

The 2017 **RICS** and Macdonald & Company  
MIDDLE EAST REWARDS & ATTITUDES SURVEY

Now in its TENTH year,  
the annual **RICS** and  
Macdonald & Company  
**REWARDS & ATTITUDES SURVEY**  
is the most comprehensive  
survey undertaken for  
the Property Sector.

## Introduction

The tenth edition of the annual Macdonald & Company Middle East Rewards and Attitudes Survey is the most comprehensive survey of its type undertaken for the property sector in the Middle East and North Africa region. The survey which reaches a diverse spectrum of participants across the GCC and beyond, is run from November 2016 to March 2017 to coincide with the other Macdonald & Company Surveys covering the UK, Europe, and Asia.

We would like to thank all of the participants who completed the Survey this year. There are comprehensive statistics on current salaries, bonuses and employment benefits in addition to information on broader employment issues and attitudes which are very relevant to employers and employees alike.

The Executive Summary sets out the key findings. Because of rounding, some percentages may not add up to 100.

## Foreword

We are currently experiencing a cautious employment market across the GCC region with few companies expanding aggressively and some more senior level redundancies being made. However, sentiment remains cautiously optimistic for the year ahead.

Oil prices remain low – trading at around \$50 per barrel as I write this. OPEC's decision to cut production at the end of 2016 gave short term gains but recently Brent crude closed at its lowest level this year, erasing all of the gains since OPEC started to cut production. Much of the business activity in the GCC is driven by government spending and large new real estate projects continue to be launched, such as the Jumeirah Central project in Dubai.

VAT looks set to be launched in the UAE in early 2018 however finer details of how this will be implemented and governed remains to be seen.

Industry participants are predicting economies such as Dubai will prove to be resilient as they move yet further away from their reliance upon oil and continue to become a global business hub. EXPO 2020 is now only 3 years away and infrastructure and projects relating to this are beginning to come out of the ground and take shape.

Dubai is a very versatile economy with a growing population and hospitality offering although tourism has been affected over the past year, due to the very strong dollar making Dubai an expensive destination. The result of BREXIT in the UK has meant the sterling has dropped significantly over the past year but news of another general

election taking place in the UK in June has meant the currency has rallied slightly and looks likely to continue to do so.

The overall findings of the 2017 salary survey show that much remains unchanged from last year with the annual average salary being AED 46,148 (a slight increase on AED 44,392 last year) and the average salary increase being 9.9% (a slight drop from 10.2% last year). A lower percentage of respondents are expecting sentiment to decrease compared to last year and salary levels and responsibility remain the key drivers in respondents job satisfaction levels.

Demand remains strong for high quality, qualified candidates from within the GCC region and abroad with the valuations and development sectors among the most competitive. Arabic speakers are still very much in demand and we are seeing increased demand for candidates who can travel easily across the GCC region for work purposes.

The UAE remains a choice destination for many real estate professionals from across the globe and we feel that whilst 2017 maybe a flat year, the medium to long term outlook is strong.

We look forward to a successful 2017.

Lara Hall, Director, Macdonald & Company, May 2017

**For further information or analysis please contact: [info@macdonaldandcompany.com](mailto:info@macdonaldandcompany.com)**

A comprehensive salary benchmarking service tailor made to individual client's needs is also available.

An online statistics package for the 2017 survey, as well as access to the two previous annual surveys, is available at a cost of US \$1199. In addition to the MENA region, Macdonald & Company undertake salary surveys for UK and Asia Pacific. All reports are available at [www.macdonaldandcompany.com](http://www.macdonaldandcompany.com)

For the sixth year, the results have been collated and analysed by BluSky Research (a research trading name of BluSky Marketing Limited – [www.bluskymarketing.com](http://www.bluskymarketing.com)).

34% ↑

are anticipating an improvement in economic activity (+7%\*).

18% ↓

18% of respondents believe that economic activity will decrease (down from 33% last year).

43% ↑

of respondents received a base salary increase (-8%\*).

9.9% ↑

Of the 43% who received an increase the average was 9.9% (-0.3%\*).

AED 46,148

is the average monthly salary for a Real Estate professional in the Middle East (+AED 1,756\*).

