



SEPTEMBER
2025

Mid-Year Job Trends Report:

**From Uncertainty
to Opportunity.
The Talent Shifts
Already Shaping
2025**

VONQ

VIEW

Dear readers,

I've worked in HR tech for over twenty years, and what keeps me energised is that hiring never stands still. Just when you think you've figured it out, new forces - technology, shifting candidate expectations, global events - change the picture again.



2025 has been no different. It's been a year of uncertainty, but also one of resilience and unexpected growth. That's why we put together the VONQ View Job Trends Report: to cut through the noise and show real data, what's really happening in talent acquisition today.

The big headline: Job postings across our platforms rose 13% in the first half of 2025 versus last year, even against political and economic headwinds. That tells me there's confidence, adaptability, and momentum in the market.

The real story sits underneath that number - which industries are hiring fastest, how AI is already shaping demand, and why recruiters are choosing integrated solutions over direct platforms,

This report isn't just a snapshot. It's a mirror that shows how hiring is shifting today, and a compass to guide what's next. My hope is that it sparks new conversations, challenges assumptions, and gives TA leaders and HR teams a bit more clarity as they plan ahead.

After two decades in this industry, one thing I know for sure: disruption never stops, but neither does progress.

Warm regards,

Ritu Mahanka

What is the Vonq View Job Trends Report?

This VONQ View Job Trends Report is our regular deep-dive analysis of the hiring market based on data pulled from both Vonq's standalone solutions for job advertising as well as our integrated Hiring API (HAPI) solution, which embeds VONQ's technology directly into Applicant Tracking Systems and Human Capital Management Systems.

This unique and proprietary data set provides exclusive insights into job posting trends around the world - including the US and throughout Europe, including the UK, DACH (Germany, Austria and Switzerland), the Netherlands and the Benelux Countries - that can reveal important phenomena impacting the hiring sector. By analysing this vast empirical resource we can draw helpful conclusions about recruitment trends that

examine trends ranging from role demand, industry need, ad duration and channel usage.

We can also unpack how AI and GenAI are impacting hiring trends, and where different industries have landed in terms of remote vs hybrid working patterns.

This blended mosaic of insight and analysis provides a rare glimpse of the primary factors driving economic and commercial development indicating growth areas and prevailing influences. Its aim is to help support Talent Acquisition (TA) professionals, business owners and operations directors everywhere in how they set their vacancy advertising tactics today and their hiring strategies for tomorrow.

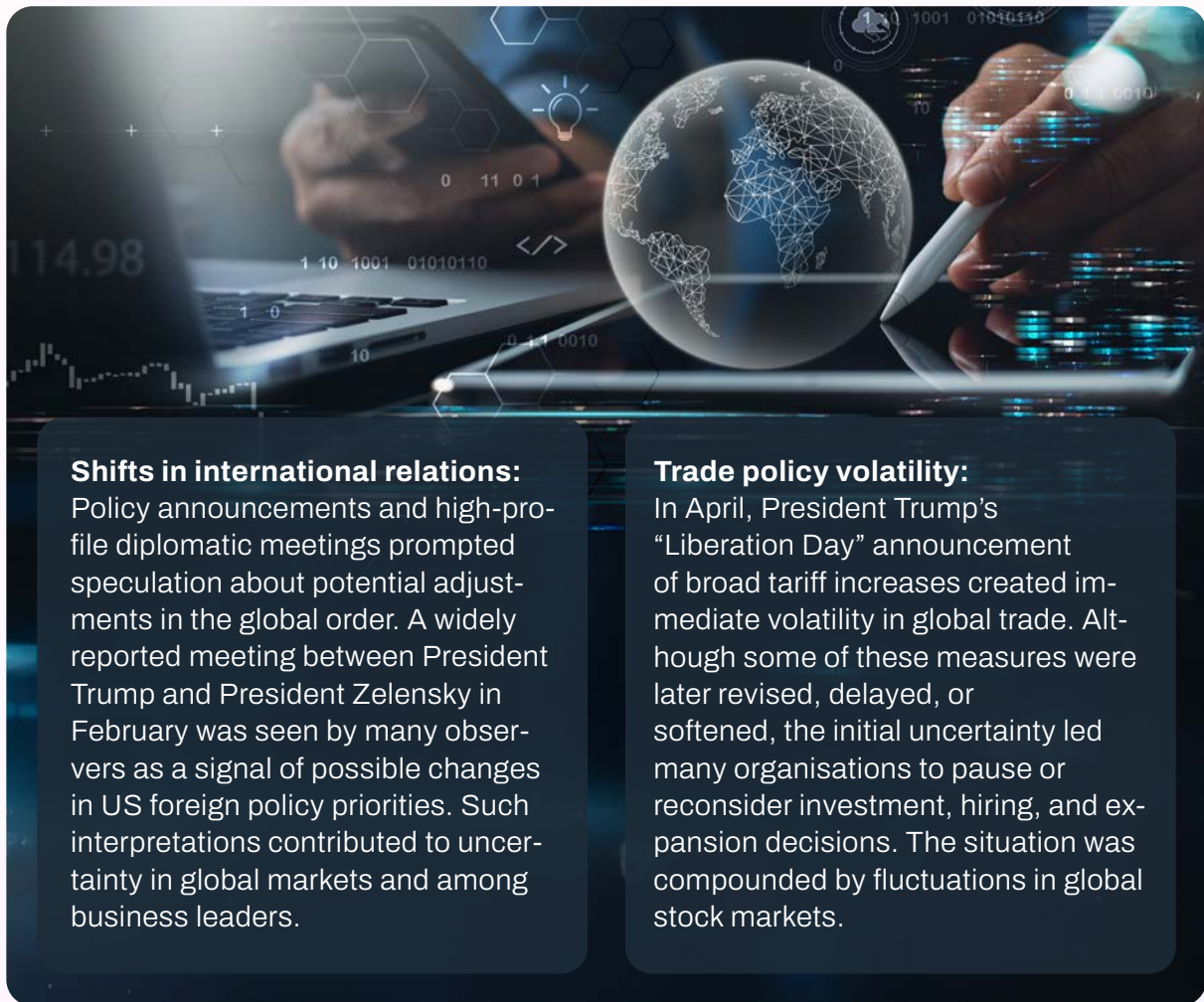
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THE CONTEXT | Zooming out first of all however, it is worth taking a moment to survey the global and longer-term backdrop to these data.

