

Workforce Report

icims® Insights

JANUARY 2025

2025: A look ahead

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Award-winning
data program





iCIMS Insights January snapshot

Will 2025 be the year that employers finally get out from under the threat of a looming recession and start hiring again? And will that give workers the confidence to go out and find better job opportunities?

Our January report gives a full picture of all employer and candidate activity that came through our platform last year. Overall, 2024 stuck its proverbial landing.

To get a read on job seeker sentiment heading in 2025, iCIMS surveyed 1,000 US adults to ask how they are feeling about work and the state of the economy (spoiler alert: opinions are mixed).



Our analysis of iCIMS data captures the insights that employers need to understand an ever-changing labor market and make better decisions for their businesses.

-Rhea Moss, Global Head of Workforce & Customer Insights, iCIMS

Top findings this month:



Applications were up 13% from the end of 2023, while applicants per opening (APO) rose 11%.



42% of people expect to look for a new job in 2025, down from 51% in 2024.



72% of people are very or somewhat confident about finding jobs that meet their needs in 2025.

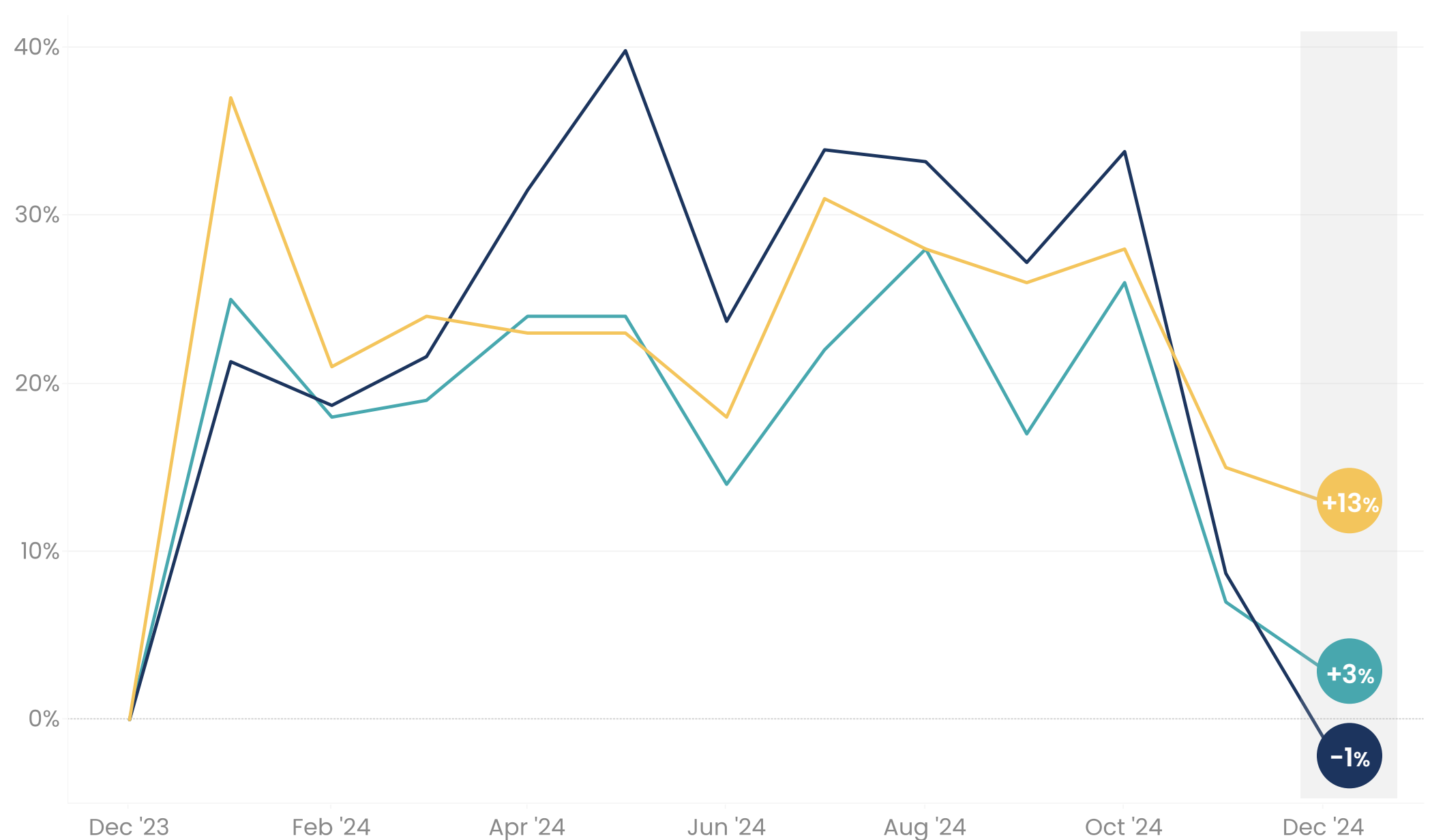


After a year of market fluctuations, 2024 sticks its landing

iCIMS Insights quick take:

