As countries around the globe begin to reopen their economies, this month’s report reveals the first potential signs of recovery for employees and companies.

We dive into the significant differences in the recovery for male and female employees, as well as different age groups.
Figure 1: Overall employee turnover continues to be far below 2019 values. This graph shows the change in turnover rate (annualized), comparing 2020 to 2019.

Resignations and hiring are trending positively upwards, while involuntary turnover is down.

Figure 1 shows overall turnover for the second week of June is still 40% below the same period in 2019. However, from mid-May to the beginning of June, the gap decreased to about 25%. There is more to this story, since changes in overall turnover are driven by both decision-making of organizations through involuntary turnover and by the actions of individual employees via resignations.
Figure 2: Involuntary turnover in May is comparable to 2019 values, and for the beginning of June, there was a reduction. This graph shows the change in involuntary turnover rate (annualized), comparing 2020 to 2019.

The data in Figure 2 shows involuntary turnover decreased to values of 65% below 2019 in the second week of June (compared to being about equal to 2019 values in the second half of May). This could signal a positive response to the reopening, as in order to meet the demands of increased economic activity, companies look to retain their remaining talent.
Businesses have also drastically increased their external hiring. Figure 3 shows the hiring rate reaching 35% annualized. This is an increase by one-third compared to the 27% annualized hiring rate at the beginning of May. In comparison to 2019 the low-point of external hiring was reached in mid-May at 42% reduction. This was caused by an uptick in hiring in May 2019 (characteristic for this period) that did not occur in 2020. That said, hiring in June has picked up dramatically, and the difference to 2019 by mid-June is only 15%. It is important to understand however, as this report shows later on, that this hiring is focused on certain employee groups.
The data also reveals that employees are starting to feel more confident about potential job opportunities. This is indicated by their increased willingness to resign from their current jobs.

At its low point at the end of April, resignation counts were 60% below 2019 values. Since the beginning of May, there has been increased resignation activity. While the number of resignations is still well below 2019 values, the second week of June shows resignation rates were just 34% below 2019 values. In absolute numbers, the resignation rate increased from 8% in the first half of April to around 14% by the first half of June (Figure 4).

With more jobs available, employees’ risk aversion to switching jobs has decreased, but there are again important differences by employee groups, which is detailed in the next section.
Male and female employees are responding differently to resignation trends.

Prior to 2020, female employees resigned at higher rates than their male counterparts (Figure 5). At the beginning of the year, both men and women were resigning at the same rate as in 2019.
Figure 6 highlights how male and female employees reacted differently to the pandemic. When the pandemic hit in earnest, female employees’ resignation rate decreased in early-March, while male employees were slower to respond and didn’t begin to decrease resignations until later that month. For all employees, the low-point for resignations was reached in late-April. In that same period, male employees sat at 48% of 2019 resignation counts, while female employees sat at 31%.

Similarly, the recovery also shows differences by gender. Resignations started to rise again at the start of May both for male and female employees; however, the rate of increase was much higher for male employees. By mid-June, as seen in Figure 5, the female employee resignation rate (14%) is halfway back to 2019 values (26%), while the male employee resignation rate (16%) is nearly to where it was in 2019 (18%).

The data seems to indicate that female employees responded faster to the crisis and did so by holding on to their jobs. But with the reopening of economies, male employees now might be feeling more bullish about job switching than their female counterparts.
Figure 7: Resignation rate (annualized) comparing 2020 to 2019, 2018, and 2017. Four charts show the resignation rates for the age groups 18–25 yrs (top-left), 25–40 yrs (top-right), 40–55 yrs (bottom-left) and 55–76 yrs (bottom-right).

Hiring and resignations for younger workers nearly back to pre-pandemic rates.

Prior to the pandemic, the resignation rates for workers aged 18–25 years showed this cohort as being much more likely to quit their jobs than older employees (see Figure 7). The resignation rate steadily declines as age increases. This is the result of younger employees typically being at different points in their career and likely having different family responsibilities than older workers.
The percent difference of resignations in 2020 compared to 2019, shown in Figure 8, reveals that the impact of the pandemic was actually quite similar for all age groups. Resignations declined in earnest in late-March and the two mid-aged groups showed a reduction approximately 50% (ages 25–40 years) and 52% (ages 40–55 years), while resignations of youngest and oldest employees decreased by approximately 59% (ages 18–25 years) and 63% (ages 55–76 years) compared to 2019 values.

