

# KPMG and REC, UK Report on Jobs

## Downturn in hiring activity eases in April

44.7

PERMANENT  
PLACEMENTS INDEX  
APR '25

46.3

TEMPORARY BILLINGS  
INDEX  
APR '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.

Permanent placements decline at softest rate in seven months

Candidate numbers rise amid further drop in vacancies

Temp wage growth improves to 11-month high

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

*"A softening in the pace of the hiring slowdown failed to bring any significant green shoots for the jobs market in April, as recruitment continued to be muted and the number of people looking for jobs increased. This is unsurprising, with businesses facing several pressures due to current global economic uncertainty and rising costs, it is unlikely to lead to a sudden turnaround in the market in the near term."*

*"Starting salaries increased again in April, as a new national minimum wage took effect, but the fact that the pace of growth continues to remain below the long-run average will support the Bank's decision to decrease interest rates this month. While the inflation outlook has shown some improvement, businesses will be looking for more signs of market stability before committing to any major spending."*

Commenting, Neil Carberry, REC Chief Executive, said:

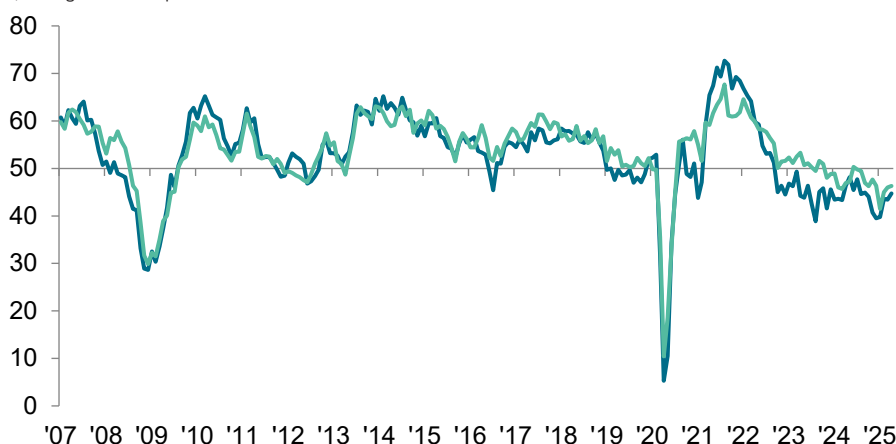
*"Given the bow wave of costs firms faced in April, maintaining the gradual improvement in numbers we have seen over the past few months is on the good end of our expectations. While we are yet to see real momentum build, hopes of an improving picture in the second half of the year should be buoyed by today's data."*

*"Last week's interest rate move is well-timed, offering some relief for businesses, with pay pressures now more contained."*

*"The biggest single drag factor on activity right now is uncertainty. Some of that can't be helped, but payroll tax costs and regulation design is in the Government's gift. Businesses have welcomed positive discussions with Ministers on the Employment Rights Bill, but now it is time for real changes to address employers' fears and boost hiring. A sensible timetable and practical changes that reduce the red tape for firms in complying with the Bill will go a long way to calming nerves about taking a chance on someone."*

■ 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 April are:

### April sees softer fall in recruitment activity

Latest survey data collected from UK recruitment consultancies indicated a further reduction in permanent staff appointments during April amid reports of weak employer confidence and tighter hiring budgets. That said, the latest reduction was the softest seen since last September. A similar trend was observed for temp billings, which fell at the slowest pace in four months, albeit one that was solid overall.

### Candidate supply continues to rise rapidly

Recruitment consultancies signalled a further substantial increase in the number of candidates seeking work in April. Moreover, the rate of growth eased only slightly from March and was therefore the second-sharpest since December 2020. The supply of permanent candidates expanded at a sharper rate than that seen for temporary staff. According to panellists, the uplifts in staff supply were largely due to job losses amid company restructuring efforts and redundancies, as well as a reduction in recruitment activity.

