

TRANSFORMATION

A nighttime photograph of a city skyline, likely New York City, featuring several illuminated skyscrapers. The Citigroup Building is prominent in the center. The lights from the buildings and streetlights are reflected in the water in the foreground. A construction crane is visible on the right side of the image.

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

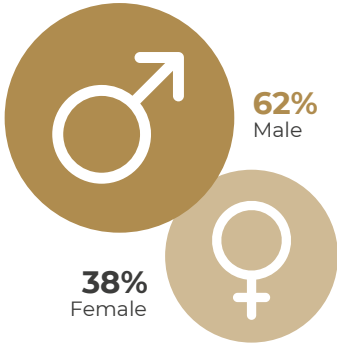
Managing Director

matthew.wilcox@markssattin.com

DEMOGRAPHIC OF RESPONDENTS

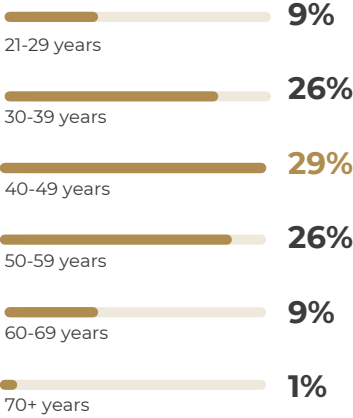
Here we outline the demographics of our survey respondents. Please note this is not a representation of our candidate and client community, rather a demographic overview of our research participants this year.

GENDER

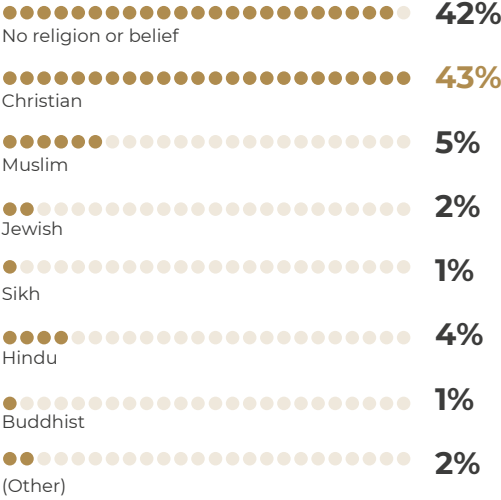


11 respondents chose non-binary

AGE



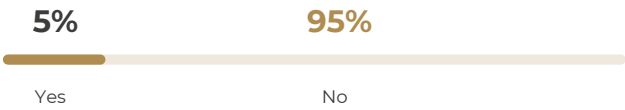
RELIGION OR BELIEF



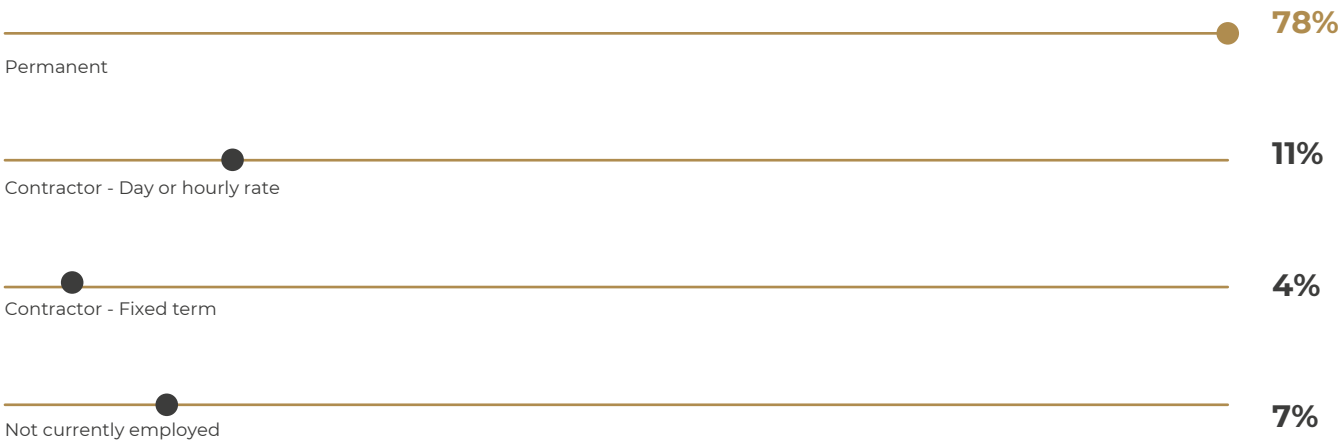
DO YOU HAVE A DISABILITY UNDER THE EQUALITY ACT 2010?

In the Act, a person has a disability if:

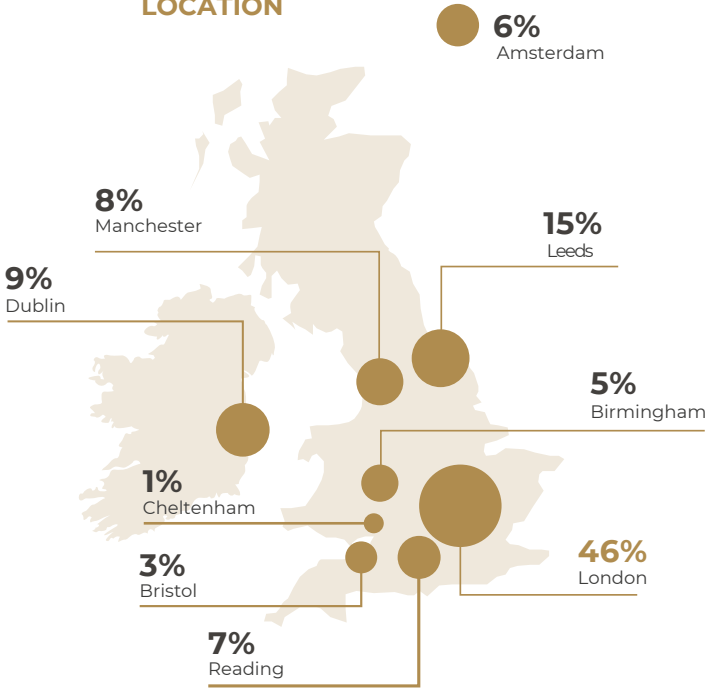
- they have a physical or mental impairment
- the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day-to-day activities.



