



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the 15th edition of our Market Insight & Salary Guide, where we share our expertise on key trends within finance, tech, transformation, legal and specialist markets for 2025.

This year our research is based upon a robust sample size of 1,823 respondents, and is referred to by 100k+ professionals across our nine offices in the UK, Ireland, and the Netherlands.

The recruitment landscape continues to evolve, shaped by economic, political & geopolitical challenges, rising operational costs, fast paced technological advancements, and an uneven market recovery. While these hurdles persist, businesses are demonstrating greater strategic agility. In particular, the finance and tech sectors are leading the way, adapting to new realities with renewed focus and determination.

There is a clear shift in sentiment: organisations are no longer merely reacting to change; they are preparing for it. The rapid pace of technological advancement and shifting workforce expectations have ushered in a new era where it's no longer 'business as usual - it's 'transformation as usual' and traditional approaches to hiring and workforce planning are being replaced with more agile, skills-focused strategies.

In this context, investing in people is more critical than ever. Skills, rather than experience, are emerging as the primary currency for hiring managers. The pace of change has never been faster, and employers are seeking professionals who can adapt, innovate, and thrive. As one industry leader put it: "Your performance tells me what you've done in the past, your skills tell me what you can do in the future."

Age inclusion is also rising up the talent agenda. With 47% of the UK workforce projected to be over 50 by 2030, businesses are increasingly recognising the need to value experience alongside innovation. Age diversity is no longer a 'nice to have' - it's a strategic imperative. Organisations that harness the full breadth of workforce demographics will be better positioned to meet evolving market demands and foster sustainable growth.

Another prevalent trend is the growing influence of Al across sectors. Businesses are making significant investments in advanced technologies to maintain a competitive edge and spur innovation. However, adopting these technologies alone is not sufficient, it is crucial for organisations to ensure their workforce possess the necessary skills to fully leverage these tools. Without the right expertise, even the most sophisticated technologies may not deliver the desired outcomes. To achieve sustained growth and stay ahead of the curve, businesses must prioritise the integration of skilled talent capable of effectively utilising these innovations to drive change and maximise value. This shift places greater emphasis on upskilling and digital readiness as key elements of workforce strategy.

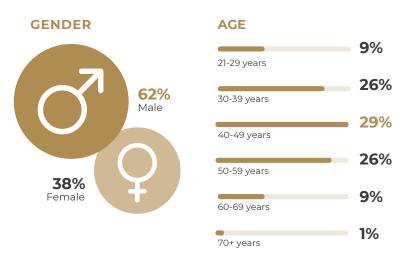
In our fast-moving environment, competition for talent is intense. Companies are offering more attractive salary packages, enhanced benefits, and flexible working models in a bid to secure top professionals. Beyond pay, professionals are increasingly prioritising wellbeing, autonomy, and alignment with company values when considering new roles. These factors are becoming critical differentiators in today's market.

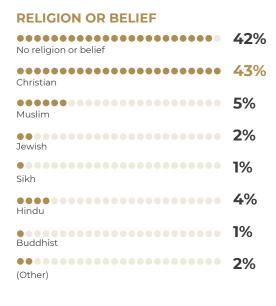
This annual report explores these developments in detail. From emerging hiring trends to salary benchmarks and workforce expectations, we provide comprehensive insight to support both employers and jobseekers. Whether you're refining your talent strategy or planning your next career move, our goal is to equip you with the knowledge needed to navigate a complex and competitive market with confidence.

A sincere thank you to the 1,823 professionals who gave their valuable time to participate in our survey. We have partnered with Ecologi again this year to plant a tree for each survey response we received!

DEMOGRAPHIC OF RESPONDENTS

Here we outline the demographics of our survey respondents. Please note this is not a representation of our candidate and client community, rather a demographic overview of our research participants this year.





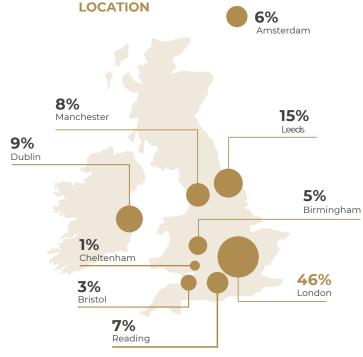
11 respondents chose non-binary

DO YOU HAVE A DISABILITY UNDER THE EQUALITY ACT 2010?

