

Northern Ireland dominates UK jobs hotspot league table – report

Evidence of the ever-tightening labour market has emerged from a new report which showed eight Northern Ireland council areas are in a list of the top 10 UK hiring hotspots.

Industry body the Recruitment & Employment Confederation (REC) tracks the number of active job adverts on a week-by-week basis and said there were around 1.82 million across the UK in the last week of February, a jump of 8.6% on the week and by 41.5% from a month earlier.

The data backs anecdotal evidence from businesses in all sectors across Northern Ireland which have

Although the Orkney Island saw the biggest increase in new listings, it was the eight Northern Ireland council areas which dominated the leaderboard.

Newry, Mourne and Down led the pack with a jump in active job postings of 20.8%, followed by Mid and East Antrim at 20.7% and Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon at 17.8%, according to data from REC. Lisburn and Castlereagh recorded a 16.1% increase, Derry City and Strabane 15.9%, Fermanagh and Omagh 14.8%, Mid Ulster 13.6% and Ards and North Down 13.6%.

Neil Carberry, Chief Executive of the REC, said the easing of Covid restrictions have boosted demand for labour, making it a candidate's market.

“Firms are hiring to meet demand as the economy recovers, and that is great news for people looking to move on in their careers,” he said. “With increases in every type of job and almost every local area, that opportunity is widespread too.

“Recruiters across the UK are ready to help people find new roles. Employers’ confidence levels have been boosted by COVID restrictions start lifting, with activity returning to city centres and industries like entertainment and hospitality much closer to normal.”

The report showed the number of active job adverts grew in every occupation in the UK in late February led by a 23.5% jump in demand for fitness instructors, a 20.9% increase in the number of job adverts for furniture makers and craft woodworkers and a jump of 15.5% for tailors and dressmakers.

It suggested the return of workers to the office may also have boosted demand in some sectors with demand for childminders jumping 16.8% while adverts for mobile salespeople with rounds, including those selling food and drink to office workers, increased by 23% week-on-week.

John Gray, Vice President, UK Operations at Emsi Burning Glass, which compiled the data said companies will need to innovate to hire the right staff.

“Whilst this suggests strong business confidence, we know that many employers are still finding it hard to get the talent they need, which means they will need to look for new and innovative ways of promoting what they offer to potential workers, if they are to attract the people they need to grow their business,” he said.

“That being said, with renewed global uncertainty and the huge rise in energy costs we are currently experiencing, the business confidence we have seen over the past few months could well be dented in the coming weeks and months, and so it will be crucial that we continue to monitor the data for signs of how employers are reacting to this new situation.”