

# HR REPORT

for Japanese Corporations in Asia

Jul. – Sep.  
2025

>Talent Needs in Asia Countries

>People and Organization Column  
'Embedding Organizational Culture  
as a Driver of Engagement '



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PERSOL Group operates in 13 countries and regions in the Asia-Pacific, and supporting our clients' talent needs. This report summarizes the latest job trends in each country based on around 100,000 hiring needs per year (\*), which are submitted to our group in Asia-Pacific countries. We hope this report will be helpful to your organization's growth.

※Numbers of recruitment cases in 13 countries and regions in Asia and the Pacific

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# > Talent Needs in Asia Countries (Singapore)








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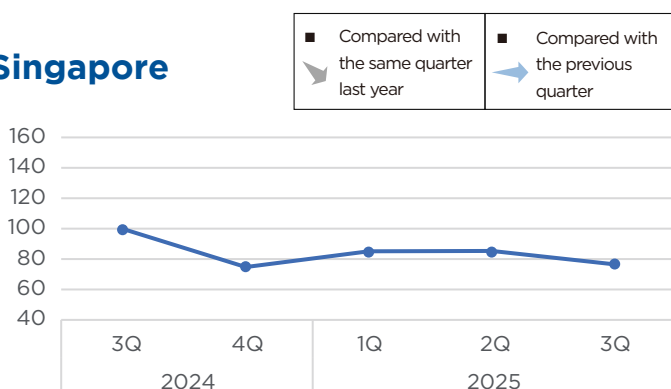
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Information in each section is accurate as of the end of September 2025. For the latest trends, please contact the sales executive in charge.

**Compared with the same period in the last year**  Significantly Increasing  Gradually Increasing  Stable  Slightly Decreasing  Significantly Decreasing

## Singapore



Written by:

**Amily Yoong, PERSOL Singapore**

Singapore's economy maintained stable growth in Q3 2025 amid continued global uncertainty.

According to the Ministry of Manpower (MOM), the GDP growth forecast for 2025 was revised upward from 0.0–2.0% to 1.5–2.5%, supported by Q2 growth of 4.4% year-on-year. Employment rose by 10,400 in Q2, driven by healthcare and logistics, while the overall unemployment rate remained low at 2.0% (residents: 2.8%, citizens: 2.9%).

Job vacancies eased slightly from 81,100 to 76,900, with a stable long-term unemployment rate of 0.9%. Key growth sectors included manufacturing, aviation, logistics, and digital industries. Under the National AI Strategy 2.0, the government plans to train over 15,000 local workers in AI-related skills, boosting demand for talent in data analytics, automation, and cybersecurity.

In September, MOM raised the S Pass qualifying salary to S\$3,300 (and S\$3,800 for financial services).

The increase aims to ensure fair wage competition and promote local talent development, prompting firms—especially in manufacturing, logistics, and construction—to review manpower costs and hiring plans.

With nearly 30% of Singapore's workforce aged 50 and above, initiatives such as the Senior Employment Credit and Part-time Re-employment Grant continue to encourage senior employment and workforce retention.

Between July and September 2025, PERSOL Singapore handled 235 job orders, introduced 196 candidates, and progressed 105 to interviews—achieving an 83% introduction rate and 54% interview rate. While total job orders remained stable from Q2 (239 orders), conversion from interview to hire improved, reflecting stronger candidate matching. Active hiring sectors included manufacturing, construction, logistics, IT, and finance.

Demand for Japanese-speaking professionals remained robust, particularly for coordination with Japan HQ and client communications — a core strength of the Japan Desk. According to the PERSOL APAC Industry Insight Report (Sep 2025), hiring across Asia-Pacific remained strongest in manufacturing, logistics, and professional services. About 40% of companies plan to expand IT/digital teams within the next 6–12 months.



Meanwhile, sustainability and carbon-related roles grew 22% year-on-year, highlighting rising demand in green finance and environmental solutions.

