

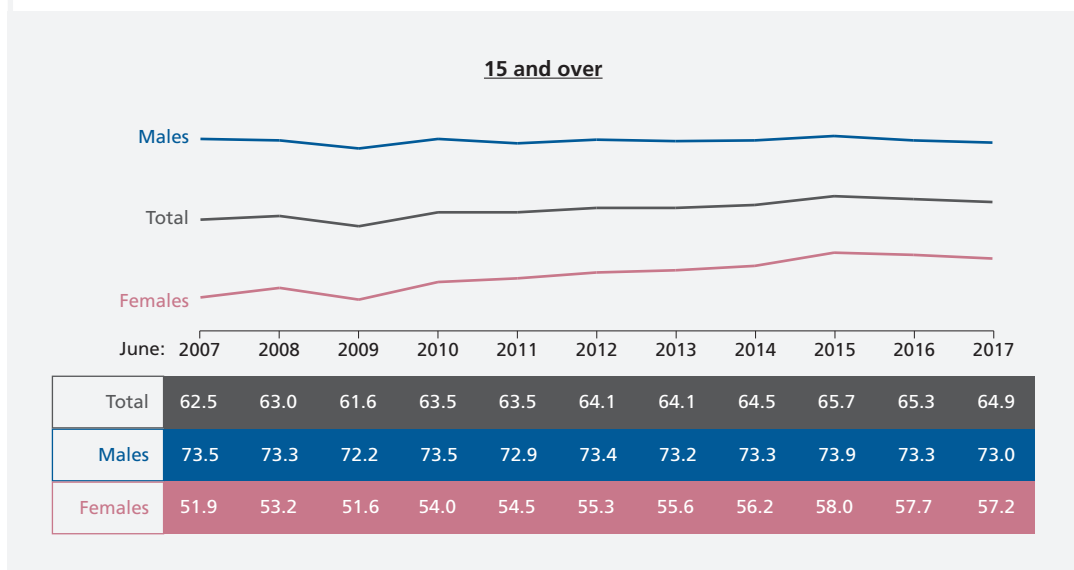
# LABOUR FORCE IN SINGAPORE 2017

## 1. Labour Force Trends

### Employment rate for residents aged 25 to 64, and 65 and over, continued their uptrend in June 2016 – June 2017

- 1.1 The employment rate for residents aged 25 to 64 continued to increase, from 80.3% in 2016<sup>2</sup> to 80.7% in 2017. Likewise, the employment rate for residents aged 65 and over increased from 25.5% to 25.8%. The employment rate for those aged 15 and over declined, reflecting population ageing<sup>3</sup> and a decline in employment rate for youths aged 15 to 24 from 35.8% to 34.1% as a result of the higher propensity of youths to pursue further education and postpone entry into the labour force.

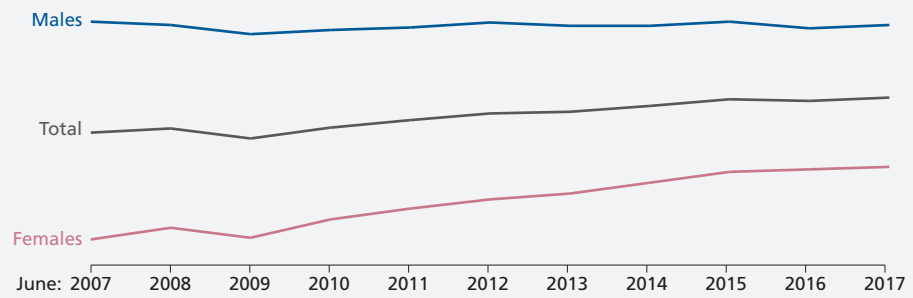
**Chart 1** Resident employment rate by selected age groups and sex  
Per Cent



<sup>2</sup> Data in this report are for June periods of the respective years and pertain to residents aged 15 and over, unless stated otherwise.

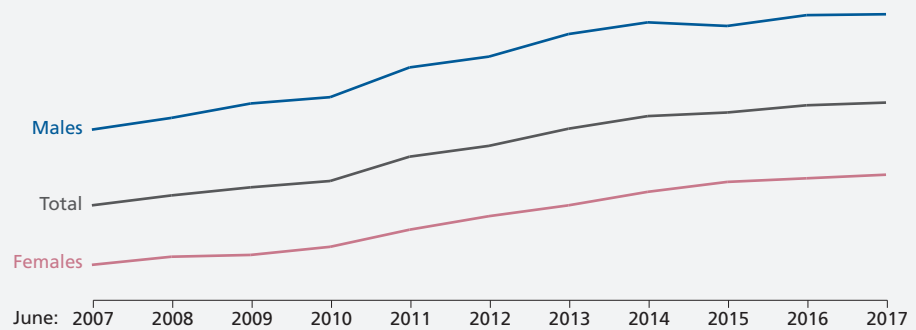
<sup>3</sup> There was a continued increase in the share of the resident working-age (aged 15 and over) population aged 55 to 64 (from 12.3% in 2007 to 16.5% in 2016 and 16.7% in 2017) and 65 and over (10.5% in 2007 to 14.6% in 2016 and 15.3% in 2017), and their employment rates were typically lower than the prime working-age groups. On the other hand, the share of youths aged 15 to 24 and prime working-age residents aged 25 to 54 among the resident working-age population declined further. Source: Singapore Department of Statistics.

### 25 to 64



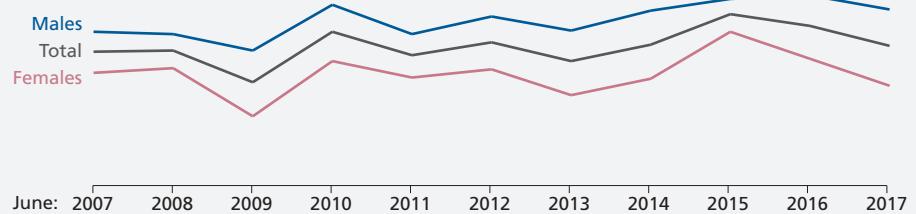
June:	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Total	76.5	77.0	75.8	77.1	78.0	78.8	79.0	79.7	80.5	80.3	80.7
Males	89.8	89.4	88.3	88.8	89.1	89.7	89.3	89.3	89.8	89.0	89.4
Females	63.7	65.1	63.9	66.1	67.4	68.5	69.2	70.5	71.8	72.1	72.4

### 65 and over



June:	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Total	14.4	15.5	16.4	17.1	19.8	21.0	22.9	24.3	24.7	25.5	25.8
Males	22.8	24.1	25.7	26.4	29.7	30.9	33.4	34.7	34.3	35.5	35.6
Females	7.8	8.7	8.9	9.8	11.7	13.2	14.4	15.9	17.0	17.4	17.8

### 15 to 24



June:	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Total	33.6	33.7	31.0	35.3	33.3	34.4	32.8	34.2	36.8	35.8	34.1
Males	35.3	35.1	33.7	37.6	35.1	36.6	35.4	37.1	38.1	38.4	37.2
Females	31.8	32.2	28.1	32.8	31.4	32.1	29.9	31.3	35.3	33.0	30.7

Source: Comprehensive Labour Force Survey, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM  
 Note: June 2007 data have been adjusted based on latest revised population estimates from DOS to facilitate comparison with June 2008 onwards.

## Overall labour force participation rate dipped due to population ageing and youths postponing entry into the labour force due to studies

- 1.2 The labour force participation rate (LFPR) for residents aged 15 and over declined slightly from 68.0% in 2016 to 67.7% in 2017, following sustained increases over the decade. Similar to employment rate, this is due to population ageing as more residents shifted into the older age groups with significantly lower LFPR, as well as the higher propensity of youths to postpone entry into the labour force.
- 1.3 For residents aged 25 to 64, LFPR increased over the same period for both males and females. While LFPR for males has held steady at around 92%-93% in the last ten years, the LFPR for females continued to rise, from 74.9% in 2016 to 75.1% in 2017, albeit at a slower pace.

**Chart 2 Resident labour force participation rate by selected age groups and sex**  
Per Cent

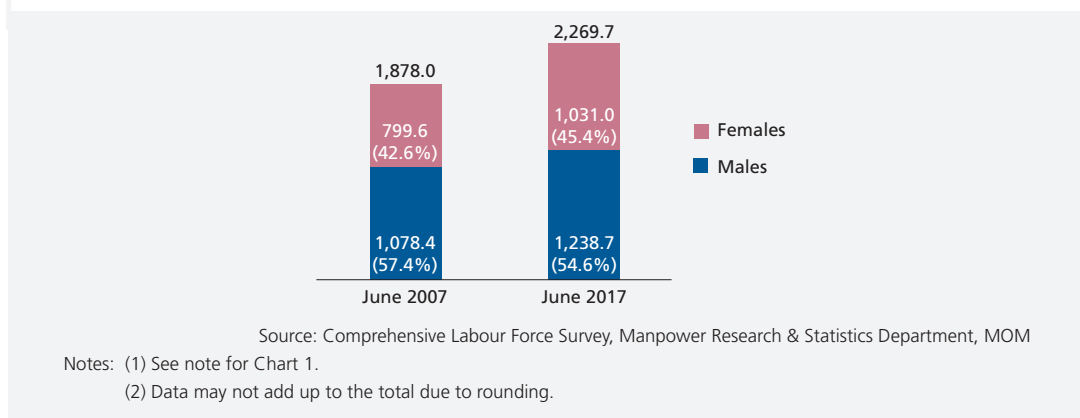


## Female share of the labour force rose

- 1.4 With the general uptrend in female LFPR and stable male LFPR over the decade, females made up a higher share in the resident labour force in 2017 (45%) than in 2007 (43%). There were 2.27 million residents in the labour force in 2017, comprising 1.24 million men and 1.03 million women.

**Chart 3 Resident labour force by sex**

Number ('000)

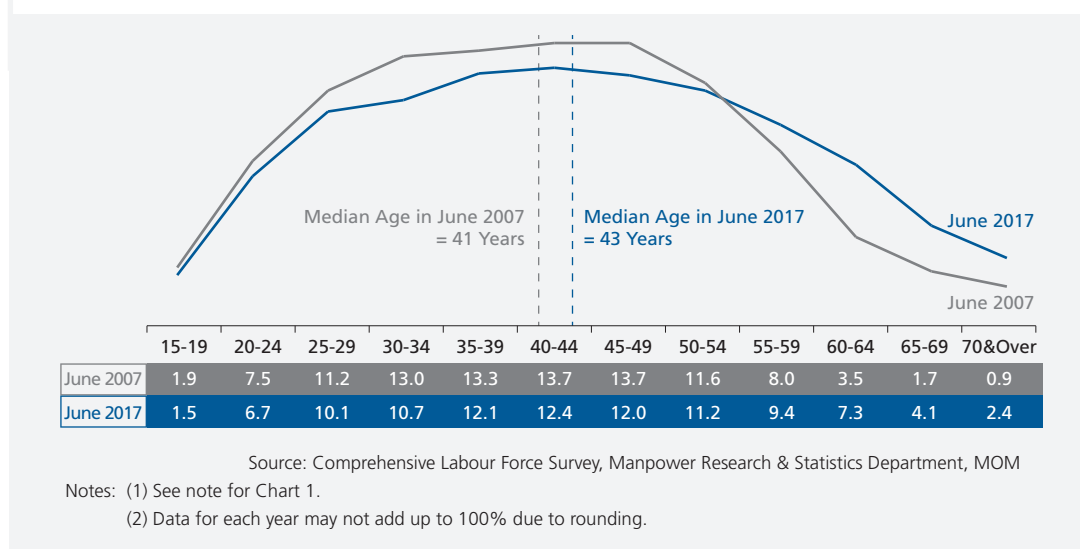


## Labour force continued to age

- 1.5 Reflecting the shift of the post-war baby boomers towards older age groups and the uptrend in LFPR for older residents over the decade, the share of those aged 60 and over in the resident labour force rose substantially from 6.1% in 2007 to 14% in 2017. The median age of residents in the labour force rose from 41 years in 2007 to 43 years in 2017.

**Chart 4 Age distribution of resident labour force**

Per Cent



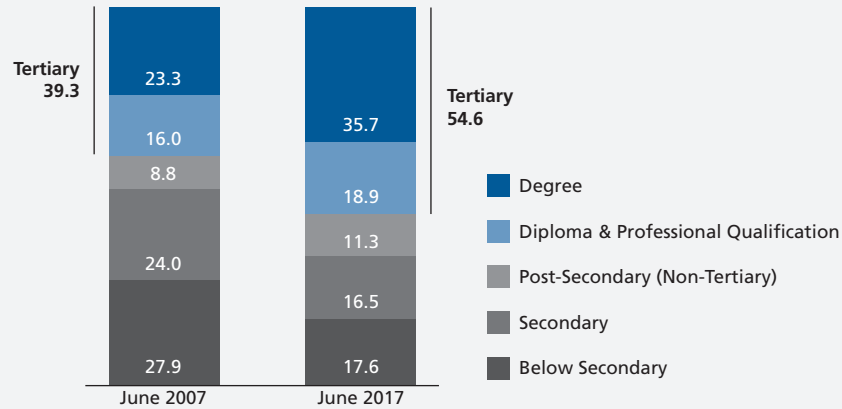


## Shift towards a tertiary-educated labour force

- 1.6 The education profile of the resident labour force continued to improve. 55% of the resident labour force in 2017 had tertiary qualifications, up from 39% in 2007. Most of the increase was from degree holders, whose share in the labour force rose from 23% in 2007 to 36% in 2017.

**Chart 5** Highest qualification attained of resident labour force

Per Cent



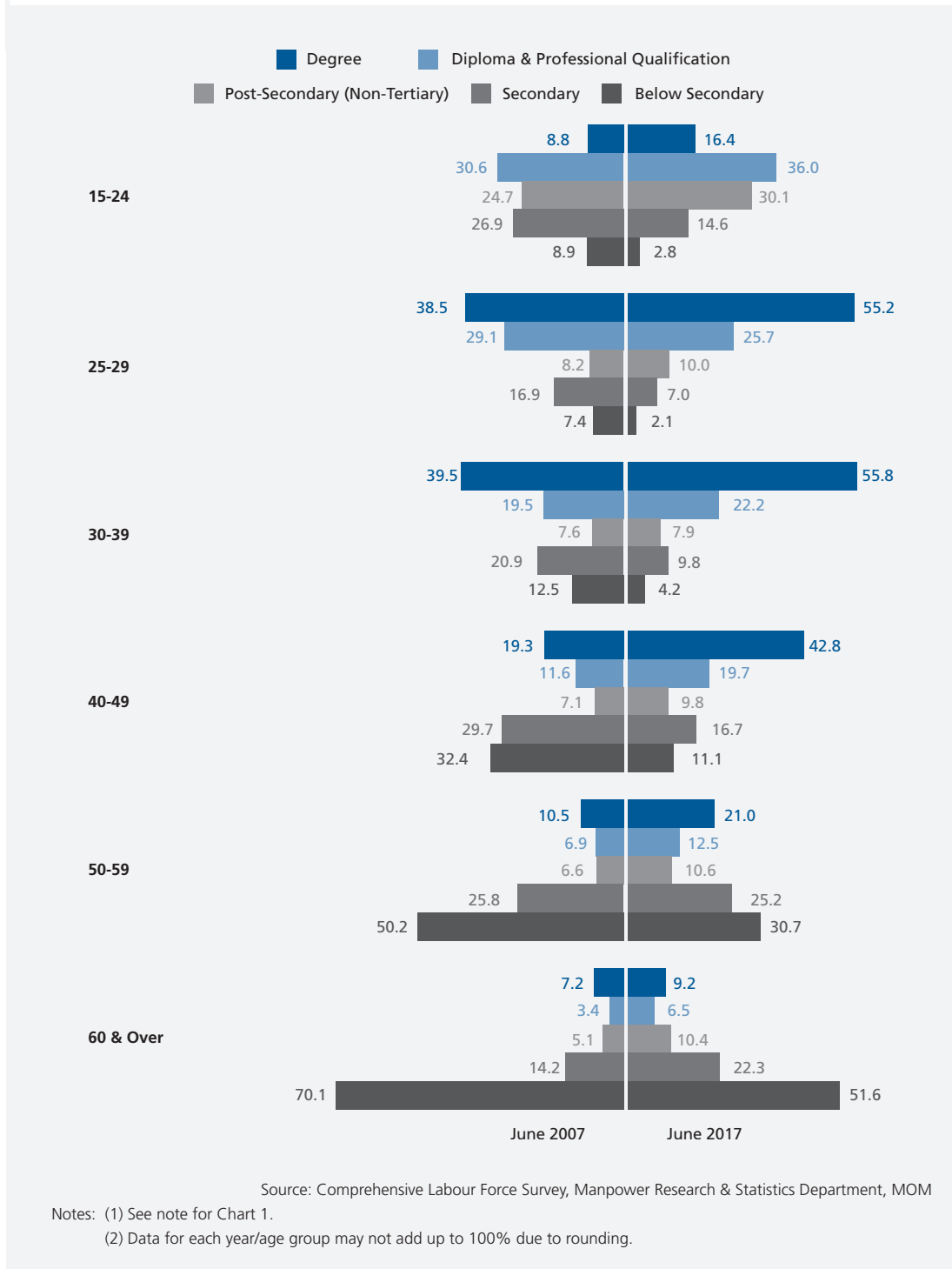
Source: Comprehensive Labour Force Survey, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM

Notes: (1) See note for Chart 1.

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

1.7 The improvement in educational profile of the resident labour force was observed across all age groups. Over the decade, the increase in share of degree holders in the resident labour force was largest among those in their 40s (from 19% to 43%), followed by those aged 25 to 29 (from 39% to 55%) and 30 to 39 (from 40% to 56%). Among older residents aged 60 and over, the improvement in educational profile was largely observed in the secondary and post-secondary groups.

