

TECHNOLOGY



MARKET & SALARY GUIDE

**MARKS
SATTIN**

Gi Group Holding



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 AI 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!

MATTHEW WILCOX

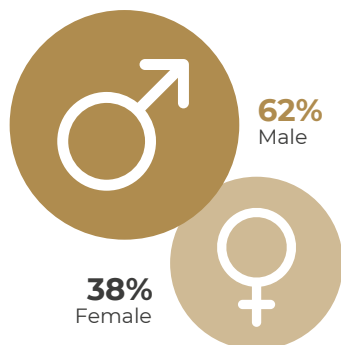
Managing Director

matthew.wilcox@markssattin.com

DEMOGRAPHIC OF RESPONDENTS

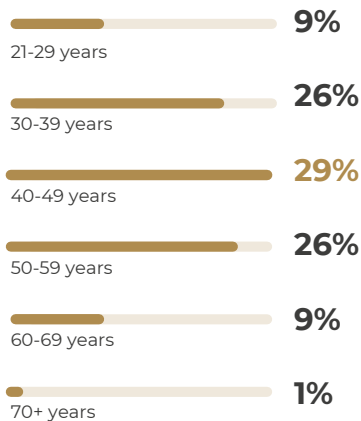
Here we outline the demographics of our survey respondents. Please note this is not a representation of our candidate and client community, rather a demographic overview of our research participants this year.

GENDER

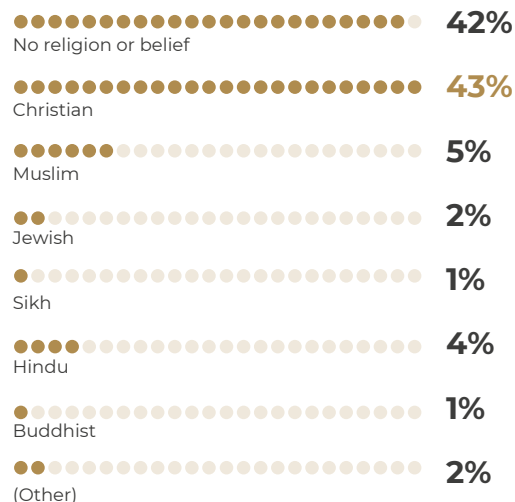


11 respondents chose non-binary

AGE



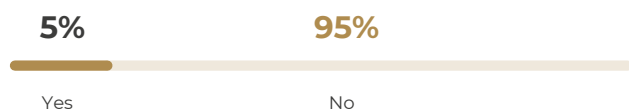
RELIGION OR BELIEF



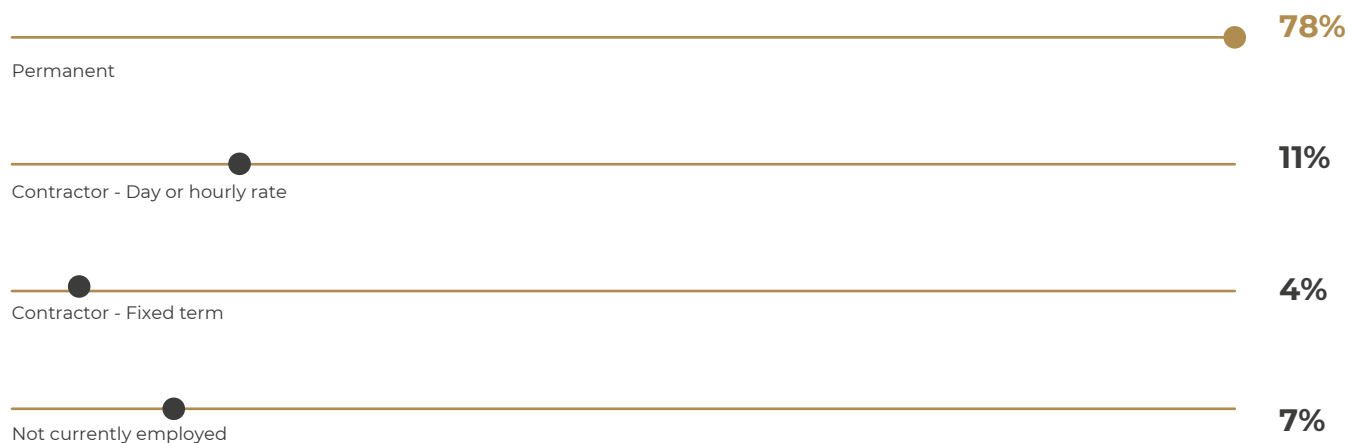
DO YOU HAVE A DISABILITY UNDER THE EQUALITY ACT 2010?

In the Act, a person has a disability if:

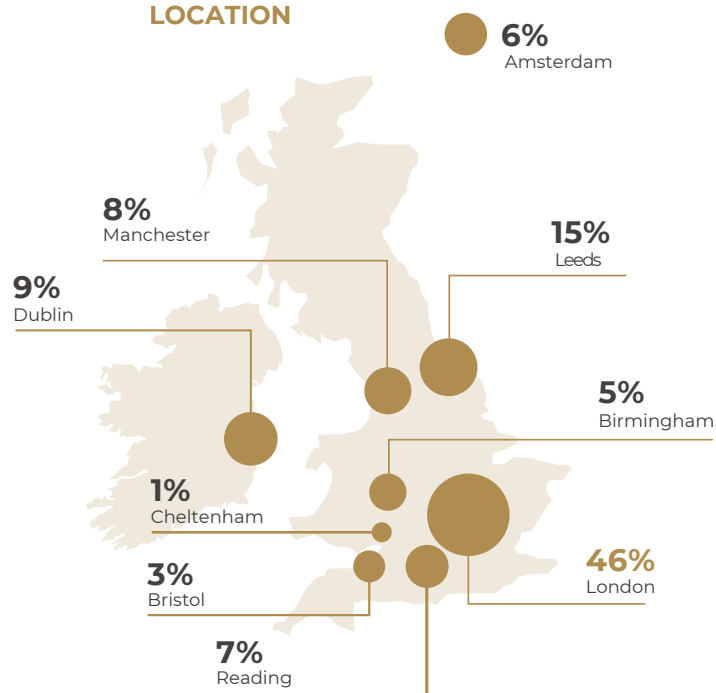
- they have a physical or mental impairment
- the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day-to-day activities.



