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NATIONAL AND REGIONAL NEWS

Vacancies and jobs in the UK: September 2021

The number of job vacancies rose by 294,000 to over 1 million in August, reaching its highest levels since records began. Although hospitality saw the biggest increase in vacancies, which rose by 75.4%, it has been reported that employers operating in the industry are still struggling to fill the vacancies.



Number of vacancies in the UK, seasonally adjusted, June to August 2002 to June to August 2021



(www.ons.gov.uk, 14/09/2021)

Employment in the UK: September 2021

The latest figures published by ONS appear to be promising, as they show that the labour market is continuing to recover. The unemployment rate has dropped while the employment rate has increased for both men and women, although it remains lower than its pre-pandemic levels. Additionally, the redundancy rate returned to its pre-pandemic levels in July.

(www.ons.gov.uk, 14/09/2021)

Labour market in the regions of the UK: September 2021

The regional figures are also encouraging, as the North East has seen its employment rates increasing and its unemployment rate dropping by 0.9 compared to the previous quarter.

Over the longer term, one of the challenges for the North East's economic development agencies has been to contribute to minimising the gap in unemployment rates between the region and the UK. The North East has historically had the highest regional



unemployment rate (with a few exceptions) and a differential against the national rate of nearly 4% at the turn of the century. In the last quarter, the difference was less than 1% (UK rate 4.6% and North East 5.3%) and the North East rate was also lower than London with an unemployment rate of 6.0%.

(www.ons.gov.uk, 14/09/2021)

Earnings and employment from Pay As You Earn Real Time Information, UK

In response to the limitations of survey data during the pandemic, the ONS and HMRC have been collaborating on using the payroll information that is fed into the PAYE system, to provide a real-time monitoring of the changes in the labour market. The advantage is that it uses all employee data (although does exclude self-employed) rather than a sample survey of people or companies. Clicking the link above will take you to the ONS report which contains a number of interesting interactive maps showing the variation in employee growth, median pay etc across the UK. For example, in the last year, the Orkney Islands have had the highest growth in employees and Solihull the smallest. Not often those two places appear in the same sentence.

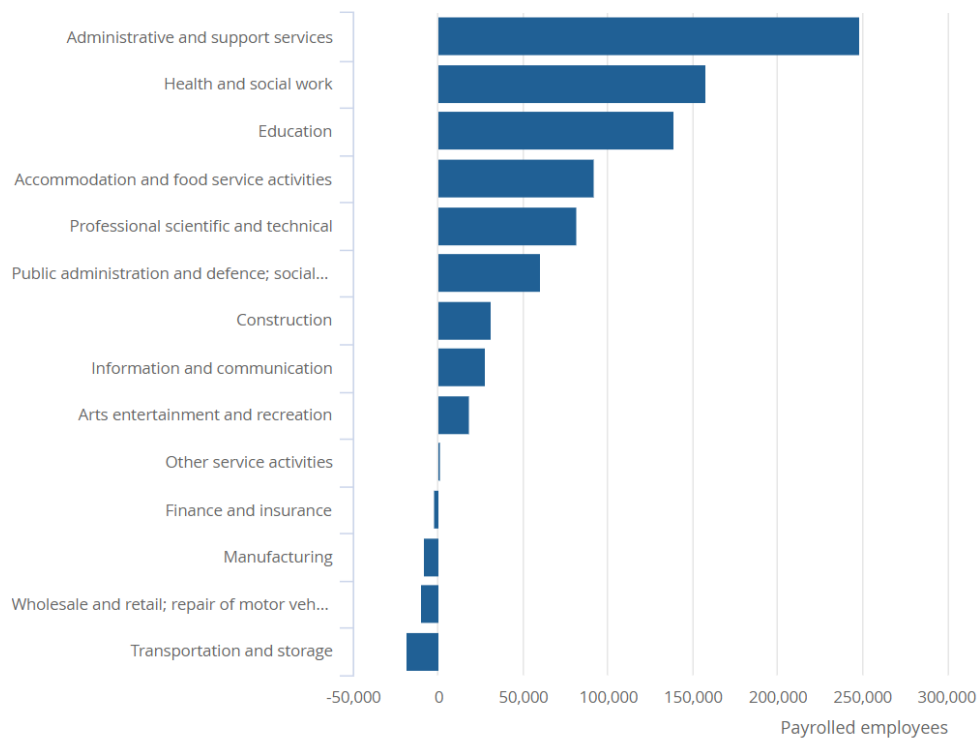
According to the latest estimates (they are described as estimates as there will always be minor corrections in the data) 241,000 more people were in payrolled employment in August 2021, compared with July 2021 and 836,000 more than in August 2020.

