

# KPMG and REC, UK Report on Jobs

## Recruitment activity increases slightly in September, but pay growth softens

50.9

PERMANENT  
PLACEMENTS INDEX  
SEP '26

50.9

TEMPORARY BILLINGS  
INDEX  
SEP '26

The KPMG and REC, UK Report on Jobs is compiled by S&P Global from responses to questionnaires sent to a panel of around 400 UK recruitment and employment consultancies.

Permanent placements and temp billings both increase marginally

Vacancies fall at weakest rate in over two years

Pay growth moderates

Commenting on the latest survey results, Jon Holt, Group Chief Executive and UK Senior Partner KPMG, said:

*"For the second month in a row we are seeing the jobs market starting to flicker back to life, with businesses increasing their hiring across both permanent and temporary roles, and for the first time in over two years vacancies grew in the private sector."*

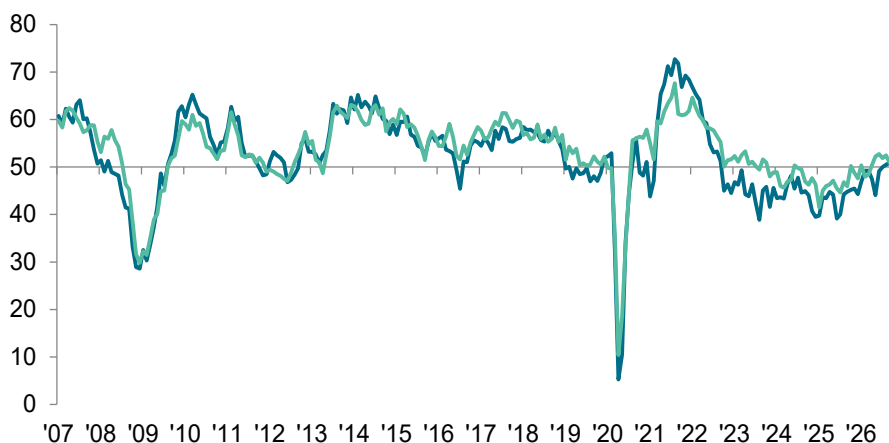
*"But this remains a fragile recovery; and in some sectors it could be seen as an employer's market as the number of people looking for roles increases. The growing uncertainty around energy prices and higher borrowing costs also means there are still headwinds in the wider economy. Businesses will be looking to the Budget later this month for greater certainty in tax policy and a sense that the Government is willing to create the right conditions to turn this emerging confidence into investment and ultimately jobs."*

Maxine Bligh, Interim Chief Executive at the Recruitment and Employment Confederation (REC), said:

*"The permanent jobs market is revving its engine, with a second successive month of growth. The last time we saw a sustained run of growth in permanent placements was between March 2021 and September 2022. If this trend continues, we could see genuine momentum building across the labour market, with both permanent and temporary hiring moving in the same direction, which is encouraging for jobseekers and the economy. The signal from the private sector is that it is ready to invest, with permanent vacancies rising for the first time in more than two years across the sector. A Budget that gets business confidence moving again is key to keeping that momentum going. The geopolitical backdrop remains challenging for government and business alike. But the Chancellor cannot seize this moment with talk of stability alone. Employers want to hear not just how we deliver stability, but how we go for growth."*

■ Permanent Placements Index  
■ Temporary Billings Index

sa, >50 = growth since previous month



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## 1 Executive summary

The Report on Jobs is unique in providing the most comprehensive guide to the UK labour market, drawing on original survey data provided by recruitment consultancies and employers to provide the first indication each month of labour market trends.

The main findings for September are:

### Permanent placements rise for second month in a row

The KPMG/REC UK Report on Jobs survey signalled a back-to-back rise in permanent placements during September. The rate of growth picked up slightly from August and, though marginal, marked the strongest rise in four years. The upturn was supported by rising activity levels at employers and efforts to expand capacity amid improved business confidence. Temp billings also expanded in September, though growth was the least pronounced in five months.

### Permanent pay inflation softens in September

While competition for highly skilled workers continued to add upward pressure on rates of starting pay, permanent salary growth slowed for the first time in four months in September, and remained below the historical average. There were reports that cost considerations and increases in staff availability had tempered inflation. Temp pay rates likewise rose at a softer pace, with the rate of growth easing to a four-month low.

### Vacancy numbers fall at softest rate since August 2024

Latest survey data indicated a further decline in overall demand for workers. However, the rate of contraction moderated to the weakest in just over two years and was only mild. Underlying data showed that both permanent and temporary vacancies declined at similarly modest rates in September. Data broken down by the private and public sectors - which are not seasonally adjusted - indicated the first improvement in demand for permanent private sector staff for over two years.

### Staff availability rises at weakest pace in three years

The availability of candidates to fill roles continued to increase in September amid reports of redundancies and fewer job opportunities. Whilst sharp, the rate of expansion was the slowest in three years, driven by a softer rise in permanent candidate supply. Notably, the latter increased at the weakest rate since September 2023, while growth in temporary candidate numbers was the fastest in three months.

■ Permanent Salaries Index  
■ Temporary Wages Index  
sa, >50 = inflation since previous month

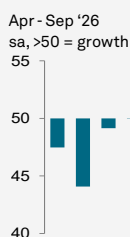


## 2 Staff Appointments

Recruitment consultancies report on the number of people placed in permanent jobs each month, and their revenues (billings) received from placing people in temporary or contract positions at employers.

