

Job Vacancies up 7.6% in Q1 2026 – but March Growth Stalls

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Business hiring confidence showed a strong increase in the first three months of 2026, with the number of job vacancies advertised up 7.6% compared to the same period in 2025 according to the latest Labour Market Insight report from [CV-Library](#), one of the UK's largest job sites.

However, following a 9% increase in January and 11% in February, March saw vacancy rates up just 0.8% compared to prior year, suggesting that early confidence has been tempered by the impacts of the Iran war.

Any improvement in the vacancy rates will be welcome news for job seekers with the latest ONS figures show that the number of jobseekers per vacancy rose from 1.9 in Q1 2025 to 2.6 in Q1 2026 and unemployment at 5.2%.

While job vacancy rates were less buoyant in March, a survey of 150 businesses by CV-Library in late March found that longer term business hiring confidence remains upbeat. 52% of respondents expected to increase hiring activity in the next 6 months, compared with just 25% who expected a decrease.

Job vacancies for the quarter were driven by demand for workers in Education, Hospitality and Social Care which consistently top the demand table. Construction job vacancies increased by 11% with IT up 12% compared to Q1 in 2025, suggesting they are sectors with strong growth potential.

Lee Biggins, CEO and Founder of CV-Library, said: "The first few months of the year suggests that the hiring handbrake was starting to be eased with business confidence returning. But that initial optimism appears to have been tempered in March with concern about the impact of the war in Iran. That said, it's encouraging to see positive hiring intent over the longer term and if we can ride out the

global uncertainty swiftly, 2026 may yet be the turning point for a long-depressed jobs market.”