CONTRACT TYPE



LOCATION



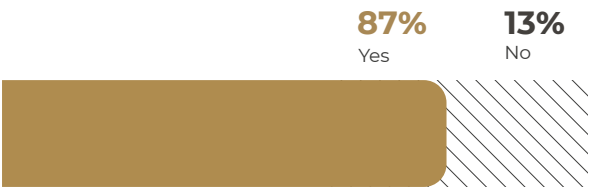
FUTURE OF WORK

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

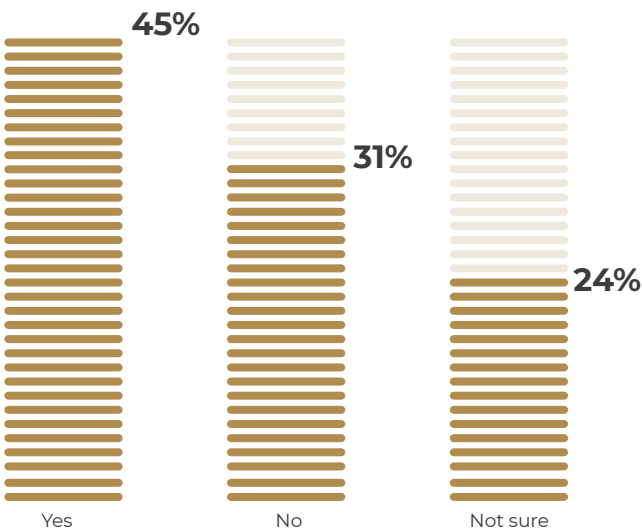
Do you think your leadership team is sufficiently diverse?



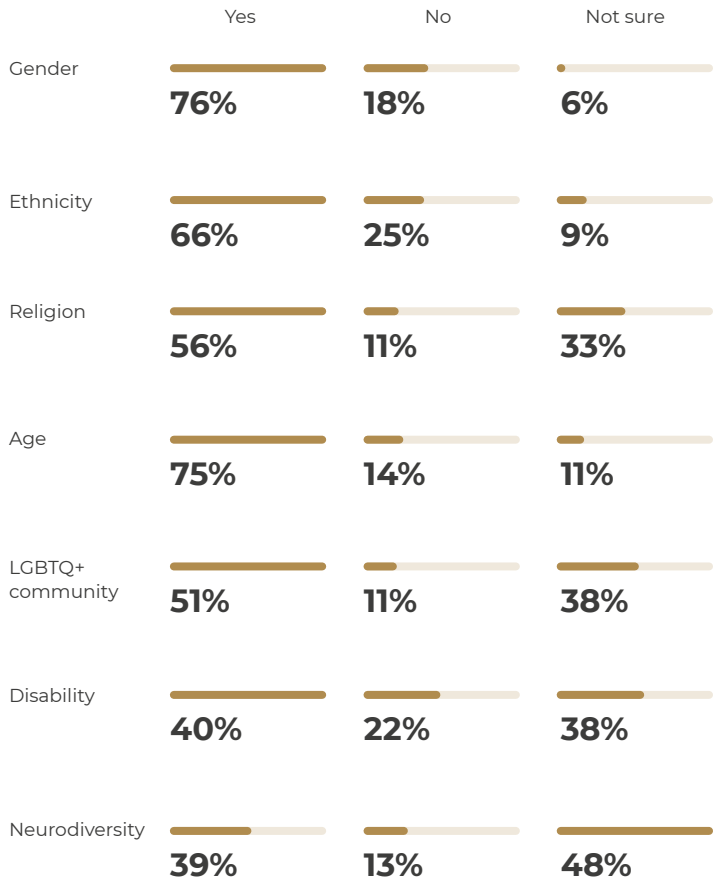
Do you feel your (or most recent) organisation, supports and encourages diversity in the workplace?



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.



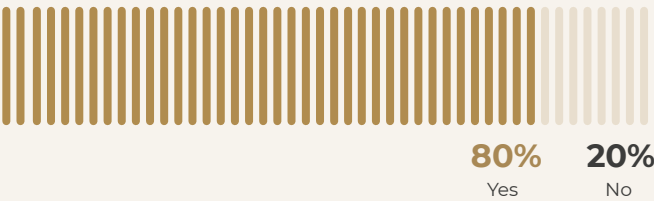
Visit our dedicated Equality, Diversity & Inclusion hub:
www.markssattin.co.uk/diversity-and-inclusion

ESG

How important is it for you to work for an organisation that has a robust ESG Strategy?

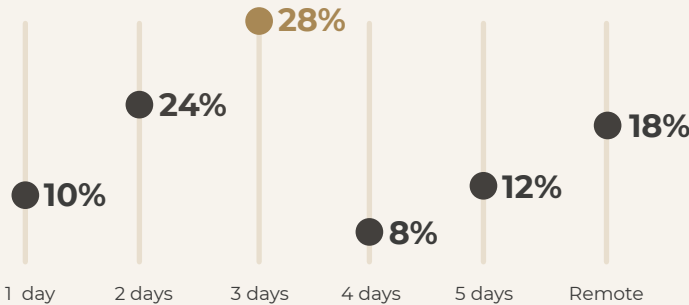


Are you satisfied with the effort your company makes to improve ESG challenges?

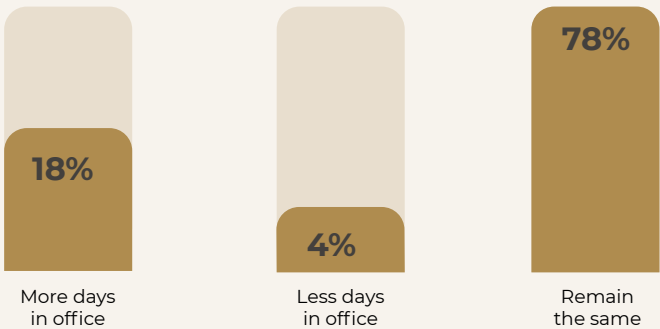


WORKPLACE FLEXIBILITY

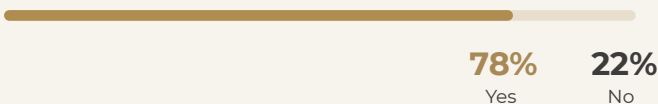
How many days per week are you expected to be in the office?