AED 83,623

45% (versus 46%\*) of all respondents secured an average annual bonus of AED 83,623 (-AED 875\*).

# 73%

are fairly or very satisfied with their current employment (-2%\*).

# +AED

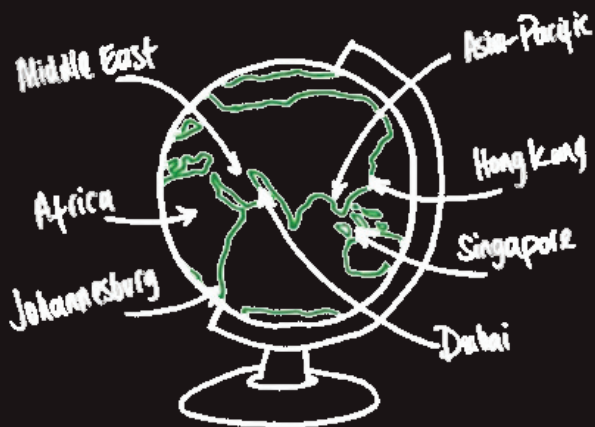
Better salary continues to be the most important job aspect.

# 48%

of respondents believe their organisation will increase headcount in 2017 (-3%\*).

# DUBAI

More respondents work in Dubai than any other location (52%).



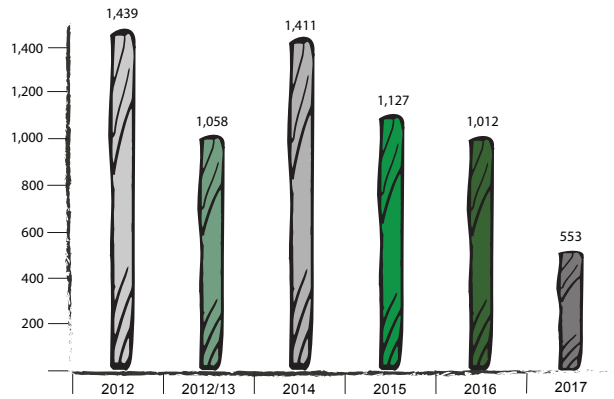
only 15% of respondents are seriously considering returning to their country of origin.

# 59%

of respondents consider the GCC region to be a preferred location for financial reasons (+3%\*).

## Response Rate Total

Now in its tenth year, the survey remains the most credible and respected of its kind in the Middle East Property Sector. With a sample size of 553 the survey response rate remains robust.

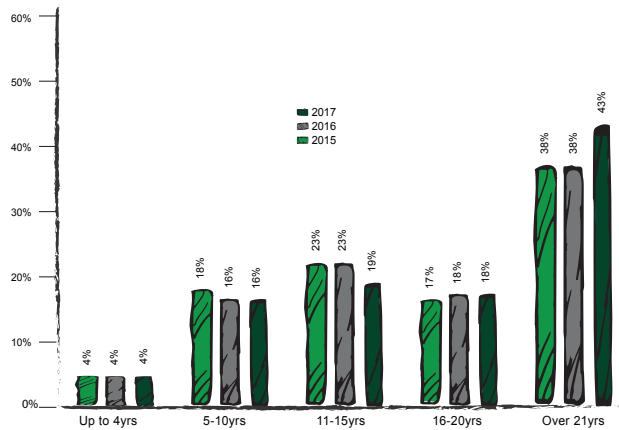


-45.4% 2016 to 2017  
-50.9% 2015 to 2017

## Years' Experience

How many years' experience do you have in your discipline?

The general level of years of experience of the sample has seen an increase in % of senior respondents (61% with 16 years plus experience, up from 56% in 2016).