External factors impacting hiring

The first six months of 2025 were marked by significant geopolitical developments that influenced global economic activity and commercial sentiment. One of the most consequential events was the inauguration of President Trump's second term in the United States. This was followed by two major developments that contributed to business uncertainty in H1:



Shifts in international relations:

Policy announcements and high-profile diplomatic meetings prompted speculation about potential adjustments in the global order. A widely reported meeting between President Trump and President Zelensky in February was seen by many observers as a signal of possible changes in US foreign policy priorities. Such interpretations contributed to uncertainty in global markets and among business leaders.

Trade policy volatility:

In April, President Trump's "Liberation Day" announcement of broad tariff increases created immediate volatility in global trade. Although some of these measures were later revised, delayed, or softened, the initial uncertainty led many organisations to pause or reconsider investment, hiring, and expansion decisions. The situation was compounded by fluctuations in global stock markets.

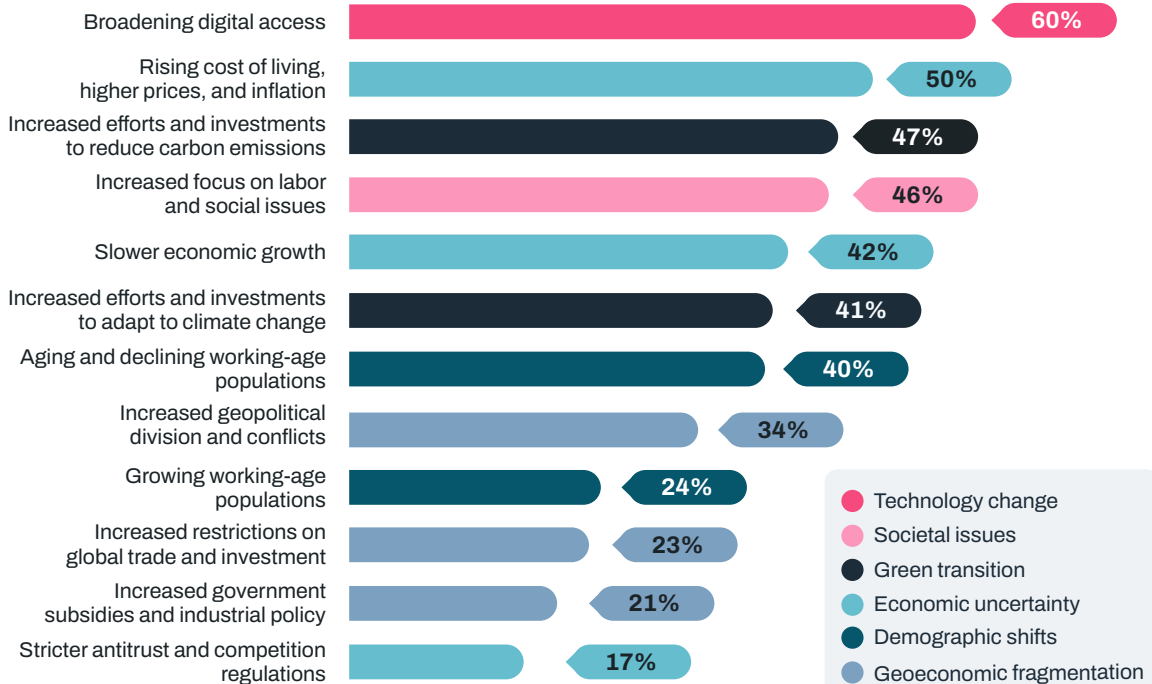
Ongoing conflicts in Ukraine and the Middle East also weighed heavily on business confidence and supply chain stability. Tensions peaked with the escalation of hostilities between Israel and Iran, which later involved the US. A subsequent ceasefire helped reduce immediate concerns of further escalation, though the interim period saw many projects deferred as organisations adopted a cautious stance.