There is also room for hope for the sectors that have had the greatest declines in the number of employees since the beginning of the pandemic. Hospitality saw its employees increasing by 36,000, arts and entertainment by 11,000, and wholesale and retail by 7,000 between July and August 2021.

The administrative and support services have seen the biggest rise in payrolled employees compared to August 2020, recording 249,000 more employees. Even with the demand for home delivery, the logistics sector has seen its greatest decrease over the same time period. The current HGV driver shortage will no doubt have contributed to the fall in employee numbers.



Payrolled employees, absolute change on August 2020, seasonally adjusted, UK, August 2021

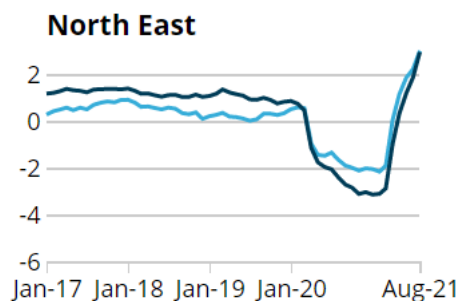


(Source: HM Revenue and Customs – Pay As You Earn Real Time Information)

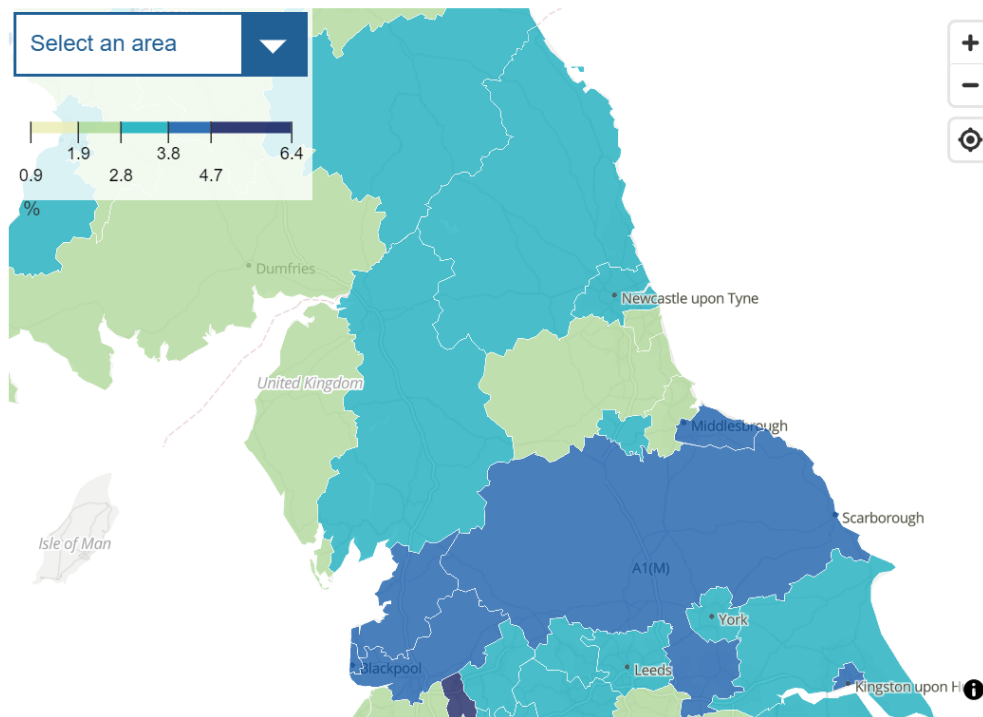
The employee growth has increased across the UK and all regions except London, Scotland and the South East are now above their pre-coronavirus levels.

Regional growth

— UK growth — Regional and country growth



Growth in payrolled employees across the North East (August 2020 – August 2021)



(Source: HM Revenue and Customs Pay As You Earn Real Time Information, Office for National Statistics.)
(www.ons.gov.uk/, 14/09/2021)

North East business confidence among highest in country, survey suggests

The Lloyds Bank Business Barometer brings good news to the North East, as its latest survey reveals that the business confidence levels in the region are amongst the highest in the country. Despite the persisting staff shortages, it has been said that the region's economic landscape is expected to remain positive in the next coming months.