CONTRACT TYPE



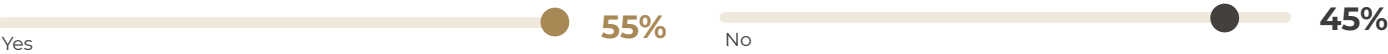
LOCATION



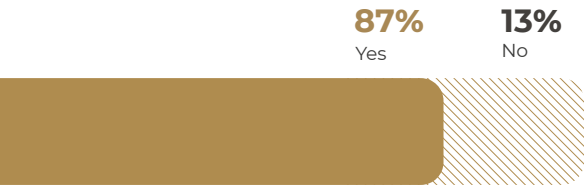
FUTURE OF WORK

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

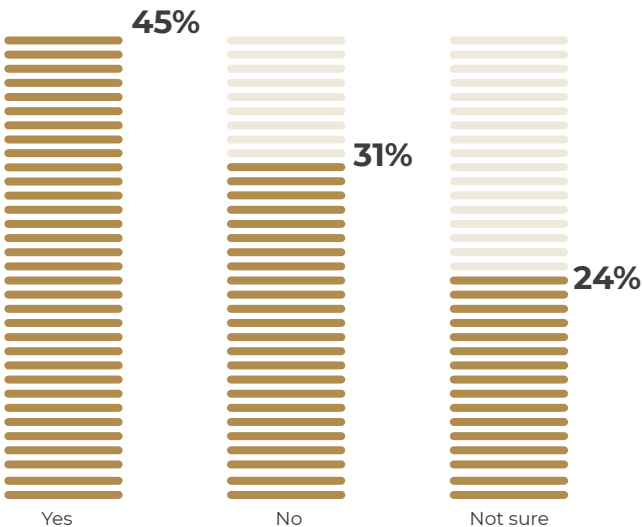
Do you think your leadership team is sufficiently diverse?



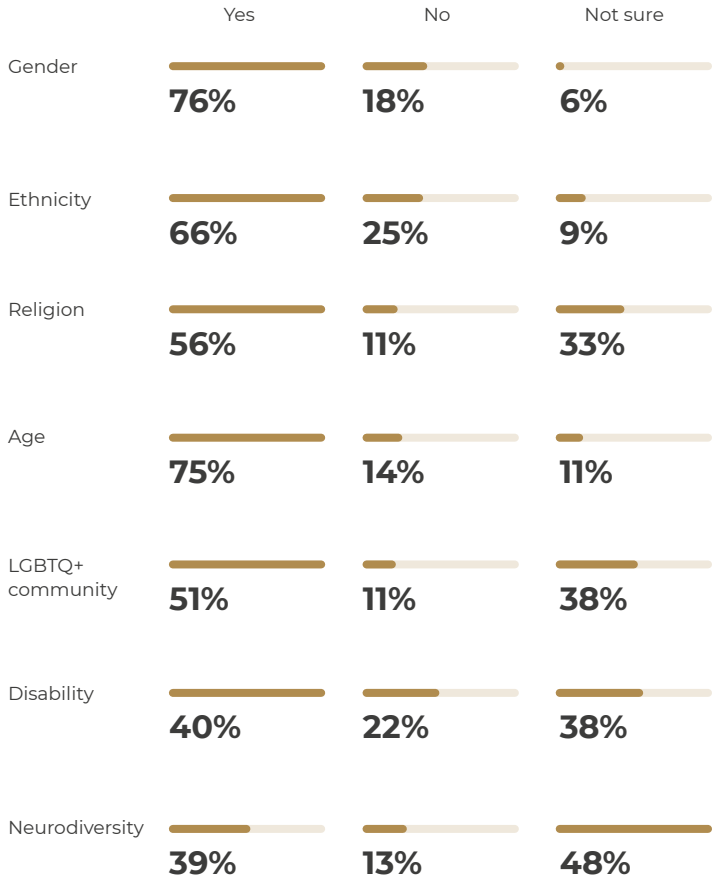
Do you feel your (or most recent) organisation, supports and encourages diversity in the workplace?



Does your company publish information on their gender pay gap?



In your opinion, do you believe your organisation is sufficiently diverse in the following areas?



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?

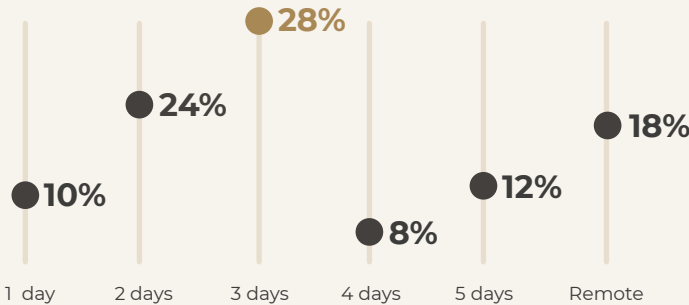


Are you satisfied with the effort your company makes to improve ESG challenges?

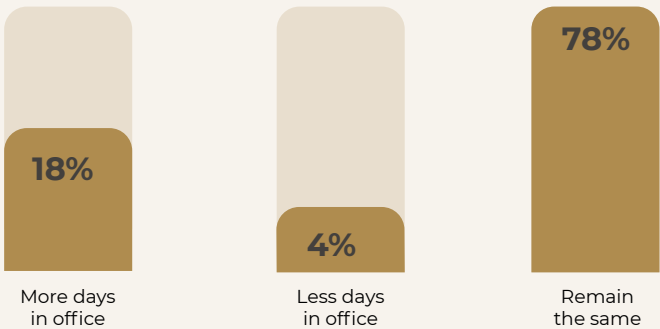


WORKPLACE FLEXIBILITY

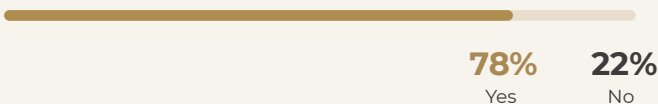
How many days per week are you expected to be in the office?



Do you anticipate this changing in 2025?

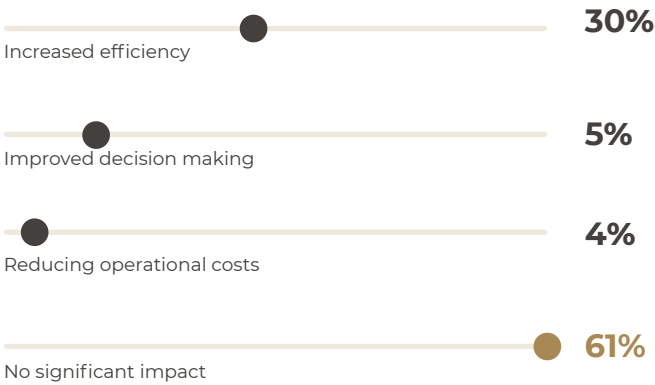


Does your organisation allow you to work flexible hours?