Alongside geopolitical tensions, businesses also faced persistent challenges from an increasingly complex cyber-security environment and the impacts of extreme weather events. For example, the Palisades fire in Los Angeles in January highlighted the growing economic risks associated with climate change, particularly for industries such as insurance.

Macrotrends Impacting Hiring

Macrotrends driving business transformation

World Economic Forum's Future of Jobs Report 2025



The World Economic Forum's Future of Jobs Report 2025¹ predicts vast transformation of the jobs market over the next five years to 2030. Ranked in order of importance, the WEF sees technological disruption, the rising cost-of-living, climate change, demographic re-alignment (an ageing population and a declining working-age population), and geo-economic fragmentation (trade disruption and geo-political uncertainty) all having a profound influence on hiring trends. The report says technological drivers are likely to displace as many as 92 million jobs, balanced out by the introduction of 170 million new ones.

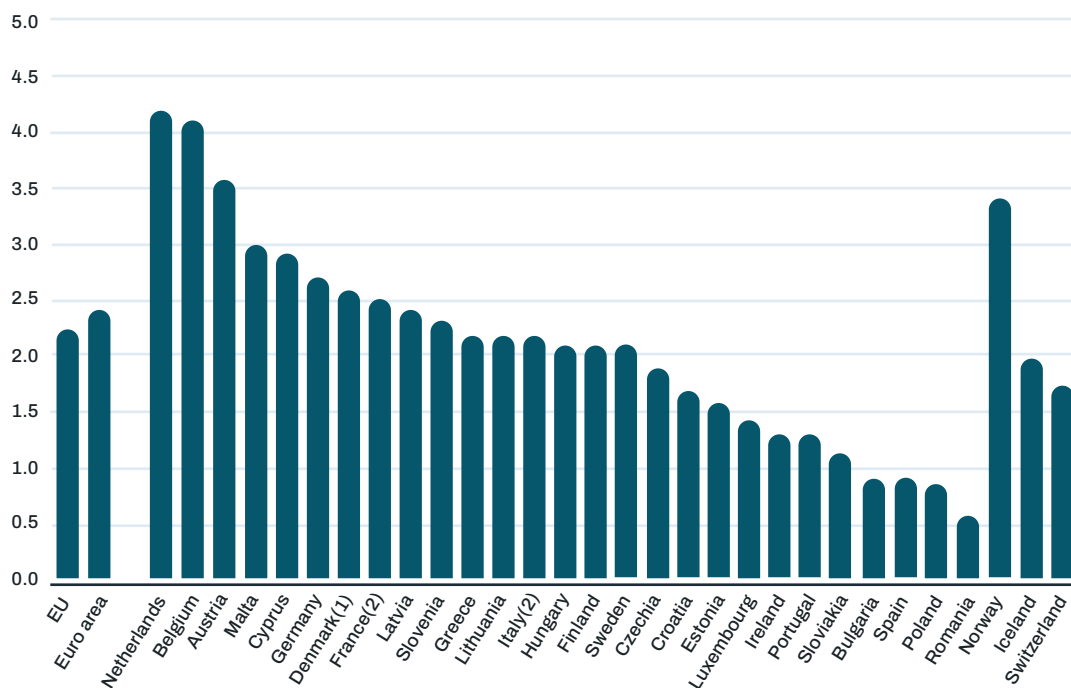
The report sees tremendous growth in frontline roles such as care assistants, farmworkers, salespersons and counseling professionals, while the fastest growth is likely to come in the tech sector. Steep delving is expected in clerical and secretarial roles where technology is displacing the widest task set.



