Youths in the Labour Market 2025

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YOUTHS IN THE LABOUR MARKET 2025

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Background

Consistent with the practice of international organisations of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), youths in Singapore refer to those aged 15 to 24. In this article, we analyse the employment outcomes of our youths and compare them with that of youths from other countries.

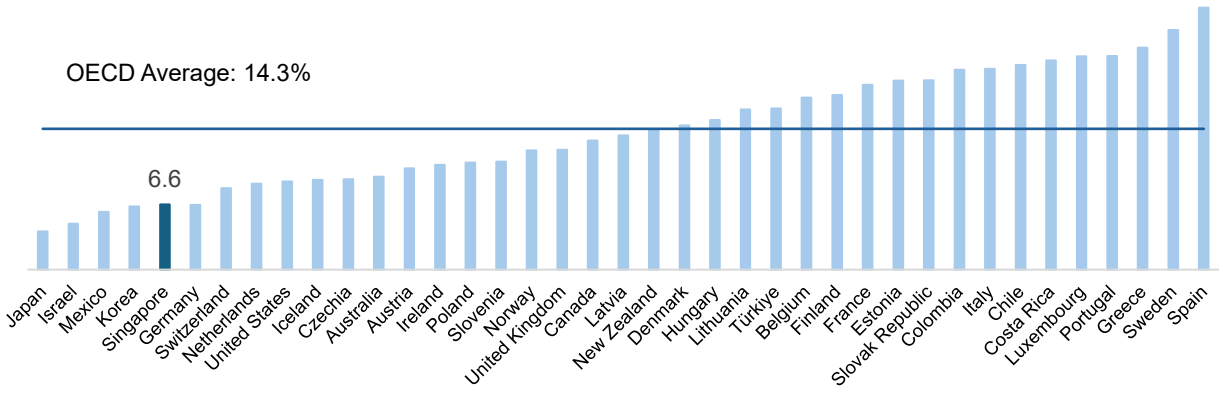
In Singapore, the high proportion of youths pursuing further education and the relatively low NEET rate show that most youths in Singapore are actively engaged through continued learning or workforce participation.

For youths who have entered the workforce, they enjoy favourable labour market outcomes compared to peers in other countries, with relatively lower unemployment and long-term unemployment rates. Working youths are likely to be in full-time positions. The remaining are part-timers who are mostly students who are working while they are schooling or on vacation break.

1. Unemployment of Youths

i. At 6.6% in 2025, Singapore's youth unemployment rate is among the lowest internationally, specifically 5th lowest when compared to OECD countries (OECD average: 14.3%) [Chart 1]. The low unemployment rate reflects the strong economic fundamentals and quality of education received by youths in Singapore.

Chart 1: International Comparison of Youth Unemployment Rates (%)

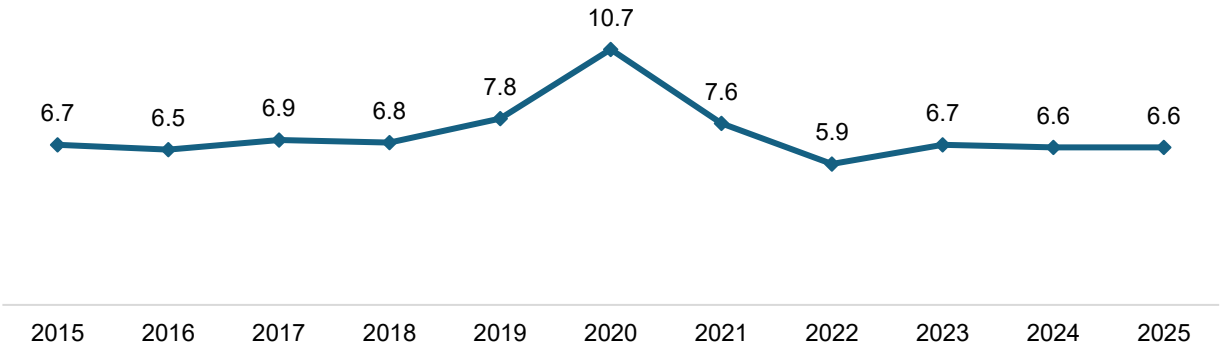


Sources: Singapore – Labour Force Survey, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM; Other economies – OECD Data Explorer

Notes:
(1) Data for Singapore pertain to residents and are based on annual average.
(2) Data shown are latest available, 2025 for Singapore, and 2024 for other economies.

ii. The unemployment rate among youths has also remained within the non-recessionary range [Chart 2].