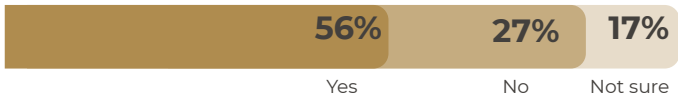


AI

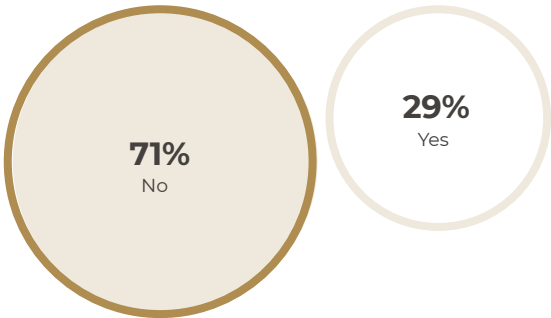
How has AI impacted your current role?



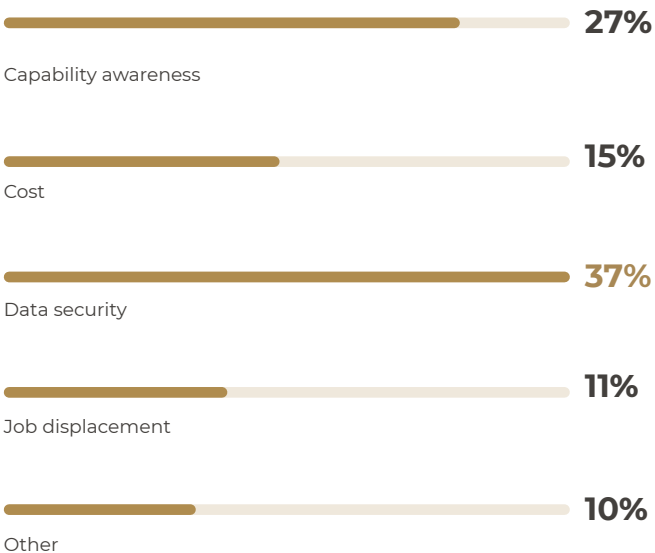
Is your company investing in AI tools?



Does your company offer training on AI?



What concerns, if any, does your business have regarding AI implementation?



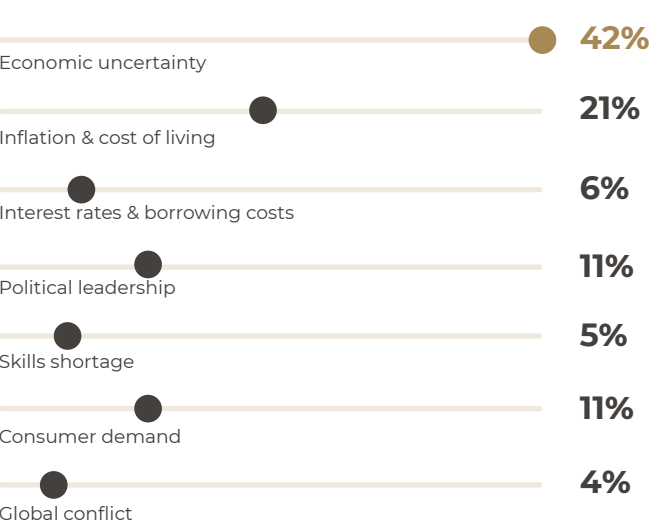
BUSINESS CONFIDENCE

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.

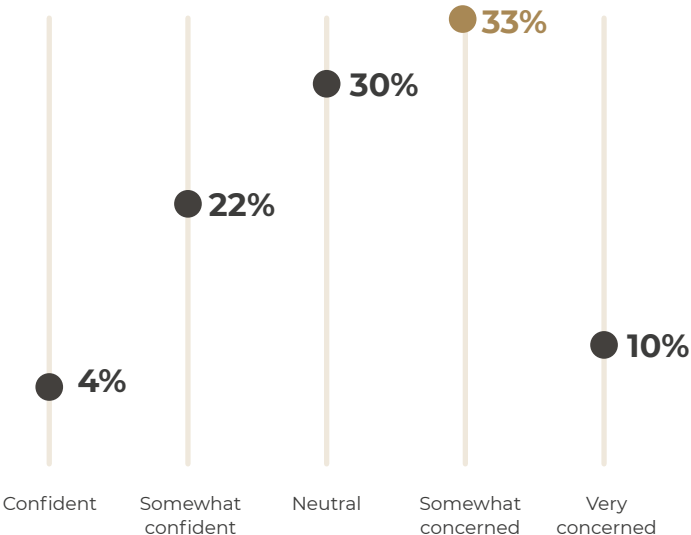
The results of our 2025 Business Confidence Survey highlight that companies are taking a measured approach to recruitment, focusing on selective hiring and investing in strategic areas like digital transformation, technology, and regulatory compliance. Businesses are adapting to the changing economic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

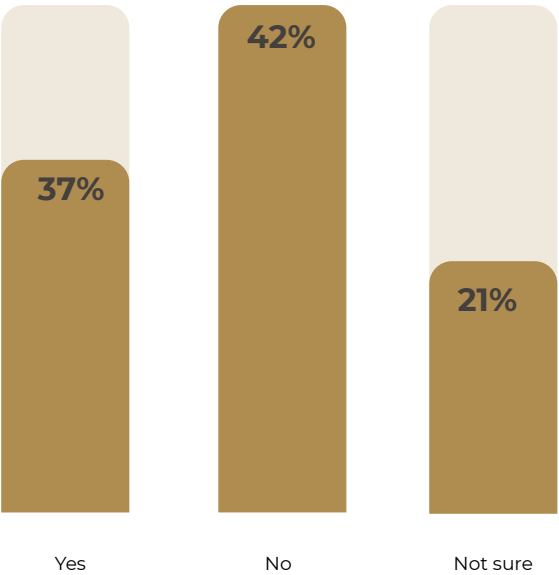
What factors are currently impacting your business confidence the most?



