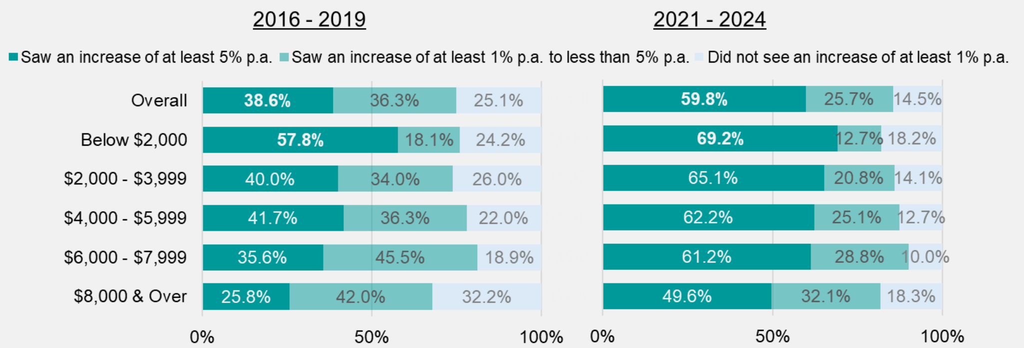
The article examines income progression by looking at workers who experienced at least a 1% annual increase in their income. It also analyses workers' upward mobility into higher income bands, using $2,000 intervals in the income distribution.

FINDINGS

A larger share of workers saw better income progression in the last three years (2021-2024) compared with 2016-2019

In the last three years (2021-2024), the large majority (85.5%) saw an increase in income of at least 1% per year, higher than the share in 2016-2019 (74.9%). The jump in proportion was more significant among those who saw stronger income growth – three in five workers saw good income growth (at least 5% per year), compared to just two in five in 2016-2019. The largest share of workers with stronger income growth was observed among the lower-income workers earning less than $2,000.

Chart B1 Full-time resident employees by income outcomes



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

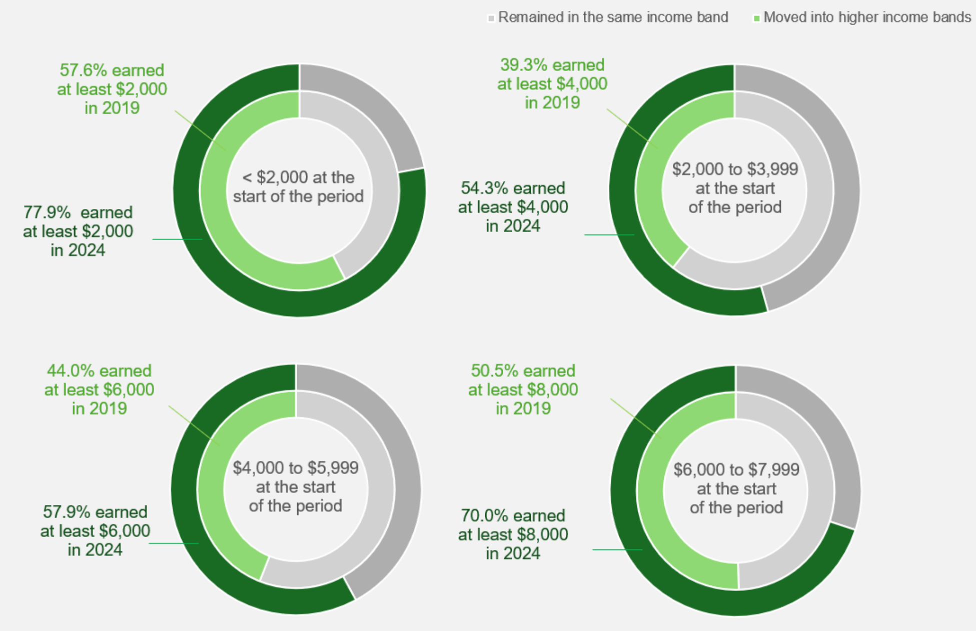
52 This complements the regular topline monitoring of growth in income from employment at the median and 20th percentile based on the income distribution that is representative of the workforce for the year.

53 This article references data from the Comprehensive Labour Force Survey for full-time resident employees aged 25 to 59 at the start of the reference period (i.e. 2016 and 2021). This ensures that we look at individuals with stronger labour market attachment, stripping out the impact of ageing, as well as youths who are still pursuing higher education. Income information is obtained from administrative records, and refers to nominal income including employer CPF and excluding bonus. The socioeconomic characteristics (other than age) are for the end of the reference period (i.e. 2019 and 2024), unless otherwise specified. The year 2020 was excluded to avoid the one-off impact of COVID-19, ensuring a more accurate comparison.

Stronger upward mobility, especially for lower-income workers[54]

A large majority of workers who saw better income progression also experienced upward mobility in their income brackets. There was a notable increase in the incidence of upward mobility among workers earning below $2,000 in 2021, who moved into higher income brackets by 2024. This shift surpassed upward mobility among higher-income earners, reflecting successful efforts to uplift lower-income workers and promote more inclusive income growth.

Chart B2 Percentage of full-time resident employees who moved into higher income bands, among those with at least 1% p.a. increase in income
By income groups



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

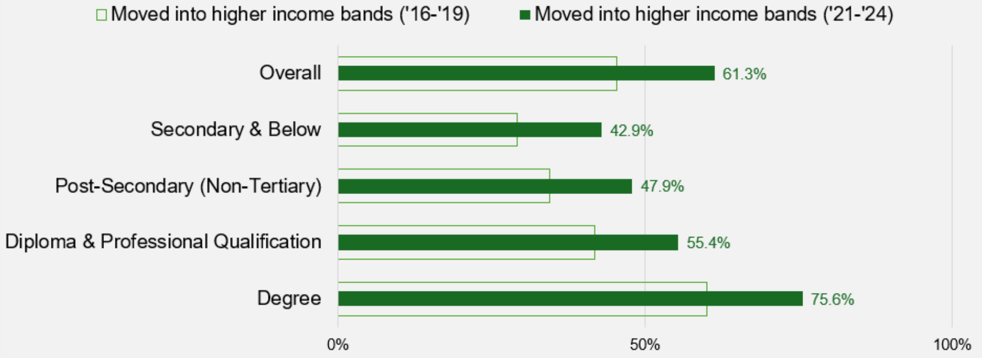
54 For consideration of upward mobility, the top income band of $8,000 & over is excluded. The top 20% (in 2016) to 32% (in 2024) of full-time employed residents had gross monthly income from employment (including employer CPF and bonuses) of at least $8,000.

Higher education gives workers a better chance of upward income mobility

As workers with tertiary education were more likely to experience better income growth compared to those without, having higher education provided an advantage in terms of upward income mobility.