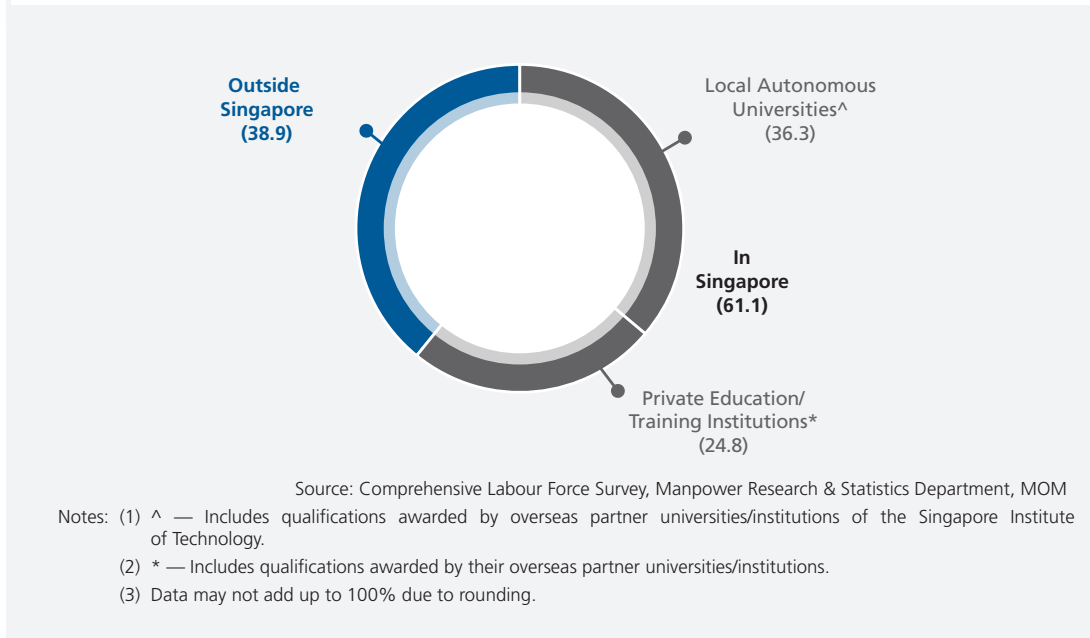
**Chart 6** Highest qualification attained of resident labour force by age  
Per Cent



- 1.8 A higher proportion of degree holders in the resident labour force in 2017 obtained their qualifications overseas (39%) and from local autonomous universities<sup>4</sup> (36%) than from private education/training institutions<sup>5</sup> in Singapore (25%).

**Chart 7** Place of study and institution that awarded qualification of degree holders in resident labour force, June 2017

Per Cent

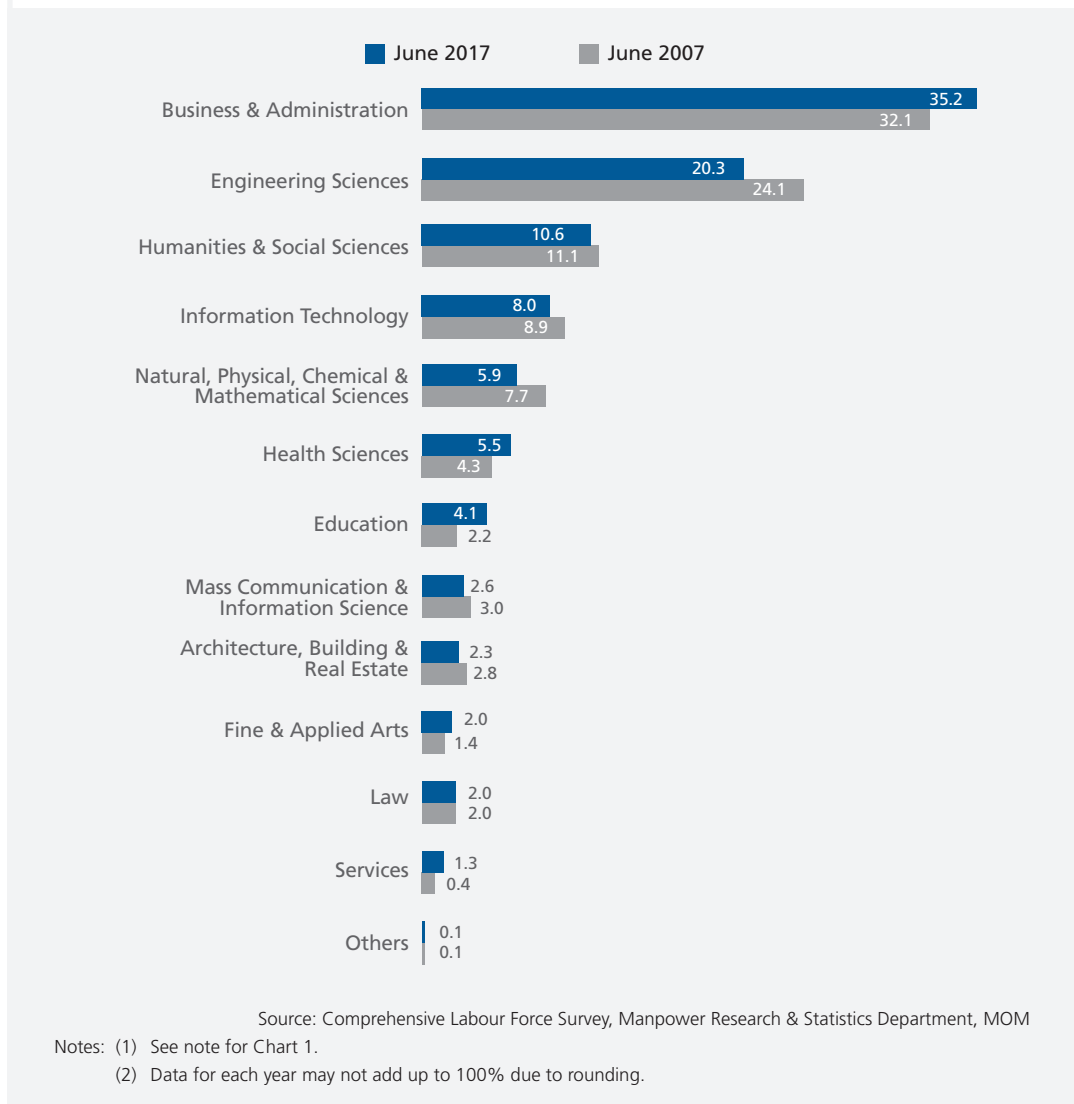


<sup>4</sup> This refers to the National University of Singapore (including the former University of Singapore), Nanyang Technological University (including the former Nanyang University and Nanyang Technological Institute), National Institute of Education, Singapore Management University, Singapore University of Technology and Design and Singapore Institute of Technology (including qualifications awarded by its overseas partner universities/institutions). It excludes the Singapore University of Social Sciences (formerly known as SIM University), which only became an autonomous university after June 2017.

<sup>5</sup> Includes qualifications awarded by their overseas partner universities/institutions. It includes data for Singapore University of Social Sciences (formerly known as SIM University), which was still a private education institution in June 2017.

1.9 Business & Administration (35%) and Engineering Sciences (20%) remained the most common fields of study among degree holders in the resident labour force in 2017. Compared with a decade ago, the share of degree holders from Business & Administration increased, reflecting a greater diversity of pathways to pursue further education. The proportion of degree holders in Education and Health Sciences (e.g. Nursing & Health Care) also increased. On the other hand, the shares decreased in several Science, Engineering & Technology disciplines, including Engineering Sciences, Natural, Physical, Chemical & Mathematical Sciences, Information Technology and Architecture, Building & Real Estate.

**Chart 8** Field of study of degree holders in resident labour force  
Per Cent

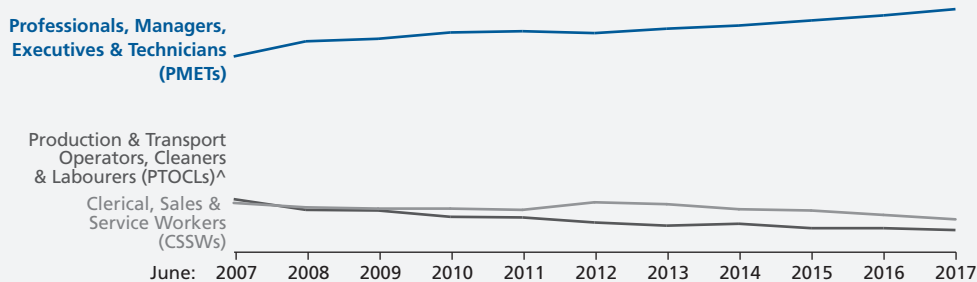


## PMET share among employed residents rose

- 1.10 The share of professionals, managers, executives & technicians (PMETs) among employed residents has trended up over the decade from 49% in 2007 to 56% in 2017, with a faster pace of increase since 2015. Over the decade, there was a decline in the share of clerical, sales & service workers (25% to 23%) and production & transport operators, cleaners & labourers (26% to 21%) among employed residents.

**Chart 9 Occupational distribution of employed residents**

Per Cent



	June: 2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
<b>PMETs</b>	48.6	51.0	51.4	52.4	52.6	52.3	53.0	53.5	54.3	55.1	56.1
CSSWs	25.4	24.7	24.5	24.5	24.3	25.5	25.2	24.4	24.2	23.5	22.8
PTOCLs^	26.0	24.3	24.2	23.2	23.1	22.3	21.8	22.1	21.4	21.4	21.1

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

Notes: (1) Data are classified based on Singapore Standard Occupational Classification (SSOC) 2015. Data before year 2015 which were coded based on earlier versions of the SSOC were mapped to SSOC 2015 as far as possible to facilitate data comparability.

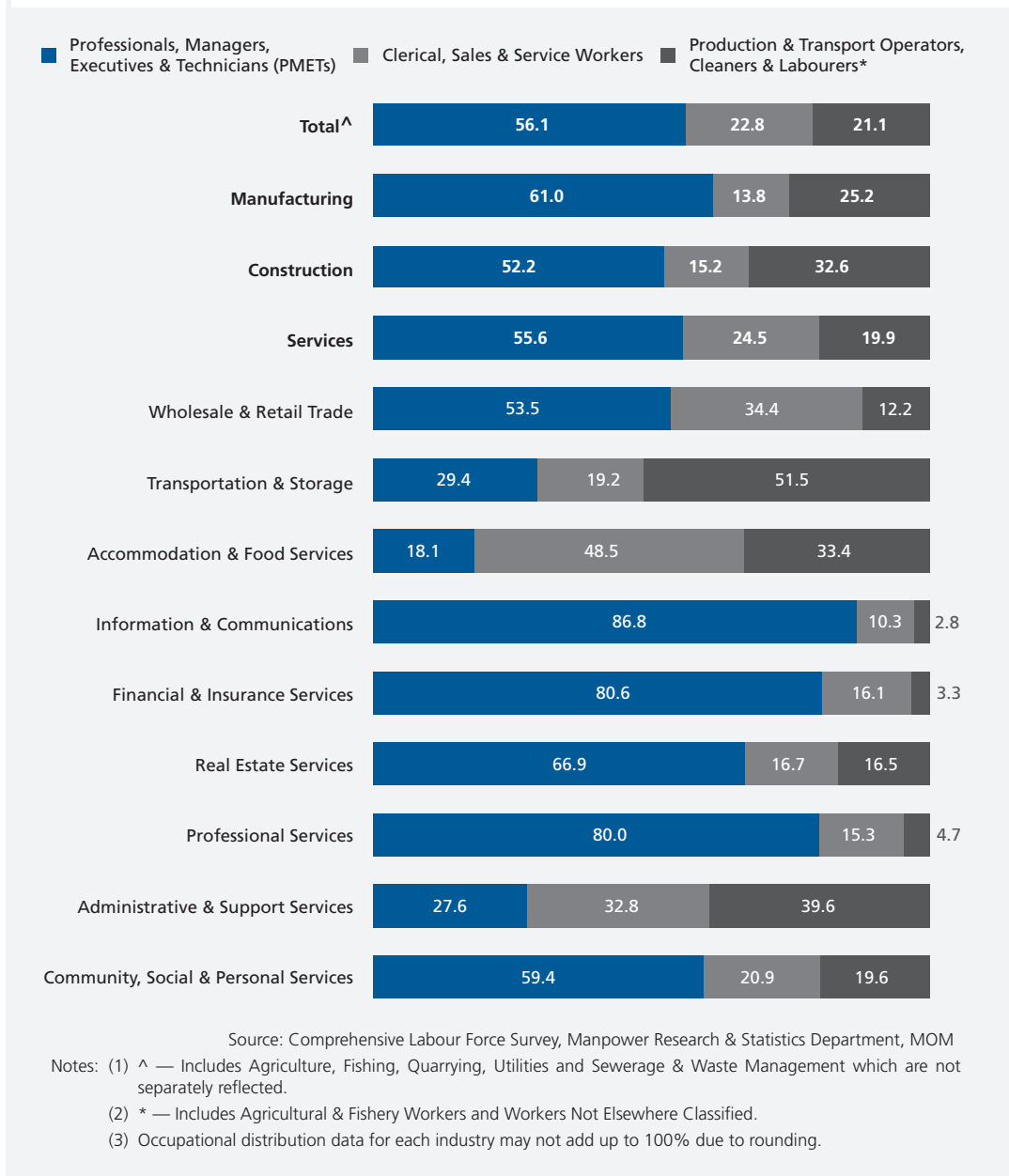
(2) ^ — Includes Agricultural & Fishery Workers and Workers Not Elsewhere Classified.

(3) See note for Chart 1.

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

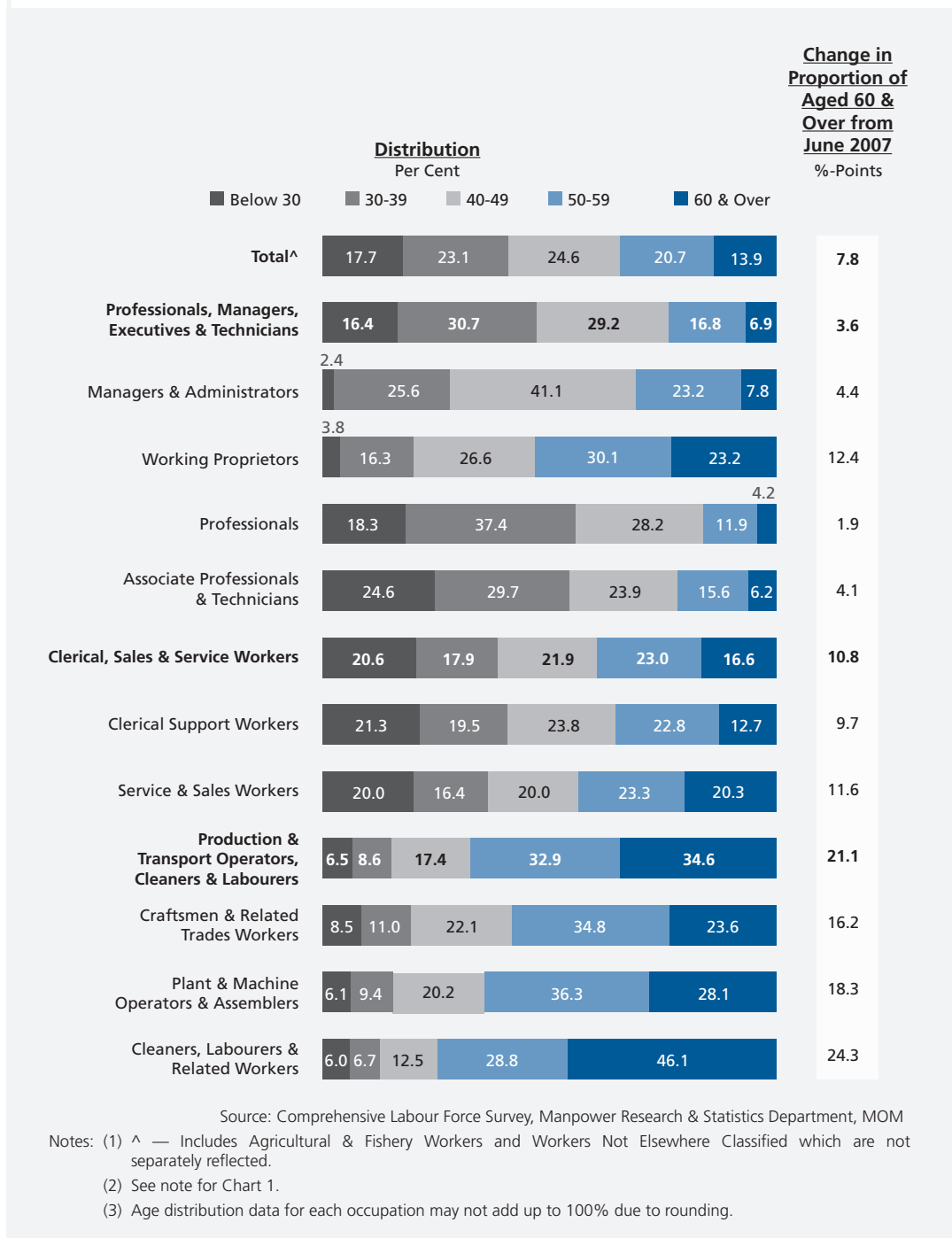
1.11 The PMET share of employed residents was highest in information & communications (87%), financial & insurance services (81%) and professional services (80%), and lowest in accommodation & food services (18%), administrative & support services (28%) and transportation & storage (29%). Workers in the latter three industries were mostly in non-PMET jobs, such as hawkers/stall holders/assistants, waiters, kitchen assistants and cooks in accommodation & food services; security guards and cleaners in administrative & support services; and taxi, private-hire car and bus drivers in transportation & storage.