### Temp wage growth improves

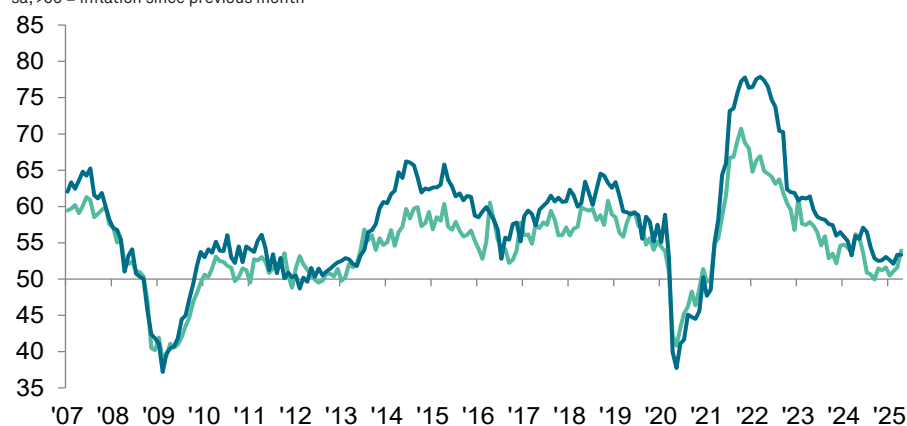
Starting salary inflation was solid in April, with the rate of pay growth unchanged from March's seven-month high. However, the increase remained much slower than seen on average through the survey history (which began in October 1997). At the same time, temp wage growth improved to the fastest in 11 months with panellists highlighting the inflationary impact of recent increases in the national minimum and living wage rates.

### Demand for staff continues to decline sharply

Overall demand for staff weakened in April, as has been the case in each of the past 18 months. The rate of contraction quickened slightly since March, but remained softer than seen earlier in the year. Underlying data pointed to similarly sharp falls in both permanent and temporary vacancies.

■ Permanent Salaries Index  
■ Temporary Wages Index

sa, >50 = inflation since previous month

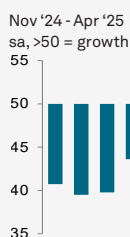


## 2 Staff Appointments

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 fall at softest pace in seven months

UK recruitment consultancies signalled a further reduction in the number of people placed into permanent job roles in April, thereby stretching the current period of decline to 31 months. Panel members often commented that employers were hesitant to commit to permanent hires due to greater economic uncertainty. There were also reports that increased pressure on budgets amid higher payroll costs had dampened recruitment activity. Though sharp, the rate of contraction was the weakest recorded since last September.

The South of England registered the steepest reduction in permanent staff appointments in April while London recorded the softest decline.

Permanent Placements Index

sa, >50 = growth since previous month

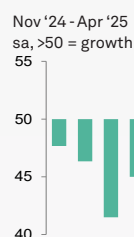


Permanent Placements Index

sa, >50 = growth since previous month

	UK	London	South	Midlands	North
Nov '24	40.7	40.8	37.7	42.6	38.5
Dec '24	39.5	44.0	36.1	39.6	36.6
Jan '25	39.8	42.9	38.8	40.3	34.3
Feb '25	43.6	46.5	40.5	48.8	39.5
Mar '25	43.4	52.5	41.0	45.4	37.8
Apr '25	44.7	47.8	39.1	44.1	45.9

Temporary Billings Index



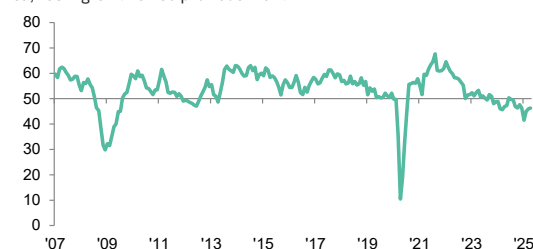
### Downturn in temp billings eases slightly

Billings received from the employment of short-term staff fell for the tenth month in a row during April. Though solid, the rate of reduction was the slowest seen in the year to date. Survey respondents commented that firms were often reluctant to take on short-term workers due to uncertainty around the outlook and concerns over higher staff costs.

Temp billings fell across all four monitored English regions for the third successive month, with the South of England seeing the most pronounced rate of decline.