Chart B3 Percentage of full-time resident employees who moved into higher income bands, among those with at least 1% p.a. increase in income

By highest qualification attained



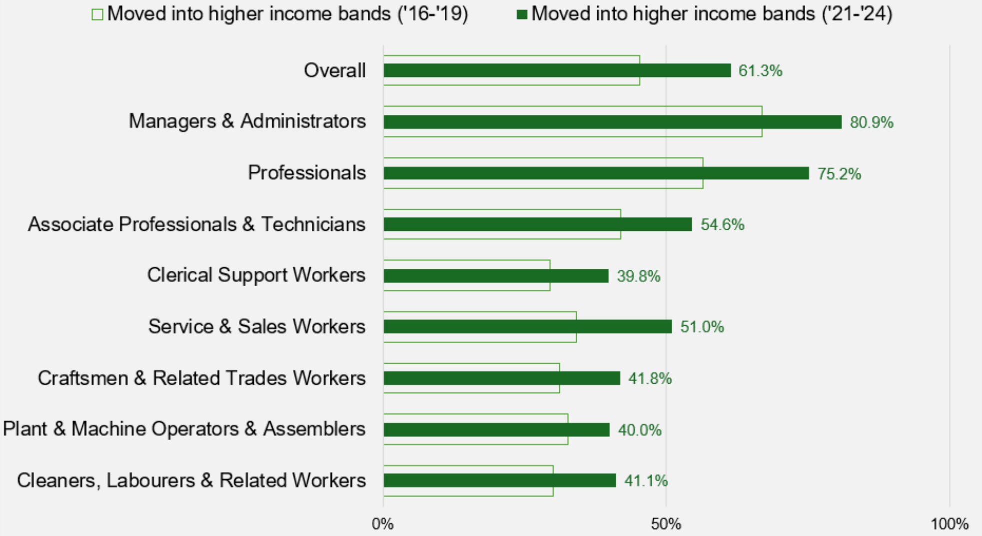
Source: Comprehensive Labour Force Survey and Administrative Records, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM

PMETs experienced greater upward income mobility compared to non-PMETs

Across all occupations, there was an increase in the incidence of upward income mobility in 2021-2024 compared to 2016-2019. In general, PMETs showed a higher incidence of upward mobility compared to non-PMETs. Workers with specialised skills and knowledge were more likely to see larger income increases and move up the income ladder.

Chart B4 Percentage of full-time resident employees who moved into higher income bands, among those with at least 1% p.a. increase in income

By occupation



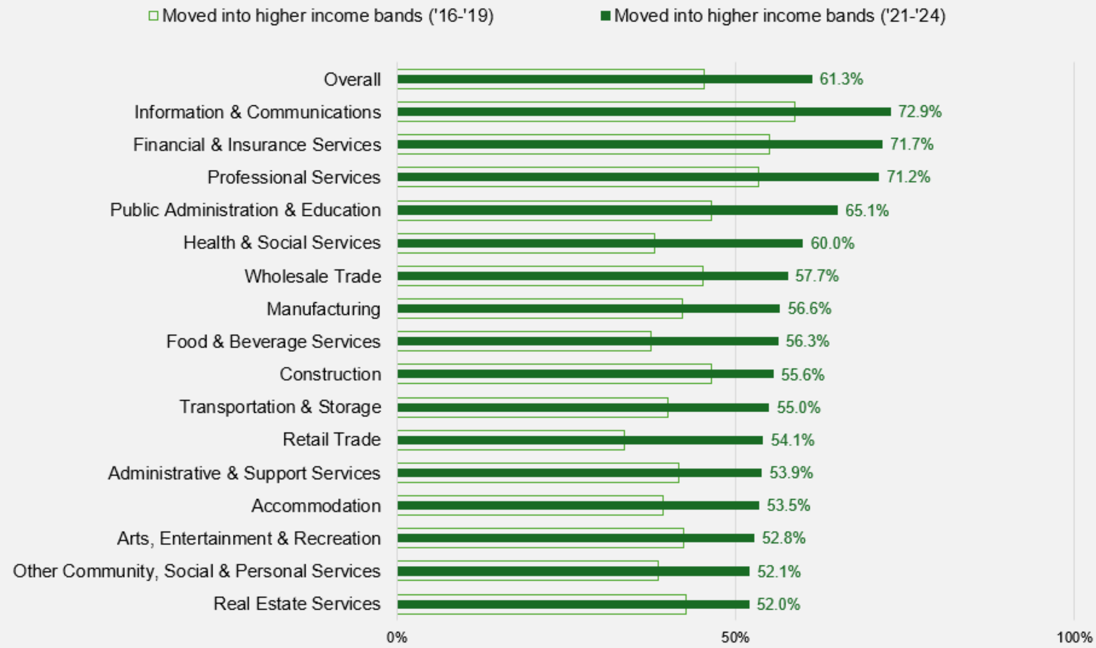
Source: Comprehensive Labour Force Survey and Administrative Records, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM

Incidence of upward income mobility was higher among workers in higher-paying industries

Workers in *Information & Communications*, *Financial & Insurance Services* and *Professional Services* had a higher tendency to see good income outcomes that resulted in upward income mobility. These are higher-paying industries[55] which also have relatively higher productivity, suggesting that firms are better positioned to provide salary increases to retain and attract talent. In addition, the *Public Administration & Education* and *Health & Social Services* sectors also saw high incidence of upward income mobility.

Chart B5 Percentage of full-time resident employees who moved into higher income bands, among those with at least 1% p.a. increase in income

By industry



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

CONCLUSION

The article highlights a positive trend in income progression among the resident workforce, particularly for lower-income workers. There was stronger income growth and upward mobility for the period 2021-2024 compared to 2016-2019. Factors such as education, occupation, and industry sector play crucial roles in determining income progression.

