

Talent on the move: the tech professionals most *looking for change*



Data from *The Tech Talent Explorer* has uncovered that up to 60% of your current tech workforce will likely be on the move in 2025, going into 2026. With so much talent open to new challenges, including those abroad, this turnover will result in fierce competition for professionals with in-demand skill sets. Is your business well-placed to take advantage of this while retaining your existing specialists?

Here, we'll explore what's making so many people search for new opportunities, explaining what the data from nearly 10,000 respondents means and how you can attract the skilled professionals your organisation needs. For a deeper dive into the plans of specific demographics across regions and technical skill sets, use the tools in *The Tech Talent Explorer* to refine your searches.



Key insight 1:

53% of tech professionals in permanent roles want to switch employer

Over half of permanently employed respondents revealed plans to change organisation over the course of the year, with as many as 66% of specialists in Southern Europe and 62% in Southeast Asia seeking a new permanent role.

Depending on your organisation's needs, you may find more candidates available in certain skill areas while also struggling to retain them. Due to demand in implementing and leveraging new technologies, it's little surprise to see that two thirds (67%) of experts in AI, Machine Learning and Robotic Process Automation will be exploring the many opportunities open to them. In contrast, Technical and Solutions Architects are the least likely to want away from their current employer – this is perhaps due to the nature of these roles, which often involve longer-term projects for which professionals will likely want to oversee the results.

To successfully attract and keep these people, it's important to understand their reasons for leaving. After salary, 'limited progression opportunities' and 'concerns over job security' were most commonly cited by respondents as highly significant reasons behind their decision. This is understandable, as economic instability and the impact of AI continue to create uncertainty. However, beyond this, respondents also noted that their direct manager would be a critical factor in their exit.

For more information on why professionals join and remain at organisations, please refer to the Executive Summary of Motivational Factors paper, which is also available for download from within *The Tech Talent Explorer*.



Key insight 2:

8% of permanent workers intend to transition into contracting this year

In addition to those 53% of workers seeking a new permanent role, a further 8% of respondents reported that they plan to begin their contractor career in the next year.

The opportunity for greater income is often highlighted as a major benefit for IT contractors, although regulations in some territories may limit such earning potential. While 66% confirmed that higher income was an important motive for their planned change, 50% named a better work-life balance as being a highly influential factor in making the switch.

Key insight 3:

Vast majority of tech professionals would consider overseas employer

The Tech Talent Explorer survey uncovered that 87% of tech specialists in permanent roles would be willing to look abroad for their next role, with 50% open to relocating. These numbers rise to 95% in the LATAM region and 90% in Southern Europe, though only 41% would want to relocate from the latter. This means that the right people for your organisation could be based abroad, although there could be several factors behind their willingness, including higher pay or better conditions, which make certain locations more attractive destinations than others. It is also worth noting that organisations can encounter challenges in bringing such workers on board when it comes to visas and tax registrations.

Our study also found 83% of contractors to be open to working with foreign organisations. Among those who are reticent about such partnerships, the most common concern would be the legal and tax implications, followed by their inability to communicate in their second language.

Headline stats

How influential are these factors in deciding to move employer?

	1	2	3	4	5
Limited progression opportunities	6%	7%	17%	28%	42%
Concerns over job stability	12%	10%	18%	23%	37%
Poor work-life balance	16%	12%	18%	18%	36%

(1= not important at all, 5 = very important)

- 87% of permanent workers and 83% of contractors would consider working for a company based abroad.
- Of the reasons that contractors gave for rejecting overseas clients, over a third (37%) cited legal and tax implications.

Our recommendations

1.

Demonstrate to candidates and existing employees that there are development plans in place at your organisation so that they can take the next step in their careers. From skills training to promotion plans, today's talent has spoken – progress matters.

2.

Your people are your biggest asset in supporting overseas candidates with relocation and integration. Data from *The Tech Talent Explorer* shows that respondents value their closest colleagues over wider company culture, with a collaborative team and their direct manager ranking as the most important factors. For those moving to unfamiliar surroundings, a welcoming environment is key. Ensure that your teams are offering this and make it clear in your employment proposal when hiring.

3.

If your organisation isn't currently engaging with contingent workers, it's time to start exploring. At Hays, we're used to seeing experienced tech professionals make the move into contracting, and you'll miss out on vital knowledge if you limit your recruitment to permanent employees. Offering these specialists greater freedom in how, when and where they work could give you a competitive advantage in securing their services. In return, you'll not only access their skills on a cost-efficient basis without offering permanent employment, but also benefit from a knowledge share between them and your current workforce.

4.

Organisations that specialise in global workforce solutions can help contractors to ensure compliance when working across borders. Making it clear that you and your partners have expertise and experience of cross-border engagements— and can support contractors through issues and doubts— will help to attract top talent from abroad.

