



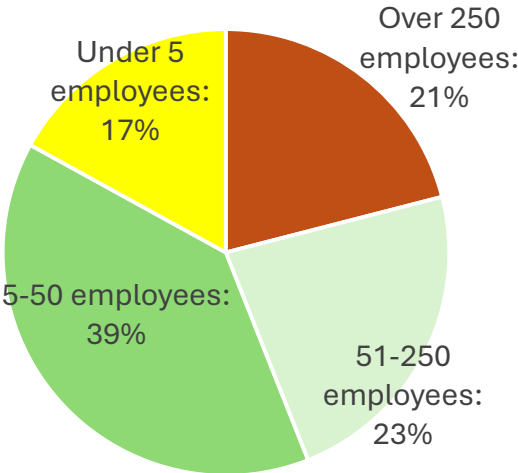
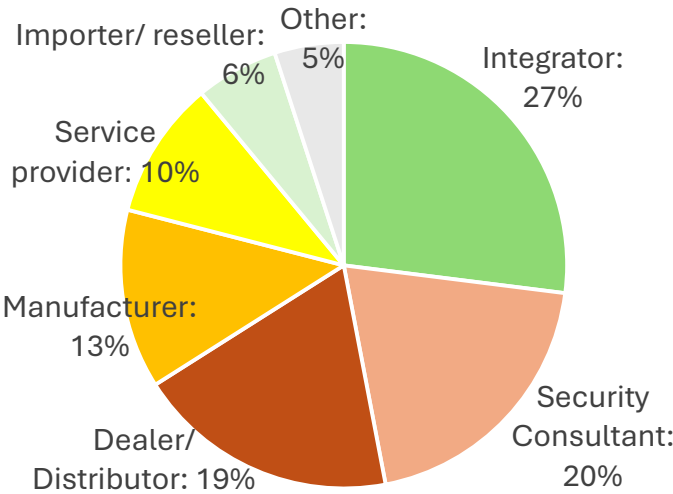
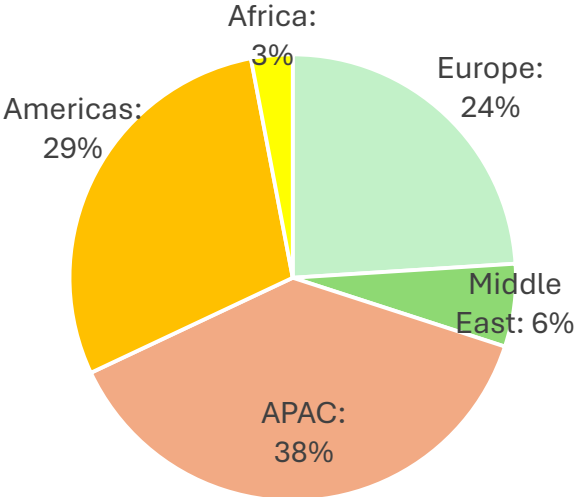
The manpower issue

in the security industry

Full highlights of the asmag.com “manpower survey”

Key facts:

- **104** valid datasets from industry experts from **35** countries or territories; answers from suspected bots and users who clicked through the survey within a few seconds were excluded
- Answers obtained from **March 10, 2026**, to **March 29, 2026**
- The results will be released on May 25, 2026 as part of a larger reporting project

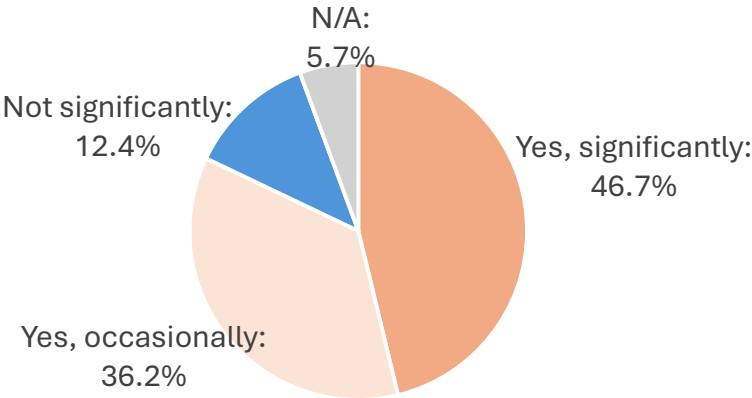


Key business types:

- The largest number of respondents were American (8%), followed by British, Indian and Singaporean (5% each)
- Over half of test takers work with small or medium-sized organizations with under 51 employees
- Business types were evenly distributed across downstream segments of the industry, while 13 percent work at manufacturers

Results overview

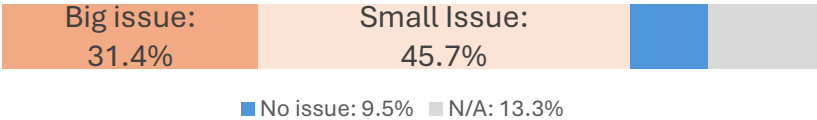
Q1: Has your organization faced notable manpower issues over the past two years?