55 A higher-paying industry is one where the industry's median income is higher than the national median income.

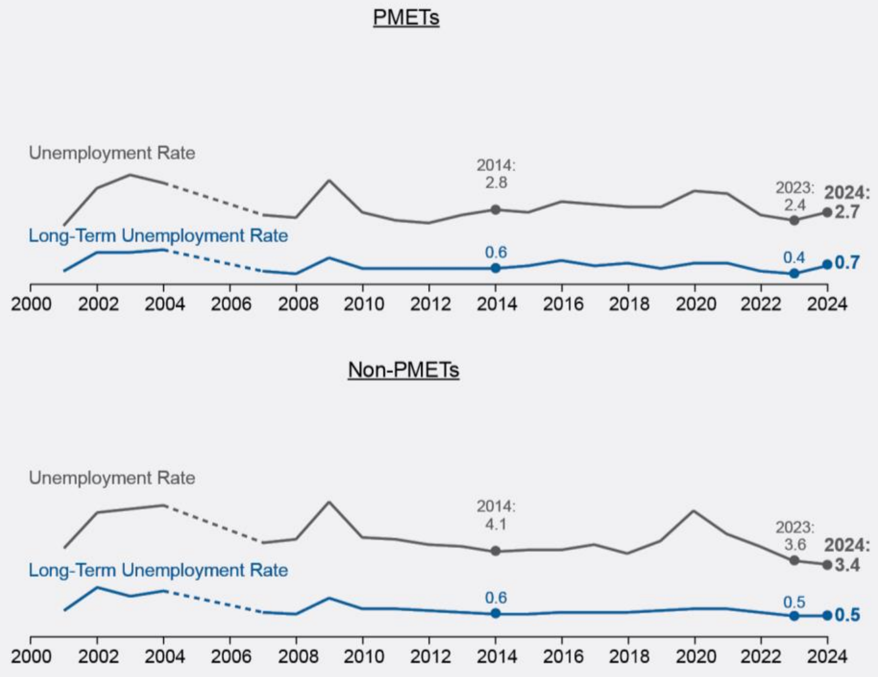
7. Unemployment[56]

Unemployment rates remained low for both PMETs and non-PMETs

7.1 Overall, unemployment remained low among PMETs and non-PMETs, with an unemployment rate of 2.7% and 3.4% and a long-term unemployment rate of 0.7% and 0.5% respectively.[57] Except during economic downturns when unemployment spikes due to job losses, there will be some variation in unemployment from year to year as job seekers will need time to find employment.

Chart 54 Unemployment rate and long-term unemployment rate of resident PMETs and non-PMETs

Per Cent



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

Notes:
(1) Data exclude unemployed residents without work experience and are non-seasonally adjusted. They should not be analysed alongside quarterly unemployment rates and long-term unemployment rates, which are adjusted for seasonality to facilitate quarter-on-quarter analysis.
(2) The unemployment rate by occupation is obtained by dividing the number of unemployed who previously worked in a given occupation by the sum of the number of workers employed in this occupation and the unemployed who previously worked in the occupation.
(3) The long-term unemployment rate by occupation is obtained by dividing the number of long-term unemployed who previously worked in a given occupation by the sum of the number of workers employed in this occupation and the unemployed who previously worked in the occupation.
(4) Data are classified based on Singapore Standard Occupational Classification (SSOC) 2020. Data before year 2020 which were coded based on earlier versions of the SSOC were mapped to SSOC 2020 as far as possible to facilitate data comparability.
(5) The Comprehensive Labour Force Survey was not conducted in 2000 and 2005 due to the conduct of the Census of Population 2000 and General Household Survey 2005 by the Singapore Department of Statistics.
(6) Data for 2006 are not available, as the level of occupational detail collected in 2006 did not support mapping to the latest version of the SSOC.

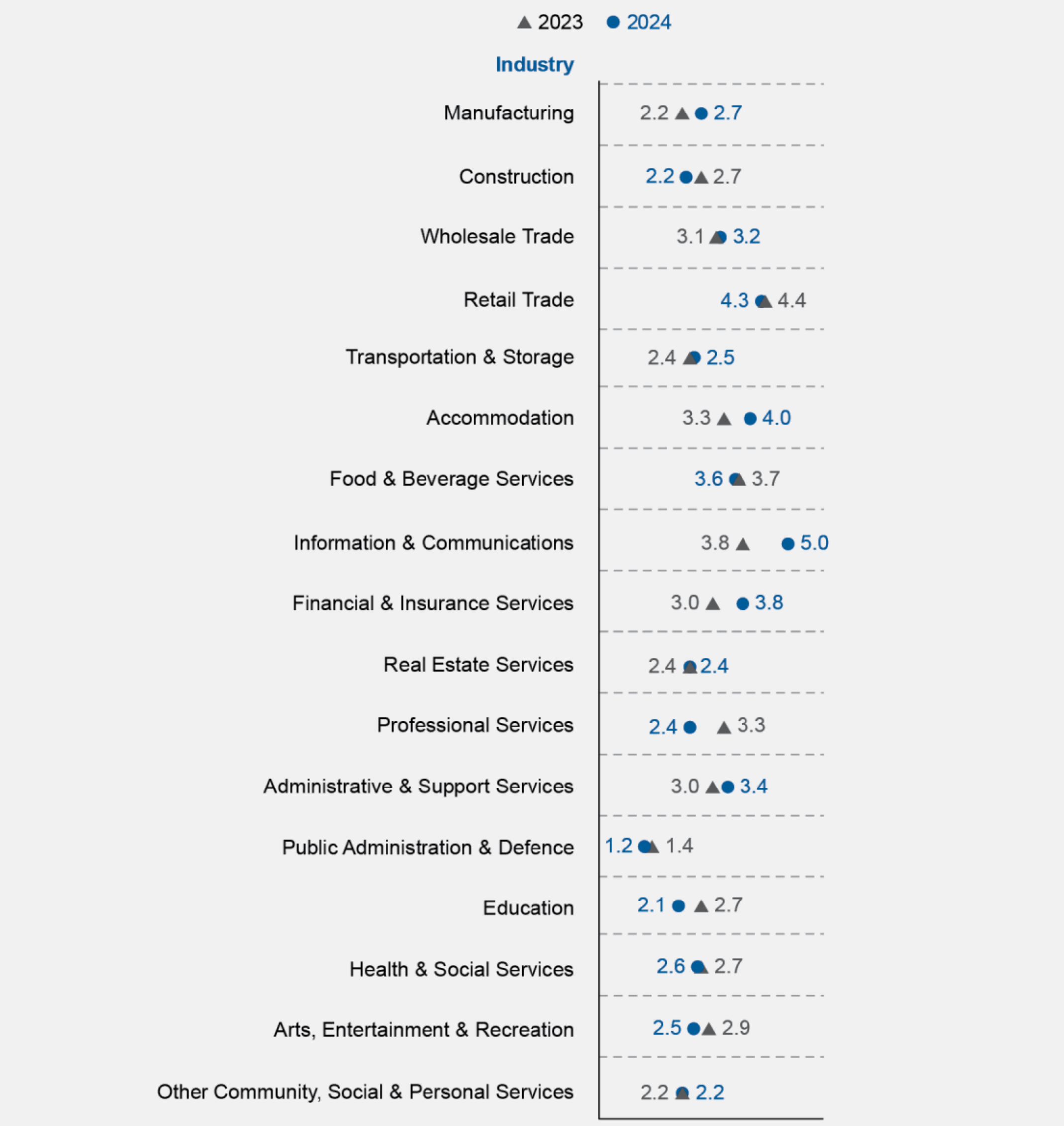
[56] Top-line seasonally adjusted unemployment rates are reported monthly, with breakdown by age and education available quarterly. With a larger sample size, the CLFS enables us to collect additional information of unemployment rates by occupation and industry. For analysis of unemployment trends at the top-line and by age and highest qualification attained, please refer to the End Monthly Unemployment Situation and quarterly Labour Market Reports.

