

Workforce Report

icims[®] Insights

November 2025

Manufacturing spotlight

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data program



DATA SCIENCE
SOLUTION OF THE YEAR



BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE
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Big Picture:

November Workforce Report

- iCIMS data showed a dip in candidate interest while employers continue to open roles — but aren't following through on the hires.
- This month, we zeroed in on manufacturing and found that the sector's midyear momentum has started to cool.
- Competition for open roles is up, but steady hiring pace and employer caution may be cooling candidate momentum.

BY THE NUMBERS:



Applications dropped 7% between September and October but were still up 9% year over year.



Manufacturing applicants per opening (APO) rose from 41 in October 2024 to 47 in October 2025, reflecting growing candidate interest over the last 12 months.



APO for computer and math jobs in manufacturing grew from 65 to 83, a 27% increase since last year.

iCIMS Insights Workforce Report provides an exclusive look into the latest labor market activity and trends. Data is drawn from our proprietary database of employer and job seeker activity, which includes hundreds of millions of data points across job openings, job applications and hires.



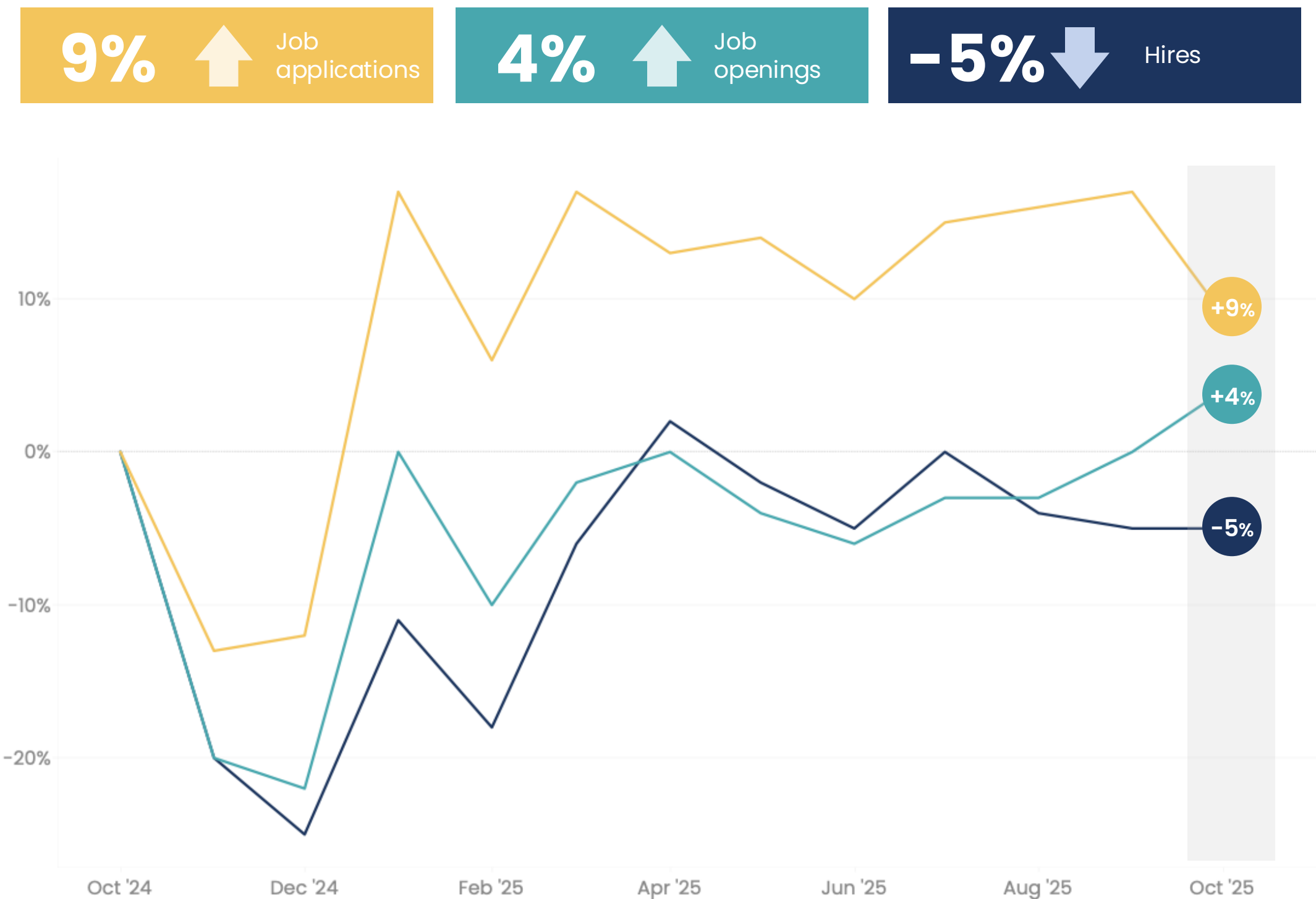
Hiring remains paused as candidates reconsider their options

