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Swiss Staffingindex: staffing service provider turnover drops after economic slowdown

A disappointing year for staffing service providers. Even highly qualified profiles have been affected. The construction and domestic services sectors saw growth.

2025 was an economically challenging year for Swiss staffing service providers. The number of hours worked by temporary workers fell by 7.1 percent compared with the previous year, according to the Swiss Staffingindex. This marks the first time that the temporary staffing sector has fallen three years in a row. The permanent staffing sector is similarly declining: turnover in 2025 was down 23.3 percent on the already weak previous year of 2024. The downturn in the global economy, the economic crisis in Germany, and huge economic uncertainty (due to factors that include US tariff policy) have all played a part in this trend. In contrast, the construction and domestic services industries in particular provided growth momentum.

Swiss staffing service providers were affected by significant economic slowdown in 2025. This is due in part to US tariff policy, which created months of huge uncertainty in the export industry. This was compounded by lingering economic weakness in Germany, one of Switzerland's most important sales markets. These shocks prompted economic development to generally wane. Given the poor order situation, many companies – especially in industry – have been very cautious in their staff planning. Whilst the lukewarm growth prospects had a particularly strong effect on the permanent staffing sector, the absence of short-term order peaks also had a negative impact on staff leasing. The persistent housing shortage and interest rate cuts by the Swiss National Bank made their impact known in 2025. Business in the construction sector remained stable and prevented a sharper decline – a trend that is likely to continue next year with the abolition of the imputed rental value.

Staffing service providers reflecting the Swiss labor market

The staff leasing sector anticipates labor market developments ahead of other sectors. As SECO's unemployment statistics show, unemployment has risen the most sharply since December 2021 in sectors like research and development (+146 percent), information technology (+96 percent) and the pharmaceutical industry (+91 percent). Christian Biedermann, Managing Director of Coopers Group AG, notes: "Demand for IT specialists for cloud solutions, cybersecurity and artificial intelligence has remained high." However, things are harder for generalists: "The IT labor shortage is over. Uncertainty and cost pressure in particular are keeping companies from offering permanent jobs." The temporary market has proven more nuanced. Biedermann explains: "Companies are becoming less reluctant to start new projects and ongoing deployments are continuing. The combination of IT skills and industry expertise is particularly in demand in highly regulated sectors.” Things are similar in the pharmaceutical sector. Ramon Bodenmiller, Managing Director of Bodenmiller Recruitment GmbH, says: “The pharmaceutical industry is still intensively seeking specialists in the clinical sphere, regulation and quality management.” Overarching functions such as marketing, finance and sales have seen lower demand.

Growth in construction and domestic services

According to SECO, unemployment has continued to fall since December 2021 in numerous sectors, a drop that has been particularly apparent in domestic services (-17 percent) and construction (-12 percent). This trend is also reflected in the staff leasing sector. “The construction industry has developed well over the last year”, says Balz M. Villiger, Country Manager of Gi Group Switzerland. “Carpenters, electricians and foremen are particularly in demand. These professional groups cannot be replaced by AI. The trend also demonstrates the strength of Switzerland’s apprenticeships: training professions and thus the dual education system have proven to be essential cornerstones in the current market situation. They provide the exact specialists who are particularly needed right now.” Villiger is optimistic about the coming months: “The combination of the abolition of the imputed rental value, the recent interest rate cuts, and a persistent housing shortage will further increase demand in the construction industry.” He also warned of one crucial challenge: “A lack of specialists could be a limiting factor for many construction companies.”

The staff leasing sector is also actively involved in domestic services through in-house care for seniors. Béatrice Mast, CEO of Dovida Switzerland, observes: “Due to demographic change, there is a high level of demand from seniors for care. This has allowed our company to buck the market trend and grow.” In order to meet this rising demand, Dovida Switzerland is promoting low-threshold training opportunities for new employees. Mast explains: “Training and continuing education have enabled us to quickly integrate even older job seekers, including those not currently in employment.”

KOF and SECO forecasts suggest that the economic situation in Switzerland will remain challenging. The CEOs of the swissstaffing member companies are expecting to see bottoming out in 2026. An ad-hoc survey conducted by gfs-zürich showed that 79 percent expected a sideways or upward trend in business over the next six months. Only 12 percent were expecting a decline in 2026. Dr. Marius Osterfeld, Head of Economics and Politics at swissstaffing, offers a reminder: “The market is currently dominated by negative trends. At the same time, artificial intelligence, population growth, and demographics are all offering new market opportunities. This growth potential is being underestimated.”