Singapore's labour market remains resilient, supported by steady growth and proactive workforce policies. Digitalisation, automation, and sustainability will continue to shape hiring needs across sectors.

For PERSOL Singapore, strategic focus on digital, green, logistics, and manufacturing talent, along with Japanese-speaking roles, will remain key to supporting clients' evolving business needs in the coming quarters.

# Talent Needs in Asia Countries (Malaysia)








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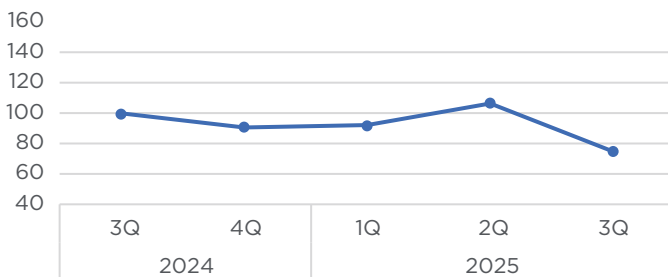
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## Malaysia



Written by:

Ryoko Kitasaka, PERSOL Malaysia

According to CIMB Securities Research, Malaysia's GDP growth slowed slightly to 4.2% in Q3, down from 4.4% in Q2. Bank Negara Malaysia reported that export-oriented industries expanded steadily, supported by stronger output in electrical & electronics (E&E) and machinery & equipment, recording 4.1% growth in July (up from 2.9% in June). Meanwhile, domestic-oriented industries grew 5.0% in July (5.1% in June), as solid performance in food & beverage (F&B) offset weaker automotive production. Overall, the manufacturing production index rose 4.4% between June and August. In financial markets, sentiment remained volatile as expectations of a U.S. rate cut faded, leading to a 0.9% depreciation of the Malaysian ringgit against the U.S. dollar.

According to the Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM), the unemployment rate remained stable at 3.0% for the fifth consecutive month in August, with around 520,000 unemployed persons. Employment gains were led by the services, manufacturing, construction, and agriculture sectors in July 2025. Youth unemployment stood at 10.2% among those aged 15-24, and 6.2% among those aged 15-30. The non-labour force population reached 7.2 million, mainly due to household duties and education.

Between July and September 2025, PERSOL Malaysia recorded 159 new job openings, representing 90% of the same period last year. The average salary budget rose to RM8,504, about RM1,000 higher than a year ago. This increase was mainly driven by a rise in sales and customer support positions with relatively higher budget allocations. Overall candidate registration remained stable.

However, a gap in practical English proficiency was observed among some Japanese candidates. Even those with professional careers in Japan sometimes struggled to meet the local market's expectation for immediate, business-level English fluency. Separately, an increasing number of pre-retirement Japanese professionals expressed interest in contributing their experience and expertise to Asia's growth, placing less emphasis on salary or title.

Despite the growing importance of bilingual capability, demand for Japanese-speaking talent remains strong. To support such candidates, PERSOL Malaysia hosted an online seminar in August 2025 for Japanese speakers seeking career opportunities in Malaysia. The session covered job options by Japanese language level, business manners, and business Japanese communication, attracting over 20 participants and providing practical career guidance for their next steps.

# > Talent Needs in Asia Countries (Thailand)



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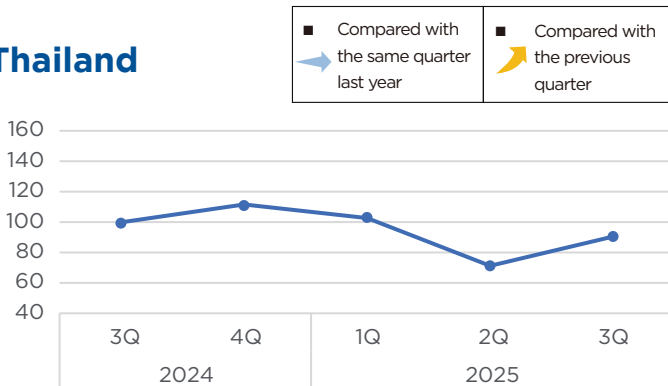
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## Thailand



Written by:

**Yuko Otsuka, PERSOL Thailand**

The third quarter marked a significant political turning point for the Thai economy. On August 29, Prime Minister Paetongtarn was dismissed by the Constitutional Court, and on September 5, Mr. Anutin of the Bhumjaithai Party was appointed as the new Prime Minister. The new administration, formed as a minority government, has pledged to hold a general election within four months and is focusing on short-term, intensive economic measures.