Temporary Billings Index

sa, >50 = growth since previous month



Temporary Billings Index

sa, >50 = growth since previous month

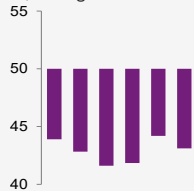
	UK	London	South	Midlands	North
Nov '24	47.7	46.4	46.9	54.6	41.1
Dec '24	46.3	45.1	42.1	51.2	44.3
Jan '25	41.5	38.6	38.4	50.1	41.3
Feb '25	45.0	41.0	43.8	49.2	46.6
Mar '25	46.0	46.6	44.8	48.9	40.2
Apr '25	46.3	49.3	42.0	47.3	42.3

### 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.

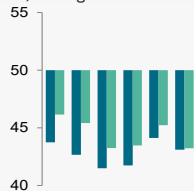
Total Vacancies Index

Nov '24 - Apr '25  
sa, >50 = growth



Permanent  
Temporary

Nov '24 - Apr '25  
sa, >50 = growth



#### Further steep reduction in demand for workers

At 43.1 in April, the seasonally adjusted Total Vacancies Index fell from 44.2 in March and signalled a drop in overall demand for staff for the eighteenth successive month. Whilst not as sharp as those seen in the opening two months of 2025, the reading remained consistent with a historically sharp rate of decline.

#### Permanent & temporary vacancies

April survey data signalled quicker, and similarly steep, falls in demand for both permanent and temporary staff. Notably, temporary vacancies fell at the sharpest pace since June 2020.

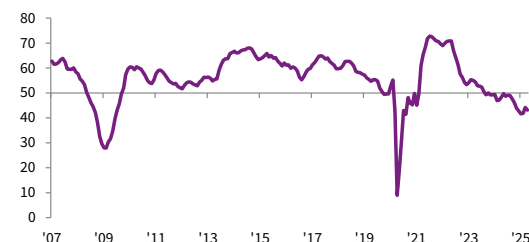
#### Public & private sector vacancies

According to sector data, vacancies across the public sector declined at sharper rates than those seen in the private sector.

Overall, the quickest reduction in demand for workers was seen for permanent staff in the public sector. The softest, but still marked, fall in vacancies was signalled for temporary private sector jobs.

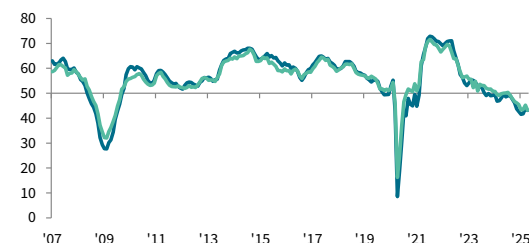
Total Vacancies Index

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.

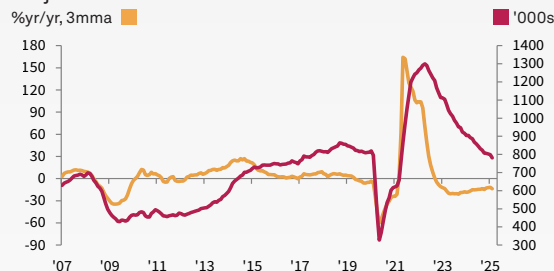
	Permanent				Temporary		
	Total	Total	Private*	Public*	Total	Private*	Public*
Nov '24	43.9	43.8	43.7	43.8	46.2	49.0	39.8
Dec '24	42.8	42.7	42.7	42.7	45.4	46.0	42.5
Jan '25	41.6	41.5	41.8	40.0	43.3	43.3	43.1
Feb '25	41.8	41.7	44.7	39.7	43.5	44.8	37.2
Mar '25	44.2	44.1	44.9	40.4	45.2	46.2	40.9
Apr '25	43.1	43.1	44.7	35.7	43.2	43.4	42.5

## Official data: UK job vacancies

Latest data from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) indicated there were 781,000 vacancies across the UK in the three months to March. This represented a drop of 26,000 from the preceding three-month period, and the lowest recorded since the three months to May 2021.

Notably, the figure was approximately 5% lower than the pre-pandemic level (there were 819,000 vacancies in the three months to February 2020).

UK job vacancies



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

## 4 Vacancies by sector

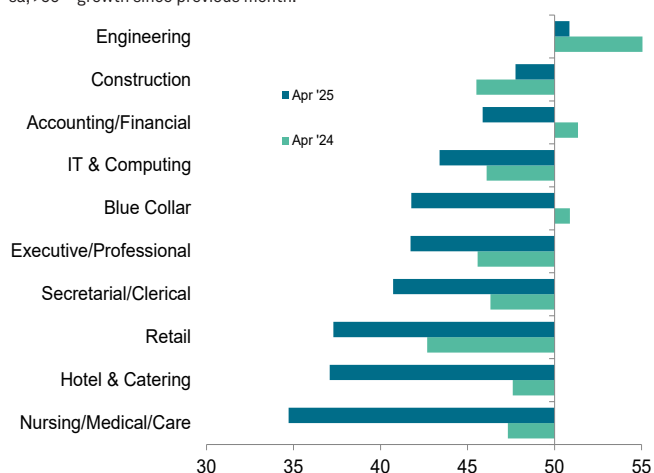
Recruitment consultancies are requested to compare the demand for staff according to sector with the situation one month ago.