Do you anticipate this changing in 2025?

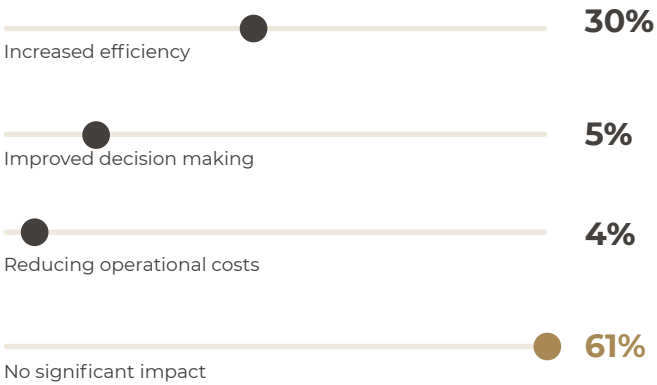


Does your organisation allow you to work flexible hours?

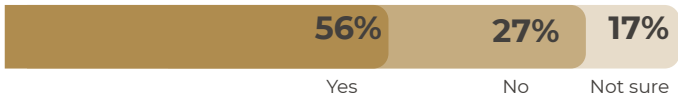


AI

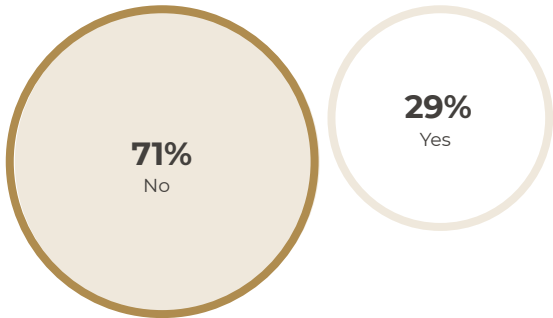
How has AI impacted your current role?



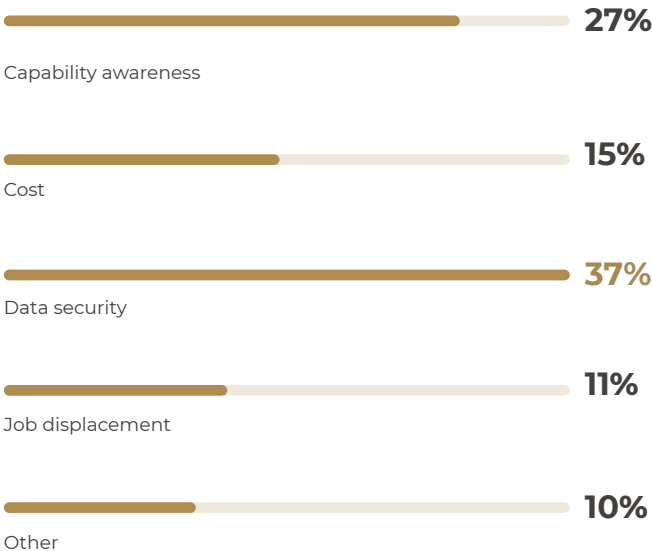
Is your company investing in AI tools?



Does your company offer training on AI?



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



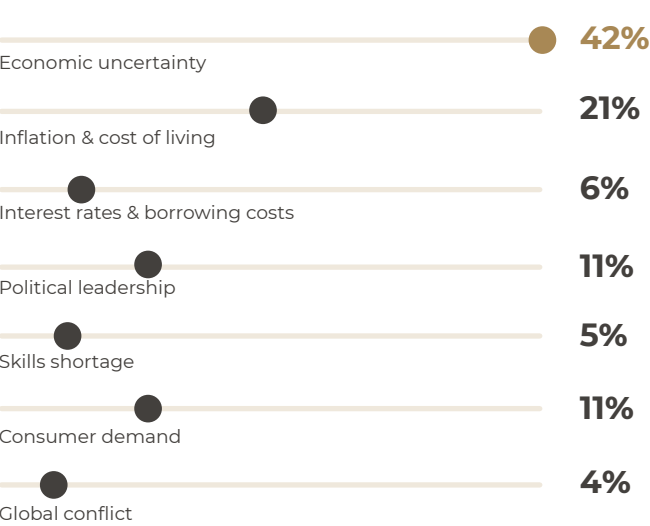
BUSINESS CONFIDENCE

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.

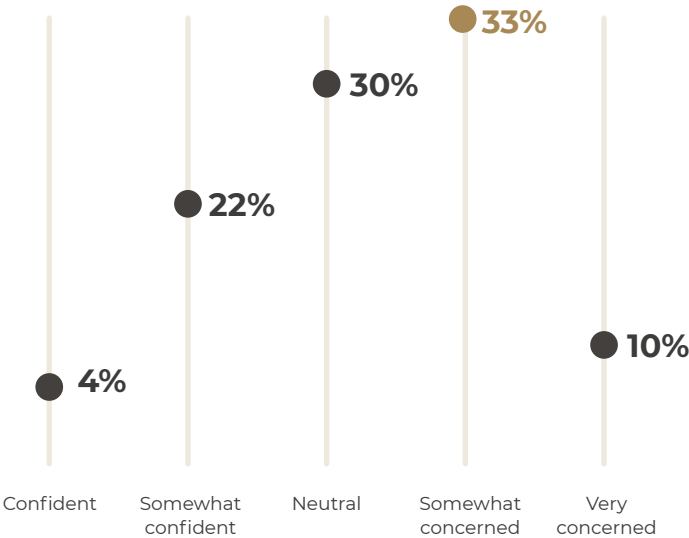
The results of our 2025 Business Confidence Survey highlight that companies are taking a measured approach to recruitment, focusing on selective hiring and investing in strategic areas like digital transformation, technology, and regulatory compliance. Businesses are adapting to the changing economic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

