

foundit Insights Tracker

April 2026

Hiring Trends in Gulf



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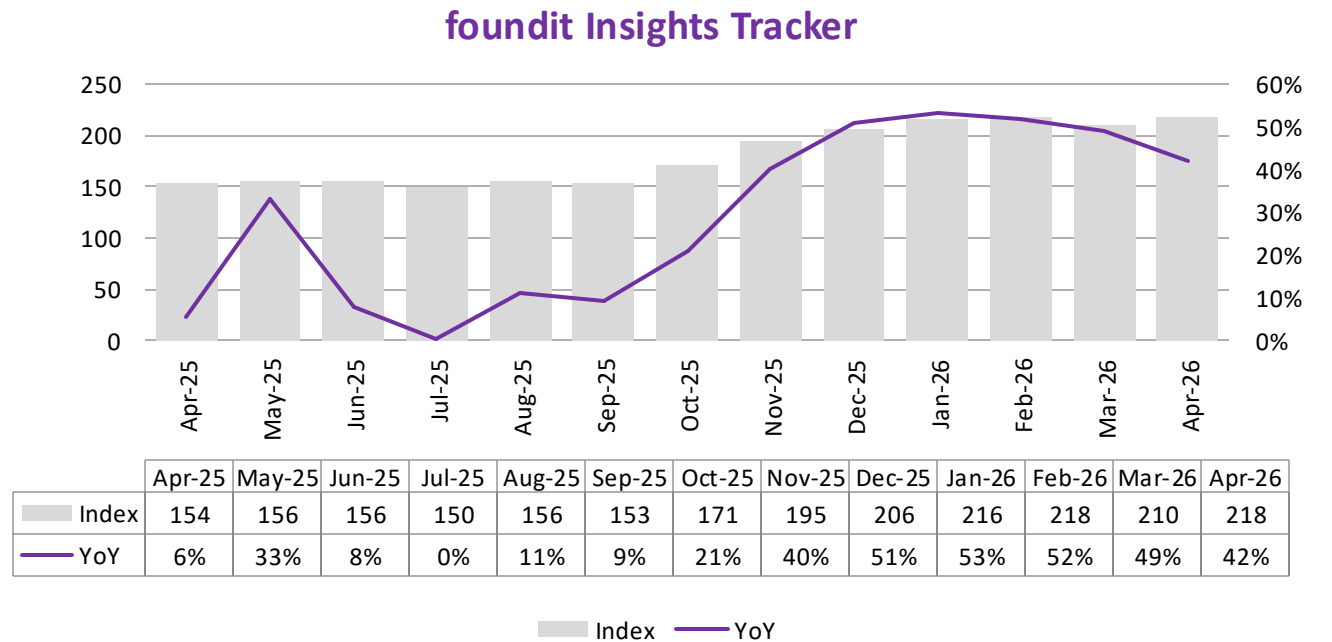
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Key Highlights of the Month

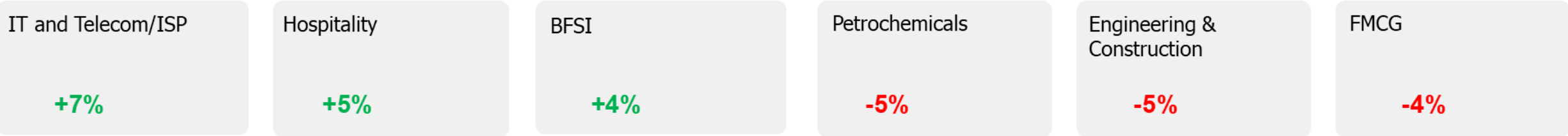
foundit Insights Tracker reports sustained hiring momentum in the Middle East, recording 42% annual growth in April 2026

- ✓ According to the latest data from the foundit Insights Tracker (FIT), the index rose from 154 in April 2025 to 218 in April 2026, reflecting a 42% year-on-year increase in hiring activity.
- ✓ On a month-over-month basis, the index **gained 4%**, rising from 210 in March 2026 to 218 in April 2026 — resuming its upward trend after a brief March dip.
- ✓ Over a shorter horizon, Gulf held steady — **broadly flat over the past three months and up 12% over six** — as the market consolidates the strong gains made through late 2025. Growth continues to be driven by economic diversification, infrastructure projects, and digital transformation across GCC economies.