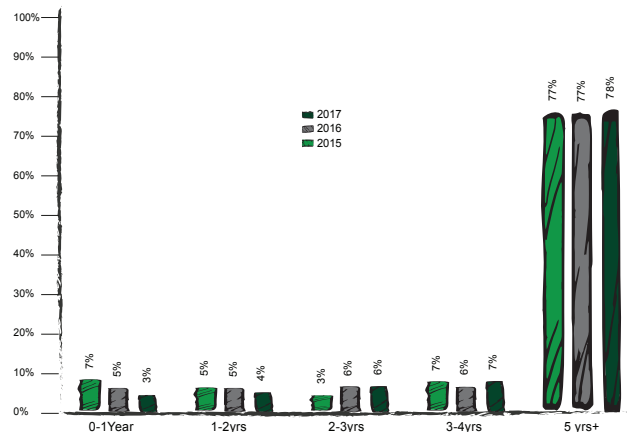


## Middle East Regional Experience

How long have you worked in the Middle East Region?

78% of the survey respondents have 5 or more years' experience working in the Middle East, 1% more than last year.

Those with between 0 to 2 years' experience working in the Middle East has dropped from 10% to 7% in 2017.

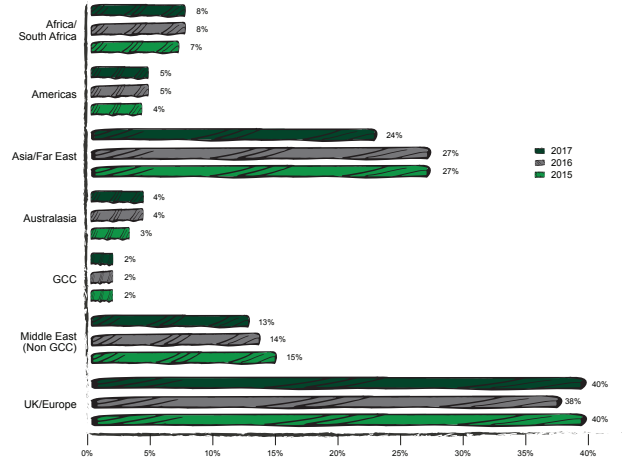


## Ethnicity

From which of these regions do you originate (Ethnicity)?

Respondents who originate from the Middle East (Non GCC) account for 13% of the total respondents (down 1% from last year), while those from UK/Europe remain one of the largest groups with 40% (up from 38%).

Those who originate from Asia/Far East have decreased by 3% this year.

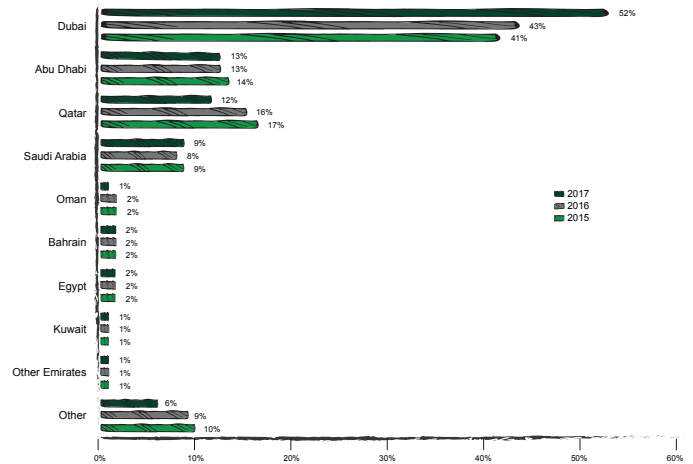


## Normal Place of Work

Where is your normal place of work?

Those who presently work in Dubai represent over half of respondents to the survey, increasing this year to 52% from 43% last year.

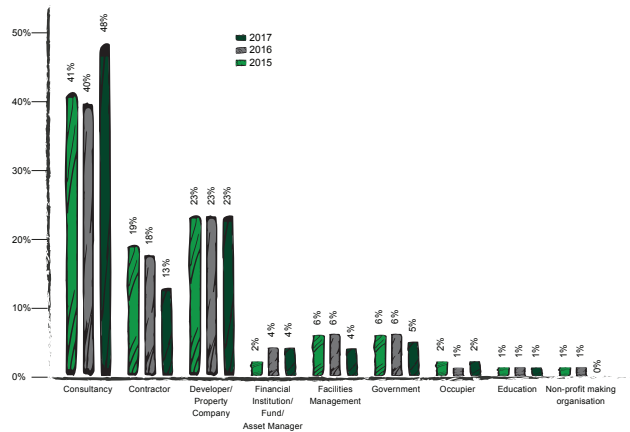
Numbers working in Qatar have declined from 16% in 2016 to 12% this year. Those in Abu Dhabi remain the same as last year at 13%, while those working in Saudi Arabia have increased slightly to 9% from 8% last year.



