FACT SHEET

SEPT 2026

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 **increased by 19%** from August. Approximately 15,200 new job postings were recorded in September 2026, an **increase of 47%** compared with September 2025.
- UK job postings **increased by 17%** compared to the previous month. There was a **9% increase** in postings compared to September 2025.
- Managers and Directors in Retail and Wholesale entered the top three occupations for the first time since June, with a **41% increase** since August 2026 and a **88% increase** since September 2025.

*Figures correct as of 07/10/2026

GRADUATE JOBS

680 online job postings had the term "Graduate" in their advertisement.

Graduate jobs postings increased by 100% compared with the previous month and annual figures have increased by 135% from September 2025, although September was the highest figure observed in the last 4 years.

The top occupations listed in job postings for graduate jobs are Civil Engineers, Sales Related Occupations, Engineering Professionals, Programmers and Software Development.

TOP OCCUPATIONS

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

SALES RELATED OCCUPATIONS N.E.C.

Approx. 800 jobs

5% of job postings

POPULAR JOB TITLES:

- Sales Assistants
- Sales Advisors
- Sales Executives
- Christmas Sales Assistants

SKILLS:

- Customer Relationship Management
- Selling Techniques
- Cash Handling
- Merchandising

CARE WORKERS AND HOME CARERS

Approx. 450 jobs

3% of job postings

POPULAR JOB TITLES:

- Care Assistants
- Support Workers
- Health Care Assistants
- Driver Assistants

SKILLS:

- Personal Care
- Companionship
- Medication Administration
- Toileting

MANAGERS AND DIRECTORS IN RETAIL AND WHOLESALE

Approx. 400 jobs

3% of job postings

POPULAR JOB TITLES:

- Store Managers
- Assistant Manager
- Business Development Managers
- Assistant Store Managers

SKILLS:

- Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
- Business Development
- Customer Relationship Management
- Marketing

*Figures are subject to revision by Lightcast

ONLINE JOB POSTINGS

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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
Sales Assistant	White Stuff	Belfast
Sales Advisor	Winemark	Strabane
Car Sales Executive	Agnew Group	Belfast
Sales Assistant	Jollyes Pets	Bangor
Sales Assistant	Cardfactory	Strabane
Sales Consultant	Adidas	Banbridge
Sales Assistant	Kurt Geiger	Belfast
Sales Executive	Lookers Ltd	Belfast

CARE WORKERS AND HOME CARERS

Job title	Employer	Location
Care Assistant	Connected Health	Belfast
Care Assistant	Connected Health	Ballymena
Caregiver	Visiting Angels	Newtownabbey
Care Assistant	Bluebird Care	Coleraine
Care Assistant	Connected Health	Magherafelt
Supported Living Care Assistant	Unique Home Care NI LTD	Newtownabbey
Care Assistant	Connected Health	Magerafelt
Care Assistant	Connected Health	Ballymena

MANAGERS AND DIRECTORS IN RETAIL AND WHOLESALE

Job title	Employer	Location
Shift Manager	Sainsbury's	Bangor
Store Manager	Winemark	Portadown
Business Development and Accounts Manager	Lantra	Magherafelt
Graduate Management Trainee	Enterprise Mobility	Derry/Londonderry
Assistant Store Manager	Mango	Belfast
Management Graduate Programme	Leonardo Hotels	Belfast
Commercial Manager	Higgins McGrath Ltd	Lisburn
General Manager	The National Trust	Bushmills

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

Apprenticeships

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

Skill Up

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

Skills Focus

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.