Chart 2: Unemployment Rate Among Resident Youths (%)

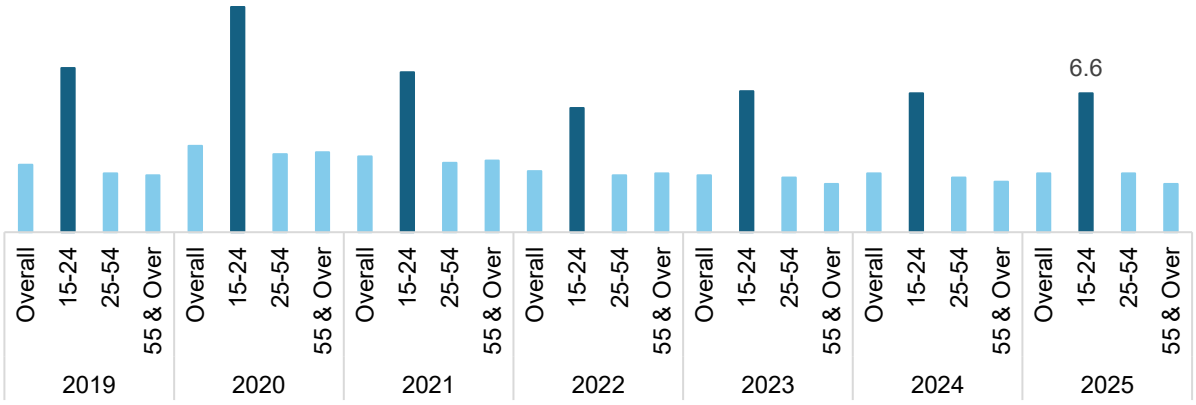


Source: Labour Force Survey, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM

Notes:
(1) The resident youth unemployment rate is based on the annual average.
(2) The youth unemployment rate is defined as the percentage of unemployed youths to the youth labour force.

iii. Similar to other countries, unemployment among youths is higher than that of other age groups [Chart 3], reflecting the greater job search activity of fresh graduates and frequent job changes as they explore different options to find a suitable job. For those working while studying, there are also short periods of job search between temporary or part-time jobs.

Chart 3: Resident Unemployment Rate by Age Group (%)

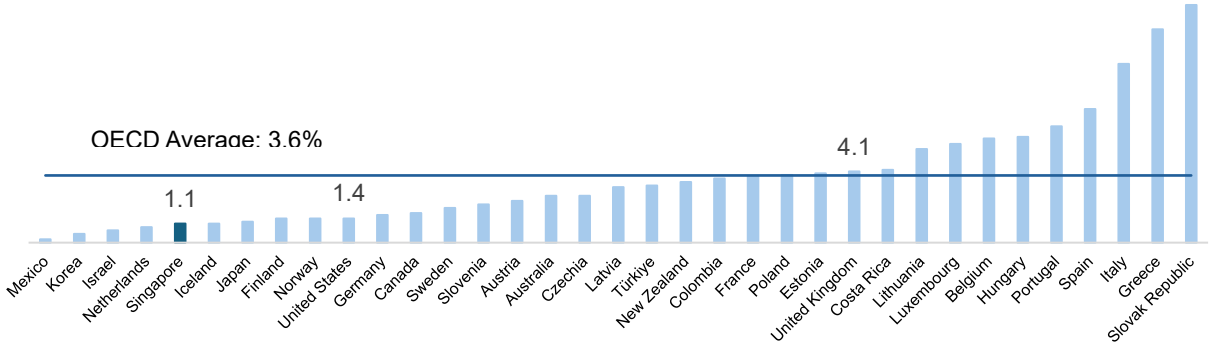


Source: Labour Force Survey, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM

Notes:
(1) The resident unemployment rate is based on the annual average.
(2) The unemployment rate is defined as the proportion of residents who are unemployed out of the resident labour force.

iv. Overall, unemployment among youths is generally short-term and transitional, likely due to short breaks between jobs or periods immediately after leaving school rather than prolonged unemployment. Long-term joblessness among youths remains low in Singapore, with our youth long-term unemployment rate (1.1%) lower than many other economies, including United States (1.4%) and United Kingdom (4.1%) [Chart 4].

