

Press release  
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## Employers rely heavily on global talent, yet hiring intentions haven't shifted

- 72% of Australian employers have hired a skilled applicant from another country in the past two years, in line with the 71% of employers who planned to hire international talent on a permanent basis in 2022
- 65% of employers believe Australia's labour market is now more reliant on skilled migration compared to five years ago
- Seeking a diverse perspective and boosting innovation (45%), the ability of skilled migrants to add value quickly (39%) and the need for specialised expertise (39%) are the top three reasons why employers rely on skilled migrants

**Sydney, 11 June 2025** – Australian employers' reliance on skilled overseas talent to bridge local skills gaps has remained consistent with levels from three years ago, even in the face of persistent skills shortages, new independent research by specialised recruiter [Robert Half](#) finds.

In the past two years, almost three-quarters (72%) of employers have hired a skilled applicant from other countries. Of these, 46% say they would do so again, while 26% say they wouldn't. Almost one in four (23%) have yet to hire a skilled migrant but would consider doing so in future to meet their skills needs. Only 5% have not and would not consider recruiting skilled migrants.

- 46% of employers have hired a skilled applicant from another country and would do so again
- 26% of employers have employed a skilled migrant but would not hire one again
- 23% of employers have not hired a skilled migrant but would consider it
- 5% of employers have not hired a skilled applicant from another country and would not consider it

According to Robert Half research conducted at the end of 2021<sup>1</sup>, over two-thirds (71%) of Australian business leaders planned to hire international talent on a permanent basis in 2022, either because or in anticipation of an inability to find the skills locally.

But even though employers are hiring or plan to hire international talent at the same rate as they did three years on, the research reveals a growing dependence on skilled migrants, with almost two-thirds (65%) of employers stating the Australian employment market is now more reliant on overseas talent than it was five years ago. Only about one in 10 (9%) employers state Australia is less reliant on skilled migrants. The remaining 26% of employers believe the reliance on skilled migrants is about the same compared to five years ago.

*"Despite easing employment market conditions, the talent shortage persists in many sectors. Considering international talent offers a significant opportunity for employers to identify highly qualified candidates, especially for higher-level or specialised roles, which in turn helps combat Australia's talent deficit," says Nicole Gorton, Director at Robert Half.*

*"Those from overseas who join the Australian workforce can offer a range of benefits to organisations, such as fresh perspectives and global experience. While it might not be the right fit for every business, tapping into overseas talent can be a valuable strategy for companies aiming to support business continuity and drive growth."*

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<sup>1</sup> [Businesses turn to international talent to fill skills gaps, Robert Half, 2022](#)

### How employers harness the value of skilled migrants

When employers were asked why they hired a skilled migrant or would consider doing so, they identified a lack of readily available staff as only part of the reason.

- 45% of employers sought a diverse perspective and to boost innovation
- 39% of employers needed a worker who could quickly add value
- 39% of employers sought specialist expertise
- 38% of employers required global knowledge
- 34% of employers cited a lack of local talent
- 34% of employers required strong business acumen
- 34% of employers want to or are undertaking global expansion

However, cultural differences and a lack of knowledge of the local market were listed as the main reasons why employers would not be willing to hire international talent or would not do so again.

- 45% of employers cited language fluency was a problem
- 44% of employers were concerned about cultural differences
- 44% of employers needed local market knowledge
- 33% of employers said visa procedures were too complex
- 31% of employers cited government regulations as their reason not to hire skilled migrants
- 28% of employers believed skilled migrants were too expensive

*“Like any recruitment strategy, hiring applicants from another country demands a considered approach, it’s not a case of ‘one size fits all’. International hiring won’t work for everyone, especially when considering real-world barriers like visa complexities and legal working rights. It’s not a ‘silver bullet’, but it can be advantageous for some organisations,”* concludes **Gorton**.

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### Notes to editors

#### About the research

The study is developed by Robert Half and was conducted online in November 2024 by an independent research company of 500 hiring managers workers in finance, accounting, business support, and IT and technology. Respondents are drawn from a sample of SMEs as well as large private, publicly-listed and public sector organisations across Australia. This survey is part of the international workplace survey, a questionnaire about job trends, talent management, and trends in the workplace.

#### About Robert Half

Robert Half is the global, specialised talent solutions provider that helps employers find their next great hire and jobseekers uncover their next opportunity. Robert Half offers both contract and permanent placement services, and is the parent company of Protiviti, a global consulting firm. Robert Half Australia has offices in Brisbane, Melbourne, Melbourne South East, Perth, and Sydney. More information on [roberthalf.com/au](https://roberthalf.com/au).

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