



## KPMG and REC, UK Report on Jobs

### Demand for staff and placements continue to fall in **November**

45.5

PERMANENT PLACEMENTS INDEX NOV '25

48.8

**TEMPORARY BILLINGS INDEX** NOV '25

Weaker, but still marked, reduction in permanent worker demand

Uncertainty and higher staffing expenses weigh on recruitment activity

Pick-up in permanent salaries as firms seek to attract talented candidates

Commenting on the latest survey results, Lisa Fernihough, Head of Advisory at KPMG UK said:

"Despite a slight uptick in some indicators again this month, the latest figures confirm the jobs market remains stuck in contraction. A complex business environment and uncertainty around the Budget kept hiring on ice last month, as business leaders weighed potential impacts.

"There will be relief at the absence of major tax hikes, however that alone is unlikely to be enough to see a marked change in how firms are planning. For now, with many businesses still facing challenges it is likely many will maintain a cautious stance, balancing recent tech investments against the need to expand their workforce.

Neil Carberry, REC Chief Executive,

"Pre-Budget nerves knocked temporary recruitment back just a little in November after a growing October, but the overall picture was still relatively benign by comparison to the last year. The market grew in London and the Midlands – two key bellwethers. Permanent hiring remained weaker, but numbers continue to improve a little month-on-month. With such a late Budget and the Christmas period just around the corner, the key now will be the decisions that employers make for their businesses this coming January.

"We can see signs of the market stabilising, including an improvement in pay rates for new jobs. But to really get businesses firing, they need confidence. While the Budget was not the horror show of last year, there was little in it to fire the heart of firms. More recently, moves to change the Employment Rights Bill will have landed well, but there is much more to do to get the economy firing. If government's priority is growth, their report card at the end of 2025 reads "Must try harder."

50 40 30

80 70 60

Permanent Placements Index ■ Temporary Billings Index sa, >50 = growth since previous month

20 10 0

'07 '08 '09 '10 '11 '12 '13 '14 '15 '16 '17 '18 '19 '20 '21 '22 '23 '24 '25

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.





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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 November are:

# Permanent placements down markedly in November, albeit to lesser degree

Permanent placements continued to decline during November as subdued market confidence—linked in part to uncertainty in the lead up to the Budget that took place at the end of the month—and the impacts of higher employment costs continued to weigh on recruitment. Although still marked, the degree to which placements fell eased again, dropping to its weakest since July 2024. Temp billings were also down only modestly, albeit signifying a return to contraction following marginal growth in October.

#### Vacancies continue to decline during November

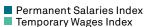
Demand for staff declined again in November, in line with a trend that now stretches back over two years. Once again, the net reduction was marked, despite easing to its weakest since June. Vacancies for permanent positions continued to decline at a steeper pace than for temp workers.

#### Staff availability increases considerably

Latest data showed that the supply of candidates for new roles increased at the second-fastest rate since November 2020, with only August 2025 seeing a stronger rise during the past five years. Recruitment companies reported that redundancies and fewer vacancies had led to the upturn in labour supply. Both permanent and temporary worker availability increased at faster and historically strong rates.

#### Permanent salary inflation highest in five months

Permanent salaries continued to increase in November as firms remained willing to offer increased pay to skilled candidates. The rate of inflation also accelerated, rising to its highest level for five months, though remaining notably below its trend level as competition and increased labour supply limited the scope for increased pay. These factors tended to weigh even heavier on temp pay, which was unchanged overall in November.







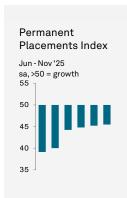




### 2 Staff Appointments

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.



# Marked fall in permanent staff appointments

Adjusted for seasonal factors, the Permanent Placements Index posted below the neutral 50.0 threshold to signal a further drop in permanent staff hiring in November. While the rate of contraction eased for the fifth straight month and was the slowest since July 2024, it remained marked overall. According to surveyed recruiters, heightened uncertainty around the Budget and generally low market confidence had weighed on recruitment. Placements were also negatively impacted by higher staffing costs related to National Insurance and the minimum wage.

All four monitored regions of England registered lower permanent staff appointments in November, with the sharpest decline seen in the North of England.