Construction and manufacturing are amongst the areas that have bounced back the most.
(www.business-live.co.uk, 31/08/2021)

CBI 'Perfect Storm' report on the the labour market shortages

A report from the CBI based on their members' reports on the mismatch between labour demand and labour supply. Not exactly a cheery tale of a 'perfect storm' of the pandemic



and Brexit creating not just a short-term issue but one that they say will run for the next two years. The report describes the solutions and what needs to be done by the government, (i.e. issue temporary visas to address the shortage of workers), as well as the businesses (i.e. invest in training). Appended to the report is a table of where some of the skill/occupation shortages are, many of which are at level 1 and level 2.

(www.cbi.org.uk)

Digital Exclusion in the North East LEP Area

The North East Local Enterprise Partnership's (North East LEP) new report, commissioned by the North East LEP's Skills Advisory Panel (SAP), reveals the scale of digital exclusion across the region and the barriers it poses to accessing education and employment.

According to the available data, the North East has the highest levels of digital exclusion in the country, with people from disadvantaged backgrounds being overly affected.

The study showed that the lack of access to devices, as well as internet connection and parental support are the key barriers that most people face. Additionally, 70% of people reported that they don't know how to use the internet or don't have the skills to do so. Other concerns included financial difficulties and people's belief that it was too late for them to learn.

Not surprisingly, Covid-19 has further exacerbated people's difficulties to access devices and broadband connection, due to the closure of libraries and IT suites. As a result, many jobseekers had been unable to access online training, job search as well as interviews, as they lacked an appropriate device.

Additionally, the lack of in person employment and learning provision during the pandemic has made more people drop out completely.

At the same time, 82% of the online vacancies require digital skills, with 23% of employers reporting that their staff lack basic digital skills. More specifically, basic Microsoft Office skills have been ranked amongst the top skills that employees to be



improved, according to the [2019 Employer Skills Survey](#), conducted by the Department for Education.

It is also important to highlight that digital skills are essential even for low paid and entry level jobs and therefore, they shouldn't be associated only with high paid occupations.

On a final note, the above findings will hopefully encourage the region to shift the focus towards providing appropriate digital training opportunities to its residents, to tackle the major barriers to its economic and social growth.

(evidencehub.northeastlep.co.uk, September 2021)

New report reveals visitor economy's £21bn annual contribution to North

The latest report from Transport for the North (TfN) sheds light on the significant contribution of tourism to the North East's economy, which makes up 25% of tourism spending in England.

More findings reveal that the visitor economy provides jobs for 579,000 people, representing 8% of total employment in the North.

However, there are calls to improve the region's public transport to make the north more attractive to domestic visitors and further benefit from the increased tourist demand.

(www.business-live.co.uk, 30/08/2021)

North best placed to reap rewards of net zero drive, report says

According to a new report by Social Market Foundation the North East is amongst the regions that can benefit the most by the emerging green industries and the thousands of job opportunities they are expected to create.

All the areas of the UK were ranked based on a combination of factors such as their geographical position, the number of jobs in the electric vehicles and low carbon sectors, as well as the number of workers with the right qualifications.

As a result, Sunderland was ranked as the second top city most likely to benefit from the green jobs, while Gateshead was also included in the 20 top areas.



There is strong and growing evidence that the North East has great potential to transform its economy through its transition to net zero and bring thousands of new jobs to its residents. However, in order to take advantage of the new arising opportunities, the region will have to shift the focus towards addressing the existing skill gaps.

(www.business-live.co.uk, 14/09/2021)

Government takes further action to tackle HGV driver shortage

In response to the persisting HGV driver shortages the Government has confirmed that it is currently changing the process of obtaining an HGV driver licence with the aim to simplify it. According to the official announcement, this will make 20,000 more tests available every year, while drivers will only have to take 1 test to drive both a rigid and articulated lorry rather than 2 separate ones.

It has been said that these changes are expected to help drivers enter the industry more quickly, considering the delays in the overall process involving the licence applications.

(www.gov.uk, 10/09/2021)

Lorry driver jobs up for grabs in the North East - with salaries up to £50,000

The lorry driver shortages across the country have fuelled a recruitment drive in the North East, with a number of companies looking for drivers.