iCIMS Insights quick take:

Candidate interest appears to be cooling, while hiring remains stalled as employers navigate ongoing market uncertainty.

- **What's happening:** Applications dropped 7% between September and October but were still up 9% year over year.
- **Holding steady:** Year-over-year hiring surged early, peaking in April and again in July. Since then, hiring has gradually receded, now holding in negative territory.
- **The dark horse:** Despite lackluster applications and hires, openings continue to climb, hitting their highest level in 12 months.

Since Oct. 2024



Platform indicators

Job openings, applications and hires
October 2024–October 2025



More applicants, same hiring speed

icims Insights quick take:

Competition for open roles is up, but steady hiring pace and employer caution may be cooling candidate momentum.

- **More applicants in the mix:** APO rose from 30 to 33 year over year, showing steady growth in job seeker activity since last October.
- **No faster path to hire:** Time to fill (TTF) held flat at 39 days, suggesting employers remain cautious and deliberate in their decision making.
- **What's at play:** While APO remains elevated year over year, recent months have seen a dip in application activity — a sign that employer caution may be tempering candidate engagement.

US Labor Market

Applicants per opening



Time to fill



"More openings, slower hiring rate. That mismatch won't last. Frustrated candidates drop off fast, so the firms that cut red tape and move top talent through quickly will own the market."



Trent Cotton,
Head of Talent Acquisition
Insights & Analyst
Relations, iCIMS



Monthly focus: Manufacturing

A closer look at the trends driving — and stalling — hiring across the manufacturing sector.

The manufacturing sector is feeling a sharper talent squeeze than the broader market. Applications per opening are rising, yet time to fill has barely moved as openings climb and hiring slows year over year. The data points to process friction, not pipeline scarcity. Candidates are applying, but few are moving through efficiently.

For manufacturing recruiters, the edge will go to those who treat hiring like production: measure throughput, eliminate bottlenecks and keep talent moving.



