

- *Number of jobs listed on NIJobs.com rose by 18% in the first quarter of 2018*
- *One quarter of employment categories posted their highest number of listings to date*
- *YoY Growth in job opportunities across NI- Antrim 35%, Derry 28%, Down 21%*
- *Skills shortages and staff turnover will continue to disrupt company growth*



The latest NIJobs.com Jobs Report with Ulster Bank reveals almost a 20% rise in job listings for the Northern Irish marketplace (Q1 2018), taking the total number of jobs advertised in the region to a new high.

This insight is in line with the most recent official statistics, indicating a robust labour market, despite various challenges facing businesses.

NIJobs.com works with over 1200 local businesses and the new report suggests that growth remains broad based with a number of firms and sectors in expansion mode.

Record jobs listings

Eight of the 32 employment categories (one quarter) on the site posted their highest number of listings to date including: construction, architecture & property and accountancy & finance.

A number of categories, notably engineering and production, manufacturing & materials handling went close to their recent highs. The latter is indicative of continued strong demand for exports, buoyed up by robust global growth.

Furthermore, in Q1 NIJobs.com recorded its highest ever month for job applications in 18 years of business.

There have been strong performances across Northern Ireland, contrary to the belief that recruitment is largely Belfast centric. In fact, two thirds of roles advertised are outside Belfast.

Over the last year some counties have had considerable growth in their job listings; Antrim 35%, Derry 28% and Down 21%. Fermanagh also had an encouraging start to 2018 with a q/q increase of 33%.

Skills shortages

Looking ahead, skills shortages, relevant experience and staff turnover are areas that will continue to cause concern for expansion and growth in Northern Ireland.

Staff turnover remains an issue with EU nationals working here increasingly attracted to opportunities in the thriving Eurozone. There was a significant jump in job listings for opportunities in the Republic of Ireland in the latest quarter highlighting the international dimension to the competition for talent.

There was a surge in demand for hospitality and IT workers in Q1. The former is not surprising given the number of new hotels due to open this year and IT vacancies rose by 37% q/q. IT, accountancy & finance and engineering are the three largest employment categories and together account for one-quarter of all job vacancies on offer. Hospitality is a close fourth, accounting for almost 7% of job listings.

Two of the biggest drivers have been hospitality and the IT sector, and this will likely continue to be the case. Whilst the phrase 'can't get the staff' is one that we are likely to hear more and more across the economy in the months ahead, it will be particularly so in these two key sectors.

It's not just about hiring people, it's about getting the right people with the right skills and experience and competition for good people in IT and hospitality will be increasingly fierce. Competition in the IT sector for skills will come from the growing number of tech companies that we have locally, whilst competition for skills in hospitality will increasingly come from external sources.

As other economies in Europe such as Germany and Poland forge ahead in terms of economic growth at a stronger rate than Northern Ireland and the UK, combined with the current exchange rate, this will make working elsewhere more attractive to many migrant workers currently in Northern Ireland.

Top three performing sectors Q1 2018

1. Construction, Architecture and Property
2. Accountancy and Finance
3. Hospitality

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