

APAC Market Report – Hiring Expansion

Key Insights

- APAC is emerging as a global hiring hotspot, with foreign company hiring in the region faster than in Europe and the US, underscoring its rising importance in global talent strategy.
- Diverse talent strategies are taking shape, with Singapore and Australia attracting senior leadership roles, while India, Indonesia, and the Philippines drive large-scale junior hiring to support operational growth.
- Singapore and India are becoming regional hiring engines, signalling a broader shift toward long-term investment in innovation, infrastructure, and strategic presence across the region.
- To succeed in APAC, businesses must understand its complexity, aligning global goals with local strengths to unlock growth, build resilient teams, and stay competitive in a rapidly evolving economic landscape.

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Overview

As the Asia-Pacific (APAC) region continues to solidify its position as a powerful engine of global economic growth, it is also emerging as a strategic destination for international expansion and globalisation. Our earlier analysis found that business expansion activity into the APAC region has grown by over 30% over the past five years - indicating that companies recognise the strategic value of setting up operations in the region in order to tap on the burgeoning growth.

In this latest analysis, we take a step further and dive into hiring expansion. We find that not only are more companies setting up offices in APAC, but these companies are also significantly increasing hiring activity across the region. By tracking where businesses are expanding, we uncover key signals about the sectors, markets, and strategies driving APAC's momentum. These insights illustrate how the region is emerging as a global hub for innovation, investment, and economic leadership, and reveal where the next wave of opportunity may lie. For businesses, investors, and policymakers, understanding the dynamics shaping APAC's economic landscape is essential to staying ahead in an increasingly interconnected world.

We leverage LinkedIn's Economic Graph data to examine the hiring activity of companies expanding beyond their home countries. Specifically, we focus on hiring taking place in countries other than where a company is headquartered. This approach allows us to identify where firms are actively investing in talent and building operational capacity - key indicators of long-term commitment and strategic growth. By tracking these cross-border hiring patterns, we gain a unique view into how APAC is evolving as both a launchpad for regional growth and a magnet for global expansion. It also helps spotlight which markets are emerging as critical hubs for innovation, workforce development, and international business integration.

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Hiring activity has grown in APAC

Over the past 5 years, hiring by foreign companies in APAC has grown by 18%.

Over the past five years, the share of hiring activity by foreign companies in APAC has grown by 18%. This outpaces both Europe (-2%) and the US (14%). Most of this hiring is concentrated in markets with young and growing workforce (Philippines, Malaysia, India, and Indonesia).

Country	Five Year Growth (%)
Australia	-2.95%
Indonesia	29.88%
India	33.61%
Japan	1.42%
Malaysia	43.53%
New Zealand	6.26%
Philippines	49.51%
Singapore	-5.11%

Source: LinkedIn Economic Graph

Notes: Percentage growth in share of hiring activity by foreign-headquartered companies, between 2020 to 2024. The countries included in this analysis are Australia, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore, and the Philippines.

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Hires in Singapore, Australia, and New Zealand are more senior.

We further analysed the share of hiring by seniority level to better understand the nature of talent investment across APAC markets - specifically, whether companies are focusing on building entry-level capacity or deepening their leadership presence.

The data reveals notable differences in hiring patterns by country.

- Compared to the regional average, markets like Indonesia, the Philippines, India have a higher proportion of junior-level hiring (1.16x, 1.12x and 1.09x higher than the regional average respectively), suggesting a focus on scaling operational capacity and tapping into large, cost-effective talent pools.
- In contrast, Singapore stands out with Director-level hires being nearly double of the regional average, and Senior Leadership (VP and C-Suites) hires being more than double of the regional average. This highlights its role as a regional hub for foreign companies seeking a base for strategic leadership to drive decision-making and corporate strategy in the broader APAC region.
- Japan has a more balanced distribution across levels, with a slight skew toward senior roles. Foreign companies may be relying on experienced leaders to manage local operations in this complex, high-context market, reflecting the value placed on institutional knowledge, cultural fluency, and long-term relationships.

Country	Junior	Manager	Director	Senior Leadership
Australia	0.87	1.25	1.67	1.27
Indonesia	1.16	0.71	0.29	0.30
India	1.09	1.06	0.49	0.85
Japan	0.96	1.02	1.17	1.30
Malaysia	1.08	0.80	0.65	0.68
New Zealand	0.90	1.76	1.37	0.88
Philippines	1.12	0.80	0.44	0.44
Singapore	0.83	0.60	1.93	2.28

Source: LinkedIn Economic Graph

Notes: Proportion of hiring at different seniority levels in the country compared to the regional average. The countries included in this analysis are Australia, India, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore, and the Philippines. For this report, the seniority levels are defined as entry-level, manager-level, director-level, and leadership-level (VP or C-suite).