An index reading above 50 signals a higher number of placements/billings than the previous month. Readings below 50 signal a decline compared with the previous month.

### Permanent Placements Index

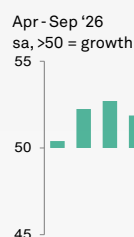


### Permanent placements rise again in September

September survey data signalled a second successive monthly increase in the number of people placed into permanent jobs across the UK. The rate of growth picked up from August, with the respective seasonally adjusted index hitting a four-year high, but remained indicative of a marginal rate of expansion overall. Where higher placements were reported, recruiters commented that employers took on extra staff due to rising activity levels and company expansion plans amid improved confidence around the business outlook. Nevertheless, reports of recruitment freezes and lower demand for permanent workers in some sectors limited overall growth.

Three of the four monitored English regions recorded higher permanent placements, led by the North of England. The South of England was the only area to see a decline.

### Temporary Billings Index



### Temp billings growth slips to five-month low

A further rise in temp billings was recorded during September, though the rate of expansion slowed on the month. Furthermore, the latest upturn was marginal and the softest seen since the current sequence of growth began in April. While panellists often reported an increase in demand for short-term staff and new project starts, others commented that some businesses had chosen to hire permanent workers and highlighted the impact of fewer overall vacancies on recruitment.

Marked increases in temp billings were seen in the North of England and the Midlands, while a modest rise was recorded in the South of England. Meanwhile, a sharp reduction was registered in London, which ended a four-month period of growth.

### Permanent Placements Index

sa, >50 = growth since previous month



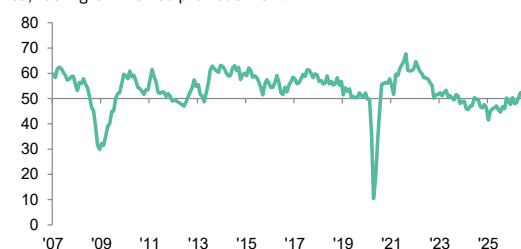
### Permanent Placements Index

sa, >50 = growth since previous month

|         | UK   | London | South | Midlands | North |
|---------|------|--------|-------|----------|-------|
| Apr '26 | 47.5 | 54.9   | 39.0  | 39.9     | 53.3  |
| May '26 | 44.1 | 47.2   | 42.0  | 40.0     | 51.1  |
| Jun '26 | 49.1 | 49.8   | 49.4  | 47.7     | 48.9  |
| Jul '26 | 50.0 | 56.2   | 47.6  | 50.6     | 47.4  |
| Aug '26 | 50.5 | 53.6   | 48.6  | 51.6     | 48.0  |
| Sep '26 | 50.9 | 50.4   | 47.9  | 52.1     | 53.6  |

### Temporary Billings Index

sa, >50 = growth since previous month



### Temporary Billings Index

sa, >50 = growth since previous month

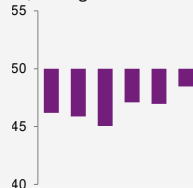
|         | UK   | London | South | Midlands | North |
|---------|------|--------|-------|----------|-------|
| Apr '26 | 50.4 | 47.1   | 52.4  | 54.5     | 46.6  |
| May '26 | 52.2 | 50.5   | 55.1  | 53.8     | 50.8  |
| Jun '26 | 52.7 | 53.3   | 54.3  | 52.6     | 52.5  |
| Jul '26 | 51.9 | 53.6   | 51.8  | 49.2     | 57.7  |
| Aug '26 | 52.4 | 51.0   | 55.1  | 48.4     | 58.9  |
| Sep '26 | 50.9 | 44.4   | 51.3  | 53.8     | 55.4  |

## 3 Vacancies

Recruitment consultants are asked to specify whether the demand for staff from employers has changed on the previous month, thereby providing an indicator of the number of job vacancies.

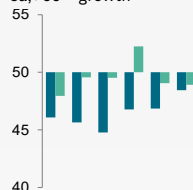
Total Vacancies Index

Apr - Sep '26  
sa, >50 = growth



Permanent  
Temporary

Apr - Sep '26  
sa, >50 = growth



### Softest fall in vacancies since August 2024

UK recruitment consultancies signalled a slower and only modest reduction in overall demand for workers during September. This was highlighted by the respective seasonally adjusted index rising from 47.0 in August to 48.5. This marked the weakest rate of decline in just over two years, with the survey pointing to mild falls in both permanent and temporary vacancies.

### Permanent & temporary vacancies

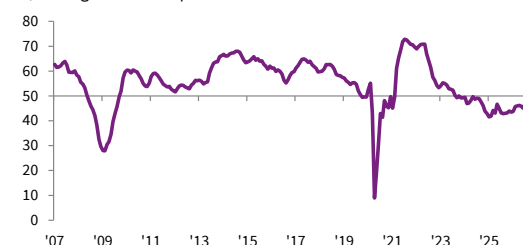
Permanent vacancies decreased in September, thereby extending the current period of reduction to just over three years. That said, the pace of contraction eased to a modest pace that was the slowest recorded since August 2024. For temp vacancies, a second successive monthly fall was recorded, albeit with the rate of decrease little-changed from August and only mild.