## Employer Type

What is the main activity of the organisation?

Those working in consultancy (48%, up from 40%), contractor (13%, down from 18%) or developer/property company (23%, equal to last year) continue to provide the majority of responses (84% in total, up slightly from 81% in 2016) to this year's survey.



## RESEARCH SAMPLE PROFILE

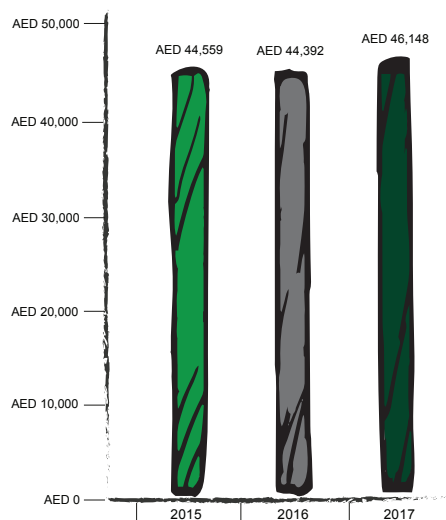
	2016 NO.	2016 %	2017 NO.	2017 %
Academic	4	0%	3	1%
Analyst/Research	21	2%	9	2%
Architect	35	4%	17	3%
Asset/Property Manager	27	3%	14	3%
Business Development Management	33	4%	13	2%
CEO/MD/Head	51	5%	31	6%
CFO/Financial Director/Controller	34	4%	7	1%
Claims & Dispute Resolution	19	2%	17	3%
Construction Management	45	5%	57	10%
Corporate Property Consultancy	13	1%	12	2%
Design Management	14	2%	11	2%
Development Management	50	5%	22	4%
Energy	17	2%	8	2%
Engineering Services Management	32	3%	10	2%
Facilities Management	41	4%	21	4%
Financial/Real Estate Analyst	27	3%	14	3%
Fund Management	16	2%	5	1%
General Practice	12	1%	5	1%
Health and Safety	22	2%	4	1%
Interior Design	8	1%	4	1%
Landlord & Tenant	4	0%	5	1%
Landscape Architect	5	1%	0	0%
Office Agent	7	1%	2	0%
Urban Design / Masterplanning	14	2%	5	1%
Property Asset Management	30	3%	20	4%
Project Management	97	10%	50	9%
Quantity Surveying	116	13%	85	15%
Residential Agent/Sales/Leasing	9	1%	6	1%
Residential Development	9	1%	6	1%
Retail Agent/Leasing	11	1%	12	2%
Valuation	39	4%	23	4%
Other	66	7%	19	3%

## AVERAGE MIDDLE EAST REAL ESTATE SALARY & BONUSES

### Average Middle East Real Estate Salary (AED)

What is your current monthly base salary? (excluding all benefits such as bonuses, car etc).

The average base salary of a Real Estate professional in the Middle East is AED 46,148 per month, up by AED 1,756 or up 4.0% from last year.



+4.0% 2016 to 2017  
+3.6% 2015 to 2017

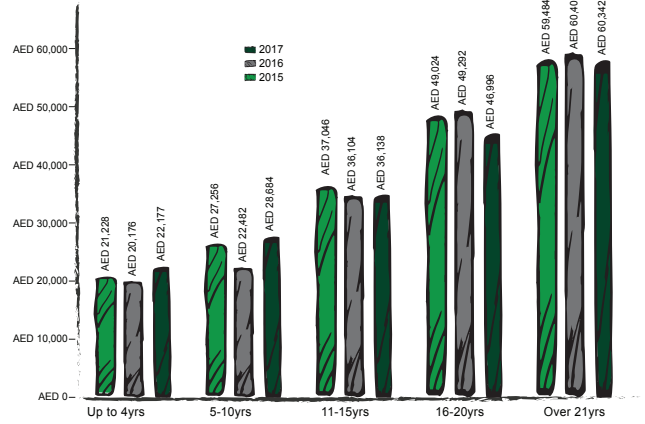


### Years' Experience Average Salary (AED)

#### Salary at last review by years' experience within discipline

Those respondents with over 21 years' experience continue to earn the highest average base monthly salary at AED 60,342 (down from AED 60,400 in 2016).