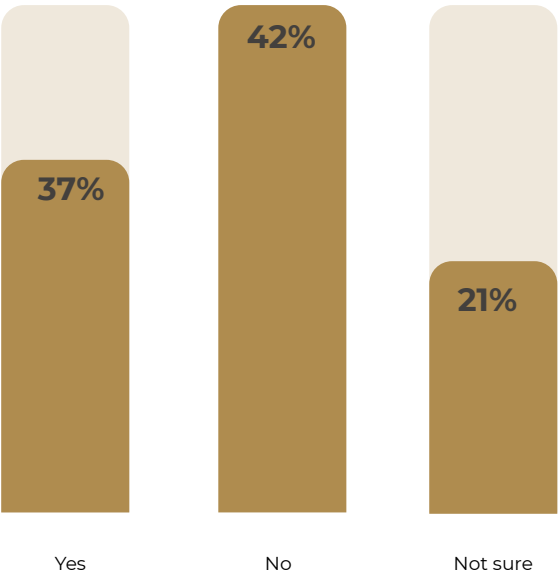
What factors are currently impacting your business confidence the most?



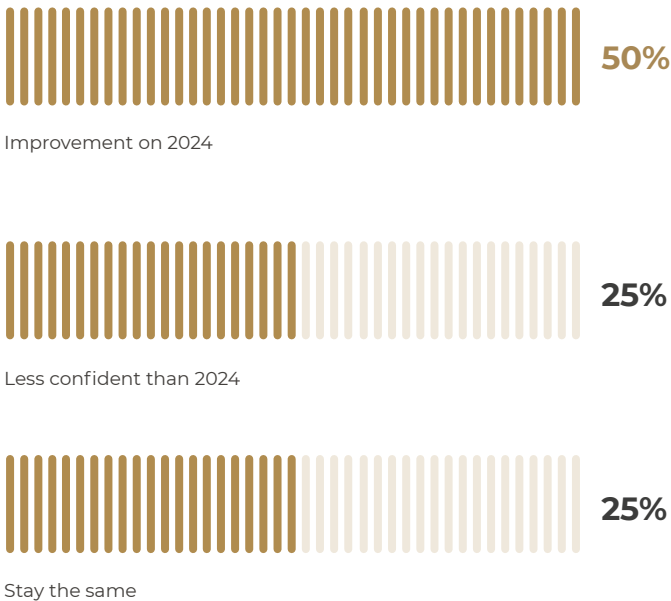
How optimistic are you regarding the UK & Ireland's economy?



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



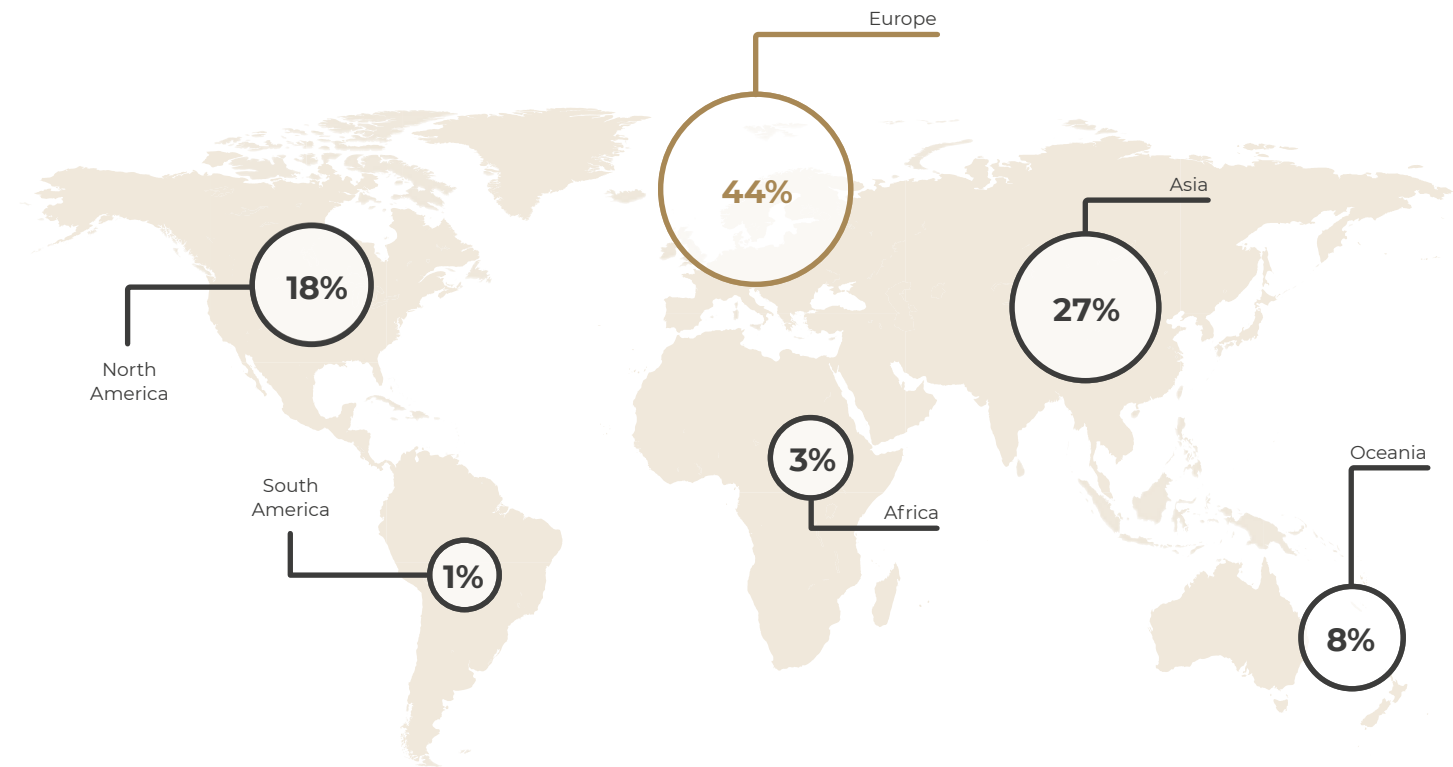
How do you expect your current (or recent) company to perform over the next 12 months?