Zooming back in more regionally, recent statistics from the **European Commission**, pulled in June 2025², tell us that job vacancy rates in the Euro zone are declining to 2.4% in Q1 versus 2.5% in Q4 2024 and 2.9% in the first quarter of 2024. This trajectory is mirrored across the wider EU too, which is a positive sign of an improving job market. The highest job vacancy rates were recorded in the Netherlands (4.2%), Belgium (4.1%) and Austria (3.9%), while the lowest (suggesting a stronger job market) were found in Romania (0.6%), Poland (0.8%), Bulgaria and Spain (0.9% respectively).



Job vacancy rates not seasonally adjusted, Q1 2025



(1) NACE Rev. 2 Sections B to N.

(2) NACE Rev. 2 Section O not surveyed and public institutions not fully covered for NACE Rev. 2 P and Q.

Source: Eurostat (online data vcode : jvs_q_nace2)

eurostat

This trend of a steadily declining vacancy rate falls in line with what **McKinsey**³ sees as a long term trajectory of an increasing European employment rate, from 72% today to 74% by 2030. It's worth noting the EU has a target of 78% by 2030.

Finally, a skills gap prevails across Europe, with the European Commission also reporting that four in five European businesses experience difficulty in finding workers with the right skills. This crisis is particularly harsh in the Health, Transport and Construction sectors.

THE VONQ VIEW JOBS TRENDS REPORT | With that wider backdrop - both geographic as well as timeframe - in place, let's dive into Vonq's own data which is derived from aggregated and anonymised customer campaigns executed through VONQ's Job Marketing platform over the past 5 years.

Job market gains momentum

The headline insight from the report is that job postings across all Vonq platforms during the first half of 2025 were up 13.1% over the same period in 2024.

This increase represents a significant rise in hiring activity and therefore a sign of economic growth around the world - including the US and throughout Europe, including the UK, DACH (Germany, Austria and Switzerland), the Netherlands and the Benelux Countries.



From these headline numbers we can infer that, despite the geopolitical volatility and global trading uncertainty outlined earlier, economic confidence is higher than during the equivalent period in 2024. It also follows that, assuming those headwinds and volatile signals recede, economic confidence - and therefore hiring activity - should be even stronger through the back end of 2025.

Job market activity: by industry

IT strongly leads the industry field (second only to "other" which gathers in tags such as "misc" and "unclassified"). The remainder of the top 10 industry tags include (ranked in order of volume): Banking & Financial Services, Energy & Utilities, Medical/Health, Retail and Wholesale, Logistics and Supply Chain, Chemical, Government and Non-Profit and Construction.

Energy, Healthcare, and Logistics together reflect critical infrastructure and operational sectors, which are seeing very resilient hiring patterns while Retail & Government also remain consistently large employers.

Our data also saw high demand from Housing and Property, Engineering, Manufacturing, Automotive and Aviation/Aerospace. This further underlines the strong presence of engineering-heavy sectors and aligns with

what we've seen in terms of growth around IT, construction and infrastructure.

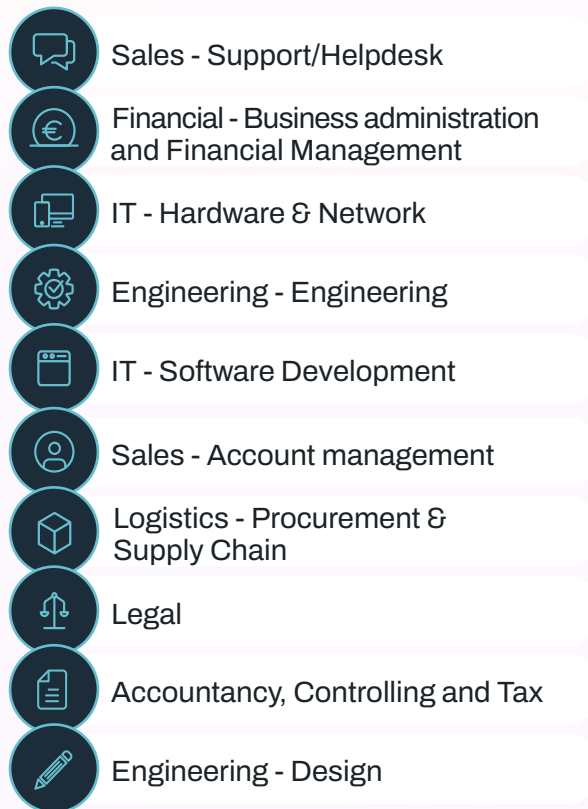
E-commerce role volumes seem lower than expected, considering industry trends, as do Advertising/Media/Communications.