According to the National Economic and Social Development Council (NESDC), Thailand's GDP growth rate for Q2 2025 was 2.8% year-on-year, down from 3.2% in the previous quarter. On July 3, the World Bank sharply revised its annual growth forecast from 2.9% to 1.8%, and on September 24, Fitch Ratings downgraded Thailand's outlook from stable to negative. Prolonged political uncertainty appears to be weighing on investor sentiment. The tourism recovery has also been sluggish. According to the Ministry of Tourism and Sports, the number of international visitors between January and September totaled 24.11 million, down 7.56% year-on-year, marking the eighth consecutive month of decline. Chinese tourist arrivals, in particular, fell 34% from the same period last year, dealing a severe blow to the tourism sector. The appreciation of the baht has further dampened demand, with the Tourism Confidence Index (TCT) dropping to 66.

According to the Ministry of Labor, the unemployment rate remained low at 1.05% in Q3 2025. However, labor shortages continue in the manufacturing and tourism sectors, especially for skilled and immediately deployable talent. The NESDC also reported that around 89% of companies are reluctant to hire fresh graduates, reflecting a stronger preference for experienced professionals. This shift toward "ready-to-contribute" hires has made the job market increasingly challenging for younger job seekers.

Overall, job openings in Q3 declined to 88% of the level seen a year ago but increased 7% from the previous quarter. Among Japanese companies, demand remained relatively steady at 93% of last year's level and 115% compared with the previous quarter. By industry, export-oriented food manufacturing showed modest recovery, while automotive manufacturing remained weak, driven mainly by replacement hiring. In contrast, the logistics sector—despite an overall sluggish economy—saw rising demand for specialized professionals through selective recruitment.



Across all sectors, Japanese-speaking candidates continue to be in strong demand, particularly those with multilingual capabilities.

As market dynamics undergo rapid change, long-established Japanese companies in Thailand now face a critical moment requiring adaptation. Moving away from overly cautious decision-making, organizations must embrace speed, execution, and a willingness to learn from failure. At PERSOL Thailand, we are committed to supporting sustainable growth through not only recruitment services but also HR system redesign, labor management, and employee engagement surveys—offering comprehensive solutions for Japanese businesses in Thailand.



# Talent Needs in Asia Countries (Indonesia)








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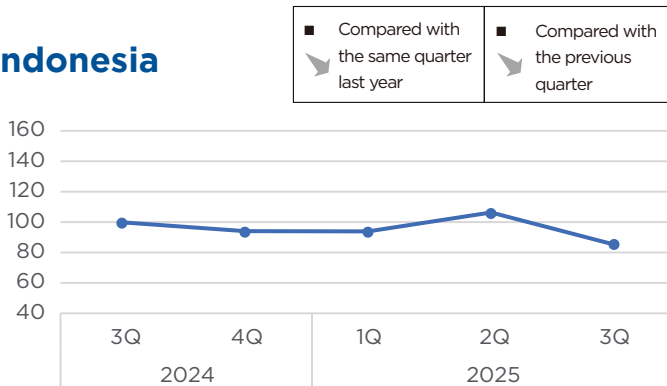
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## Indonesia



Written by:

Yoshinobu Kaji, PERSOL Indonesia

Indonesia's real GDP grew 5.12% year-on-year in the April-June 2025 period, accelerating from 4.87% in Q1 (January-March 2025). The expansion was mainly driven by strong export growth and a recovery in private consumption, which supported domestic demand. By sector, services (11.31%) and transportation & warehousing (8.52%) recorded particularly high growth rates.