In the Act, a person has a disability if:

- they have a physical or mental impairment
- the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day-to-day activities.

5%	95%	
Yes	No	



CONTRACT TYPE

Permanent

11%

Contractor - Day or hourly rate

4%

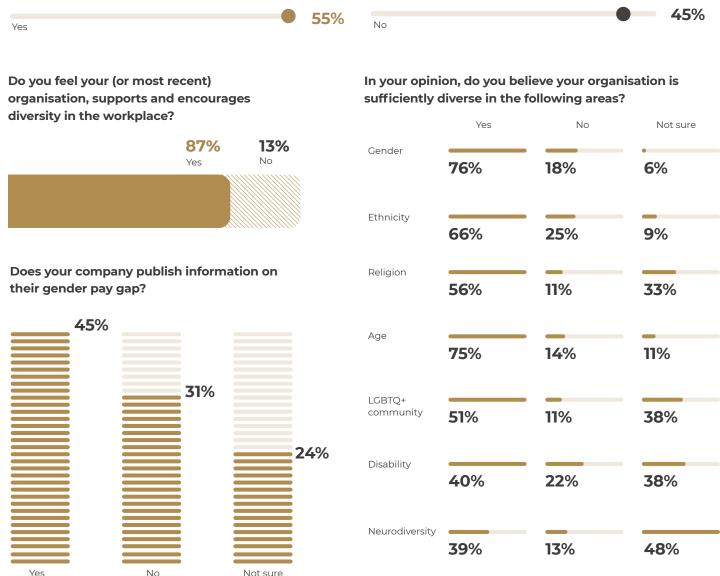
Volume Tixed term

7%

FUTURE OF WORK

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION





OUR DIVERSITY PROMISE

As a talent consultancy, we have an unwavering responsibility to represent everyone in our network in a fair and ethical manner. We commit to providing the same high level service to every professional we work with regardless of their age, gender identity, race, sexual orientation, physical or mental ability, and ethnicity.

We recognise and advocate that a diverse workforce contributes positively to a company's success and growth. It's not just about the service we provide, true appreciation for diversity, equality, and inclusion needs to be at our core. We pledge to keep embedding these values in our culture, so that as advisors, we feel empowered to afford the same opportunities we receive, to the professionals we represent.



Visit our dedicated Equality, Diversity & Inclusion hub: www.markssattin.co.uk/diversity-and-inclusion

ESG How important is it for you to work for an organisation that has a robust ESG Strategy? •••••• **42**% Very important 35% Somewhat important ••••••• 23% Not important Are you satisfied with the effort your company makes to improve ESG challenges? 20% 80% Yes No

Increased efficiency 5% Improved decision making 4% Reducing operational costs No significant impact 61% Is your company investing in AI tools?

Yes

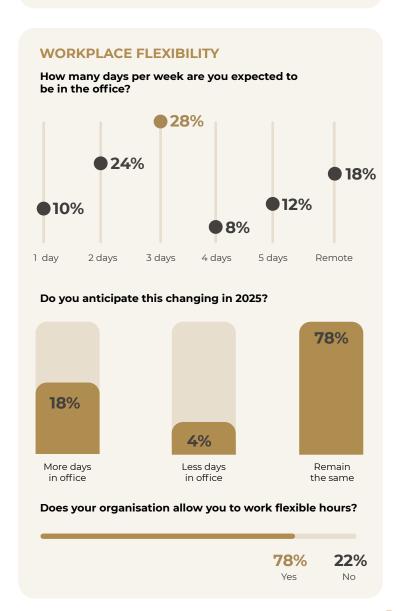
Does your company offer training on AI?

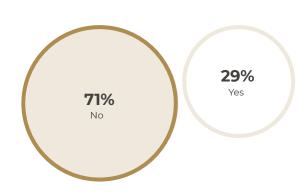
No

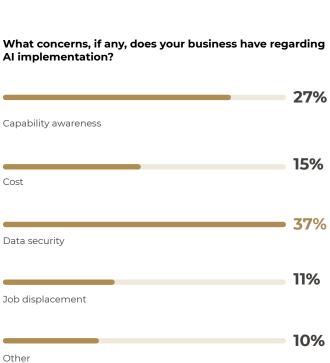
Not sure

How has AI impacted your current role?