**Chart 10 Occupational distribution of employed residents by industry, June 2017**  
Per Cent



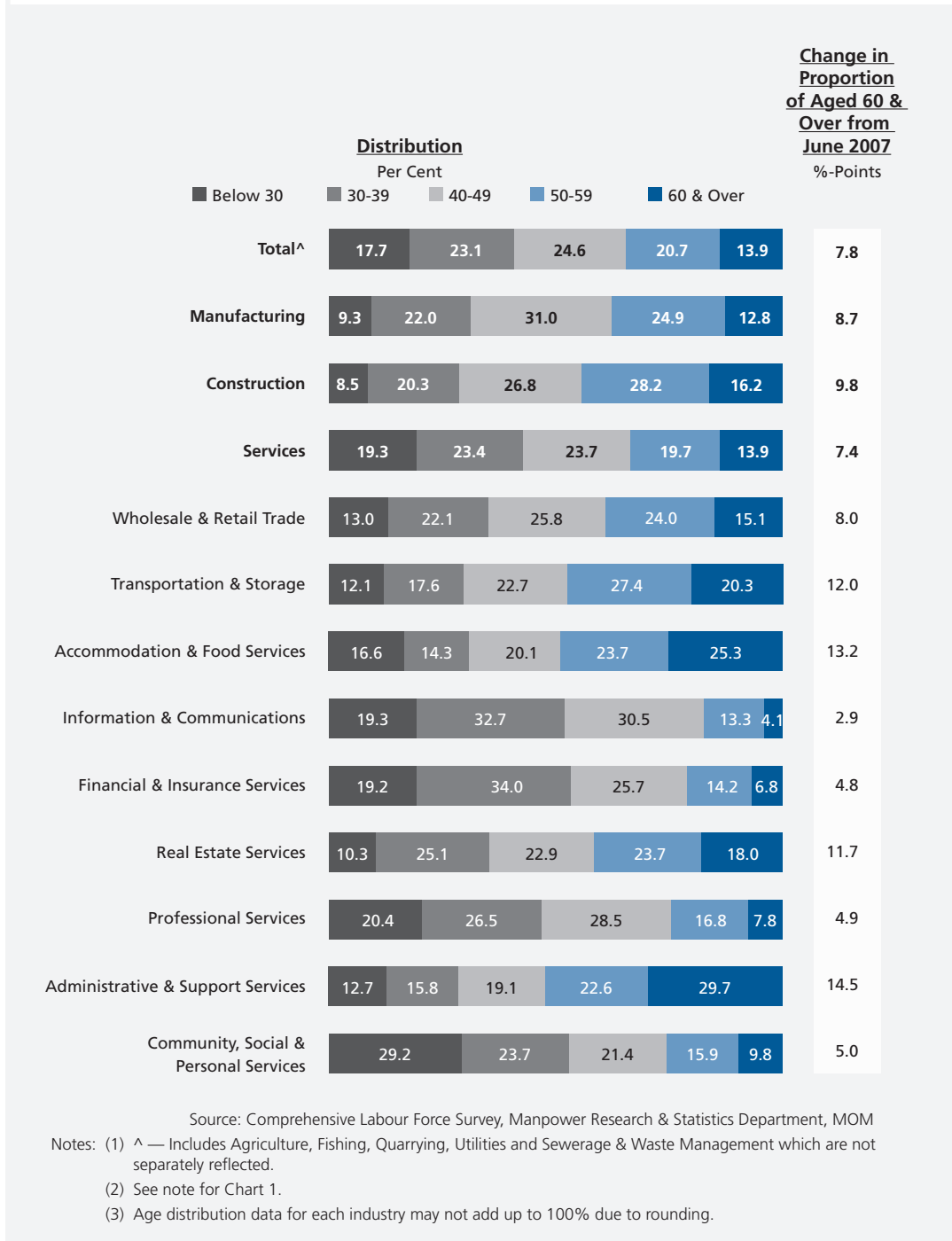
1.12 Production & transport operators, cleaners & labourers tend to be older, with 35% of employed residents aged 60 and over in 2017 compared with 17% among clerical, sales & service workers and 6.9% among PMETs. They also posted larger increase in proportion of older workers aged 60 and over from 2007 to 2017 than clerical, sales & service workers and PMETs. The large increase in concentration of older workers in lower-skilled blue-collar occupations reflect population ageing and rising labour force participation among older residents, and the lower likelihood of younger residents taking on such jobs given their better-educated profile.

**Chart 11** Age profile of employed residents by occupation, June 2017



1.13 Administrative & support services (30%), accommodation & food services (25%) and transportation & storage (20%) had the highest proportion of older workers aged 60 and over in 2017, as many of the workers in these industries are production & transport operators, cleaners & labourers who tend to be older. Real estate services (18%) also had relatively high proportion of older workers, pulled up by cleaners. These industries also posted the largest increase in proportion of older residents aged 60 and over compared with 2007.

**Chart 12** Age profile of employed residents by industry, June 2017



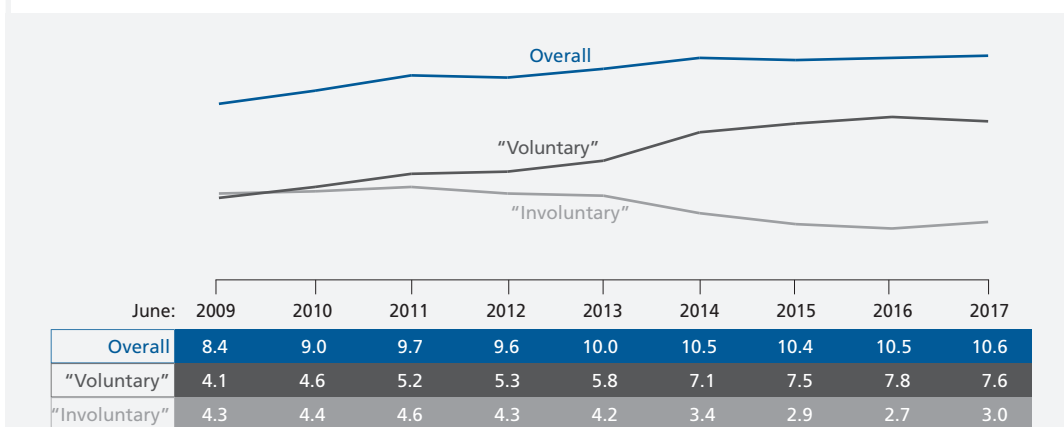


## Slight increase in part-timers who were willing and available to work additional hours

- 1.14 The share of part-timers among employed residents remained stable at 10.6% in 2017. However, the time-related underemployment rate<sup>6</sup> or “involuntary” part-time rate rose from 2.7% in 2016 to 3.0% in 2017, after declining steadily from 2011.

**Chart 13** Incidence of part-time employment among employed residents

Per Cent



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

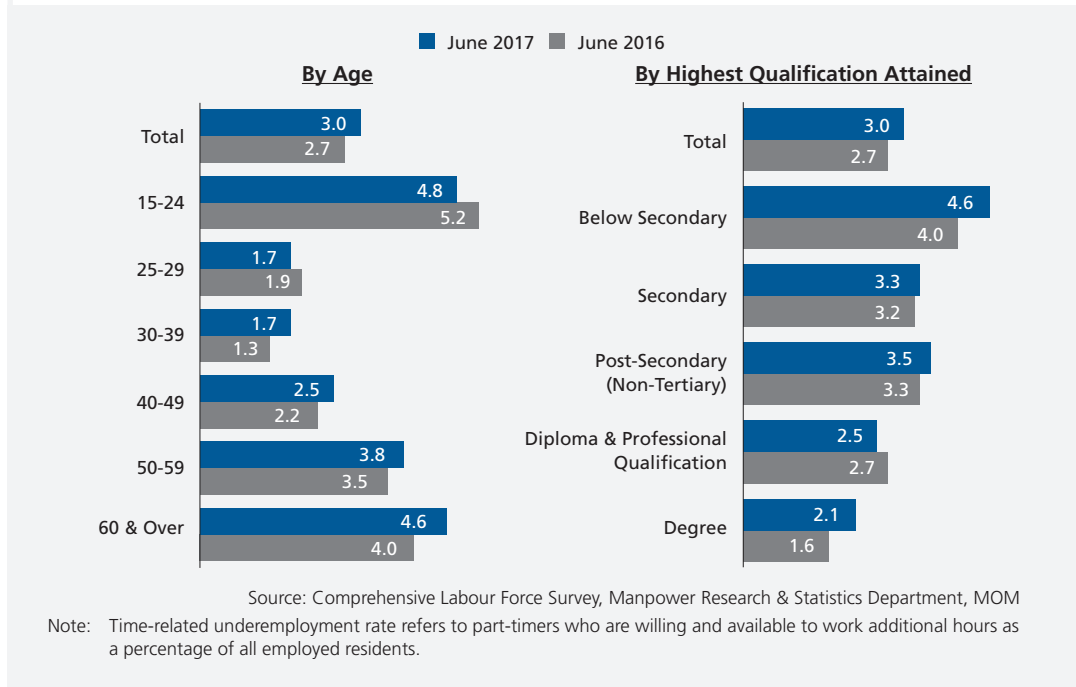
- Notes: (1) “Voluntary” part-time employed refers to those who are (a) unwilling to work additional hours or (b) willing to work additional hours but unavailable for additional work.  
 (2) “Involuntary” part-time employed refers to time-related underemployed residents, i.e. part-timers who are willing and available to work additional hours.  
 (3) Incidence refers to the number of part-time employed residents in the respective groups as a percentage of employed residents.  
 (4) Data for “voluntary” and “involuntary” may not add up to the overall figure due to rounding.

<sup>6</sup> Refers to the proportion of employed residents working part-time but willing and available to work additional hours.

1.15 Residents with below-secondary qualifications were more likely to be time-related underemployed, and posted the largest increase in time-related underemployment rate among the education groups from 2016 to 2017. Over the same period, time-related underemployment rate increased among residents in their 30s and older, with larger increase among older residents aged 60 and over. In contrast, there were decreases in time-related underemployment rate among younger residents aged below 30.

**Chart 14 Resident time-related underemployment rate**

Per Cent

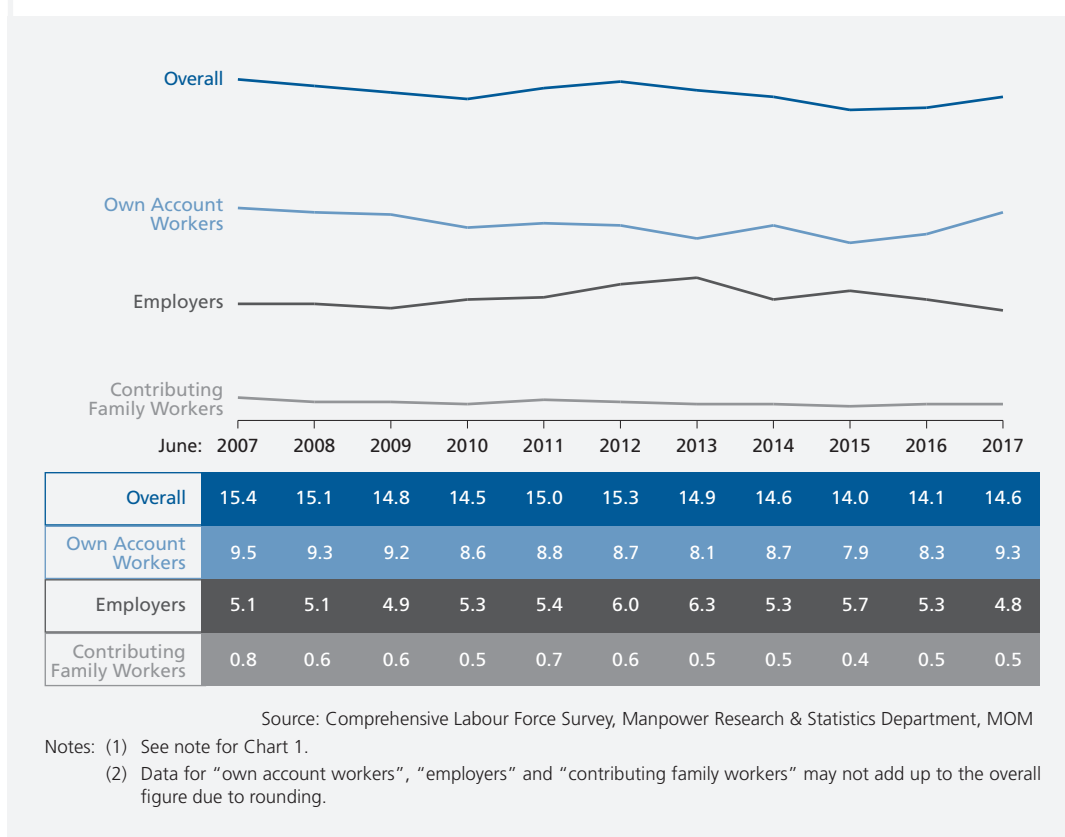


## Share of own account workers among employed residents rose

1.16 Among residents employed during the reference week in June 2017, 85% were employees and the remaining 15% were self-employed in their main<sup>7</sup> or primary job. The share of self-employed among employed residents increased from June 2016, after a broad downtrend over the decade. The increase came from own account workers (i.e. persons who operate their own business or trade without employing any paid workers), whose share among employed residents rose from 8.3% in June 2016 to 9.3% in June 2017. This was back to around the high of 9.5% observed a decade ago. The share of employers fell from 5.3% to 4.8% over the same period, broadly continuing a downtrend from the peak in June 2013. The self-employed commonly worked as managing directors/chief executive officers, company directors, working proprietors, insurance sales agents/brokers, real estate agents, private tutors, hawkers/stall holders, taxi drivers and private-hire car drivers.

**Chart 15** Proportion of self-employed among employed residents

Per Cent



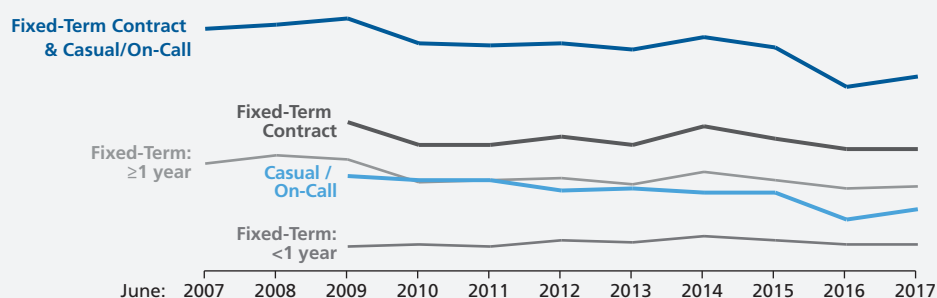
<sup>7</sup> For persons who held more than one job during the week preceding the survey interview (i.e. the reference period), their employment status is based on the job in which they usually work the longest hours. Multiple job holders formed a small minority or 2.7% of employed residents in June 2016 (latest available as this indicator is collected once in every two years).

## Proportion of resident employees on fixed-term contracts stayed low

- 1.17 The proportion of resident employees on fixed-term contracts and casual/on-call employment<sup>8</sup> rose slightly to 9.9% in 2017, after registering a sharp decline in 2016 when industries with higher reliance on short-term workers cut back on manpower due to less optimistic business conditions. The increase in 2017 was mainly driven by a higher proportion of casual/on-call workers (from 3.0% to 3.5%) while the proportion for those on fixed-term contracts remained unchanged at a low of 6.4%.

**Chart 16** Incidence of resident employees on fixed-term contract and casual/on-call employment<sup>8</sup>

Per Cent



	June: 2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
<b>Fixed-Term Contract &amp; Casual/On-Call</b>	12.2	12.4	12.7	11.5	11.4	11.5	11.2	11.8	11.3	9.4	9.9
Casual /On-Call	n.a.	n.a.	5.1	4.9	4.9	4.4	4.5	4.3	4.3	3.0	3.5
<b>Fixed-Term Contract</b>	n.a.	n.a.	7.7	6.6	6.6	7.0	6.6	7.5	6.9	6.4	6.4
<1 year	n.a.	n.a.	1.7	1.8	1.7	2.0	1.9	2.2	2.0	1.8	1.8
≥1 year	5.7	6.1	5.9	4.8	4.9	5.0	4.7	5.3	4.9	4.5	4.6

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) See note for Chart 1.  
 (4) n.a. — Not available as casual/on-call employment was collected together with fixed-term contract of less than 1 year before 2009.  
 (5) Data for each year may not add up to the overall figure due to rounding.

<sup>8</sup> Employees on fixed-term contracts refer to those whose employment will terminate on the expiry of a specific term unless it is renewed, while casual/on-call employees refer to those employed on ad hoc basis, as and when the company requires additional manpower. On the other hand, permanent employees refer to those employed for an unspecified duration, i.e. they are neither casual/on-call employees nor on fixed-term contracts.

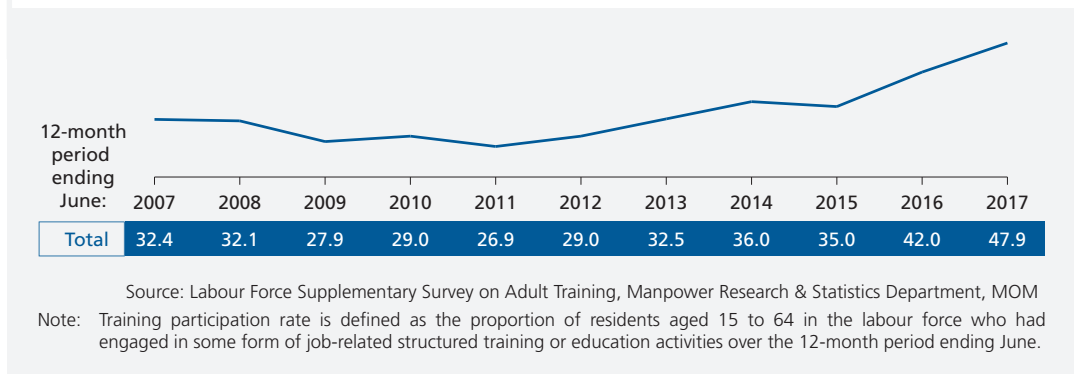
## 2. Training

### Training participation rose to a new high

- 2.1 The training participation rate for the resident labour force aged 15 to 64 continued its steady increase to 48% in 2017. This reflected on-going initiatives to restructure the economy and build a career-resilient workforce.

