

# Vacancies in UK reached record levels in 2021 with the Capital leading hiring recovery

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Recruitment levels peaked in 2021 as vacancies in the UK reached all-time highs, finishing up 113.9% when compared to 2020. That's according to new research from the Association of Professional Staffing Companies (APSCo), the trade association for the professional recruitment sector.

The data, provided by business intelligence specialist Vacancysoft reveals that London dominated the hiring landscape with a 114% year-on-year increase in new jobs, constituting 44.3% of overall hiring in the UK. The smallest annual growth was experienced in the East of England where recruitment levels only rose by 88% year-on-year, resulting in the region's share of overall professional vacancies falling by almost a percentage point in relation to 2020.

Elsewhere, the technology, media and telecoms (TMT) industry saw a huge increase in demand with new jobs up 121.5% compared to 2020. This can be attributed to the UK's shift to remote working and the consequent need for better technology and communication solutions. As lockdown restrictions eased, consumer goods and services began to make a recovery in 2021, with recruitment levels up by 147.8% - the largest year-on-year rise. However, this was later impacted by the emergence of the Omicron variant, which effected the sector during the Christmas period.

The busiest company in terms hiring activity out of the top firms in England and Wales was JPMorgan, publishing over 5,300 vacancies. The American investment bank plans to maintain its recruitment streak in 2022 by hiring hundreds more staff for its UK retail bank. Meanwhile, Sky became the top UK company for professional vacancies, publishing over 3,840 new jobs in 2021, which can be attributed to the rollout of their smart television. Many consider this to be a highly strategic move that puts Sky in a good position for 2022.

Ann Swain, CEO of APSCo comments:

"Hiring activity reached record highs in 2021 and it was extremely promising to see the UK showing incredible signs of recovery. However, with the emergence of Omicron, it would appear that the pandemic is not yet behind us and will certainly continue to have an impact on recruitment in 2022. With skills shortages also remaining a key challenge in what is likely to be yet another unprecedented year, we expect to see an increased focus on the likes of diverse recruitment, upskilling and reskilling as well as embracing recruitment tech in order to broaden the scope of talent pools in the coming months."

James Chaplin, Founder & CEO of Vacancysoft:

"This next year offers little respite from the struggles of the last two years. The Omicron Covid variant, while relatively benign compared to earlier variants, is spreading rapidly. Consequently, working from home is likely to remain prevalent, certainly in the first months of 2022 — with consequences for businesses hiring and onboarding. But rather than simply throwing caution to the wind, recruiters can thrive by making calculated, insight-led gambles."

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