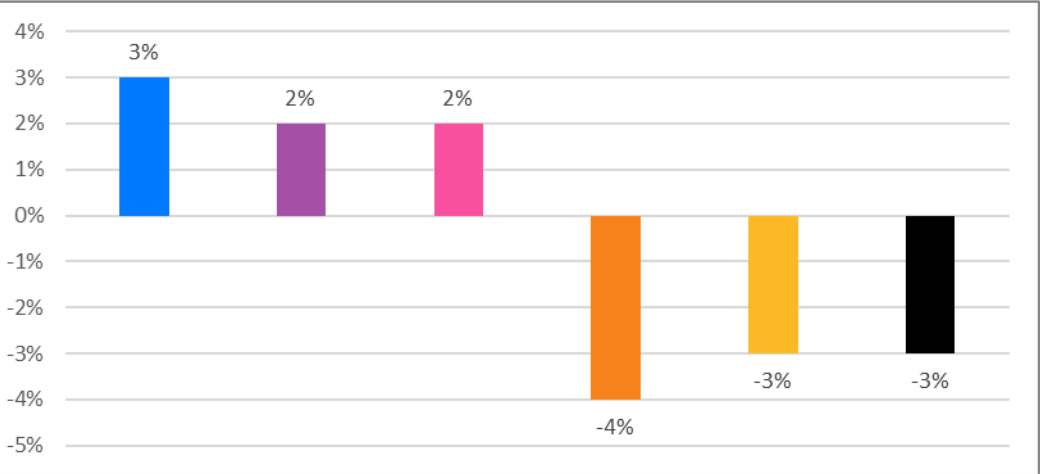


Hiring Trends – MoM*

INDUSTRY

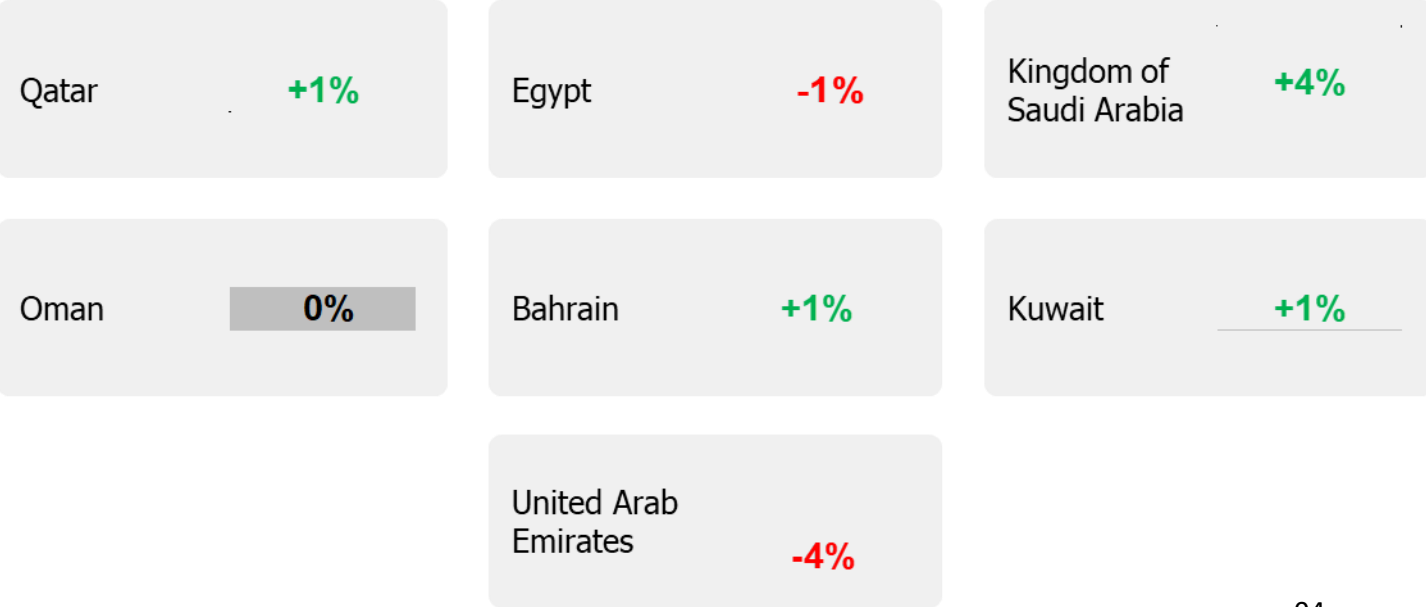


FUNCTIONAL AREA



- Marketing & Comms
- Finance and Account
- Hospitality and Travel
- Software, Hardware, Telecom
- HR & Admin
- Engineering and Production