### Public & private sector vacancies

September's survey data signalled increases in private sector vacancy numbers for both permanent and temporary workers. Notably, this marked the first rise in permanent staff demand across the sector for over two years. Demand for public sector staff - both permanent and short-term - meanwhile continued to decline and at marked rates.

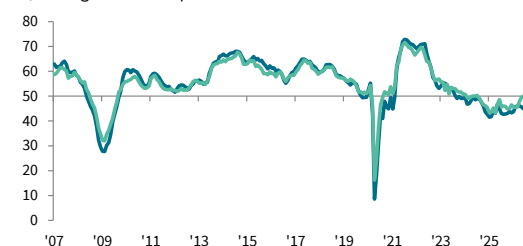
Total Vacancies Index

sa, >50 = growth since previous month



Permanent Vacancies Index  
Temporary Vacancies Index

sa, >50 = growth since previous month



Vacancy Index summary

sa, >50 = growth since previous month. \*Not seasonally adjusted.

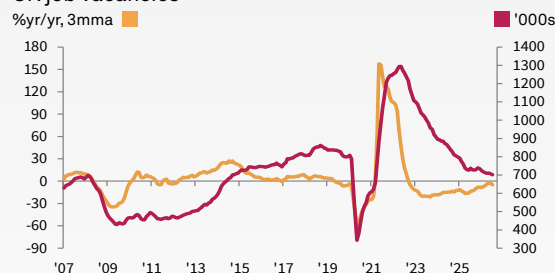
|         | Permanent |       |          |         | Temporary |          |         |
|---------|-----------|-------|----------|---------|-----------|----------|---------|
|         | Total     | Total | Private* | Public* | Total     | Private* | Public* |
| Apr '26 | 46.2      | 46.1  | 47.1     | 41.1    | 47.9      | 48.2     | 46.8    |
| May '26 | 45.9      | 45.6  | 45.5     | 46.5    | 49.6      | 49.7     | 49.1    |
| Jun '26 | 45.1      | 44.8  | 45.4     | 41.7    | 49.5      | 50.3     | 48.1    |
| Jul '26 | 47.1      | 46.8  | 48.8     | 44.2    | 52.2      | 53.0     | 48.9    |
| Aug '26 | 47.0      | 46.8  | 50.0     | 39.5    | 49.1      | 53.7     | 44.4    |
| Sep '26 | 48.5      | 48.4  | 52.9     | 44.5    | 48.9      | 52.4     | 43.5    |

## Official data: UK job vacancies

The number of vacancies in the UK continued to decline in the three months to August. Overall, the number of job opportunities were down 8,000 compared to the three months to May, taking the total to 702,000. This marked the lowest level since the three months to April 2021.

When excluding the pandemic period, this is the lowest number of overall vacancies since the three months to October 2014.

UK job vacancies



Source: Office for National Statistics via S&P Global Market Intelligence.

## 4 Vacancies by sector

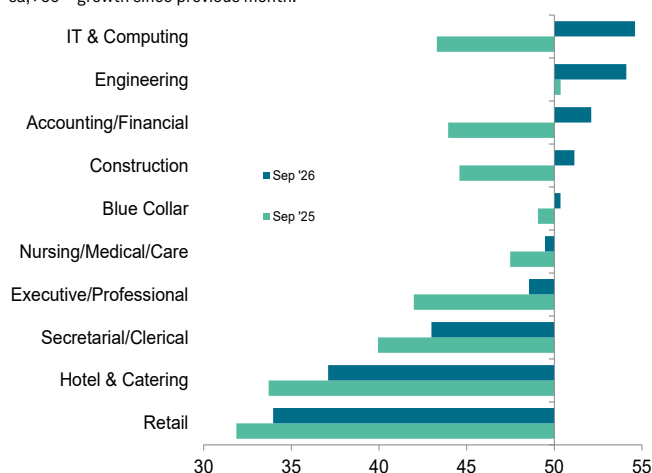
Recruitment consultancies are requested to compare the demand for staff according to sector with the situation one month ago.

### Permanent vacancies

Higher demand for permanent workers was recorded in half of the ten monitored job sectors during September, led by IT & Computing and Engineering. At the other end of the table, the sharpest falls in vacancies were signalled across Retail and Hotel & Catering categories.

#### Permanent Vacancies Index

sa, >50 = growth since previous month.

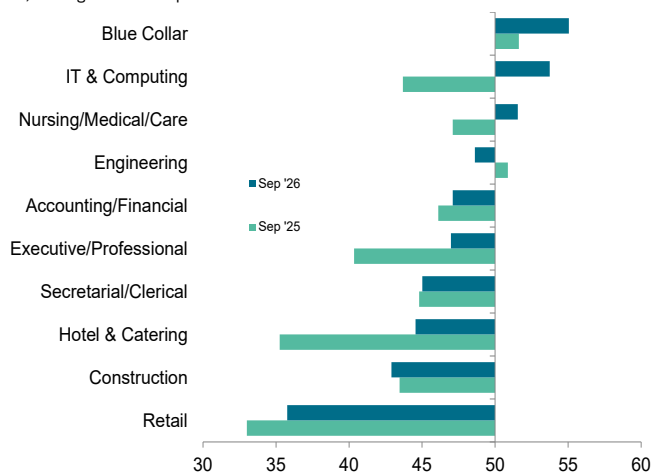


### Temporary vacancies

Only the Blue Collar, IT & Computing and Nursing/Medical/Care sectors recorded growth in temp vacancies during September. Rates of decline varied across the seven other monitored job categories, with a modest fall in Engineering roles contrasting with a sharp drop in Retail jobs.

