

Summary

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# **HIRING INTERNATIONAL TALENT IN LITHUANIA:**

**from labour market trends  
to employer readiness**

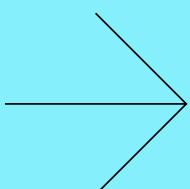


## Demographic change in the labour market: increasing demand for international talent

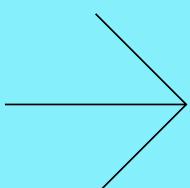
Forecasts indicate that over the next 10–15 years, Lithuania will see a decline in both the total population (6 to 20% by 2050) and the number of working-age individuals (11 to 30%). The greatest need to replace workers leaving the labour market will be in the engineering industry sector. Moreover, with falling birth rates, the youth population (ages 0–14) could decrease by one-fifth by 2033. Therefore, without ensuring sufficient domestic supply, we will inevitably need to attract specialists from abroad.



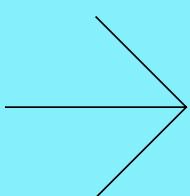
## **International talent delivers enduring value to businesses and Lithuania's economy**



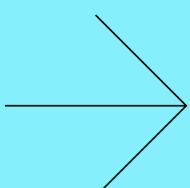
Helps effectively meet the demand for niche and general competencies when they are lacking in the local market.



Reduces the risk and cost of unfilled positions.

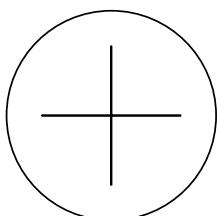


Contributes to innovation growth, brings fresh ideas, and is a key driver for the development of Lithuania's innovative sectors.



Team diversity fosters creativity and problem-solving, leading to better financial performance.

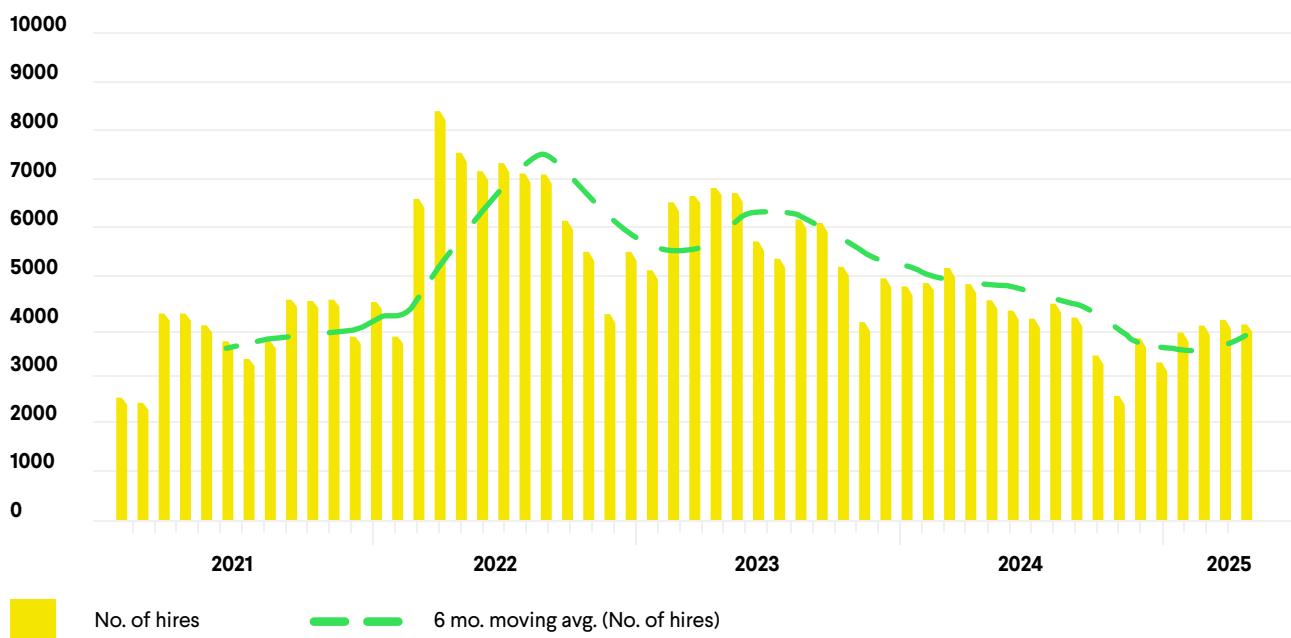
## International recruitment is one of the key drivers of labour market growth in Lithuania



Between 2021 and 2024, nearly 270 000 individual foreign workers from over 170 countries were employed in Lithuania. Such international recruitment is one of the key drivers of labour market growth and helps mitigate demographic pressure.

International recruitment in Lithuania peaked in early 2022 due to the Belarus crisis and Russia's war against Ukraine, which led to a large influx of Belarusians and Ukrainians. By 2023, recruitment levels had declined significantly; however, a temporary recovery was observed in the spring primarily due to increased migration from Central Asia, particularly within the transport sector. Following this, recruitment continued to decline for a period, until stabilising in early 2025.