These industries may be underrepresented because of erroneous classification, or may reflect more informal hiring practices such as word-of-mouth, networking, executive search and internal appointments.

The lowest ranking industry for job posts was Printing/Graphical Arts, followed by Culture/Art, perhaps reflecting economic and commercial realities but also the fact that there tends to be more informal or freelance contracting arrangements in these sectors. Other poorly represented industries include niche and specialist sectors such as Biotech and Legal while others merely reflect declining activity such as Oil and Gas.

Job market activity: by function

Just as the WEF has predicted, our data identify SALES as the predominant sector for job posting volume as well as growth. Of the categories listed, sales positions represent 70% with Graphics and printing at the other end of the scale. The top 10 job categories are:



While Sales broadly dominates the field, there are different categories of sales role with helpdesk and customer support leading but supported also by account management, telesales, business development that are also represented in the data. It is important to note that these roles are predominately client facing and entry level - likely meaning younger or less experienced candidates. The IT function is strongly represented, again in multiple sub-categories and while infrastructure (hardware and networks) lead, other sub-categories include software development, services and support.



Engineering is strongly represented in the top 10, but also by sub-categories such as design, execution and preparation. With Construction also strongly represented, it is clear that there is solid demand for roles in technical and industrial sectors.

While not featured in the top 10, healthcare hiring has strong momentum in several sub-categories such as Physical, Doctors, Mental and Children (Paediatric). In the main the sector is fragmented but primarily clinician-focussed.

JOB AD MARKETING TRENDS

Job marketing is adapting

The starkest trend we've noticed this year in terms of how organisations are marketing job ads is a dramatic market shift from direct or standalone platforms to fully integrated recruitment solutions, like our own HAPI solution. HAPI (Hiring API) connects VONQ's job marketing technology and media capabilities directly into more than 50 ATS and HR systems, enabling recruiters to access and manage job advertising seamlessly within their existing workflows.

We are seeing significant, and sometimes explosive, growth seen on our HAPI solution versus 2024 (in January as much as 76%!) at the expense of Direct Channel usage which

↑ **76%**

... growth in fully ATS-integrated solutions (Jan 2025 vs. 2024)

experienced significant and consistent decline throughout H1 compared to last year.

These growth rates indicate a pronounced market shift: clear adoption of integrated solutions in the marketplace as organisations favour the efficiency and automation features of these more sophisticated platforms. This is a profound change in how the market takes its hiring strategies to market, and one we will continue to monitor in subsequent reports to see if it remains consistent over time.

Channel strategies are narrowing

Whether organisations market directly, or via integrated platforms, we are seeing a fairly conservative distribution strategy. **The average number of channels selected for a job posting is only 1.40**, meaning most job advertisers are using only one or two channels. This either suggests very budget-conscious behaviour, or the outcome of a tried-and-tested execution history that has identified a few specific channels as ideal for better targeting of candidates.

Of the most populated channels - which include Job Boards, Publications and Social Media - Job Boards were head-and-shoulders ahead, and growing 33% Year-on-Year. However, we have seen significant growth in the use of channels with a niche audience which suggests increasing sophistication among TA professionals. This was also seen more in terms of job Board use, but also Social Media.



INSIGHT: While the refined targeting of candidates using niche audience channels suggests very sophisticated marketing techniques, the low channel mix and the lower-than-expected use of special media suggests TA professionals would benefit from a more advanced use of social recruiting and multi-channel strategies.