Chart 4: International Comparison of Youth Long-Term Unemployment Rates (%)

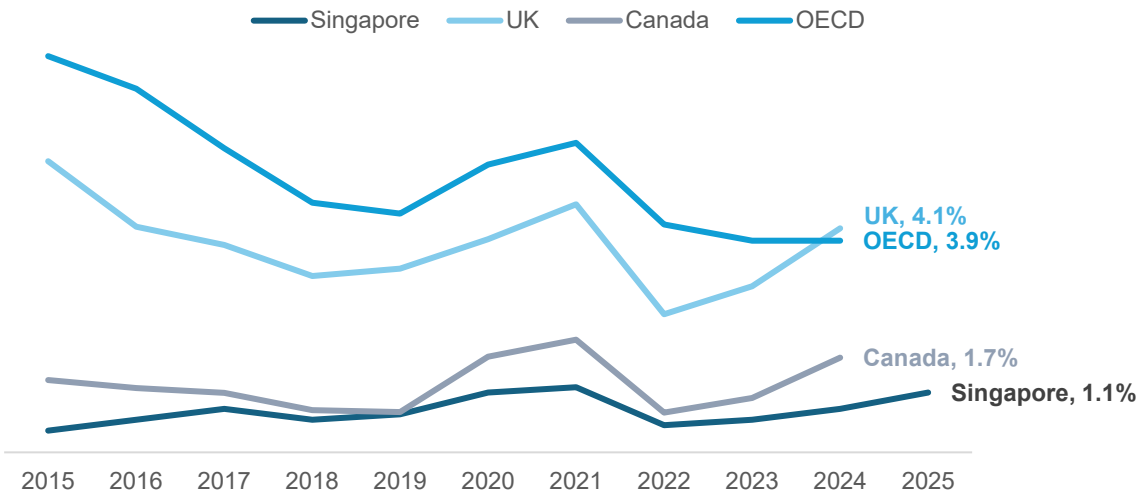


Sources: Singapore – Labour Force Survey, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM; Other economies – OECD Data Explorer

Notes:
(1) Data for Singapore pertain to residents and are based on annual average.
(2) Data shown are latest available, 2025 for Singapore, and 2024 for other economies.

v. The long-term unemployment rate among youths in Singapore has ticked up from the lows in 2022 when the labour market was extremely tight [Chart 5]. This was likewise seen in countries such as the UK and Canada. The rise is more discernible in these countries as industries such as retail and hospitality, which typically hire younger workers, scale back on hires.

Chart 5: Youth Long-Term Unemployment Rate (%)



Sources: Singapore – Labour Force Survey, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM; Other economies – OECD Data Explorer

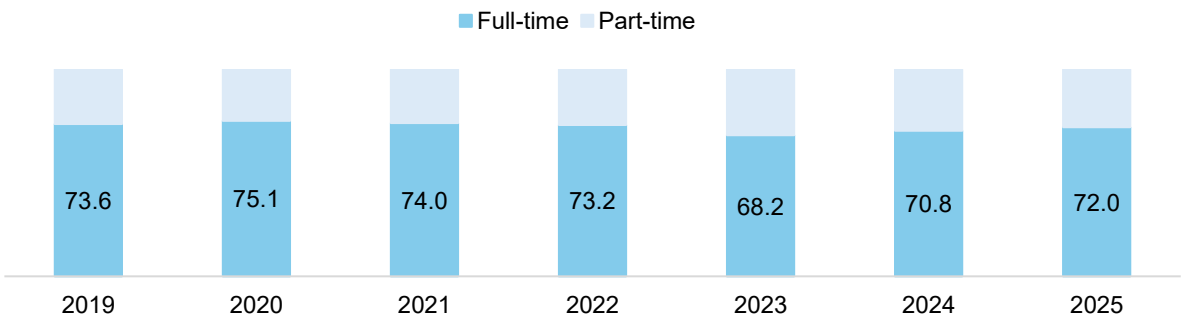
Notes:
(1) The resident youth long-term unemployment rate is based on the annual average.
(2) The youth long-term unemployment rate is defined as the proportion of youths who are unemployed for at least 25 weeks out of the resident youth labour force.

2. Employment Outcomes and Training of Youths

i. Most working youths are in full-time employment. The proportion of employed youths securing full-time employment increasing from 70.8% in 2024 to 72.0% in 2025 [Chart 6]. They mostly secure full-time jobs in sectors such as Health and Social Services (14.8%), Professional Services (10.4%), and Financial and Insurance Services (9.1%), suggesting strong alignment between youth skills and the evolving economy.

ii. Youths are increasingly able to secure more skilled jobs due to higher educational attainment overall, with 46.9% of employed residents aged 15 to 24 equipped with tertiary education (i.e. either a polytechnic diploma or university degree).