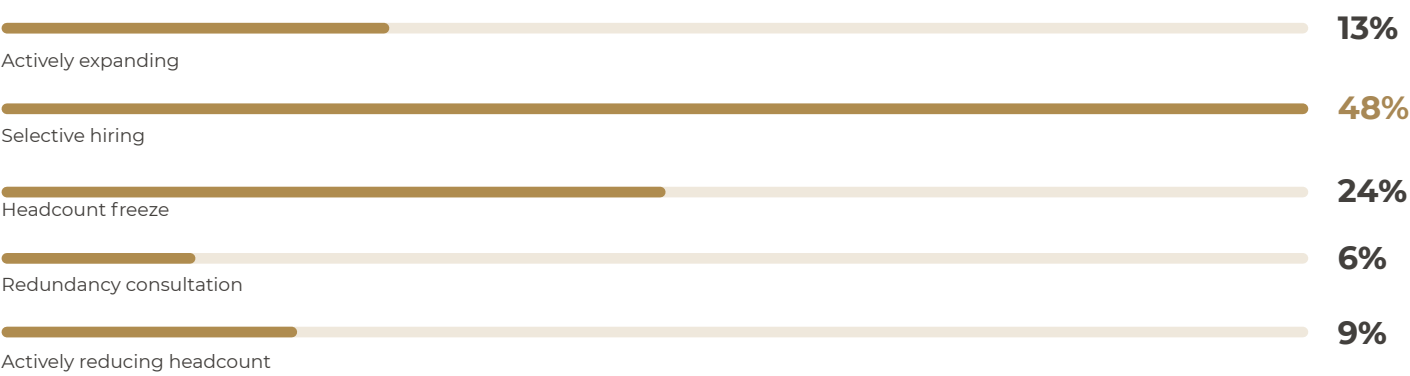
Would you relocate in the next 12 months?



Which international location would you relocate to?



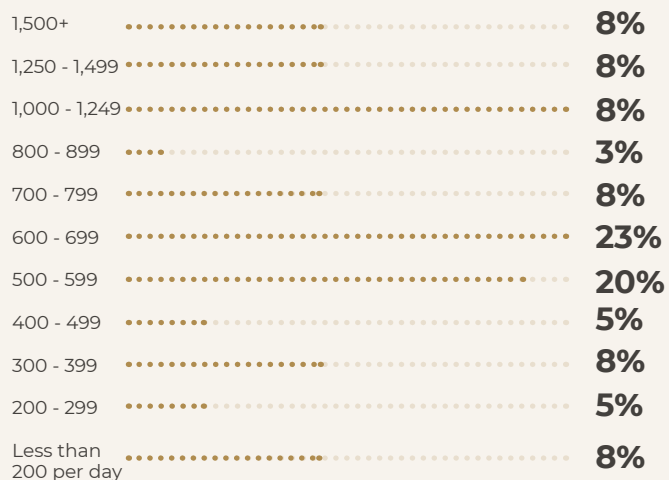
What is your business's current hiring outlook?



KEY FINDINGS

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

CONTRACT



Are you satisfied with your current rate?

60%

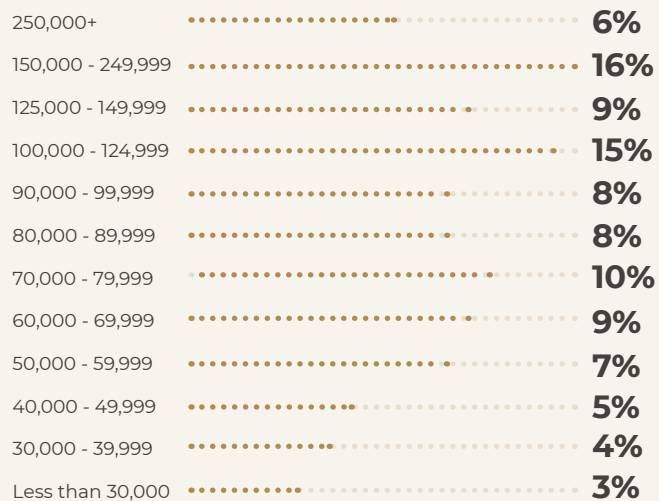
Yes

40%

No

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

PERMANENT / FTC



Are you satisfied with your current pay?

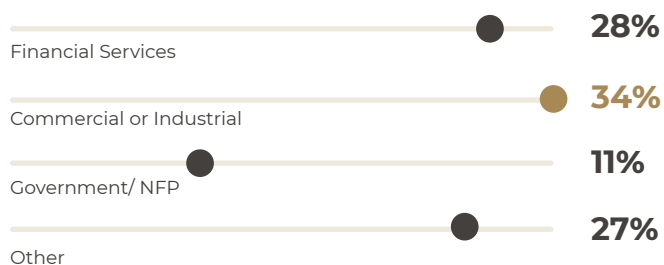
53%

Yes

47%

No

Which industry are you currently (or most recently) working in?