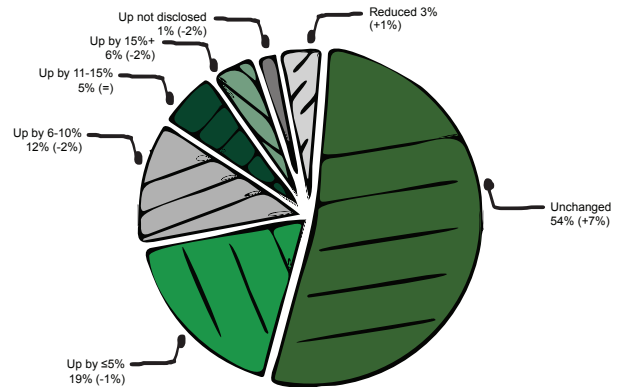
Respondents with under 10 years' experience have seen an increase in their respective categories. Those with between 5-10 years' experience have seen an increase of 27.6% (up from AED 22,482 to AED 28,684 in 2017), while those with up to 4 years' experience have seen an increase of 10.0% (up from AED 20,176 to AED 22,177 in 2017).



### Change to Salary at Last Review

#### What change if any was made to your Monthly Base Salary at your last pay review?

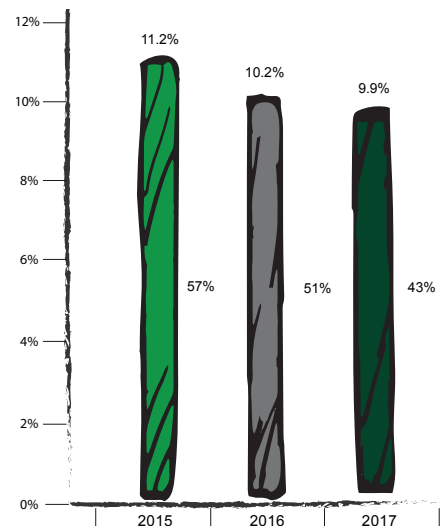
43% of respondents secured a base salary increase (down from 51% last year), while 3% received a salary reduction (up from 2% last year). 54% of respondents did not see a change in their annual salary (up from 47% last year).



### Average Salary Increase

#### If your salary was increased, please indicate % increase?

The average salary increase has fallen slightly since 2016, down from 10.2% to 9.9% in 2017. The % of respondents who have secured an annual salary increase has decreased from 51% in 2016 to 43% in 2017.



## Average Increase: Region

If your salary was increased, please indicate % increase?

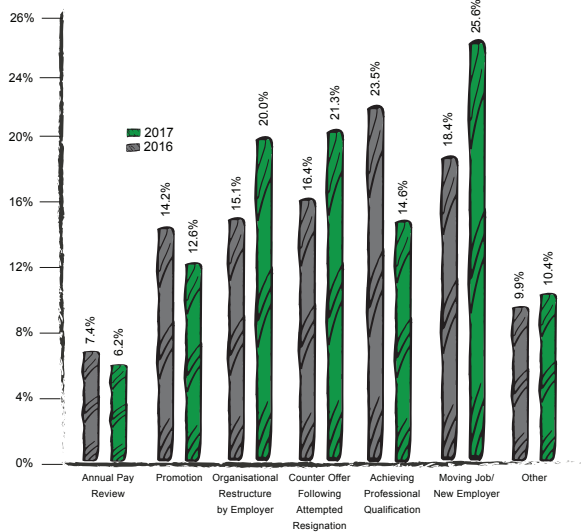
	AVERAGE SALARY INCREASE
Total	9.9%
Dubai	9.6%
Abu Dhabi	6.4%
Qatar	9.0%
Saudi Arabia	16.5%
Oman	15.0%
Bahrain	6.7%
Egypt	11.0%
Kuwait	5.8%
Other	9.4%

## Reason for Salary Increase

If your salary was increased please indicate % INCREASE.

