

FACT SHEET



Department for the
Economy
An Roinn
Geilleagair
www.economy-ni.gov.uk

ONLINE JOB POSTING TRENDS

KEY MESSAGES

While recognising that the data from this source can vary from month to month and readers should avoid drawing conclusions on the basis of one month's figures, the latest data shows that:

- ▶ Online job postings in Northern Ireland remained largely unchanged from the previous month. Approximately **12,300 new job postings** were recorded in March 2026, matching the figures observed in February. Despite this, there was a **32% annual increase** in job postings compared to March 2025.
- ▶ UK job postings **increased by 3%** compared to the previous month, while annual figures were **7% higher** than March 2025.
- ▶ Programmers and Software Development Professionals entered the top three occupations for the first time since 2024. Job postings for this group **increased by 17%** compared to the previous month and have more than doubled since March 2025.

*Figures correct as at 08/04/2026



APPRENTICESHIPS

350 online job postings had the following term in their advertisement: Apprenticeship.

Job postings for apprenticeships increased by **12%** compared to the previous month and were **45% higher** than in March 2025.

The top occupations listed within apprenticeship roles were in sales and electrical trades.



TOP OCCUPATIONS

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/campaigns/careers>

SALES RELATED OCCUPATIONS N.E.C.

Approx. 450 jobs

4% of job postings

POPULAR JOB TITLES:

- ▶ Sales Assistants
- ▶ Sales Advisors
- ▶ Sales Executives
- ▶ Sales Consultants

SKILLS:

- ▶ Selling Techniques
- ▶ Customer Relationship Management
- ▶ Merchandising
- ▶ Product Knowledge

BOOK-KEEPERS, PAYROLL MANAGERS AND WAGE CLERKS

Approx. 400 jobs

3% of job postings

POPULAR JOB TITLES:

- ▶ Account Assistants
- ▶ Payroll Administrators
- ▶ Finance Assistants
- ▶ Book-keepers

SKILLS:

- ▶ Finance
- ▶ Invoicing
- ▶ Accounting
- ▶ Accounts Payable

PROGRAMMERS AND SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT PROFESSIONALS

Approx. 350 jobs

3% of job postings

POPULAR JOB TITLES:

- ▶ Software Engineers
- ▶ Java Engineers
- ▶ Developers
- ▶ Artificial Intelligence Engineers

SKILLS:

- ▶ Scalability
- ▶ Amazon Web Services
- ▶ Agile Methodology
- ▶ Continuous Integration/Continuous Delivery

*Figures are subject to revision by Lightcast

ONLINE JOB POSTINGS



Jobs reported to the Northern Ireland Employment Service can be found on [JobApplyNI](#).
If you wish to chat online with a careers adviser for advice and guidance on your careers options see [Nidirect careers](#).

SALES RELATED OCCUPATIONS N.E.C.

Job title	Employer	Location
Various Retail Roles	Tesco	Across Northern Ireland
Various Sales Roles	Gordons Chemists	Across Northern Ireland
Various Sales Roles	New Look	Across Northern Ireland
Sales Assistant	The Perfume Shop	Bangor
Various Team Member Roles	Next	Across Northern Ireland
Various Sales Related Roles	Poundland	Across Northern Ireland
Various Sales Roles	Card Factory	Across Northern Ireland
Sales Assistant	Superdrug	Newtownards

BOOK-KEEPERS, PAYROLL MANAGERS AND WAGE CLERKS

Job title	Employer	Location
Payroll Assistant	Woodside Logistics Group	Belfast
Book-keeper	Dunmurry Golf Club	Dunmurry
Book-keeper	The Door Store Ltd	Newtownabbey
Accounting Technician	McMahon & Co	Portadown
Book-keeper	Stairlift Solutions NI	Newtownards
Book-keeper	W R Hamilton Ltd	Craigavon
Accounts Administrator	Sodexo	Belfast
Payroll Administrator	WJM Building Services Ltd	Belfast

PROGRAMMERS AND SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT PROFESSIONALS

Job title	Employer	Location
Software Engineer	Aflac	Belfast
Solution Architect	Digital Catapult	Belfast
Analyst	TP ICAP Group Services Ltd	Belfast
AI Software Engineer	Cooper & Hall Ltd	Belfast
Software Engineer	Citi	Belfast
Software Engineer	CME Group	Belfast
Software Engineer	Apex Fintech Solutions	Belfast
Software Engineer	Bright Software Group	Belfast

DEPARTMENT FOR THE ECONOMY SKILLS PROGRAMMES

Skills programmes for individuals



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Assured Skills Academies

Assured Skills Academies

If you're unemployed, under-employed, or want to change career, then [ASSURED SKILLS ACADEMIES](#) pre-employment training can help you.

Assured Skills Academies help individuals gain the skills they need to compete for guaranteed job vacancies, with both new Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) companies and expanding locally based businesses. In the last 2 years over 280 people have secured employment through academies.



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Apprenticeships

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An [APPRENTICESHIP](#) can give you the training and qualifications you need to help you get ahead in your chosen career. There are currently two framework levels to choose from, Level 2 and 3. It usually takes up to two years to complete one level and up to four years to finish the two levels depending on their complexity and your ability.

Higher Level Apprenticeship

If you've completed A Levels or equivalent, you may be interested in a [HIGHER LEVEL APPRENTICESHIP](#), which offers the opportunity to gain quality training and a recognised higher education qualification at level 4 to 7 (Foundation Degree to Masters) while in paid employment. By taking part in a Higher Level Apprenticeship, you can gain the skills that employers need and that are relevant to the local economy, therefore improving your prospects of good earnings and sustained employment.



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Skill Up

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If you're aged 18 and over and eligible to work in Northern Ireland, a range of free accredited courses are available to help you re-train and re-skill, through [SKILL UP – the flexible skills programme](#). The Department for the Economy is supporting free short courses, delivered by the local further and higher education providers.

Skills programmes for businesses



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InnovateUs

InnovateUs

[INNOVATEUS](#) is fully funded by DfE. It helps businesses with fewer than 50 employees gain skills to engage in innovation activities. Delivered by the six local Further Education colleges, up to 60 hours of tailored training is provided during each InnovateUs project, either in the workplace, college, or via online learning. The programme provides an important first step for those small businesses who wish to upskill and innovate. Projects help develop ideas for new products, processes, or services and training is tailored to meet the needs of each individual business.



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Skills Focus

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[SKILLS FOCUS](#) aims to support, promote, and facilitate collaborative working between business and colleges by providing tailored skills provision to small-to-medium enterprises (SMEs) with fewer than 250 employees. It meets business needs by increasing the skills levels and employability of the existing workforce to qualifications at level 2 and above, up to and including Level 7 (Master's degree level). The programme is currently 90% funded by DfE with a 10% contribution from participating businesses.