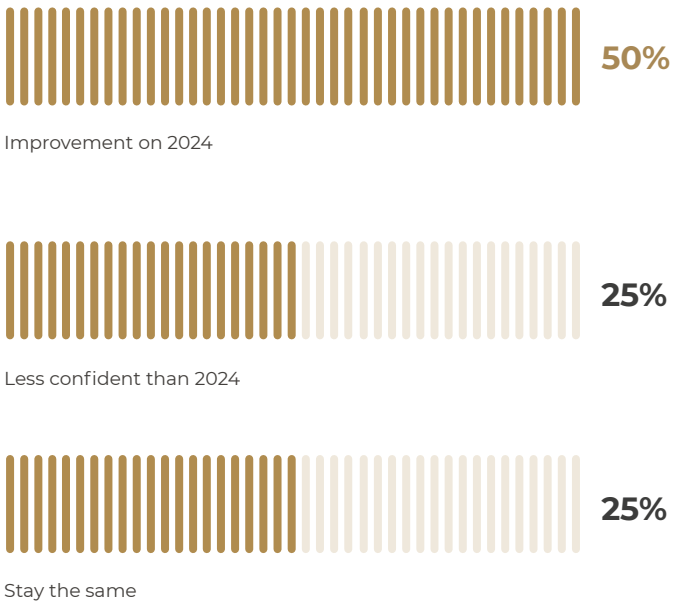
How optimistic are you regarding the UK & Ireland's economy?



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



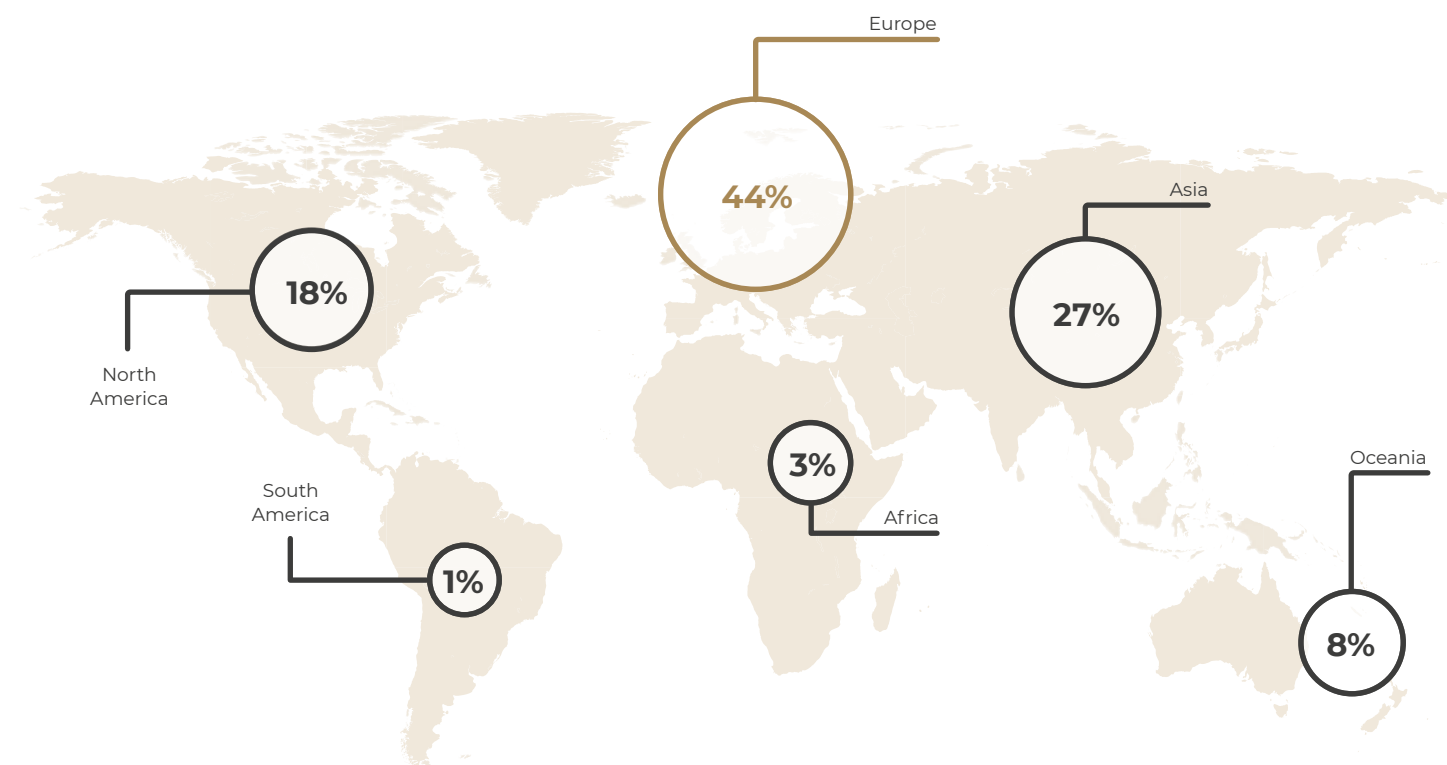
How do you expect your current (or recent) company to perform over the next 12 months?



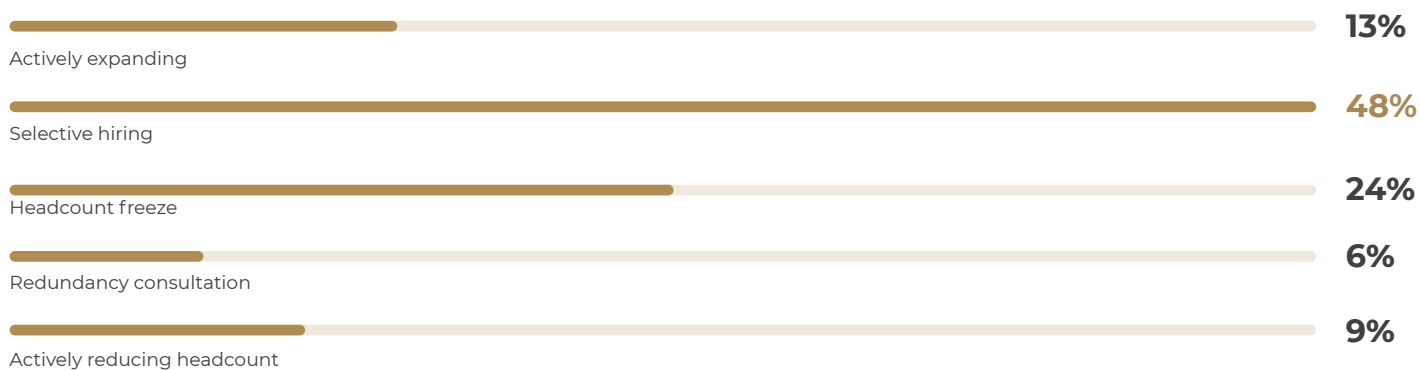
Would you relocate in the next 12 months?



Which international location would you relocate to?