ΑI







BUSINESS CONFIDENCE

To gain a deeper understanding of how economic conditions are affecting recruitment and talent strategy, we incorporated market confidence questions in this year's survey. With over 1,800 respondents sharing their perspectives, here are some valuable insights into hiring outlooks and market sentiment for the remainder of the year.

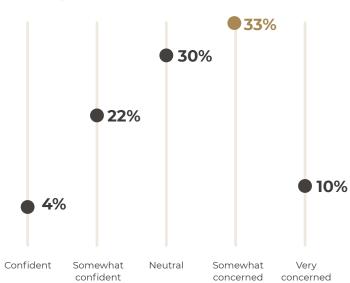
The results of our 2025 Business Confidence Survey highlight that companies are taking a measured approach to recruitment, focusing on selective hiring and investing in strategic areas like digital transformation, technology, and regulatory compliance. Businesses are adapting to the changing economic climate by prioritising resilience, innovation, and cost control. While some

are embarking on major transformation initiatives, others are maintaining stability and carefully navigating uncertainty. This strategic focus on transformation is expected to drive demand for specialised talent, particularly in technology and legal sectors. Overall, while there are concerns about the long-term impact of economic conditions, businesses are staying agile, leveraging opportunities for growth in high-demand sectors. The trend toward stability, coupled with a clear preference for flexible work and cautious relocation decisions, reflects the broader sentiment of managing risk in an unpredictable environment. As we move forward through 2025, the outlook remains one of adaptability and strategic investment in the face of ongoing change.

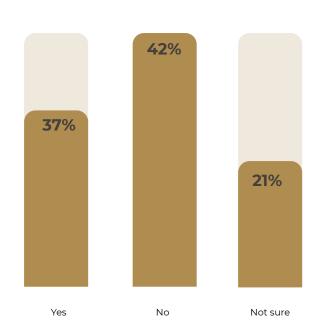
What factors are currently impacting your business confidence the most?



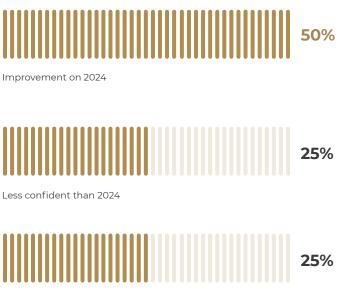
How optimistic are you regarding the UK & Ireland's economy?



Is your current (or recent) business embarking on any significant Change Programmes in 2025?



How do you expect your current (or recent) company to perform over the next 12 months?

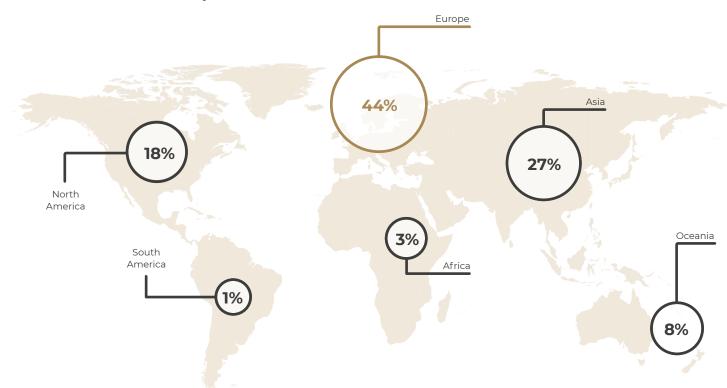


Stay the same

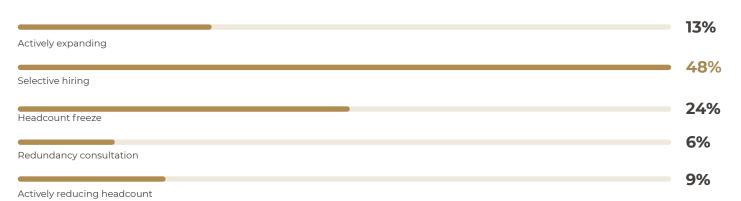
Would you relocate in the next 12 months?

