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# **2022 REVIEW & 2023 TREND FORECAST**

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# Introduction

After two years that were significantly impacted by the forces of the pandemic, it is fair to say that 2022 represented somewhat of a normalisation of the recruitment market. The sector was back to more or less its pre-pandemic levels with a surge in employment across the economy, creating more jobs and more opportunities.

In fact when we look at the hard figures, the total of number of jobs tracked with the last full pre - pandemic year in 2019. This was particularly impressive considering that at the beginning of 2022, several sectors were still grappling with significant levels of public health restrictions.

While 2021 had been a year of growth as the economy marked its post pandemic revival, 2022 was when that recovery matured. This created a strong pipeline of activity with FRS Recruitment recording a total of just under 108,000 advertised opportunities. This represented a marked increase on the 2021 situation, with the number of roles advertised up (and up significantly) for 11 of the 12 comparative months.

However the growth in opportunities doesn't tell the complete recruitment story for 2022. With so many openings in the market, candidates had their pick of openings to choose from, while their existing employers battled to retain valued talent. This meant that the average number of applications per role actually diminished in 2022.

It also meant that candidates became much more aware of the demand for their services. This created upward pressure on salaries as well as on broader benefit packages.

While work life balance also became a significant motivating factor for candidates. Many had developed a taste for remote or hybrid working and were not willing to give it up, no matter what the preference of their employers might be. In fact it was notable that there were a few roles in certain hybrid friendly sectors, which received no applications after the employers insisted on pursuing a 100% on site working requirement.

Although there was a rise in opportunities across the entire economy, it was also notable that several sectors thrived over the course of 2022. In FRS Recruitment our specialist teams tracked major increases in opportunities in IT, healthcare, technical engineering & life sciences, construction and agriculture related roles. Further in depth analysis and details on these sectors as well as the commercial and temporary work sectors are outlined in focused reviews in the second half of this report, beginning on page 09.

Another important factor in the growth of activity was the number of jobs that came on market in the capital over the course of 2022. In fact, Dublin accounted for a massive 30% of the total opportunities available last year, a major jump on the situation in 2021.

This was partly driven by a rise in jobs with the county being the main economic driver of the country. However it was also influenced by the number of people who were moving away from the capital to enhance their work life balance or in search of more affordable/available accommodation. This led to openings which also needed to be filled. The rising cost of living was another factor in the changing recruitment environment, with many candidates preferring to avoid having to locate themselves in cities or large towns for work. There was also a move towards preferring shorter commutes, with fuel costs for transport another area of concern for candidates.

The impact of this 'rebalancing' or decentralisation of a portion of the workforce also meant that the growth in opportunities wasn't an equally shared across the regions. While 18 of the 26 counties experienced a year on year increase, there was a small drop experienced in 8 counties.

Looking ahead to 2023, our expectation is that there will be a more muted level of growth in opportunities as the economy grapples with the cost of living and slight downturns in certain sectors.