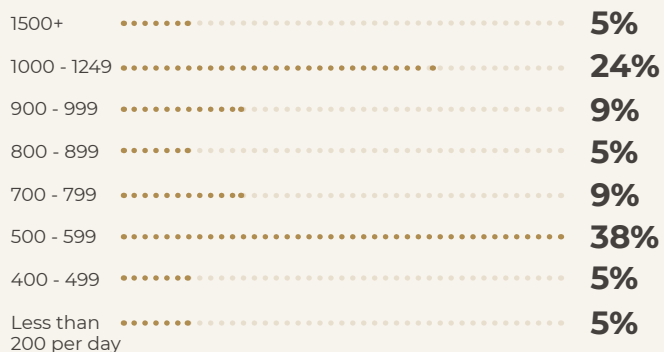
What is your business's current hiring outlook?



TECHNOLOGY KEY FINDINGS

What is your current (or most recent) daily rate?

CONTRACT



Are you satisfied with your current rate?

71%

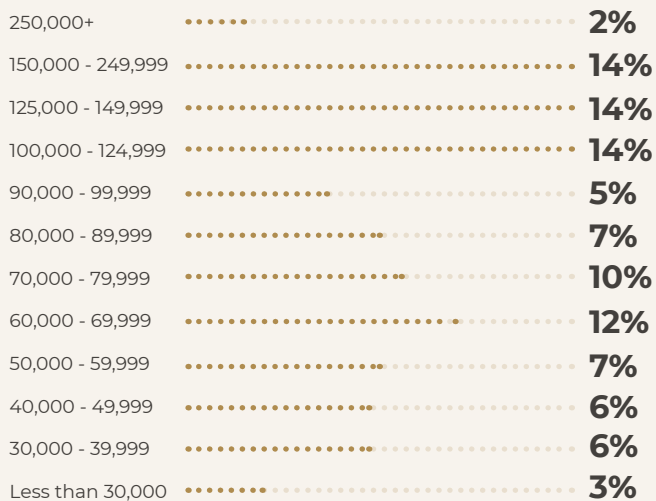
Yes

29%

No

What is your current (or most recent) basic salary?

PERMANENT / FTC



Are you satisfied with your current pay?

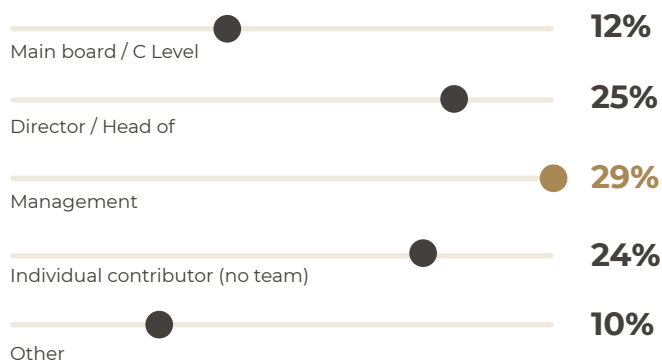
49%

Yes

51%

No

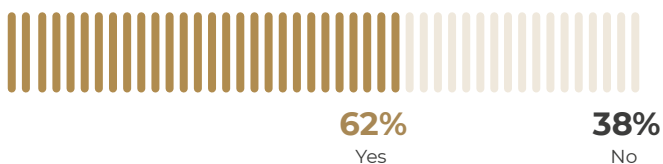
What level is your current (or most recent) position?



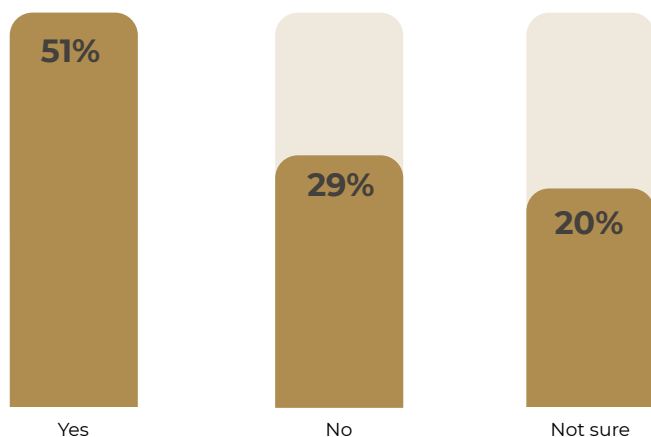
Top 3 reasons for leaving last role



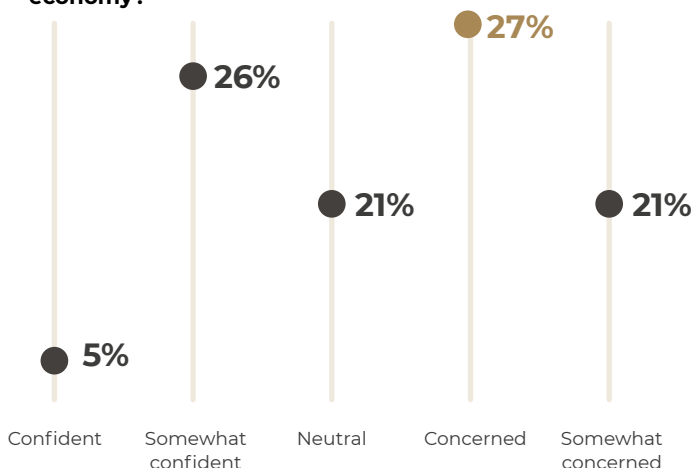
Are you satisfied in your current role?



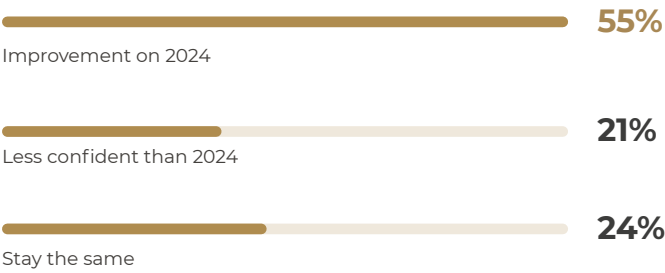
Do you feel your job is secure in 2025?



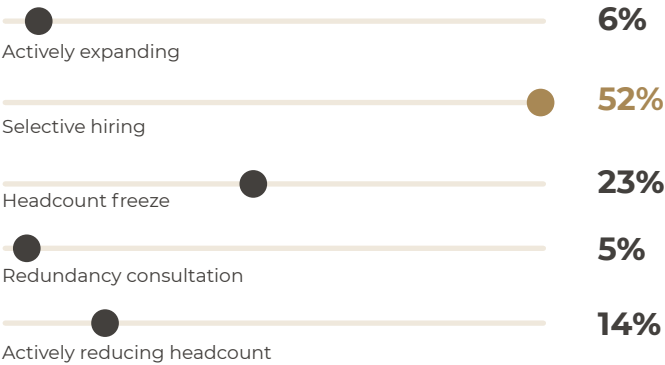
How optimistic are you regarding the UK & Ireland's economy?