Yes - Domestically	14%
Yes - Internationally	25%
No.	61 %

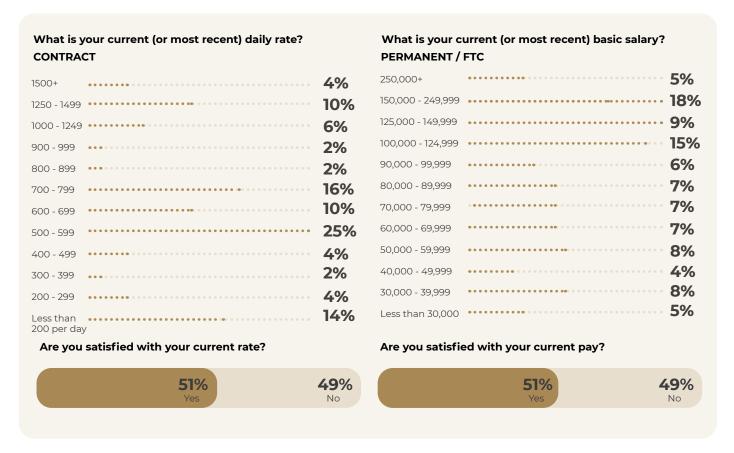
Which international location would you relocate to?



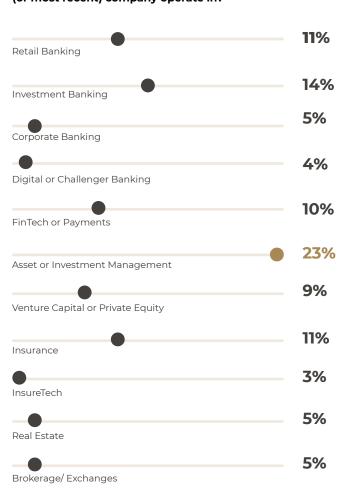
What is your business's current hiring outlook?



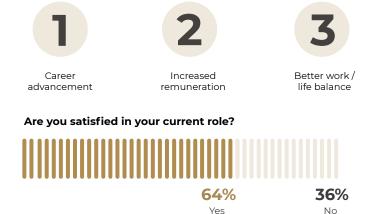
KEY FINDINGS



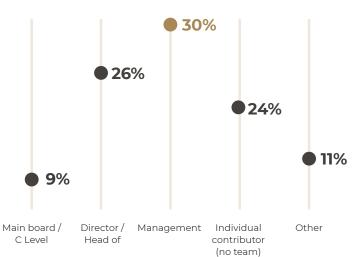
Which FS subsector does your current (or most recent) company operate in?



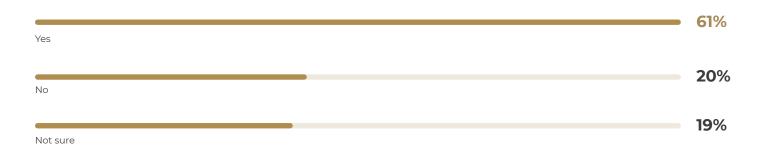
Top 3 reasons for leaving last role



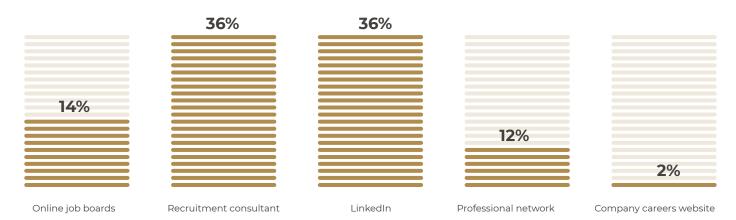
What level is your current (or most recent) position?



Do you feel your job is secure in 2025?



When looking for a role, which of the below would you use?







25 days+ annual leave



Annual bonus



Insurances (PMI, Dental, DIS, Life)



Gym / Health subsidy

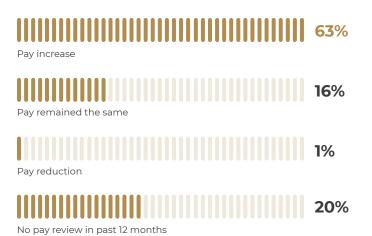


Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)

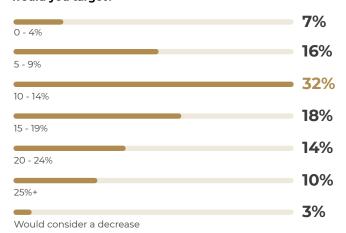
Are you happy with your current benefits?

