

Trade body responds to latest ONS Statistics

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Responding to the latest data from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) which revealed that there are more job vacancies now than before the pandemic, the Association of Professional Staffing Companies (APSCo) has warned of the immense pressure facing the recruitment sector.

Tania Bowers, Legal Counsel and Head of Public Policy at APSCo commented

“While this increase in employment opportunities is an encouraging sign for the post-Covid economy, with unemployment levels rising there is immense pressure on the staffing sector to fill roles at a time when competition is rife. Now more than ever the expertise of recruitment businesses will be needed, but we can’t overlook the challenges that this sector has faced in the last 18 months.”

“Aside from the struggles that staffing companies faced as hiring stalled at the beginning of the pandemic, available talent pools have also been impacted by both Brexit and the roll out of Off Payroll earlier this year. Temporary resources play a critical role in filling both sudden spikes in demand and resourcing gaps, but this segment of the workforce has been significantly impacted as IR35 was rolled out and the ability to tap into European contingent resources became unnecessarily complex following the UK’s exit from the Bloc. The lack of clarity surrounding the Employment Bill and the plans to return to in-person Right to Work checks are only exacerbating this issue.”

“With hiring demand showing no signs of slowing, it’s critical that the UK’s ability to both easily tap into high-demand resources employed in a more flexible way and develop its own skills, is simplified. As APSCo has called for before, steps such as changes to national training schemes and the Apprenticeship Levy as well as extending access to training to the self-employed will play a significant role in the longer-term. On a shorter-term basis, though, how European contingent talent is engaged with and brought into the UK needs to be carefully re-considered.”

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