### Permanent vacancies

Engineering was the only monitored job category to see an improvement in demand for permanent staff during April, albeit one that was modest overall. Nursing/Medical/Care, Hotel & Catering and Retail sectors meanwhile saw the steepest reductions in permanent vacancies.

#### Permanent Vacancies Index

sa, >50 = growth since previous month.

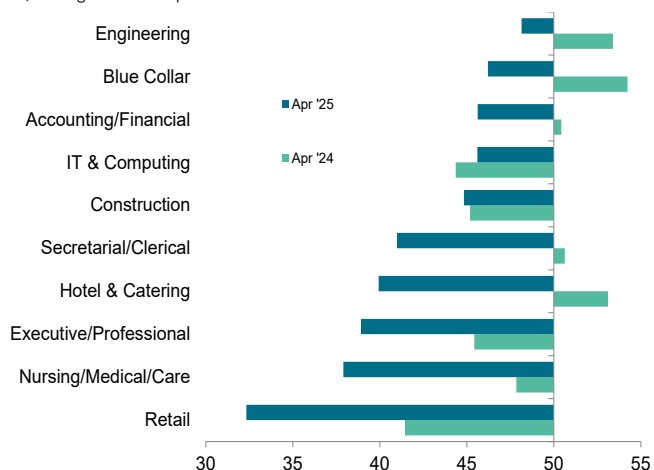


### Temporary vacancies

April survey data indicated that demand for temporary staff fell across all ten monitored job sectors, led by Retail. Engineering saw the softest drop in short-term vacancies, despite the rate of contraction quickening slightly on the month.

#### Temporary Vacancies Index

sa, >50 = growth since previous month.



### Vacancy index by sector

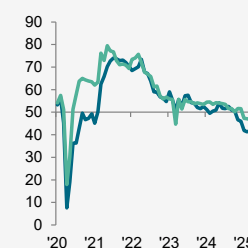
■ Permanent ■ Temporary

sa, >50 = growth since previous month

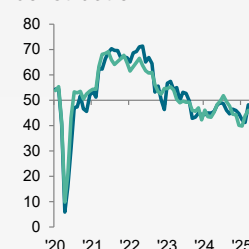
#### Accounting & Financial



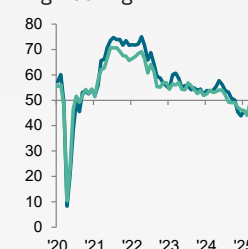
#### Blue Collar



#### Construction



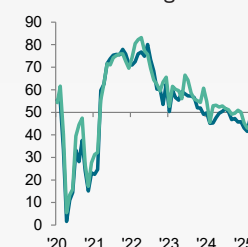
#### Engineering



#### Executive & Professional



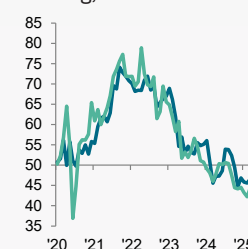
#### Hotel & Catering



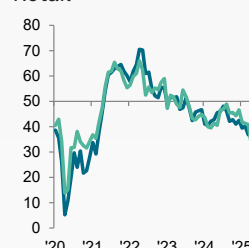
#### IT & Computing



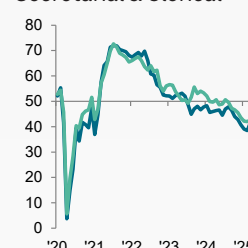
#### Nursing, Medical & Care



#### Retail



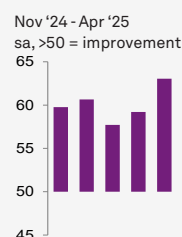
#### Secretarial & Clerical



## 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



### Further rapid increase in total candidate availability

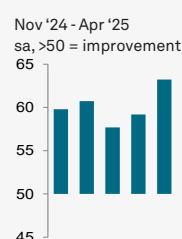
At 62.6 in April, the seasonally adjusted Total Staff Availability Index fell only slightly from 63.0 in March to signal a sharp rise in overall candidate numbers that was the second-fastest since December 2020. The latest growth stretched the current period of rising staff availability to 26 months.