Job ad duration: by industry

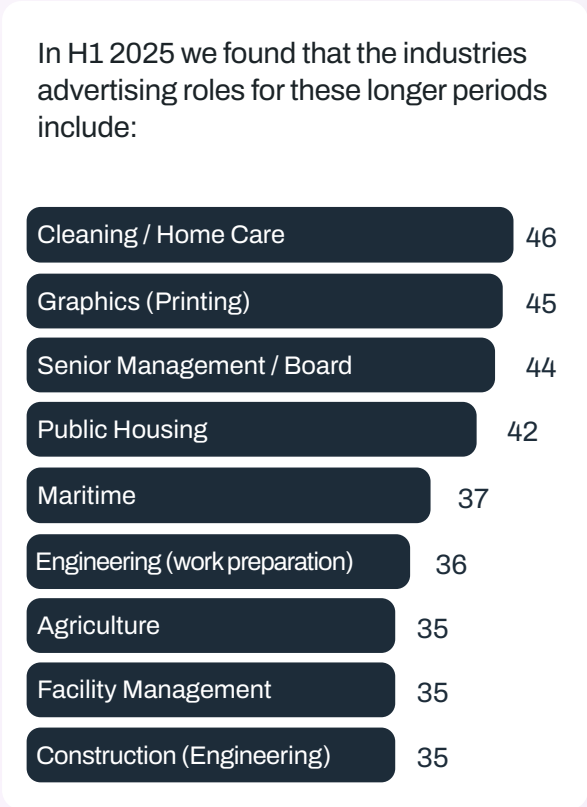
The length of time a job ad is live for can reveal a great deal about the nature of a particular job market and is therefore some of the most interesting data sets we surfaced.

Industries and functions characterised by long job ad duration - for instance more than 35 days - suggest one or more of several factors:

- High seniority - C-Level and board roles
- Blue-collar or frontline jobs (e.g. Cleaning, Agriculture, Construction)
- Niche/specialized roles (e.g. Maritime, Graphics – Printing)

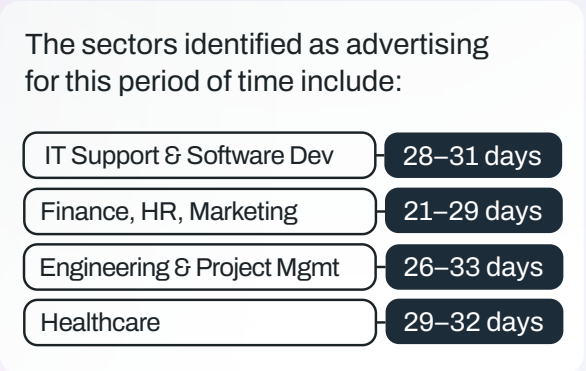
But also:

- Low urgency from employers
- Inadequate reach/channel selection
- Remote or rural locations



Those sectors advertising for a medium period of time - 20-34 days - tend to be characterised more by:

- High skill candidates
- Competitive but fillable roles
- Functional roles that while well served in terms of candidate volume still require a close fit.



VONQ DATA

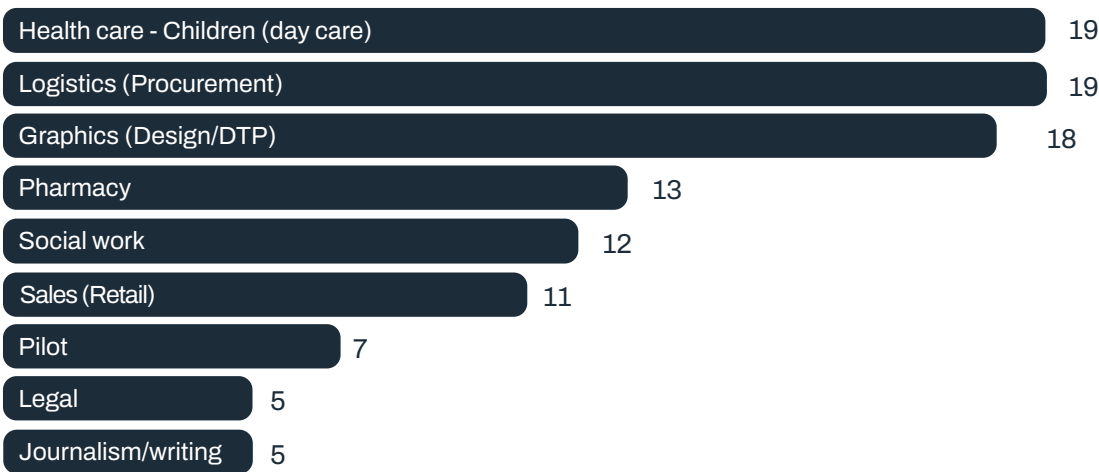
Short ad duration, typically less than 20 days and often as short as five days, suggest a sector characterised by a small but high quality pool of candidates, a greater degree of network-based and search-based hiring as well as job ads being published merely by way of formality to provide due process for an internal promotion.