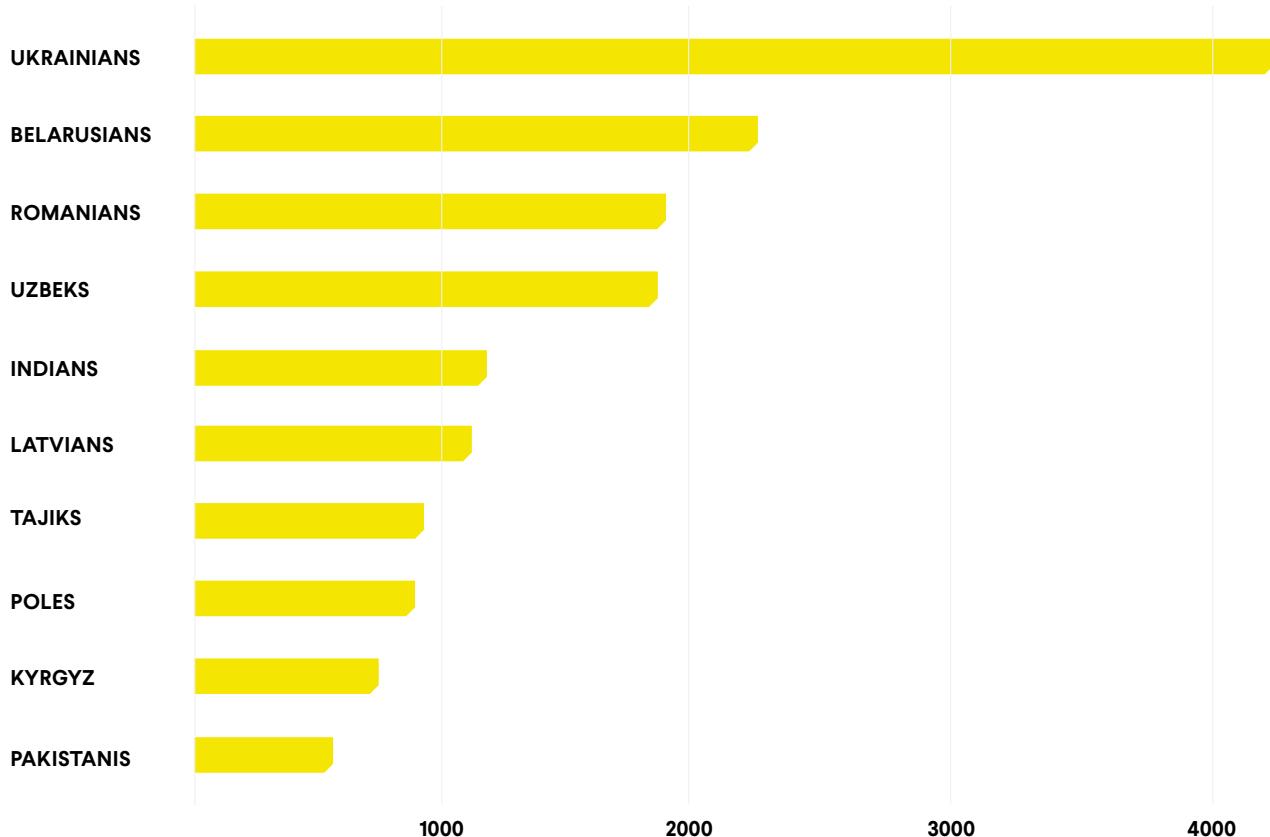
### TOTAL FIRST-TIME FOREIGN HIRES PER MONTH, WITH A SIX-MONTH ROLLING AVERAGE (2021-2025)



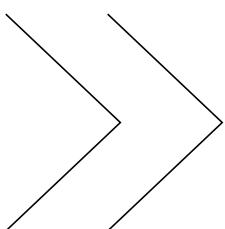
# The countries from which companies most frequently recruit foreign workers are changing

Between 2021 and 2024, most foreign nationals were recruited from Belarus, Ukraine, and Central Asian countries. Although these sources remained the largest by recruitment volume in the first half of 2025, their share has been declining and recruitment is beginning to diversify. Notably, there has been faster growth in arrivals from Romania, India, Latvia, and Poland.