Below is a list of the employers who have been hiring with links to the vacancies:

- [Greggs](#)
- [Marshalls](#)
- [LB Purkins Transport](#)
- [ADR Network/Royal Mail](#)
- [Suttons Group](#)
- [Fresh Freight Group](#)
- [DFDS Seaways](#)

(www.chroniclive.co.uk, 12/09/2021)



The jobs up for grabs at Travelodge hotels in the North East

Travelodge is recruiting for 750 full and part-time roles at its hotels across the UK, with dozens of them in the North East.

The North East vacancies include receptionist and housekeeping roles in various locations, including Durham, Darlington, and Newcastle. There will also be flexible working hours that match the school run for posts such as receptionists and bar staff, to help parents who want to return to work.

(www.thenorthernecho.co.uk, 23/09/2021)

Work for Us! A recruitment event from North East NHS and Local Authorities

North East NHS and Local Authorities are holding a series of free virtual recruitment events, running between 11 and 16th October 2021 to promote job opportunities in the NHS.

The events will include representatives from several North East NHS Trusts, the local council, as well as the North East Ambulance Service.

To view the workshop timetable and register for the event, visit

<https://tinyurl.com/js7cwbyu>

NORTHUMBERLAND, TYNE & WEAR AND COUNTY DURHAM

Fenwick creates almost 200 Christmas jobs in Newcastle - how to apply

As part of its Christmas recruitment drive, Fenwick is hiring 180 staff members to work at its Newcastle store during the festive period.

The posts will be temporary and include sales advisors, retail and restaurant posts, as well as performing roles such as Santa's elves.



The roles range from eight-hour to 30-hour contracts with start dates between now and mid-November.

More jobs will be advertised on the company's website in the next coming weeks.
(www.chroniclelive.co.uk, 20/09/2021)

Port of Blyth opens unique £1m Wind Turbine Training Facility

The North East is attracting increasing levels of attention, due to recent investments that reveal the region's potential in the renewables sector and particularly the offshore wind.

As part of these developments, the Port of Blyth has launched a £1m Wind Turbine Training facility to provide people with access to training opportunities in offshore energy sector, which is central to the area's reputation and growth.

The facility is available to hire through the [Port Training Services](#) and it is aimed to help local people take their first steps into the renewables industry.
(www.nof.co.uk, 17/09/2021)

Wind farm base at Port of Tyne to be built to net zero guidelines

Port of Tyne brings another development to the region that reflects its leading role in the transition to net zero, as it welcomes the building of the operations and maintenance base for Dogger Bank, which is the world's largest offshore wind farm.

The facility will be carbon neutral, and will create over 200 direct jobs, including wind farm technicians, engineers, project planners, and health and safety professionals.
(www.business-live.co.uk, 14/09/2021)

Plans for £130m cable factory could create 170 new jobs in the North East

JDR Cables is planning to build a £130m plant making cables for offshore wind farms on the Northumberland coast, which could bring 170 new jobs to the region. The new factory is expected to further enhance the area's reputation for being a growing hub for renewables activities.



(www.business-live.co.uk, 28/09/2021)

Blyth Valley Jobs Fair

Over 50 national and local employers offering thousands of job vacancies will be attending Blyth Valley recruitment fair, which is taking place on Wednesday 13th October 2021.

The free event will feature a wide range of opportunities, including full-time, part-time and seasonal jobs, as well as apprenticeship and graduate roles offered by a variety of different organisations, including some of the region's largest employers.

For more information and to register for the event, visit <https://tinyurl.com/8e47vkf3>

People leaving care could be given special priority when applying for Northumberland County Council jobs

Northumberland County Council is giving priority to care leavers who apply for jobs at the council with the aim to increase their job opportunities, which has been one of the council's key priorities.

As it has been reported, the number of older care leavers who are not in education or training who struggle to secure employment are still high.

(www.northumberlandgazette.co.uk, 02/09/2021)

Visit Northumberland launches job vacancies group to help under-pressure tourism and hospitality sector

In response to the current staff shortages across the tourism and hospitality sector, [Visit Northumberland](#) has launched an online Facebook group to feature job vacancies from 600 visitor economy businesses.

To find out more and view the current opportunities, visit the new Facebook group '[Tourism & Hospitality Jobs in Northumberland](#)'

(www.northumberlandgazette.co.uk, 24/08/2021)



Landmark as Hexham site changes from nuclear bunker to Lidl and Travelodge | The Northern Echo

Hexham is expected to welcome an economic boost through a new scheme that will turn a former nuclear bunker into a Travelodge and Lidl store.

The new development is anticipated to bring nearly £2.16m visitor spending to the local economy, along with the creation of 60 permanent jobs that would help the town's economic recovery.