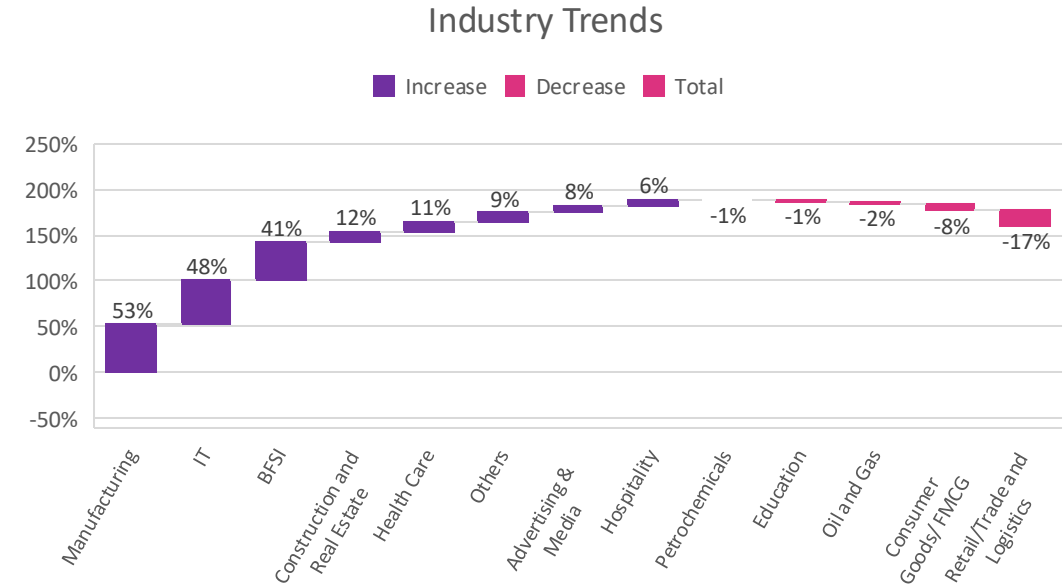
ACROSS REGIONS



Hiring Trends – Industry*

8 out of 13 industries monitored by the tracker registered an annual increase in hiring activity in April '26

- ✓ **Production/Manufacturing & Automotive (+53%)** and **IT & Telecom/ISP (+48%)** retained their positions as the top two hiring sectors annually, continuing to benefit from the Gulf's industrial diversification agenda and digital investment. **BFSI (+41%)** was close behind, with financial services hiring elevated by banking sector expansion, fintech activity, and increased compliance demand across the GCC.
- ✓ **Retail/Trade & Logistics (-17%)** remained the weakest sector in hiring annually, weighed down by subdued consumer spending and margin pressure. **Consumer Goods/FMCG (-8%)**, **Oil & Gas (-2%)**, **Education (-1%)**, and **Petrochemicals (-1%)** also recorded negative YoY growth, reflecting controlled hiring in commodity and public sector-linked categories.
- ✓ **Engineering & Construction (+12%)**, **Health Care (+11%)**, **Advertising & Media (+8%)**, and **Hospitality (+6%)** posted moderate hiring growth annually. Engineering benefited from ongoing mega project activity, Advertising grew alongside corporate investment, and Healthcare and Hospitality continued to see steady demand driven by population growth and tourism expansion.