#### Permanent Placements Index

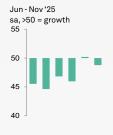


#### Permanent Placements Index

sa, >50 = growth since previous month

	UK	London	South	Midlands	North
Jun '25	39.1	37.3	36.7	43.1	43.5
Jul '25	40.0	38.8	37.6	43.3	42.8
Aug '25	44.2	46.9	36.1	48.9	43.9
Sep '25	44.8	45.2	43.3	46.6	45.0
Oct '25	45.2	46.7	45.8	45.2	44.3
Nov '25	45.5	45.2	45.7	46.8	43.8

#### Temporary Billings Index



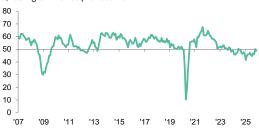
# Temp billings slip back into decline

After rising for the first time in 16 months in October, temp billings declined during November. That said, the rate of reduction was modest and slower than the average for 2025 to date. According to panel members, Budget-related uncertainty and a general slowdown in hiring had underpinned the renewed fall in billings.

Trends were mixed at the regional level, with a sharp and accelerated rise in temp billings recorded in the Midlands, and marginal growth in London. However, marked falls were seen in the South and North of England.

#### Temporary Billings Index

sa, >50 = growth since previous month



#### Temporary Billings Index

sa, >50 = growth since previous month

	UK	London	South	Midlands	North
Jun '25	45.5	45.8	42.8	50.2	45.9
Jul '25	44.6	41.3	46.1	45.8	45.5
Aug '25	46.8	48.5	41.6	50.7	46.9
Sep '25	46.0	43.4	41.7	53.1	51.0
Oct '25	50.2	49.1	48.9	54.0	50.2
Nov '25	48.8	50.8	44.7	55.4	46.4

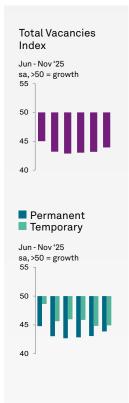






### 3 Vacancies

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.



#### Vacancies decline at slowest rate in five months

The seasonally adjusted Total Vacancies Index rose from 43.2 in October to 43.9 in November, signalling a further reduction in overall demand for workers. This stretched the current period of falling vacancies to just over two years, though the rate of decline was the slowest since June.

#### Permanent & temporary vacancies

The uplift in the headline vacancy index largely reflected a slower reduction in permanent staff demand. Vacancies for permanent roles fell at the softest pace in five months, albeit one that remained quicker than for temporary positions. The latter fell at a fractionally slower rate than seen in October but solidly overall.

#### Public & private sector vacancies

November survey data indicated that demand for workers fell more acutely in the public sector than the private sector.

The sharpest reduction in vacancies was signalled for short-term roles in the public sector, while the softest decline was signalled for temp positions in the private sector.





#### Permanent Vacancies Index Temporary Vacancies Index sa, >50 = growth since previous month



#### Vacancy Index summary

'09

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

		Permanent			Temporary		
	Total	Total	Private*	Public*	Total	Private*	Public*
Jun '25	45.0	44.8	46.1	38.5	48.6	49.5	44.5
Jul '25	43.2	43.0	43.7	37.7	45.7	50.7	39.4
Aug '25	42.9	42.7	42.6	42.7	46.0	46.6	41.8
Sep '25	43.0	42.8	44.5	38.8	45.9	49.5	41.2
Oct '25	43.2	43.1	47.6	39.7	44.8	48.5	43.1
Nov '25	43.9	43.9	44.7	40.0	44.9	46.9	39.1

### Official data: UK job vacancies

Initial estimates of vacancies published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) indicated that vacancies broadly stabilised in the three months to October. Measured overall, the number of open roles increased by just 2,000 to 723,000 over the latest three-month period. This followed a 39-month period of falling vacancies and was among the lowest figures seen in more than four years. Furthermore, the number of job opportunities remained nearly 10% below the pre-pandemic level (in the three months to March 2020).