Total Staff Availability Index

sa, >50 = improvement since previous month



Permanent Staff Availability Index



### Expansion in permanent staff supply eases only slightly

Recruiters across the UK signalled a further improvement in the availability of staff for permanent positions in April. Furthermore, the rate of expansion held close to March's 51-month record. Anecdotal evidence indicated that the supply of workers had often increased due to job losses stemming from company restructuring and redundancies. Fewer vacancies were also noted as factor. Some panellists noted that workers were seeking new roles due to concerns around job security, and efforts to secure higher paying jobs.

All four monitored English regions recorded steep increases in permanent candidate numbers.

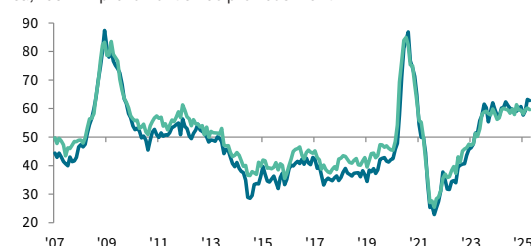
### Temporary candidate numbers continue to rise sharply

The seasonally adjusted Temporary Staff Availability Index remained well above the neutral 50.0 level in April to signal a further substantial increase in temporary staff supply. Notably, the rate of growth eased only slightly from March and was among the quickest seen in the past four years. Reduced demand for workers, fewer job opportunities and redundancies were all linked to the latest expansion of short-term candidate numbers.

The upturn was broad-based across all four monitored English regions, with the North of England seeing the fastest rate of growth.

Permanent Staff Availability Index  
Temporary Staff Availability Index

sa, >50 = improvement since previous month



Permanent Staff Availability Index

sa, >50 = improvement since previous month

	UK	London	South	Midlands	North
Nov '24	59.8	59.9	57.0	61.9	60.3
Dec '24	60.7	60.8	58.0	65.2	61.7
Jan '25	57.7	57.2	55.5	61.0	55.5
Feb '25	59.2	60.3	57.5	61.5	58.3
Mar '25	63.2	66.5	60.4	60.9	66.8
Apr '25	62.8	61.5	60.8	63.0	66.2

Temporary Staff Availability Index

sa, >50 = improvement since previous month

	UK	London	South	Midlands	North
Nov '24	59.4	59.3	59.8	61.1	58.7
Dec '24	59.5	59.5	58.9	59.7	59.9
Jan '25	58.1	60.8	55.9	56.9	61.2
Feb '25	59.6	69.3	55.7	57.4	59.3
Mar '25	60.2	61.8	59.9	58.2	62.0
Apr '25	59.6	60.2	61.0	57.8	61.1



## 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>	Mechanical Engineers Senior Electronic Engineers Senior Engineers Specialist Engineering Technicians Vending Engineers	Consultant Doctors Healthcare Assistants Life Sciences Medical Paediatric Nurses Pharmacists Social Workers
Accountants Accounts Payable Auditors Bookkeepers Credit Controllers Estimators Finance Finance Business Partner Finance Managers Financial Controllers Insurance Management Accountants Part Qualified Accountants Payroll Practice Accountant Practice Accounting Tax & Audit	<b>Executive/Professional</b>	<b>Secretarial/Clerical</b>
<b>Blue Collar</b>	Business Development Commercial Manager Energy & Renewables Human Resources Legal Management Marketing Marketing Agency Mid-Management Project Managers Public Relations Solicitors	Customer Service Admin. Office Staff Sales Administrators
Blue Collar Drivers Electricians HGV Mechanic HVAC LGV 2 Drivers LGV Drivers Production Refrigeration Vehicle Technicians Warehouse Operatives Welders	<b>Hotel/Catering</b>	<b>Other</b>
<b>Construction</b>	Chefs Hospitality	Account Directors Account Managers Buyers Commercial Conference Producer Customs Demand Planners European Languages Fabric Technologists Field Sales FMCG Production Logistics Operations Production Manager Sales Sales Negotiators Sales Order Processor Security Cleared STEM Supply Chain Teachers Telesales
Architectural Tech Part 2 Architect Asst. Quantity Surveyors Structural Engineers Surveyors	<b>IT/Computing</b>	
<b>Engineering</b>	AI Developers Analysts CAD Cloud Computing Cyber Security Data Engineers Data Platform Engineers Data Scientists Developers Digital IT Security Operations Server Engineer Software Software Architects Software Engineers Technical Roles Technical Sales Technology	
Electrical Design Electrical Engineers Engineering Roles Engineers Field Service Engineers Fire & Security Engineers Fire & Security Roles	<b>Nursing/Medical/Care</b>	
	Allied Health Professionals Carers	