Top 3 reasons for leaving last role

1

Career advancement

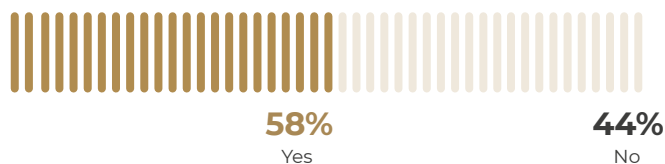
2

Increased remuneration

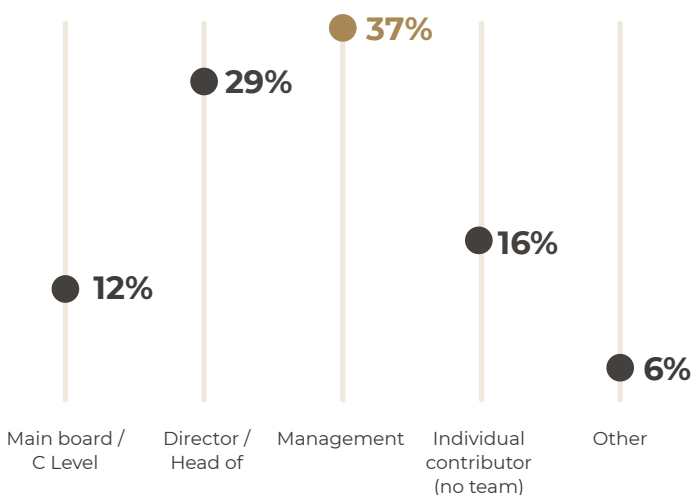
3

Contract completion

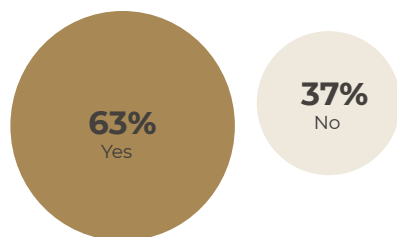
Are you satisfied in your current role?



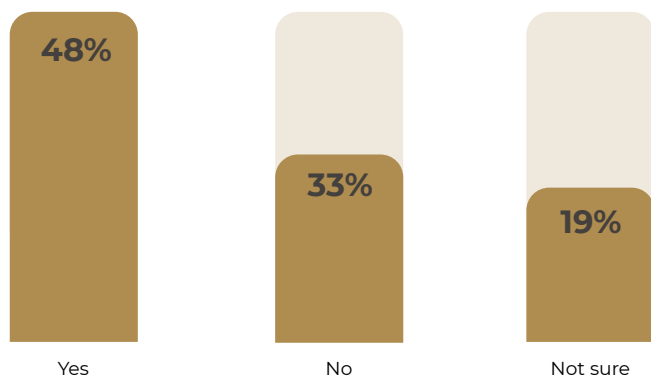
What level is your current (or most recent) position?



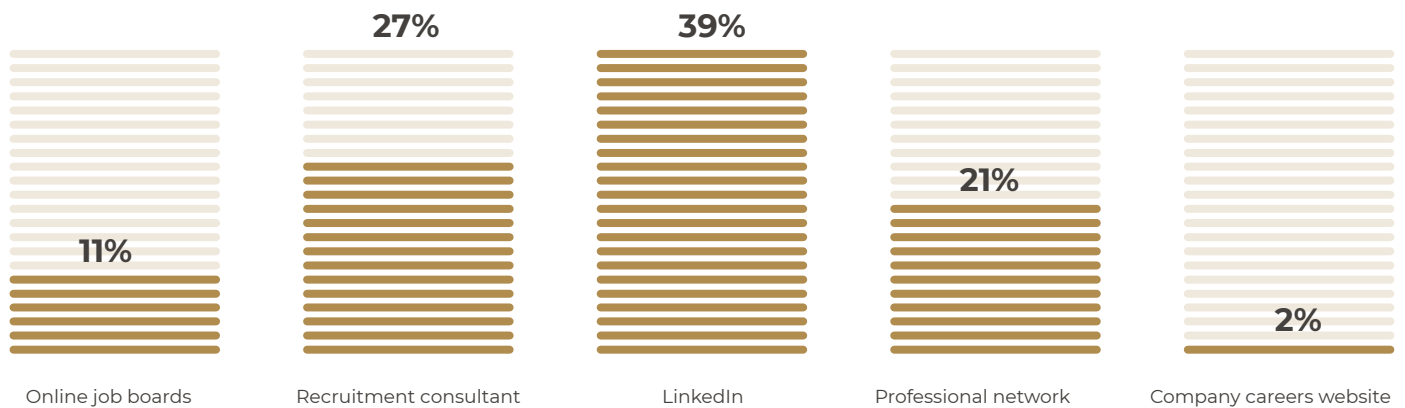
Do you envisage changing jobs in the next 12 months?



Do you feel your job is secure in 2025?



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



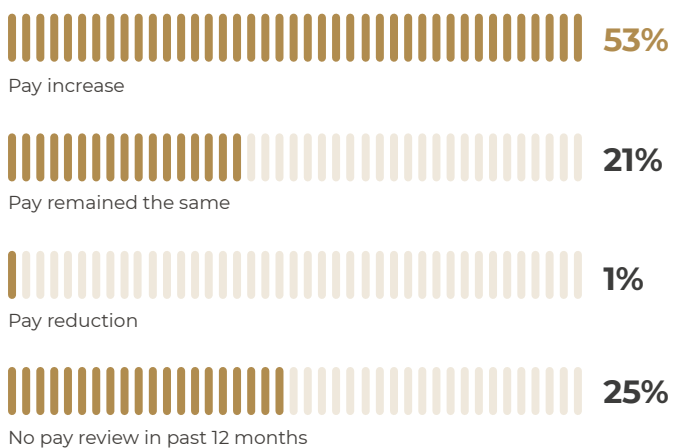
Top 5 benefits



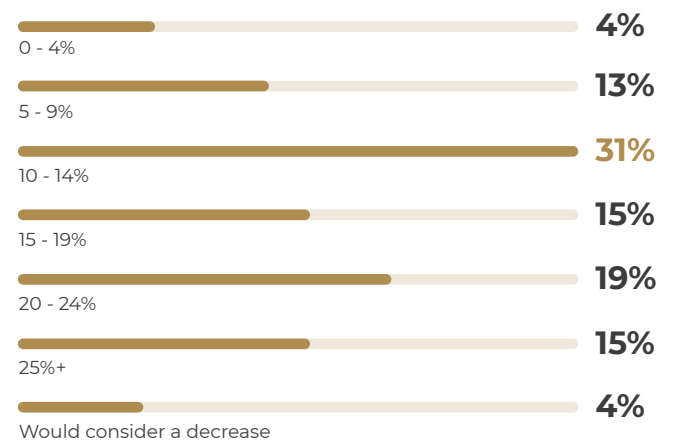
Are you happy with your current benefits?