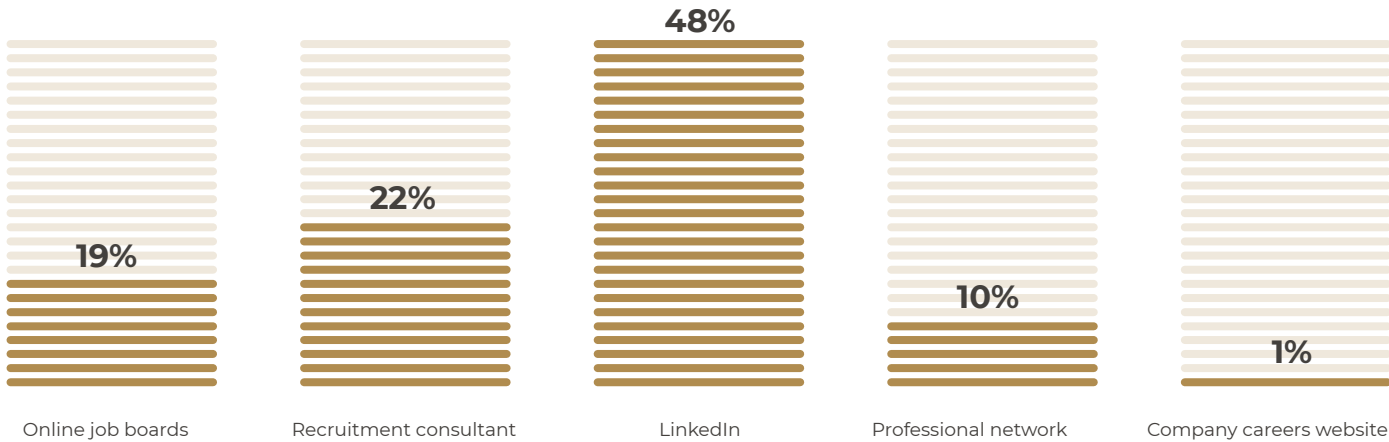
How do you expect your current (or recent) company to perform over the next 12 months?



What is your business's current hiring outlook?



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



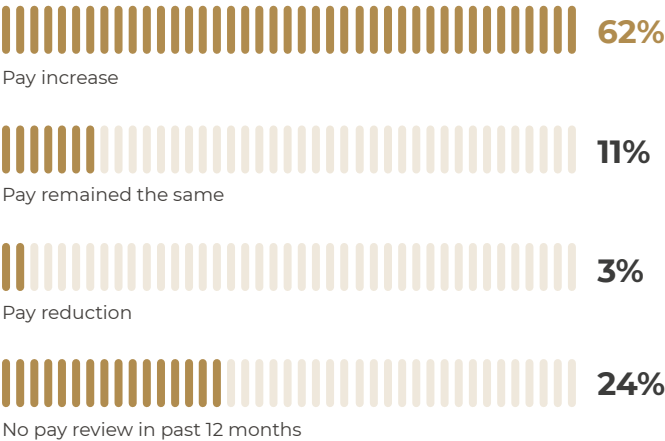
Top 5 benefits



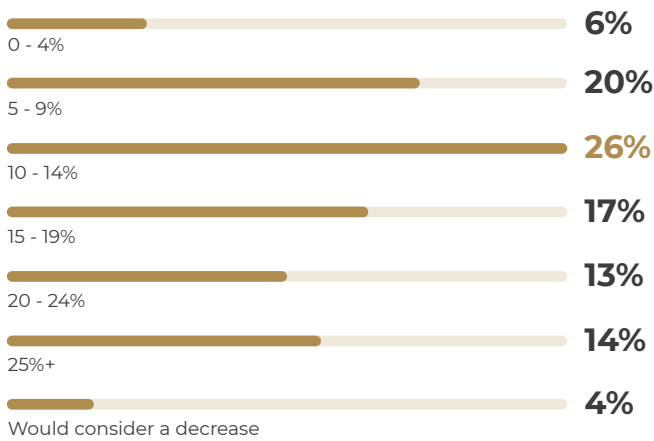
Are you happy with your current benefits?



What was the outcome of your last pay review?



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



MARKET INSIGHT

The UK technology sector remains a key driver of job creation. Despite economic headwinds in recent years, tech employment has shown resilience and continued growth. As of 2024, the UK's net tech workforce is projected to grow by 1.7%, following a 3.4% increase in 2023, which brought the total to approximately 2.13 million workers and accounting for approx. 6.4% of all UK jobs, and it is projected to keep expanding. However, a persistent digital skills shortage means competition for qualified tech talent is intense, making 2025 a challenging yet opportunity rich year for both employers and professionals.

CAUTIOUS OPTIMISM

The first part of 2025 has seen cautious hiring amid economic uncertainty. Many tech employers delayed hiring decisions in late 2024 due to inflation and market concerns, leading to longer hiring cycles especially for mid-to-senior roles. Nonetheless, employer sentiment is improving; nearly 46% of IT/tech hiring managers plan to create new permanent jobs in 2025, and 25% expect to increase contract hires to support projects. This indicates optimism for a gradual hiring recovery as companies finalise budgets and project roadmaps in Q2 and Q3.

HIGH DEMAND FOR NICHE SKILLS

Even with some caution, demand remains strong for specialised tech skills. Companies are actively seeking experts in areas like Cyber Security, Artificial Intelligence (AI), whilst there is still a demand for cloud engineering, and DevOps. In fact, over 51% of IT firms planned to hire in Q1 2025, yet 75% of them struggled to find qualified candidates for those roles, highlighting the ongoing skills gap. Employers report that technology professionals are still amongst the hardest to find, a situation unchanged for five years running. This skills mismatch means critical roles stay open longer, and organisations risk missing growth opportunities due to unfilled positions.

CANDIDATE EXPECTATIONS

For professionals, 2025's job market remains in their favour for in-demand roles, but economic pressures influence decisions. With cost of living still high, candidates are seeking higher salaries and better benefits, and counter-offers from current employers to retain talent have become common. However, many candidates equally prioritise flexibility and work-life balance, companies with rigid office requirements are struggling to attract talent compared to those offering remote or hybrid options. As a result, employers are focusing not just on pay but also on offering strong workplace culture, career development, and flexibility to secure hires and improve retention.

