

# News Release

Embargoed until 0815 GST (0415 UTC) 5 May 2025

## S&P Global United Arab Emirates PMI®

### Hiring growth picks up in April as firms look to reduce workloads

#### Key findings

Employment rises at fastest pace in 11 months

Activity growth remains marked, despite softening

Backlog accumulation eases further

Non-oil private sector businesses in the UAE increased employment levels at a stronger pace at the start of the second quarter, in a bid to ease capacity pressures and support new business growth. Output continued to expand sharply, albeit with the pace of growth slipping to a seven-month low. While backlogs accumulated at a slightly softer rate, firms signalled further difficulties completing existing work amid payment delays. Nevertheless, they remained confident that sales pipelines would underpin output growth over the coming year.

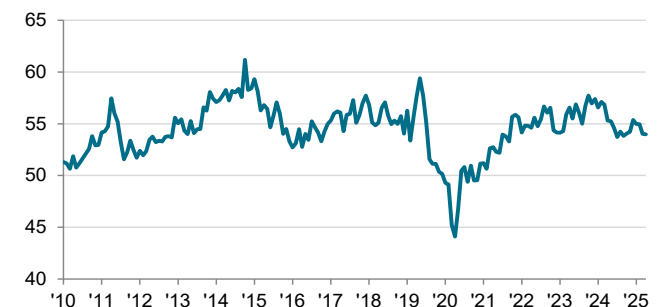
The seasonally adjusted S&P Global UAE Purchasing Managers' Index™ (PMI®) – a composite indicator designed to give an accurate overview of operating conditions in the non-oil private sector economy – was at 54.0 in April, unchanged from March and indicative of a solid strengthening of operating conditions. Faster increases in new orders and employment were offset by a greater improvement in supplier delivery times (which is normally associated with weaker conditions).

Notably, staff numbers across the non-oil economy rose at the sharpest rate in 11 months. This followed a relatively subdued period of job creation, especially since the final quarter of last year. Surveyed businesses typically related higher employment to a growing need to address workloads, which the survey data indicated have been elevated since early 2024. The latest figures showed the rate of backlog accumulation easing to a six-month low, albeit remaining steep overall. Transaction delays hampered work completion, according to panellists.

In many cases, businesses also signalled that an increase in new work had pushed backlogs higher. Total new orders rose sharply, with the rate of growth accelerating from March. This was partly due to the strongest upturn in international demand for five months, while companies also reported gaining domestic clients.

S&P Global United Arab Emirates PMI

sa, >50 = improvement since previous month



Source: S&P Global PMI.

Data were collected 9-24 April 2025.

#### Comment

David Owen, Senior Economist at S&P Global Market Intelligence, said:

*"The April PMI results signalled a notable uptick in hiring activity across the non-oil private sector. After several months of mild increases in payroll numbers, despite robust sales growth, job creation rose to its highest level in 11 months. Firms signalled this was mainly done as part of efforts to reduce their backlogs, which rose sharply but at the softest pace in six months. That said, employment growth was still modest overall, adding to suggestions that some firms may be struggling to recruit."*

*"The headline PMI's reading of 54.0, which was unchanged from March, signals that underlying business conditions are still improving robustly. Firms are also hopeful that elevated demand levels and strong pipelines, as characterised by steeply rising backlogs, should propel activity higher in the coming months."*

PMI®

by S&P Global

© 2025 S&P Global

Business activity rose markedly in April, although momentum continued to weaken to a seven-month low. There was also a considerable increase in input purchases at non-oil firms, as panellists reported growing demand for materials and components. The rate of growth was sharp, but softened from March's 68-month peak.

Elsewhere, the survey data signalled a stronger improvement in supplier performance at the start of the second quarter. Lead times shortened at the fastest pace since last August, which firms mainly attributed to efforts at vendors to increase their capacity.

Despite input purchases rising and delivery times shortening, stock levels were broadly unchanged for the second consecutive month. Growth at some firms was offset by reductions elsewhere.

Input prices in the non-oil economy increased again during April. The rise was in line with the series trend, as companies reported uplifts in both purchasing and staff costs. Prices charged were also raised, but at a slower pace than in March, with many panellists citing efforts to offer lower prices to customers amid strong competition.