[57] The PMET and non-PMET unemployment rates are non-seasonally adjusted figures and refer to June periods. They should not be analysed alongside quarterly unemployment rates, which are adjusted for seasonality to facilitate quarter-on-quarter analysis.

7.2 Unemployment rate declined or remained similar over the year in most industries. In outward-oriented *Information & Communications* and *Financial & Insurance Services*, the unemployment rate rose, partly due to the rise in retrenchments from business restructuring as global economic headwinds impacted firms in these sectors.

Chart 55 Resident unemployment rate by industry

Per Cent



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

Notes: (1) Data exclude unemployed residents without work experience and are non-seasonally adjusted. They should not be analysed alongside quarterly unemployment rates, which are adjusted for seasonality to facilitate quarter-on-quarter analysis.

(2) The unemployment rate by industry is obtained by dividing the number of unemployed who previously worked in a given industry by the sum of the number of workers employed in this industry and the unemployed who previously worked in the industry.

7.3 While most industries saw an uptick in long-term unemployment rate from the lows in 2023, their rates in 2024 remained at around or lower than their pre-pandemic levels.[58]

Chart 56 Resident long-term unemployment rate by industry
Per Cent

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

Notes: (1) Data exclude unemployed residents without work experience and are non-seasonally adjusted. They should not be analysed alongside quarterly long-term unemployment rates, which are adjusted for seasonality to facilitate quarter-on-quarter analysis.

(2) The long-term unemployment rate by industry is obtained by dividing the number of long-term unemployed who previously worked in a given industry by the sum of the number of workers employed in this industry and the unemployed who previously worked in the industry.

7.4 Most unemployed residents had left their jobs voluntarily, commonly due to work-related dissatisfaction and family care obligations. Compared to a year ago, more PMETs and non-PMETs left their last job because they were dissatisfied with the working conditions, career prospects, or relationship with colleagues/boss. There was also a notable increase in share of unemployed non-PMETs who left their previous job due to housework/caregiving, especially to care for their own children aged 12 and below.

7.5 The unemployed could also leave their job involuntarily.[59] Retrenchment was the top reason for involuntary unemployment, reflecting the trend among unemployed PMETs. With ongoing global economic headwinds that have led some to become unemployed involuntarily for reasons such as

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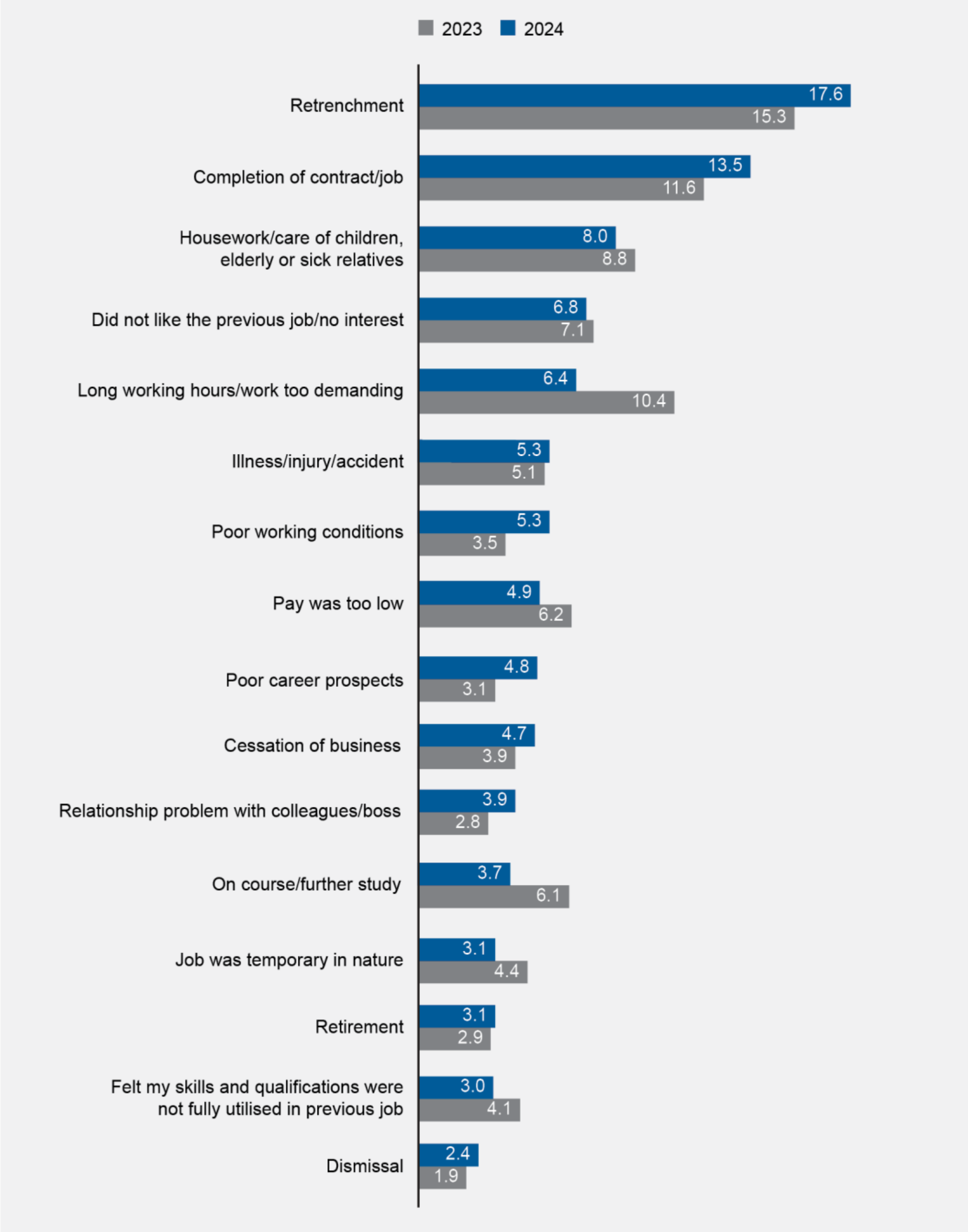
[58] The exceptions were *Wholesale Trade* (2024: 0.8%; average of 2018/2019: 0.3%) and *Financial & Insurance Services* (1.0%; 0.7%).

[59] The involuntary reasons for unemployment include retrenchment, temporary layoff without pay, cessation of business, dismissal, non-renewal or loss of temporary job, and termination due to illness/injury/accident.

retrenchment and cessation of business, the involuntary unemployment rate among residents rose to 1.0% in 2024 from 0.8% in 2023.[60]

Chart 57 Main reason for leaving last job among unemployed residents

Per Cent



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

Notes: (1) Data exclude unemployed residents without work experience.

