

Recruitment optimism remains at last year's average

The ManpowerGroup Employment Outlook Survey for the second quarter of 2026 is 3 points higher than in the same period last year and 8 points higher than in 2024

Prague, March 10, 2026 – ManpowerGroup Czech Republic today released the results of the ManpowerGroup Employment Outlook Survey for the second quarter of 2026. The data shows that the Czech labor market remains stable, but there are significant fluctuations between individual sectors and company sizes. Employer optimism is driven by the Financial Sector, Construction and Real Estate, and Manufacturing, with optimism in the Automotive Sector also remaining high. In contrast, the public sector, healthcare, social services, and energy, utilities, and natural resources are stagnating.

As part of the ManpowerGroup Employment Outlook Survey for the second quarter of 2026, all participants in a representative sample of 525 employers in the Czech Republic were asked the question: *"How do you expect the total number of employees in your company to change in the next quarter until the end of June 2026 compared to the current quarter?"*

In the Czech Republic, 32% of employers plan to increase their workforce, 18% expect a decline, and 49% do not plan any changes. The net labor market index is thus 14 percentage points. Compared to the previous quarter, this is a decline of 6 percentage points, while year-on-year, the index is 3 points higher.

However, the decline in optimism does not mean a general cooling of the labor market. Rather, it confirms the continuing structural transformation of the economy and the different dynamics of individual sectors.

"High recruitment optimism continues and remains at last year's average level, with us three percentage points higher than in the same period last year and eight points higher than the year before last. We see the highest confidence in the financial sector, which is approaching record levels of optimism, with construction and real estate also strengthening significantly as one of the drivers of economic growth, and manufacturing coming in third. We find ourselves in a unique historical situation where the economy is growing, but unemployment is also rising. This is a result of the transformation from industry to services, with automation, digitization, and AI also coming into play," says **Jaroslava Rezlerová, CEO of ManpowerGroup Czech Republic.**

Comparison by sector

In the second quarter, differences between sectors widened significantly. While the Financial Sector and Manufacturing are accelerating recruitment, Energy and Natural Resources and the Public Sector are sinking into pessimism.

The Finance and Insurance sector shows the highest recruitment optimism with a Net Index of 42 points. 46% of companies in this sector plan to recruit and only 4% plan to lay off staff. Compared to the previous quarter, it improved by 6 points and by as much as 12 points year-on-year. This sector has been among the most positive for several quarters.

The Construction and Real Estate sector also remains strong, with an index of 28. Here, too, 46% of companies plan to increase their workforce, but at the same time 18% plan to lay off employees. The sector improved by 8 points quarter-on-quarter and by 9 points year-on-year. Together with the automotive industry (25), where we see a slight decline (by 4 p. p.) compared to the previous quarter, the manufacturing industry (23) is one of the drivers of the Czech economy. Manufacturing declined by 3 percentage points quarter-on-quarter, but grew by 11 percentage points year-on-year.

On the contrary, a more significant slowdown compared to the previous quarter is evident in the Accommodation, catering, recreational and cultural services sector, where there was a decline of 10 percentage points to a still positive value of 3. Compared to last year, however, the Index is still 9 p. p. higher.

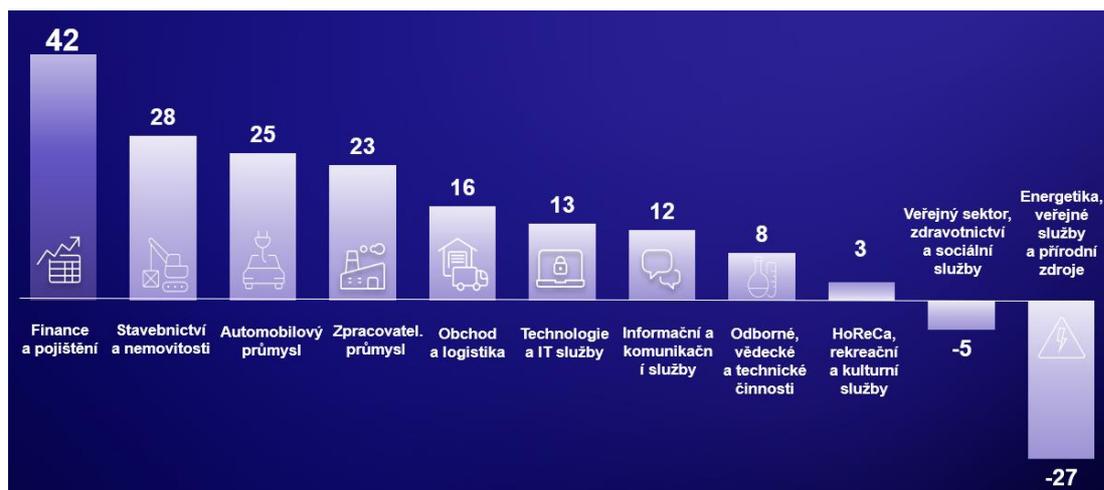
An even more pronounced quarter-on-quarter decline can be seen in the Professional, Scientific, and Technical Activities sector, with a Net Index of 8 (a decline of 21 p. p.). This still means growth in the number of employees, but the Index is the lowest in 1.5 years.