What was the outcome of your last pay review?



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



MARKET INSIGHT

Transformation hiring has been marked by a strategic but cautious approach in 2025. Hiring statistics for Chief Transformation Officers, Programme Directors, Change Managers and related positions shows the constant need for business evolution while navigating the pressures of an uncertain economy.

A PICTURE IN NUMBERS

London remains the epicentre for transformation hiring across the UK. Vacancy levels in London rebounded in Q1 2025 after the lows of late 2024 but have not yet returned to early 2024 heights. Budgets reset and new projects launched, driving job openings, yet year-on-year hiring is still subdued. Early optimism was tempered by renewed global market volatility and geopolitical instability, fuelling cautious employer sentiment and a measured hiring pace.

The dominance of London in this space is clear: the capital hosts nearly three times the number of Digital, Technology, Change, and Transformation vacancies in Financial Services compared to other regions such as the North West. This concentration of opportunities attracts a deeper talent pool and underpins London's relatively greater hiring resilience.

Commercial industries have seen a real mix in hiring trends for the year to date. While the UK job market shows overall signs of recession, Retail and Hospitality experienced the sharpest declines. Sectors linked to Technology and Infrastructure have been steadier. Tech and Change jobs in London are still in demand, with continued investment in Digital and Data projects from major firms across the city. The need for people in Transformation remains, with Engineering and High-tech sectors showing strong signs of resilience.

SECTORAL VARIATIONS AND MACROECONOMIC INFLUENCES

The impact of macroeconomic factors is far from uniform. Retail and hospitality remain highly sensitive to consumer spending shifts and cost inflation. High interest rates, energy costs, and cautious consumer credit have dampened retail confidence, driving aggressive cost-cutting and selective hiring. Manufacturing feels the squeeze from global demand softness and trade uncertainties, leading to cautious staffing and investment decisions.

Conversely, technology and digital sectors benefit from persistent secular demand. Despite challenges in capital availability for startups due to higher interest rates, established tech firms and those in critical innovation areas continue to hire niche transformation roles to maintain strategic imperatives around AI, cybersecurity, and cloud adoption. Media companies, facing advertising market fluctuations, have moderated redundancies but remain cautious, prioritising short-term and interim transformation hires.

These dynamics shape transformation hiring: cost-pressured sectors execute change with minimal headcount additions, while growth-oriented or innovation-focused sectors invest in talent despite economic uncertainty.

PERMANENT VS. CONTRACT HIRING

Hiring dynamics in the UK have continued to shift in 2025, reflecting wider market caution. Permanent placements have trended downward nationwide since late 2022. Although London experienced a brief uptick in March 2025, this was quickly offset by a dip in April as economic uncertainty persisted.

Employers have adopted an increasingly risk-averse stance. Permanent hiring has slowed noticeably, while contract and temporary hiring has been volatile. After a subdued interim market in early 2024, demand for contractors picked up in Q1 2025, with one industry report citing an 11% month-on-month rise in contract placements in March. However, this proved to be a temporary lift, as April saw hiring volumes fall once again. In the commercial sector, experts anticipate increased demand for temporary professionals throughout the year. Media and technology firms, in particular, are turning to interim transformation experts to deliver time-sensitive projects. Meanwhile, retail and manufacturing companies are cautiously engaging contract specialists to lead targeted initiatives, ranging from supply chain overhauls to process automation.

IN-DEMAND SKILLS

The most sought-after transformation skills in 2025 seem to be dominated by upcoming ERP implementations, specifically those with SAP S/4HANA or D365 F&O. We have also seen an increase in demand with those candidates with Private Equity experience focused on post-acquisition activities. Undoubted focus will lead to cost so candidates have delivered significant cost transformation programmes will also start to see an increase in activity.

Candidates who combine strategic acumen with technological literacy and exceptional soft skills, especially storytelling capabilities, stand out. Their ability to link change initiatives to broader business goals is critical to overcoming siloed operations and ensuring organisation-wide alignment.

Data and analytics remain indispensable. Change functions sit at the intersection of technology and business insight, with expertise in tools like Power BI and Tableau being highly valued. AI and automation skills are especially prized, underpinning process improvements and customer insight innovations. AI and Machine Learning professionals command salaries up to 35% higher than average, reflecting acute demand across financial and commercial sectors.

TALENT AVAILABILITY

Job markets tend to be job-led or candidate-led, and fluctuate depending on the availability of each. Where post-pandemic conditions saw talent availability at unprecedented low levels, the tide has shifted somewhat in 2025. Spring 2025 saw a sharp rise in candidate availability, with April's data showing the supply of talent growing at the fastest rate for over four years. This increase might be linked to corporate restructurings and redundancies, with some firms downsizing or pausing hiring due to economic uncertainty. As a result, more experienced

Change professionals are on the market, meaning employers have a larger pool to choose from. This, in turn, has eased pressure on salaries, though permanent starting salaries for new and niche hires are still rising.

SALARY BENCHMARKING

The wage growth in the UK has slowed to about 5-6% annually, and for Change roles, hiring managers may find strong candidates without needing to outbid others. We can stop short however of calling the market job-led.

Skill shortages still exist in key areas. Especially high-calibre transformation leaders and technical change specialists, seasoned Chief Transformation Officers or Programme Directors with particular skillsets. Salaries within highly sought-after areas are unlikely to stabilise, with many now offering flexible, remote or hybrid working to attract those in demand. Flexibility remains a key draw for hires. Those offering hybrid working can find a competitive edge in attracting talent against the backdrop of some London institutions pulling staff back to the office more frequently. For many, flexible working is now a basic expectation, with career growth, project scope, and company culture still important in job acceptance rates.

Strategic changes in how transformations are executed have been driven by cost pressures, with many tightening margins and seeking greater efficiency in projects. Initiatives which reduce operating costs or automate processes are highly regarded in 2025.

STAYING ON TOP OF REGULATIONS

Regulatory and political factors have a big influence in Financial Services. Upcoming regulations, such as the ARGA regime for audit governance, mean banks must undertake compliance transformations. This will naturally fuel demand for professionals in these areas.