## MOST FREQUENTLY HIRED FOREIGN WORKERS BY CITIZENSHIP (2025, H1)



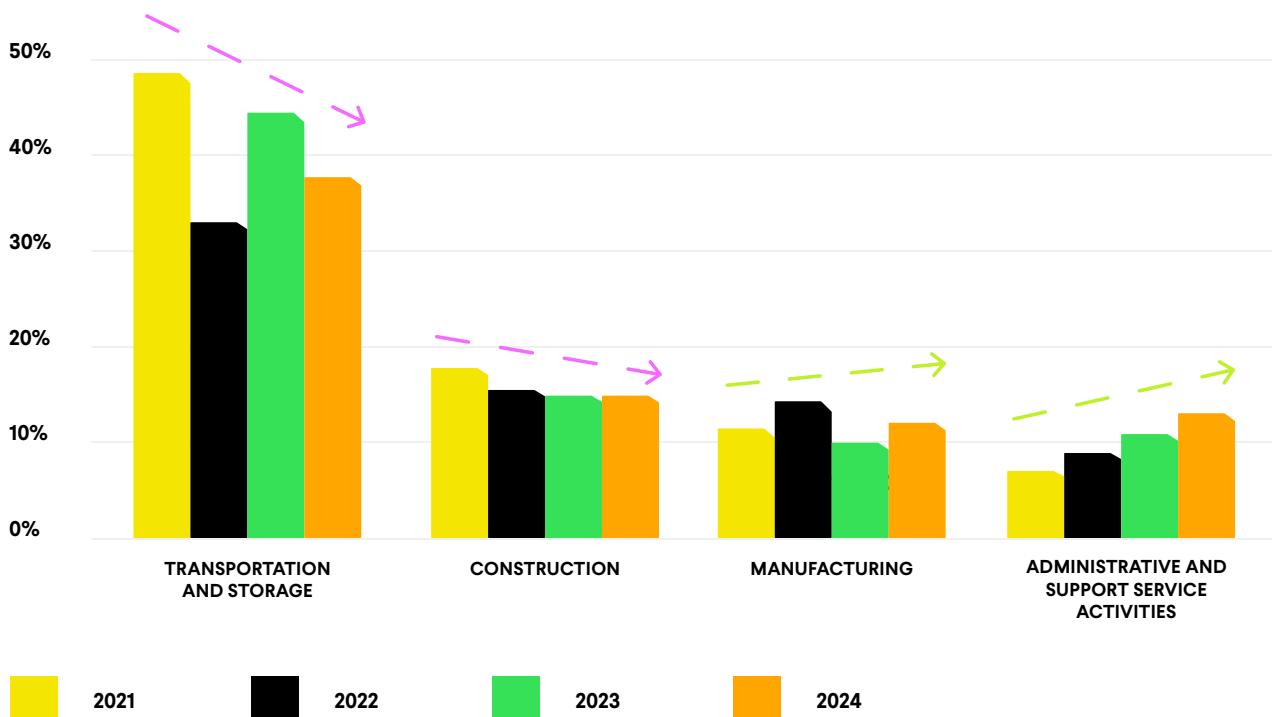
## The transport and construction sectors are the most dependent on international recruitment



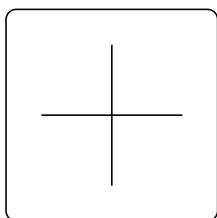
Foreign nationals in Lithuania are most frequently employed in the transport, construction, and manufacturing sectors. However, their share of total annual international recruitment declined from two-thirds to one-half between 2021 and 2024.

The fastest-growing sector was Administrative and Support Services, in which recruitment doubled between 2021 and 2024.

### MAJOR STRUCTURAL SHIFTS BY ECONOMIC SECTOR IN THE NUMBER OF HIRED FOREIGN WORKERS (2021-2024)



## Highly skilled foreign nationals: an underutilised resource for companies

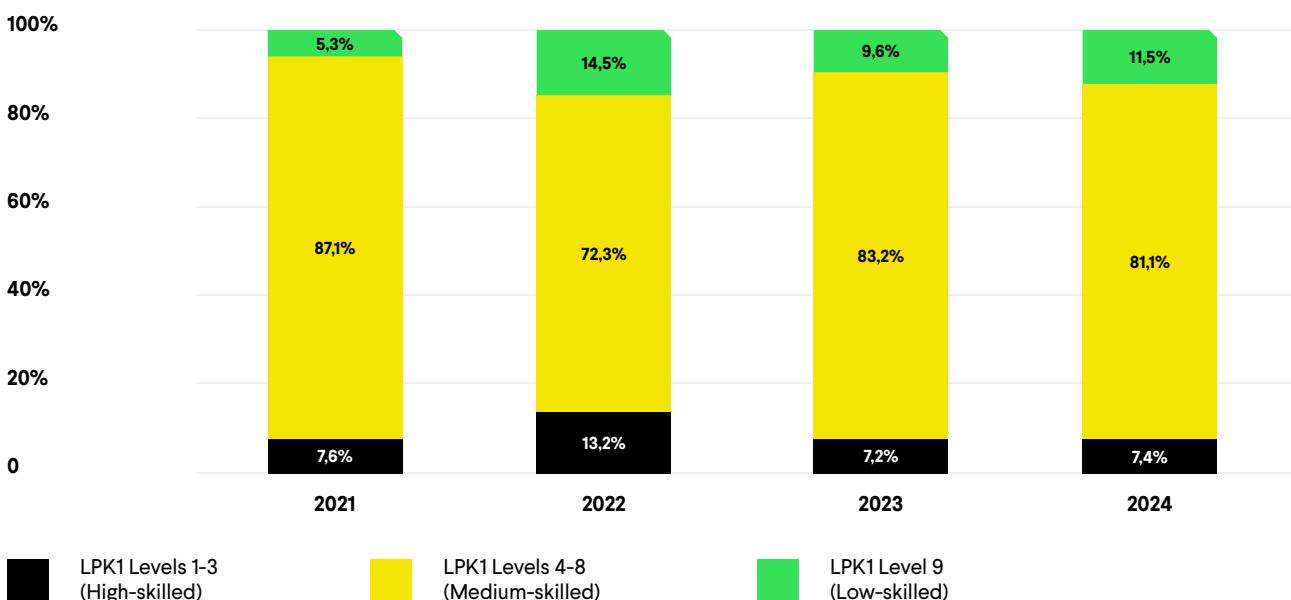


Medium-skilled workers constitute the majority of foreign recruitment in Lithuania, primarily due to high demand in the transport and construction sectors.