Our interpretation:
Some degree of staffing issues is widespread across the industry, with only 12% not feeling the pinch.

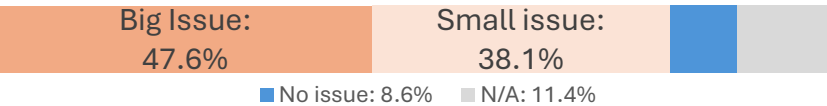
Q2: If yes, what were the main issues?

- No or too few applicants

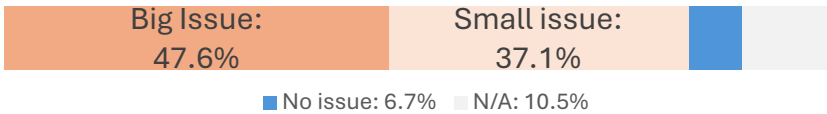


Our interpretation:
Qualifications and salary expectations are equally seen as main hinderances, followed by the number of applicants, which is seen as a smaller, yet significant issue. Over three-quarters of organizations say they're affected.

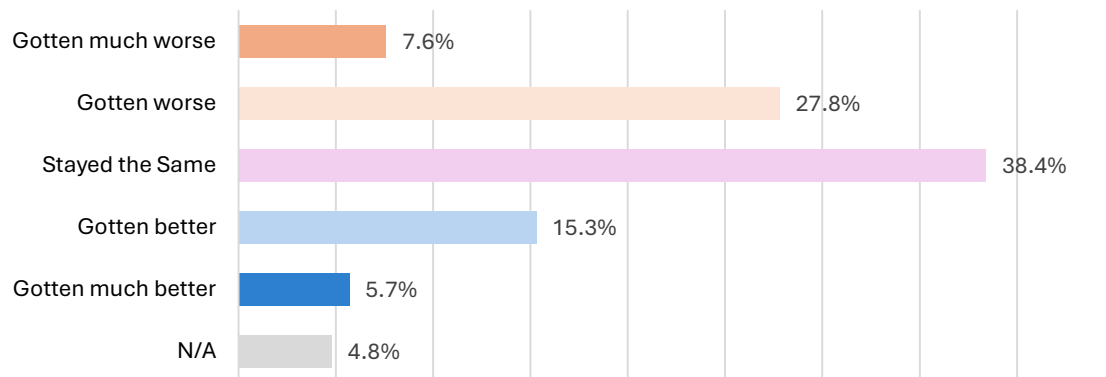
- Applicants didn't have the right qualifications



- Salary expectations



Q3: Has the situation worsened since the pandemic?



Our interpretation: The COVID-19 pandemic marks the onset of “the manpower issue,” which has continued to worsen for 35% of respondents, while only 21% say the situation has improved.

Q4: If the situation has changed significantly since the pandemic, why do you think is it the case?

Top mentions:

- **A ‘generational’ shift in expectations:** About a quarter of respondents explicitly point to a change in the mindset of the ‘younger generation.’
- **Work-from-home pressure:** A significant number of survey takers mention that the pandemic created a permanent desire for remote or flexible work.
- **Cost of living vs. wage inflation:** Many respondents say industry salaries cannot keep pace with inflation, creating pressure on jobseekers to look elsewhere.
- **Tech vs. skills:** Many respondents say advances in technology have outpaced upskilling efforts, widening the gap between what’s available and what’s needed.

Top comments:

“The salaries in the industry cannot keep up with inflation. Talented youngsters who wish to have a good life (for example buying a house for the family...) simply don't apply for security jobs because they know they won't make enough money as an integrator. Those are often family businesses so they have no hope that they'll ever be anything but an employee.” — a Singaporean security consultant

“The situation has changed ... younger generations now have different career expectations and priorities. Many seek flexible work.” — a Vietnamese service provider

“A lack of young people learning trades when leaving education... Wage inflation resulting in margin pressures on business in general.” — a British integrator

“Cost of living increases making entry-level wages less attractive, especially here in the Pacific NW”
— an American integrator

“The young generation’s expectation regarding jobs and salary are very high, not realistic, and they want the benefits immediately applied, with no probation period.”
— a Romanian integrator

“Gig economy more attractive than entry-level jobs.”
— an American integrator

“Because it is shown that processes can be done in other ways and workers raised selfawareness and selfworth.”
— a Bosnian security consultant