(2) Data for each year will not add up to 100% as other reasons with smaller numbers are not shown here (but available in the Statistical Tables).

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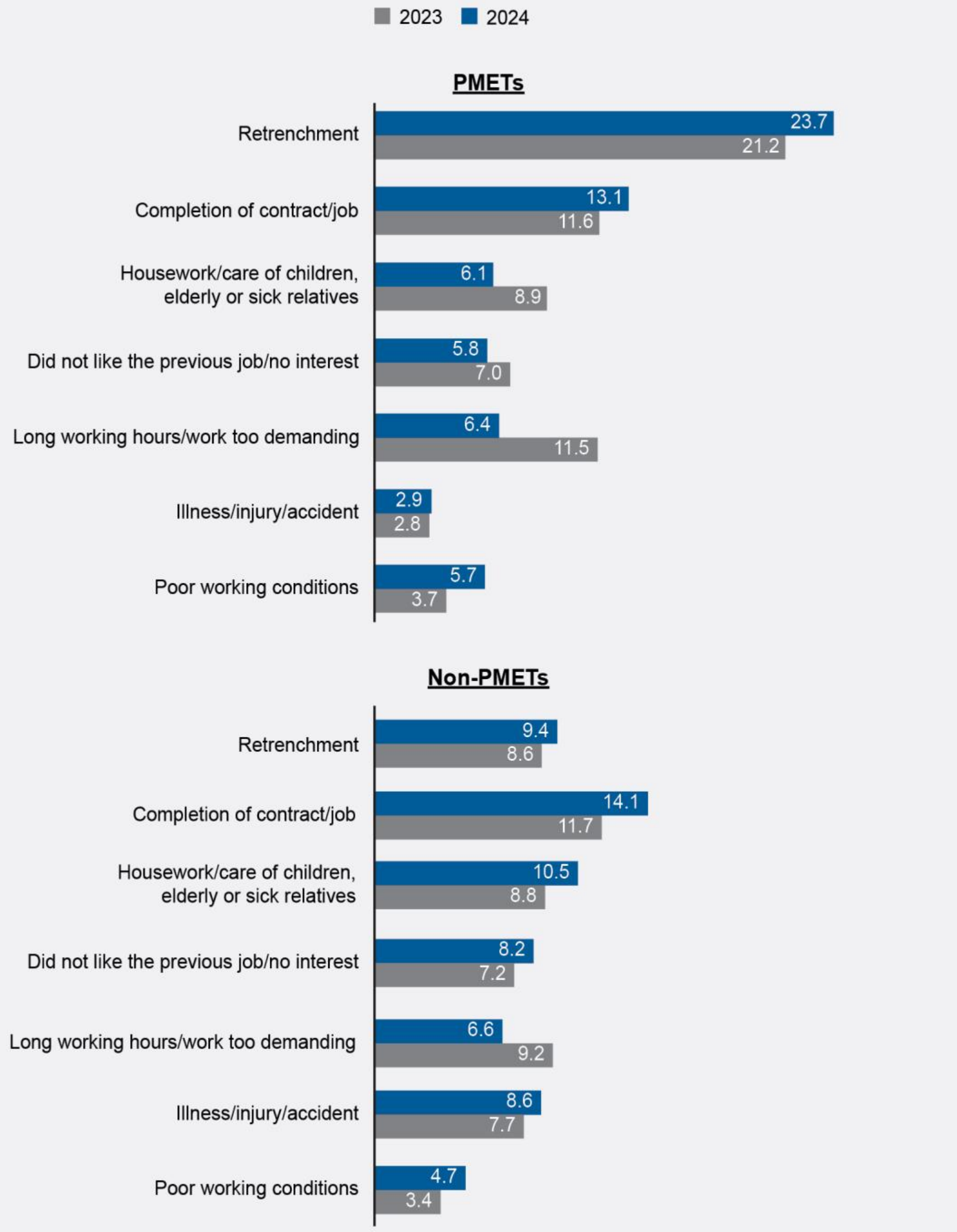
[60] The involuntary unemployment rate refers to the unemployed residents who left their jobs involuntarily, expressed as a percentage of the resident labour force. Data exclude unemployed residents without work experience and are non-seasonally adjusted. They should not be analysed alongside quarterly unemployment rates, which are adjusted for seasonality to facilitate quarter-on-quarter analysis.

Chart 58 Selected main reasons for leaving last job among unemployed resident PMETs and non-PMETs

Per Cent



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

Notes: (1) Data exclude unemployed residents without work experience.

(2) Data for each year will not add up to 100% as only selected main reasons are shown in the chart.

8. Persons Outside the Labour Force

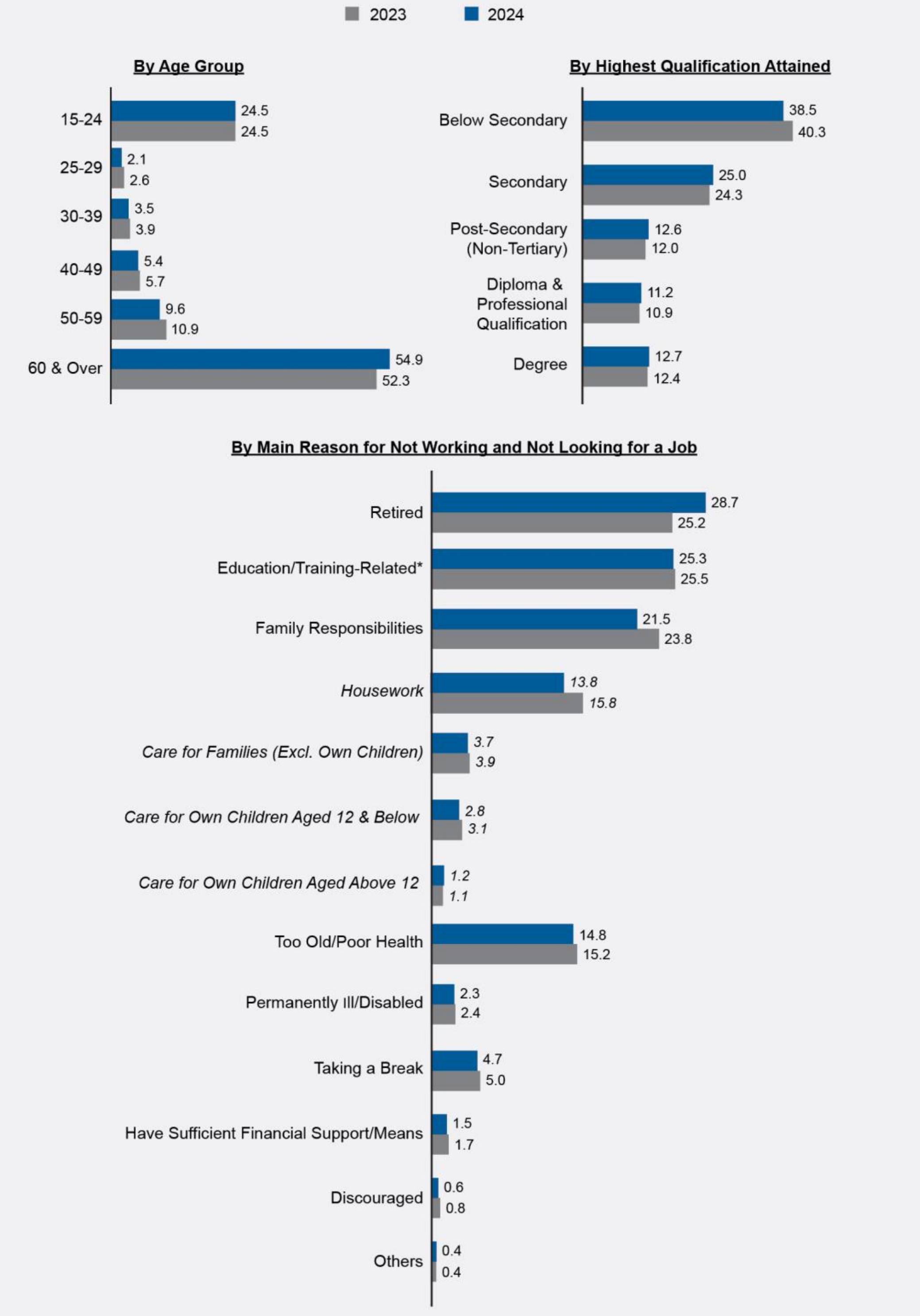
More residents outside the labour force, as the population ages