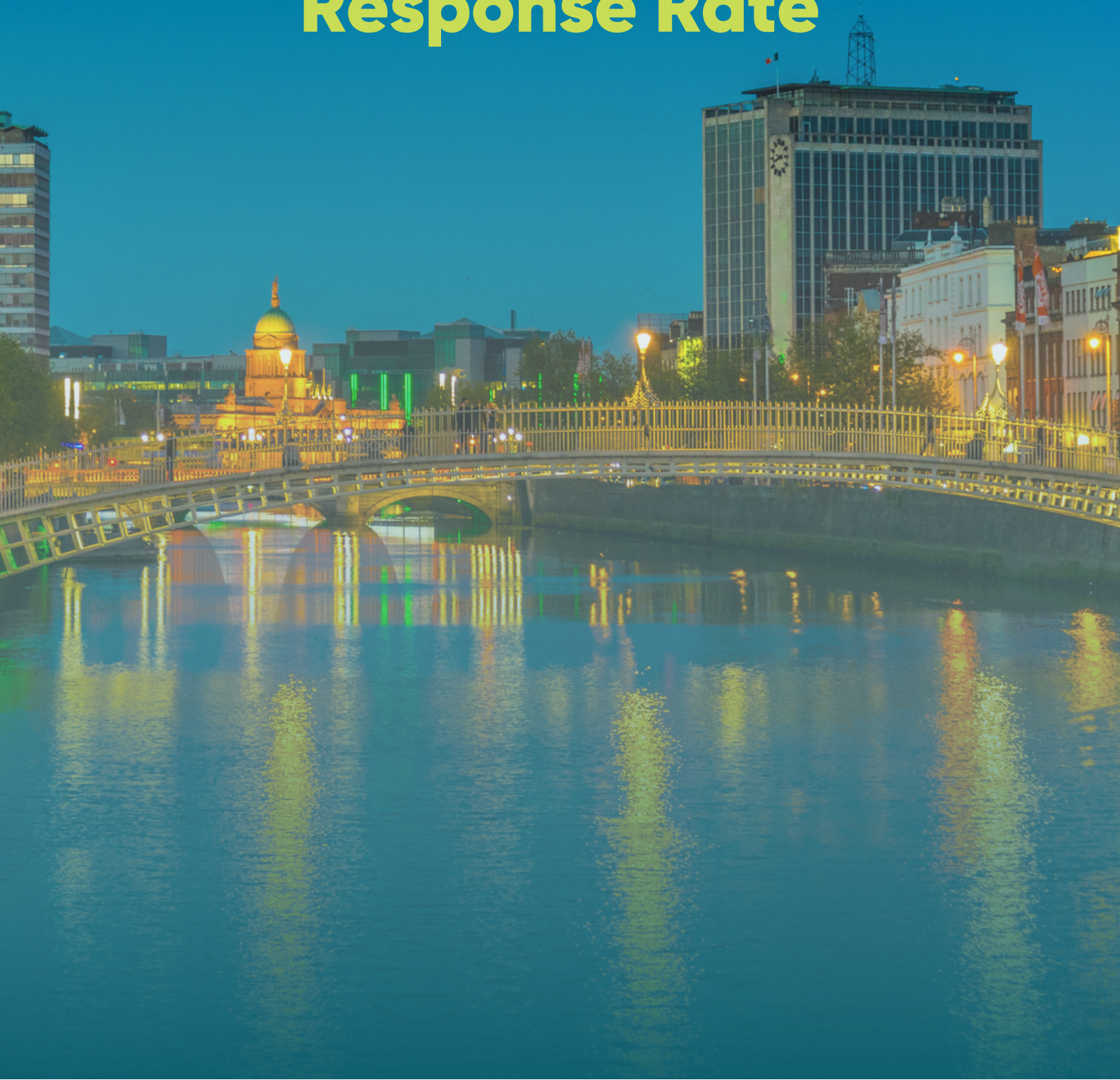
With some of the major technology companies having announced job cuts towards the end of 2022 and other businesses closing, this will create some negative ripples in the market. It is also likely to have a dampening effect on salary expectations, with many candidates placing a heavier premium on job security in the coming year.

However most of our specialist sectors are still likely to see a significant level of recruitment activity. In certain areas such as healthcare, IT and construction that demand is relatively inelastic, such is the entrenched need for qualified talent.

Taking all this into account we are forecasting a modest 5 - 10% rise in opportunities for 2023.