Hiring Trends - Functional Area*

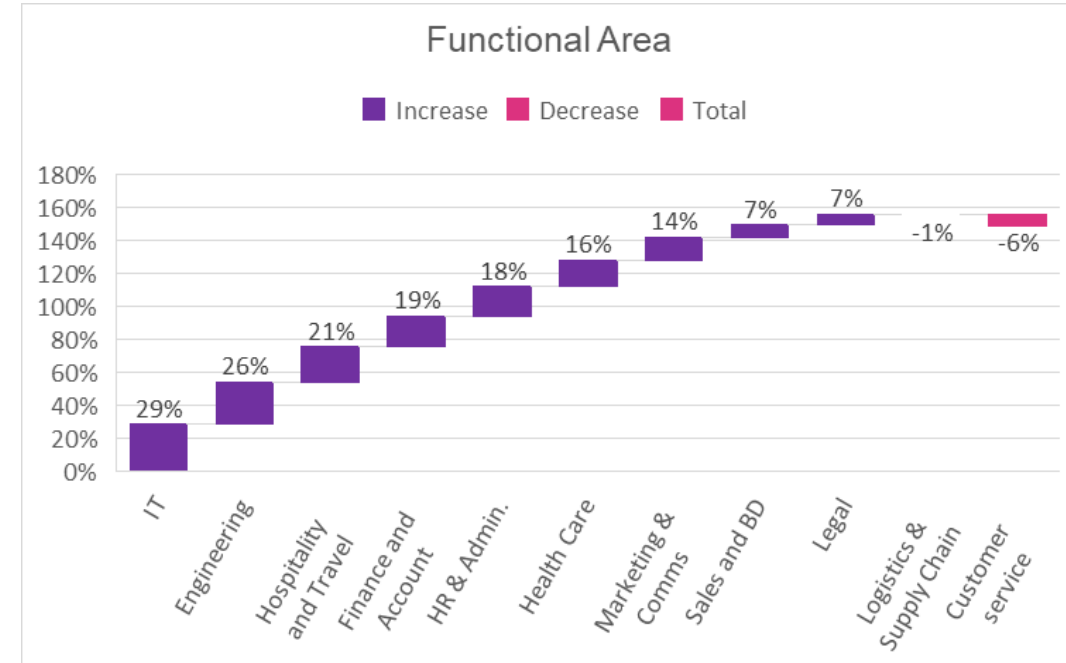
Online recruitment activity surpassed the year-ago level in 9 out of 11 occupation groups monitored by the tracker

✔ **Software, Hardware & Telecom (+29%)** marked as the top-performing functional area annually, sustained by continued technology adoption and digital infrastructure investment across the Gulf. The hiring in **Engineering & Production (+26%)** aligned with the region's active project pipeline across industrial and infrastructure sectors. Also, **Hospitality & Travel (+21%)** reported a strong annual rebound reflecting Gulf tourism expansion and the continued build-out of hospitality capacity in key markets.

✔ **Customer Service (-6%)** saw the decline in hiring reflecting automation pressures and efficiency-led headcount management in customer-facing roles. Hiring for **Purchase/Logistics/Supply Chain (-1%)** roles dropped marginally, as operational demand remained stable but non-expansionary.

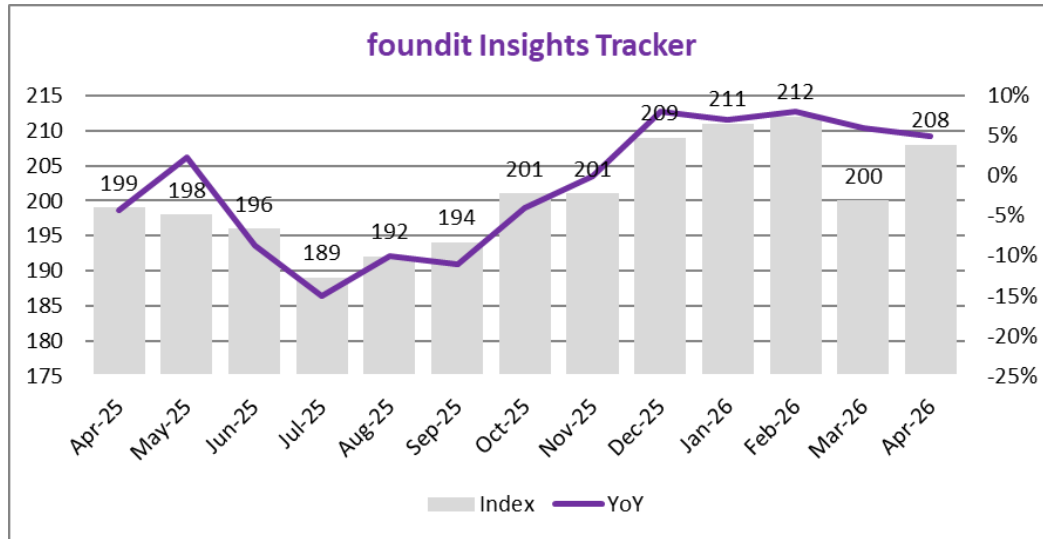
Additionally, **Finance & Account (+19%)**, **HR & Admin (+18%)**, **Health Care (+16%)**, and

✔ **Marketing & Communications (+14%)** posted solid hiring growth, supporting broader business expansion, compliance requirements, and rising brand investment across the region.