8.1 In 2024, there were 1.14 million residents outside the labour force, up from 1.12 million in 2023, primarily due to an increase in retirees. The proportion of those aged 60 years and over among this group rose from 52.3% in 2023 to 54.9% in 2024, reflecting population ageing. The share of residents outside the labour force citing retirement as the main reason increased from 25.2% to 28.7%, with this trend expected to continue as baby boomers retire.

8.2 Meanwhile, the proportion of residents outside the labour force due to housework and caregiving decreased from 23.8% to 21.5%, likely influenced by the rise in flexible work arrangements, which may have helped caregivers balance work and family responsibilities.

Chart 59 Profile of residents outside the labour force

Per Cent



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

Notes: (1) * – Includes pursuing full-time study, pursuing part-time study, awaiting the start of academic year, awaiting national service (NS) call-up, awaiting examination results and attending courses/training.

(2) Others refer to less common reasons for being outside the labour force, such as doing voluntary/community work.

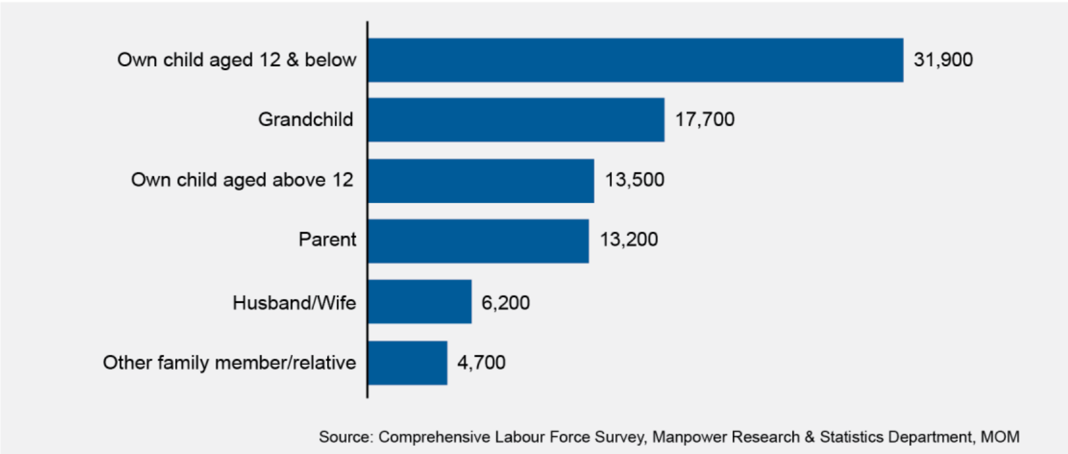
(3) Data for each group may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

8.3 Among the 87,100 residents who were outside the labour force mainly for caregiving reasons, most were taking care of children, with the bulk (31,900) doing so for their own young child aged 12 and below. There were also some who were looking after their parents (13,200), mostly either aged (in their 80s or older), ill, or disabled.

8.4 A large majority of caregivers (93.2%) were outside the labour force as they preferred to personally provide care to their family. Availability of flexible work arrangements and practices[61] for more progressive and inclusive workplaces would encourage more with caregiving responsibilities to continue working whilst providing care at home.

Chart 60 Residents outside the labour force mainly due to caregiving by relationship of care recipient to caregiver, 2024

Number



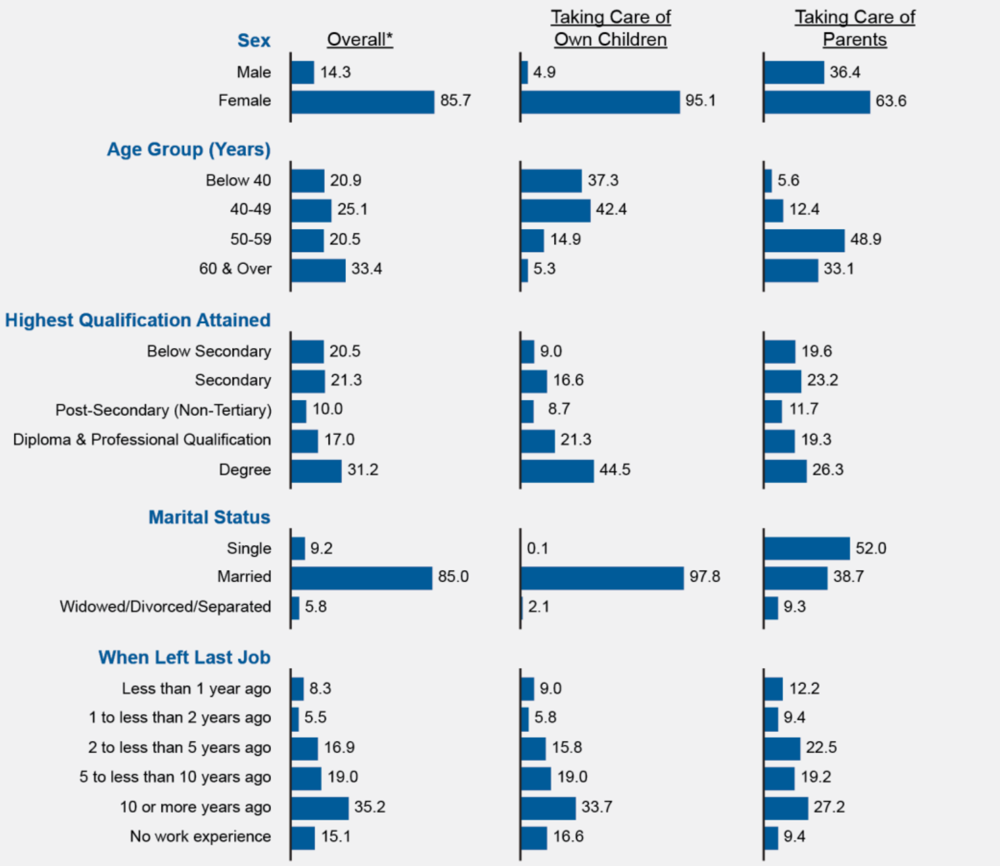
[61] These include the Tripartite Guidelines on Flexible Work Arrangement Requests that recently took effect from 1 December 2024, the Tripartite Standard on Work-Life Harmony, and the Tripartite Standard on Unpaid Leave for Unexpected Care Needs.

