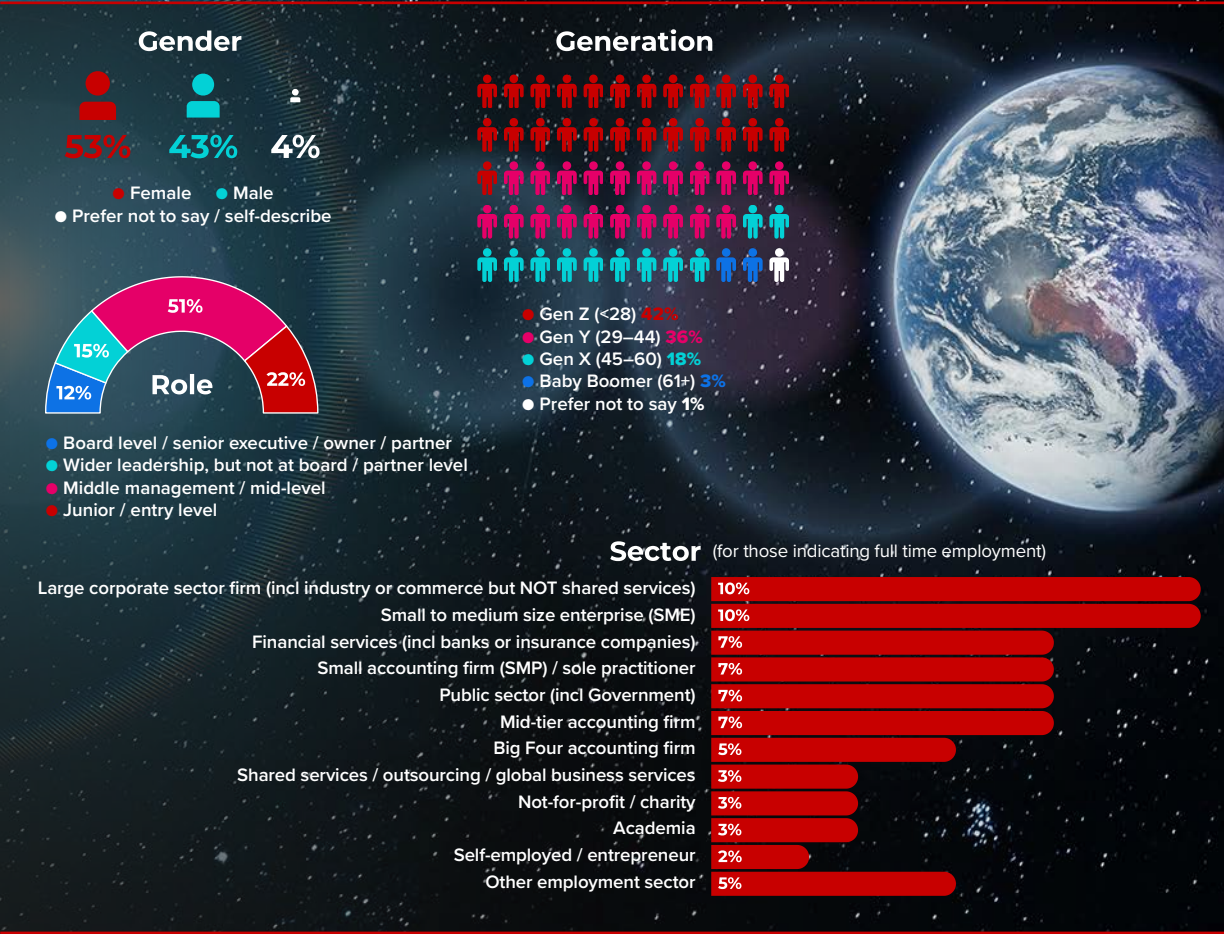


global talent trends. 2025

Executive summary.