PERMANENT & CONTRACT HIRING INTEL

Both permanent and contract hiring are contributing to the tech workforce growth in 2025. Permanent roles offer stability and are growing. At the same time, contracting is rebounding after a late 2024 slowdown. Companies are leveraging contractors for short-term projects and niche expertise to

deliver a specific project, or technical implementation which is driving up contractor demand and rates. In fact, the top 10% of tech contractors now command around £708 per day on average, a 9% year-on-year increase in rates. This trend reflects how organisations are willing to pay a premium for readily available specialist skills without long-term commitments. Overall, 2025 finds a balanced approach: firms hire permanent staff for core strategic roles while tapping into the contract market to fill skill gaps and maintain agility in uncertain times. Permanent positions are favoured for roles that are core to the business or require deep institutional knowledge – for example, product managers, team leads, and any position involving strategy or proprietary expertise. Candidates often prefer permanent roles for stability, benefits, and clear career progression. However, with the ongoing skill shortages, employers are having to streamline hiring processes and improve offers to win over perm candidates before they accept other offers. We also see companies placing more emphasis on employee retention (engagement, upskilling, internal promotions) in 2025, because retaining talent is as important as hiring new talent in a tight market.

Contracting remains a vital part of the tech employment landscape, giving firms flexibility to scale skills on demand. Contractors are commonly used for short-term projects, implementations, or to fill immediate skill gaps, for instance, bringing in a contract software engineer to build or enhance a new platform, or a Cyber Security professional to strengthen a company's security functions. The end of 2024 saw a slight lull in contract opportunities due to economic uncertainty, but early 2025 data indicates a rebound in IT contracting activity. For highly skilled professionals, contracting can be very lucrative in the current market. Overall, contracting in 2025 is seeing healthy demand, and with upcoming IR35 reforms relatively settled, both companies and contractors have more clarity on engagement models. Many businesses now maintain a blended workforce, keeping a core perm team and flexing with contractors or freelancers as needed.

For hiring managers, the decision between hiring permanently or contracting often comes down to urgency, skill rarity, and budget. In fields like software architecture or certain AI specialties, if the right permanent hire isn't available, companies will bring in a contractor or consultant rather than leave the need unfilled, even if it costs more in the short term. Conversely, for roles like team lead or department head, organisations prefer permanent staff to provide continuity and leadership. The general view on contractors is that they come at a higher cost, but if you break down the efficiency and ramp up times, alongside one-off placement fees and benefits, the budget for hiring a contractor vs a permanent employee are not too different within a 12-month timeline. Anything further than 12 months and the cost of a contractor vs a permanent member of staff starts to widen. The good news is that opportunities exist in both.

TRENDS LIKELY TO SHAPE TECH HIRING

Continued demand in key roles: High-demand tech specialisations such as cybersecurity, AI/ML, cloud, data engineering, etc. will remain hot commodities. There's no indication that the need for these will abate; if anything, as projects progress, companies may realise they need even more of these skills. For instance, a firm that starts an AI project mid-year might by Q4 need additional ML engineers or data engineers to scale it. We also foresee some new niche roles emerging or growing in prominence, like Ethical AI Consultant, Innovation Lead or Sustainability Data Scientist, though these will be relatively few and very specific. The broad takeaway for professionals is to continue developing skills in the areas the market values – those are likely to yield multiple job offers and security through 2025.

Hiring ramp-up and competition: After a somewhat slow first quarter, many companies will likely ramp up hiring in Q3 and Q4 to meet year-end targets and prepare for 2026. This means competition for talent could further intensify. Hiring managers should be ready for a competitive recruiting environment; candidates with sought-after skills may end up with bidding wars between firms. We might see another wave of “offer inflation” – where companies exceed typical salary bands or add bonuses to secure critical hires, if the talent war heats up. For less in-demand roles, the market will be more balanced, but overall unemployment in tech occupations is expected to remain very low (possibly under 2-3%). The second half of 2025 will still be a candidate's market in most tech niches, barring any major economic shocks.

Persistent skills shortage: Unfortunately, the underlying skills shortage won't resolve quickly. Digital skills gap in the workforce and fast tech evolution outpacing training are deep-set. In fact, the shortage might “get worse before it gets better”, as any uptick in hiring demand meets the same limited talent pool. This means unfilled vacancies could continue to be an issue. We anticipate more companies investing in upskilling initiatives, partnering with universities or apprenticeship programs, and considering overseas talent to fill roles. The UK government's focus on tech visas and digital skills training could start to alleviate some pressure, but likely not in the immediate term.

Contract market: On the contracting side, if economic conditions stay stable or improve, contract opportunities will remain strong through year-end. Companies often use contractors for year-end pushes (e.g. completing an implementation by Q4 or covering permanent staff gaps). Additionally, upcoming regulatory changes (like any 2025 IR35 tweaks or other labour regulations) will influence contracting; as of now, no major deterrent changes are expected in 2025, so the contract market should remain a viable and attractive option for both businesses and workers.

Regional growth and relocation: We may see some shifting of roles regionally. For example, if London costs continue to rise, some employers could expand more in regional offices (a trend already seen with banks and tech firms growing teams in Manchester, Leeds, etc.). Remote work will also allow late 2025 hiring to be more geographically agnostic; more job listings may say “UK remote” which broadens the candidate field. This could slightly ease regional disparities and allow talent in harder-hit economic areas to access tech jobs from elsewhere. As we see a lot of companies returning to the office, this limits certain talent who might seek work outside of the UK where there still seems to be a more favoured approach to remote working.

2025 OUTLOOK

The tech sector has shown it can weather economic storms better than most, and 2025 year-to-date indicates that while challenges like skill shortages persist, the overall trajectory is one of growth and robust demand for tech talent across the UK. According to LinkedIn, the UK tech job market in 2025 is “in flux but not in decline” – it is evolving to meet new technological frontiers, and those with the right skills and strategies will thrive in this environment. Industry projections suggest that hiring activity will accelerate modestly as economic confidence improves. The OECD's improved economic forecasts for the UK and stabilising business sentiment mean companies are likely to green-light projects that were on hold, thereby creating new job openings. Many employers also report plans to invest more in technology (AI, digital transformation, etc.), and where there is investment, talent needs follow.