The second-largest category is low-skilled recruitment, which rose from 5.3% to 11.5% between 2021 and 2024. This growth was driven by inflows of refugees and economic migration, as well as language barriers that limit access to higher-level positions.

Employers have also increasingly opted for foreign nationals as a more reliable and cost-effective workforce. Nevertheless, it is highly skilled specialists who have the greatest impact on economic transformation.

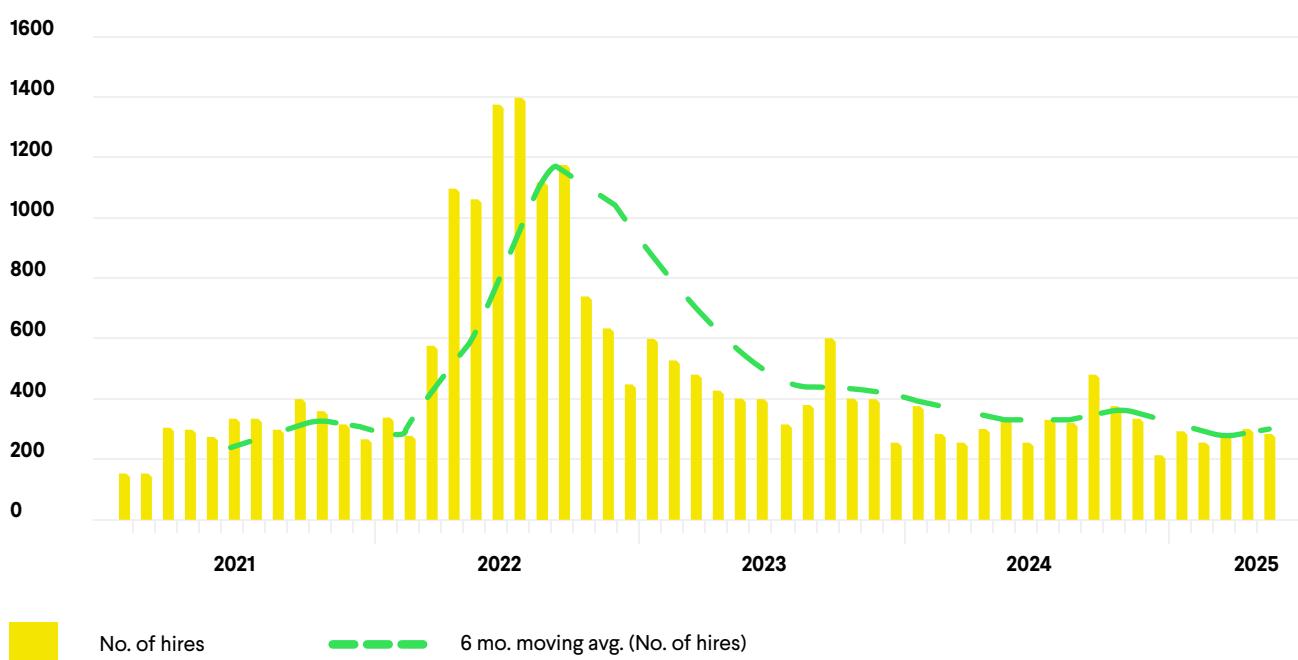
### LABOUR MARKET STRUCTURE AND DYNAMICS BY QUALIFICATION OF HIRED FOREIGN WORKERS (2021–2024)



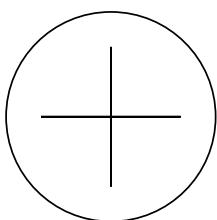
## Highly skilled foreign specialists are essential for the Lithuanian labour market

In total, approximately 23 600 foreign specialists were employed in Lithuania between 2021 and 2024, and in 2021–2023 international talent filled around one-quarter of all open high-skilled positions in the country.

**TOTAL FIRST-TIME HIGHLY SKILLED FOREIGN HIRES PER MONTH, WITH A SIX-MONTH ROLLING AVERAGE (2021-2025)**



# The countries of origin of highly skilled foreign specialists are shifting

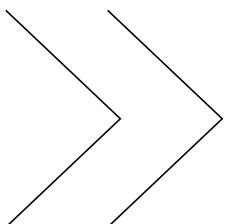


Between 2021 and 2024, the majority of highly skilled specialists were recruited from Belarus, Ukraine, and Russia, accounting for approximately 60%. However, alongside these countries, more stable international markets are emerging, with a consistent increase in the inflow of specialists from India, Latvia, Germany, and Romania.