Hiring Trends – Kingdom of Saudi Arabia *

foundit Insights Tracker in KSA recorded 4% annual growth in April '26

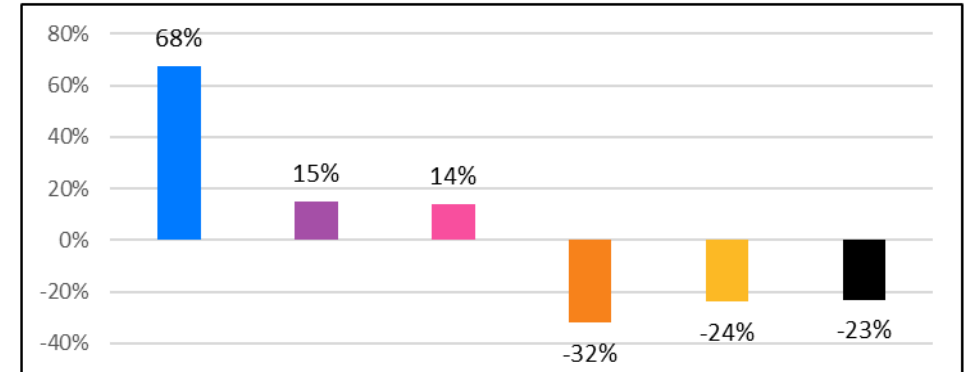


✓ The KSA index rose to **208** in April 2026, up **4% year-on-year**, gaining from 200 in March.

✓ **Production & Manufacturing (+69%)** led industry hiring growth by a wide margin, driven by localisation priorities and the build-out of domestic industrial capacity. On the downside, **Education (-32%)** and **Engineering & Construction (-24%)** saw the steepest declines, reflecting project completions and controlled upstream hiring.

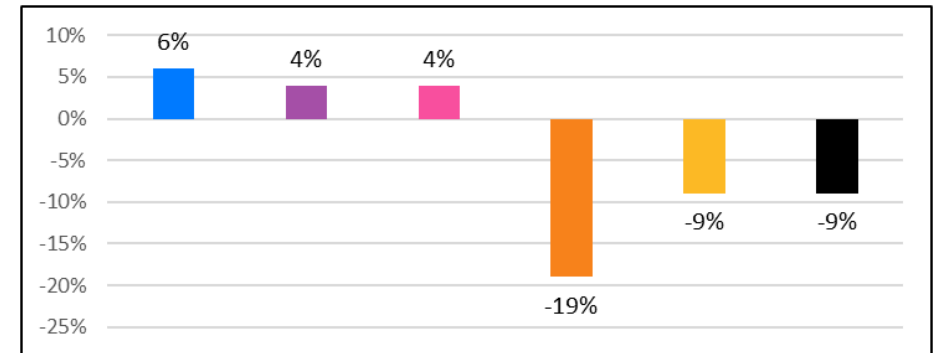
✓ Among functions, **Marketing & Communications (+6%)** is the top performer, with Hospitality & Travel and Purchase/Logistics close behind (both +4%), while **HR & Admin (-19%)** is the lowest as administrative hiring slowed against a high base a year earlier.

Industry Trend



- Production/Manufacturing
- BFSI
- IT
- Education
- Engineering/Construction
- Oil and Gas