Sources:

www.finextra.com, www.linkedin.com, www.comptia.org, www.hays.co.uk



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SALARY GUIDE

	SALARY RANGE	DAY RATE
CLOUD & INFRASTRUCTURE		
Helpdesk Engineer	£30,000 - £35,000	£140 - £170
2nd Line Support Engineer	£35,000 - £45,000	£170 - £250
3rd Line Support Engineer	£48,000 - £60,000	£270 - £450
Storage Engineer	£30,000 - £50,000	£150 - £400
Virtualisation Engineer	£35,000 - £65,000	£200 - £500
Cloud Consultant	£65,000 - £88,000	£540 - £800
Cloud Architect	£80,000 - £140,000	£700 - £1,000
Infrastructure Engineer	£45,000 - £80,000	£300 - £550
Infrastructure Architect	£75,000 - £120,000	£500 - £1,000
Network Engineer	£45,000 - £75,000	£350 - £500
Cloud Systems Administrator	£55,000 - £80,000	£430 - £590
Systems Engineer	£50,000 - £65,000	£350 - £450

	SALARY RANGE	DAY RATE
BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE, DATA & ANALYTICS		
Business Intelligence Developer	£55,000 - £75,000	£300 - £650
Database Administrator	£60,000 - £80,000	£400 - £600
Database Developer	£45,000 - £65,000	£350 - £550
Data Engineer	£65,000 - £80,000	£450 - £650
Senior/Principle Data Engineer	£85,000 - £115,000	£550 - £700
Head of Data Engineering	£110,000 - £145,000	£900 - £1,300
Data Architect	£80,000 - £120,000	£700 - £950
Data Analyst	£45,000 - £65,000	£300 - £500
Senior Data Analyst	£65,000 - £90,000	£500 - £700
Data Analytics Manager	£70,000 - £90,000	£400 - £550
Data Scientist	£60,000 - £80,000	£550 - £750
Senior Data Scientist	£90,000 - £125,000	£700 - £1,250
Head of Data Science	£120,000 - £170,000	£1,000 - £1,600
Machine Learning Engineer	£70,000 - £80,000	£500 - £600
Senior Machine Learning Engineer	£80,000 - £100,000	£600 - £800
AI Engineer	£75,000 - £140,000	£550 - £1,400
Head of Data & Business Intelligence	£100,000 - £130,000	£800 - £1,300
Head of Data & Architecture	£110,000 - £130,000	£900 - £1,300

SALARY RANGE

DAY RATE

PRODUCT

Product Analyst	£40,000 - £55,000	£250 - £450
Product Designer	£45,000 - £65,000	£250 - £450
Product Owner	£60,000 - £75,000	£450 - £750
Product Manager	£65,000 - £100,000	£500 - £750
Head of Product	£85,000 - £130,000	£600 - £850
Product Director	£100,000 - £145,000	£700 - £900
VP Product	£120,000 - £180,000	£750 - £1,000

SALARY RANGE

DAY RATE

INFORMATION & CYBER SECURITY

Information Security Analyst	£55,000 - £90,000	£450 - £650
Penetration Tester	£55,000 - £75,000	£450 - £1,000
SOC Analyst	£40,000 - £60,000	£350 - £500
Cyber Security Analyst	£55,000 - £90,000	£450 - £750
Security Architect	£80,000 - £140,000	£650 - £1,200
Information Security Manager	£70,000 - £110,000	£550 - £900
Security Engineer	£75,000 - £105,000	£550 - £900
Information Security Officer	£85,000 - £125,000	£700 - £1,200
Head of Cyber Security / VP	£90,000 - £150,000	£1,000 - £1,300
Head of Information Security / VP	£100,000 - £150,000	£850 - £1,200

SALARY RANGE

DAY RATE

TECHNOLOGY LEADERSHIP

CIO (Chief Information Officer)	£140,000 - £250,000+	£900 - £2,000
CTO (Chief Technology Officer)	£150,000 - £300,000+	£900 - £2,000
IT Director	£95,000 - £180,000	£850 - £1,300
Head of IT	£85,000 - £160,000	£800 - £1,300
Head of Innovation	£100,000 - £180,000	£850 - £1,400
CISO (Chief Information Security Officer)	£145,000 - £250,000+	£1,300 - £1,550
CPO (Chief Product Officer)	£120,000 - £250,000+	£900 - £1,500
IT Manager	£65,000 - £100,000	£500 - £800
Head of Architecture	£90,000 - £150,000	£850 - £1,300
Head of ERP / ERP Manager	£95,000 - £170,000+	£850 - £1,100

SALARY RANGE

DAY RATE

SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT & ENGINEERING

Senior FullStack Developer	£78,000 - £120,000	£500 - £950
Full Stack Developer	£65,000 - £87,000	£350 - £650
Senior Frontend Developer	£82,000 - £120,000	£500 - £850
Senior Backend Developer	£80,000 - £120,000	£500 - £1,000
Backend Developer	£65,000 - £88,000	£350 - £750
Frontend Developer	£67,000 - £85,000	£300 - £650
Site Reliability Engineer (SRE)	£55,000 - £75,000	£300 - £500
DevOps Engineer	£70,000 - £90,000	£400 - £650
Senior DevOps Engineer	£85,000 - £140,000	£550 - £1,400
Technology Lead	£85,000 - £120,000	£750 - £1,000
Solution Architect	£75,000 - £120,000	£700 - £900
Enterprise Architect	£75,000 - £150,000	£800 - £1200
Head of Architecture	£125,000 - £200,000	£850 - £1,800
Head of Engineering	£120,000 - £180,000	£1,000+

SALARY RANGE

DAY RATE

EMBEDDED SYSTEMS

Embedded Test Engineer	£45,000 - £75,000	£400 - £600
Embedded Software Engineer	£60,000 - £90,000	£475 - £750
Embedded Electronics Engineer	£60,000 - £90,000	£475 - £750
Electronics Design Engineer	£50,000 - £70,000	£425 - £575
Control Systems Engineer	£40,000 - £55,000	£375 - £550
PCB Designer	£50,000 - £70,000	£425 - £575
FPGA Engineer	£65,000 - £100,000	£500 - £800
Computer Vision Engineer	£70,000 - £110,000	£550 - £850
Mobile App Developer	£55,000 - £85,000	£450 - £650
IoT Engineer	£70,000 - £110,000	£550 - £850
Systems Engineer	£40,000 - £55,000	£375 - £550
Hardware Engineer	£55,000 - £85,000	£450 - £650
Hardware Test Engineer	£45,000 - £70,000	£375 - £550
Firmware Engineer	£60,000 - £90,000	£475 - £750
Embedded Systems Architect	£80,000 - £140,000	£650 - £1,000
Embedded Security Engineer	£75,000 - £130,000	£600 - £950

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