The least optimistic sectors are Public Sector, Health Care and Social Services, with an index of -5. It fell by 15 p. p. quarter-on-quarter and by 23 p. p. year-on-year, and Energy, Public Utilities and Natural Resources, with an index of -27 p. p. and a decline of 37 percentage points compared to the previous quarter. This sector regularly experiences a decline in the spring.

Czech organizations in 9 of the 11 sectors surveyed expect an increase in the number of employees in the second quarter of 2026, while two sectors report negative values, meaning that more companies plan to lay off than hire. The level of optimism is increasing in 4 sectors, while 5 sectors expect a slowdown in hiring.

"We are currently seeing a paradox on the Czech labor market, which has been deepening in recent years. Sectors such as construction, industry, and especially the automotive industry are reporting growth in demand for employees, but in reality they are looking for very specific profiles, either highly qualified specialists, technicians, engineers, or, conversely, skilled trades that have been in short supply for a long time. It is practically impossible to fill these positions from among the unemployed, as their qualifications often do not match the needs of companies at all. We see a similar trend in the financial sector and IT, where companies are strengthening strategic roles in areas such as data analytics, cybersecurity, digital product management, and AI, while trying to automate routine and operational activities. Structural factors also come into

play. The recruitment of foreign workers continues to be hampered by administrative barriers, and demographics are inexorably reducing the number of people of working age. The result is a widening gap between what companies actually need and the qualifications and expectations of job seekers. Companies are reporting a shortage of people, while some employees feel they cannot find a job that meets their expectations, which is causing frustration on both sides of the market," says **Jaroslava Rezlerová**, CEO of ManpowerGroup Czech Republic..



Comparison by company size

In terms of organization size, there has been an interesting development, particularly among smaller companies, where optimism has increased quarter-on-quarter, while optimism has declined among medium-sized and large companies. Smaller employers are thus showing greater recruitment optimism than large companies, which is not very common.

The most positive are organizations with 10-49 employees, with an index of 22, and micro-organizations (fewer than 10 employees), where the index reaches 21 p. p. Large companies (1,000–4,999 employees) are the least likely to hire, with a Net Index of 7, followed by large organizations with more than 5,000 employees (10 p. p.). The largest quarter-on-quarter decline is seen in medium-sized companies (250–999 employees), down 20 p. p. to 13.

Regional development: Prague is growing, but Moravia and Bohemia are slowing down

In all three regions, employers are predominantly increasing their workforce. Prague has the highest index (19 p. p.), improving by 3 p. p. quarter-on-quarter and 6 p. p. year-on-year. Moravia and Silesia follow with a Net Index of 12, but optimism has fallen by 13 p. p. compared to the previous quarter. Bohemia lags slightly behind Moravia and Silesia with an index of 11.

Global perspective

The ManpowerGroup Employment Outlook Survey for the second quarter of 2026 surveyed a total of 41,764 employers in 42 countries. The global employment outlook

improved by 6 percentage points to 31 compared to the previous quarter and by 7 percentage points year-on-year.

North America (36) reports its strongest hiring optimism in nearly four years for the second quarter of 2026. The US added 130,000 jobs in January, primarily in healthcare and construction, yet unemployment remains elevated.

Europe (21) is growing slightly for the fourth consecutive quarter, but continues to lag behind other regions. Growth is mainly driven by Southern Europe, while Germany, Central and Eastern Europe remain below average. Germany (18), as a key customer for Czech exports, remains more optimistic than Czechia, but in previous years its Index was up to half higher than it is now. Germany lags behind the global average by 13 points. Although the economy is showing signs of stabilization thanks to higher government spending and better GDP growth expectations, persistent geopolitical and trade uncertainties are leading companies to be cautious.

About the ManpowerGroup Employment Outlook Survey

The ManpowerGroup Employment Outlook Survey is conducted quarterly to track employers' plans to reduce or increase their workforce during the following quarter. The Czech Republic is one of 42 countries in which the survey is conducted.

The survey has been conducted for 60 years and has become one of the most trusted recruitment surveys in the world. The ManpowerGroup Employment Outlook Survey is based on a survey of approximately 40,000 employers in the public and private sectors across 42 countries and is considered a highly reliable economic indicator.

The ManpowerGroup Employment Outlook Survey is currently conducted in the following 42 countries and regions around the world: Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Guatemala, Hong Kong, India, Ireland, Italy, Israel, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, Panama, Peru, Poland, Puerto Rico, Portugal, Romania, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. Colombia, Costa Rica, Hungary, Mexico, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Panama, Peru, Poland, Puerto Rico, Portugal, Austria, Romania, Greece, Singapore, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

For more information about the survey and detailed results for all countries, visit manpowergroup.com/workforce-insights/ or manpower.cz/pruzkumy/.

The next ManpowerGroup Employment Outlook Survey results will be released on June 9, 2026.

ManpowerGroup in the Czech Republic

ManpowerGroup has been operating in the Czech Republic for more than 30 years and is one of the leaders in the field of personnel and HR solutions. It helps companies respond to changes in the labor market and helps people find meaningful and

sustainable employment. The company focuses on talent recruitment and development, flexible forms of work, digitization of HR processes, and support for equal opportunities. ManpowerGroup Czech Republic has 21 branches and fills over 2,000 specialized positions for its clients each year and handles payroll for more than 5,500 agency employees.