At 25.6%, moving job / new employer led to the largest increase to base salary.

Respondents whose annual base salaries were increased following an annual pay review received an average of 6.2%.

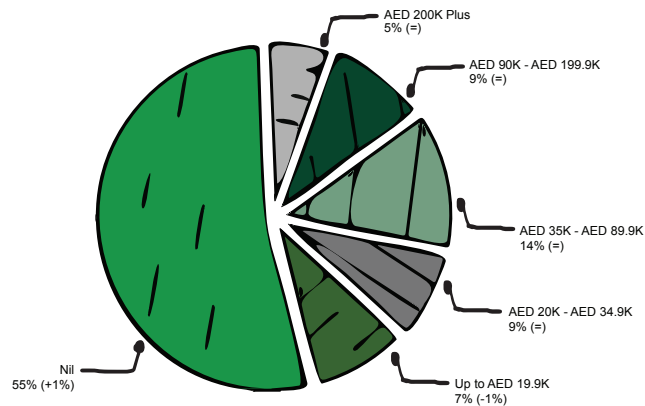


## Bonuses Received Over the Last Twelve Months

What was the approximate value of your annual bonus (or bonuses) over the last 12 months?

45% of the survey respondents received a bonus (down from 46% in 2016), while 55% received no bonus whatsoever (up from 54% last year).

The average annual bonus of a Real Estate professional in the Middle East is AED 83,623 (down from AED 84,498 last year).

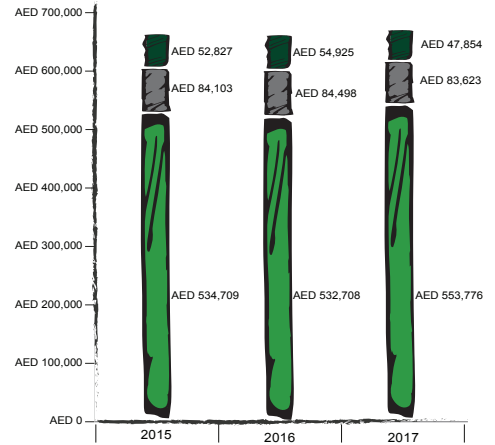


### Middle East Real Estate Professional Total Reward

What was the approximate value of your salary, bonus and additional remuneration received (e.g. commission & performance related pay) over the last 12 months (annualised)?

The total reward received by Real Estate professionals increased by 2.0% to AED 685,253 year on year.

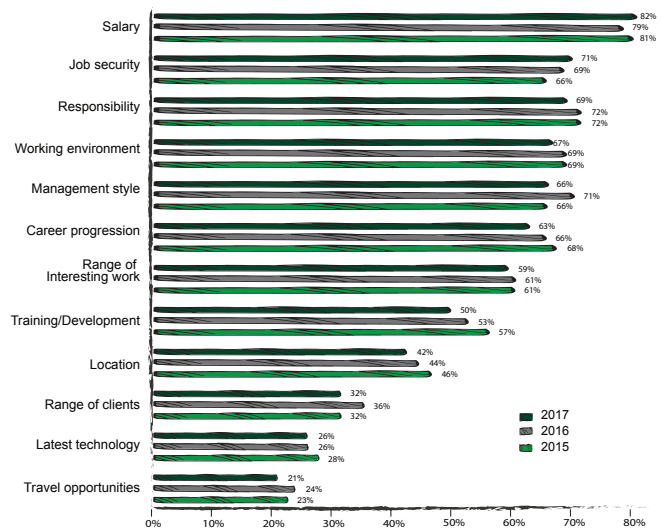
The total reward includes the annualised salary, average annual bonus (or bonuses) and the average additional remuneration received (e.g. commission & performance related bonus) last year.



### Important Job Aspects

How important are each of the following to you in your job?

Salary continues to be the most important factor when it comes to job satisfaction. This is followed by job security at 71% (+2%), responsibility at 69% (-3%) and working environment at 67% (-2%).