**Chart 17** Training participation rate of resident labour force aged 15 to 64

Per Cent

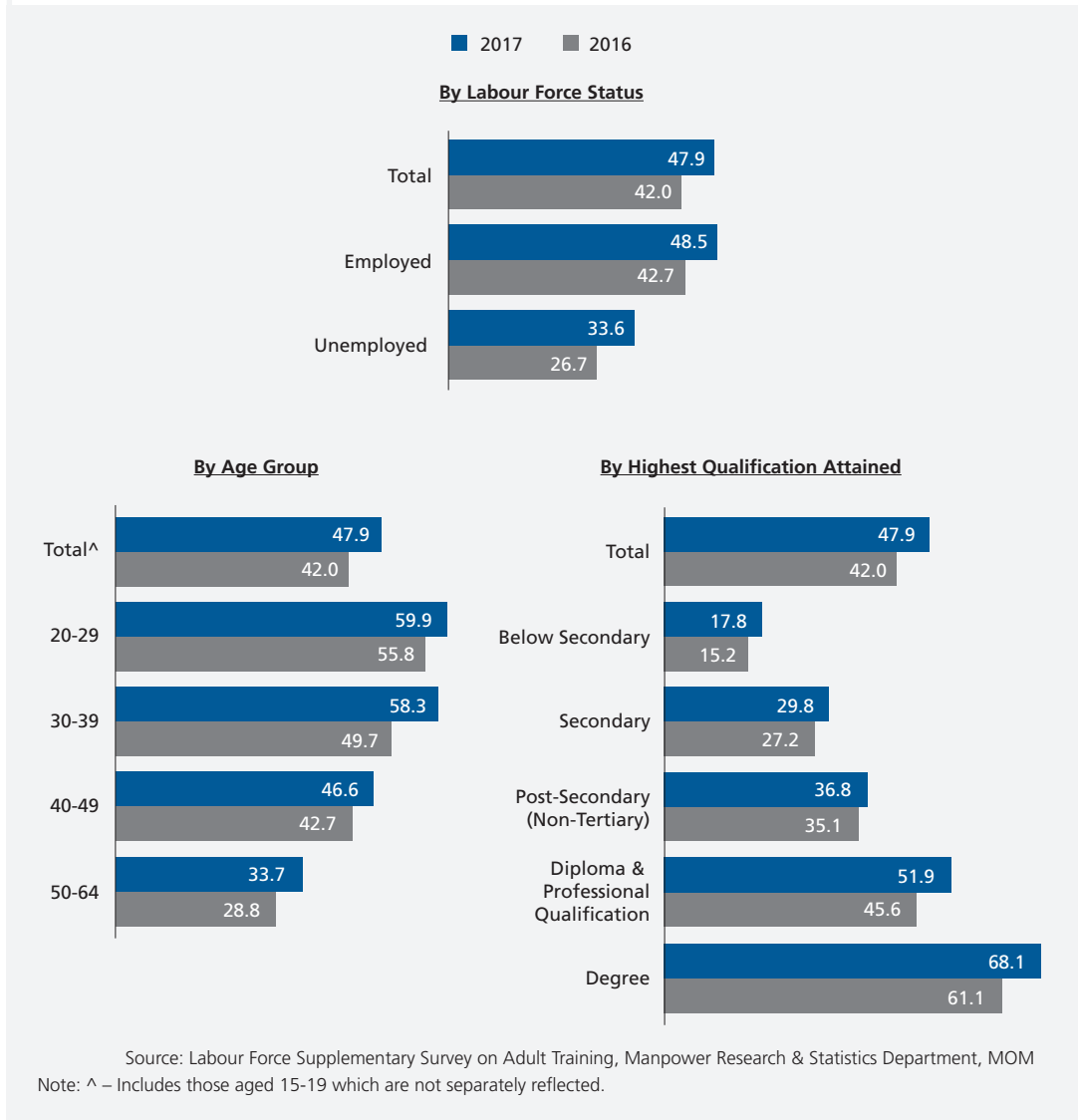


- 2.2 Training participation rose for both employed and unemployed residents in 2017, though participation among the unemployed (34%) continued to lag the employed (48%) who can benefit from training provided by employers.
- 2.3 In terms of age, younger residents aged 20 to 29 continued to have the highest training participation rate, given their longer time horizon to reap benefits from training. By education, training participation rose across all qualification levels in 2017, with degree holders taking the lead.

**Chart 18**

**Training participation rate of resident labour force aged 15 to 64**

Per Cent

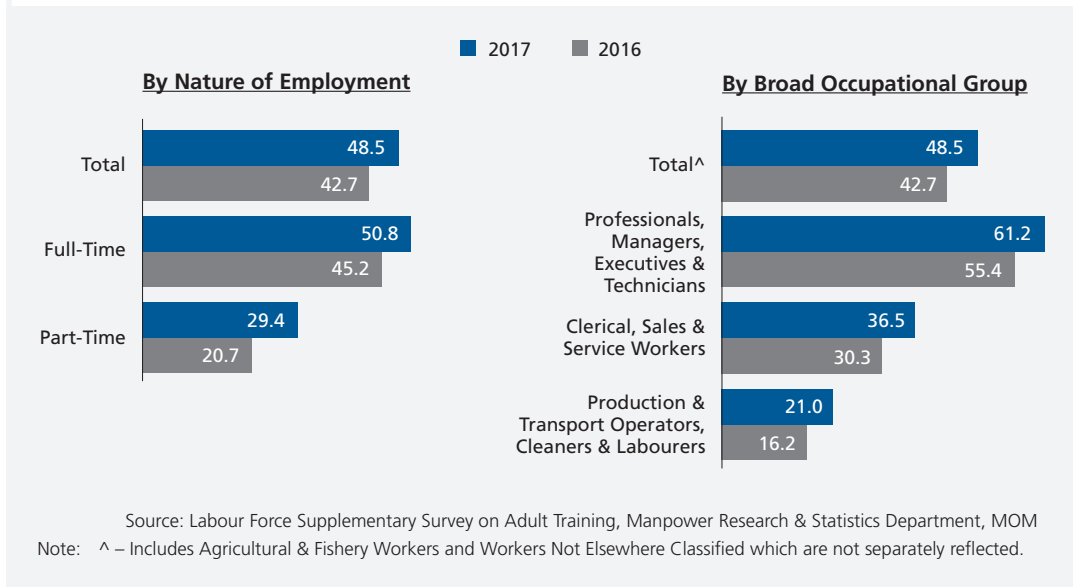


- 2.4 Among the employed, full-timers (51%) continued to have higher training participation rate than part-timers (29%) due to their stronger labour market attachment. However, part-timers saw a larger increase in the training incidence.
- 2.5 Training participation rate improved across all broad occupational groups. PMETs remained more likely to participate in training (61%) compared to clerical, sales & service workers (36%) and production & transport operators, cleaners & labourers (21%).

**Chart 19**

**Training participation rate of employed residents aged 15 to 64**

Per Cent

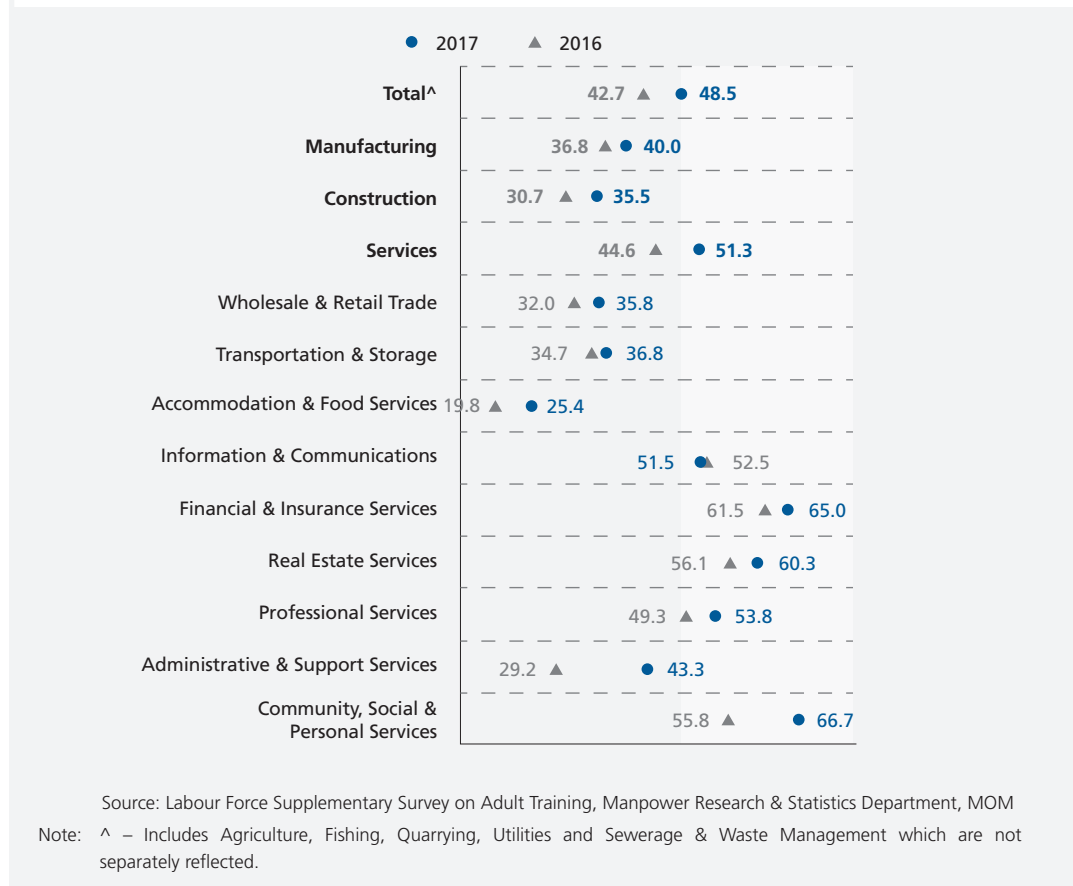


2.6 Reflecting the higher concentration of PMETs, training was most prevalent in community, social & personal services (67%), financial & insurance services and real estate services. On the other hand, it was less common in sectors with greater reliance on lower-skilled and/or seasonal workers such as accommodation & food services (25%).

**Chart 20**

**Training participation rate of employed residents aged 15 to 64 by industry**

Per Cent



## IMPACT OF TRAINING

Most employers and workers provided positive responses to training outcomes, but employers tend to rate more favourably on training having a positive impact on organisational performance and employees.



# QUICK FACTS ABOUT TRAINING

## PROVISION OF TRAINING BY FIRMS

After a sharp increase in 2014 due to one-off policy effects, the proportion of training-providing employers with 25+ employees declined in 2016, back to levels seen in 2010 and 2012.



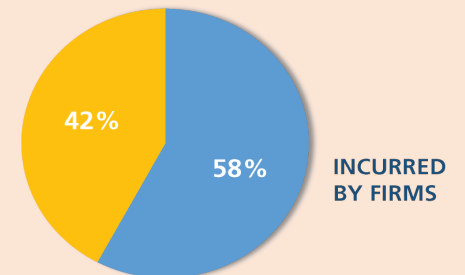
03

## NET DIRECT EXPENDITURE PER TRAINEE

Majority of training expenditure was borne by employers. After netting training grants from private sponsors and government subsidies, the amount paid by employers per trainee was \$606, higher than the \$442 by individuals.

02

INCURRED BY INDIVIDUALS



INCURRED BY FIRMS

01



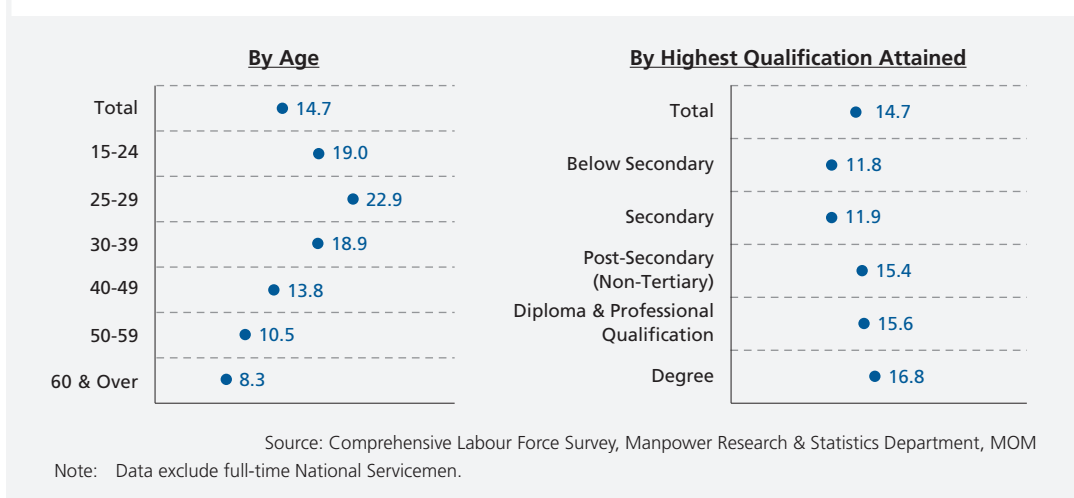
### 3. Job Mobility and Tenure

#### Incidence of job change decreased further

- 3.1 Fewer workers had changed jobs in the recent two years, as recruitment and resignation rates continued to fall<sup>9</sup> in a labour market with greater slack.<sup>10</sup> 15% of employed residents in June 2017 had changed jobs in the last two years (i.e. between June 2015 and June 2017), down from 17% and 19% of employed residents in June 2015 and 2013 respectively.<sup>11</sup> Job changes were more common among younger workers, as many of them are in the early stages of their career and exploring different options to find a job that better suits them. Degree holders had the highest incidence of job change among the education groups, reflecting their younger age profile.

**Chart 21** Proportion of employed residents who had changed jobs in the last 2 years, June 2017

Per Cent



#### Proportion of employees who had worked for less than a year with current employer fell, reflecting lower extent of labour market entry and job change

- 3.2 With smaller cohort of younger workers entering the labour market in recent years and a lower proportion of workers changing jobs, the proportion of resident employees who had worked for less than a year with their current employer decreased further to 16% in 2017 from 18% in 2016 and 23% in 2007.
- 3.3 Meanwhile, the proportion of resident employees who had worked for at least ten years with their current employer rose to 29% in 2017 from around 27% in each of the preceding five years. This is pulled up by employees who started working in their current jobs during the high employment growth years of 2006/2007 crossing the ten-year mark. The increase in proportion who had worked for at least ten years in their current job in 2017 was largest in the age group of 30 to 39, many of whom newly entered the labour market around a decade ago or were in the early stages of their careers then. The proportion of employees in their 40s and 50s with at least ten years of service with their current employer also rose. This departed from the downtrend in proportion of long-tenured employees in these age groups in recent years.

<sup>9</sup> The seasonally adjusted average monthly recruitment rate fell from 2.8% in the second quarter of 2013 to 2.4% in the second quarter of 2015 and 2.1% in the second quarter of 2017. The seasonally adjusted average monthly resignation rate fell from 2.0% in the second quarter of 2013 to 1.9% in the second quarter of 2015 and 1.7% in the second quarter of 2017. Source: Labour Market Survey, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM

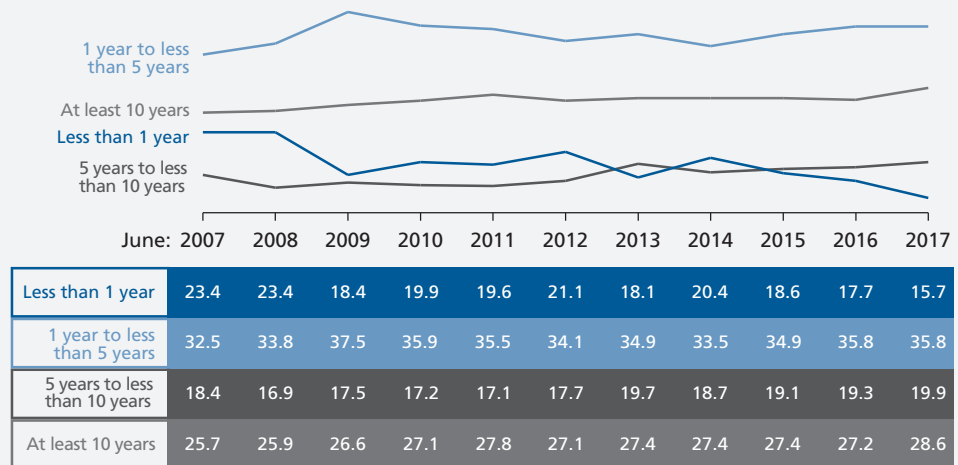
<sup>10</sup> The Monetary Authority of Singapore's Labour Market Pressure Indicator showed that there was greater slack in the labour market compared to the five-year average from the second quarter of 2015 onwards, especially in the period from the fourth quarter of 2016 to the second quarter of 2017.

<sup>11</sup> Comparable data for job change, collected once in every two years, is available from 2013 onwards. Before 2013, data includes not just job changes involving a change in employer, but also those who had changed jobs within the same company.

Chart 22

Distribution of resident employees by years in current job

Per Cent



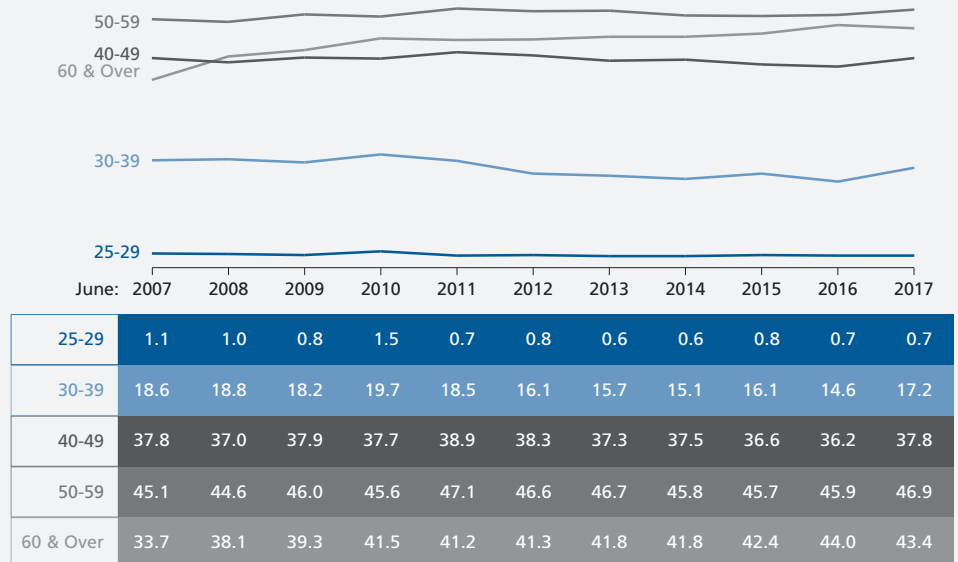
Source: Comprehensive Labour Force Survey, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM

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

Chart 23

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

Per Cent



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

- Notes: (1) Data exclude full-time National Servicemen.  
 (2) See note for Chart 1.  
 (3) 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.

## 4. Usual Hours Worked

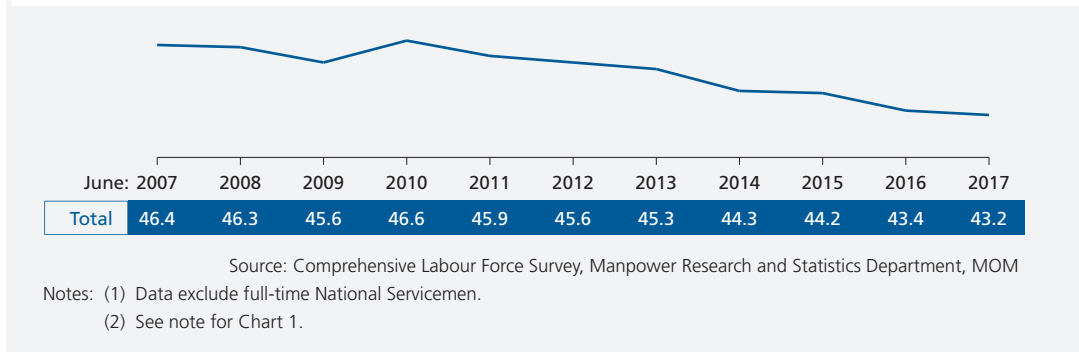
### Average usual hours worked continued to decrease

- 4.1 The average (mean) usual hours worked among employed residents decreased to 43.2 hours per week in 2017, continuing the downtrend from 43.4 hours in 2016 and the high of 46.6 hours in 2010. Both full-timers (from 46.1 to 45.9 hours) and part-timers (from 21.3 to 20.6 hours) worked fewer hours on average than a year ago.