Chart 6: Proportion of Employed Resident Youths by Nature of Employment (%)

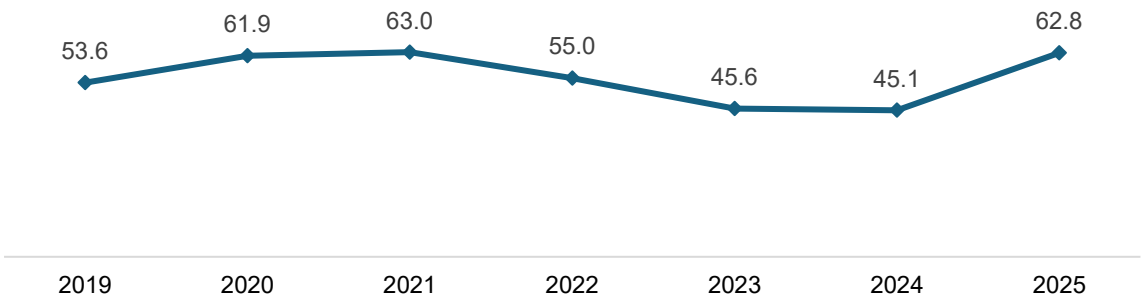


Source: Comprehensive Labour Force Survey, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM

Notes:
(1) Data pertain to employed residents aged 15 to 24 and are for the period of June.
(2) Data exclude Full-Time National Servicemen.

iii. Among employed youths, training participation decreased from 53.6% in 2019 to 45.1% in 2024 but further increased to 62.8% in 2025 [Chart 7]. This reflects growing recognition among youths of the importance of continuous skill development. This increase suggests that youths are becoming more proactive about enhancing their employability and competitiveness even after securing employment.

Chart 7: Training Participation Rate Among Employed Youths (%)



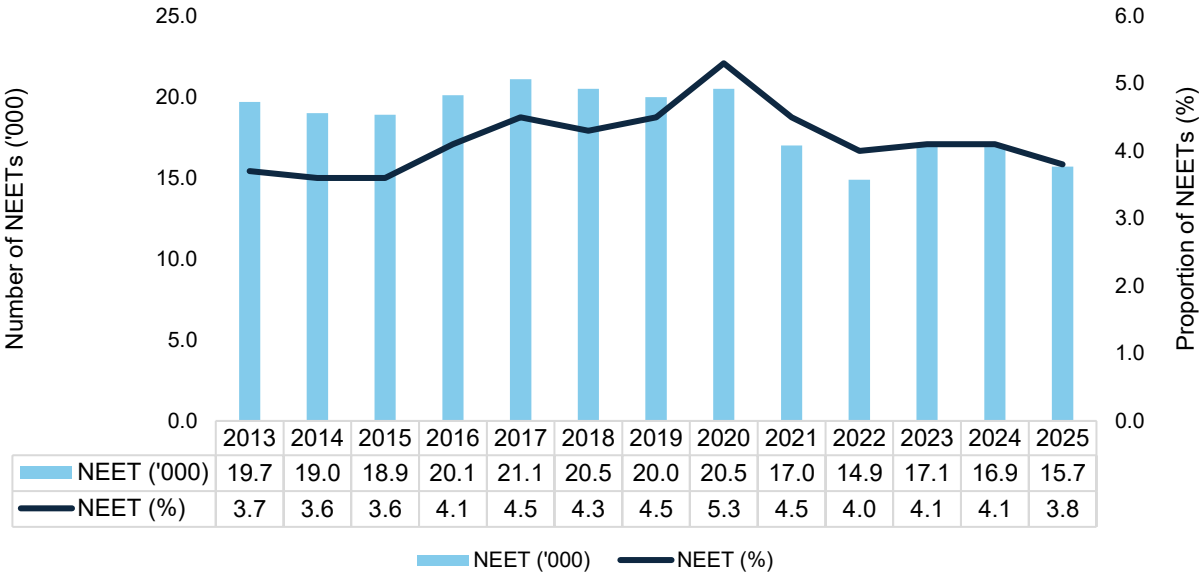
Source: Supplementary Survey on Adult Training, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM

3. Youths Not in Employment, Education, or Training (NEET)

i. To better understand youths' difficulty in finding a job, as well as their likelihood of being economically "idle", it is useful to look at the proportion of youth population who are not in employment, education or training (i.e. the NEET measure). Singapore adopts a similar definition and methodology of NEET as other developed countries and labour organisations such as Germany and the ILO.

ii. The proportion of youths NEET was 3.8% in 2025, a decline from the peak of 5.3% in 2020 and from 4.1% in 2024 and the lowest since 2015 (3.6%) [Chart 8].