70%Yes
No

What was the outcome of your last pay review?



When looking for a new position, what salary increase would you target?



MARKET INSIGHT

Year-to-date the UK financial services recruitment market has been defined by cautious optimism. At the beginning of the year, many financial institutions lifted hiring freezes and moved ahead with Q1 recruitment, however, this rebound was not reflected in vacancies placed - being tempered by wider challenges. Persistent inflation and high interest rates, coupled with global economic uncertainties, have made many firms careful in expanding headcount. Nevertheless, hiring is pressing forward in key areas. Demand is strongest for roles that bolster resilience, compliance and strategic finance, even as organisations recalibrate their workforce needs.

A BALANCED APPROACH BETWEEN PERMANENT AND TEMPORARY HIRING

Market intel indicates that over half of finance hiring managers plan to increase permanent headcount in 2025, reflecting optimism in long-term growth. At the same time, a significant proportion also intend to hire on a project or contract basis to maintain flexibility. In practice, project-led work (such as regulatory implementations or system upgrades) has driven a surge in temporary roles, with companies moving quickly to secure contractors who can meet immediate deadlines. This dual strategy allows firms to "staff up" selectively for core functions and leverage interim talent for short-term needs.

REGULATION DRIVES HIRING IN FINANCIAL SERVICES

With firms navigating a mixed economic climate, certain themes dominate 2025's hiring trends:

- Regulatory pressure and governance demands are a major catalyst: organisations are "doubling down" on roles that ensure regulatory compliance, risk control and sound governance. Upcoming rules (such as MiFID III and the new UK Audit, Reporting and Governance Authority) are expected to further spur recruitment of compliance and governance specialists.
- Technology and automation continue to reshape staffing. Many institutions are investing in digital transformation and Al-driven efficiency, even as they streamline elsewhere. This has led to sustained hiring of tech-savvy talent, such as data analysts, Al developers, fintech specialists, while some junior and back-office roles are being phased out by automation.
- Industry-specific conditions influence hiring. For example, private capital markets are expanding (fuelling recruitment in private credit and semi-liquid funds), whereas parts of traditional banking are retrenching (leading to selective hiring focused on compliance and cost management).
- **Talent strategy considerations** like rising salary expectations and skills shortages are impacting how companies hire.

INDUSTRY INSIGHTS

Private Equity & VC

Private equity (PE) firms and venture capital (VC) investors navigated a slower deal market in 2023/24, but 2025 is showing cautious but steady improvement in activity. This is translating into a gradual uptick in hiring, particularly as firms position themselves for renewed growth.

There is a sense of positioning for a future upcycle – firms want the right talent in place so they can act quickly on deals when conditions improve further. However, given some overhang in the market (e.g. PE firms still working through companies bought at high valuations, and VCs waiting for better exit conditions), hiring is not at a breakneck pace. It's selective and often focused on senior-level or specialised expertise.

Private Credit/Debt

Private credit is a standout growth area in 2025's financial job market. Building on a strong rebound in 2024, private credit and direct lending firms are expanding aggressively, and this is fuelling significant hiring. Notably, the bulk of hiring in private credit has been at the mid-senior level (approximately 3–10 years' experience). According to one compensation survey, around 70% of offers in early 2025 were for Senior Associate, VP, or Director-level positions.

Another trend is new entrants fuelling hiring. The UK private credit scene is seeing increased participation from new players, including some U.S. investment firms and traditional institutions launching private debt strategies. Between that and many firms launching or expanding private credit units, talent with direct lending experience is in short supply and can command premium compensation (indeed, upward pressure on pay in this sector has been noted due to the competition for talent).

Infrastructure & Real Estate

The infrastructure sector is benefiting from strong tailwinds – government initiatives (like the UK's new industrial strategy and clean energy drive) and investor appetite for stable, long-term assets are buoying activity. Infrastructure funds and project finance lenders are busy with projects in renewable energy, transport, digital infrastructure, and more. As a result, specialist talent in infrastructure investment and finance is in demand.