Trent Cotton,
Head of Talent Acquisition Insights &
Analyst Relations, iCIMS



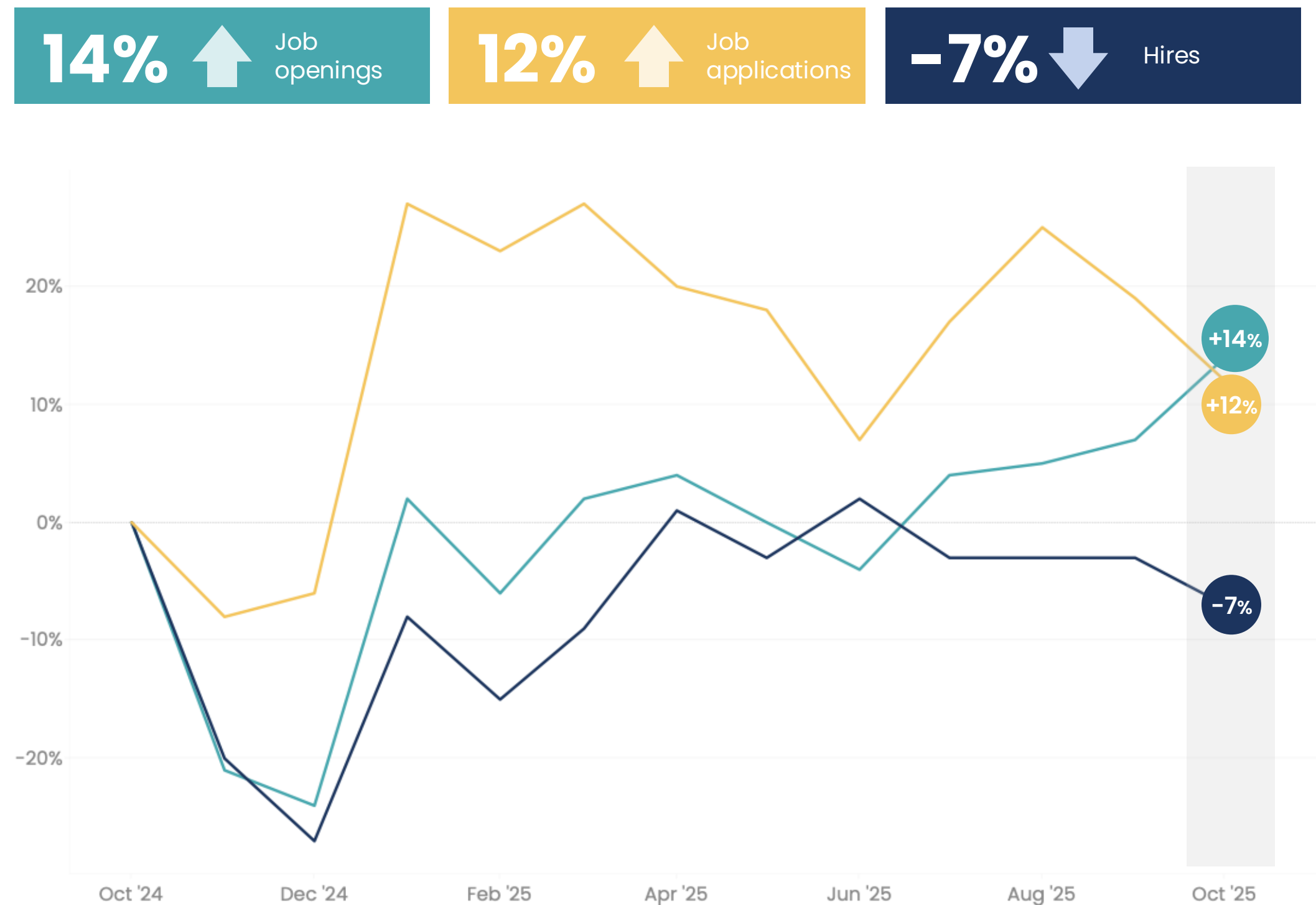
Manufacturing's midyear hiring peak has fizzled

iCIMS Insights quick take:

Manufacturing's midyear hiring momentum is cooling. Openings continue to climb while hires and applications lose steam.

- **Hiring stalls out:** After strong peaks in April and June, hires are down 7% year over year, signaling that manufacturers are easing up after a midyear rally.
- **More open roles, fewer filled seats:** Job openings are up 14% year over year and have been trending upward since June, but that activity isn't translating into actual hires.
- **Applicants lose steam:** Applications are up 12% year over year but have fallen for two consecutive months, suggesting job seekers may be mirroring employers' slowdown.