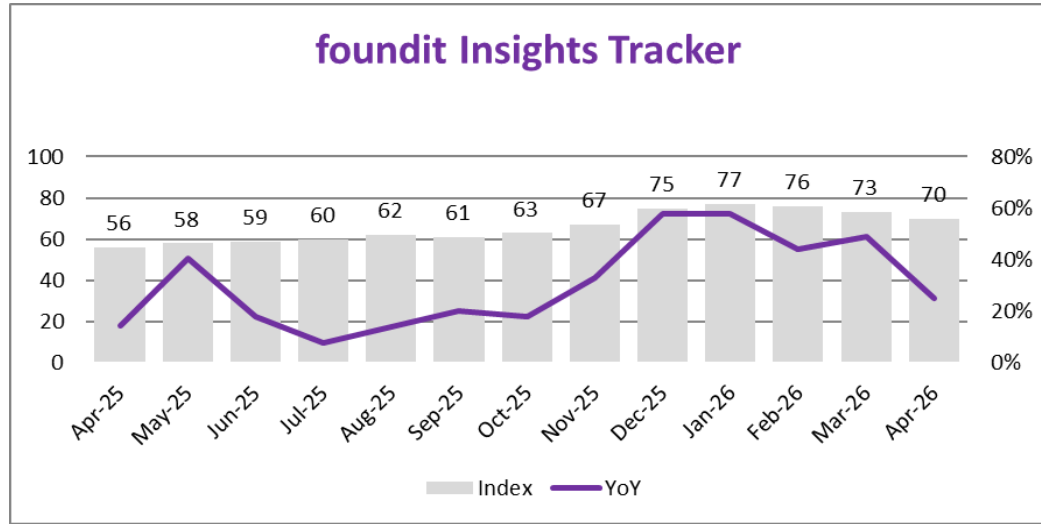
Functional Area Trend



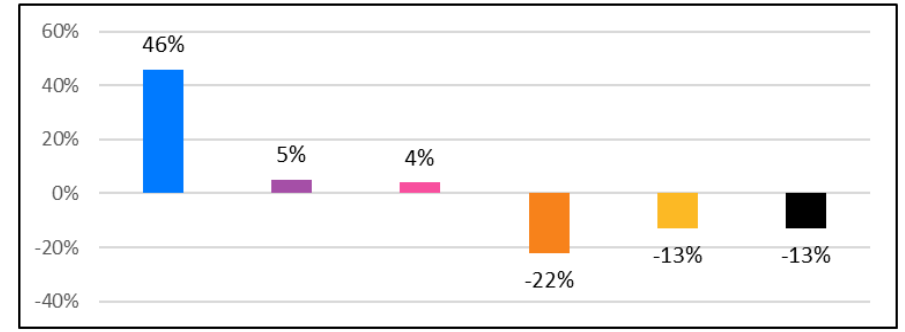
- Marketing
- Logistics
- Hospitality
- HR & Admin
- Finance and Account
- Software

Hiring Trends – United Arab Emirates*

foundit Insights Tracker in UAE recorded 25% annual growth in April '26

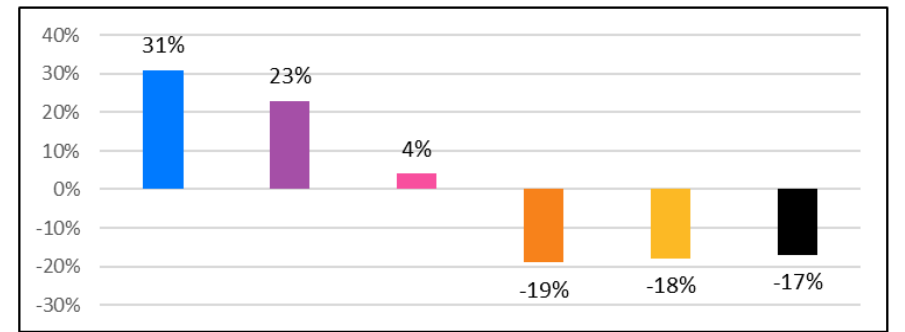


Industry Trend



- Engineering, Construction
- IT and Telecom/ISP
- BFSI
- Petrochemicals
- Hospitality
- Retail/Trade and Logistics

Functional Area Trend



- Software, Hardware, Telecom
- Sales and BD
- Health Care
- Hospitality and Travel
- Customer Service
- HR & Admin.

- ✓ The UAE index stood at **70** in April 2026, up **25% year-on-year** from 56 in April 2025, though down 4% month-on-month from March.
- ✓ **Engineering & Construction (+46%)** led all industries by a wide margin, powered by infrastructure and real estate project momentum. Most other industries contracted — **Petrochemicals (-22%)** and **Retail/Trade & Logistics (-13%)** recorded the steepest annual declines.
- ✓ Among functions, **Software, Hardware & Telecom (+31%)** leads at the top, while **Hospitality & Travel (-19%)** is the lowest, as hiring eased from the unusually strong demand seen a year earlier.

Data & Methodology

The foundit Insights Tracker (fit) is a comprehensive monthly analysis of online job posting activity conducted by foundit.in. Based on a real-time review of millions of employer job opportunities culled from a large, representative selection of online career outlets, fit presents a snapshot of employer online recruitment activity nationwide. In its earlier form (as Monster Employment Index), it gave a broader view of hiring trends by industry, function, location and experience levels. In its new avatar, it provides next-level insights on recruitment trends and tracks developments in demand for key skills, roles available and salary range on offer in the market.

