



**Building and  
sustaining a global,  
flexible workforce  
fit for the future**

# About APSCo

APSCo Global is an international trade body offering global services with local delivery to the international recruitment sector through offices in the UK, Australia, Germany, and Singapore. APSCo helps differentiate the professional recruitment market by raising standards and delivering expert support and market intelligence to members of APSCo and their client base around the world.

According to latest research the number of applicants applying to engineering roles has declined by 44.1% compared to 2021

APSCo UK has been an expert on the professional recruitment market since 1999 and together with APSCo OutSource has over 1000 corporate members. UK recruiters have a global reputation for attracting candidates with new, evolving skills to the world's top companies due to their ability to access the best, global talent. The international expansion of its membership led to APSCo Asia launching in Singapore in 2013, APSCo Deutschland in 2015 and following a merger with an existing trade body in Australia, APSCo Australia launching in 2016.

As the Government negotiates trade deals, there is an opportunity for the UK to access the high-skilled workers it needs to remain a world leader in new and existing technologies.

## APSCo's priorities for the new Government.

- Introduce an Employment Bill and review off-payroll tax legislation at the earliest opportunity.
- Create a truly Global Britain, simplifying visa processes in skills short sectors and regions, broadening access for expert, professional independent workers.
- Tackle skills shortages, reforming Apprenticeship Levy use, prioritising skills investment in urban hubs and regions with existing sector strengths.

## Challenges facing the UK's labour market

- APSCo's research shows vacancy levels across all sectors are currently exceeding 2019 levels, suggesting jobs are remaining unfilled. This will be impacting the UK's recovery from COVID-19 as a global economy and will also be impacting productivity.
- Members report "applications per skilled vacancy" are at historic lows with the costs of hire increasing, as it becomes harder to find appropriate candidates.
- Permanent and contract recruitment across all APSCo sectors is buoyant, suggesting employers and contract clients are having to use recruiters to source hard to find candidates.

## APSCO'S POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

### Introduce an Employment Bill

The introduction of the Employment Bill has been delayed. It is now essential that workers are protected through updated legislation, ensuring supply chains remain compliant within the labour market, preventing disguised remuneration.

The Employment Bill is needed to update the Employment Agencies Act and Regulations in order to: regulate umbrella companies; provide regulation suitable for the 21st century recruitment market; secure greater support for

self-employed and independent contractors; recognise the value of the professional recruitment sector and the value of expert professional temporary contracting; and to facilitate a flexible labour market which can mature, responding as needed to economic challenges.

Off-payroll tax legislation affecting independent contractors should also be reviewed considering challenges to the temporary recruitment market.

## Create a truly Global Britain

To achieve a flexible workforce, fit for the future APSCo recommends that Government should put in place the right regulatory environment, visa routes and recruitment environment to allow the UK to draw talent from across the world and expand globally; helping the UK to make a success of Brexit.

APSCo also recommends that discussions and agreements on trade deals focus on skills, the workforce and the mutual recognition of services and professional qualifications as well as tariffs and goods. Barriers to corporate establishment and ownership should be minimized.

APSCo are also calling for the simplification of the process by which self-employed contractors who are a critical part of the solution to the skills shortage can access visas.

## Tackle Skills Shortages across the Economy

To help tackle skills shortages, APSCo recommends designing flexible and pragmatic training initiatives designed to maximise access across the workforce from school leavers to mid-life "lane changers" if the skills system is to equip the UK labour market with the experience and expertise in demand by business now and in decades to come.

This includes developing a national strategy, recognising urban hubs and regions with existing strengths in particular skills and industries.

APSCo are also calling for reform of the Apprenticeship Levy and for Government to encourage increased inclusion, flexibility, and fairness in the workplace to incentivise the workforce to participate fully in the labour market.



The number of permanent jobs created nationally has dropped 9% between 2019–22.

IT is leading the way as the top professional area recruited for in the capital with vacancies 36.6% higher compared to 2021.

## Conclusion

At APSCo Global we want to work with policymakers to ensure we have a truly sustainable, global, and flexible workforce fit for the future.

APSCo is therefore calling on the Government to introduce an Employment Bill which will better reflect modern day working post-pandemic than current legislation and more suitable high-skilled visas that can allow the UK labour market to remain agile and alive to specific sector labour shortages. Flexible and pragmatic training initiatives designed to maximise business's access to talent across the workforce are also essential. In acting on these policy items, the UK will continue to be a world leader in new and existing markets.



## Contact details

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