Since Oct. 2024



Manufacturing platform indicators

Job openings, applications and hires
October 2024–October 2025

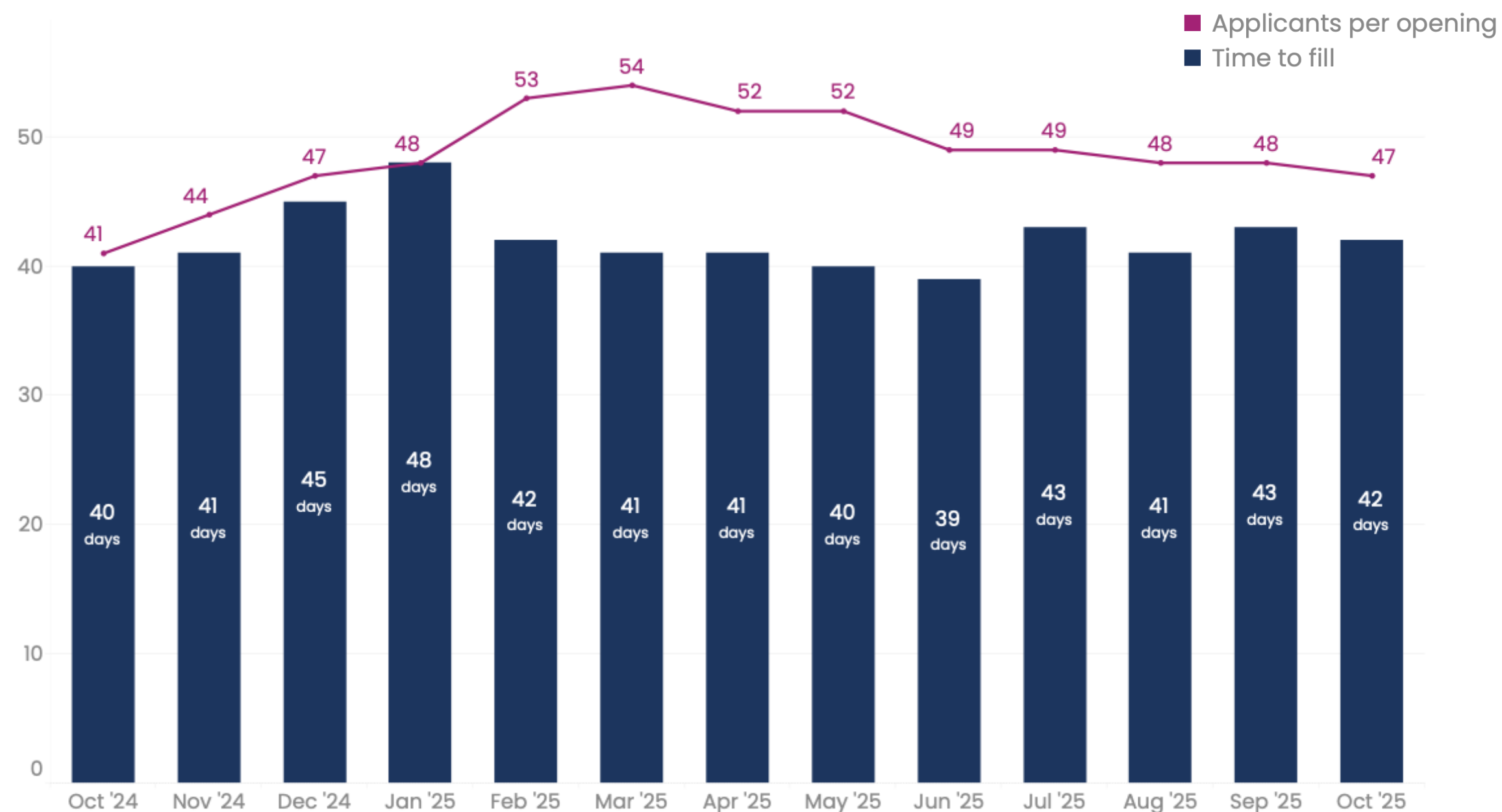


Manufacturing's hiring slowdown cools applicant momentum

icims Insights quick take:

APO is up from last year, but slower hiring activity may be starting to cool candidate interest.

- **Applicants are showing up:** Manufacturing APO rose from 41 in October 2024 to 47 in October 2025, reflecting growing candidate interest year over year.
- **Watching for signs:** Applicant activity appears to be tracking employer demand. APO peaked midyear alongside hiring growth and has eased in recent months as hiring momentum slowed.
- **Slower moves, fewer hires:** TTF increased from 40 to 42 in the past 12 months, suggesting employers are making slower hiring decisions in a cautious market. But moving too slow could mean losing critical hires.