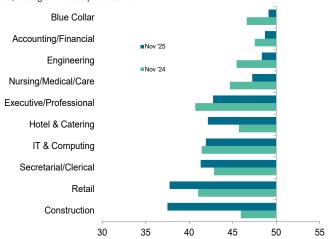
### 4 Vacancies by sector

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

#### Permanent vacancies

Vacancies for permanent staff fell across all ten monitored categories in November, albeit to varying degrees. The steepest reductions in demand were signalled for Construction and Retail workers, while the softest was seen for Blue Collar staff.

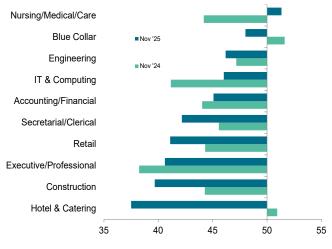
Permanent Vacancies Index sa, >50 = growth since previous month.



#### **Temporary vacancies**

Nursing/Medica/Care was the sole exception to the general trend of falling demand for short-term staff in November and recorded a modest increase in vacancies. Hotel & Catering saw the sharpest drop in demand overall, while Blue Collar registered the mildest rate of contraction.

Temporary Vacancies Index sa, >50 = growth since previous month.











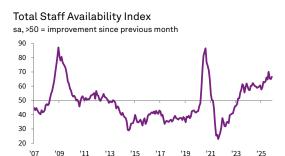
### 5 Staff availability

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.

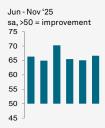


# Total staff availability expands at quickest rate in three months

The seasonally adjusted Total Staff Availability Index rose from 65.0 in October to 66.5 in November. That signalled a sharp and accelerated rise in the number of candidates seeking work. Notably, the rate of expansion was the second-sharpest (after August 2025) since late 2020, when the COVID-19 pandemic led to a rapid increase in labour supply. The latest increase also extended the current period of rising worker availability to 33 months.



#### Permanent Staff Availability Index

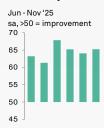


# Stronger rise in permanent candidate numbers

As has been the case since March 2023, the availability of permanent workers increased during November. Furthermore, the rate of expansion accelerated to the second-sharpest since late-2020 (after August 2025), with recruiters often noting that redundancies and fewer vacancies had caused the upturn in permanent labour supply. Around 43% of panel members registered an increase in permanent candidate numbers, compared to approximately 12% that recorded a fall.

The upturn was broad-based across all four monitored English areas, with the South of England posting the sharpest rate of growth.



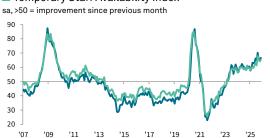


# Rapid and quicker increase in supply of temporary labour

The supply of temporary workers across the UK continued to rise at an historically sharp pace midway through the final quarter of 2025. Notably, the rate of growth accelerated from October, and was among the steepest seen since the pandemic. There were frequent reports that the availability of short-term staff had risen due to the subdued economic climate. Many recruiters also noted that company layoffs had contributed to the rise in temp workers.

The sharpest expansion in temp labour supply was seen in London, while the softest was seen in the North of England.

### Permanent Staff Availability IndexTemporary Staff Availability Index



#### Permanent Staff Availability Index

sa, >50 = improvement since previous month

	UK	London	South	Midlands	North
Jun '25	66.3	65.5	67.6	65.3	64.1
Jul '25	64.9	65.3	63.6	65.1	66.3
Aug '25	70.2	71.4	70.5	67.1	73.1
Sep '25	65.5	62.1	67.4	64.9	67.3
Oct '25	65.1	66.2	66.5	63.0	65.4
Nov '25	66.6	66.8	70.0	60.5	67.1

#### Temporary Staff Availability Index

sa, >50 = improvement since previous month

	UK	London	South	Midlands	North
Jun '25	63.2	62.8	67.0	62.5	56.1
Jul '25	61.3	61.7	60.2	59.9	62.0
Aug '25	67.9	70.2	66.5	61.0	69.4
Sep '25	65.2	62.3	67.6	63.3	65.2
Oct '25	64.1	64.1	66.2	66.0	60.4
Nov '25	65.2	68.6	66.8	66.7	58.9