## HIRING OF HIGHLY SKILLED FOREIGN SPECIALISTS BY CITIZENSHIP (2021–2024)

NATIONALITY	2021	2022	2023	2024	TREND
BELARUSIANS	1333	4263	1275	563	
UKRAINIANS	346	2394	1114	828	
RUSSIANS	383	1211	370	202	
LATVIANS	157	255	200	268	
INDIANS	108	167	208	211	
TURKS	77	127	155	93	
POLES	68	91	143	137	
ITALIANS	77	139	114	116	
GERMANS	51	88	85	105	
FRENCH	44	78	101	94	

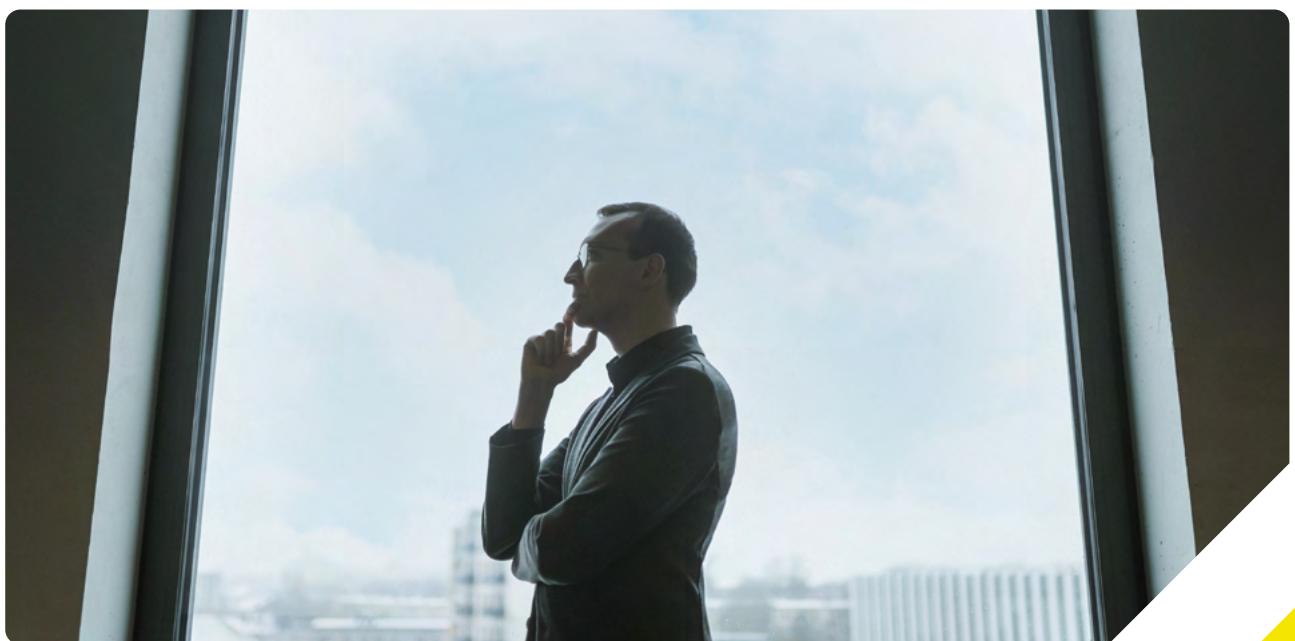
## Highly skilled international talent tends to remain in Lithuania



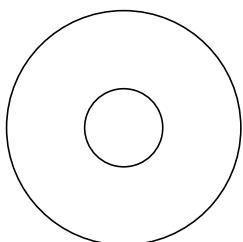
Doubts regarding the recruitment of highly skilled foreign specialists persist among Lithuanian employers; there is a common concern that such employees may not remain in Lithuania and will depart for greater opportunities elsewhere.

**19.5 mo**

Data from Sodra for the period 2021–2024 shows that on average, highly skilled specialists remain in their first Lithuanian workplace for approximately 19.5 months.