#### Temporary Vacancies Index

sa, >50 = growth since previous month.

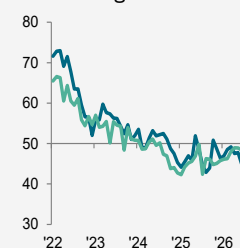


### Vacancy index by sector

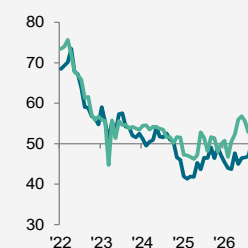
■ Permanent ■ Temporary

sa, >50 = growth since previous month

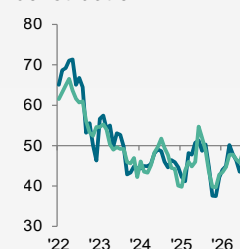
#### Accounting & Financial



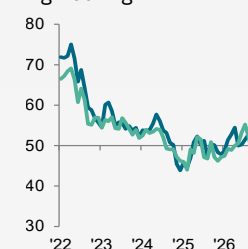
#### Blue Collar



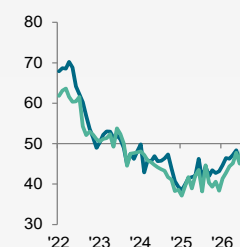
#### Construction



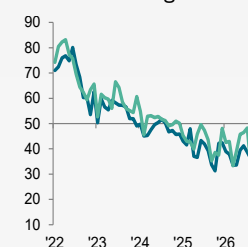
#### Engineering



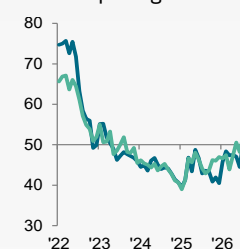
#### Executive & Professional



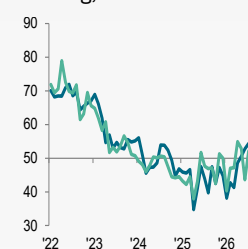
#### Hotel & Catering



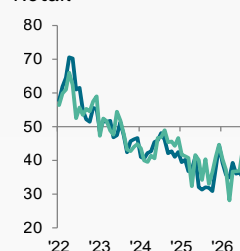
#### IT & Computing



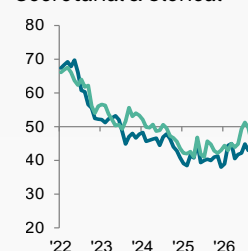
#### Nursing, Medical & Care



#### Retail



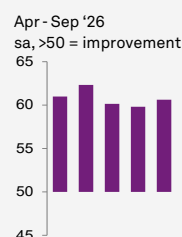
#### Secretarial & Clerical



## 5 Staff availability

Recruitment consultants are asked to report whether availability of permanent and temporary staff has changed on the previous month. An overall indicator of staff availability is also calculated.

Total Staff Availability Index



### Candidate supply increases at softest pace in three years

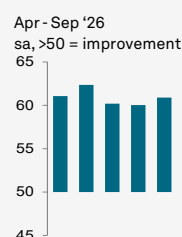
The seasonally adjusted Total Staff Availability Index fell from 60.6 in August to 57.2 at the end of the third quarter, indicating another increase in the overall supply of workers. Candidate numbers have now risen in each month for just over three-and-a-half years. Whilst the latest expansion was sharp, it was the slowest recorded since September 2023, driven by a weaker increase in permanent candidate availability.

Total Staff Availability Index

sa, >50 = improvement since previous month



Permanent Staff Availability Index



### Upturn in permanent labour supply eases

Permanent staff availability rose again in September, extending the current period of growth to 43 months. Although substantial overall, the pace of expansion eased from August to the weakest in three years. Redundancies and fewer work opportunities were widely reported to have led to growth in jobseekers.

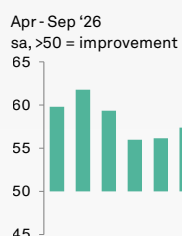
Permanent candidate numbers rose across all four monitored English regions, albeit to varying degrees. The sharpest increase was recorded in the North of England, while the softest was in London, which saw only a marginal rate of growth.

Permanent Staff Availability Index

sa, >50 = improvement since previous month



Temporary Staff Availability Index



### Temp candidate numbers rise at fastest pace since June

As has been the case since March 2023, the availability of staff to fill temporary vacancies increased in September. The rate of expansion quickened slightly to a three-month high, but remained much weaker than levels typically seen since 2024. Fewer vacancies and more people out of work led to the increase in temp availability, according to surveyed recruiters.

The rise in temp labour supply was broad-based by English area, with the most pronounced increase seen in the North of England. London meanwhile recorded the softest rate of growth, albeit one that was still solid overall.