The onset of recovery, indicated by an increasing resignation rate (seen in Figure 4), can be much more clearly understood when comparing different age groups. Since their low-point of 81% resignation reduction at the end of April, younger employees aged 18–25 years have shown a remarkable recovery. By the second week of June, their resignation rate now even surpasses their 2019 values. This is in sharp contrast to the other age groups. Only a weak increase in resignations for employees above 25 years in age is seen over the same time window, potentially indicating there is a quicker recovery related to entry-level roles than more senior or specialized positions.
Historically, hiring rates ramp up for many organizations in late-April, as new graduates enter the workforce. This can be seen in Figure 9 in the top-left chart for the 18–25 years age group from 2017-2019. During the pandemic, all age cohorts had less new starts, but the data shows that in the second week of June 2020, hiring within the age group 18–25 years has increased, fully recovering to the 2019 value.
Figure 10: Percent difference of external hiring rate (annualized) for 2020 vs 2019, comparing the four age groups 18–25 yrs, 25–40 yrs, 40–55 yrs and 55–76 yrs.

The percent difference comparison of 2020 to 2019 allows a better comparison of the impact of the pandemic on different age groups (see Figure 10). Hiring declined at the beginning of March for all age groups; however, this decline was more rapid for workers aged 18–25 years.

The youngest cohort and the oldest cohort reached their low-point in late-April, at approximately 69% (ages 18–25 years) and 63% (ages 55–76 years) reduction compared to 2019. The results show a split in the recovery process. While there is a swift recovery to 2019 values for employees aged 18–25 years starting in the later half of May, hiring for other age groups is still largely on hold into the second week of June.
High tech companies continue to show signs of recovery.

The May 2020 edition of this report highlighted that high tech companies reacted differently to COVID-19 than other industries, with increased involuntary turnover and increased hiring. Measurements for the first half of June in high tech show another story of recovery. Figure 11 reveals that the increased involuntary turnover observed in March, April, and May has gone back to 2019 values, even dipping 85% below 2019 values for the second week of June.
Figure 12: Hiring for High Tech companies. This graph shows the change in external hiring rate, comparing 2020 to 2019. This year, there is a clear reduction of hiring compared to last year for both weeks.

Figure 12 shows that hiring in the high tech industry is also changing from their somewhat increased values in April and May when compared with 2019. Last year, hiring picked up in the first week of June and was still relatively high in the second week of June. This year, there is a clear reduction of hiring compared to last year for both weeks.
Summary

This report uncovers the disparities that exist between gender and age groups during the recovery phase of the COVID-19 pandemic. Employers should not implement one-size-fits-all policies, but use their people data and analytics to develop equitable and targeted strategies that will support their most at-risk employee groups.

Even once the pandemic has passed, businesses will be operating in a permanently altered environment. If you have enhanced your people analytics capabilities during this crisis, you can build agile plans and increase the scope of decision-making. You will then be in the best position to build the future success of your business around the core group of people who will differentiate your results.

The data for the figures published in this report are available on GitHub: [github.com/VisierSolutionsInc/VisierInsightsReports](https://github.com/VisierSolutionsInc/VisierInsightsReports)
Resources

Visier is committed to helping organizations react, respond, and recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. To assist with data-driven decisions for crisis management and workforce planning, we are providing curated COVID-19 data and analytic content to our customers using Visier People, the market leading solution for people analytics and workforce planning.

We are also making our curated global COVID-19 case data, which is transparently consolidated from many primary and secondary sources, publicly available via GitHub:

github.com/VisierSolutionsInc/VisierCOVID19CaseData

Crisis management resources and virtual open forums for data-driven leaders are available at:

visier.com/crisis-management/

Visier Methodology

At the core of Visier Insights reports is Visier’s unique database of anonymized, standardized workforce data. For this report we targeted a broad range of employers, leveraging a subset of Visier’s customer database, which included over six million employee records from more than 70 large companies.

Companies included in this report represent a wide range of industries, including Healthcare, Technology, Financial Services and Insurance, Energy, and Manufacturing. For each of the included companies, Visier ensured a high degree of confidence in both data availability and quality for the topics and time period being covered by the report.
About Visier

Visier’s purpose is to help people see the truth and create a better future, now.

Visier was founded to focus on what matters to business people: answering the right questions, even the ones a person might not know to ask. Questions that shape business strategy, provide the impetus for taking action, and drive better business results.

Visier delivers fast, clear people insight by using all the available people data—regardless of source. With best-practice expertise built-in, decision-makers can confidently take action. Thanks to our amazing customers, Visier is the market leader in Workforce Analytics with 5,000 customers in 75 countries around the world.

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