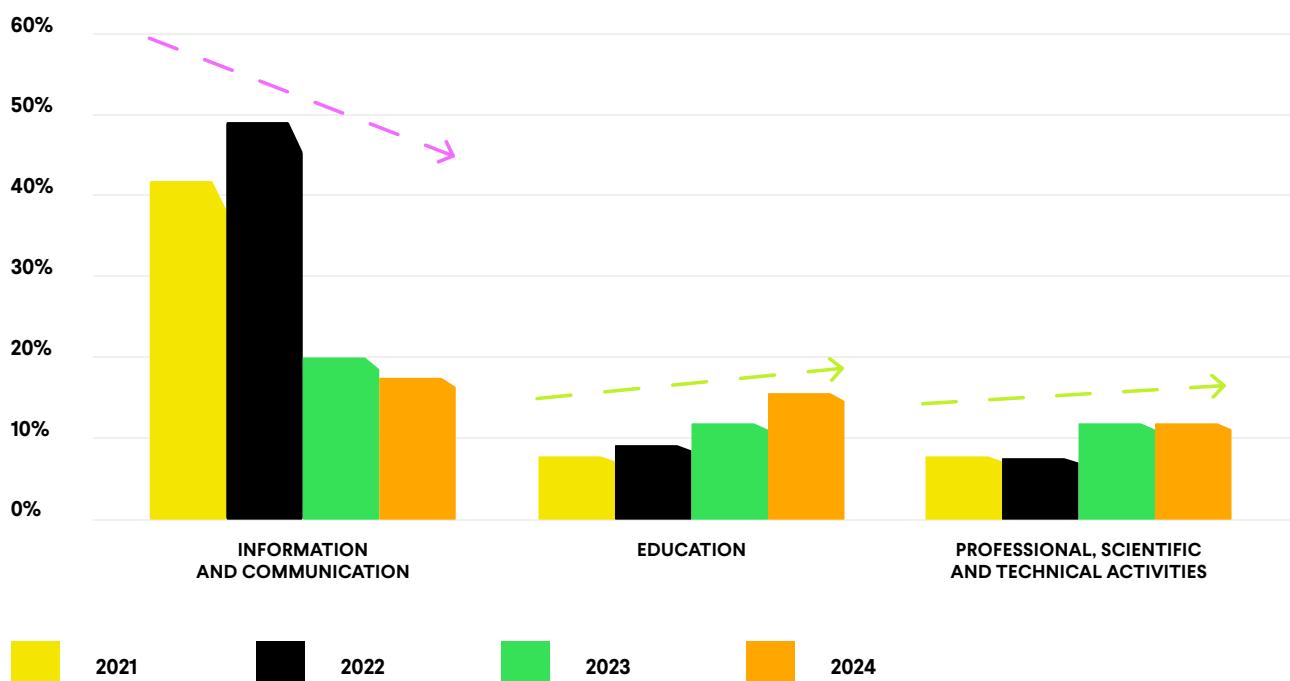


## Three sectors derive the greatest value from attracting highly skilled foreign specialists

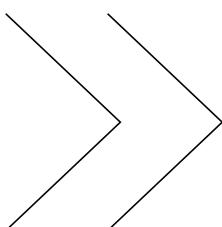


The recruitment of highly skilled foreign specialists is concentrated in three principal sectors: Information and Communication, Education, and Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities. Taken together, these sectors account on average for around 40% of all recruitment of highly skilled specialists from abroad.

### MAJOR STRUCTURAL SHIFTS BY ECONOMIC SECTOR IN THE NUMBER OF HIRED HIGHLY SKILLED FOREIGN SPECIALISTS (2021-2024)



# Companies recruit international talent predominantly in programming and sales

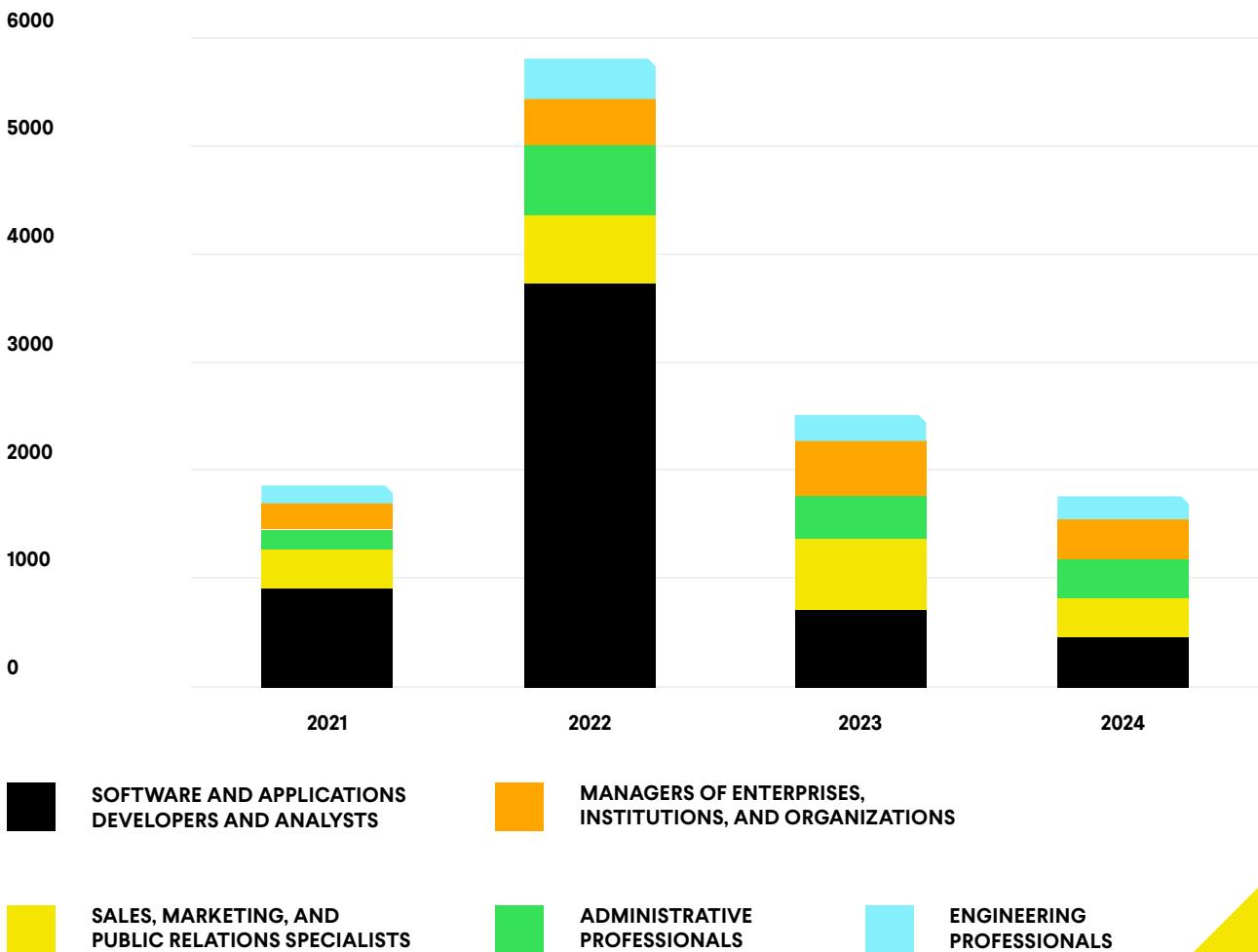


In the period 2021–2024, two main groups predominated:

