

IMBALANCE AND TALENT SHORTAGE IN THE CATALAN LABOR MARKET: SURVEY INSIGHTS AND COMPARISON WITH OJA'S

1. Introduction

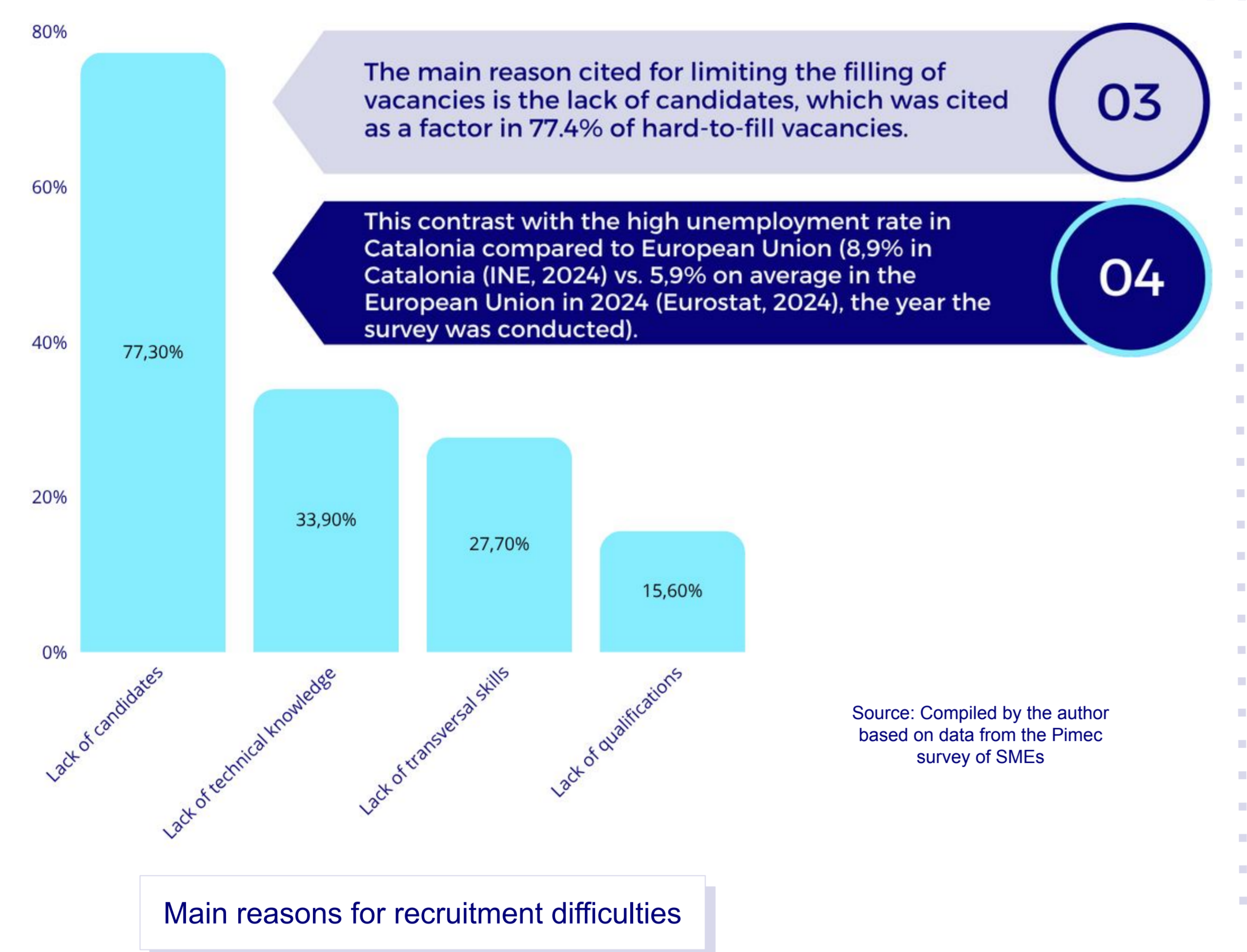
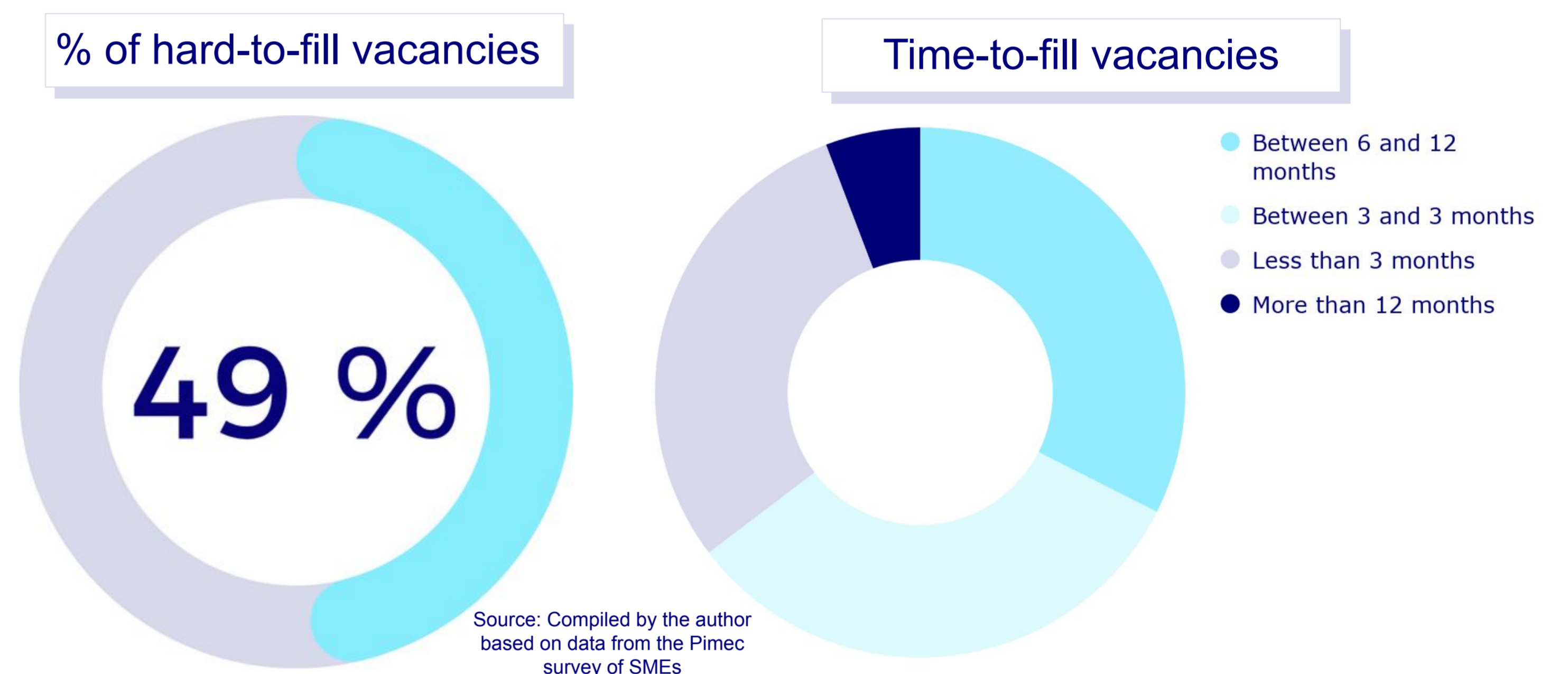
SMEs are the backbone of the Catalan economy, accounting for 99.8% of companies and 70% of the workforce (Pimec, 2024). Despite their significance, specific insights into their talent needs and recruitment challenges remain limited. This research addresses this gap by **analyzing talent shortages** within Catalan SMEs and benchmarking their recruitment requirements against online job data.