- Following months of hiring hesitation, employers wrapped up 2024 on a positive note. iCIMS December data shows job openings and hires mostly in line with December 2023. Keep in mind we saw hires down 13% YoY in December 2023. After the hump of November's election and the holidays, businesses look poised to perhaps start adding to payrolls in 2025.
- iCIMS research found that almost 6 out of 10 (58%) people had no plans to look for jobs in the new year. With applications up 13% in December, has applying become a numbers game where people are applying to many more positions to land a job?

Since Dec. 2023



Platform indicators

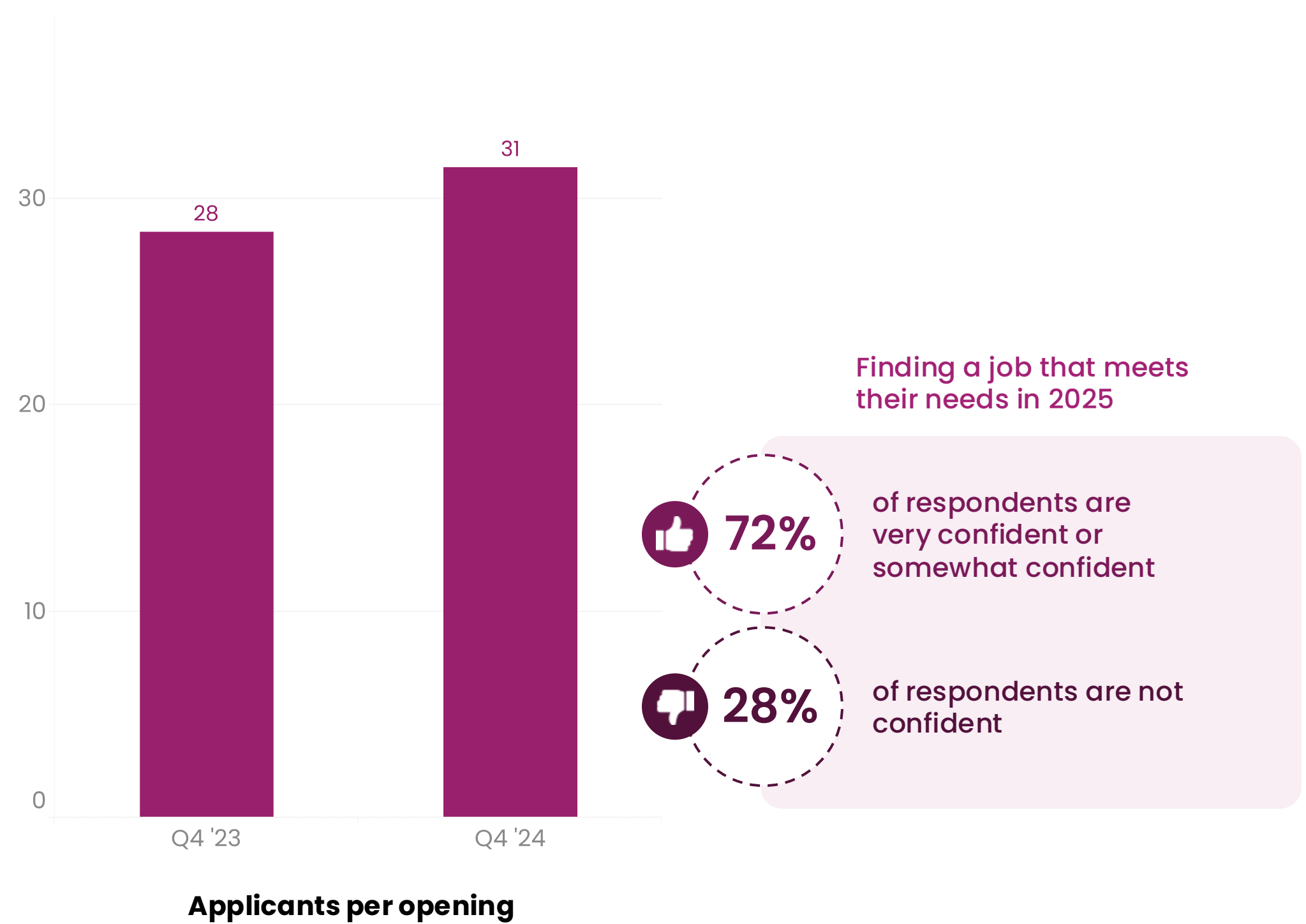
Job openings, applications and hires
December 2023–December 2024