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Sectors with highest share and growth in hiring activity.

Our analysis shows that foreign companies expanding in APAC are primarily hiring in Professional Services, Technology, Manufacturing, and Finance. These sectors account for the largest share of total hires, with Professional Services making up approximately 26% on average, followed by Manufacturing (16%), Technology (16%), and Finance (10%).

Country	Financial Services	Manufacturing	Professional Services	Technology, Information and Media
Australia	8.64%	15.39%	25.19%	14.46%
Indonesia	6.22%	16.52%	18.40%	16.24%
India	10.30%	11.92%	37.27%	20.12%
Japan	8.53%	17.20%	23.81%	24.03%
Malaysia	10.50%	22.39%	23.00%	12.69%
New Zealand	9.30%	13.95%	22.34%	10.59%
Philippines	10.75%	9.51%	34.15%	14.72%
Singapore	18.40%	17.29%	21.22%	16.52%

Source: LinkedIn Economic Graph

Notes: Share of hires across different sectors in the country. The countries included in this analysis are Australia, India, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore, and the Philippines.

The country-specific data reveal insights about the differences between the countries' strengths and direction of sector development.

- In Singapore, Finance accounts for 18% of hiring in Singapore. This is much higher than the regional average, and reflects its role as a leading financial hub in the APAC region. The strong presence of Professional Services (21%) and Manufacturing (17%) also indicates its position as a strategic centre for both corporate services and industrial operations.

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- In India, Professional Services make up a substantial 37% of hires in India, highlighting the importance of this sector in the country's growing economy. The notable share of Technology (24%) also underscores India's role in the global tech landscape, with the country being a key player in IT outsourcing and digital innovation.
- In Malaysia, the hiring landscape is led by Professional Services (23%) and Manufacturing (22%), reflecting the country's diversified economy. The prominence of Professional Services highlights the growing demand for business and corporate services, likely driven by increasing global investments. Meanwhile, the significant share of Manufacturing underscores Malaysia's key role in the regional supply chain, with its strong industrial base complementing its service-oriented sectors.
- In the Philippines, Professional Services make up 34% of hires, firmly establishing the country as a global leader in the BPO sector. The Technology industry also holds a significant share at 15%, further illustrating the Philippines' growing digital economy and its role in the global outsourcing landscape.
- In Japan, Technology leads with 24% of hires, emphasizing the country's continued focus on technological advancement and innovation. Manufacturing (17%) remains a vital sector, underscoring Japan's position as a global leader in industrial production. The substantial share of Professional Services (23%) further demonstrates the importance of corporate and business services in Japan's robust economy.

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Large companies are driving the majority of foreign hiring activity, but small companies have shown more growth.

Foreign hiring activity in APAC is largely dominated by large enterprises with more than 5,000 employees. In most countries, large companies are responsible for more than half of foreign hiring. This is not surprising - large multinationals often have the capital, infrastructure, and global reach to hire at scale when entering or expanding in foreign markets.

Country	Small-Medium Enterprises (% share)	Mid-Market Enterprises (% share)	Enterprises (% share)	Large Enterprises (% share)
Australia	17.12%	12.37%	15.58%	54.93%
Indonesia	16.05%	11.34%	14.80%	57.81%
India	14.12%	10.71%	15.26%	59.91%
Japan	18.45%	14.05%	17.81%	49.69%
Malaysia	20.70%	13.29%	14.94%	51.07%
New Zealand	21.98%	12.97%	13.92%	51.13%
Philippines	16.62%	12.47%	16.21%	54.71%
Singapore	19.13%	12.50%	13.36%	55.01%

Source: LinkedIn Economic Graph

Notes: Share of hires across different company sizes in the country. The countries included in this analysis are Australia, India, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore, and the Philippines.

However, the growth story is shifting. Over the past five years, Small-Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and Mid-Market Enterprises (MMEs) have experienced stronger hiring growth than their larger counterparts in most countries. For example: In Malaysia, hiring by SMEs grew by 39%, and MMEs by 23%, while large enterprises saw a 13% decline. In Australia, SME hiring grew by 12%, compared to a 9% drop among large enterprises. This trend suggests a broadening base of foreign investment, with more agile, growth-stage companies expanding into the region.