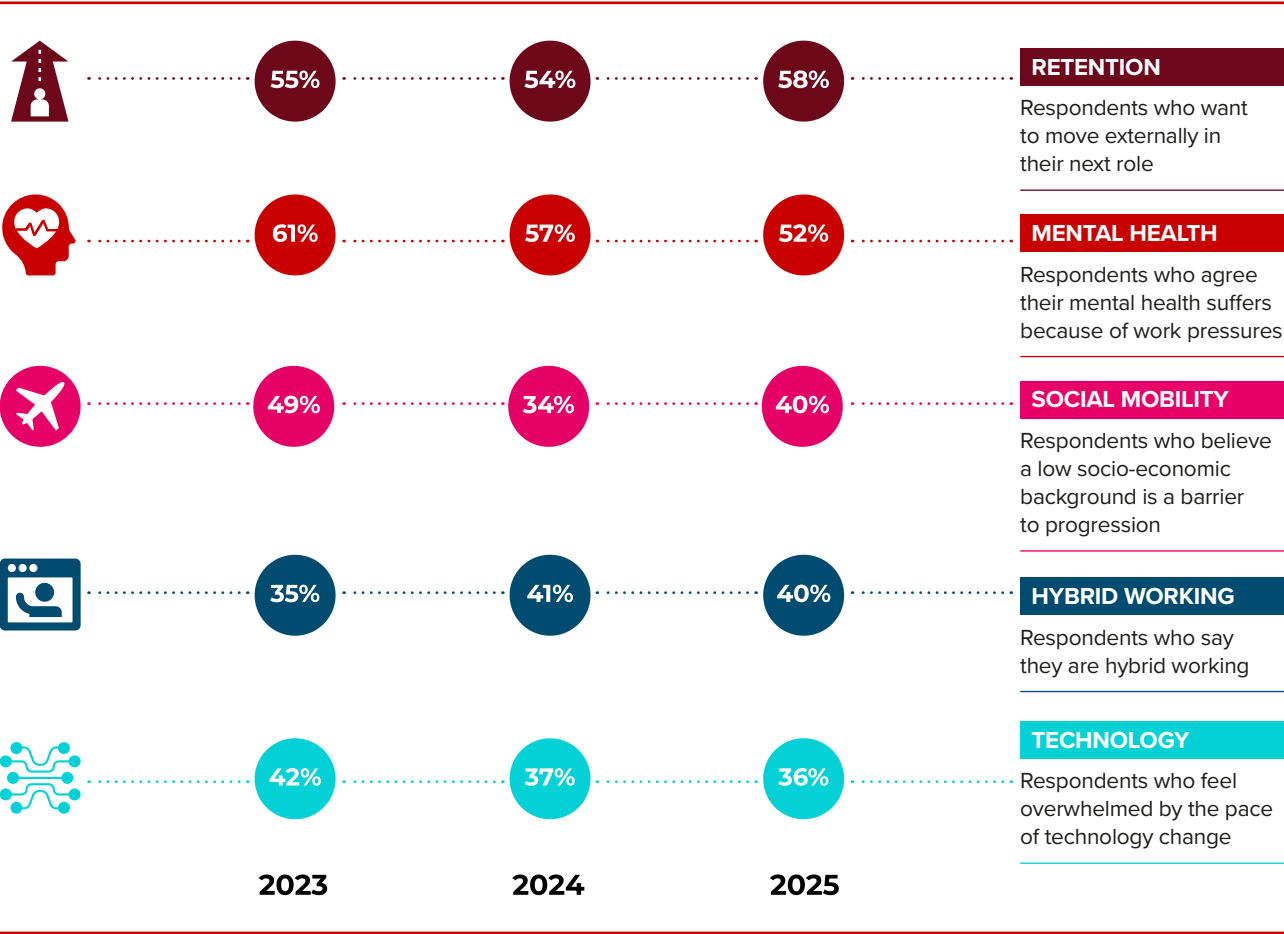
Demographics.

Global Talent Trends 2025 is the largest annual talent survey of accountancy and finance professionals across the world, shared by over 10,000 respondents from 175 countries.



Key work metrics tracked.

Every year we track key metrics to better understand trends across different aspects of work in accountancy and finance.



2025 headlines at a glance.