Competition heats up for job seekers as APO jumps 11% from last year

iCIMS Insights quick take:

- Applicants per opening (APO) rose 11% year over year in Q4, which aligns with recent headlines about how tough it was to find a job at the end of 2024. According to the US Labor Department, more than 1.6 million jobless workers had been job hunting for at least six months.
- However, Americans are feeling upbeat about their job prospects in 2025. According to iCIMS research, 72% are very or somewhat confident about finding a job that meets their needs this year. And almost half of all respondents (49%) feel optimistic about the country's economic outlook.

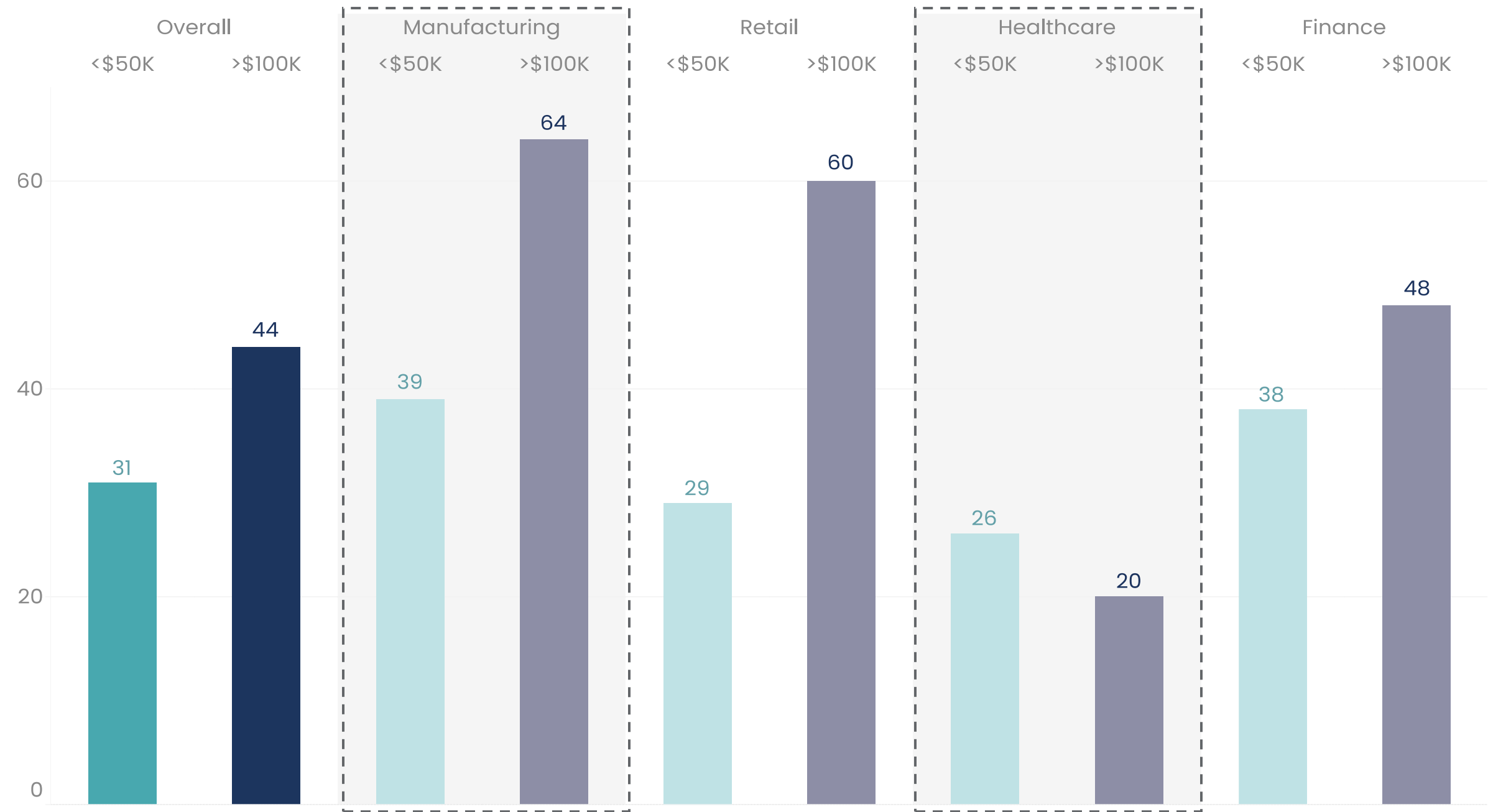




Think it's easier to hire with more applicants? Depends on the industry.

icims Insights quick take:

- Competition might be heating up for job seekers on average, but it varies widely by industry and salary range.
- Manufacturing roles over \$100K had on average 64 applicants per opening (APO), compared to the overall 44 APO for that salary range. In comparison, six-figure healthcare roles only garnered 20 APO.
- High-salary toolbelt jobs like electricians and service technicians are gaining traction, driven in part by Gen Z's growing interest in manufacturing roles. iCIMS data shows 47% of applicants for manufacturing roles were under 25 at the end of 2024.



