Following the sharp drop in resignations and hiring across the board seen during the July COVID-19 resurgence, new data from September shows both women and workers aged 18-25 years old are trailing behind their counterparts.

The Visier Insights database, comprising over six million employee records from more than 70 large companies, reveals how different age and gender groups are reacting to the new outbreaks.
Figure 1: Overall employee turnover was above 2019 values at the beginning of September, however it has decreased since then. This graph shows the change in turnover rate (annualized), comparing 2020 to 2019.

**Hiring surpasses 2019 levels in September.**

September was filled with significant fluctuations in turnover: The month began with an increase to 30% more than the same period last year, followed by a drop to 35% below 2019 values by the end of the month. A combination of factors is at play, which is resolved by measuring involuntary turnover and resignations separately.
**Figure 2:** Involuntary turnover is fluctuating strongly above and below 2019 values. This graph shows the change in involuntary turnover rate (annualized), comparing 2020 to 2019. The observed decrease since mid-September could be caused by delayed recording of involuntary turnover in the HR data.

Involuntary turnover mirrors the overall turnover trend, with numbers fluctuating around 2019 values as well. By the end of September, involuntary turnover is 57% below 2019 levels; however, this may be due to delayed recording of involuntary turnover events.
One positive sign, reflected in the new data, is the external hiring rate has surpassed last year's rate for the second time in 2020. The first week of September shows an increase of 46% above 2019's hiring rate, bouncing back from a drop in momentum observed in late-August. The first time external hiring surpassed 2019 values was in the second half of June and early July; however, with the largest increase of 17%. Hiring rates continued to stay above 2019 levels for the rest of September.
Resignations rose to 23% (annualized) in early August, reaching 2019 values for the first time since March. This is followed by a decrease in resignations throughout September, reaching 14% at the end of the month, which is 27% lower than in 2019.

While employees are still resigning during the pandemic, there are definite signs of hesitation. However, coupled with the significant increase in external hires, the data suggests there is enough movement in the market that unemployment rates could decrease as the last quarter of the year unfolds.
Women remain the most cautious with resignations, and are being hired less frequently.

While resignation rates for women have yet to recover to 2019 values, men briefly surpassed 2019 resignation rates at three points: early June (5% higher than 2019), early August (8% higher than in 2019) and early September (7% higher than in 2019).

However, both genders are resigning less as the fall season goes on. As of late September, the resignation rate for men is 8% and for women it is 39% less compared to last year.
Resignation rates for women continue to be lower than those of their male counterparts. When both genders were at their highest resignation values for September, female employees resigned at 13% below 2019 values, while male employees resigned at 7% above 2019 values.
Hiring rates show a more positive sign for both genders. By early September, men and women have surpassed 2019 levels by 30% and 11%, respectively. However, female starts have decreased as the month continues, while those for male employees stay well above last year's numbers.
By late September, the hiring rate for male employees is 12% above 2019 values, while for female employees, the rate is at 15% below 2019 values. The female hiring rate has been consistently lower than for male employees compared to 2019 since the beginning of June this year.
Figure 9: 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).

**Resignation and hiring decrease sharply for 18–25 year olds.**

Resignations show a reversal in confidence for the youngest age cohort: where 18-25 year olds resigned at rates surpassing 2019 values in August, there has been a dramatic decrease during all of September, ending in 21% below 2019. In contrast, the older age cohorts (24-40, 40-55, and 55-76) had less volatile fluctuations in resignations throughout the month, yet with a clear downward turn.
Despite gains early in the month, by late September, resignation rates for all age cohorts have decreased. For 18-25 year olds, the rate is 21%; 25-40 year olds is at 43%; 40-55 year olds is at 47%; and 55-76 year olds at 59% compared to 2019 values.

This may indicate decreased confidence in the talent market amidst an upswing in new COVID-19 cases.
In early September, all cohorts were hired at increased rates, with 25-40 year olds surging ahead of the pack. Their external starts are 35% above 2019 levels—and 16% higher than previous leaders, the 18-25 cohort.
Figure 12: 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.

Despite a reduction in hiring, 18-25 year olds are still the only group to be close to their 2019 levels (6% below 2019 at the end of September). Additionally, the 25-40 year old cohort had the highest increase in starts among the older cohorts, which could indicate a need for more experienced workers to help companies weather the continued uncertainty of the business environment.

Involuntary turnover rates increased sharply in July following the resurgence of COVID-19 cases, and by August, the rates rose and fell steadily.

**Figure 13:** Involuntary turnover for High Tech companies. This graph shows the change in involuntary turnover rate (annualized), comparing 2020 to 2019. Data from the middle of September onwards are omitted, because delayed data corrections are expected to affect these values.

**Hiring increases in the tech industry.**
Figure 14: Hiring for High Tech companies. This graph shows the change in external hiring rate, comparing 2020 to 2019. 

Hiring in the first week of September showed a sharp increase to 81% above 2019 values, followed by some variability. By the end of the month, hiring was between 22% below and 12% above 2019 values. This may be another positive sign of steady hiring during the fall season.
Summary

This new data shows that women have been disproportionately affected by this pandemic since it began. Likewise, while 18-25 year olds appear to have stalled in both resignations and hiring, employers must not forget that older workers have yet to recover as this age group has.

More work needs to be done to ensure that both women and older workers, especially those over age 40, are given the same hiring opportunities as others, and that those who stay—rather than resign from—their organizations have fair and equitable access to promotions, training, salary increases, and other opportunities.

Quick and flexible decision-making is needed more than ever. If you have enhanced your people analytics capabilities during this crisis, now is the time to build agile plans based on your data and model different scenarios for recovery.

The data for the figures published in this report are available on GitHub: github.com/VisierSolutionsInc/VisierInsightsReports
Footnotes

1,2,3,4,5  The most recent metric values that are highlighted in the top panel are rounded. The percent change indicated in brackets is more precise (without rounding) and it is consistent with the lower panel.

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.

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/
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.

For more information, visit visier.com
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