8.5 There was a higher proportion of caregivers who had left the labour force in the recent year (from 6,200 or 6.9% in 2023 to 7,300 or 8.3% in 2024). Most of them were outside the labour force to look after their own children (56.5%), predominantly aged 12 and below. Nearly all caregivers who were outside the labour force to take care of their own children were women (95.1%). Majority of them were in their 40s or younger (79.7%) and held tertiary qualifications (65.8%), especially degree (44.5%). The recently implemented Tripartite Guidelines on Flexible Work Arrangement Requests could support a greater adoption of flexible work arrangements and help more workers balance work and family responsibilities.

8.6 Caregivers who were outside the labour force to take care of their parents were mostly females (63.6%), although there was also a sizeable share of males (36.4%). This group of caregivers were predominantly aged 50 and over (82.0%), and singles formed a majority (52.0%). Most of these caregivers were non-tertiary educated (54.5%), and had left the labour force for at least five years or had no work experience (55.8%). Should they decide to return to or join the labour force, they could tap on available government support on career guidance, job search assistance, and training services for skills upgrading.

Chart 61 Profile of residents outside the labour force who are not working mainly due to caregiving, 2024

Per Cent



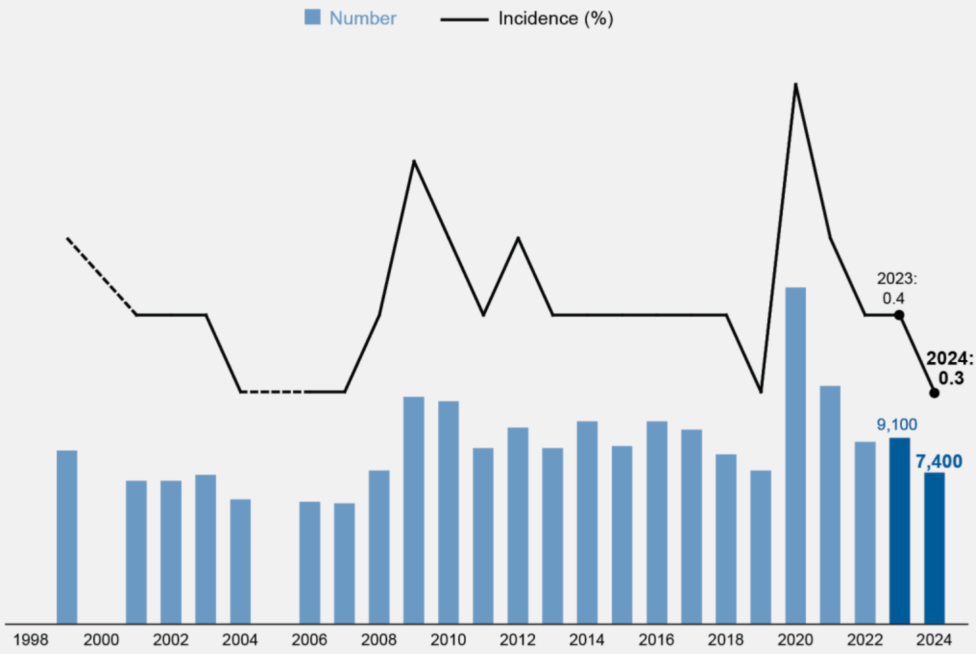
Source: Comprehensive Labour Force Survey, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM

Notes: (1) Data for each characteristic may not add up to 100% due to rounding.
(2) * - Also includes those taking care of grandchild, husband/wife or other family member/relative, which are not separately reflected.

Number and incidence of discouraged workers declined

8.7 The number and incidence of discouraged workers, i.e. those not looking for work because they feel their job search will not yield results, declined from 9,100 or 0.4% in 2023 to 7,400 or 0.3% in 2024.