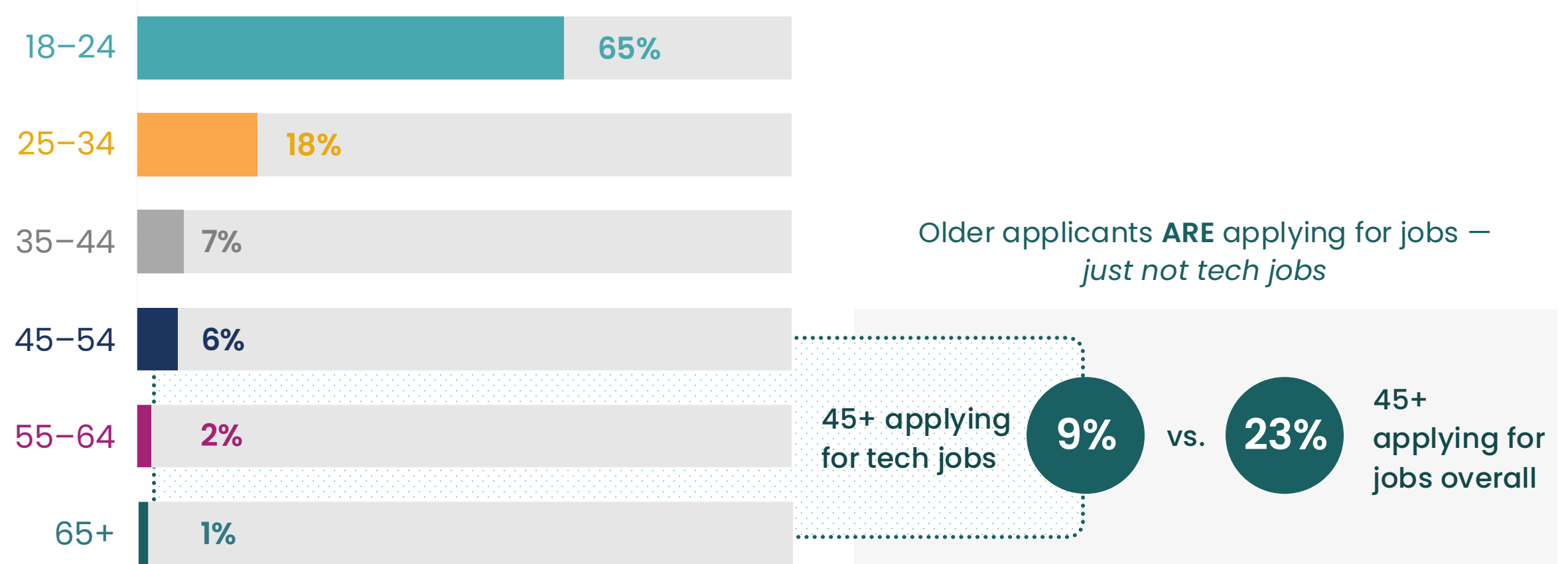
APO by industry and salary
Q4 2024



Tech bubble: Older workers steer clear of technical jobs

iCIMS Insights quick take:

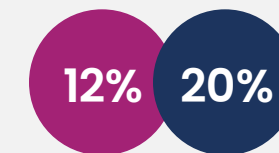
- Older workers are staying in the workforce longer, with 23% of applicants at the end of last year aged 45 and older. However, they're just not applying for tech-related jobs.
- Only 9% of applicants for tech jobs at the end of 2024 were 45 and older and just 3% are 55 and older. Unsurprisingly, the bulk of applicants for technical roles were under 25 (65%) and 83% under 35.
- This hesitancy also extends to job search strategies, with 96% of baby boomer respondents reportedly having no experience using AI tools to “auto apply” — or auto fill — a job application.



Applicants by age for tech jobs
Q4 '24



96% of baby boomers have **not used** AI tools to “auto apply” for a job posting or autofill an application.



12% of Gen X vs. 20% of Gen Z consider AI/automation to be a threat to their jobs in 2025.



2025 PREDICTION

AI investment and adoption have accelerated, becoming core drivers of operational efficiency, innovation and customer experience. But now the question is: Are they driving tangible outcomes? The true measure of AI's success will go beyond just implementation — organizations will begin to focus on tangible, outcome-driven metrics to assess its impact.

Jason Edelboim,
CEO, iCIMS

2025 predictions: A look ahead

How do workers feel heading into the new year? iCIMS conducted an online survey in December of 1,000 US adults to find out. Want to know whether we'll see an influx of applications in 2025? Are people feeling good about the future economy and their prospects at work?

Read on to find out.



Over half of workers are satisfied with jobs and plan to stay put in 2025

iCIMS Insights quick take:

- Almost 6 out of 10 respondents (58%) don't expect to look for jobs in 2025, which is up from last year (48%). Is this sheltering in place due to contentment or uncertainty about the economic outlook, with over half (49%) unsure of how the economic landscape will affect their job security?
- Survey sentiment aligns with recent Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reports, with unemployment down to 4.1 and a lowered quit rate in December. The number of people who quit their jobs in November dropped to a level not seen since the height of the pandemic, according to the most recent BLS JOLTS report.