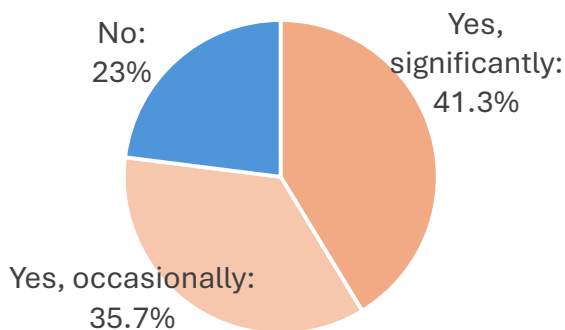
“The situation has gotten much worse because many workers were retrenched during the pandemic, and this affected the smooth flow of operations.”
— a British security consultant

“Young engineers want to go to big company or AI related work. Since very few Japanese major in engineering field that we have to co-work with other company to complete the job we are working.”
— a Japanese integrator

“In Certin Rural Areas of Australia the problem is quite acute, so you have to be creative to find solutions and always be on look out for people even when you’re not hiring.”
— an Australian professional (unknown sector)

“People are starting to pay more attention to quality of life and physical health.”
— A Taiwanese manufacturer

Q5: Has the situation affected the way you conduct business?



Our interpretation: Two-thirds of organizations say they’re affected, most of them ‘significantly,’ while only one-fifth remains unfazed.

Q6: If yes, how are you addressing the issue?

Top mentions:

- **Operational strain:** A significant number of respondents say they're forced to be more selective with the work they take on.
- **Plugging gaps on their own:** To address a shortfall in technical skills, many respondents say their organizations focus on ad-hoc internal upskilling.

Top comments:

"We have put in extra effort in retaining the few senior technical staff we have and increased the number of unskilled helpers." — a Colombian integrator

"Challenges with talent acquisition is stunting growth. We're addressing it by apprentices and fast track upskilling. This takes time and requires talent to support those less skilled." — a British integrator

"Working to digitize my institutional knowledge and package that into apps to allow users to gain my skills and knowledge without me having to hire talent to travel to remote sites." —an American security consultant

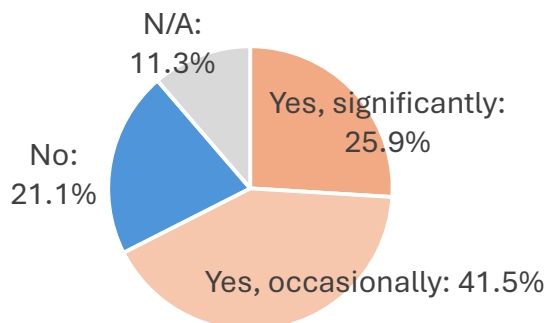
"When we have a massive flow of jobs and not enough people to do, it put extra pressure on the team." — Australian professional (unknown sector)

"Restructuring workflows, tryna do more with less staff." — a Canadian dealer/ distributor

"The implementation of automated equipment has begun, but the need for professional personnel remains essential." — a Taiwanese integrator

"The loss of a specialist always brings problems. A new employee with no experience often makes mistakes." — a Polish manufacturer

Q7: Have manpower issues at other organizations affected your business?



Our interpretation: Two-thirds of organization see spillover effects from their partners affected by the 'manpower issue.'

Q8: If so, what have been the main issues?

Top mentions

- **Spillover effects across companies:** Highlighting the most cited issue, survey takers report significantly extended lead times and shipping bottlenecks.
- **Tech support lacking:** Several respondents noted a decline in the technical proficiency among staff at their partner organizations.
- **Compounding delays:** Respondents cite backlogs throughout their supply chains, leading to payment delays and "pushed out" joint projects.

Top comments:

"Working with subcontractors and getting them to get back to us on time can be a challenge; additionally, in certain areas of Australia, freight is an issue." —an Australian integrator

"Competence in the sub contracted services we provide while significantly increasing prices." —a British integrator

"Shipping bottlenecks with some partners. We had to diversify supply chains, also due to new rules on China imports." —an American integrator

"Other competitors are 'buying' our resources." —a Spanish dealer/distributor

"The previous staff of our Integrators was trained and were generating minimum, but significant questions into support. Right now, I need to explain the basics for someone mostly every month." —a Ukrainian dealer/distributor

"Delay in supply of material to site, delays in fabrication and delays in erection of the same." —an Indian dealer/distributor

Q9: What job profiles are the hardest to find suitable applicants for?

Top mentions

- **Technicians / installers** (mentioned by nearly one-third of respondents)
- **Engineers and IT/cybersecurity experts** (mentioned by about one-sixth)
- **Management and sales staff** (mentioned by about 10 percent)

Q10: Is there anything that could be done to improve the situation?

