

Lawyers reticent to move jobs amid Brexit uncertainty according to new research

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Vacancies for private practice lawyers have fallen by 13% year-on-year according to new survey data from specialist recruiter, Clayton Legal. And the recruiter believes the fall in advertised positions can largely be attributed to lawyers being reticent to move roles in an environment of uncertainty.

The survey, which was compiled based on the recruiter's comprehensive data on advertised roles, also reveals the regional variations in vacancy decline. London has experienced the most acute drop with available roles down 26% year-on-year, while the North East and the South East experienced the smallest decline (3% and 4% respectively). Other regions where advertised positions fell were the South West (11%) and the North West (18%). The only region which did not note a drop in advertised positions was the Midlands where vacancies levels remained static year-on-year.

Despite the overall picture looking somewhat gloomy, there were certain specialisms which experienced increases in vacancy numbers. Lawyers specialising in family law, for example, were in particular demand across the South and North East where vacancies were up 50% and 65% respectively. Personal Injury specialists have also been highly sought after with advertised roles up by 27% in the South West. The increased demand for specialist lawyers is indicative not only of increased workloads in these specialisms, but also a skills shortage attributed to lawyers remaining in their current positions for longer due to the uncertain environment Brexit has caused.

Commenting on the results of the data, Lynn Sedgwick, Managing Director at Clayton Legal said:

"Almost a year has passed since the UK decided to leave the EU and while we have certainly seen lawyers being less committed to a career move, the hiring picture as a whole remains generally healthy. And while there is clearly caution around Brexit, we are also seeing a change in the recruitment strategies of our clients. Many firms are hiring lawyers for newly created positions due to increased workloads instead of replacement hires that are associated with specialists moving between firms. And as Brexit becomes more of a 'business as usual' scenario, we're confident the 'wait and see' approach will pass."

ENDS

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