**5-10% rise in  
opportunities  
in 2023**

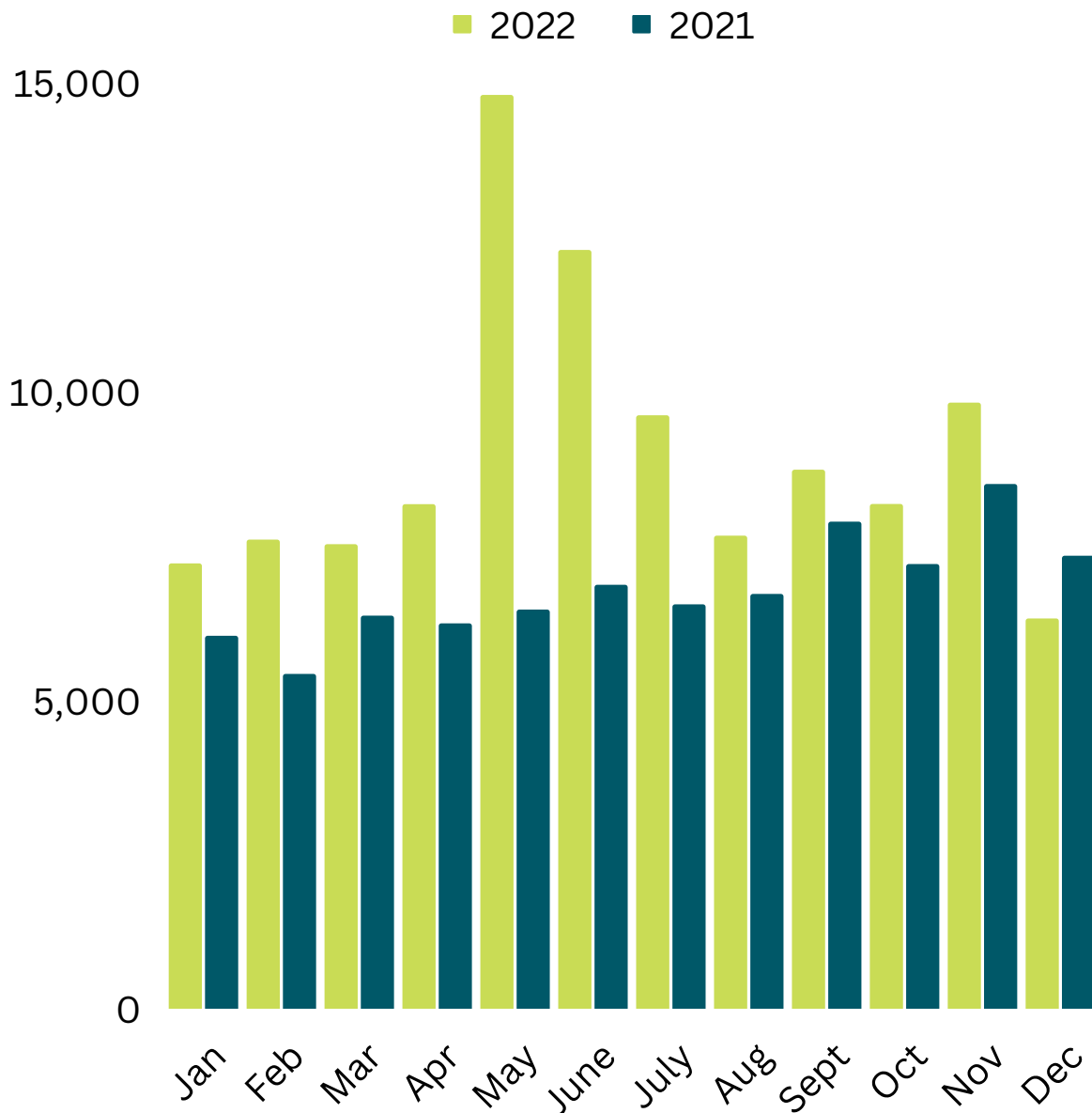
# Job Opportunities & Response Rate



## Job Opportunities & Response Rates

With the economy growing stronger and businesses feeling more optimistic having emerged from the pandemic, 2022 was a year with a strong level of growth in the number of opportunities available. The total opportunities advertised by FRS Recruitment in 2022 came to 107,802 – a marked increase on the year before. In fact, year on year there was a 32% rise in the number of opportunities advertised by FRS Recruitment in 2022 over the previous year.

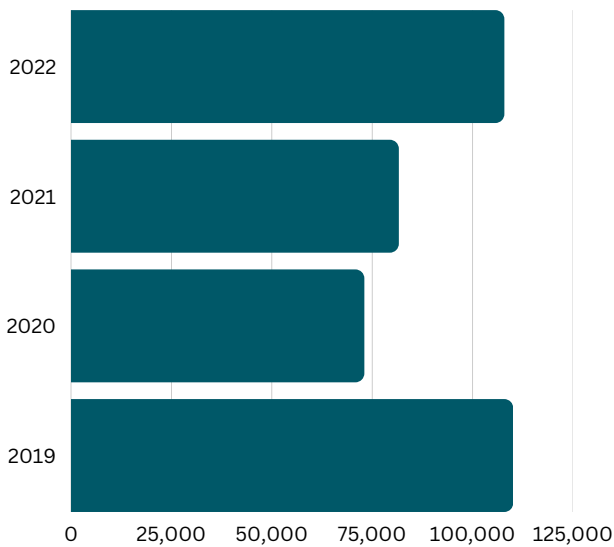
As the table below highlights this was a trend throughout the year, with almost every month tracking ahead of its 2021 comparison. The level of opportunities particularly took off during the summer months with a comparative spike in postings, despite the early warning signs around inflation starting to emerge.