Chart 8: Resident NEET Youths



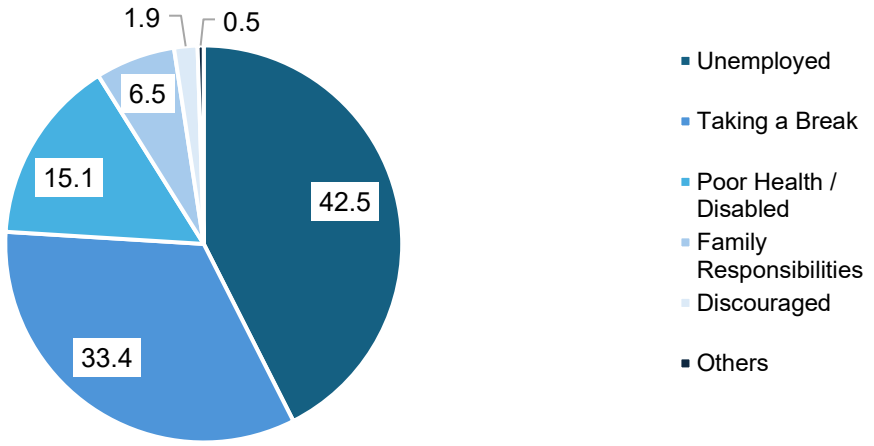
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
NEET ('000)	19.7	19.0	18.9	20.1	21.1	20.5	20.0	20.5	17.0	14.9	17.1	16.9	15.7
NEET (%)	3.7	3.6	3.6	4.1	4.5	4.3	4.5	5.3	4.5	4.0	4.1	4.1	3.8

Source: Labour Force Survey, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM

Notes:
(1) NEET refers to those who are unemployed or outside the labour force, due to reasons other than education or training.
(2) NEET rate represents the NEET youths as a proportion of the resident youth population aged 15 to 24.
(3) Annual figures are based on average of figures obtained quarterly.

iii. This reaffirms that NEET spells among youths are generally transitory due to short breaks between jobs or periods immediately after leaving school rather than prolonged unemployment as majority of NEETs in Singapore were either unemployed (42.5%) or taking a break (33.4%) [Chart 9].

Chart 9: Distribution of NEET Residents Aged 15 to 24 (Annual Average, 2025) (%)

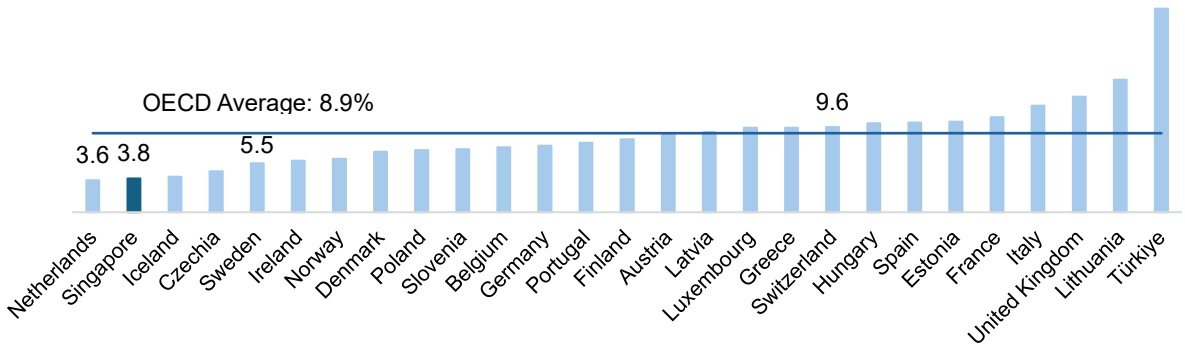


Source: Labour Force Survey, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM

Notes:
(1) NEET refers to those who are unemployed or outside the labour force, due to reasons other than education or training.
(2) NEET rate represents the NEET youths as a proportion of the resident youth population aged 15 to 24.
(3) Annual figures are based on average of figures obtained quarterly.

iv. Singapore ranks favourably compared to our international counterparts, ranking 2nd behind Netherlands (3.6%), and outperforming advanced economies such as Sweden (5.5%) and Switzerland (9.6%) [Chart 10]. This reflects the strength of our labour market in creating opportunities for youths while they transition from education to work. This is likely due to more youths pursuing higher education or participating in training rather than experiencing increased job search difficulties.[1]

Chart 10: International Comparison of NEET rates (%)



Sources: Singapore – Labour Force Survey, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM; Other economies – EuroStat Database and National Statistical Agencies

Notes:
(1) Data for Singapore pertain to residents and are based on annual average.
(2) Data shown are latest available, 2025 for Singapore, and 2024 for other economies.
(3) The age group for NEETs in United Kingdom is 16 to 24, and 15 to 24 for other economies.

[1] Training participation rate among those aged 15 to 29 increased from 43.6% in 2024 to 59.5% in 2025. Source: Labour Force in Singapore 2025.