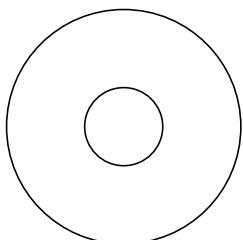
- Software and applications developers and analysts;
- Sales, marketing and public relations professionals.

After 2022, recruitment within these professional groups declined, particularly among IT specialists, as the geopolitically driven inflow contracted and became more diversified.

## MOST COMMON OCCUPATIONS AMONGST HIRED HIGHLY SKILLED FOREIGN SPECIALISTS (2021–2024)



## **Salaries do not differ significantly from those of local specialists**



According to data on newly concluded employment contracts, in 2024, highly skilled foreign specialists in Lithuania were offered an average monthly salary of €2 746.70. The highest average salaries were recorded in the following sectors:

K – Financial  
and insurance activities

**3 807.9 €**

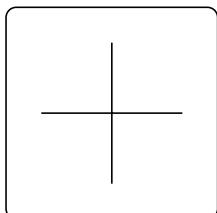
J – Information  
and communication

**3 232.7 €**

N – Administrative  
and support service activities

**3 092.3 €**

## International recruitment is a consistent practice driven by business needs



A study conducted by Work in Lithuania during March and May 2025 reveals that, among companies engaged in international recruitment in 2022–2024, a significant share hired at least one specialist from abroad at least once in the past year, and more than half did so on a regular basis – at least once per quarter or more frequently. In addition, nearly one-third of companies plan to increase the number of international hires over the next three years.

**60%**

of companies hired at least one international specialist over the past year

**54%**

of companies hired international talent at least once per quarter or more frequently

**29%**

of companies intend to recruit international talent in the future



While more than one-fifth of companies actively seek to attract and employ international talent, one-third prioritise citizens of the Republic of Lithuania.

**28%**

of companies actively seek to attract and employ international talent

**33%**

of companies give priority to citizens of the Republic of Lithuania

**28%**

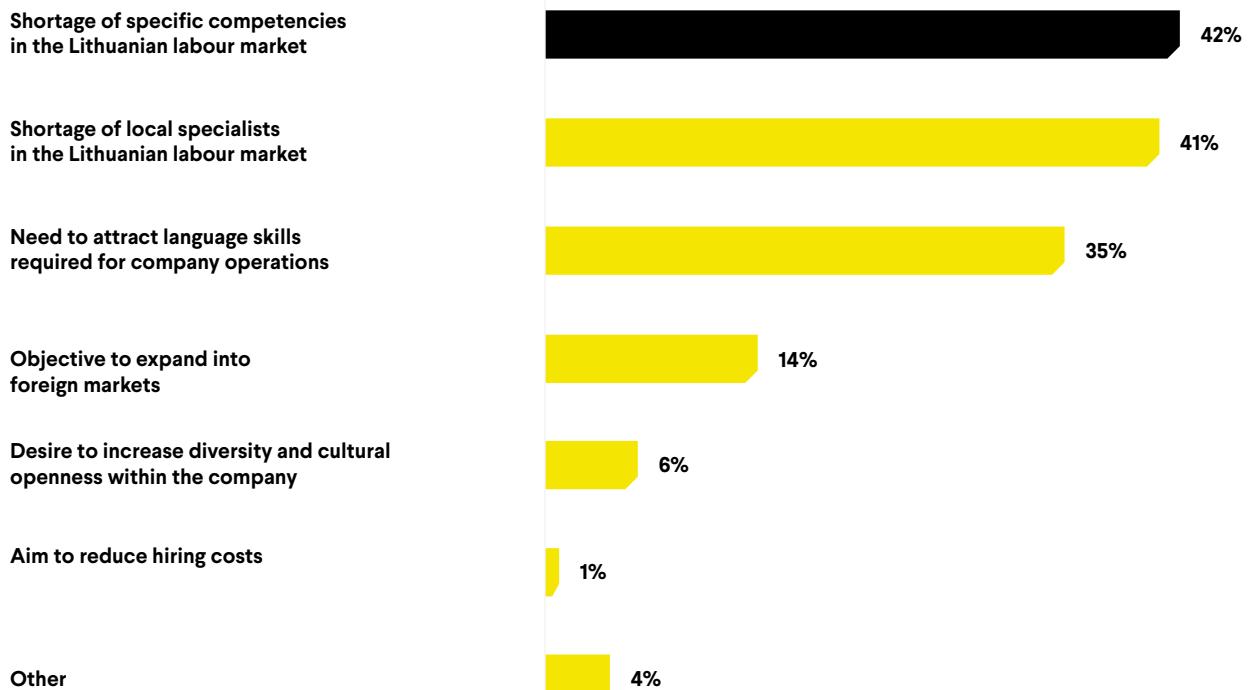
of companies have no clear position regarding the recruitment and attraction of international talent