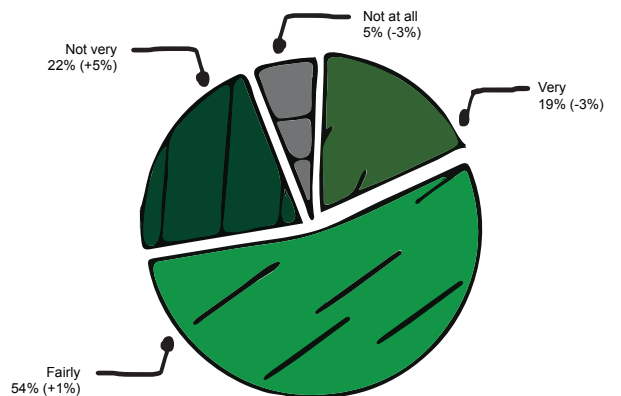


### Job Satisfaction

How satisfied overall are you with your current job?

The majority of survey participants (73%, down 2% versus last year) are fairly or very satisfied with their current employment.

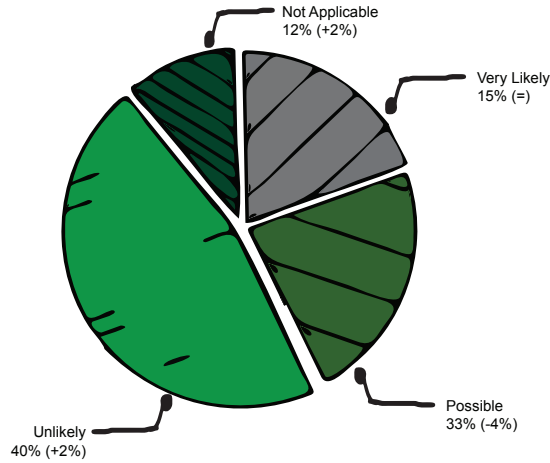
5% say that they are not at all satisfied (down from 8% last year).



## Returning Home

Are you considering returning home to the UK, Europe, US, Africa, Asia or Australasia?

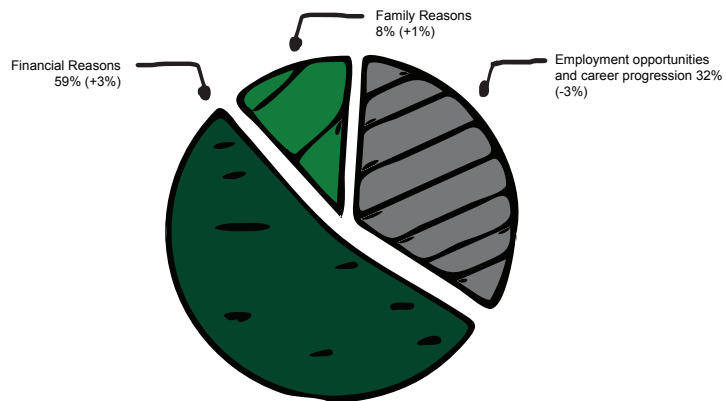
Only 15% of the survey respondents (equal to last year), who are in a position to return home, are very likely to return to their country of origin.



## GCC Preferred Location

Do you still consider the GCC region to be a preferred location for?

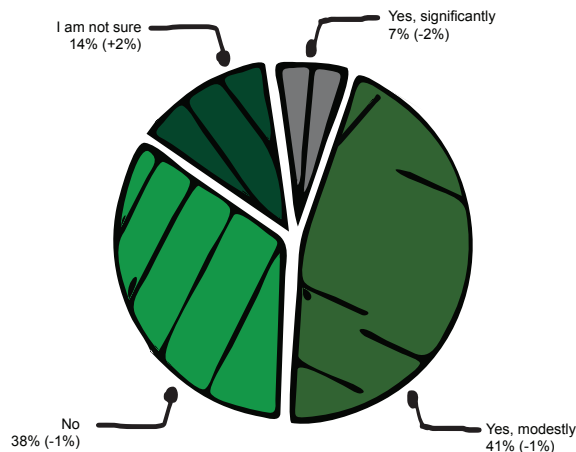
59% of the survey respondents consider the GCC region to be a preferred location for "financial reasons" (up from 56% last year). While 32% (down from 35% last year) cited "employment opportunities and career progression" as a consideration.