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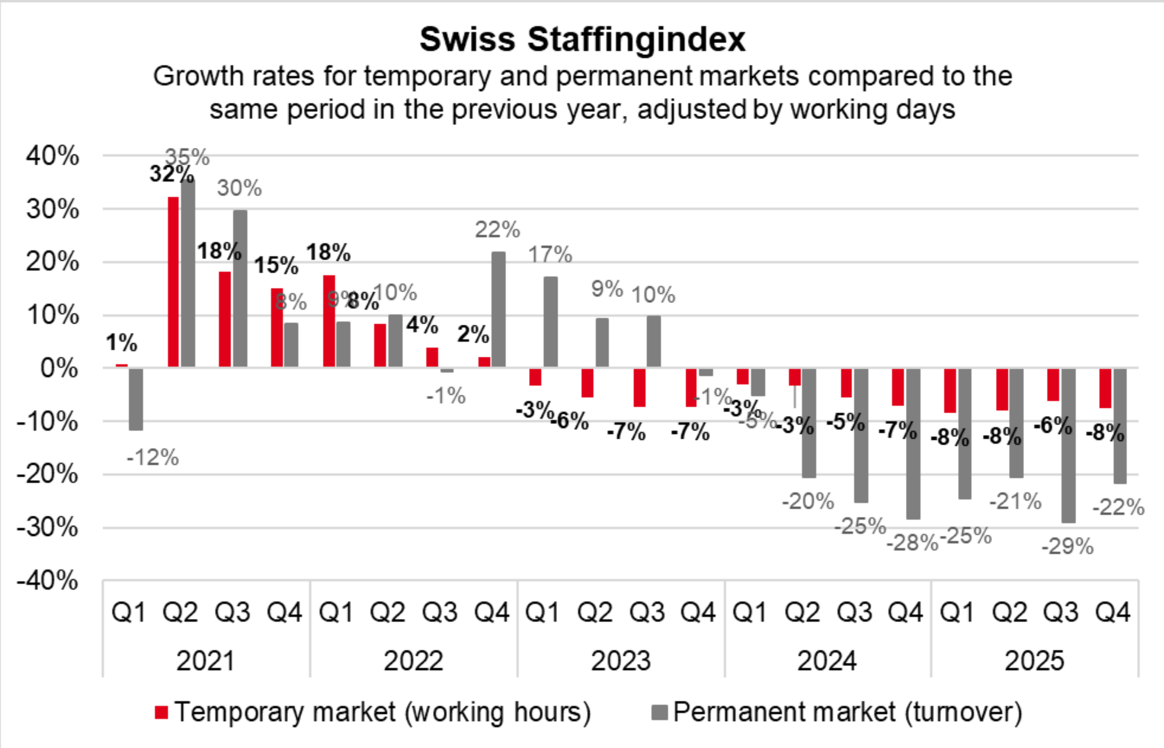
The pages that follow show the index's key data and the development of the underlying index values. Other statistics are available by clicking on this link.



Source: swissstaffing, Q4/2025

Swiss Staffing Index key data	
Staff leasing companies included	400 companies
Temporary staffing market	
Working hours recorded per year	103 million
Temporary staffing market coverage	approx. 50 percent
Permanent staffing market	
Permanent job placements recorded per year	8500
Permanent employment market coverage	approx. 40 percent
Publication dates	
Frequency of publication	Monthly
Frequency of press releases	Quarterly
Next provisional publication date	April 30, 2026

Source: swissstaffing, Q4/2025

Swiss Staffingindex: temporary staffing market (working hours), basis: Q1 2018

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Q1	100.0	103.7	101.4	102.0	120.0	116.1	112.7	103.2
Q2	134.6	132.8	105.6	139.7	151.3	142.8	138.1	127.1
Q3	140.5	140.1	123.4	145.8	151.4	140.3	132.7	124.6
Q4	128.7	129.2	122.4	140.8	143.8	133.5	124.1	114.8

Source: swissstaffing, Q4/2025

Swiss Staffingindex: permanent staffing market (turnover in CHF), basis: Q1 2018

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Q1	100.0	103.5	89.6	79.2	85.6	100.6	95.5	72.0
Q2	105.7	110.7	67.7	91.7	99.1	110.2	87.7	69.7
Q3	97.4	90.9	69.2	89.6	89.1	95.1	71.3	50.7
Q4	92.3	82.6	66.0	71.5	87.1	86.0	61.7	48.3

Source: swissstaffing, Q4/2025

swissstaffing is the centre of excellence for staffing service providers in Switzerland. As an employers' association, swissstaffing represents the interests of its over 500 members in matters of policy, the economy and society. swissstaffing is a social partner of the CBA on Staff Leasing, the contract covering the majority of Switzerland's employees.

Studies on temporary workers and staffing service providers in Switzerland

The market research institute gfs-zürich completes regular surveys on behalf of swissstaffing. The current study can be found at this link.