Manufacturing applicants per opening and time to fill
October 2024–October 2025



What roles are driving manufacturing applications?

icims Insights quick take:

Industries such as manufacturing and finance have benefitted from tech-sector layoffs, capturing displaced talent with transferable skills.

- **What's happening:** APO for computer and math jobs in manufacturing grew from 65 to 83, a 27% increase year over year.
- **Keep on trucking:** Applicants for roles in transportation and material moving also grew from 39 to 50, which was a 28% bump from last year.
- **Mr. Roboto:** Applicants for architecture and engineering roles in manufacturing jumped 24% year over year, reflecting a convergence of infrastructure/plant build out, growing use of automation and widening access to these roles via skills-based hiring.

Computer and Mathematical Occupations

Business and Financial Operations Occupations

Management Occupations

Architecture and Engineering Occupations

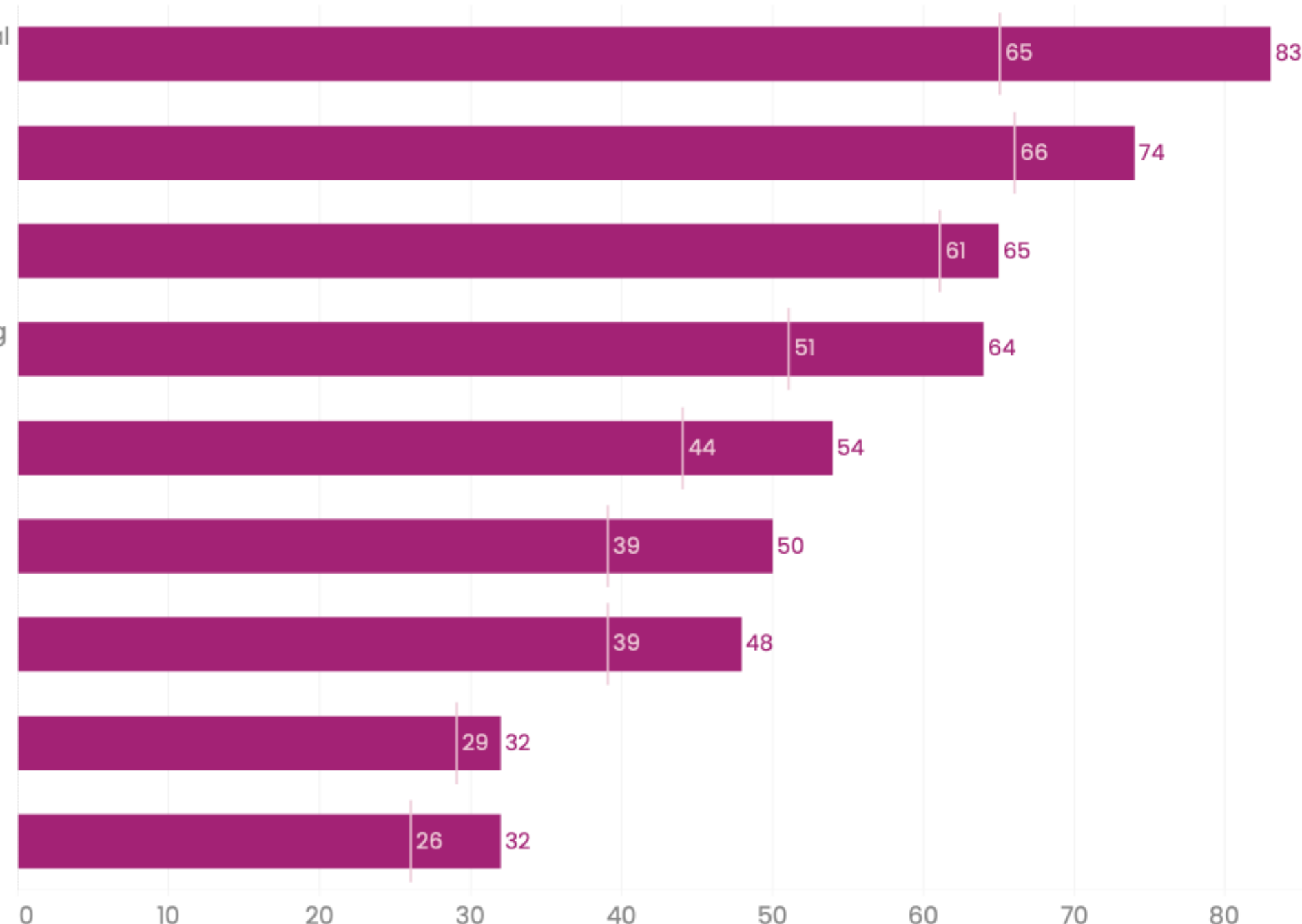
Office and Administrative Support Occupations