### 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

#### Accounting/Financial Design Engineers M&E Electrical Engineers ACCA Engineers Accountants FM Engineers Accounts Payable Maintenance Engineers Mechanical Engineers Auditors CIMA Project Engineers Credit Controllers Senior Electronic Engineers Credit Risk Specialist Engineering Finance Technicians Finance Business Partner Test Engineer Financial Crime Executive/Professional Financial Services Management Accountants Area/Regional Paraplanners Management Business Development Payroll Practice Accountant Conveyancers Purchase Ledger Corporate Affairs Qualified Accountancy Tax Accountant Energy & Renewables Human Resources Blue Collar Legal Secretarial Assembly Technicians Blue Collar Management Manufacturing Director CNC Roles Marketing Drivers Mid-Management Electricians Professional Roles **HGV Mechanic** Project Managers HVAC Research LGV 2 Drivers LGV Drivers Solicitors Manufacturing Hotel/Catering Production Hospitality Refrigeration IT/Computing Security Guards Site Managers AI/MI Developers AI/ML Engineers Construction Application Manager Cyber Security Architectural Tech Civil & Structural Engineers Data Engineers Data Professionals Construction Construction Professionals Construction Project Managers Full-Stack Developer Fitters Part 2 Architect Asst. IT Helpdesk Quantity Surveyors IT Infrastructure Surveyors Media SMT Engineers Engineering Software Aviation Maintenance Software Architects Clean Technology Commissioning Engineers Software Developers Software Engineers Design Engineers

#### Accounting/Financial Technical Sales Technology Accountants Nursing/Medical/Care Accounts Payable Allied Health Professionals Compliance Professionals Carers Corporate Finance Consultant Doctors Credit Controllers Life Sciences (Sales) Finance Medical Nurses Occupational Therapist Blue Collar Paediatric Nurses Assembly Technicians Paramedics Blue Collar Physiotherapist Coded Welders Social Worke Despatch Operatives Secretarial/Clerical Drivers Electrician Administration Forklift Drivers Receptionist HGV Drivers Hygiene Operatives LGV Drivers Digital Print Line Leaders Machine Operators Facilities Management Field Sales Manufacturing Manufacturing Operatives Health & Safety Mechanical Assemblers Logistics New Home Sales PPT Drivers Production Operations Paid Media Security Guards Welders Sales Sales (FMCG) Construction STEM Architectural Tech Telesales Bricklayers Transport Planners Civil & Structural Engineers White Collar Construction Joiners Labourers Qualified Electricians Quantity Surveyors Skilled Trades Engineering Automation Engineers

Aviation Maintenance

Design Engineers M&E

acilities Specialists

Electrical Engineers

Design Enginee

**HVAC Engineers** 

Engineers

Commissioning Engineers

#### Skills in short supply: Temporary staff

Maintenance Engineers

Project Engineers Specialist Engineering

	scialist Engineering
Exe	ecutive/Professional
Pro	man Resources ocurement ality Assurance
IT/	Computing
Cylin IT II LLIN Seri Sort Sort Sort Technology	tomation Testers per Security  Infrastructure M Engineers nior IT Engineers Itware M Engineers M Engin
Nu	rsing/Medical/Care
Nu	rers rses cial Workers
Re	tail
Ref	tail
Se	cretarial/Clerical
Re	ministration ceptionist cretary
Otl	ner
Da <sup>1</sup> Log	stomer Service ta Analyst gistics w Home Sales es

#### Skills in excess supply: Permanent staff

C-suite

Accounting/Financia
CFOs Corporate Finance Credit Controllers Finance Finance Directors Finance Managers Financial Controllers
Blue Collar
Blue Collar Industrials Site Managers Unskilled Labour Warehouse Operative
Construction
Construction Site Managers Manual Testers Skilled Construction
Engineering
Graduate Engineers Service Engineers

Executive/Professional

Corporate Sustainability

Business Analysts

000

Executives HR Graduates HR Manager HR Qualified Human Resources Legal Secretarial Management Managing Director Marketing Marketing Director Operations Managers Procurement Project Managers Recruitment Consultants Senior Management Talent Acquisition Hotel/Catering Hospitality

IT/Computing Analysts BIM Modellers Entry Level IT IT Administrators IT Analysts IT Directors

IT Infrastructure Software Developers Technical Roles Nursing/Medical/Care Research Scientist