Almost 6 out of 10 respondents

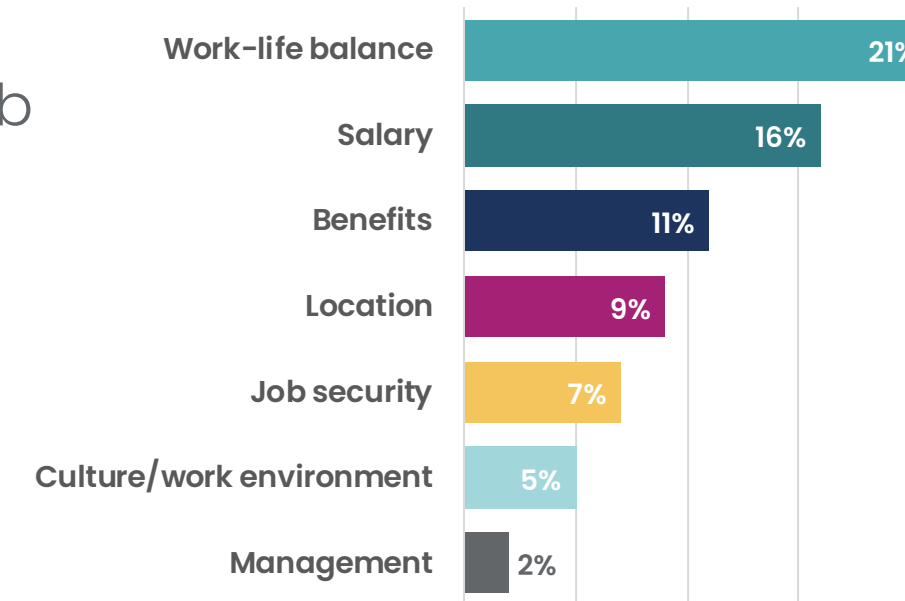
do not expect to look for a new job in 2025



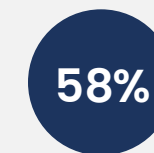
52% of survey respondents are satisfied with their current jobs

Respondents **not looking** for a job

Top reasons to stay:



49% of all respondents feel optimistic about the country's economic outlook vs. pessimistic (24%)



58% aren't concerned about getting laid off in 2025



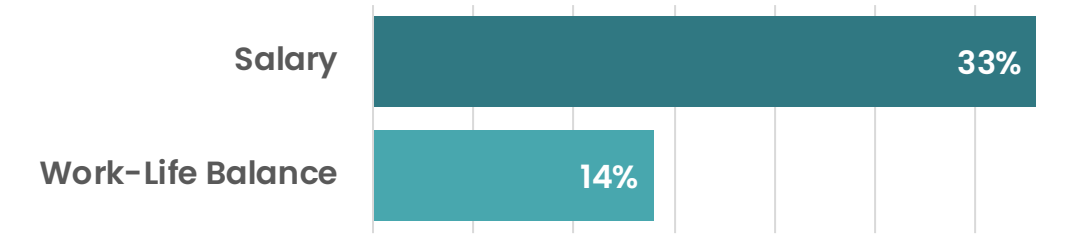
Salary and work-life balance at the top of workers' 2025 wish lists

iCIMS Insights quick take:

- According to iCIMS research, salary and work-life balance are the driving forces behind workers' decisions to stay or leave their companies in 2025. With the rise of return-to-office mandates and economic uncertainty looming, these priorities are not entirely surprising.
- Workers are looking for a financial cushion and flexibility in an uncertain environment. In the year ahead, organizations that deliver competitive pay and foster work-life balance will be well-positioned to attract and retain talent.

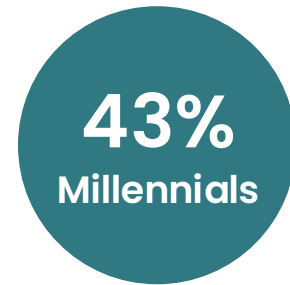
Respondents who will look for a job

Top drivers:



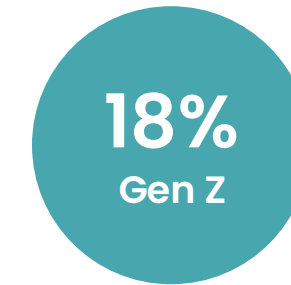
Top reasons by generation:

Salary



- 39% Gen X
- 34% Gen Z
- 11% Baby boomers

Work-life balance



- 16% Millennials
- 14% Gen X
- 8% Baby boomers



49%

of respondents are unsure of how the economy will affect their job security.