Chart 24

### Average (mean) usual hours worked per week of employed residents

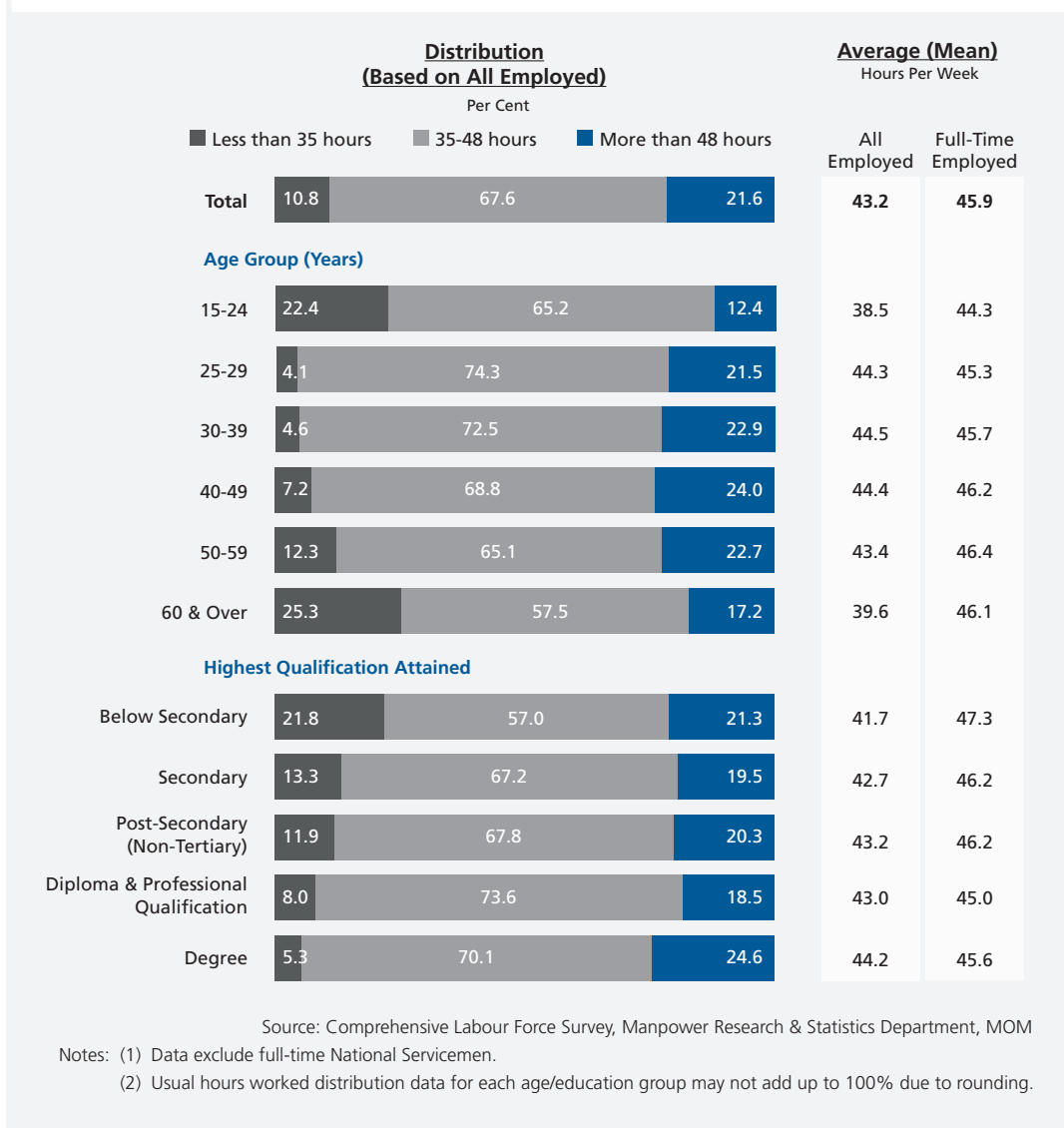
Hours Per Week



- 4.2 Long working hours was more common among workers in their 40s, where 24% usually worked more than 48 hours a week in 2017. However, there was also a higher proportion of workers in their 40s who usually worked less than 35 hours a week (7.2%) than those in their 30s (4.6%) and aged 25 to 29 (4.1%), resulting in similar average (mean) usual hours worked (44.3 to 44.5 hours per week) for these three groups. Considering full-timers only, residents in their 50s had the longest usual hours worked on average.
- 4.3 Pulled up by their older age profile, substantially more workers with below-secondary qualifications usually worked less than 35 hours a week compared with the better-educated groups. As a result, their average usual hours worked (41.7 hours) was shorter than those for better-educated groups (42.7 to 44.2 hours). Among full-timers, the below-secondary group worked the longest hours on average (47.3 hours) among the education groups.

Chart 25

Usual hours worked per week of employed residents, June 2017



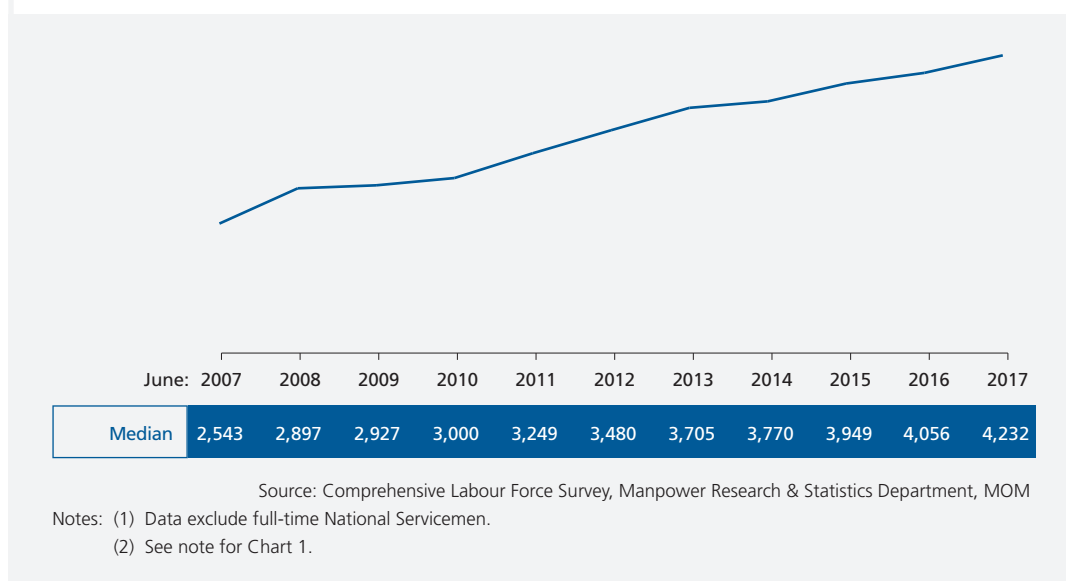
## 5. Income

### Higher income growth at the median in 2017

- 5.1 Year-on-year, the gross monthly income of full-time employed residents in the middle of the income distribution (i.e. median)<sup>12</sup> rose by 4.3% (or 3.7% after adjusting for inflation), from \$4,056 in 2016 to \$4,232 in 2017. This was higher than the increase from June 2015 to June 2016 (nominal: 2.7%, real: 3.3%), and could reflect the pick-up in economic growth,<sup>13</sup> changing composition of the workforce and continued restructuring of the economy.

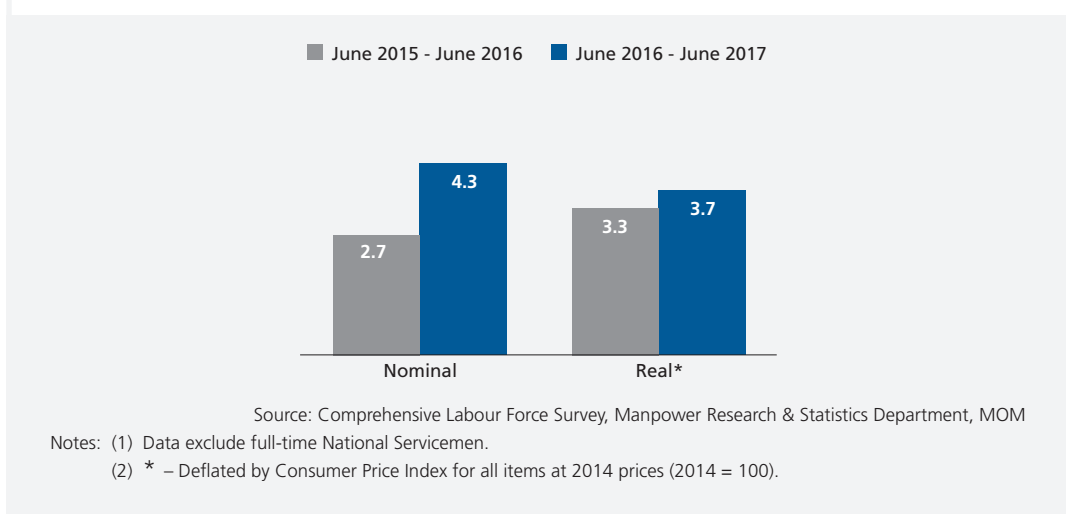
**Chart 26** Median gross monthly income from work (including employer CPF contributions) of full-time employed residents

Dollars



**Chart 27** Year-on-year change in gross monthly income from work (including employer CPF contributions) of full-time employed residents

Per Cent



<sup>12</sup> The gross monthly income includes employers' CPF contributions, income received from more than one job and any movement in income as a result of job changes. The median income is the income such that half of the workers earn less and the other half earn more. Thus the change in median income is different from the mean change in wages, which is the average of all the wage changes of the population considered.

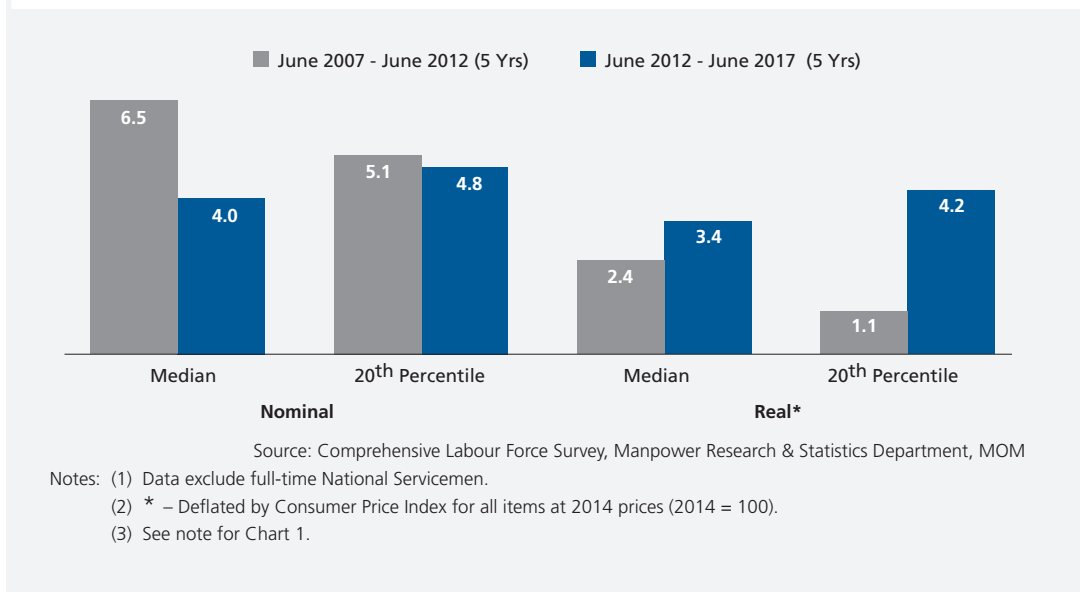
<sup>13</sup> Real GDP grew by 2.4% in the twelve months ending June 2017, compared with 1.8% in the same period ending June 2016. Source: Singapore Department of Statistics

## Income growth at the 20<sup>th</sup> percentile higher than median

- 5.2 Over the last five years from 2012 to 2017, the median income for full-time employed residents rose by 4.0% p.a. in nominal terms from \$3,480 to \$4,232, or 3.4% p.a. in real terms. Supported by initiatives to raise the income of low-wage workers in recent years,<sup>14</sup> the income growth at the 20<sup>th</sup> percentile of full-time employed residents was faster than at the median. The 20<sup>th</sup> percentile income rose by 4.8% p.a. in nominal terms from \$1,740 in 2012 to \$2,200<sup>15</sup> in 2017, or 4.2% p.a. in real terms.<sup>16</sup>
- 5.3 Real income growth at both the median and 20<sup>th</sup> percentile were significantly faster than the growth in the preceding five years (i.e. 2007 to 2012), supported by lower inflation.

**Chart 28** Annualised change in gross monthly income from work (including employer CPF contributions) of full-time employed residents

Per Cent Per Annum



<sup>14</sup> This includes the National Wages Council's quantitative wage recommendations for low-wage workers and the Progressive Wage Model for the cleaning, security and landscape sectors.

<sup>15</sup> Excluding employer CPF contributions, the income of full-time employed residents at the 20<sup>th</sup> percentile was \$2,000 in June 2017.

<sup>16</sup> As the data are captured from a sample survey, the income changes for the 20<sup>th</sup> percentile nearer the end of the income spectrum tend to be more volatile over shorter (e.g. year-on-year) than longer periods (e.g. 5 or 10 years). Studying income at the 20<sup>th</sup> percentile level over longer periods allows for more meaningful analysis of the income growth, as the year-on-year volatility in the data gets smoothed out.

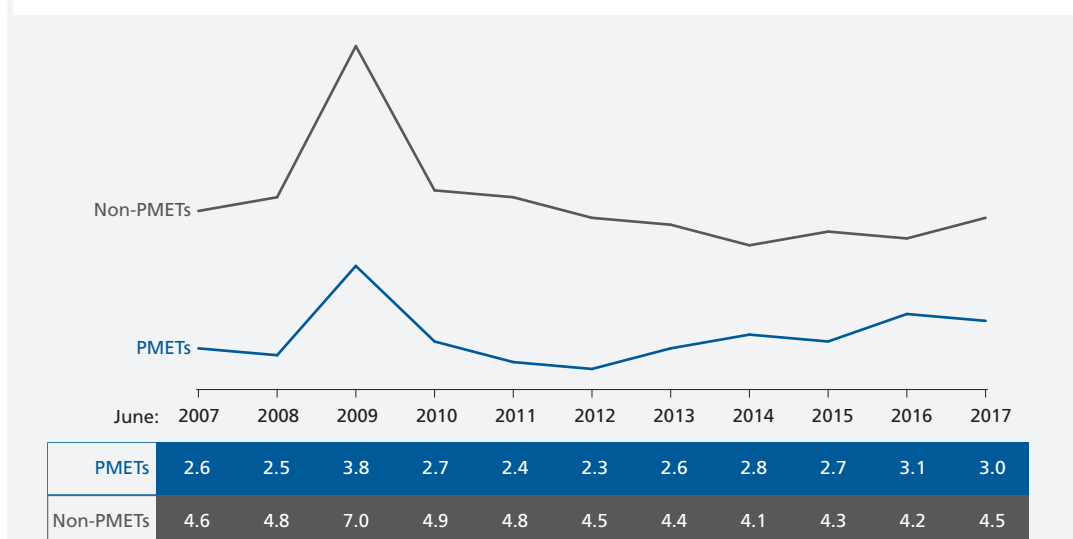
## 6. Unemployment<sup>17</sup>

### The unemployment and long-term unemployment rates for PMETs showed signs of improvement

- 6.1 The unemployment rate for PMETs fell slightly from 3.1% in 2016 to 3.0% in 2017,<sup>18</sup> after trending up from 2012. The long-term unemployment rate for PMETs also improved from 0.9% in 2016 to 0.7% in 2017. This could have been aided by enhancements to Adapt & Grow programmes which assist PMETs, especially those aged 40 and over, in securing employment.<sup>19</sup> With the improvement, the long-term unemployment rate for PMETs was similar to non-PMETs in 2017, after surpassing them in the previous two years.
- 6.2 On the other hand, the unemployment rate for non-PMETs rose in 2017 after posting a general improvement from 2009, as they found it harder to secure a job with the continued decline in non-PMET job vacancies.<sup>20</sup> Nevertheless, the long-term unemployment rate for non-PMETs remained unchanged at 0.7% in 2017.

**Chart 29** Resident unemployment rate by broad occupational group

Per Cent



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

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

(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) Data are classified based on Singapore Standard Occupational Classification (SSOC) 2015. Data before year 2015 which were coded based on earlier versions of the SSOC were mapped to SSOC 2015 as far as possible to facilitate data comparability.

(4) See note for Chart 1.

<sup>17</sup> This section covers more details of the characteristics of the unemployed based on the mid-year Comprehensive Labour Force Survey, including the unemployment rate by occupation and industry, and their profile by reasons for leaving last job, unemployment duration and job search methods. For analysis of unemployment rate trends at the top-line and by age, highest qualification attained and sex, please refer to the quarterly Labour Market Reports.

<sup>18</sup> Unemployment/long-term unemployment rates by occupation/industry are non-seasonally adjusted, as they are available once a year rather than quarterly. It would not be appropriate to compare them against the seasonally adjusted unemployment rates at the top-line.