In the Indonesian hiring market, new job openings in Q3 2025 increased to 104% compared with the previous quarter, although they were slightly down at 96.9% year-on-year. Demand for locally hired Japanese professionals continued to rise. Among job categories, sales, customer support, and consulting roles accounted for 44.2%, followed by back-office (27.9%), construction engineers (16.3%), and manufacturing engineers (11.6%). For local staff, demand was strongest in sales and marketing, followed by HR, accounting, and other back-office functions. Youth unemployment remains a serious social issue in Indonesia.

As of 2025, the unemployment rate among those aged 15-24 reached 17.3%, roughly three times higher than the overall unemployment rate of 4.76%. While the number of university and vocational school graduates continues to increase, many struggle to find employment due to a lack of practical work experience. About 59% of new employment falls within the informal sector (including non-permanent, day-labor, and freelance work), where many young people face unstable income and limited social protection. This structural challenge contributes to persistently high youth unemployment.

Against this backdrop, an increasing number of young Indonesians are seeking overseas employment. Japan is one of the most popular destinations, due to its stable working conditions, competitive wages, and strong social security system. Applications through Japan's Specified Skilled Worker (SSW) schemes continue to rise. Many participants are also motivated by the opportunity to improve their language and technical skills abroad, leading to a growth in sending organizations (LPKs) and vocational training institutions. We have also seen a rise in inquiries from Japanese companies seeking to hire Indonesian talent. This trend is driven not only by Indonesians' diligence and reliability, but also by cost competitiveness and Japan's ongoing labor shortages in key sectors such as nursing care, manufacturing, and construction.



# Talent Needs in Asia Countries (Vietnam)








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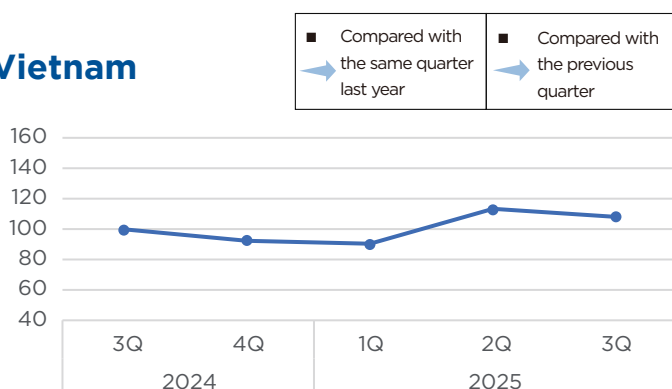
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## Vietnam



Written by:

Kento Ishikawa, PERSOL Vietnam

On October 5, 2025, the Vietnamese government announced the “National Master Plan for 2021-2030 (with a Vision to 2050)”. The plan sets ambitious targets, aiming for an average GDP growth rate exceeding 8.0% between 2021 and 2030, and above 10% during 2026-2030. The government will prioritize the development of the northern and southern economic regions, with Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City positioned as the two key growth hubs. By promoting modern and integrated infrastructure, Vietnam aims to stimulate balanced national development. The plan also emphasizes a new growth model centered on science, technology, and digital transformation, accelerating infrastructure development in transportation, urban areas, energy, and social systems, and advancing the transition toward a digital government, digital economy, and digital society.

According to the General Statistics Office under the Ministry of Finance, the unemployment rate in Q3 2025 (July–September) was 2.22%, marking a slight improvement of 0.02 percentage points quarter-on-quarter and 0.01 percentage points year-on-year. For the January–September period, the unemployment rate remained steady at 2.22%, reflecting a stable and resilient labour market. However, youth unemployment (ages 15–24) rose to 8.38% (+0.47 percentage points YoY). In urban areas, the rate was particularly high at 11.24%, compared with 6.75% in rural regions, widening the urban-rural gap. Youth employability remains a key challenge, highlighting the need for enhanced vocational training and practical experience programs.