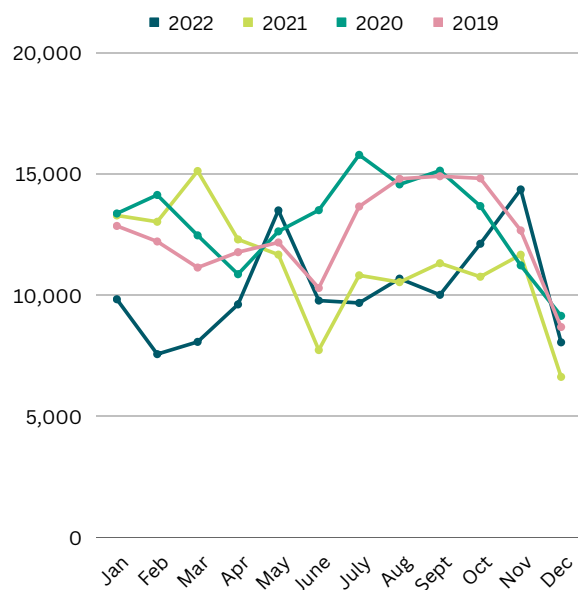
The year on year comparison also tracks very favourably with a longer term view. Despite 2022 beginning with the country still in a period of lockdown and with pandemic restrictions still impacting a variety of different sectors, the overall number of postings were practically equal with the 2019 figures. It also highlights the level of opportunities that were available in the economy last year as the country neared full employment.



## Job Opportunities - Year on Year



## Job Responses - Year on Year Comparison



Of course there were also ramifications for all the good news in the economy. With plenty of job opportunities available unemployment reached a 20 year low, dropping to just 4.2% in July. All this meant that the jobs' market became very favourable towards candidates, allowing those who were looking to move jobs to pick and choose.

Unfortunately this had an impact on the response rate for the various opportunities available. Throughout most of the year the level of interest from candidates was down compared to the number of applications received in 2019, 2020 and 2021. However there was a strong uptick in the latter part of the year, with the number of responses surpassing all other years in November.



## Sectoral Impact

Having established that 2022 was a very strong year for job opportunities, with the numbers advertised via FRS Recruitment having risen by 32% and the economy thriving, there may be an expectation that this would mean more jobs being available in practically every field.

However that is not quite the case. Economic buoyancy does not always lift all sectors and it doesn't necessarily create additional opportunities across the board.

That was certainly the situation in 2022, when we saw quite a lot of variation as we look at the sub sector by sub sector picture.

The largest percentage increase came in Banking & Financial Services, where the number of opportunities more than doubled, year on year. This is partially down to the growth of the market, but the significant rise is also linked to the additional focus placed on this sector internally within FRS Recruitment.

When it became clear there would be a surge of banking/ financial service opportunities in 2022 we were able to enhance our resources and further build our sectoral team.

This proved to be very successful as the 106% growth rate illustrates. It not only enabled FRS Recruitment to work with more clients in this space, but we were also in a position to better help them address their hiring needs, bringing on board an even wider range of valuable personnel across all levels.

There was also significant growth in the number of IT opportunities, both within the software development and support service sub sectors. We will go into this in more detail in our detailed IT sector analysis later in this report, but it was fair to say that there was a major demand for more IT talent in general throughout 2022.

There were also strong levels of growth experienced in Arts, Entertainment and Recreation; Education & Training as well as Professional Services & Practices.

At the same time there were also drops in some areas such as food manufacturing, medical device manufacturing, construction – building and private sector healthcare.

Even within specific sectors, there was quite a strong level of variation, with the latter being a good example of this. While the number of private sector healthcare roles were down, this was strongly covered by the increase in public sector opportunities.