Permanent Staff Availability Index

sa, >50 = improvement since previous month

|         | UK   | London | South | Midlands | North |
|---------|------|--------|-------|----------|-------|
| Apr '26 | 61.1 | 62.8   | 59.3  | 56.2     | 66.6  |
| May '26 | 62.4 | 64.0   | 63.9  | 55.0     | 67.4  |
| Jun '26 | 60.2 | 58.2   | 62.5  | 55.3     | 66.7  |
| Jul '26 | 60.0 | 53.9   | 61.4  | 56.9     | 67.2  |
| Aug '26 | 60.9 | 56.8   | 60.3  | 56.5     | 68.2  |
| Sep '26 | 57.2 | 50.9   | 57.8  | 56.8     | 62.9  |

Temporary Staff Availability Index

sa, >50 = improvement since previous month

|         | UK   | London | South | Midlands | North |
|---------|------|--------|-------|----------|-------|
| Apr '26 | 59.8 | 62.9   | 61.5  | 53.5     | 59.3  |
| May '26 | 61.8 | 66.6   | 59.5  | 54.3     | 64.9  |
| Jun '26 | 59.3 | 61.3   | 60.6  | 53.4     | 59.5  |
| Jul '26 | 56.0 | 55.3   | 59.5  | 53.0     | 56.9  |
| Aug '26 | 56.1 | 59.6   | 56.2  | 50.4     | 55.0  |
| Sep '26 | 57.4 | 54.9   | 57.0  | 55.5     | 61.5  |

## 6 Demand for skills

Recruitment consultancies are invited to specify any areas in which they have encountered skill shortages during the latest month.

### Skills in short supply: Permanent staff

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Accounting/Financial</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Construction H&S<br>Fitters<br>Labourers<br>Part 2 Architect Asst.<br>Quantity Surveyors<br>Surveyors                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | CNC<br>Cyber Security<br>Data Annotators<br>Data Architect<br>Data Engineers<br>Full-Stack Developer<br>Infrastructure Analysts<br>IT<br>IT Helpdesk<br>IT Procurement Specialists<br>IT Project Manager<br>Security Cleared IT<br>Software<br>Software Architects<br>Software Developers<br>Software Engineers<br>Software Sales<br>Technical Sales<br>Technology |
| ACCA<br>Accountants<br>Accounting Roles<br>Accounts Payable<br>Auditors<br>Bookkeepers<br>CIMA<br>Estimators<br>Finance<br>Finance Business Partner<br>Finance Managers<br>Financial Services<br>Management Accountants<br>Part Qualified Accountants<br>Payroll Specialists<br>Pension Specialists<br>Practice Accountant<br>Practice Accounting<br>Qualified Accountancy<br>Tax & Audit<br>Tax Accountant<br>Technical Finance<br>Professionals<br>Transactional Finance | <b>Engineering</b><br>Control Systems Engineer<br>Electrical Design Engineer<br>Electrical Engineers<br>Energy Process Engineers<br>Engineers<br>Field Service Engineers<br>Fire & Alarm Engineers<br>Gas Engineers<br>Maintenance Engineers<br>Pump Engineers<br>Robotics Engineers<br>Senior Electronic Engineers<br>Space Technology<br>Stress Engineers<br>Technical Engineer<br>Technicians<br>Toolmaker<br>Vending Engineers | <b>Nursing/Medical/Care</b><br>Allied Health Professionals<br>Care Assistants<br>Consultant Doctors<br>Medical<br>Nurses<br>Occupational Therapist<br>Paediatric Nurses<br>Paramedics<br>Physiotherapist<br>Social Workers                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Blue Collar</b><br>Blue Collar<br>CNC Machinist<br>Drivers<br>FLT Operators<br>Forklift Drivers<br>HVAC<br>LGV Drivers<br>LGV/HGV 2 Drivers<br>Manufacturing<br>Operatives<br>Production<br>Refrigeration<br>Warehouse Operatives<br>Welders                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <b>Executive/Professional</b><br>Commercial Law<br>Employee Relations<br>Energy & Renewables<br>HR Business Partners<br>HR Manager<br>Human Resources<br>IP Law<br>Law<br>Legal Secretarial<br>Marketing<br>Quality Assurance<br>Solicitors                                                                                                                                                                                        | <b>Secretarial/Clerical</b><br>Office Roles                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Construction</b><br>Architect<br>Architectural Tech<br>Civil & Structural Engineers<br>Commercial Managers - Civils<br>Construction                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <b>Hotel/Catering</b><br>Chefs                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <b>Other</b><br>Commercial<br>Customer Service<br>Demand Planner<br>Education<br>Field Sales<br>Insurance Specialists<br>Interior Designers<br>Sales<br>Sales Negotiators<br>Training<br>White Collar                                                                                                                                                              |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <b>IT/Computing</b><br>AI/ML Developers<br>AI/ML Engineers<br>Automation Testers<br>CAD                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |

### Skills in short supply: Temporary staff

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Accounting/Financial</b><br>ACCA<br>Accountants<br>Accounts Payable<br>Assistant Accountant<br>CIMA<br>Finance<br>Finance Business Partner<br>Part Qualified Credit Control<br>Practice Accountant<br>Tax Accountant                                                                                                                                         | <b>Executive/Professional</b><br>Directors<br>Human Resources<br>Management                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Blue Collar</b><br>Blue Collar<br>CNC Machinist<br>Drivers<br>Electricians<br>Forklift Drivers<br>HGV Drivers<br>Industrials<br>LGV Drivers<br>LGV/HGV 2 Drivers<br>Manufacturing Operatives<br>Mechanical Assemblers<br>Plant Maintenance<br>Technician<br>Plater<br>Pre-Heating Technician<br>Production<br>TIG Welders<br>Warehouse Operatives<br>Welders | <b>Hotel/Catering</b><br>Catering<br>Chefs<br>Kitchen Production System                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Construction</b><br>Architect<br>Labourers<br>Pipefitters<br>Quantity Surveyors<br>Sheet Metal Workers<br>Skilled Trades<br>Surveyors                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | <b>IT/Computing</b><br>AI/ML Developers<br>AI/ML Engineers<br>Cyber Security<br>Full-Stack Developer<br>IT<br>IT Procurement Specialists<br>Security Cleared IT<br>Software<br>Software Architects<br>Software Developers<br>Technology |
| <b>Engineering</b><br>EC&I Engineers<br>Electrical Engineers<br>Engineers<br>MIG Welders                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | <b>Nursing/Medical/Care</b><br>Care Assistants<br>Nurses<br>Social Workers                                                                                                                                                              |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <b>Secretarial/Clerical</b><br>Office Roles                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <b>Other</b><br>Commercial<br>Data Analyst<br>Education<br>Sales<br>Teachers                                                                                                                                                            |

### Skills in excess supply: Permanent staff

|                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Accounting/Financial</b><br>Accounts Payable<br>CFOs<br>Credit Controllers<br>Finance Directors<br>Financial Controllers                                                                                  | Marketing<br>Mid-Management<br>Personal Injury Law<br>Procurement<br>Project Managers<br>Recruitment Consultants                                                                                           | Legal Assistants<br>Personal Assistant                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Blue Collar</b><br>Blue Collar<br>Production Operators<br>Site Managers<br>Warehouse Operatives                                                                                                           | <b>Hotel/Catering</b><br>Hospitality                                                                                                                                                                       | <b>Other</b><br>Business Analyst<br>Change & Transformation<br>Commercial<br>Customer Service<br>Entry Level<br>Graduates<br>Health & Safety Advisors<br>Operations<br>Programme Manager<br>Public Sector General<br>Sales |
| <b>Construction</b><br>Commercial Fit-Out<br>Labourers                                                                                                                                                       | <b>IT/Computing</b><br>Business Analysts<br>Entry Level IT<br>IT Directors<br>IT Generalists<br>IT Helpdesk<br>IT Support All Levels<br>IT Support Specialists<br>Software Developers<br>UI/UX Specialists |                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Engineering</b><br>Design Engineers                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Executive/Professional</b><br>Brand Specialists<br>Business Analysts<br>Directors<br>HR Director<br>HR Manager<br>HR Qualified<br>Human Resources<br>Legal Secretarial<br>Management<br>Managing Director | <b>Nursing/Medical/Care</b><br>Healthcare Assistants<br>Nurses                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <b>Retail</b><br>Retail                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <b>Secretarial/Clerical</b><br>Administration<br>Customer Service Administrator                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |

### Skills in excess supply: Temporary staff

|                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Accounting/Financial</b><br>Credit Controllers<br>Debt Recovery<br>Financial Crime                                        | <b>Retail</b><br>Retail                                                                                                             |
| <b>Blue Collar</b><br>Blue Collar<br>Carpenters<br>Cleaners<br>Production Operators<br>Site Managers<br>Warehouse Operatives | <b>Secretarial/Clerical</b><br>Administration                                                                                       |
| <b>Construction</b><br>Labourers                                                                                             | <b>Other</b><br>Business Analyst<br>Customer Service<br>Graduates<br>Materials Controllers<br>Programme Manager<br>Traffic Marshall |
| <b>Executive/Professional</b><br>Business Analysts<br>Human Resources<br>Project Managers                                    |                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Hotel/Catering</b><br>Hospitality                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>IT/Computing</b><br>Business Analysts<br>IT Directors<br>IT Support All Levels<br>Network Engineer                        |                                                                                                                                     |

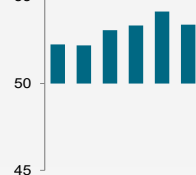
Note : Skills can be reported as being both in short supply and excess supply as we survey various recruitment agencies across the country, so there is geographical variation as well as the possibility of candidates with particular skills being concentrated in certain areas.

## 7 Pay pressures

The recruitment industry survey tracks both the average salaries awarded to people placed in permanent jobs each month, as well as average hourly rates of pay for temp/contract staff.

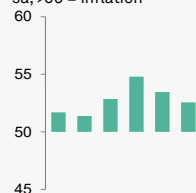
### Permanent Salaries Index

Apr - Sep '26  
sa, >50 = inflation



### Temporary Wages Index

Apr - Sep '26  
sa, >50 = inflation



### September sees renewed slowdown in perm salary growth

Permanent starting salaries increased again during September, extending the current period of pay growth to just over five-and-a-half years. The rate of inflation eased for the first time in four months, however and, whilst solid, moved further below its long-run trend. While competition for high-quality candidates reportedly placed upward pressure on salaries, some recruiters noted that efforts to control costs and improved candidate numbers had limited pay growth. Salaries rose sharply in the North of England, and modestly across the remaining monitored English areas.