### Skills in short supply: Temporary staff

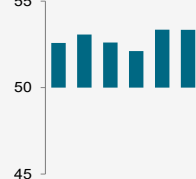
<b>Accounting/Financial</b>	<b>Hotel/Catering</b>
Accountants Accounts Payable Auditors Credit Controllers Finance Finance Directors Payroll Purchase Ledger	Chefs
<b>Blue Collar</b>	<b>IT/Computing</b>
Blue Collar Carpenters Coded Welders Drivers Electricians Forklift Drivers HGV Drivers LGV Drivers Machine Operators Manufacturing Manufacturing Operatives Operatives Plumbers Production Trades Warehouse Operatives Welders	Analysts Cyber Security Data Engineers Developers Full-Stack Developer IT Software Software Engineers Software Sales Technical Roles Technology
<b>Construction</b>	<b>Nursing/Medical/Care</b>
Architect Architectural Tech Joiners Labourers Quantity Surveyors Skilled Trades	Carers Healthcare Assistants Midwife Nurses Paediatric Nurses Psychiatric Nurses
<b>Engineering</b>	<b>Secretarial/Clerical</b>
Electrical Engineers Engineering Roles Engineers HGV Engineers Industrial Engineers System Engineers	Office Staff Receptionist Sales Administrators
<b>Executive/Professional</b>	<b>Other</b>
Energy & Renewables Human Resources	Change & Transformation Customer Service Defence Industry Ecologists New Home Sales Productivity Analysts Sales Sales Directors Security Cleared Teachers Telesales

## 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.

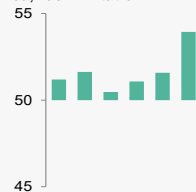
### Permanent Salaries Index

Nov '24 - Apr '25  
sa, >50 = inflation



### Temporary Wages Index

Nov '24 - Apr '25  
sa, >50 = inflation



### Growth of permanent starters' pay remains below long-run trend

Salaries awarded to newly-placed permanent workers increased for the fiftieth month in a row in April. Although the rate of inflation was unchanged from March's seven-month high and solid, it remained notably weaker than the long-run series average. Efforts to attract and secure high quality candidates was a key factor pushing up salaries, according to panellists. Some employers raised pay in response to an increase in the national minimum and living wage rates. Starting salaries rose across all four monitored English regions, led by the Midlands.

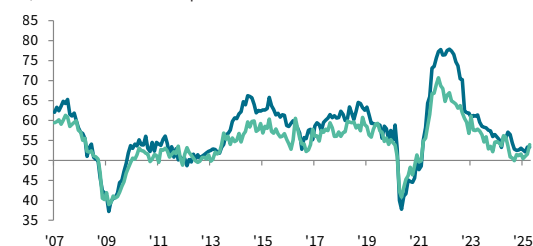
### Temp pay inflation quickens to 11-month high

Average hourly rates of pay for temporary staff across the UK continued to increase at the start of the second quarter. Furthermore, the rate of wage inflation was the quickest recorded in nearly a year and solid. Where higher temp pay was recorded, it was generally linked to stronger than average increases in the national minimum and living wage rates in April.

The South of England recorded the strongest uplift in wages during April, though solid increases were also seen elsewhere.

### Permanent Salaries Index

sa, >50 = inflation since previous month



### Permanent Salaries Index

sa, >50 = inflation since previous month

	UK	London	South	Midlands	North
Nov '24	52.6	52.2	49.7	51.3	53.4
Dec '24	53.1	56.9	47.9	52.4	55.5
Jan '25	52.6	52.2	49.7	55.1	52.9
Feb '25	52.1	55.4	49.9	53.9	48.7
Mar '25	53.3	57.8	52.0	54.6	48.2
Apr '25	53.3	53.0	51.8	54.1	52.5

