

# HR jobs fall 38% year-on-year but demand for interims holds strong as employers utilise contingent workers

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Professional vacancies for human resources specialists dropped by 38.1% year-on-year in 2020, however demand for interims remained strong as employers relied on the contingent workforce. That's according to new research from the Association of Professional Staffing Companies (APSCO), the trade association for the recruitment sector.

The data, provided by business intelligence specialist Vacancysoft, revealed that the year-on-year reduction in HR vacancies was largely attributed to the UK's first lockdown which forced hiring levels down by 80.1% in April 2020 compared to the same month a year earlier. In comparison, the number of HR openings started to recover as the year progressed and by quarter 4 2020, vacancies were 12% higher compared to the same period in 2019.

APSCO's data also revealed that while many employers put a hold on permanent hiring during the pandemic, others turned to the professional contingent workforce, with hiring for interim positions increasing from 13.2% in 2019 to 17.8% in 2020.

Ann Swain, CEO of APSCO comments:

"It's no surprise that demand for HR professionals reduced last year as the pandemic took hold, however our data suggests that by the end of the year the recovery was underway with recruitment levels rising once again. It is also interesting to note that demand for interims actually increased last year, indicative of the increasing reliance on the professional contingent workforce as employers turn to agile and flexible hiring solutions in an uncertain market. And as we progress throughout 2021 and lockdown measures are eased we expect to see the recruitment market for HR professionals continue on a positive trajectory."

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