These roles - which include those like Retail, Social Work, Pharmacy - often have higher applicant volumes or shorter decision windows. Often these sectors offer high demand roles where candidates apply very quickly (such as via “easy-apply” functions).



These following sectors led this category in H1 2025:

VONQ DATA

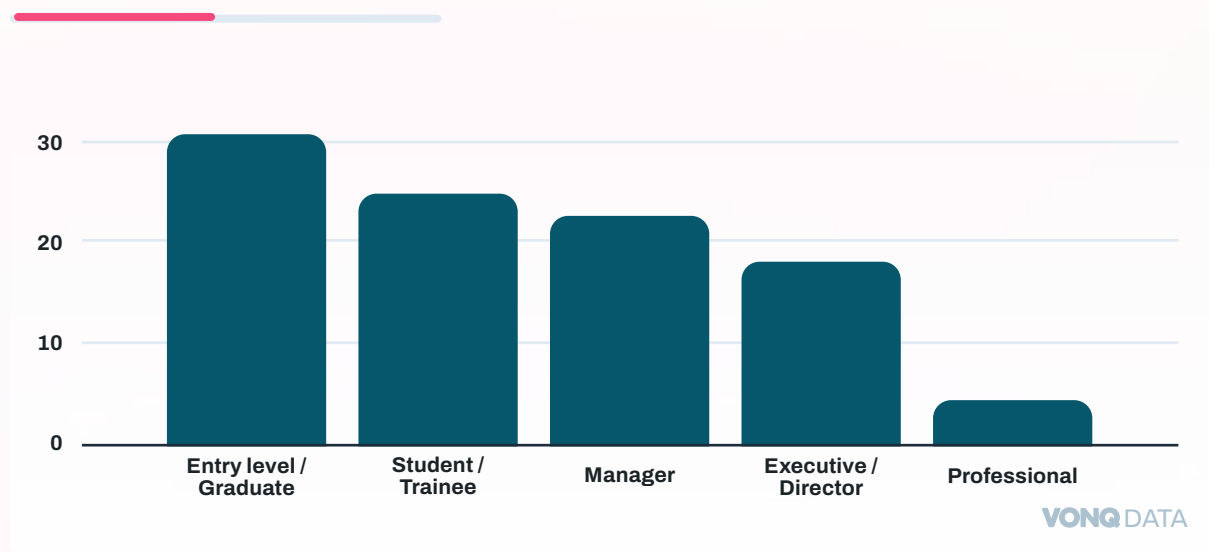


Broadly speaking, job ad duration patterns can be understood using the following rules-of-thumb:

VONQ DATA

Category	Duration	Examples	Interpretation
Very Long	35+ days	Consultancy, Health, Army	Hard-to-fill roles, niche talent, long hiring cycles → require tailored attraction strategies
Medium	20–34 days	Energy, Education, E-commerce, Government	Balanced supply and demand → focus on optimising sourcing and conversion
Short	<20 days	Retail, IT, Legal, Recruitment	Easy-to-fill or fast-hire workflows → efficient, but may also signal high churn





Job ad duration: by job level



It may seem counter-intuitive but the evidence shows that **entry-level roles** (31 days) have the longest average ad duration, which is likely a factor of a combination of filtering complexity and high volume. These roles are characterised by a low match rate which draws out the process, as does a tendency for employers to take more time to vet and screen junior candidates. This sector also tends to include bulk recruitment campaigns with longer application windows.

Student and Trainee positions (25 days) display very similar patterns but are impacted by some specific factors. These are often structured programs with defined posting durations and can experience slightly greater efficiency because of recurring hiring timelines - i.e. long-established academic calendars.

Managerial (23 days) and **Executive-level** (18 days) roles fill surprisingly much faster than might be expected which potentially reflects a complex range of factors which include:

-  Pre-identified candidates, active headhunting or direct sourcing
-  fast decision-making processes (e.g. urgent commercial scenarios)
-  Strong internal pipelines
-  Possibly pre-filled roles (e.g. internal promotions posted externally)

At only 5 days, the **Professional** category is a notable outlier because it tends to include a group of hiring sectors that include Fixed-term contracts, freelance, or consulting assignments; roles posted to meet compliance/internal requirements but filled fast; and could even also reflect misclassified data.



Remote work is becoming invisible

Since the pandemic-driven remote-working boom, many companies have settled into hybrid models or returned to office-first norms following challenging internal communications campaigns. So there has been a noticeable decline in references to “remote working” in job ads across most categories.

9%

In H1 2025 we found customers clicked “remote” upon checkout on only 9% of ads across all Vonq platforms.