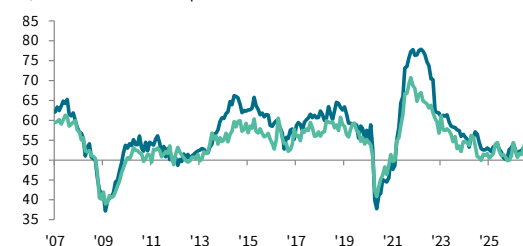
### Temp pay inflation eases to four-month low

Temp pay rates increased for the tenth month in a row at the end of the third quarter. According to anecdotal evidence, higher quality candidates were generally able to secure increased pay rates. However, the rate of inflation continued to slow from July's recent high and was the softest since May.

All four monitored English regions registered softer increases in temp pay during September, with the weakest rise seen in the Midlands.

### Permanent Salaries Index

Temporary Wages Index  
sa, >50 = inflation since previous month



### Permanent Salaries Index

sa, >50 = inflation since previous month

|         | UK   | London | South | Midlands | North |
|---------|------|--------|-------|----------|-------|
| Apr '26 | 52.3 | 53.5   | 52.5  | 50.8     | 52.6  |
| May '26 | 52.2 | 53.6   | 50.4  | 50.4     | 53.3  |
| Jun '26 | 53.1 | 54.5   | 49.7  | 51.1     | 54.4  |
| Jul '26 | 53.3 | 57.8   | 50.7  | 51.2     | 52.4  |
| Aug '26 | 54.1 | 54.2   | 54.6  | 50.4     | 53.3  |
| Sep '26 | 53.4 | 51.9   | 51.5  | 52.4     | 56.3  |

### Temporary Wages Index

sa, >50 = inflation since previous month

|         | UK   | London | South | Midlands | North |
|---------|------|--------|-------|----------|-------|
| Apr '26 | 51.7 | 50.2   | 54.8  | 54.2     | 48.5  |
| May '26 | 51.4 | 52.4   | 51.2  | 53.8     | 49.8  |
| Jun '26 | 52.9 | 55.1   | 50.7  | 53.9     | 53.3  |
| Jul '26 | 54.8 | 57.1   | 53.4  | 54.0     | 54.1  |
| Aug '26 | 53.5 | 52.9   | 53.2  | 55.3     | 54.5  |
| Sep '26 | 52.6 | 52.6   | 52.4  | 52.2     | 53.6  |

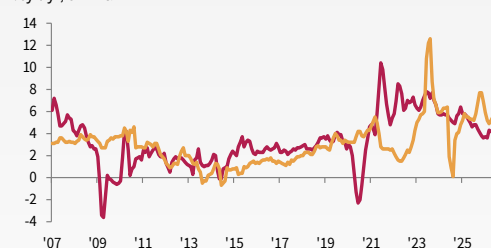
## Official data: UK average weekly earnings

Total employee earnings continued to rise on an annual basis in the three months to July. However, at 3.9%, the rate of inflation was the joint-lowest since November 2020 (equal to that seen in February 2026).

This was driven by slower growth in private sector earnings, which softened to 3.2% in the latest period; marking the weakest rise in pay in the sector since the three months to October 2020. This offset a stronger rise in public sector pay, which increased at the quickest rate in the year to date (6.6%), which the Office for National Statistics linked to earlier than usual NHS staff pay rises in 2026 when compared to 2025.

### UK average weekly earnings

%yr/yr, 3mma



Source: Office for National Statistics via S&P Global Market Intelligence.

## 8 Special feature

This section features analysis from the Recruitment and Employment Confederation

### Early signs of recovery: The UK recruitment market in summer 2026

As attention shifts from summer to the Autumn Budget, the latest REC data provides an opportunity to take stock of the past three months. The picture is one of improving resilience, but with employers continuing to balance recruitment needs against economic uncertainty and cost pressures.

The Report on Jobs signalled a gradual improvement in recruitment activity over the summer. Permanent placements stabilised in July before rising slightly in August for the first time since September 2022, while temporary billings continued to strengthen over the summer. Demand for temporary workers also increased for the first time in two years.

Looking at UK job postings, the Labour Market Tracker pointed to stronger activity than a year ago. Active job postings reached 1.67 million in July, up 7.7% year-on-year, before rising to 1.70 million in August, which was 10.4% above August 2025. New postings were also slightly higher year-on-year in both months, increasing by 0.9% in July and 3.6% in August. The summer hiring market provided further encouragement, with an upturn in seasonal demand. In July, hospitality postings were up 16.3% year-on-year, while tourism and construction postings increased by 22.4% and 8.2%, respectively.

The regional picture remained uneven. All UK Government Office Regions recorded growth in active job postings in August, although seven of the ten areas with the strongest increases were in Scotland. This reinforces the importance of looking beyond the national picture when assessing changes in recruitment demand.

Meanwhile, candidate availability continued to rise sharply. The Report on Jobs found that recruiters cited redundancies and a lack of job opportunities as contributors. At the same time, competition for suitably skilled and experienced candidates supported stronger pay growth, with permanent starting salaries in August recording their highest rate of increase since January 2026.

JobsOutlook provides further context for this mixed picture. Employer confidence in the economy improved by eight percentage points over June–August to -39%, while confidence in hiring and investment rose six points to -8%. While both measures remained negative, the improvement suggests a gradual strengthening in employer confidence as the recruitment market shows signs of recovery.