Whereas the picture is more cautious in the real estate sector. The commercial real estate market in the UK has been under pressure due to high interest rates (which raise financing costs and put downward pressure on property values) and shifts in demand (e.g. hybrid work affecting office occupancy, e-commerce affecting retail property). In 2024, real estate lenders and investors became more conservative, and this has continued into 2025.

Insurance

Hiring in the insurance sector is steady, with no dramatic growth. Key areas of growth are compliance, risk (particularly climate and model risk), and technology roles. Traditional insurance skillsets remain important, but candidates who augment those with data and regulatory knowledge stand out. The availability of talent is relatively good in insurance; it's a mature sector, so there's a solid pipeline of qualified actuaries and underwriters, though niche skills like catastrophe modelling or cyber insurance underwriting can be hard to find. We expect insurance employers to maintain a stable hiring pace through 2025.

Banking & Capital Markets

The large banks remain focused on cost discipline and hiring is focused predominantly on mid-level professionals due to internal departures. Smaller banks and alternative lenders however have seen a significant push in their hiring requirements, with entrants from 22/23 at a position now to develop within teams.

Trading firms and market makers (outside of banks), like proprietary trading shops are hiring quants and traders in profitable niches. The exchanges and clearing houses are hiring tech and risk personnel as they upgrade systems. Capital markets hiring is likely to uptick if the economic outlook continues to brighten, but is at present very reserved.

The second half of 2025 may witness more hiring in front-office banking roles if equity and debt issuance rebounds – banks will be keen to capitalise on any market recovery and may quickly scramble for talent in deal teams, making pipeline networking important now. In summary, banking sector hiring is cautious, but not frozen.

Fintech

Last year saw something of a fintech boom in hiring, as venture capital investment flowed again and fintech firms ramped up innovation in areas like payments, digital assets, and Al-driven finance. In fact, 2024 recorded a striking 44% year-on-year increase in job vacancies in the fintech sector.

Looking ahead, the fintech job market should stay buoyant through this year, but possibly less frothy than 2024's growth. If interest rates fall, venture funding could further increase, giving fintech another boost in hiring (particularly in lending fintechs or mortgage tech, which have been quieter during high-rate times). Conversely, if funding tightens, some consolidation may occur, but those who leave one startup often get absorbed by another, keeping overall employment levels fairly steady.

IN-DEMAND ROLES

Despite the overall moderation in hiring, certain roles and skill-sets are experiencing unabated demand across financial services. Professionals who can drive financial resilience, ensure regulatory adherence, or harness technology for efficiency are especially sought-after.

Finance (part-qualified to CFO)

In the finance and accounting function, hiring has remained steady and broad-based, with needs spanning from part-qualified accountants to finance directors.

Part-qualified candidates (those progressing toward full qualifications) are highly sought after as they can fill accounts assistant, analyst and junior controller roles, gaining experience while alleviating workload on senior staff. In fact, recent data shows part-qualified and newly qualified accountants have seen some of the fastest salary growth of any group, a huge differential to 2024 where the junior candidate base had little movement.

At the mid-level, organisations are bolstering their finance teams with specialists in financial planning & analysis (FP&A), budgeting, and business partnering. Expertise in data analytics and business intelligence tools is a prized asset for finance hires.

At the senior end (CFOs and Finance Directors), demand remains steady but hiring is highly selective. Many firms prefer to promote internally for top finance jobs unless specific expertise is needed. That said, CFO turnover in private companies and startups is creating opportunities – for instance, private equity portfolio companies often seek experienced CFOs or Finance Directors who can drive growth initiatives or turnaround plans.

Risk Management

Risk management hiring is robust, as financial institutions grapple with an evolving risk landscape. Regulatory changes, market volatility, and new technologies are all driving demand for specialised risk talent across banking, insurance, and investment firms. Credit risk hiring is also steady in banks and lenders, given concerns around loan defaults in a high-rate environment.