Retail

Secretarial/Clerical Administration Clerical Personal Assistant

Receptionist Other

Change & Transformation Customer Service Document Controller Entry Level General Managers General Operatives Graduates Property Lettings Public Sector General Sales Team Leaders

Skills in excess supply: Temporary staff Accounting/Financial HR Manager

Accounting/I mancial	i in iviariagei		
Accountants CFOs Equity Research Analyst Finance	Human Resources Marketing Programme Professional Project Managers		
Blue Collar	Hotel/Catering		
Blue Collar	Hospitality		
Industrials	IT/Computing		
Manufacturing Operatives Packers Production Production Operators Refinery Operator	Business Analysts CAD Technicians IT Directors Programmers		
Scaffolders	Retail		
Trades	Retail		
Warehouse Operatives	Secretarial/Clerical		
Construction	Administration		
Construction Site Managers Labourers Skilled Construction	Clerical Personal Assistant Receptionist		
Engineering	Other		
Engineering Draughtsperson Graduate Engineers	Entry Level Logistics		
Executive/Professional	Sales		
Business Analysts			

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.



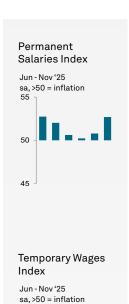
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### 7 Pay pressures

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.



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# Fastest rise in perm salaries since June

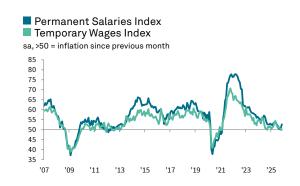
Permanent salaries continued to rise during November, in line with the trend since early 2021. Panellists reported that salaries had generally been increased to attract talented applicants, especially in those areas where skills are in short supply.

Although rising to its highest level since June, the net increase in salaries nonetheless remained historically modest amid reports that expanded labour supply had led to fierce competition amongst candidates.

# Temp pay rates unchanged in November

There was no change in temp pay rates during November. Whilst some panellists reported that demand for skilled workers had helped to support pay levels, others noted that market conditions were subdued overall and limiting the scope for pay rises.

There was some divergence in temp pay trends across England in November. Rates declined in both the Midlands and the North, but rose marginally in London and the South.



#### Permanent Salaries Index

sa, >50 = inflation since previous month

	UK	London	South	Midlands	North
Jun '25	52.7	53.6	51.0	53.4	51.1
Jul '25	52.0	51.6	50.4	50.8	53.7
Aug '25	50.6	51.6	47.0	56.8	47.6
Sep '25	50.2	51.8	48.5	54.1	49.0
Oct '25	50.8	51.3	49.8	52.5	47.3
Nov '25	52.7	52.8	51.5	55.9	49.5

#### Temporary Wages Index

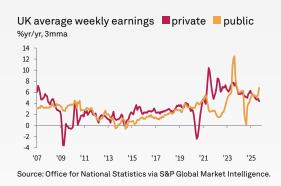
sa, >50 = inflation since previous month

	UK	London	South	Midlands	North
I (OF	50.0	50.7	50.0	F4.0	404
Jun '25	52.3	52.7	52.8	51.0	48.1
Jul '25	51.1	52.9	48.1	50.6	52.3
Aug '25	51.5	57.5	48.6	51.7	49.5
Sep '25	50.8	52.8	49.4	53.7	48.6
Oct '25	49.9	52.5	48.1	51.8	49.4
Nov '25	50.0	50.4	50.6	49.3	47.0

### Official data: UK average weekly earnings

Latest figures from the ONS signalled a slightly slower annual increase in average weekly earnings in the three months to September although growth remained well above its historical trend pace. Overall, wages increased by 4.8%, compared to 5.0% in August.

There was however a noticeable divergence between public and private sector pay trends. For public sector workers, pay increased by 6.8% - a near two-year high. In contrast, pay rose by 4.4% in the private sector – the lowest growth in four-and-a-half years.





### 8 Special feature

This section features data from the Recruitment and Employment Confederation

### UK recruitment industry: current state

Now in its sixth year, Recruitment and Employment Confederation (REC) UK's latest UK Recruitment Industry Status Report (RISR) arrives at a pivotal moment for the sector. After a year defined by a cooling labour market, rising unemployment-to-vacancy ratios, and persistent inflationary pressures, the question is no longer about rebound, but about resilience. How does the industry build on its stabilising role and prepare for the next phase of workforce transformation?