Taken together, the past three months suggest that the recruitment market is beginning to move away from the prolonged weakness of recent years, but the recovery remains tentative. Permanent hiring has reached a turning point, while temporary recruitment continues to provide flexibility, and job-posting activity remains above last year's levels. At the same time, declines in recruiter reported vacancies and rising candidate availability show that overall labour market conditions remain challenging.

As the final quarter of the year approaches, the key question is whether the tentative improvement seen over the summer can be sustained.

## 9 Scotland's labour market

### Downturn in permanent staff hiring eases in September

This section contains the latest data and findings from the Scottish companies participating in the UK Jobs survey.

The latest Report on Job's survey signalled a further reduction in permanent staff recruitment across Scotland. Though solid, the decline was the softest in the current five-month period of contraction. At the same time, temp billings fell at a marginal rate that was the weakest since May, when growth was last recorded.

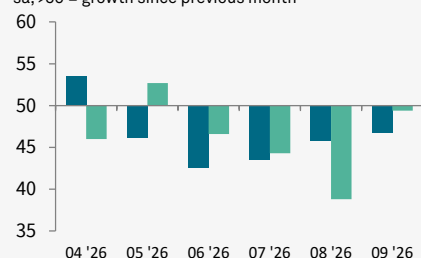
Recruiters in Scotland signalled a renewed fall in starting salaries during September. Though only slight, it marked the first reduction since November 2020. In contrast, temp pay rates continued to rise, with the rate of inflation the sharpest in over two years.

Permanent staff availability meanwhile rose rapidly in September, despite the rate of growth easing to a three-month low. The supply of temporary labour across Scotland expanded at a comparatively slower pace, but one that remained sharp overall.

■ Permanent Placements Index

■ Temporary Billings Index

sa, >50 = growth since previous month



■ Permanent Availability Index

■ Temporary Availability Index

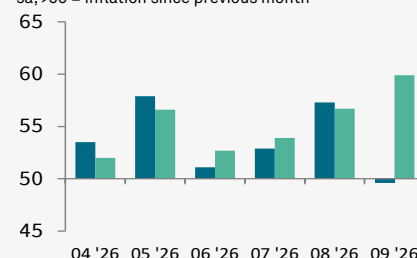
sa, >50 = improvement since previous month



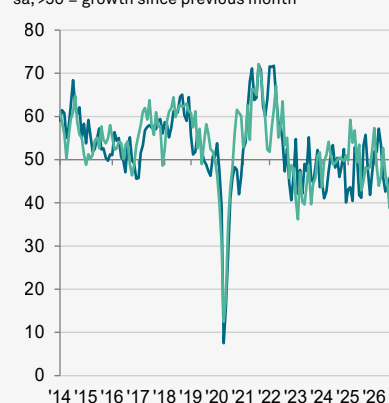
■ Permanent Salaries Index

■ Temporary Wages Index

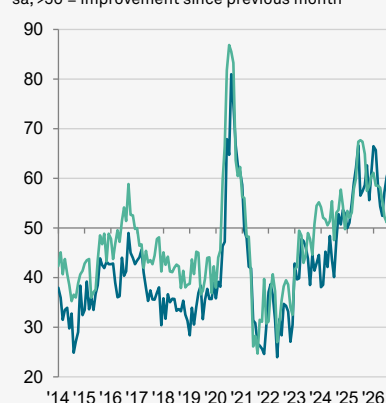
sa, >50 = inflation since previous month



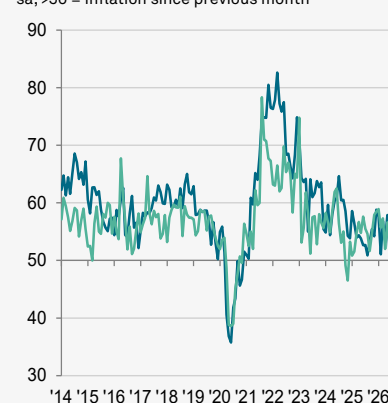
sa, >50 = growth since previous month



sa, >50 = improvement since previous month



sa, >50 = inflation since previous month



#### Scotland Jobs Index summary

sa, 50 = no change over previous month

|        | Permanent Placements | Temporary Billings | Permanent Availability | Temporary Availability | Permanent Salaries | Temporary Wages |
|--------|----------------------|--------------------|------------------------|------------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| 04 '26 | 53.5                 | 46.0               | 54.4                   | 58.1                   | 53.5               | 52.0            |
| 05 '26 | 46.1                 | 52.7               | 52.5                   | 55.5                   | 57.9               | 56.6            |
| 06 '26 | 42.6                 | 46.6               | 57.2                   | 52.3                   | 51.1               | 52.7            |
| 07 '26 | 43.5                 | 44.3               | 60.4                   | 51.1                   | 52.9               | 53.9            |
| 08 '26 | 45.8                 | 38.8               | 62.0                   | 55.3                   | 57.3               | 56.7            |
| 09 '26 | 46.7                 | 49.4               | 59.9                   | 55.0                   | 49.6               | 59.9            |

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### Methodology

The KPMG and REC, UK Report on Jobs is compiled by S&P Global from responses to questionnaires sent to a panel of around 400 UK recruitment and employment consultancies.

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.

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 survey methodology, please contact  
[economics@spglobal.com](mailto:economics@spglobal.com).

### Survey Dates

Data were collected 10-24 September 2026.

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