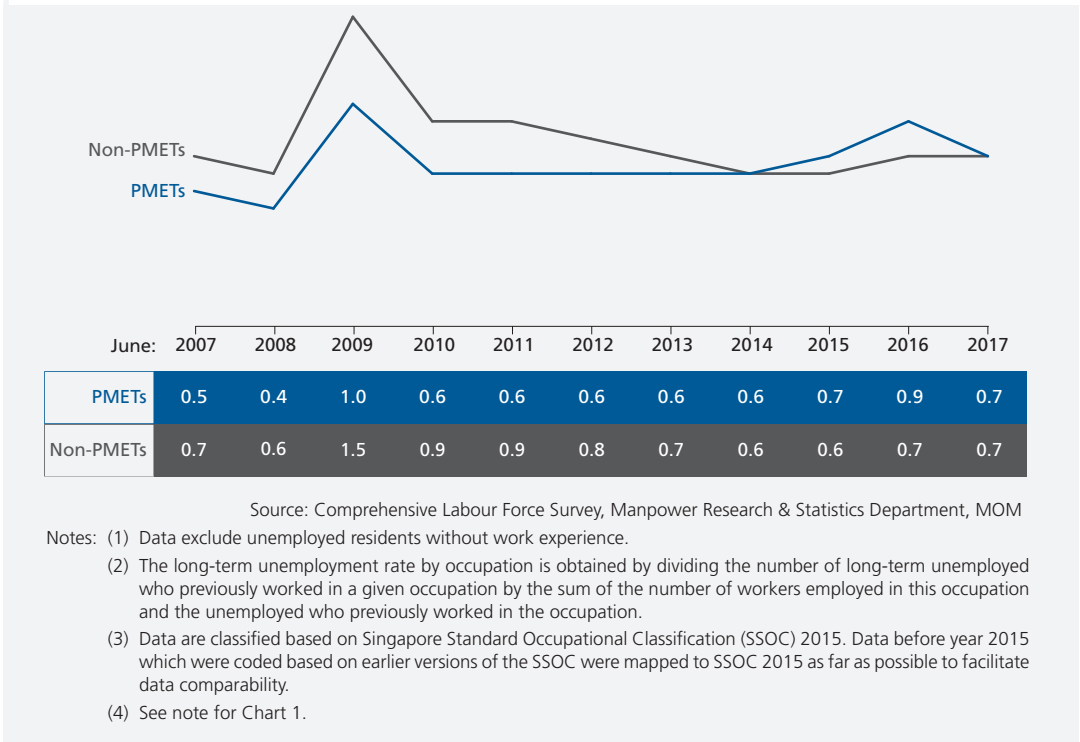
<sup>19</sup> The enhancements to the Adapt & Grow initiative includes (i) higher wage support for a longer duration to employers under the Career Support Programme (CSP) if they hire PMETs aged 40 and over who had been unemployed for at least 12 months, (ii) raising the wage support to employers who hire PMETs aged 40 to 49 who had been unemployed for at least 6 months to the same level as those aged 50 and over, and (iii) extending the CSP to all PMETs who had been unemployed for at least 6 months regardless of their age or whether they were made redundant. The salary support cap for jobs offered under the Professional Conversion Programmes (PCPs) was also increased to encourage employers to offer more PCP jobs at the mid-level.

<sup>20</sup> Job vacancies for non-PMETs fell from 24,200 in June 2016 to 22,500 in June 2017, continuing the downtrend from 34,800 in June 2014. Source: Labour Market Survey, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM

Chart 30

**Resident long-term unemployment rate by broad occupational group**

Per Cent

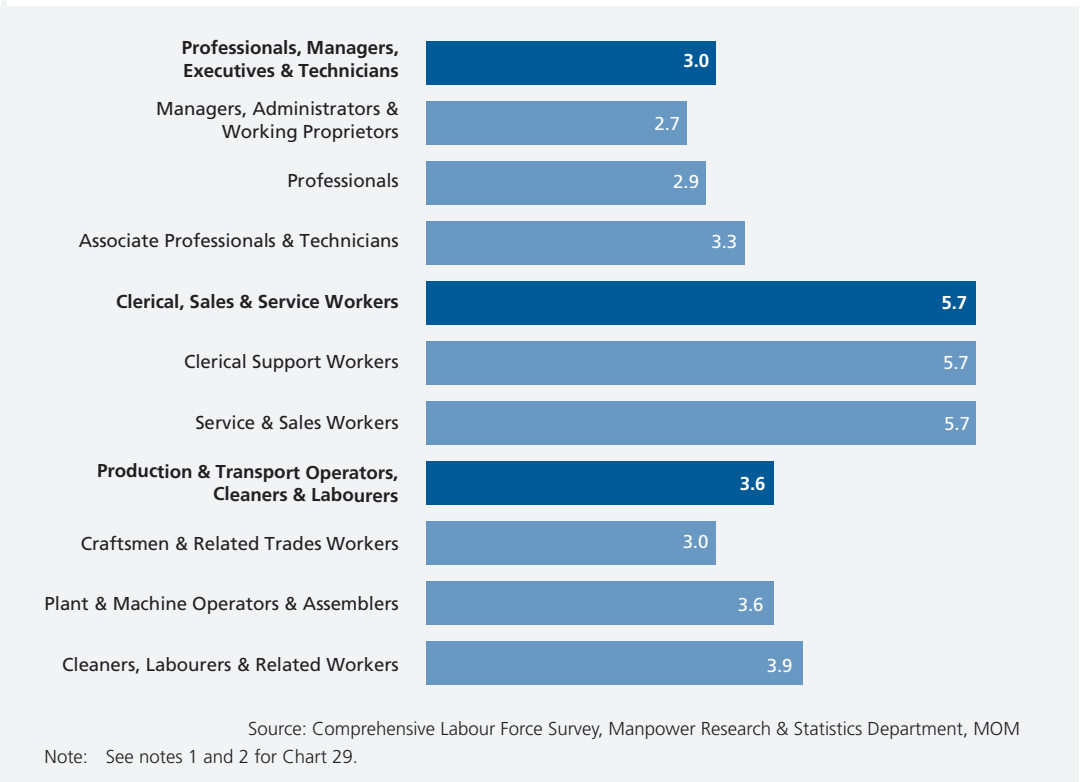


6.3 PMETs were less prone to unemployment than non-PMETs. Among non-PMETs, the unemployment rate was higher for clerical, sales & service workers (5.7%) than production & transport operators, cleaners & labourers (3.6%), reflecting their faster staff turnover.<sup>21</sup>

Chart 31

**Resident unemployment rate by occupation, June 2017**

Per Cent

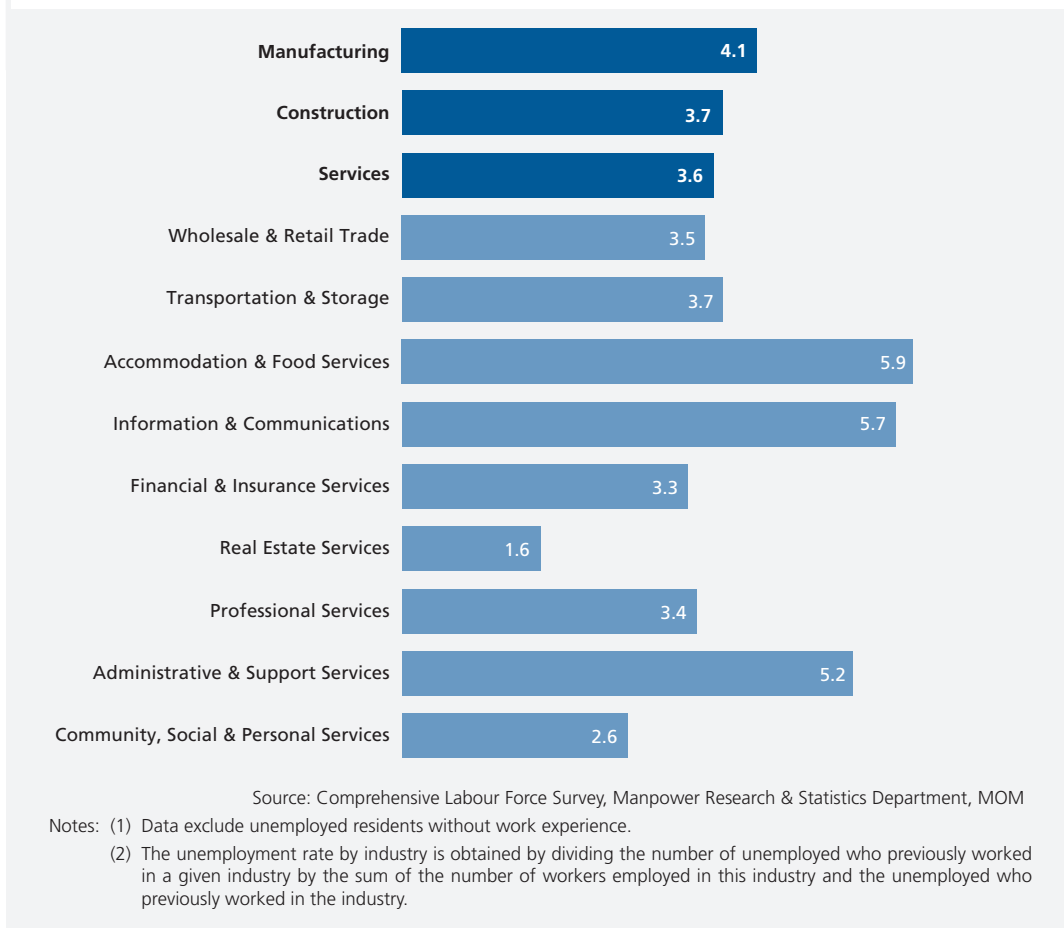


<sup>21</sup> The average monthly recruitment and resignation rates were 3.2% and 2.8% respectively for clerical, sales & service workers in the second quarter of 2017, higher than 2.5% and 2.3% for production & transport operators, cleaners & labourers. Source: Labour Market Survey, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM



6.4 Across industries, the unemployment rate was higher in accommodation & food services (5.9%) and administrative & support services (5.2%) due to their faster labour turnover,<sup>22</sup> as well as information & communications (5.7%).

**Chart 32 Resident unemployment rate by industry, June 2017**  
Per Cent

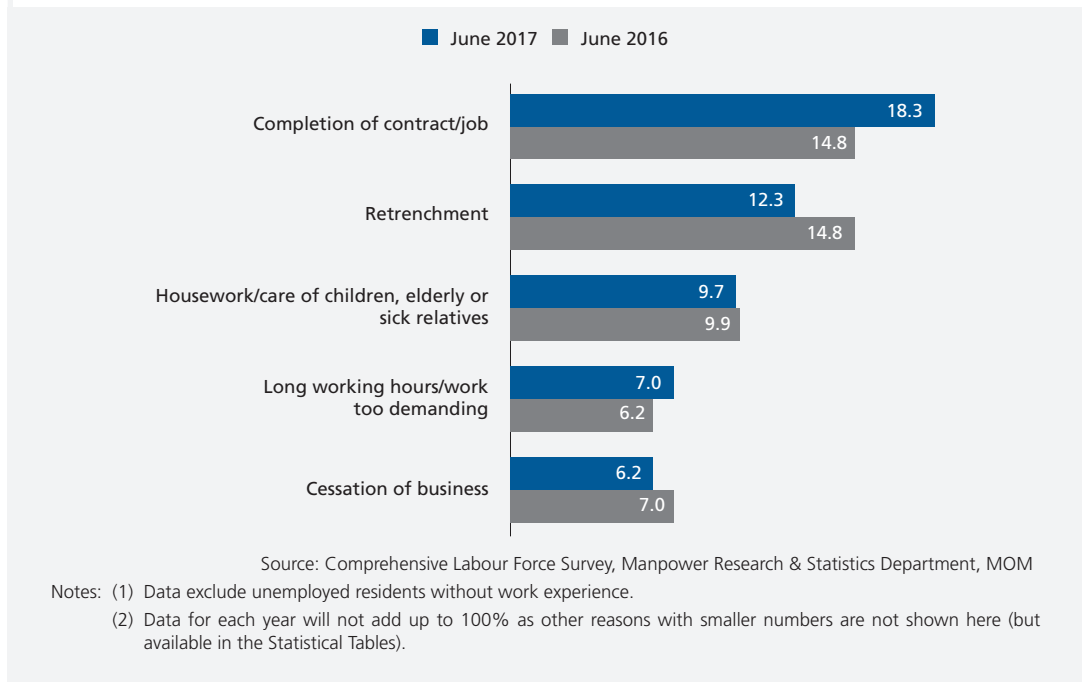


<sup>22</sup> The average monthly recruitment and resignation rates for accommodation & food services (both 4.0%) and administrative & support services (4.5% and 3.5% respectively) were among the highest across industries in the second quarter of 2017, substantially above the overall rate (2.2% and 1.9% respectively). Source: Labour Market Survey, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM

## More unemployed left their last job because of completion of contract/job, while fewer were retrenched

6.5 Residents who left their last job because of completion of contract/job formed the largest group or 18% of unemployed residents<sup>23</sup> in 2017, up from 15% in 2016. This largely reflects the increase among youths aged 15 to 24, many of whom are still schooling or exploring different options in the earlier part of their career. With layoffs easing,<sup>24</sup> the share of job seekers who left their last job mainly because of retrenchment decreased from 15% to 12% over the same period. Those who were retrenched formed a larger share among unemployed residents in their 40s or older, as well as those who were formerly in PMET jobs as PMETs remained more at risk to retrenchments.

**Chart 33** Leading main reasons for leaving last job among unemployed residents  
Per Cent



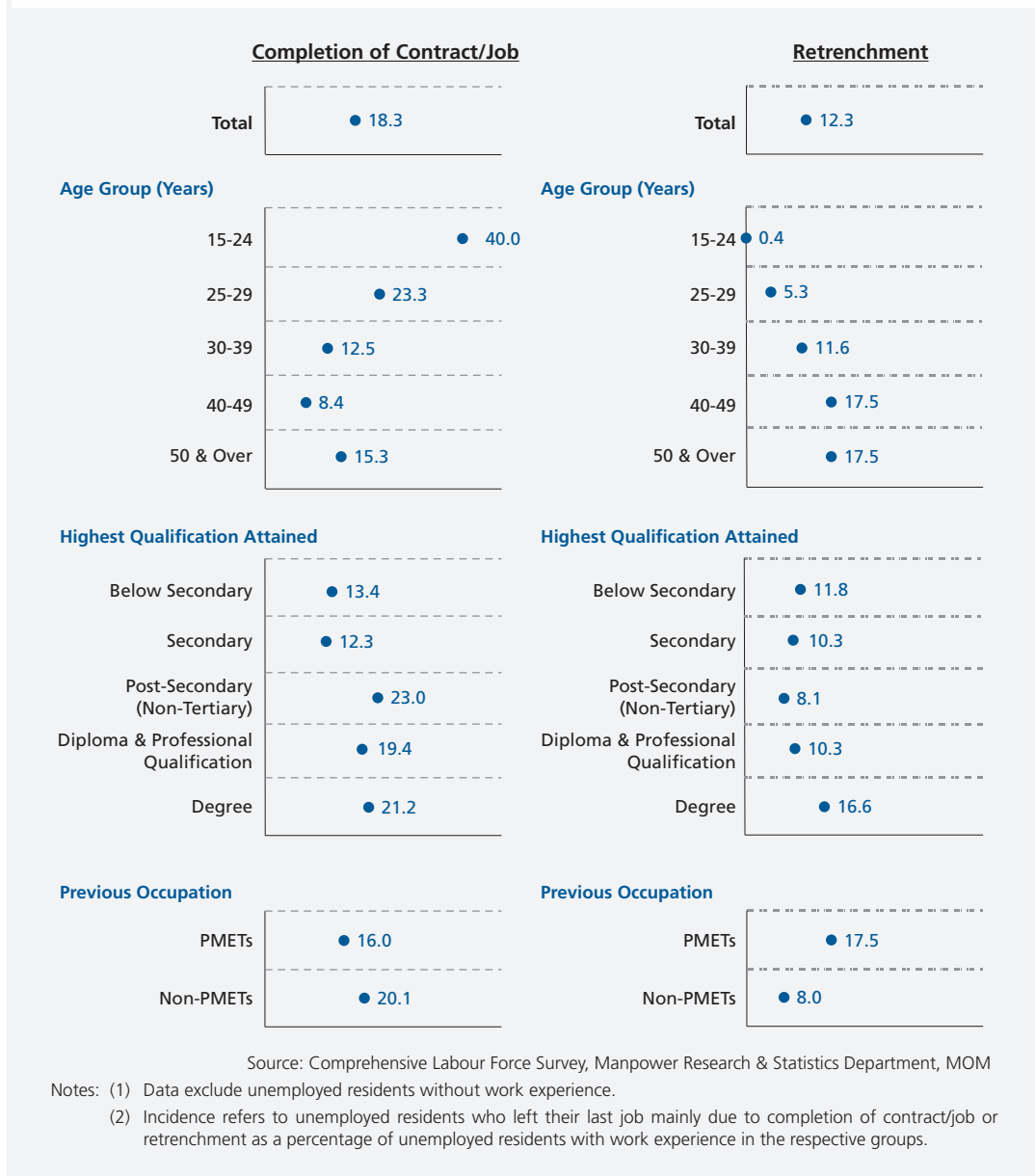
<sup>23</sup> Excluding unemployed residents without work experience.

<sup>24</sup> 3,640 workers were retrenched in the second quarter of 2017, lower than in the first quarter of 2017 (4,000) and a year ago (4,800). Source: Labour Market Survey, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM

Chart 34

### Incidence of unemployed residents who left their last job due to completion of contract/job or retrenchment, June 2017

Per Cent

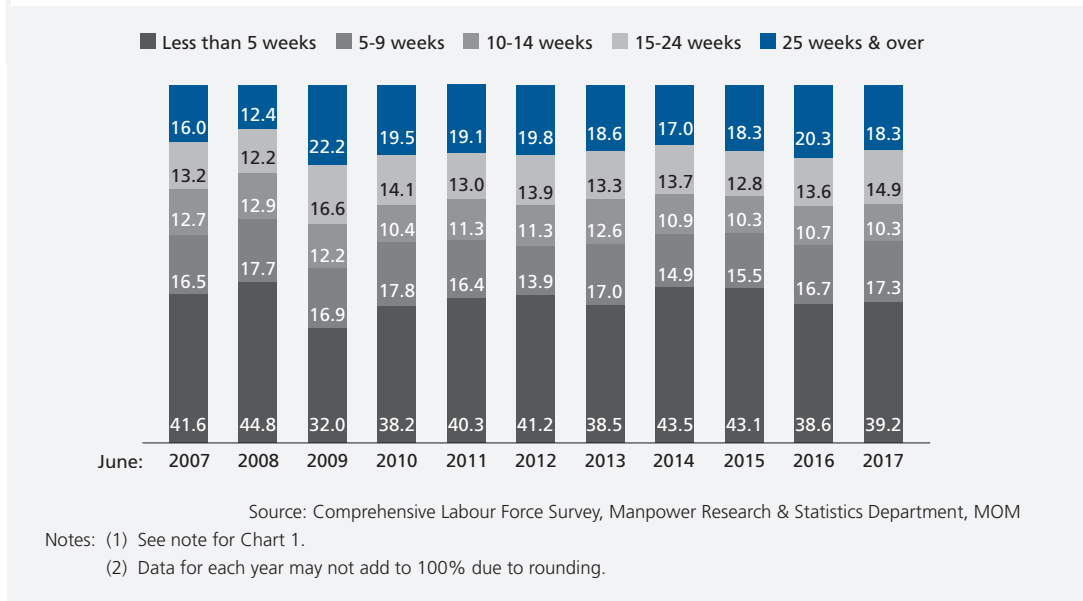


## Share of long-term unemployed among job seekers fell

6.6 Those who had looked for work for less than 5 weeks (around 1 month or shorter) still formed the largest group among resident job seekers in June 2017 (39%). The share of unemployed residents who had been looking for work for at least 25 weeks decreased from 20% in 2016 to 18% in 2017, as long-term unemployment remained broadly similar even as overall unemployment was higher than a year ago.

