

INSIGHTS

News about employability,
careers and the labour market

Welcome to the June edition of Insights.

A reminder if you have any feedback or comments, you can contact us at
Insights@edt.org.

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Higher Technical Qualifications

In 2020, the Department for Education (DfE) published their plans to improve higher technical education through the introduction of an alternative to apprenticeships and degrees ([Higher technical education reforms - GOV.UK - www.gov.uk](#)). The policy issue was that there was a demand for higher technical skills from employers that was not being met. The aim therefore was to improve the quality of higher technical education and to make it clearer to learners the relevance of these qualifications to employer needs, whether these were studied pre-employment or for upskilling of existing staff. The timetable for the introduction of the Higher Technical Qualifications (HTQs) was digital occupation qualifications to be introduced in 2022, followed by courses in health, science and construction in 2023 with other sectors to follow.

The progress on HTQs was updated at the beginning of May 2023 ([Higher Technical Qualification \(HTQ\): an introduction - GOV.UK - www.gov.uk](#))

with information on what courses are available and where, the finance and funding, the timetable for sector qualifications through to September 2025 and links to the National Careers Service for advisers and learners. One thing to note is that HTQs are not in all cases new qualifications and include existing HNCs, HNDs and foundation degrees which are designated HTQs under the new programme.

At the beginning of June, the DfE announced the launch of the £48million Skills Injection Fund (SIF) ([Major funding boost to support rollout of quality skills training - GOV.UK - www.gov.uk](#)) to support the rollout of HTQs. This money to be shared amongst more than 40 schools and colleges to improve their facilities to meet the demographic increases in young people aged 16 to 19.



Graduate Outcomes

A few years ago the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) moved (from 18 months) to surveying graduates 15 months after completing their higher education course. This is the release of the findings from the 2020/21 cohort - [Graduate Outcomes 2020/21: Summary Statistics - Summary | HESA.](#)



The headline data is:

- 82% of respondents were in employment or unpaid work
- The majority of these graduates were engaged in full-time employment (61%)
- 10% of graduates were engaged in part-time employment and employment and further study
- The £24,000-£26,999 band contains the highest proportion of graduates in full-time paid UK employment at 21%, followed by the £27,000-£29,999 band with 14% of graduates.

Work and Health Programme

The [Work and Health Programme \(WHP\)](#) was launched in England and Wales between November 2017 and April 2018 predominantly to help people who are disabled, as well as the long-term unemployed or those in the [Early Access group](#) to enter into and stay in work. The WHP was originally scheduled to stop taking all referrals at the end of October 2022. However, the Department for Work & Pensions extended referrals for the Disability and Early Access Groups from November 2022 to September 2024.

From DWP's quarterly release of data [Work and Health Programme statistics to February 2023 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\):](#)

- Between November 2017 and February 2023, 380,000 individuals have been referred to the programme with 260,000 having started on the programme.
- Of the number of participants who started on the programme between November 2017 and February 2021, 29% achieved a job outcome and 44% achieved first earnings from employment within 24 months.

Ukrainian Nationals in Work

Through our National Careers Service and employability programmes, we have worked with Ukrainians who have arrived in the UK over the last 18 months. You can watch a video from the Making a Difference programme, highlighting their work with Ukrainian refugees in the South [here](#)).

The [Analysis of Ukrainian nationals entering employment in the UK - GOV.UK www.gov.uk](#) is the latest Government data from HMRC on Ukrainian nationals who had registered for a National Insurance number (NINo) on or after 4 March 2022 upto 31 March 2023 and were subsequently paid through PAYE. This predominantly captures those entering the UK through humanitarian visa schemes (Homes for Ukraine, Ukraine Family Scheme and Ukraine Extension Scheme).

In March 2022 there were 1,400 Ukrainian* payrolled employees in the UK (this therefore does not include those who are self-employed). In March 2023 the figure was 42,300. Data in the analysis is available for nations and regions.

***Nationality breakdowns are determined using HMRC's Migrant Workers Scan (MWS). Nationality is reported by individuals when they register for a NINo.**



Volunteering

Volunteering is often a route for people back into employment through the skills and confidence it can bring. However, the evidence through the Department for Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) Community Life Survey is that participation in volunteering has been falling since the survey began back in 2013/14 ([Community Life Survey 2021/22: Volunteering and charitable giving - GOV.UK - www.gov.uk](#)).

In 2013/14, 70% of respondents said they took part in volunteering at least once in the previous 12 months. The latest survey covered the period October 2021 to September 2022 and participation was down to 55%. The most commonly given reason for not participating in formal volunteering was work commitments although the implications of Covid-19 were still present, with 14% citing 'restrictions or concerns' due to the pandemic as a barrier to participation. 7% of participants said that helping them get on in their career was one of the reasons for taking part.