Many employers no longer explicitly label remote options because flexibility is either assumed or discussed individually in interviews as part of the process. There are some of course who want to avoid limiting to local applicants or signaling too much flexibility in

office attendance. Certainly there are some organisations engaged in consciously shifting back to in-office models to boost collaboration or culture. However, there are still some that do call it out as a specific aspect of the role.

Our data did find that remote working was primarily associated with the IT, Marketing, Customer Support, Consulting sectors; while frontline, healthcare, logistics, engineering, retail, and blue-collar roles almost always require actual physical presence as part of the job description.

By way of comparison, our research shows a dramatic decline in remote share, from 18-22% in 2021 to 12-15% in 2023. This 9% result is broadly commensurate with global norms which indicate between 11-13%.

Artificial intelligence is on the rise

According to the World Economic Forum, the sectors most disrupted by AI are those with large models of publicly available data. These include Software Development, Finance and Customer Support where data is widely publicly available and accessible; while healthcare, construction and education where data set availability is affected by public scarcity and privacy compliance.

In the first half of 2025, our data found that job postings referencing AI grew by 54% YoY, with a huge spike in January (57%). The only exception was April which we believe to be a seasonal.

Jobs Including “AI” in the Role: Jan–Jun 2024 vs 2025 + %change:

Jan	4	15	+57%
Feb	13	32	+17%
Mar	9	53	+6%
Apr	17	32	-2%
May	60	41	+8%
Jun	37	42	+10%

The massive jump in AI-based role advertising in January could reflect the way AI is becoming more central to core business, and the way that budgets are assigned to these roles (rather than being discretionary, pilot or project based). In terms of comparative volumes however, AI is still growing off a low base and represents only a small and niche

proportion (less than 1%) of the overall range of job ad postings. It is also mainly confined to a small family of sectors - mainly tech and data-based roles.

This trend reflects the broader business push toward automation, intelligent systems, and AI-augmented workflows.

Reasons for Optimism

It is clear that these are turbulent times - economically, politically, and technologically. The job market is being reshaped by multiple forces at once. The rise of AI is already transforming how workforces are assembled and how the balance between frontline and back-office roles is shifting. In the short term, volatility and uncertainty make strategic planning more complex.

Yet our data shows that, despite these headwinds, the job market remains resilient. Job postings - and with them employment opportunities - are growing, signaling that underlying confidence is strong. As condi-

tions stabilize, we expect employers to become even more optimistic in their hiring strategies.

The AI revolution is still in its early stages but already driving growth. Demand for AI roles is rising, IT continues to lead as the strongest employing industry, and impacts will differ widely across roles and sectors depending on task automation and data availability.

In future editions, the VONQ View Job Trends Report will continue to track these developments, helping talent acquisition professionals and employers adapt their strategies with clarity and confidence.



1. Future of Jobs Reopert, 2025; World Economic Forum: https://reports.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Future_of_Jobs_Report_2025.pdf (Page 10).
2. Job Vacancy Statistics (EU) 2025, EuroStat: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Job_vacancy_statistics#
3. Future of Work Report, 2025; McKinsey & Company: <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/future-of-work/explore-the-future-of-work-in-europe?page=/map/employment/today>
4. "Why AI is replacing some jobs faster than others", World Economic Forum: <https://www.weforum.org/stories/2025/08/ai-jobs-replacement-data-careers/>
5. VONQ DATA, 2025: Source: Internal VONQ analysis based on proprietary data.

Key Takeaways



The headline insight from the report is that job postings across all Vonq platforms during the first half of 2025 were up 13.1% over the same period in 2024.



Despite geopolitical volatility and global trading uncertainty, economic confidence is higher than during the equivalent period in 2024.



Assuming those headwinds and volatile signals recede, economic confidence - and therefore hiring activity - should be even stronger through the back end of 2025.



IT strongly leads as the most prolific industry in terms of job opportunity postings, followed closely Banking & Financial Services and Energy & Utilities.



Sales positions represent 70% of job function postings, in line with the WEF's "Future Job Trends Report" predictions that in the AI era, 'Frontline' roles will dominate.



There has been a dramatic market shift from direct or standalone platforms to fully integrated recruitment solutions in terms of how organisations are marketing job ads.



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From Trends to Results: Power your hiring with VONQ!

The insights in this report are just the beginning. With VONQ's Job Marketing Platform, you can distribute your jobs smarter, reach the right candidates faster, and gain real-time insights - all in one place. Discover how VONQ can support your hiring goals.