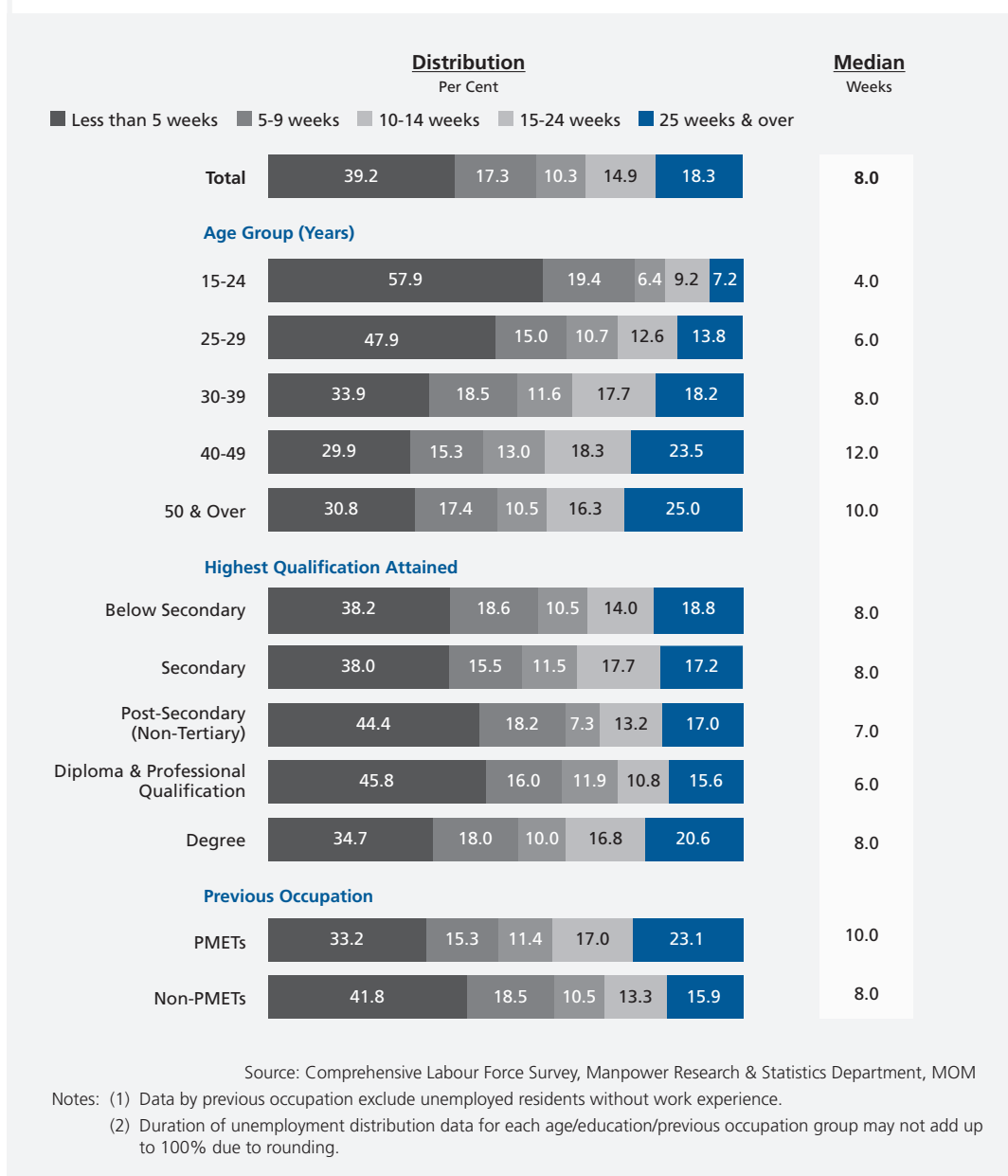
**Chart 35** Duration of unemployment distribution among unemployed residents

Per Cent



- 6.7 Even though youths aged 15 to 24 have relatively higher unemployment rate reflecting job search among fresh graduates and higher likelihood of job change in the process of exploring different options to find a more suitable job, they had the shortest median duration of unemployment (4 weeks) among the age groups. Most or 58% of unemployed youths have unemployment duration of less than 5 weeks. On the other hand, a higher proportion of job seekers in their 40s and aged 50 and over were long-term unemployed.
- 6.8 Among job seekers who had worked before, a higher proportion of those previously in PMET jobs had been unemployed for at least 25 weeks than non-PMETs. This reflects the time taken by PMETs to find jobs that better match their skills, qualifications and salary expectations.

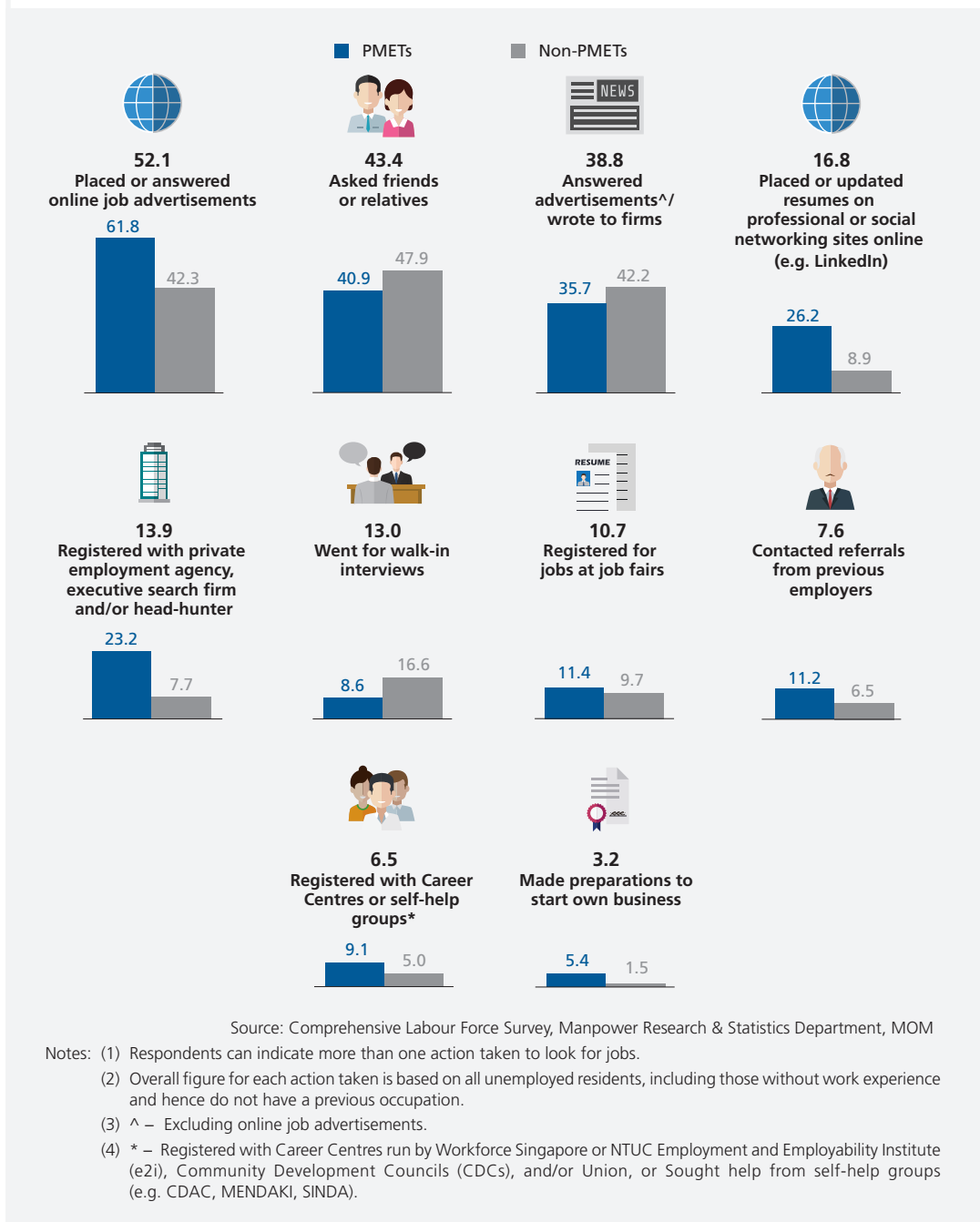
**Chart 36** Duration of unemployment among unemployed residents, June 2017



6.9 Job seekers in June 2017 most commonly sought work by placing or answering online job advertisements (52%), more so among PMETs (62%) than non-PMETs (42%). This was followed by those who asked friends or relatives (43%) or answered advertisements (excluding online ones)/wrote to firms (39%), both of which were more commonly used by non-PMETs than PMETs. Besides these three modes, PMETs also tend to place or update resumes on professional or social networking sites (e.g. LinkedIn) (26%) or register with private employment agencies, executive search firms and/or head-hunters (23%).

**Chart 37** Modes of job search among unemployed residents by previous occupation, June 2017

Per Cent

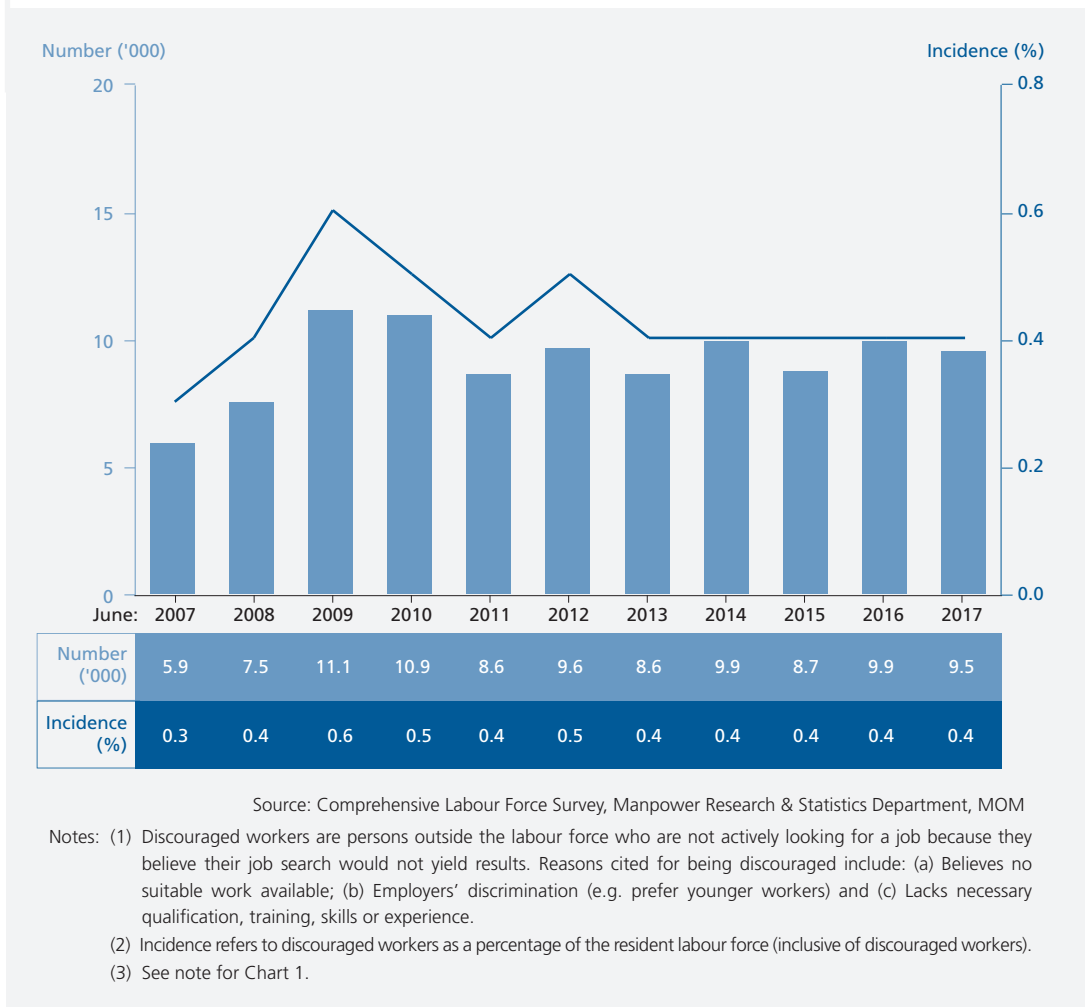


## 7. Persons Outside the Labour Force

### Slight decline in number of discouraged workers

7.1 There is no evidence that the dip in LFPR was due to more unemployed residents giving up their job search. The number of discouraged workers<sup>25</sup> fell slightly from 9,900 in 2016 to 9,500 in 2017. The incidence of discouraged workers has stayed low at 0.4% of the resident labour force (inclusive of discouraged workers) since 2013.

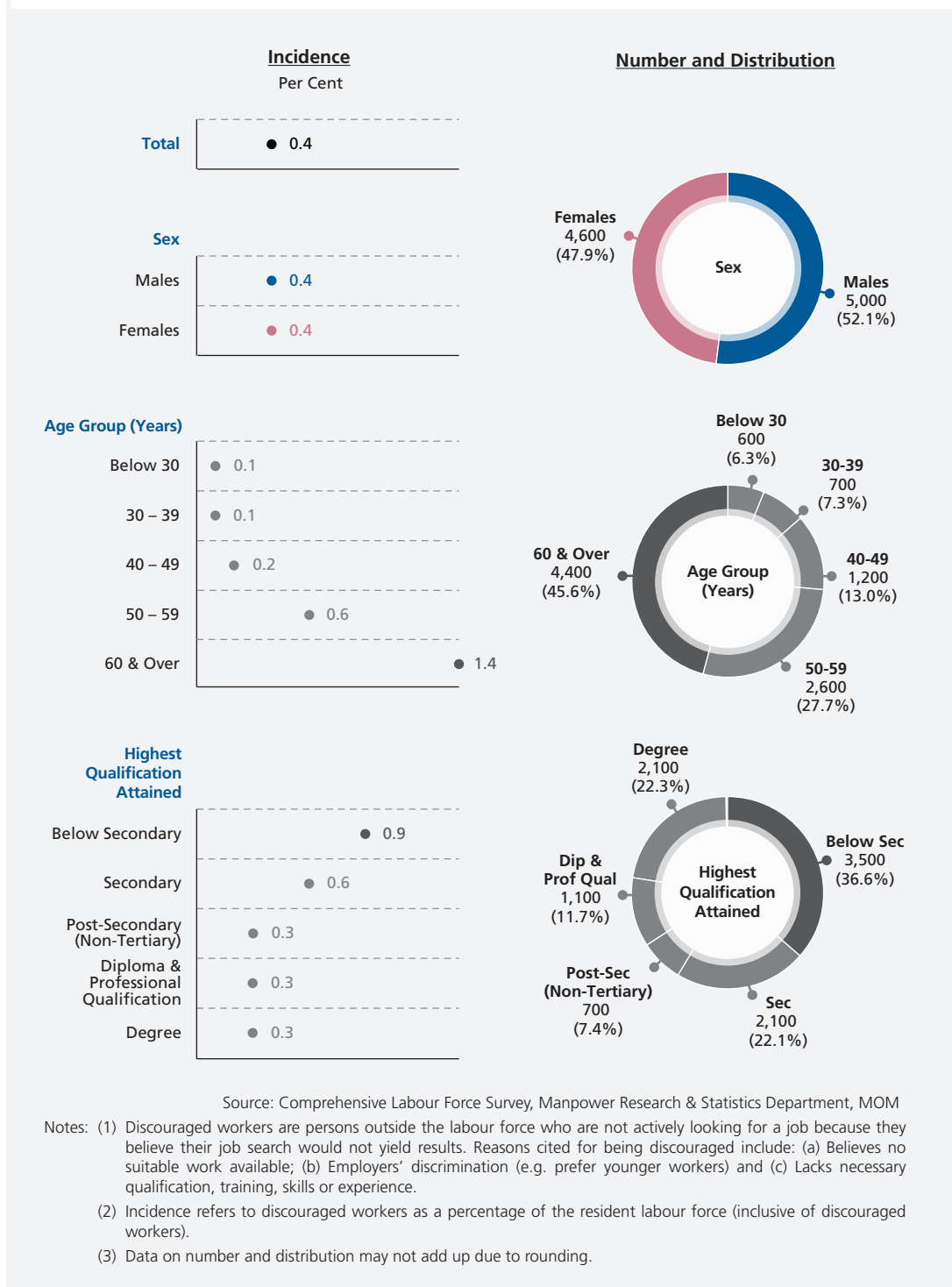
**Chart 38** Residents discouraged from seeking work



<sup>25</sup> Discouraged workers are persons outside the labour force who are not actively looking for a job because they believe their job search would not yield results. Reasons cited for being discouraged include: (a) Believes no suitable work available; (b) Employers' discrimination (e.g. prefer younger workers) and (c) Lacks necessary qualification, training, skills or experience.

7.2 Reflecting their higher incidence of being discouraged from seeking work, older residents aged 60 and over (46%) as well as those with below secondary (37%) qualifications formed the largest groups among discouraged workers.

**Chart 39 Profile of residents discouraged from seeking work, June 2017**

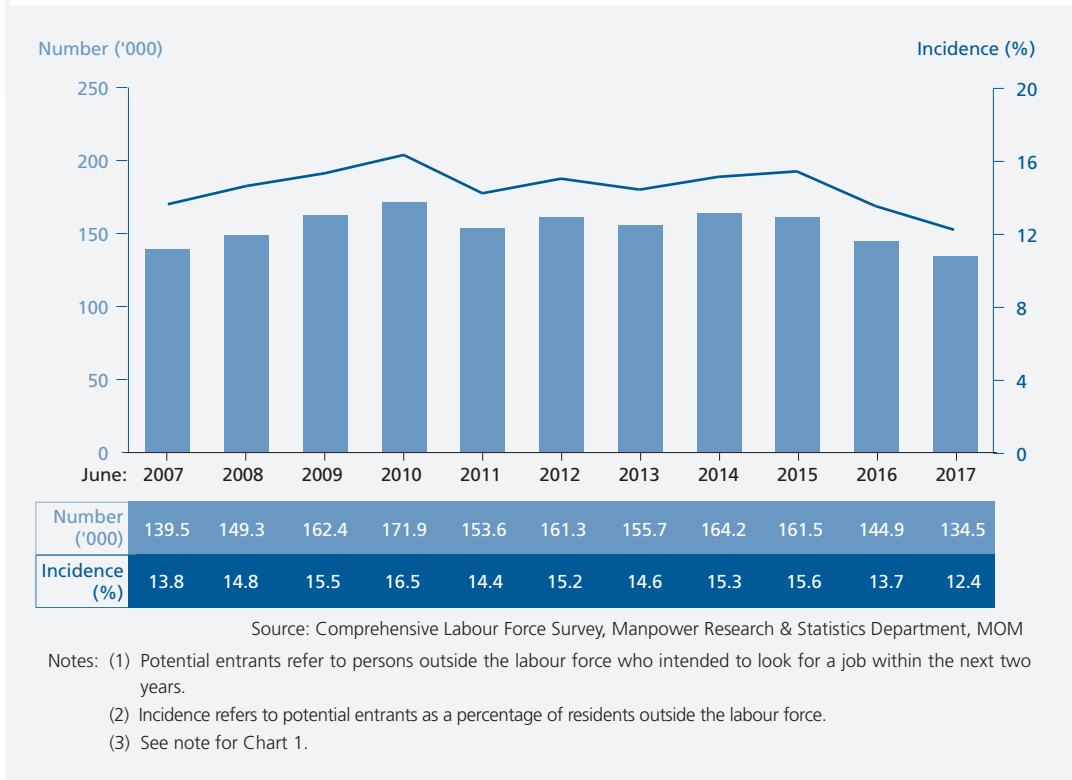




## Pool of potential entrants fell to a new low

7.3 Fewer residents outside the labour force intended to look for jobs in the next two years. The number of potential entrants declined steadily since 2015 to a new low<sup>26</sup> of 134,500 (or 12% of residents outside the labour force) in 2017.