## Hiring Intentions

Do you expect your organisation to increase headcount in 2017?

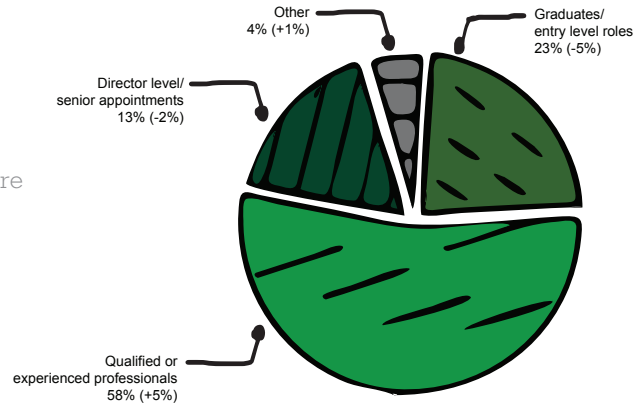
Just under half of respondents (48%) believe their organisation will increase headcount in 2017, with 41% of respondents expecting their organisation to modestly increase headcount and 7% expecting a significant increase in headcount in 2017.



## Hiring Intentions by Level

At what level/role do you expect your company to hire this year?

Of the respondents who expected their organisation to increase headcount in 2017, 58% believe their company will hire qualified or experienced professionals (up 5% from last year), while 23% anticipate their company hiring at graduate and entry level roles this year (down 5% from last year).

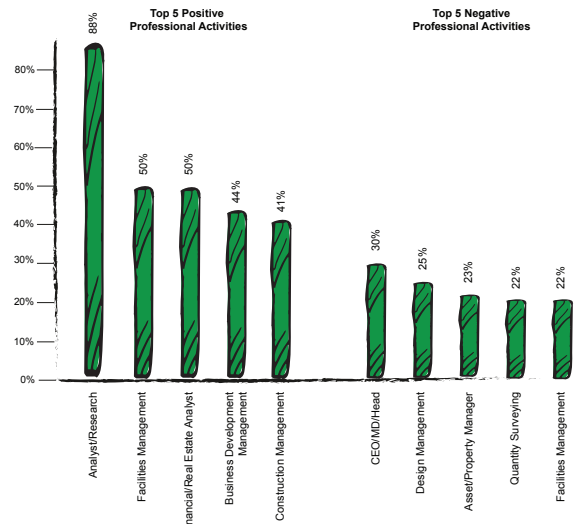


## Sentiment by Main Professional Activity

In your chosen professional activity, do you anticipate economic activity in the next 12 months to increase, decrease or remain unchanged?

Analysts/Research are the most positive about the economic outlook in the next 12 months with 88% anticipating an increase in economic activity during 2017. This is followed by Facilities Management (50%) and Financial/Real Estate Analysts (50%).

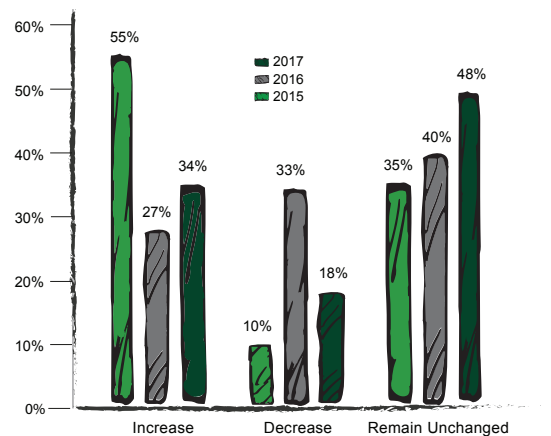
Those working as CEO/MD/Heads are the least confident, with 30% anticipating a decrease in economic activity during 2017.



## Overall Sentiment

In your chosen professional activity, do you anticipate economic activity in the next 12 months to increase, decrease or remain unchanged?

Overall positive sentiment has improved, with 34% of respondents anticipating economic activity will increase (up from 27% last year), while 18% believe it will decrease (down from 33%). However nearly half of respondents (48%) believe economic activity will remain unchanged over the next 12 months.



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