(www.thenorthernecho.co.uk, 16/09/2021)

Sunderland's first Business Festival to include jobs fair at Stadium of Light

A recruitment fair that will be part of Sunderland's first Business Festival will showcase job and training opportunities from businesses across a range of sectors.

The festival will be a combination of virtual and face to face events across the city that will be taking place from October 4 – 8.

The jobs fair will take place on Wednesday, October 6 at the Stadium of Light, with the aim to connect residents from a range of backgrounds to local job opportunities.

For further information visit www.sbfestival.co.uk and for information about the programme of events at the Bridges, contact bernice@sortedpr.com.

(www.sunderlandecho.com, 31/08/2021)

North East cleaning firm Maxim FM to create 100 jobs as growth continues

Sunderland's cleaning company Maximum FM is creating up to 100 new jobs after winning new contracts. The company is currently recruiting for around 20 roles and is planning to hire 80 additional members of staff in the next year.

(www.business-live.co.uk, 23/09/2021)



First phase approved for £60million 1,600-job Hillthorn Business Park development in Washington

The development of the new Hillthorn Business Park in Wearside, Washington is expected to bring 1,600 jobs to the area.

The business park, which is planned to be fully built by 2023, was designed with the aim of boosting the area's economic growth. It is also expected to further improve Sunderland's reputation for its advanced manufacturing and logistics sectors, by attracting more investments.

(www.sunderlandecho.com, 08/09/2021)

Construction company Brims to launch recruitment drive on back of £30m order book

Sunderland's construction company Brims is ready to start recruiting staff, including trades people and site managers to support a number of projects which are expected to start in the coming months.

The firm is also anticipating to secure more projects by the beginning of next year, creating the need for additional staff.

(www.business-live.co.uk, 16/09/2021)

South Shields amusement arcade to be converted into restaurant with new roof terrace

12 full-time roles will be created by a new restaurant that will replace the former amusement arcade Dunes Amusements in South Shields.

(www.chroniclelive.co.uk, 15/09/2021)



Staycation helping to create over 200 jobs at County Durham manufacturing plant

North East leisure vehicles manufacturer Erwin Hymer has announced its plans to create over 200 new jobs in County Durham, following a £15m investment.

(bdaily.co.uk, 06/09/2021)

Durham electronics firm creates 'significant' number of new jobs

The global electronics company II-VI Compound Semiconductors Ltd is opening a new site in Newton Aycliffe, County Durham and is currently recruiting for 25 roles. These include manufacturing technicians, operators, and engineers, and more, which can be found on the company's website: <https://tinyurl.com/2xrusf5x> .

(www.business-live.co.uk, 27/09/2021)

TEES VALLEY

Labour market

There were positive signs in the figures in the latest labour market figures from ONS for Tees Valley for the period April 2020 - March 2021. The unemployment count and rate was at its lowest since 2005 – a count of 17,700 and rate of 5.7%.

The claimant count – this is the count of people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance plus those claiming Universal Credit who are required to look for work – has fallen for the fifth consecutive month. At 26,690 it is 5,700 lower than in August 2020.

Tees Valley businesses 'crying out for workers'

An interview with the manager of the DWP jobcentres in Middlesbrough and Redcar on the demand for new staff, which she says many businesses are describing.

Alongside the HGV shortage there is also demand in hospitality, manufacturing, renewables, contact centres and security work.

(www.gazettelive.co.uk, 16/09/2021)



Darlington College tackling driver shortages

An example of an education business partnership at Darlington College which is working with Stiller, a logistics business in Newton Aycliffe, to support students at the college and providing a guaranteed job interview at the end of the course.

(www.business-live.co.uk, 23/09/21)

Wind turbine manufacturing a step closer

Redcar and Cleveland Council has given permission for the construction of the GE Renewable Energy site (to be operated by LM Windpower) which will manufacture the 107m long blades used on the world's largest wind farm at Dogger Bank. The site is to be built on the redeveloped Teesworks area, creating 2,250 jobs in the construction from 2021 and over 2,000 jobs in direct and indirect employment when it is operational in 2023.

(www.teesworks.co.uk/, 13/09/2021)

Digital jobs in Stockton

Gateshead digital solutions company Aspire Technology has opened an office in the Fusion Hive business zone on Stockton's North Shore. They are planning on creating 150 new jobs based on their business growth projections

(www.aspirets.com/aspire-teesside-expansion/)



European Union

European
Social Fund



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