Certainly some of these fluctuations will have been impacted by the various shifts that took place due to the pandemic. For example a lot of people who were working in hospitality at the beginning of the outbreak of Covid-19 would have received the Pandemic Unemployment Payment (PUP). When their employers were able to reopen they wouldn't have had to reapply for roles, they would have already had a job opening for them. So effectively a lot of the hiring within hospitality would have involved people who had already occupied those roles, meaning many of these jobs never needed to go to market.

It is also true that the spike in employment for some sectors started occurring the previous year. This was broadly the case across most of the manufacturing sub sectors as well as for construction building roles and private sector healthcare opportunities. The latter actually experienced a 74% jump in opportunities in 2021.

The below table provides a broad snapshot of the variations in opportunities across some sub sectors. More detailed insights and analysis of various sectors is provided later in this report.

SECTOR	PERCENTAGE CHANGE
Agriculture	7.3
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	43.2
Banking & Financial Services	106.1
Charities & Not for Profit	11.5
Construction – Building	-8.7
Construction – Engineering & Energy	12.6
Education & Training	31
Healthcare – Private Sector	-5.9
Healthcare – Public Sector	17.3
Hotel & Hospitality	10.8
IT – Support Services	46.4
IT – Software Development	66.5
Manufacturing – Electronics	19.1
Manufacturing – Food	-3.0
Manufacturing – Medical Devices	-4.4
Manufacturing – Pharmaceutical	5.2
Manufacturing – All other	3.5
Pharmacy – Retail	12.0
Professional Services & Practices	24.6
Public Sector – Services	17.9
Retail	1.9
Supply Chain, Transport & Logistics	17.2
Telecoms	8.4
Utilities – Renewable Energy	4.9

## Regional Impact

While the national figure of job opportunities shows the impressive level of growth experienced in 2022, as we have seen in the sectoral analysis, this does not mean that growth takes place equally across the board. In fact in the three years that FRS Recruitment has been conducting this analysis, there are always regional fluctuations, with different parts of the country not quite aligning with the national trend.

That is once again the case this year. In fact according to our analysis, on a county by county basis the number of opportunities rose in 18 of the 26 counties, but dropped in 8. All of these drops were single digit, with some down to specific localised factors. For example in two of the counties that experienced a decline it can be explained by a local major employer having undertaken a major recruitment drive in 2021, skewing the annual picture for that year.

However the main reason why the national picture differs from the situation in several counties comes down to one particular location - Dublin.

The analysis shows quite clearly that a major portion of the strong spike in job opportunities came in the capital. Not only did the number of opportunities grow by almost 36% over the course of the year, but in 2022 Dublin accounted for almost 30% of all the jobs handled across the country.

This compares with 22% of the total for 2021. Dublin wasn't the only part of the country to see a rise in opportunities but it certainly took the lion's share.



**Carlow, Clare,  
Dublin,  
Monaghan,  
Offaly,  
Roscommon &  
Sligo saw a rise  
in job  
opportunities in  
2022**

However there was good news in other parts of the country too. We also recorded significant jumps of double figure percentage growth in Cork, Clare, Wicklow, Sligo and Roscommon.

In fact, on a percentage basis Roscommon actually enjoyed the largest jump, with the number of local opportunities more than doubling over the course of the year. Again this is partially explained by internal factors within FRS Recruitment, as we sought to enhance our service in that county over the last 12 months.