2. Methods

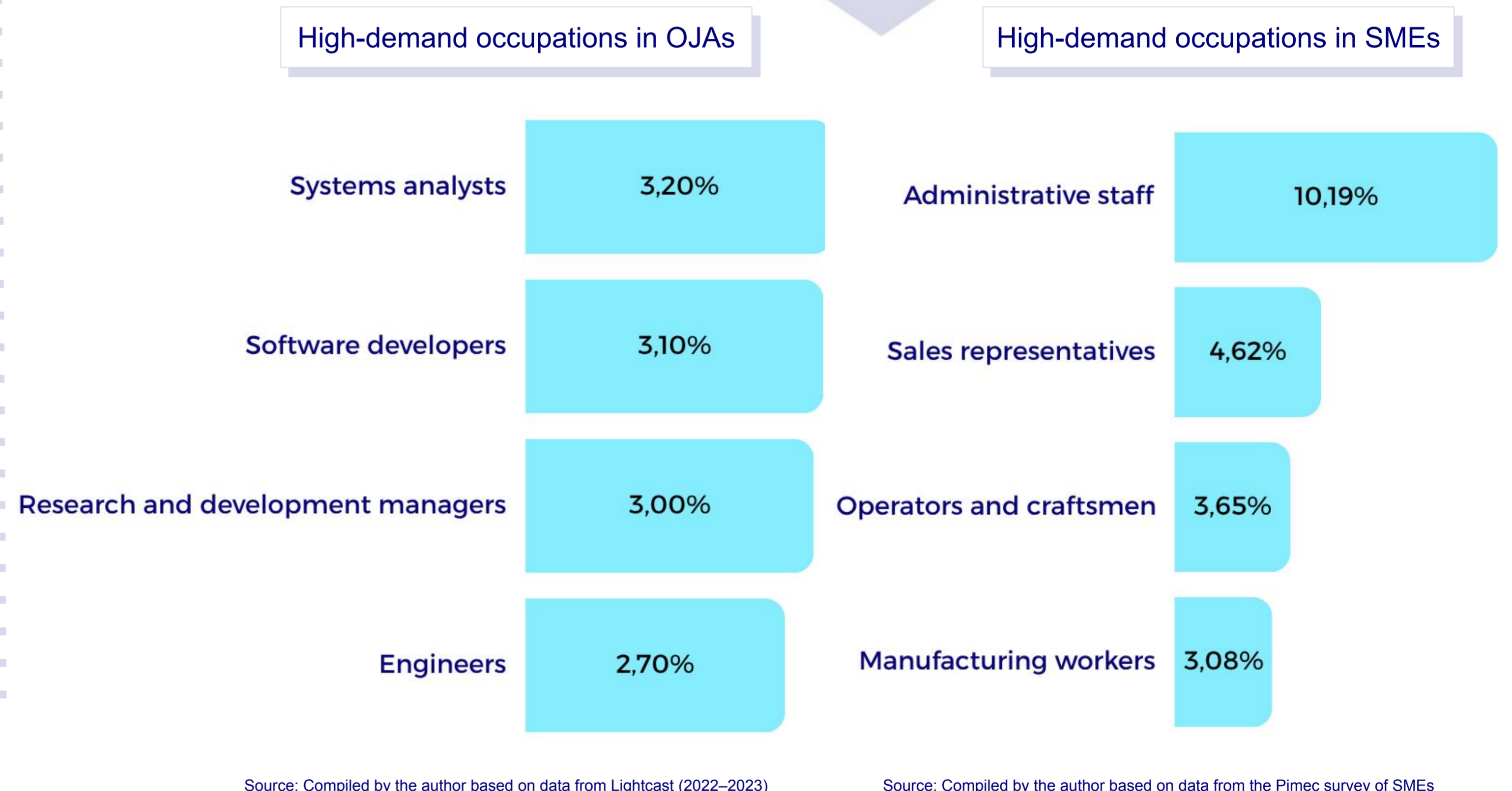
The methodology relies on a representative survey of Catalan SMEs conducted by PIMEC between March and October 2024 using a mixed-mode approach (CATI and CAWI). These findings are cross-referenced with online job advertisements (OJAs) to perform a comparative analysis between direct employer demand and the broader digital labor market landscape.

3. Results

- 01** Nearly half of the open vacancies (49.3%) were considered difficult to fill by companies, nearly half of the companies that launched recruitment processes (48.6%) reported recruitment challenges.
- 02** These hiring challenges are reflected in the time it takes to fill open positions, with more than 70% of recruitment processes taking over three months to complete.



- 05** A comparative analysis reveals a significant disparity in labor requirements: while online job postings prioritize occupations requiring high cognitive skills, surveyed companies primarily seek roles with lower qualification levels



4. Conclusions

- The Catalan labor market presents a **significant paradox**. While employers report a severe shortage of talent, relatively high unemployment rates suggest **deeper imbalances** rather than a simple lack of candidates, in line with findings of Cedefop (2024).
- OJA data frequently underestimated the demand from SMEs. Our findings reveal a clear **divergence between OJA data and the actual recruitment needs of SMEs**.
- To overcome the limitations of Big Data, labor market analysis must adopt a hybrid approach. **Integrating OJA analytics with conventional research methods** –such as surveys, semi-structured interviews or focus groups– is essential for a comprehensive understanding of employer demand.

5. Key references

- Cedefop (2024). *Untangling labour shortages in Europe: unmet skill demand or bad jobs?* Luxembourg: Publications Office. Cedefop working paper series; No 20. [\[Link\]](#)
- Eurostat (2024). *Unemployment by sex and age - annual data* [\[Link\]](#)
- INE (2024). *Unemployment rates by different age groups, sex and Autonomous Community*. [\[Link\]](#)
- López, A., Pagés, C. & Pedro-Aznar, P. (2024). *Radiografía de la demanda de talent en les mípimes catalanes*. Baròmetre de competències i ocupacions de Catalunya. UOC-Pimec [\[Link\]](#) [Primary source: scan for full report]
- Pimec (2024). *Anuari de la PIME catalana*. [\[Link\]](#)



SCAN ME