On the wage front, the average monthly salary increased by 10.0% year-on-year to 8.3 million VND (approx. JPY 47,000). Male workers earned 9.3 million VND (approx. JPY 52,800), while female workers earned 7.1 million VND (approx. JPY 40,300), indicating that the gender pay gap persists.

At PERSOL Vietnam, the number of job openings handled by the Japan Desks in Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi during July–September 2025 declined to around 75% compared to the same period last year. Hiring activity has slowed, particularly in the manufacturing and service sectors, reflecting a more cautious approach among employers. However, inquiries from Japanese companies preparing for new market entry into Vietnam remain steady. There continues to be sustained demand for both Japanese and Vietnamese professionals in pre-establishment and setup-related positions, suggesting ongoing medium- to long-term investment interest in the Vietnamese market.

# > Talent Needs in Asia Countries (Philippines)








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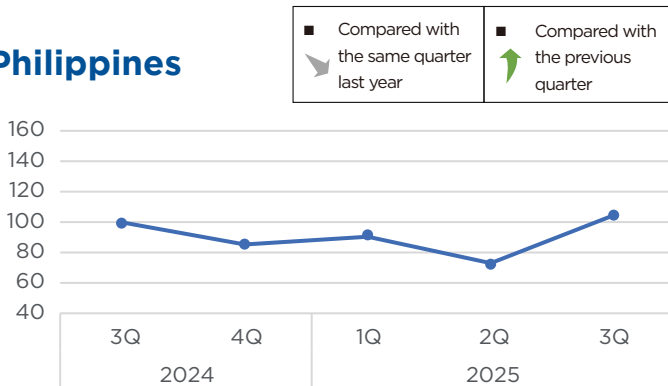
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## Philippines



Written by:

**AYAHITO TAKAYAMA, PERSOL Philippines**

According to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), the Consumer Price Index (CPI, 2018=100) for September 2025 rose 1.7% year-on-year, mainly driven by higher food and transportation costs. Persistently high fuel prices and adjustments in public utility rates also contributed to the increase. Inflation stood at 2.8% in the National Capital Region (NCR) and 1.4% in areas outside NCR (AONCR). Core inflation, which excludes food and energy, remained stable at 2.3%, and the government expects the full-year inflation rate to stay within its target range of 2.0–3.0%.

On the external front, exports in July increased 12.3% year-on-year, while imports fell 2.8%, resulting in a 25% reduction in the trade deficit. Exports to the U.S. and Japan—particularly semiconductors and electronic components—remained strong. The depreciation of the peso has improved export competitiveness and encouraged renewed investment in manufacturing and logistics-related industries. The government has maintained its 2025 GDP growth forecast at 5.5–6.5%, emphasizing consumption, exports, and infrastructure investment as key growth drivers. While inflation stabilization and employment recovery are progressing, continued attention is needed on disaster resilience and institutional reforms.

In response to rising living costs, the minimum wage in Metro Manila has been increased to ₱695 per day. Wage hikes are also under review in surrounding regions, prompting companies to reconsider their salary structures and benefit schemes. Many employers have introduced inflation allowances and transportation subsidies, which are becoming essential measures for talent retention and employee engagement.

According to the Labor Force Survey, the employment rate in August 2025 stood at 96.0%, with a labor force participation rate of 65.7%, both remaining high. Job growth continues mainly in hospitality, food services, and retail/wholesale trade, while manufacturing and construction show signs of stagnation. The underemployment rate improved to 12.8%, though the employment environment for young workers remains challenging. In the IT-BPM (Information Technology–Business Process Management) sector, demand for specialized and technical professionals is increasing as AI adoption and process automation accelerate. To keep pace with these changes, companies are investing in skills development and expanding in-house training programs.

At PERSOL Philippines, we will continue to analyze ongoing changes in the economy and labor market, and support Japanese companies in optimizing their talent strategies and managing risks to ensure stable business operations in the local market.