Transportation and Material Moving Occupations

Sales and Related Occupations

Production Occupations

Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations



Applicants per opening for manufacturing job titles

Year-to-date 2024 vs. 2025

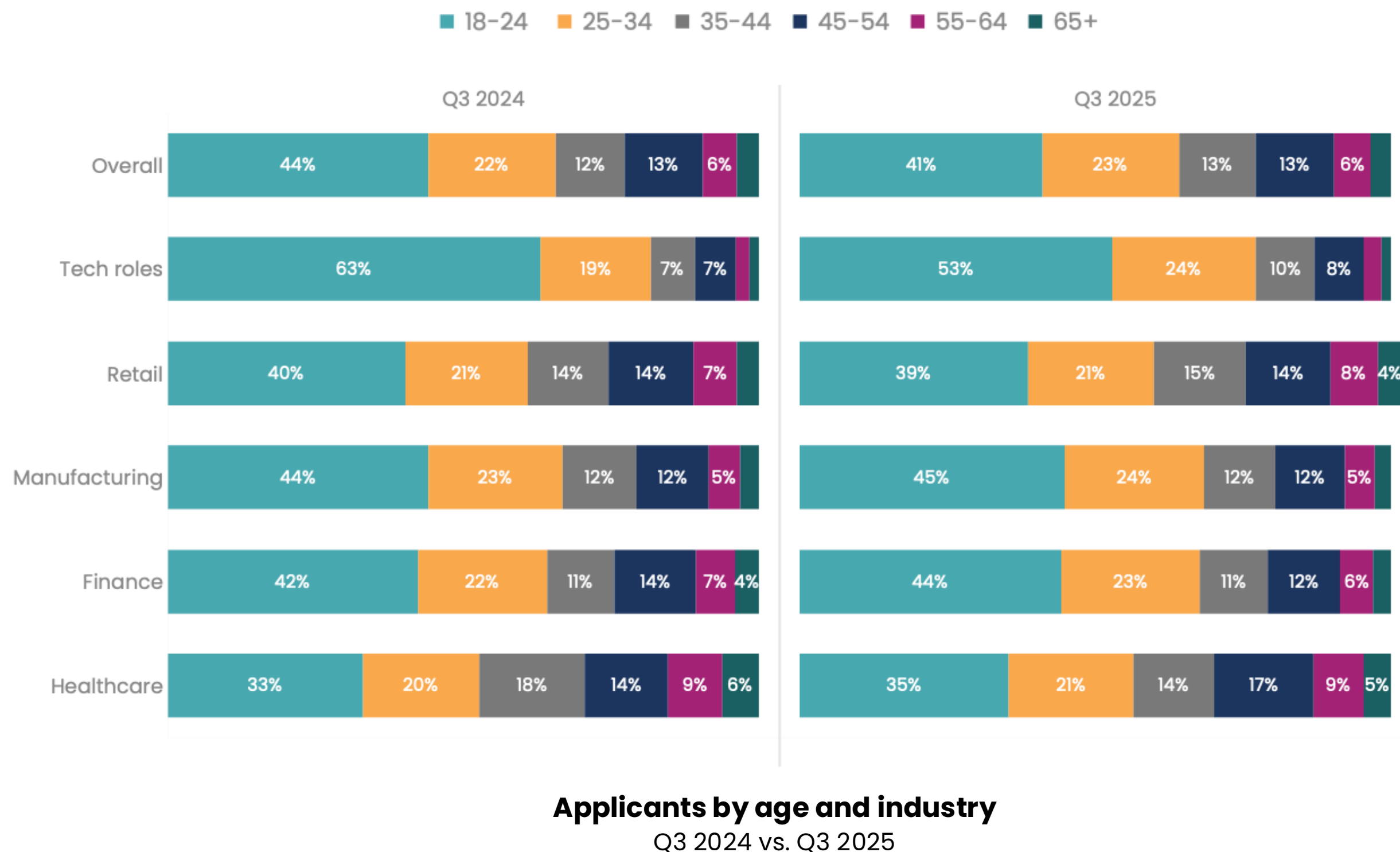


Tech jobs are losing their luster with younger workers

iCIMS Insights quick take:

Once the job every new college grad dreamed of, tech roles are no longer what younger applicants are trying to nab.

- **What's happening:** The share of applicants ages 18-24 pursuing tech roles fell from 63% to 53% year over year in Q3 .
- **The state of the market:** Youth unemployment (ages 16-24) reached 10.5% in August, up from 9.0% in January.
- **Job hugging:** Midcareer and older candidates remain steady, suggesting stability and — perhaps reading the labor market tea leaves — a desire to stay put.





FROM INSIGHTS TO IMPACT

Tailored takeaways for business, HR and talent leaders

Whether you lead people, run operations or shape strategy, you can use these insights to align teams, reduce friction and move faster on your goals.

FOR THE Talent Leaders

- **Manufacturing openings are up**, but hiring is slowing and applications are dipping. Talent teams should reengage candidates from earlier this year to keep pipelines full and maintain top-of-funnel momentum.
- **More volume doesn't equal lower TTF.** It is important to audit your top hire sources to ensure the increase in top of funnel is with qualified candidates. Conducting a monthly audit of this process will help you further refine your targeting without overwhelming your teams with low-quality candidates.

FOR THE CHROs

- It is time to help your hiring managers understand that speed in hiring is paramount. If the slow hiring is the result of business direction, reassess the openings and prioritize to help your teams focus on quality hiring.