However should regulatory burdens remain heavy while lacking supportive policies, companies could shift operations elsewhere. We saw a similar shift with Brexit and the fall-out that followed. And while London retains its 'Global Change Hub' status, this isn't permanent. Firms are becoming more selective in their expansions and will follow the winds of change, should they bring inclement conditions to the capital. The remainder of 2025 is expected to bring a gradually improving but measured hiring environment for Change & Transformation roles in London. The consensus among experts is that caution will persist initially, with many firms holding the line ahead of an uncertain summer. Indications suggest hiring in H2 may remain subdued compared to last year. With companies likely to maintain a cautious stance until market stability returns.

Hires which bolster resilience and efficiency may take precedence over roles which expand into new areas, though many will continue to see where those two can combine, like AI and machine learning.

There's reason for optimism by late 2025. Should inflation continue to fall and interest rates continue to be cut, business confidence should rise. This would fall in line with lower financing costs and a clearer picture of the economy.

Hiring dynamics for the remainder of 2025 may look like a competitive balancing act. Expanded candidate pools means employers can have more say than post-pandemic levels. And yet talent at the top of their game, who bring skills scarce in nature still hold some of the cards. Companies need to differentiate themselves to win talent in 2025 and beyond.

Sources:

linkedin.com, bbc.com, info.recruitics.com, barclaysimpson.com, investigo.co.uk, sandersonplc.com



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SALARY GUIDE

COMMERCE & INDUSTRY

	SALARY RANGE	DAY RATE
DELIVERY / PROJECT & PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT		
Chief Transformation Officer	£150,000+	£1,200+
Global Programme Director	£140,000+	£1,000+
Head of Project Management	£110,000+	£900+
Programme Manager	£80,000 - £120,000	£650 - £950
Senior Project Manager	£70,000 - £90,000	£500 - £700
Project Manager	£55,000 - £70,000	£400 - £500
Junior Project Manager	£45,000 - £55,000	£300 - £400

	SALARY RANGE	DAY RATE
CHANGE MANAGEMENT		
Director of Change Management	£120,000+	£850+
Head of Change Management	£100,000+	£750+
Change Lead	£80,000 - £100,000	£650 - £850
Change Manager	£65,000 - £85,000	£450 - £750
Communications Manager	£60,000 - £80,000	£400 - £600
Trainer	£50,000 - £65,000	£350 - £600
Change Analyst	£45,000 - £55,000	£300 - £500

	SALARY RANGE	DAY RATE
PMO / GOVERNANCE		
PMO Director	£120,000+	£800+
Head of PMO	£90,000+	£700+
PMO Manager	£70,000 - £85,000	£450 - £650
Project Planner	£60,000 - £80,000	£400 - £600
PMO Analyst	£50,000 - £65,000	£350 - £500
Project Coordinator	£40,000 - £50,000	£250 - £350

FINANCIAL SERVICES

	SALARY RANGE	DAY RATE
DELIVERY / PROJECT & PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT		
Chief Transformation Officer	£160,000+	£1,250+
Global Programme Director	£150,000+	£1000+
Head of Project Management	£120,000+	£950+
Programme Manager	£90,000 - £125,000	£700 - £950
Senior Project Manager	£80,000 - £110,000	£600 - £800
Project Manager	£60,000 - £80,000	£450 - £650
Junior Project Manager	£45,000 - £60,000	£350 - £450

	SALARY RANGE	DAY RATE
CHANGE MANAGEMENT		
Director of Change Management	£140,000+	£950+
Head of Change Management	£110,000+	£800+
Change Lead	£90,000 - £110,000	£700 - £900
Change Manager	£70,000 - £100,000	£500 - £750
Communications Manager	£60,000 - £80,000	£400 - £600
Trainer	£55,000 - £70,000	£400 - £600
Change Analyst	£45,000 - £55,000	£350 - £500

	SALARY RANGE	DAY RATE
PMO / GOVERNANCE		
PMO Director	£125,000+	£850+
Head of PMO	£100,000+	£750+
PMO Manager	£70,000 - £90,000	£500 - £650
Project Planner	£60,000 - £80,000	£450 - £650
PMO Analyst	£50,000 - £65,000	£350 - £550
Project Coordinator	£40,000 - £50,000	£250 - £350

COMMERCE & INDUSTRY

	SALARY RANGE	DAY RATE
PROCESS IMPROVEMENT		
Head of Business Process Improvement	£90,000+	£650+
Business Process Improvement Manager	£60,000 - £90,000	£500 - £700
Business Process Improvement Analyst	£45,000 - £60,000	£350 - £450
Business Process Improvement Coordinator	£40,000 - £50,000	£250 - £350

	SALARY RANGE	DAY RATE
ANALYSIS		
Global Head of Business Analysis	£110,000+	£900+
Business Analysis Manager	£80,000+	£700+
Senior Business Analyst	£70,000 - £90,000	£500 - £700
Business Analyst	£50,000 - £70,000	£350 - £500
Junior Business Analyst	£40,000 - £50,000	£250 - £350
Senior Data Analyst	£55,000 - £75,000	£450 - £650
Data Analyst	£40,000 - £55,000	£250 - £450

FINANCIAL SERVICES

	SALARY RANGE	DAY RATE
PROCESS IMPROVEMENT		
Head of Business Process Improvement	£100,000+	£700+
Business Process Improvement Manager	£70,000 - £90,000	£500 - £700
Business Process Improvement Analyst	£45,000 - £65,000	£350 - £500
Business Process Improvement Coordinator	£40,000 - £50,000	£250 - £350

	SALARY RANGE	DAY RATE
ANALYSIS		
Global Head of Business Analysis	£120,000+	£1,000+
Business Analysis Manager	£90,000+	£750+
Senior Business Analyst	£75,000 - £100,000	£550 - £800
Business Analyst	£55,000 - £75,000	£400 - £600
Junior Business Analyst	£40,000 - £55,000	£250 - £350
Senior Data Analyst	£60,000 - £80,000	£450 - £700
Data Analyst	£40,000 - £60,000	£300 - £500

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