Looking ahead, surveyed firms remained confident that sales pipelines and resilient market conditions would support activity going forward. The degree of confidence ticked up for the third month running and was the best recorded in 2025 so far.

## Dubai PMI

The latest survey data for Dubai signalled a softer upturn in operating conditions across the non-oil private sector during April. This was mainly due to a weaker increase in new business inflows, with firms reporting the slowest pace of growth since last October.

That said, order book volumes continued to rise sharply overall, contributing to another robust expansion in business activity. The rate of increase in output quickened slightly from the three-and-a-half-year low recorded in March.

Employment expanded during April, overturning a brief reduction in March, as firms reportedly looked to boost their capacity. At the same time though, companies showed a lower degree of confidence towards future activity levels. In fact, expectations were among the weakest on record.

## Contact

David Owen  
Senior Economist  
S&P Global Market Intelligence  
T: +44 1491 461 002  
[david.owen@spglobal.com](mailto:david.owen@spglobal.com)

Kriti Khurana  
Corporate Communications  
S&P Global Market Intelligence  
T: +91-971-101-7186  
[kritikhurana@spglobal.com](mailto:kritikhurana@spglobal.com)

If you prefer not to receive news releases from S&P Global, please email [press.mi@spglobal.com](mailto:press.mi@spglobal.com). To read our privacy policy, [click here](#).

---

### Survey methodology

The S&P Global United Arab Emirates PMI® is compiled by S&P Global from responses to questionnaires sent to purchasing managers in a panel of around 1000 private sector companies. The panel is stratified by detailed sector and company workforce size, based on contributions to GDP. The sectors covered by the survey include manufacturing, construction, wholesale, retail and services. Data were first collected August 2009.

Survey responses are collected in the second half of each month and indicate the direction of change compared to the previous month. A diffusion index is calculated for each survey variable. The index is the sum of the percentage of 'higher' responses and half the percentage of 'unchanged' responses. The indices vary between 0 and 100, with a reading above 50 indicating an overall increase compared to the previous month, and below 50 an overall decrease. The indices are then seasonally adjusted.

The headline figure is the Purchasing Managers' Index™ (PMI). The PMI is a weighted average of the following five indices: New Orders (30%), Output (25%), Employment (20%), Suppliers' Delivery Times (15%) and Stocks of Purchases (10%). For the PMI calculation the Suppliers' Delivery Times Index is inverted so that it moves in a comparable direction to the other indices.

Underlying survey data are not revised after publication, but seasonal adjustment factors may be revised from time to time as appropriate which will affect the seasonally adjusted data series.

For further information on the PMI survey methodology, please contact [economics@spglobal.com](mailto:economics@spglobal.com).

### Disclaimer

The intellectual property rights to the data provided herein are owned by or licensed to S&P Global and/or its affiliates. Any unauthorised use, including but not limited to copying, distributing, transmitting or otherwise of any data appearing is not permitted without S&P Global's prior consent. S&P Global shall not have any liability, duty or obligation for or relating to the content or information ("Data") contained herein, any errors, inaccuracies, omissions or delays in the Data, or for any actions taken in reliance thereon. In no event shall S&P Global be liable for any special, incidental, or consequential damages, arising out of the use of the Data. Purchasing Managers' Index™ and PMI® are either trade marks or registered trade marks of S&P Global Inc or licensed to S&P Global Inc and/or its affiliates.

This Content was published by S&P Global Market Intelligence and not by S&P Global Ratings, which is a separately managed division of S&P Global. Reproduction of any information, data or material, including ratings ("Content") in any form is prohibited except with the prior written permission of the relevant party. Such party, its affiliates and suppliers ("Content Providers") do not guarantee the accuracy, adequacy, completeness, timeliness or availability of any Content and are not responsible for any errors or omissions (negligent or otherwise), regardless of the cause, or for the results obtained from the use of such Content. In no event shall Content Providers be liable for any damages, costs, expenses, legal fees, or losses (including lost income or lost profit and opportunity costs) in connection with any use of the Content.

**PMI®**

by **S&P Global**