- Labor market demographics are shifting, changing not just how but where you recruit. Make sure your hiring teams are ready to adapt their approach.

FOR THE CXOs

- The C-suite needs to provide clarity around hiring prioritization. The slowdown in hiring could be reflective of economic uncertainty affecting hiring decisions. Slow hiring will only deter top talent from joining your organization. Provide the clarity and prioritization needed for your organization to capture your share of the market through talent.



Want more great insights?

iCIMS 2025 State of Frontline Hiring

Frontline roles are the backbone of our workforce, but hiring for them continues to be challenging. Based on fresh data from over 2,000 frontline workers and hiring managers across healthcare, hospitality, manufacturing and retail, our [2025 State of Frontline Hiring Report](#) uncovers why companies are struggling to fill roles.

iCIMS 2025 State of the CHRO Report

The role of HR has never been more strategic. Learn how 1,000 CHROs and chief people officers are navigating the shift and how 500 CIOs see HR navigating TA tech in [iCIMS 2025 State of the CHRO Report](#).

iCIMS Talent Experience Report

Explore what candidates want right now and how talent acquisition pros are delivering those experiences in our second annual [Talent Experience Report](#).



About iCIMS

iCIMS is a leading provider of talent acquisition technology that enables organizations everywhere to build winning workforces.

Visit www.icims.com to learn more.



Data Breakthrough Awards:
2025 Business Intelligence
Solution Provider of the Year

Workforce data is vital to driving business forward.

iCIMS Insights provides data that is:

- Current
- Cross-industry
- Dual-focused on employer and job seeker intentions and activity

Data derived from:



3.3M+ global
platform users



223M+ applications
in 2024



630M+ candidate
profiles



5.4M+ hires in
2024