

Difficult-to-fill vacancies survey



April 2019

This paper reports the findings of the recruitment agency survey conducted in April 2019. The survey gathers the views of selected Irish recruitment agencies in respect of occupations that require skills which are in short supply and in their view, are proving difficult to fill.

Science research, engineering & technology

>50% Over half reported difficulty in:

IT — software developers, analysts, designers, engineers, architects, support and technicians

Engineering — production and process, design and development, automation, validation, EHS, quality control, quality and regulatory engineers, production, quality and engineering technicians



Business & finance professionals

12% reported difficulty in:

Quality and regulatory professionals

Tax accountants, new & part-qualified accountants, financial accountants, payroll, financial admin



Other sectors

Health – medical consultants, nurses, healthcare assistance



Drivers – HGV drivers, fork lift drivers, construction drivers

Other – chefs, waiters, admin assistance



Construction

7% reported difficulty in:

Welders, electricians, carpenters, glaziers, fitters, steel erectors, pipe fitters, plumbers, curtain wallers, tool makers, quantity surveyors, civil engineers, site and project engineers



Findings of survey over last 12 months

Salary – salaries were up from last year, the majority (four fifths) of the responses from this survey indicated an increase in the salary offered, these were primarily in areas of identified skills shortages (National Skills Bulletin, 2018).



Degree of difficulty – the level of difficulty in filling vacancies has increased in the last year, with almost three quarters of the vacancy responses considered 'very difficult' to fill. The primary reason for these difficulties was an insufficient number of skilled candidates available in the Irish labour market.



Experience – remains a key issue in the reported difficulty in filling vacancies, employers are responding to the increased difficulty filling certain roles with over half of them now accepting candidates with 3 plus years as against 5 plus years experience which was required in previous years.



Demand – the Irish economy continues to grow and this is reflected in the increase in the demand for the majority of the mentioned difficult-to-fill vacancies in the past year.



Nationality – hiring and retaining qualified and experienced employees continues to be an issue in this growing economy, particularly in the IT and life science sectors; the results of this survey found that 23% of the difficult to fill vacancies were filled by Irish candidates only, while the remainder were filled by a combination of Irish, EU and non-EU candidates.



Key factors to attract/retain employees

Progression/
career
advancement

Benefit
packages

Flexible
working

Salary

Location

Upskilling