

Employment Rights Bill triggers employer confusion, ahead of Autumn Budget

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The Bill, which has been touted as the biggest upgrade to rights at work for a generation, brings forward 28 separate reforms.

However, the recent announcement put a renewed focus on the already familiar headlines of the Bill, rather than offering up new details. This week, the Government brought forth an additional announcement, warning employers of a potential rise in National Insurance tax – which could put further strain on financial budgets, employee wages and consumer prices.

According to a recent poll from [Robert Walters](#), the Bill could boost the confidence of just over two-fifths of UK professionals to seek new job opportunities. Meanwhile, a third of UK employers still feel ‘left in the dark’ over how the new laws will impact them and state needing more clarity.

A further fifth of employers’ state that they their hiring focus may shift towards temporary and contract professionals. Contrastingly, a quarter are certain that the Bill will have minimal impact on their hiring plans.

Richard Harris, Chief Legal Officer at Robert Walters: “The Government’s employment law overhaul is being touted as the most transformative in a generation – and for good reason. It’s geared towards protecting what Labour often calls “working people” over “corporate elites”. However, make no mistake—it will impact nearly every company.

“Understandably, it’s caused some worries for business. However, with the benefits for wider society, industry bodies and corporations may be tempered in their public stances on these concerns. It will be fascinating to see how consultations on the details play out. Certainly, smaller businesses and start-ups

are more exposed to dealing with complexity, compliance costs and impact of things going wrong.”

Chris Eldridge, CEO of Robert Walters UK and Ireland: “Companies across the UK will be forced to adapt and innovate in response to the Bill. Whilst the longer-term repercussions are considered, we are likely to witness an increase in temporary and contract roles, as they look to exert more controls over staffing costs.

“We may also notice a more specific increase in temporary-to-permanent contracts implemented as a technique by employers looking to retain longer cost control or trial periods.

“With the Bill not set to come into effect until at least 2026, and the budget announcement mere weeks away, we will continue to keep an ear-to-the-ground for further announcements.”