Across the sector, regulatory risk and compliance-related risk roles are a consistent priority (overlapping with the compliance function). As new rules come into force, companies need risk managers who understand regulatory requirements (Basel standards, consumer protection rules, operational resilience frameworks, etc.) and can ensure the firm stays within risk appetite.

In summary, risk professionals – from risk analysts and modellers up to Chief Risk Officers (CROs) – are in high demand. Functions like market risk, credit risk, tech/cyber risk, and operational risk are all hiring.

Compliance & Financial Crime

The compliance function remains one of the hottest areas for hiring in financial services. With regulators intensifying scrutiny and new regulations coming into effect, companies are bolstering their compliance, risk governance, and financial crime teams at all levels. In fact, compliance and risk management roles are among those growing fastest in demand.

Financial crime compliance is a particular priority. There is surging demand for anti-money laundering (AML) and fraud prevention specialists, reflecting both stricter enforcement and the rise of complex financial crimes.

Beyond AML, general regulatory compliance officers are in high demand. Organisations are preparing for, or adapting to a host of new regulations – from consumer protection measures to prudential rules – and need staff who can interpret and implement these changes.

Overall, the compliance job market is active this year. Junior analysts (e.g. KYC analysts, monitoring analysts) are needed to handle the volume of checks and reports, while mid-level managers are sought to design and enforce compliance programs, and senior compliance officers/heads of compliance are being hired or elevated to set the strategy in an increasingly complex regulatory environment.

Trading & Quantitative roles

Trading roles present a mixed picture, varying by industry segment. On one hand, major investment banks have been restrained in adding traders due to cost-cutting and lower deal activity in the past year. On the other hand, buy-side firms (hedge funds, proprietary trading firms, asset managers) are aggressively hiring trading talent – particularly quantitative traders and researchers – as they expand strategies and take advantage of volatile markets. The rise in interest rates and macro volatility has created lucrative opportunities in certain trading areas (like fixed income and commodities), spurring some firms to build out their trading desks.

A clear trend is the continued rise of quantitative and algorithmic trading roles. Firms across the spectrum are investing in quants who can develop models and algorithms to generate alpha or manage risk.

Sources:

 $bmmagazine.co.uk, roberthalf.com, accountancyage.com, \\ alternative creditin vestor.com, vacan cysoft.com, selbyjennings.com, elevate partners.ie$



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SALARY GUIDE

	SALARY RANGE	DAY RATE
PRIVATE EQUITY & INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT		
Fund Accountant	£60,000 - £75,000	£425 - £550
Fund Controller / Fund Accounting Manager	£90,000 - £125,000	£500 - £800
Head of Fund Accounting	£120,000 - £180,000	£750 - £1,000
Newly Qualified Accountant ACCA / CIMA / ACA /Non Big 4	£60,000 - £65,000	£350 - £425
Newly Qualified Accountant ACA Big 4	£60,000 - £70,000	£375 - £425
Senior Accountant 1 - 4 years PQE	£67,500 - £85,000	£400 - £575
Finance Manager / Reporting or Financial Planning & Analysis 3 - 6 years PQI	£75,000 - £100,000	£500-£650
Financial Controller	£90,000 - £130,000	£550- £850
Transactional Support 5+ years PQE	£90,000 - £135,000	£500 - £800
Head of Finance	£110,000 - £160,000	£700 - £1,000
Finance Director	£150,000 - £200,000+	£850 - £1,500
CFO	£220,000 - £275,000+	£1,000 - £2,000+

	SALARY RANGE	DAY RATE
REAL ESTATE ACCOUNTING		
Fund Accountant	£60,000 - £75,000	£425 - £550
Fund Controller / Fund Accounting Manager	£80,000 - £110,000	£500-£800
Head of Fund Accounting	£110,000 - £175,000	£700 - £1,000
Newly Qualified Accountant ACCA/CIMA/ACA non Big 4	£55,000 - £60,000	£350 - £425
Newly Qualified Accountant ACA Big 4	£57,500 - £65,000	£375 - £425
Senior Accountant 1 - 4 years PQE	£65,000 - £85,000	£400 - £550
Finance Manager / Reporting or FP&A 3 - 6 years PQE	£75,000 - £100,000	£500 - £650
Financial Controller / Senior Finance Manager	£85,000 - £125,000	£550 - £800
Transactional Support 5+ years PQE	£85,000 - £135,000	£500 - £800
Head of Finance	£115,000 - £160,000	£700 - £1,000
Finance Director / CFO	£150,000 - £300,000	£900 - £2,000+