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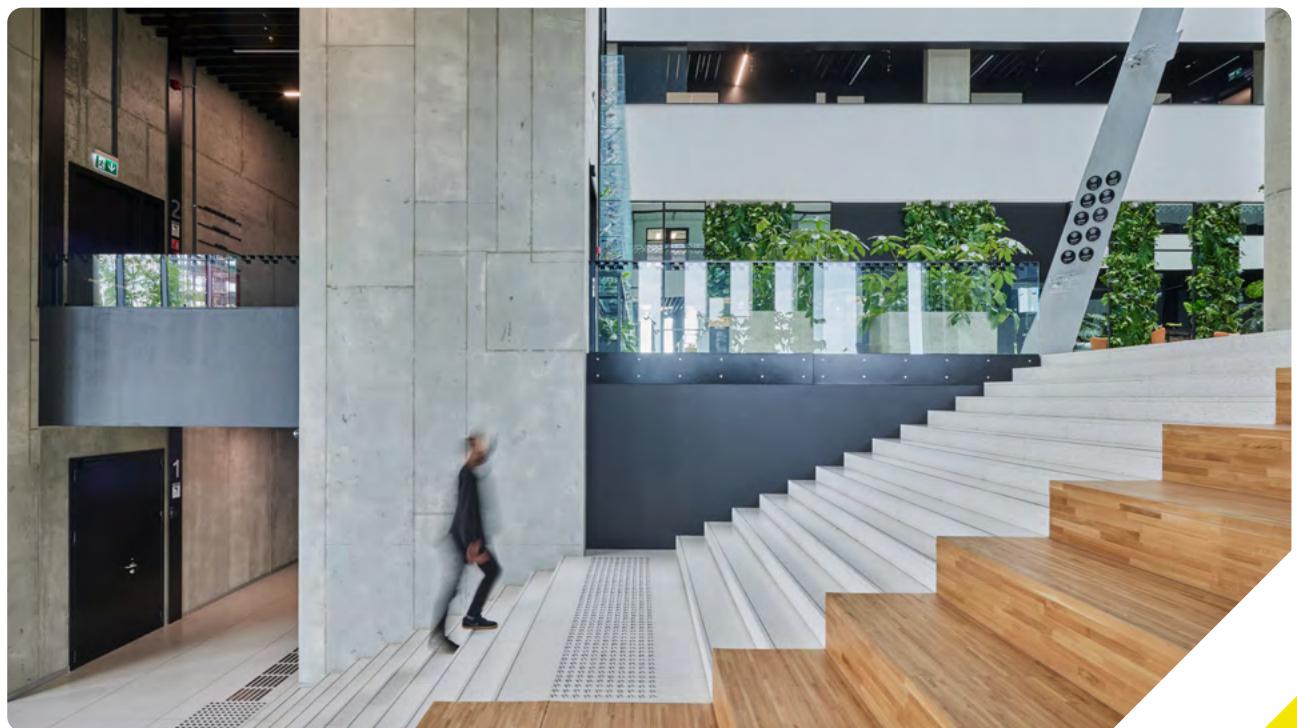
International recruitment is primarily driven by two key factors: the shortage of specific competencies and the lack of local specialists in the Lithuanian labour market.

## REASONS WHY COMPANIES CHOOSE TO HIRE INTERNATIONAL TALENT



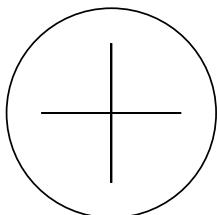
## Recruitment decisions: driven by skills or nationality?

Although nearly one-third of companies (31%) state that skills and experience are the most important factors, actual international recruitment practices remain geographically selective, showing the greatest openness to candidates from Europe and North America, and the least to specialists from Africa, Central America, the Caribbean, and the Middle East. This bias may be driven by unease or practical considerations, such as lower bureaucratic risk. Moreover, the lengthy international recruitment process – complicated by challenges in finding suitable candidates and handling migration documentation – has become a key reason why some companies choose not to hire international talent at all.



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## Strategic planning: the key to effective international recruitment



Companies are more confident in managing the practical processes of employing international talent, but are more reserved about their readiness to attract such personnel. The main challenges stem from insufficient strategic planning and the absence of a systematic approach – companies tend to react to immediate circumstances rather than plan ahead.

**54%**

of companies were either unaware or unable to respond regarding planned changes to international recruitment over the next 3 years

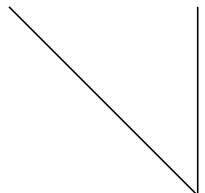
**25%**

of companies have a clear and documented strategy for attracting international talent



However, forward-looking strategic planning – which includes company positioning, the documentation of a clear international strategy, and the use of external support when internal expertise is lacking – helps to reduce the key challenges of international recruitment: suitable candidates are found more quickly, and the risk of delays in migration processes is mitigated. This, in turn, enables international hiring to become a more routine and predictable business practice.

*Detailed results and practical recommendations for effective international recruitment are available [here](#).*



*Interested in exploring international recruitment for your company?  
[Register for a free consultation with Work in Lithuania experts.](#)*