In order to avoid excessive monthly fluctuations, the index is calculated using a volatility-adjusting formula. We publish the data in a volume index format with the base value of 100. The index describes changes in the level of online job demand against the baseline. An increase in the index indicates growth in online job availability and suggests an increase in the demand for employees by employers.

Foundit Insights Tracker (formerly Monster Employment Index) was first launched in India in May 2010 with data collected since February 2009 followed by Gulf in April 2011 with data collected since February 2010; Singapore in May 2014 with data collected since January 2011; Philippines and Malaysia in May 2015 with data collected since February 2014.

foundit has taken due care in compiling and processing the data available from various sources for foundit Insights Tracker (fit), but does not guarantee the accuracy, adequacy or completeness of any information and is not responsible for any errors or omissions or action / decision taken or for the result obtained from the use of such information.



About foundit.in APAC & Middle East

foundit.in, formerly Monster, is a leading talent platform offering comprehensive employment solutions to recruiters and job seekers across India, SEA, and Gulf. Since its inception, the company has been assisting over 90 million registered users to find jobs, upskill, and connect with the right opportunities across 18 countries. Over the last two decades, the company has been a catalyst in the world of recruitment solutions with advanced technology, seeking to efficiently bridge the talent gap across industry verticals, experience levels, and geographies. Today, foundit.in is committed to enabling and connecting the right talent with the right opportunities by harnessing the power of deep-tech to sharpen hyper-personalised job searches, and precision hiring. foundit.in strongly believes that a job title doesn't define one's potential and leverages technology to dig deeper to curate opportunities central to the needs, aspirations, and dreams of each user.

To learn more about foundit in APAC & Gulf, visit:

www.foundit.in

www.foundit.my

www.founditgulf.com

www.foundit.com.ph

www.foundit.sg

www.foundit.hk



Annexure



Annexure: All Gulf Industry Data*

Industries	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26	Feb-26	Mar-26	Apr-26
Engineering, Construction and Real Estate	106	101	100	109	112	112	119	115	120	123	130	125	119
BFSI	92	103	101	128	132	115	107	111	108	118	125	125	130
Production/Manufacturing, Automotive and Ancillary	89	84	87	108	111	96	106	116	122	126	128	131	136
Retail/Trade and Logistics	87	73	73	67	67	66	74	76	76	79	74	72	72
Oil and Gas	58	53	47	49	50	54	55	53	55	58	57	58	57
IT and Telecom/ISP	376	367	368	394	420	422	422	474	506	504	531	521	555
Hospitality	110	108	105	108	109	111	107	117	118	123	126	111	117
Education	134	136	126	138	143	148	150	158	159	135	134	134	132
Petrochemicals	111	119	108	115	118	112	111	109	112	110	110	116	110
FMCG, Food & Packaged Food , Home Appliance, Garments/ Textiles/ Leather, Gems & Jewellery	144	125	118	114	112	112	111	126	133	138	145	137	132
Health Care	107	104	104	106	108	105	104	109	108	109	114	114	119
Advertising, Market Research, Public Relations, Media and Entertainment	72	69	68	65	65	63	66	69	72	74	81	76	78

* Represents Index figures

Annexure: All Gulf Functional Area Data*

Industries	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26	Feb-26	Mar-26	Apr-26
Engineering and Production	147	152	153	165	169	162	167	160	170	180	185	190	185
Finance and Account	81	86	86	88	88	77	79	85	87	90	95	94	96
HR & Admin.	84	89	86	101	113	105	110	122	117	114	107	102	99
Sales and BD	83	83	81	81	83	77	80	86	88	88	89	89	89
Purchase / Logistics / Supply Chain	162	156	155	161	162	158	162	156	157	161	161	158	161
Hospitality and Travel	109	108	106	104	113	123	108	124	119	117	107	129	132
Health Care	92	95	92	98	100	96	99	102	100	102	108	105	107
Software, Hardware, Telecom	217	210	212	208	217	217	214	261	269	281	305	290	279
Marketing & Communications/Arts/Creative	131	130	128	122	124	121	131	131	132	140	151	145	149
Customer service	112	106	108	112	99	105	104	109	108	108	107	106	105
Legal	90	88	90	90	94	87	91	91	93	96	96	94	96