### Temporary Wages Index

sa, >50 = inflation since previous month

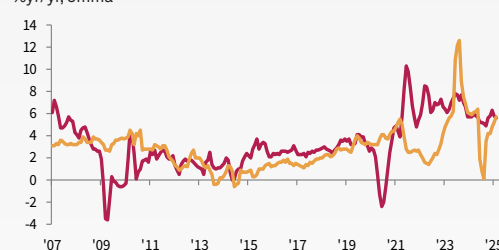
	UK	London	South	Midlands	North
Nov '24	51.2	51.8	50.3	49.1	52.0
Dec '24	51.6	53.3	48.9	51.5	51.5
Jan '25	50.5	51.3	48.7	53.3	51.0
Feb '25	51.1	51.7	50.0	52.8	50.2
Mar '25	51.6	53.1	51.0	53.3	50.6
Apr '25	53.9	53.3	55.2	53.5	54.0

## Official data: UK average weekly earnings

Official data published by the ONS indicated that average weekly earnings continued to expand at a historically strong pace in the three months to February. At 5.6%, the rate of pay growth was unchanged from the preceding three-month period, running at nearly double the average seen prior to the pandemic (2.9%).

Public sector pay increased at a slightly quicker pace than private sector earnings (5.7% versus 5.6%). Notably, the uptick in public sector pay was the strongest seen since the three months to May 2024.

### UK average weekly earnings



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



## 8 Special feature

This section features data from the Recruitment and Employment Confederation

### Leveraging technology in health care recruitment: A data-driven approach

As the UK health care sector faces mounting workforce pressures, recruitment agencies play an increasingly crucial role in bridging the gap. Whilst public and Government narratives tend to focus on the NHS' spending on agencies, we should instead be directing our attention to improving overall staffing figures – which is the key to creating a sustainable health care workforce.

Data is an essential tool for recruitment agencies navigating this increasingly complex landscape.

#### **Making data work: Strategic recruitment through insight.**

Data is the new differentiator in today's competitive job market. A recent analysis by REC revealed 177,032 postings for Health roles in the first quarter of the year (January to March 2025). This is 71% higher than the previous quarter (October to December 2024), but 15.3% lower than the same quarter in the previous year (January to March 2024).

The average UK job posting ratio is 2:1 meaning two total postings per unique job. In health care it jumps to 3:1, and for nursing roles, it climbs to 4:1. This is a clear indicator of the additional effort required to fill these roles. By analysing demand, agencies can tailor their outreach and resource allocation effectively.

#### **Informed targeting: Skills and certifications.**

Understanding the demand for skills and certifications can enable agencies to guide candidates toward improved employability. Top in-demand skills include:

- Auditing
- Clinical governance
- Risk analysis

Recruitment firms can use this data to target better-fit candidates and coach jobseekers on any necessary upskilling.

#### **Understanding market shifts: Vacancy trends.**

The May 2025 Report on Jobs reveals continued declines in health care vacancies. The Permanent Healthcare Staff Vacancies Index dropped sharply to 34.7 in April, down from 46.6 the previous month. Temporary demand also weakened, with the Temporary Healthcare Vacancies Index falling from 44.4 to 37.9. While health care demand has been declining for six consecutive months, these latest figures point to a more fragile market, just as changes to National Insurance and the National Minimum Wage come into effect.

#### **Workforce trends from the NHS and ONS.**

To build a data-driven strategy, recruitment professionals must understand the broader workforce landscape. As of the end of 2024, the NHS employed over 1.2 million people in England, with significant figures in Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland.

The workforce includes:

- 150,000 doctors
- 700,000 nurses and midwives
- 250,000 allied health professionals
- 400,000 support staff

This diversity underscores the wide range of recruitment needs. Regions like Scotland, with a higher nurse-to-other-professional ratio, show how local priorities shape hiring needs.

#### **Driving the sector forward**

As the health care recruitment landscape shifts, recruitment agencies must evolve. Leveraging real-time labour market data, with an understanding of regions and skills-based trends will be critical.

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### S&P Global

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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 09-24 April 2025.

### About S&P Global

S&P Global (NYSE:SPGI) S&P Global provides essential intelligence. We enable governments, businesses and individuals with the right data, expertise and connected technology so that they can make decisions with conviction. From helping our customers assess new investments to guiding them through ESG and energy transition across supply chains, we unlock new opportunities, solve challenges and accelerate progress for the world.

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### About KPMG UK

KPMG LLP, a UK limited liability partnership, operates across the UK with approximately 17,000 partners and staff. The UK firm recorded a revenue of £2.99 billion in the year ended 30 September 2024.

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### About REC

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](http://www.rec.uk.com).

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