## Embedding Organizational Culture as a Driver of Engagement

As discussed in our previous issue, enabling effective “alignment of expectations” by middle management requires two key components: a supporting “system” and the cultivation of a strong “organizational culture” through that system. This time, we focus on organizational culture itself and explore concrete approaches to enhancing employee engagement across Asia.

### Embedding Culture Is the Key to Engagement

Various studies have demonstrated a direct link between the strength of organizational culture and employee engagement. In China and the ASEAN region, research shows that a “hybrid approach” — combining consistent leadership values with a family-oriented workplace ethos — significantly enhances engagement.

The crucial point here is how to foster genuine empathy from employees. A culture imposed from the top only generates superficial compliance. True engagement arises when employees identify with and internalize the organization's values.

### Organizational Climate vs. Organizational Culture

Before delving deeper, it's important to clarify two often-confused concepts.

- Organizational climate refers to the atmosphere, habits, and unspoken norms that naturally develop over time — the “way things are done” in the company.
- Organizational culture, on the other hand, is a consciously articulated set of values and behavioural standards designed by management to achieve strategic goals.

If the aim is to enhance performance through engagement, the key lies in embedding organizational culture. When

culture takes root, employees act proactively toward strategic objectives, paving the way for sustainable business growth.

### Three Cultural Anchors for China and ASEAN

To embed organizational culture effectively in Asia — particularly in China and ASEAN — three factors are crucial:

#### 1. Respect for Familial Values

Many workplaces in the region function like extended families. Managers are often expected to act as “family heads,” showing care not only for employees' work but also for their personal lives. Embracing this spirit of mutual support and incorporating warmth and empathy into culture-building efforts fosters psychological safety and acceptance. (Note: Gen Z employees may show different tendencies.)

#### 2. Consistency of Message

Management messages must align with HR policies and day-to-day decisions. In diverse, multi-generational workplaces, communication can easily become distorted. Repeating a consistent message across multiple channels builds trust and reinforces shared values.

#### 3. Participatory Approach for Empathy-Building

Culture cannot be imposed — it must be co-created. Engaging local managers and frontline employees in the process cultivates ownership and transforms culture from something “given from above” into something “built together.”

### How to Make the Participatory Approach Work

Two practices can ensure success in a participatory approach:



## People and Organization Column: Embedding Organizational Culture as a Driver of Engagement

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### 1. Engage Key Informal Leaders

Identify influential employees who naturally earn the trust of their peers — not just formal managers — and involve them early in the culture-development taskforce. Once these individuals begin communicating values in their own words, momentum builds rapidly.

### 2. Create and Share Early Wins

For example, when a Chinese firm launched a new “challenge-driven” culture, it began with one project team as a pilot. Concentrated resources and authority led to small but visible successes, which were then shared across the company as proof of the new culture’s effectiveness.

### Start by Defining the Desired Culture

Embedding culture is not an overnight process. It begins by clearly articulating the desired culture — in words that resonate. This requires reflecting on the local entity’s history and past successes to identify what should be preserved and what must evolve.

Equally important is explaining why this culture matters now — in the context of current competition and future societal trends — so that employees can relate to it.

By trusting local teams, promoting a participatory process, and patiently nurturing empathy, organizations can strengthen engagement — ultimately building a foundation for sustainable competitive advantage.



#### Hiroaki Ide

Director of Organizational Development  
PERSOL Consulting

Hiroaki Ide is a seasoned HR consultant with over 10 years of experience in human resource management across Japan, Greater China, and Southeast Asia, he has been involved in designing HR systems for various industries. He also has prior experience as an in-house HR professional at a listed company, where he led strategic HR initiatives such as HR system development and talent selection planning. In addition, he has published multiple HR-related columns in finance industry publications.

He began his career as a national public servant after graduating from the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Tokyo. He then held HR leadership roles at a major display industry company and worked as a senior consultant at Mizuho Research & Technologies. In 2017, he joined PERSOL Consulting and relocated to the Shanghai office in 2021.



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