Workforce jobs

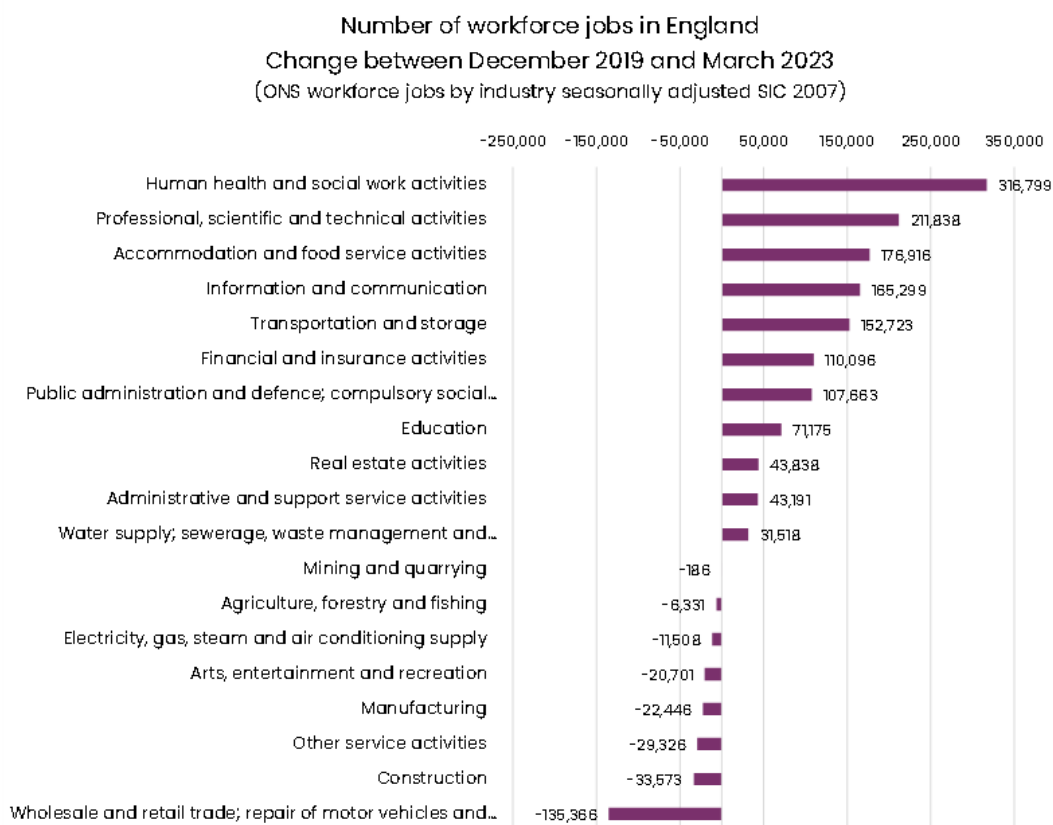
The June labour market figures were generally positive with a record number of people in employment in the UK (33.9 million) and a record number of workforce jobs (36.8 million). The number of workforce jobs is not the same as the number of **people in employment**. This is because a person can have more than one job. Workforce jobs is also not the same as vacancies. UK vacancy estimates are provided by ONS as a three month average. The latest figure for January to March 2023 was 1.05 million job vacancies.

The below chart shows the difference in the number of workforce jobs in England between December 2019 and March 2023.

Most sectors have seen an increase in the number of jobs, the largest being in health and social work activities

which includes care work, professional scientific and technical which includes higher skill occupations and hospitality (accommodation and food).

There have been some sectors where the number of jobs has fallen, the largest of which is wholesale and retail with smaller drops in construction and manufacturing. It is worth noting that the difficulty with annual comparisons is that they can miss cyclical changes. This is particularly the case in construction where the number of jobs was impacted during the Covid-19 period but has been increasing since then. Workforce jobs data is available at national and regional geographies through NOMIS where it is possible to select particular regions and sectors to see the long-term trends ([Nomis - Official Census and Labour Market Statistics - nomisweb.co.uk](https://nomisweb.co.uk)).



News

Minister's speech to UCAS

Minister Halfon address at UCAS Admissions Conference 2023 – GOV.UK – www.gov.uk

The Minister for Skills, Apprenticeships and Higher Education, Robert Halfon, delivered a speech at the UCAS Admissions Conference 2023 on 24th May. The focus was on the need to embrace all options open to young people.

“With a million young people expected to be able to apply to UCAS by the end of the decade, we need high quality provision of all kinds to await them. My ambition is that UCAS will eventually stand for the Universities, Colleges, Apprenticeships and Skills service.”

More ex-prisoners into work

Thousands more ex-prisoners in work following major drive to boost employment – GOV.UK – www.gov.uk

The Ministry of Justice reporting that the number of ex-offenders who have been successfully steered into jobs within 6 months more than doubled from 14% to 30% since April 2021.

Majority of gig workers earning below minimum wage

May: Gig economy worker research | News and features | University of Bristol

Research from the University of Bristol which found that 52% of gig workers doing jobs ranging from data entry to food delivery were earning below the minimum wage. On average respondents were earning £8.97 per hour – around 15% below the current UK minimum wage, which rose to £10.42 in April.

Net Zero skills

2023 Progress Report to Parliament – Climate Change Committee – theccc.org.uk

The Climate Change Committee's report to Parliament on progress to reducing emissions contains many references to the skills component of the drive towards the Net Zero targets. The potential demand for 'green jobs' is a question that often comes up in careers work. The message from this report is that the current progress to meet the demands of retrofitting and installation of heat-pumps in domestic buildings is off-track and recommends an action plan for Net Zero skills.

To find out more about the employability and careers services at EDT, please contact us at careersinfo@edt.org