Chart 62 Residents discouraged from seeking work

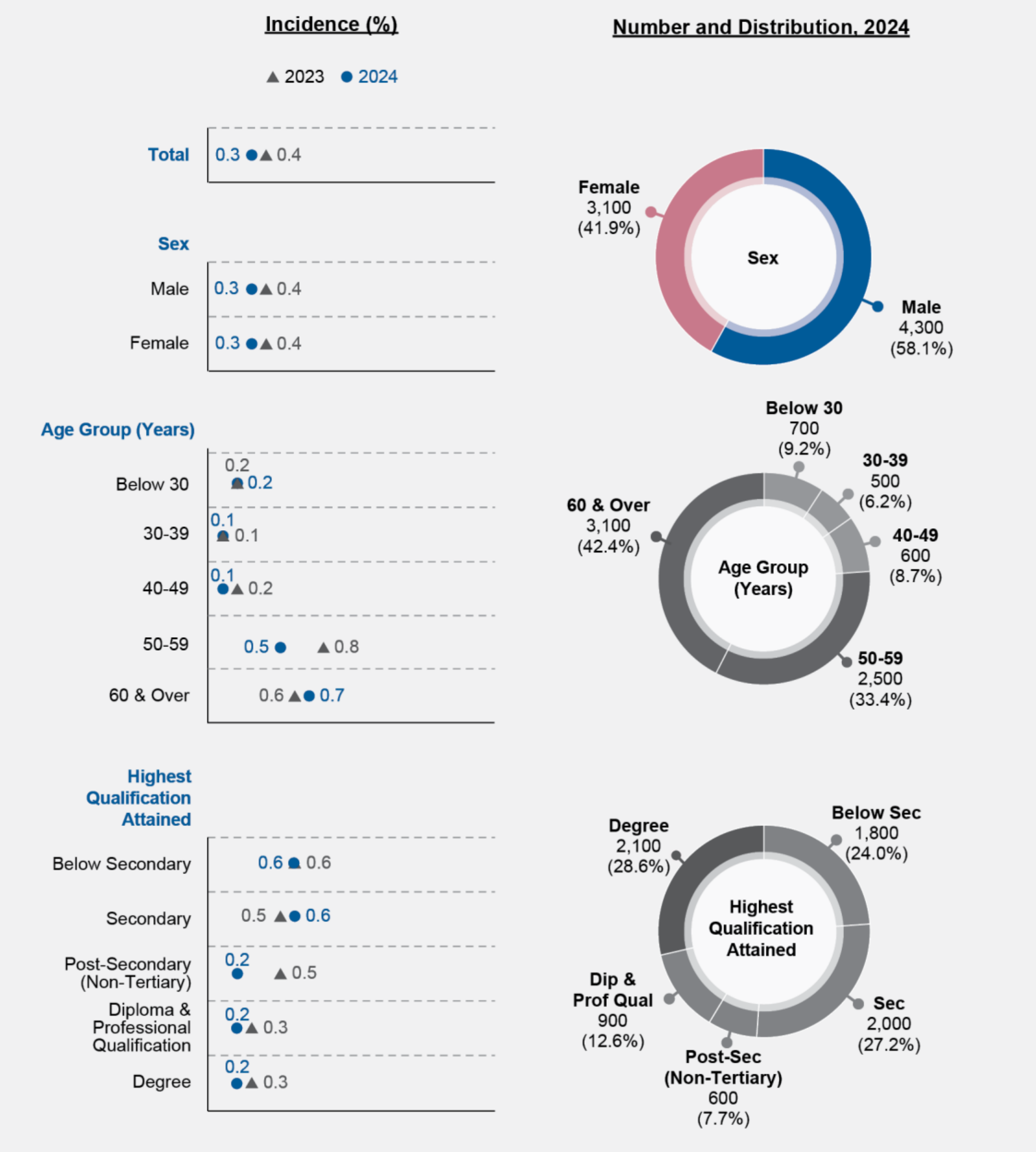


Source: Comprehensive Labour Force Survey, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM

Notes: (1) Incidence refers to discouraged workers as a percentage of the resident labour force (inclusive of discouraged workers).
(2) The Comprehensive Labour Force Survey was not conducted in 2000 and 2005 due to the conduct of the Census of Population 2000 and General Household Survey 2005 by the Singapore Department of Statistics.

8.8 The incidence of discouraged workers improved for most demographic groups. While the rate for seniors aged 60 and over slightly increased from 0.6% in 2023 to 0.7% in 2024, it remained lower than in 2022 and earlier.[62] Over 70% of discouraged workers were aged 50 and above, with 33.4% aged 50 to 59 and 42.4% aged 60 and over. Most were non-tertiary educated and had not worked for at least two years.

Chart 63 Profile of residents discouraged from seeking work



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

Notes: (1) Incidence refers to discouraged workers as a percentage of the resident labour force (inclusive of discouraged workers).
(2) Data on number and distribution may not add up due to rounding.

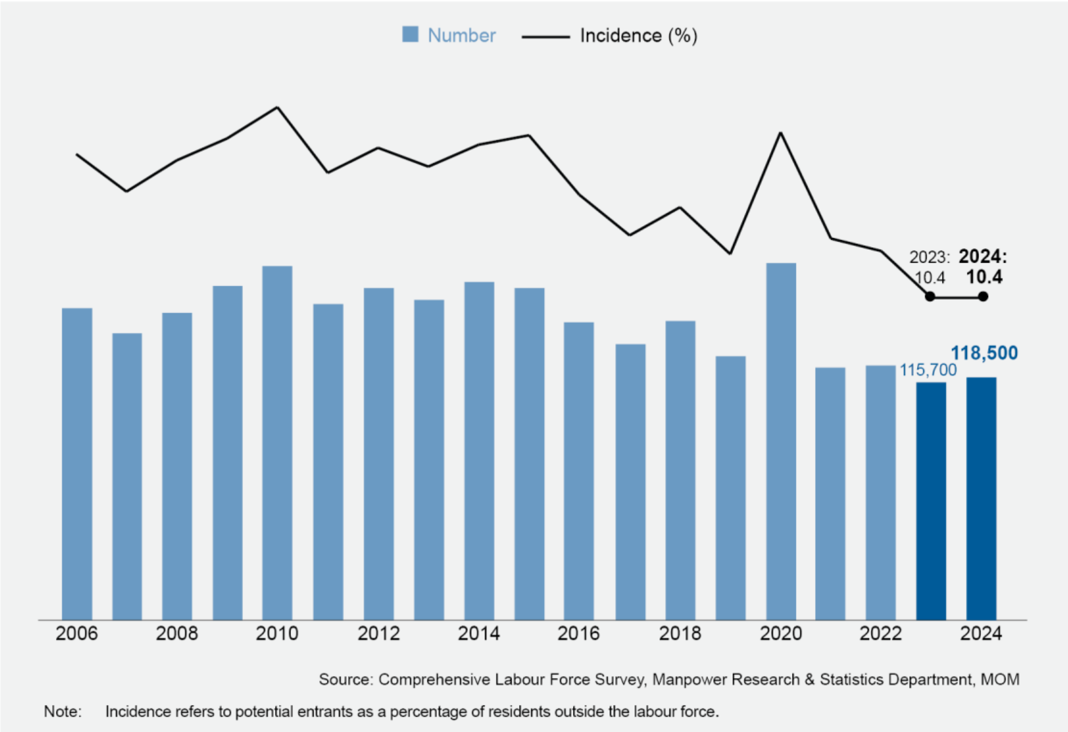
[62] From 2014 to 2022, the incidence of discouraged workers among residents aged 60 years and over ranged from 0.8% to 1.5%.

Incidence of potential entrants held steady, after decreasing in earlier years

8.9 While the number of potential entrants (118,500), i.e. residents who intended to look for jobs within the next two years, inched up slightly from 2023 (115,700), their share remained at the low of 10.4% of residents outside the labour force in 2024, following declines in the preceding years. As all post-war baby boomers will reach their 70s or older over the next ten years, we expect a continued downtrend in the share of potential entrants among residents outside the labour force.[63]

8.10 The majority of potential entrants are younger residents, particularly those under 40 years of age, who make up 51.0% of this group. Additionally, those with tertiary education represent 51.7% of potential entrants. Both figures surpassed their respective shares among residents outside the labour force (aged below 40 years: 30.1%, tertiary-educated: 23.9%).

Chart 64 Resident potential entrants into the labour force



[63] Only 1.4% of residents outside the labour force aged 70 years and over in 2024 were potential entrants.