Top mentions:

- **Vocational focus:** This is the most dominant theme. Respondents are calling for a shift in the education syllabus to include 'real-world' and 'hands-on' technical training.
- **Subsidies and taxes:** Many respondents believe the situation requires government intervention. Suggestions include training schemes and hiring subsidies.
- **Deregulation and removing "red tape":** A significant part of the audience (mostly in Middle East and Western markets) say the job market is over-regulated.

Top comments:

"Vocational training and engineering degrees are too far apart, there's nothing in between."

— a German security consultant

"Better training through industry associations and indiv companies."

—a Saudi integrator

"We are trying to cooperate with technical schools where learning takes place on our devices, but we are afraid that the results of cooperation with schools will appear only after some time and we are also afraid that the number of young people who are more involved will not be large."

— a Polish manufacturer

"Taxes must come down, get rid of red tape."

—a British service provider

"Some areas of the world abound with tradespeople who have the skills to match the demand, but they lack the means to move internationally, both in terms of finances and English proficiency. Governments should have policies in place not only to train locals but also to allow these skilled workers to migrate and provide them with the necessary support."

— an Australian professional (unknown sector)

"Since we are a very small company and located in countryside, limited source and limited people."

—a Japanese integrator

"Targeted hiring subsidies can be highly cost-effective and reduce labor market persistence."

—a British security consultant

"Yes in India - government has started Skill India initiative which will help connect the education institute with the organisation who are looking for the manpower - direct hiring and help in experience."

—an Indian integrator

"Educational initiatives are being done, but I'm afraid they'll have limited impact. There's too much talk about AI killing jobs."

—a Singaporean security consultant

“Salaries and improvement possibilities. In regards to security, main issue is that is not well recognised as business-enabler but cost in the balance. In BiH we do not have corporate prevention security approach, but after-incident and fear-of-the -fines ones.” —a Bosnian security consultant

“Education initiatives, pre-qualifications, quality performance, competitive salaries, motivation.”
—a Norwegian integrator

“All-hands on deck needed. Certification processes are too slow, which is something few ppl talk about.”
—an American integrator

Q11: What do you think is the main underlying issue that causes so many industries to struggle to find and retain suitable staff?

Top mentions:

- **The Gen Z gap:** Many respondents describing young applicants as prioritizing "easy money," remote work, and instant benefits over the "manual labor," while lacking "technical problem-solving," and "field-based" grit.
- **The allure of tech jobs:** Many respondents mentioned that technology-interested young people aim for jobs with a technology company instead of physical security.
- **Educational mismatch:** Many highlight a failure of the education system to prepare students for the reality of the job market, with a strong focus of educational institution on academic skills.

Top comments:

“Believe the Tech giants had created a ripple of unsustainable salary expectations, as after their contracts, these staff had been let go and now have and diluted expected of salaries.” — a Singaporean integrator

“The main underlying issue is the mismatch between what younger generations expect from work and what many industries currently offer. Today’s workforce values flexibility, meaningful work, and continuous development opportunities, but many industries still rely on traditional structures that feel outdated. At the same time, rapid technological change requires new skills, and education systems often struggle to keep pace. This gap between expectations, skills, and opportunities makes it difficult for companies across sectors to attract and retain suitable staff.”
—a Vietnamese security service provider

“TikTok is my first thought. Many young people see that as a way to prosperity. Most people going to college nowadays are in tremendous debt...”
— an American security consultant

“Competition with the tech sector which is ‘sexier.’” —an American integrator

“I think the main issue isn’t a lack of people, but that manpower is focused in the wrong places. A lot of workers end up in roles that aren’t that essential, while important industries struggle to find staff. Part of that comes from trends and incentives pushing people toward certain careers, even if those areas are already full.”

Meanwhile, necessary jobs don't get enough attention or value. Hopefully, AI can help by taking over unnecessary or repetitive work, so people can shift back into roles where they're actually needed."

—a North Macedonian integrator

"The Demographic "Silver Tsunami"; the "Skills Mismatch" and Educational Lag."

—a Slovakian dealer/distributor

"Easy money, High aspirations for the new generation people, Risk taking behaviour." —an Indian integrator

"The attraction of remote work and 9-5 hours vs having to go on the road and working on occasion nights & weekends."

—a Canadian manufacturer

"The world is changing, young people have a completely different approach to work than before, expectations are that they should pay a lot and not demand too much, our industry is very technical, so it is sad to say that it will not be easier for us to find committed people focused on solving technical problems."

—a Polish manufacturer



The “**manpower issue**” – a survey among physical security professionals subscribed to

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