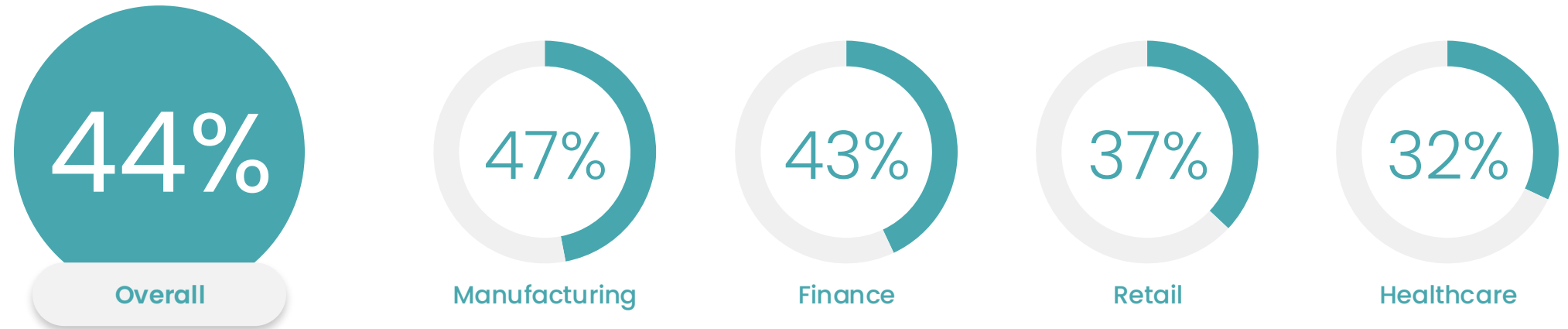


Gen Z is leaving space for new opportunities in 2025

icims Insights quick take:

- Younger workers are heading into 2025 with notable optimism about their job prospects and the economic impact on job security. But is this optimism grounded in reality?
- icims research suggests this rosy perspective may stem from a false sense of security, with many reporting they've been largely unaffected by hiring trends such as layoffs or budget cuts. As these workers enter the job market in the year ahead, are they prepared for the challenges they'll face, or are they underestimating the complexity of the current labor landscape?

Percentage of applicants under 25 by industry



61%

of Gen Z plan to look for a new job in 2025



87%

of Gen Z are confident about landing a new job



45%

of Gen Z expect the economic outlook in 2025 to affect their job security positively



27%

Of Gen Z expect to receive a raise or promotion at their company in the next 12 months



3 of the biggest talent acquisition trends to watch for in 2025

- 1. Finding the just-right balance for AI:** Businesses know AI has solid potential, but it's not the one-stop shop many expected.
- 2. Zeroing in on critical skills:** As businesses start to shift to skills-based hiring, they will focus on roles that drive business transformation to ensure they're hiring talent with the right skills for success.
- 3. Creating a great experience through a strong EVP:** Top talent is researching companies and asking more questions during the hiring process. Integrating cultural values is key to talent attraction in 2025.

2025 PREDICTION

"Ultimately, the companies that can align flexibility and the employee experience with their business goals will stand out, even when competing against larger employers."

Laura Coccaro,
Chief People Officer, iCIMS

2025 PREDICTION

With 42% of people saying they plan to look for a new job in 2025, quit rates could be on the rise in 2025. To avoid the Great Resignation 2.0, employers need to invest in their internal talent and provide clear pathways for growth and skills development to encourage them to stay.

Rhea Moss,
Global Head of Workforce &
Customer Insights, iCIMS



Want more great insights?

icims 2024 Talent Experience Report

Explore what candidates want right now and how talent acquisition pros are delivering those experiences in our second annual [Talent Experience Report](#).

icims 2024 CHRO Report

CHROs and chief people officers share insight into what's top of mind in the year ahead in [icims 2024 CHRO Report](#).
Unsurprisingly, HR leaders are juggling many challenges and priorities in an uncertain hiring climate.

Complete guide to using AI in recruiting

AI has the potential to revolutionize hiring, but getting started can feel overwhelming. Based on our history of using AI across our hiring platform, we've developed [four steps](#) to help you evaluate and implement AI in your recruiting process.



About iCIMS

iCIMS is a leading provider of talent acquisition technology that enables organizations everywhere to build winning workforces.

Visit www.icims.com to learn more.

Workforce data is vital to driving business forward.

iCIMS Insights provides data that is:

- Current
- Cross-industry
- Dual-focused on employer and job seeker intentions and activity

Data derived from:



3.3M+ global platform users



223M+ applications in 2024



630M+ candidate profiles



5.4M+ hires in 2024