**Chart 40** Resident potential entrants into the labour force



<sup>26</sup> Since the start of comparable data series from 2006.

7.4 Most of the potential entrants in 2017 were aged 15 to 24 (34%) and 50 and over (28%), even though their incidence of potential entrants were relatively lower. 62% of the potential entrants were females, and the incidence of potential entrants was higher among females in the 25 to 49 age groups. However, their incidence was still lower than men as some females may choose to stay outside the labour force due to family commitments. Tertiary-educated residents have higher incidence of potential entrants than those with non-tertiary qualifications.

**Table 1 Profile of resident potential entrants into the labour force, June 2017**

Characteristics	Total			Males			Females		
	Number	Distribution (%)	Incidence (%)	Number	Distribution (%)	Incidence (%)	Number	Distribution (%)	Incidence (%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>134,500</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>12.4</b>	<b>51,100</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>13.0</b>	<b>83,500</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>12.1</b>
<b>Age Group (Years)</b>									
15 - 24	46,300	34.4	15.2	19,300	37.8	12.6	26,900	32.3	17.8
25 - 29	12,200	9.0	48.7	7,200	14.1	61.2	5,000	6.0	37.6
30 - 39	18,400	13.7	34.8	3,800	7.4	56.8	14,600	17.5	31.6
40 - 49	20,600	15.3	25.5	4,200	8.3	43.3	16,400	19.6	23.0
50 - 59	18,900	14.0	15.2	7,100	13.8	27.3	11,800	14.2	12.0
60 & Over	18,200	13.5	3.7	9,500	18.5	5.1	8,800	10.5	2.8
<b>Highest Qualification Attained</b>									
Below Secondary	26,300	19.5	5.3	11,600	22.7	7.0	14,700	17.6	4.4
Secondary	29,800	22.1	11.0	10,000	19.6	9.3	19,800	23.7	12.2
Post-Secondary (Non-Tertiary)	20,600	15.3	18.5	8,700	17.0	19.1	11,900	14.2	18.1
Diploma & Professional Qualification	27,300	20.3	28.2	11,100	21.8	28.2	16,200	19.4	28.2
Degree	30,600	22.7	28.9	9,700	18.9	28.2	20,900	25.1	29.2
<b>Work Experience</b>									
With Work Experience	101,100	75.1	15.3	35,900	70.3	14.0	65,200	78.1	16.1
Without Work Experience	33,500	24.9	7.9	15,200	29.7	11.3	18,300	21.9	6.4
<b>Preference for Full-Time / Part-Time Employment</b>									
Full-Time	82,700	61.5	n.a.	34,300	67.2	n.a.	48,400	58.0	n.a.
Part-Time	51,800	38.5	n.a.	16,800	32.8	n.a.	35,000	42.0	n.a.

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

Notes: (1) Potential entrants refer to persons outside the labour force who intended to look for a job within the next two years.

(2) Incidence refers to potential entrants as a percentage of residents outside the labour force.

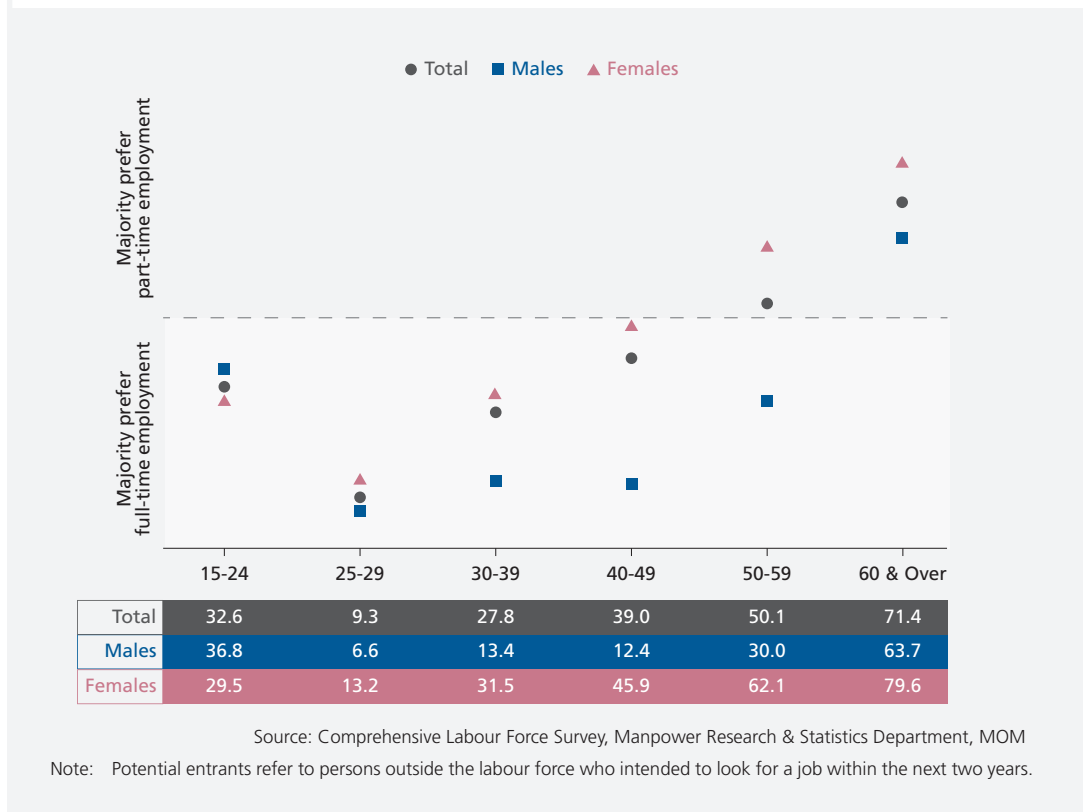
(3) n.a. — Not applicable.

(4) Data on number and distribution may not add up to the total due to rounding.

7.5 39% or 51,800 potential entrants preferred to work part-time. Preference for part-time employment was higher among older potential entrants aged 60 and over and females aged 50 to 59. Unlike in the past, more female potential entrants aged 40 to 49 in 2017 preferred working full-time (54%) than part-time (46%). Full-time employment was also preferred by most of the potential entrants in the younger prime working-ages, especially among males.

**Chart 41** Proportion of resident potential entrants who preferred to work part-time by age group and sex, June 2017

Per Cent



## Residents outside the labour force tend to be females, older and less educated

7.6 Including those who did not intend to look for jobs in the next two years, 46% of residents outside the labour force in 2017 were aged 60 and over. This was an increase from 35% in 2007, reflecting population ageing. Youths aged 15 to 24 also formed a sizeable share (28%) among residents outside the labour force, given that many of them were still schooling. As the older residents tend to be less-educated, the large majority of residents outside the labour force held below secondary (46%) and secondary (25%) qualifications. However, the proportion who held below secondary qualifications has trended down from 58% in 2007, due to the improvement in the educational profile of the population.

**Table 2** Profile of residents outside the labour force, June 2017

Characteristics	Total			Males			Females		
	Number	Distribution (%)	Incidence (%)	Number	Distribution (%)	Incidence (%)	Number	Distribution (%)	Incidence (%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,083,500</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>32.3</b>	<b>391,400</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>24.0</b>	<b>692,100</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>40.2</b>
<b>Age Group (Years)</b>									
15 - 24	304,100	28.1	61.8	153,000	39.1	59.5	151,000	21.8	64.3
25 - 29	25,000	2.3	9.8	11,800	3.0	9.3	13,200	1.9	10.4
30 - 39	52,800	4.9	9.3	6,700	1.7	2.5	46,100	6.7	15.3
40 - 49	80,900	7.5	12.8	9,800	2.5	3.2	71,200	10.3	21.7
50 - 59	124,500	11.5	21.0	25,800	6.6	8.7	98,600	14.3	33.3
60 & Over	496,200	45.8	61.3	184,300	47.1	49.0	311,900	45.1	72.0
<b>Highest Qualification Attained</b>									
Below Secondary	499,600	46.1	55.6	164,700	42.1	41.9	334,900	48.4	66.2
Secondary	269,800	24.9	41.9	107,300	27.4	36.0	162,500	23.5	47.0
Post-Secondary (Non-Tertiary)	111,200	10.3	30.2	45,600	11.6	22.1	65,700	9.5	40.4
Diploma & Professional Qualification	97,100	9.0	18.4	39,500	10.1	14.6	57,500	8.3	22.5
Degree	105,800	9.8	11.6	34,300	8.8	7.4	71,500	10.3	15.8

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

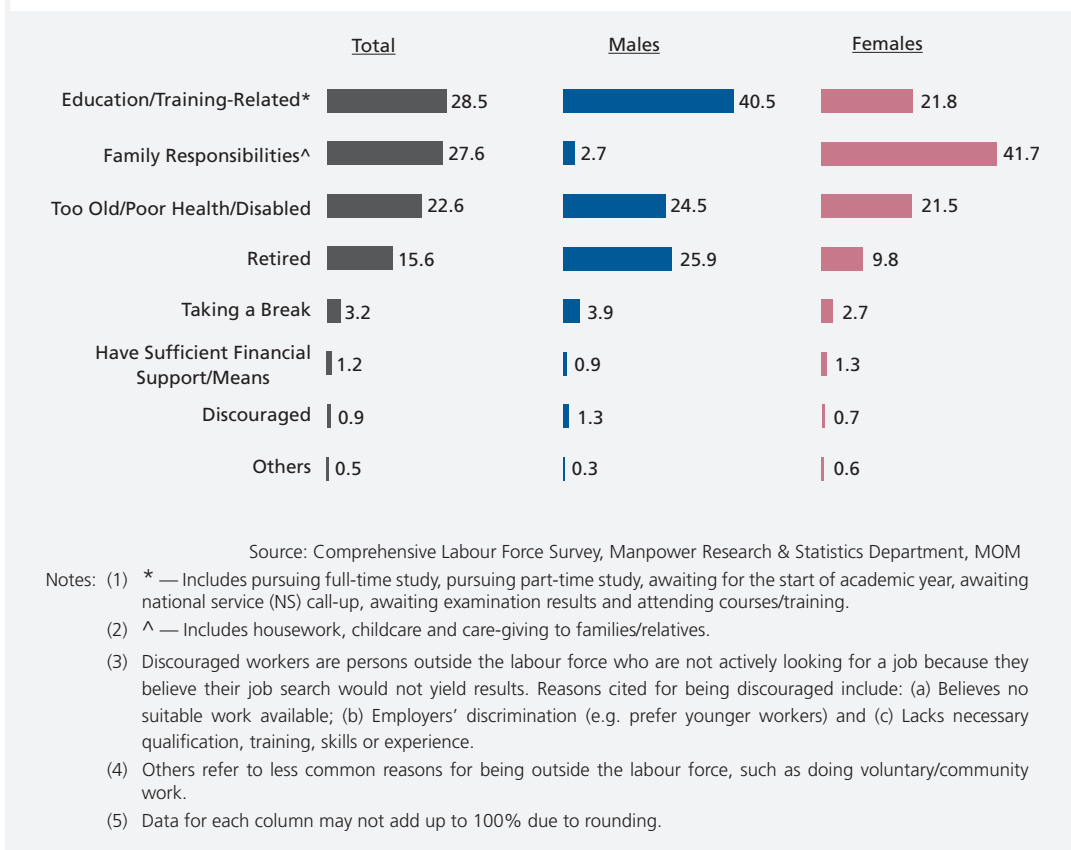
Notes: (1) Data on number and distribution may not add up to the total due to rounding.

(2) Incidence refers to residents outside the labour force as a percentage of the resident population in the respective groups.

7.7 Women were more likely than men to stay outside the labour force, and they made up 64% of residents outside the labour force in 2017. Family responsibilities (42%) was the top reason which kept females outside the labour force, while males tend to be outside the labour force due to education/training-related reasons (40%). Old age, poor health or disability was also a common reason cited (males: 24%, females: 21%), given the older profile of residents outside the labour force. Retirement was a more common reason among males (26%) than females (9.8%) as the latter were more likely to have left the labour market when they were younger to take care of their families.

**Chart 42 Resident outside the labour force by main reason for not working and not looking for a job, June 2017**

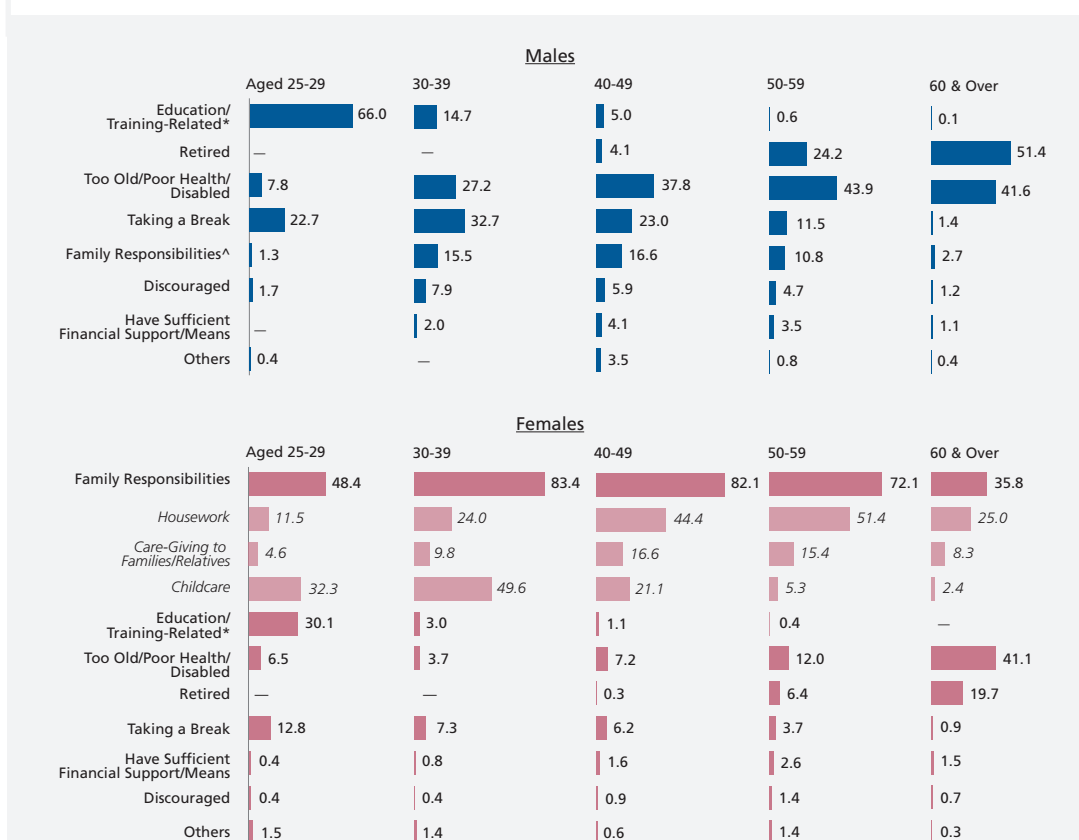
Per Cent



- 7.8 Other than youths aged 15 to 24, a substantial proportion of residents aged 25 to 29 outside the labour force did not participate in the labour market because of education/training, more so for males (66%) who tend to graduate and enter the labour market later than females due to their National Service commitments. Among the relatively small group of males in their 30s and 40s who were outside the labour force, the most common reasons cited were poor health/disability (30-39: 27%, 40-49: 38%) and taking a break (30-39: 33%, 40-49: 23%).
- 7.9 The vast majority of females outside the labour force in their 30s (83%), 40s (82%) and 50s (72%) were neither working nor looking for work because of family responsibilities (namely housework, childcare, or care-giving to families/relatives). While this was also a common reason among older females aged 60 and over (36%), a larger proportion indicated old age, poor health or disability (41%) as their main reason for not participating in the labour market.

**Chart 43** Main reason for not working and not looking for a job by selected age groups and sex, June 2017

Per Cent



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

- Notes: (1) \* — Includes pursuing full-time study, pursuing part-time study, awaiting for the start of academic year, awaiting national service (NS) call-up, awaiting examination results and attending courses/training.
- (2) ^ — Includes housework, childcare and care-giving to families/relatives.
- (3) Discouraged workers are persons outside the labour force who are not actively looking for a job because they believe their job search would not yield results. Reasons cited for being discouraged include: (a) Believes no suitable work available; (b) Employers' discrimination (e.g. prefer younger workers) and (c) Lacks necessary qualification, training, skills or experience.
- (4) Others refer to less common reasons for being outside the labour force, such as doing voluntary/community work.
- (5) '—': Nil or negligible.
- (6) Data for each age/sex group may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

## 8. Concluding Remarks

- 8.1 The employment rate has continued to increase for residents aged 25 to 64 and those aged 65 and over, while it fell among those aged 15 to 24 due to their higher propensity to pursue further education and postpone entry into the labour force. Real median income rose faster in 2017 as the economy and demand for higher-skilled manpower improved. At the same time, the unemployment and long-term unemployment rates for PMETs showed signs of improvement, helped by the strengthening of job search and training support for this group.
- 8.2 Population ageing and the higher propensity of youths to postpone entry into the labour force will continue to exert downward pressure on Singapore's LFPR, even if the participation rates in various age groups continue to increase. To maintain and further strengthen our LFPR, which is already one of the highest compared with OECD countries, we will need to press on with efforts to allow older workers to remain in employment longer, and make available more flexible work arrangements, especially for those with caregiving responsibilities.