Annexure: KSA Industry Data *

Industries	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26	Feb-26	Mar-26	Apr-26
Engineering, Construction and Real Estate	150	139	137	143	135	119	122	117	124	119	121	114	114
BFSI	129	128	126	127	127	126	127	125	125	141	149	148	148
Production/Manufacturing, Automotive and Ancillary	100	127	136	150	162	176	192	195	196	193	166	167	169
Retail/Trade and Logistics	96	87	85	82	77	82	85	82	85	83	87	81	84
Oil and Gas	86	80	76	72	69	69	67	66	67	68	68	67	66
IT and Telecom/ISP	255	263	265	270	283	299	303	291	300	308	307	294	291
Hospitality	124	124	121	121	125	145	143	142	150	142	145	122	139
Education	158	141	130	120	114	110	106	103	102	101	108	104	107
Petrochemicals	122	123	120	116	114	112	110	108	110	108	107	107	106
FMCG, Food & Packaged Food , Home Appliance, Garments/ Textiles/ Leather, Gems & Jewellery	143	134	129	127	124	127	126	134	143	142	147	144	139
Health Care	117	114	113	113	113	113	112	113	114	108	113	113	114
Advertising, Market Research, Public Relations, Media and Entertainment	346	323	315	279	296	295	297	309	316	339	339	332	345

Annexure: KSA Functional Area Data*

Industries	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26	Feb-26	Mar-26	Apr-26
Engineering and Production	155	154	152	157	154	156	159	159	172	174	167	157	157
Finance and Account	125	122	118	116	116	115	113	110	110	113	116	115	114
HR & Admin.	139	139	135	133	134	132	131	127	125	119	120	113	113
Sales and BD	164	151	149	144	143	129	142	148	151	144	156	153	159
Purchase / Logistics / Supply Chain	198	207	204	199	200	223	234	230	211	202	204	199	205
Hospitality and Travel	73	71	69	64	67	74	78	78	94	82	79	75	76
Health Care	113	116	114	117	118	116	113	116	121	118	121	118	116
Software, Hardware, Telecom	324	319	315	313	313	327	320	322	324	313	309	309	295
Marketing & Communications/Arts/Creative	185	186	186	186	173	173	192	195	193	195	195	192	197

Annexure: UAE Industry Data*

Industries	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26	Feb-26	Mar-26	Apr-26
Engineering, Construction and Real Estate	95	97	103	99	90	95	109	112	120	123	127	132	139
BFSI	84	85	75	69	64	75	77	81	80	84	92	86	87
Production/Manufacturing, Automotive and Ancillary	75	82	92	90	93	80	74	74	73	73	75	75	73
Retail/Trade and Logistics	85	77	76	73	73	107	75	75	76	80	81	74	74
Oil and Gas	56	53	51	49	48	50	50	49	49	49	49	49	49
IT and Telecom/ISP	110	115	112	106	100	109	112	111	117	118	120	118	116
Hospitality	79	76	74	71	69	74	75	80	82	80	76	72	69
Education	142	132	124	171	186	154	155	143	142	137	137	134	135
Petrochemicals	125	124	110	146	140	135	134	114	113	106	104	99	98
FMCG, Food & Packaged Food , Home Appliance, Garments/ Textiles/ Leather, Gems & Jewellery	116	113	111	99	97	82	94	106	112	111	113	116	107
Health Care	101	101	104	92	94	85	87	87	87	91	92	90	91
Advertising, Market Research, Public Relations, Media and Entertainment	78	79	78	80	79	72	74	76	76	75	75	74	71

Annexure: UAE Functional Area Data*

Industries	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26	Feb-26	Mar-26	Apr-26
Engineering and Production	188	196	196	183	181	155	161	161	171	168	169	159	161
Finance and Account	46	45	46	46	48	48	45	43	42	42	46	42	41
HR & Admin.	36	35	35	40	49	49	45	41	36	33	35	31	30
Sales and BD	35	32	30	28	25	27	32	34	37	42	49	42	43
Purchase / Logistics / Supply Chain	125	136	128	109	110	115	126	123	121	131	109	110	113
Hospitality and Travel	57	53	50	49	52	53	52	55	56	54	48	44	46
Health Care	67	67	67	69	68	66	68	68	67	67	69	69	70
Software, Hardware, Telecom	95	90	91	92	94	94	96	102	107	109	119	120	124
Marketing & Communications/Arts/Creative	105	110	107	104	103	90	100	108	112	113	105	101	107
Customer service	60	60	58	59	54	53	53	54	50	52	52	51	49

Thank you