1. Accountancy as a gateway for building entrepreneurial skills

With over half of respondents (**52%**) indicating they have career ambitions to be entrepreneurs, it's clear that many see accountancy as a natural springboard to eventually running their own businesses in the future. But as career paths expand, there's a growing need for accountants to adapt their entrepreneurial mindsets to more traditional career paths in finance and business too – where skills such as commerciality and innovation are prized attributes.

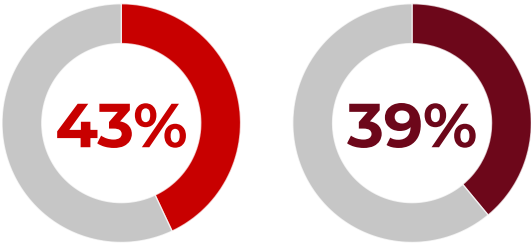


Respondents who have career ambitions to be an entrepreneur

‘With 52% of respondents indicating they have career ambitions to be entrepreneurs, it’s clear that many see accountancy as a natural springboard to eventually running their own businesses.’

2. The rise of the ‘side hustle’ for Gen Z?

Our survey shows that **43%** of Gen Z respondents in work and **39%** across all age groups suggest they're now engaged in additional employment to their main jobs. The key reasons cited by younger respondents pursuing concurrent roles are earning supplementary income and diversification of income streams. These ambitions have significant implications for employers in terms of engagement and retention – but some see the positive side in opportunities to acquire new skills.



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‘The key reasons cited by younger respondents pursuing concurrent roles are earning supplementary income and diversification of income streams.’

3. Hybrid work preferences remain elusive for many

Three years of tracked data from our annual Global Talent Trends survey suggests that worker demands on hybrid working are still not being met. Over three quarters of respondents (**76%**) want hybrid working arrangements, yet over half (**51%**) are still working in the office full time. This ongoing discrepancy risks poor engagement and employee dissatisfaction, but it also has potential implications for skills development and mental health. The issue is compounded by ‘in-office days’ policies that appear to be applied inconsistently.



Over three quarters of respondents want hybrid working arrangements, yet over half are still working in the office full time

‘This ongoing discrepancy fuels poor engagement and employee dissatisfaction, but it also has potential implications for skills development and mental health.’

4. Ageism in accountancy?

Leadership inclusivity indicators score well across our survey – with most respondents seeing their leaders as having integrity and being accessible. Yet there are elements of the inclusivity agenda that continue to cause concern – with **40%** of respondents agreeing that a low socio-economic background is still a barrier to progression. Almost half of respondents this year (**45%** – up from **41%** in 2024), suggest their organisation continues to focus more on certain aspects of diversity than others. Interestingly, it’s inadequate recognition of older employees that tops the list of concerns.



Almost half of respondents suggest their organisation continues to focus more on certain aspects of diversity than others (up from **41%** in 2024)

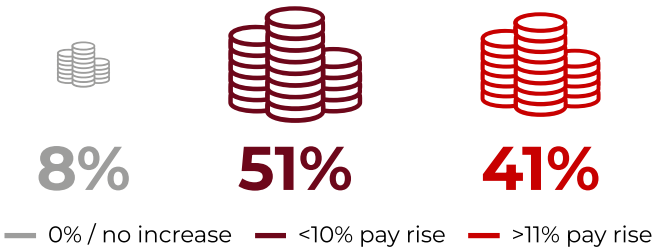
‘Interestingly, it’s inadequate recognition of older employees that tops the list of concerns.’





5. Cost of living continues to top our ‘workplace fears’ index

Concerns over the cost of living continue to top our Global Talent Trends ‘workplace fears’ index in 2025, a trend we’ve seen for three years in a row. It’s an issue that’s evident across the respondent divide, almost entirely agnostic of sector or country demographic. This is creating pressure for organisations in managing salary costs – with **41%** of respondents expecting an annual pay rise of at least **11%**. No surprise, it’s also the younger generation and more junior employees who feel hardest hit.