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Yet, there are notable exceptions - large foreign enterprises continue to grow hiring in Singapore and India. In Singapore, large company hiring grew by 21%, even as SMEs and mid-sized firms contracted. This trend underscores Singapore's position as a regional headquarters hub, offering multinational firms access to top talent, regulatory certainty, and a strategic gateway to Asia. In India, large enterprises expanded hiring by 18%, driven not only by access to a deep talent pool, but also by the opportunity to capitalise on the country's rapidly growing consumer market and economic potential.

Country	Small-Medium Enterprises (% growth)	Mid-Market Enterprises (% growth)	Enterprises (% growth)	Large Enterprises (% growth)
Australia	12%	16%	14%	-9%
Indonesia	1%	-8%	-1%	2%
India	-37%	-18%	12%	18%
Japan	-2%	9%	17%	-6%
Malaysia	39%	23%	-5%	-13%
New Zealand	24%	10%	2%	-10%
Philippines	2%	11%	-4%	-2%
Singapore	-15%	-13%	-24%	21%

Source: LinkedIn Economic Graph

Notes: Growth in share of hires across different company sizes in the country, between 2020 to 2024. The countries included in this analysis are Australia, India, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore, and the Philippines.

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Singapore and India are fuelling the regional hiring ecosystem

Unsurprisingly, the major global economies - the US, the UK, France, and Germany - dominate cross-border hiring activity in the APAC region. These countries continue to play a central role in driving talent acquisition. However, a closer look reveals some noteworthy trends, particularly the growing influence of Singapore and India in driving regional hiring across APAC.

Singapore has emerged as a notable source of hiring, especially in Southeast Asia. The country accounts for a significant portion of the foreign hiring activity in countries like Malaysia (20%) and Indonesia (19%). This highlights Singapore's role as a regional hub, where its companies are increasingly seeking talent from their Southeast Asian neighbors to expand their regional operations.

India is also playing a key role in cross-border hiring, with a substantial share of its foreign hires being well-distributed across many countries in APAC - Indian companies account for approximately 4% of all foreign hires in every APAC country that we analysed - this indicates India's growing influence in the region, not only as a source of talent but also as a regional player contributing to the hiring ecosystem across various APAC markets.

Country	Share of Hiring by Singapore-headquartered Companies	Share of Hiring by India-headquartered Companies
Australia	2.10%	3.88%
Indonesia	19.15%	4.51%
India	2.40%	N/A
Japan	3.14%	3.97%
Malaysia	20.00%	3.99%
New Zealand	1.13%	3.09%
Philippines	5.72%	3.10%
Singapore	N/A	4.38%

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Conclusion

The data paints a clear picture: APAC is not only attracting global business expansion but also becoming a focal point for cross-border hiring activity. With hiring by foreign companies in the region growing much faster than Europe and the US, APAC has firmly established itself as a magnet for global talent investment.

Markets like Singapore and Australia are emerging as hubs for senior decision-making roles, while countries such as Indonesia, India, and the Philippines are powering operational scale through large volumes of junior-level hiring. This balance reflects the diversity of talent strategies across the region, shaped by local strengths and the evolving needs of global companies. It also points to a growing concentration of decision-making and leadership functions in mature markets, even as companies leverage emerging markets for scalability and efficiency.

Perhaps most significantly, the rise of Singapore and India as regional hiring engines marks a shift in how companies are expanding - not just into APAC, but within it. Their influence extends beyond hiring; it signals broader investments in infrastructure, innovation, and long-term business presence. As these countries deepen their role in connecting regional talent markets, they are helping to shape a more self-sustaining and interconnected APAC business ecosystem.

The takeaway message is clear: understanding the nuances of doing business across APAC is essential to unlocking growth, building resilient teams, and staying competitive in one of the world's most dynamic economic regions.

Methodology

Data and Privacy. This body of work represents the world seen through LinkedIn data, drawn from the anonymized and aggregated profile information of LinkedIn's 1+ billion members around the world. As such, it is influenced by how members choose to use the platform, which can vary based on professional, social, and regional culture, as well as overall site availability and accessibility. In publishing these insights from LinkedIn's Economic Graph, we want to provide accurate statistics while ensuring our members' privacy. As a result, all data show aggregated information for the corresponding period following strict data quality thresholds that prevent disclosing any information about specific individuals.

Company Size Classification. A company's size is determined by the 12-month average number of LinkedIn members who listed an active position in the listed company for the 12-month period of January to December 2024. We split company sizes into 3 main categories: Small-Medium Business (less than 200 global employees), Mid-Market Enterprises (201-1,000 global employees), Enterprise (1,001-5000 global employees), and Large Enterprise (more than 5000 global employees).

Seniority Classification. For this report, the seniority levels are defined as entry-level, manager-level, director-level, and leadership-level (VP or C-suite).