#### GVA, margins and market dynamics

The recruitment sector continues to play a pivotal role in the UK economy, even amid challenging conditions. In 2024, its direct gross value added (GVA) reached £40.6 billion, based on official data published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). This was a 5.5% decline from 2023 and a sharper 9.2% fall in real terms once inflation is factored in. Yet the industry still contributed 1.6% of total UK GVA and remains 4% above pre-pandemic levels. This resilience highlights the recruitment industry's enduring importance as a stabilising force, helping businesses navigate uncertainty and prepare for the future of work.

#### Permanent placements under pressure, temporary staffing as a strategic lifeline

Temporary staffing continues to be the industry's anchor in uncertain times. It accounts for more than three-quarters of total GVA (76.7%). In 2024, recruiters delivered an estimated 21.6 million temporary or contract placements - a modest decline from 2023, marking the second consecutive year of contraction but still demonstrating strong demand for flexibility.

By contrast, permanent hiring faced significant headwinds. Permanent placements contributed 23.3% of GVA and fell sharply in 2024, down from 806,400 the previous year. This drop underscores employers' caution and the growing reliance on agile workforce solutions.

#### Sectoral bright spots

Permanent hiring remained concentrated in education and teaching and secretarial/clerical roles, reflecting sustained demand for administrative and academic professionals.

On the temporary side, nursing, medical and care roles led the way on placements, followed closely by education. This highlights the continued need for flexible, short-term labour in critical services.

Across both categories, secretarial/clerical and technical/engineering roles maintained strong representation. Meanwhile, sectors such as construction and executive/professional saw notable increases in temporary placements. This signals a strategic shift toward more agile hiring models.

#### Looking ahead: what stability in 2025 really means for recruiters

The role of recruitment agencies will be in helping clients navigate skills shortages, upcoming legislative changes and economic uncertainty. In this environment, success will hinge on intelligence, adaptability and sector-specific insight. Recruitment is no longer just about filling roles; it's about shaping workforce strategies for resilience and growth.







### 9 Scotland's labour market

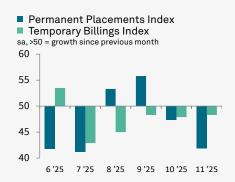
# Accelerated decline in permanent placements signalled in November

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

In November, the number of people placed into permanent positions in Scotland deteriorated for a second successive month – and to the greatest degree since July. Temp billings also fell, although the rate of contraction was modest and the joint slowest in the past five months (matching September's decline).

Despite reductions in placements, permanent salaries increased again, with the rate of inflation remaining marked (despite easing since October). Temp rates rose at an even-stronger rate, with inflation hitting its highest level since June 2024.

Staff availability meanwhile improved, with permanent labour supply increasing again – albeit to a noticeably slower degree than October's four-month high. Temp availability in contrast continued to rise at a strong pace.

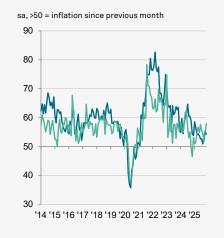












### Scotland Jobs Index summary sa, 50 = no change over previous month

	Permanent Placements	Temporary Billings	Permanent Availability	Temporary Availability	Permanent Salaries	Temporary Wages
06 '25	41.8	53.5	66.7	67.4	52.7	57.6
07 '25	41.2	42.9	56.5	67.7	52.6	55.5
08 '25	53.3	45.0	57.4	67.4	50.9	54.6
09 '25	55.8	48.3	58.7	64.9	53.3	51.7
10 '25	47.4	47.9	62.6	57.5	55.5	54.8
11 '25	41.9	48.3	55.6	58.5	54.2	57.9







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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

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

For further information on the survey methodology, please contact

#### **Survey Dates**

Data were collected 12-24 November 2025.

#### About S&P Global

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The REC is the voice of the recruitment industry, speaking up for great recruiters. We drive standards and empower recruitment businesses to build better futures for their candidates and themselves. We are champions of an industry which is fundamental to the strength of the UK economy. Find out more about the Recruitment & Employment Confederation at www.rec.uk.com.

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