£55,000 - £60,000	£350 - £425
£55,000 - £60,000	£350 - £425
£60,000 - £65,000	£350- £425
£65,000 - £85,000	£400 - £550
£65,000 - £90,000	£500 - £650
£85,000 - £120,000	£550 - £800
£60,000 - £75,000	£400 - £550
£75,000 - £90,000	£550 - £750
£90,000 - £125,000	£600 - £900
£110,000 - £150,000	£800 - £1,200
£150,000 - £300,000+	£1,000 - £2,500+
	£65,000 - £85,000 £65,000 - £90,000 £85,000 - £120,000 £60,000 - £75,000 £75,000 - £90,000 £90,000 - £125,000

	SALARY RANGE	DAY RATE
FINTECH		
Newly / Recently Qualified ACA	£60,000 - £70,000	£350 - £400
Newly / Recently Qualified ACCA or CIMA	£60,000 - £65,000	£350 - £400
Finance manager 1 - 3 years PQE	£70,000 - £80,000	£400 - £525
Financial Controller 3 - 5 years PQE	£80,000 - £95,000	£450 - £650
Head of Finance / Finance Director	£95,000 - £130,000	£600 - £900
CFO	£150,000+	£800 - £1,500+

	SALARY RANGE	DAY RATE
BANKING & CAPITAL MARKETS		
Financial Accountant Newly Qualified up to 2 years PQE	£60,000 - £70,000	£350 - £450
Financial Accountant 2 - 5 years PQE	£70,000 - £90,000	£425 - £600
Senior Financial Accountant 5 - 10 years PQE	£80,000 - £100,000	£450 - £700
Financial Controller 2 - 5 years PQE	£70,000 - £95,000	£425 - £625
Financial Controller 5 - 10 years PQE	£85,000 - £120,000	£500 - £700
Management Accountant Newly Qualified up to 2 years PQE	£60,000 - £70,000	£350 - £450
Management Accountant 2 - 5 years PQE	£70,000 - £90,000	£400 - £550
Finance Business Partner / FP&A Newly Qualified up to 2 years PQE	£60,000 - £75,000	£375 - £450
Finance Business Partner / FP&A 2 - 5 years PQE	£70,000 - £90,000	£400 - £600
Finance Business Partner / FP&A 5 - 10 years PQE	£95,000+	£450 - £750
Head of FP&A	£120,000 - £150,000	£800 - £1,500
Product Controller Newly Qualified up to 2 years PQE	£60,000 - £75,000	£400 - £500
Product Controller 2 - 10 years PQE	£75,000 - £100,000	£500 - £650
Head of Finance	£100,000 - £130,000	£650 - £1,000
Finance Director	£130,000 - £150,000+	£950 - £1,500
CFO (Dependent on size of bank)	£150,000 - £200,000+	£1,200 - £2,000+

	SALARY RANGE	DAY RATE
PART QUALIFIED & TRANSACTIONAL		
Graduate up to 12 months' experience	£27,000 - £35,000	£175 - £200
Accounts Assistant More than 12 months' experience	£35,000 - £42,000	£180 - £250
Accounts Payable / Receivable	£40,000 - £60,000	£225- £350
Assistant Accountant	£31,000 - £38,000	£225 - £300
Assistant Financial Accountant	£38,000 - £48,000	£250 - £325
Assistant Management Accountant	£38,000 - £48,000	£225 - £325
ACCA Finalist	£50,000 - £60,000	£300 - £350
Finance Analyst	£40,000 - £50,000	£225 - £320
PQ Regulatory Accountant	£45,000 - £55,000	£275 - £425
PQ Fund Accountant	£44,000 - £55,000	£275 - £400
Fund Administrator	£30,000 - £36,000	£200 - £250
Payroll Admin	£30,000 - £42,000	£250 - £300
Payroll Manager	£60,000 - £80,000	£375 - £425
Head of Payroll (FS)	£80,000 - £125,000	£450 - £700
AP Manager	£55,000 - £75,000	£300 - £400

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