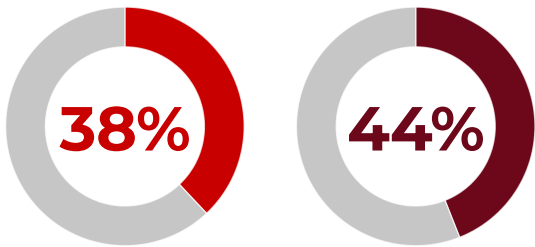


Annual pay rise expectations of respondents overall, with **41%** of respondents expecting a pay rise of at least **11%**

‘Concerns over the cost of living continue to top our ‘workplace fear’ index in 2025, a trend we’ve seen for three years in a row.’

6. Is AI upskilling falling short?

Exactly half of respondents (**50%**) are concerned they’re not developing the skills required for the future workplace. Artificial intelligence (AI) is unsurprisingly identified as the most valuable workplace skill in demand – but **38%** suggest they are not confident in their current knowledge of AI. While there’s broad confidence in being able to apply and learn new AI skills, many (**44%**) cite insufficient opportunities to learn about AI as a key barrier to skills development. Less than one third (**32%**) say their organisation is providing opportunities to learn AI-related skills, and where upskilling is happening, it appears to be heavily weighted towards Gen Z workers only.



38% of respondents suggest they are not confident in their current knowledge of AI, and **44%** cite insufficient opportunities to learn about AI as a key barrier to skills development

‘Half of respondents are concerned they’re not developing the skills required for the future workplace.’

7. Employability confidence is high

The retention challenge for employers evident in this year’s data mirrors the employability confidence that professional accountants have – with almost **60%** of respondents in work expecting their next career role to be outside of their current organisation. The speed with which career paths and job roles are evolving demands a re-evaluation of individual career planning. Crowdsourcing thousands of comments on successful individual career strategies, there’s consistent advice emerging from this survey on the need for ‘resilience’, ‘authenticity’, ‘adaptability’ and ‘lifelong growth’.

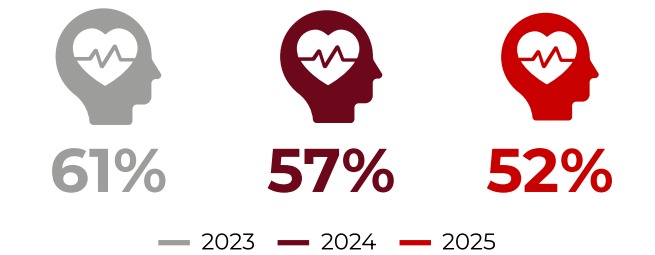


Respondents expecting their next career role to be outside of their current organisation

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8. Mental health indicators improve but remain challenging

It's clear that mental health continues to be a challenge. More positively, our mental health indicators have improved slightly in comparison to both our 2023 and 2024 findings – but over half of respondents (52%) in 2025 still agree that their mental health suffers due to work pressures. There's little room for complacency as the data suggests a relationship between poor mental health status, concerns on the adequacy of organisational support, and overall workplace satisfaction levels. Organisation flight risk continues to be a key issue linked to mental health.



Mental health indicators have improved slightly in comparison to our 2023 and 2024 findings – but over half of respondents in 2025 still agree that their mental health suffers due to work pressures

‘Organisation flight risk continues to be a key issue linked to mental health.’

9. Demand for sustainability related careers flies high

Two-thirds of respondents (67%) suggest they are interested in pursuing accountancy and finance roles focused on environmental issues. It's a particular ambition for Gen Z respondents, as well as those in emerging markets. While many of these roles currently reside at more senior levels, there's a real opportunity for organisations to ensure sustainability roles and skills cascade through to junior levels moving forward.



Over two thirds suggest they are interested in pursuing accountancy and finance roles focused on environmental issues

‘While many of these roles currently reside at more senior levels, there’s a real opportunity for organisations to ensure sustainability roles and skills cascade through to junior levels moving forward.’

10. Accountancy training remains a gateway for global careers

Our survey finds that 72% of Gen Z respondents and 52% from Gen Y cite a desire to pursue career opportunities abroad – with migration typically from developing economies to key developed economies to pursue career goals and job moves. But does this exodus of finance professionals have implications for retaining home-grown accountancy talent in emerging markets?



‘But does this exodus of finance professionals have implications for retaining home-grown talent in emerging markets?’