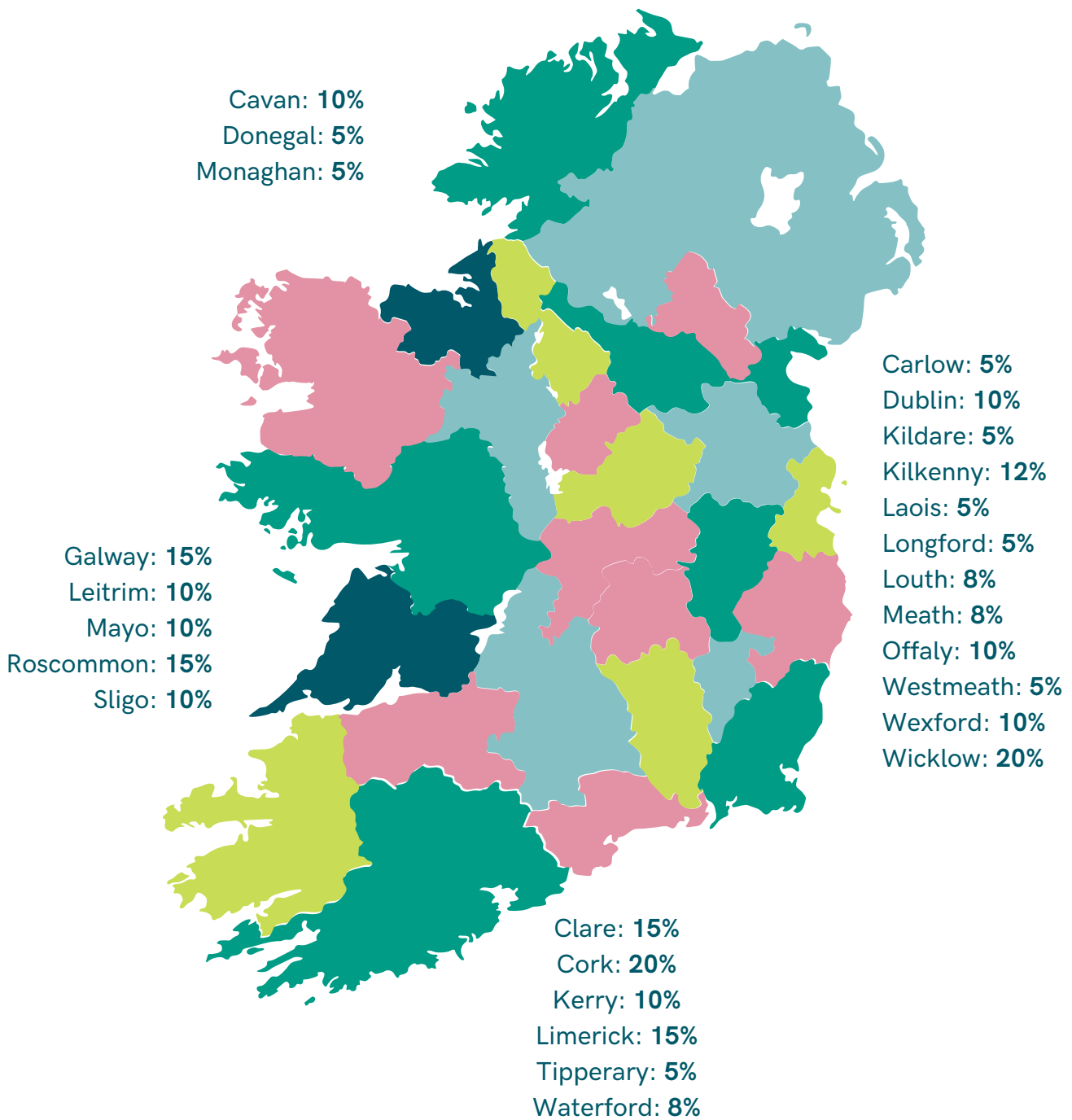
It was also notable how well the various urban locations fared in 2022. Along with Dublin we saw extensive activity in Cork, Galway and Limerick - highlighting the significant demand that was present in all the major cities.

The rise in Dublin was also felt in most of the surrounding counties too, with rises also experienced in Meath, Kildare and especially in Wicklow, where the number of opportunities rose by more than a third.

## County by County Analysis

COUNTY	PERCENTAGE CHANGE
Carlow	4.6
Cavan	-5.1
Clare	30.5
Cork	15.2
Donegal	-3.9
Dublin	35.9
Galway	9.4
Kerry	-9.6
Kildare	5.6
Kilkenny	8.7
Laois	7.3
Leitrim	-8.6
Limerick	5.8
Longford	-6.1
Louth	-7.4
Mayo	-4.3
Meath	3.4
Monaghan	2.3
Offaly	1.2
Roscommon	100.7
Sligo	14.5
Tipperary	5.9
Waterford	9.6
Westmeath	4.4
Wexford	-3.8
Wicklow	34.2

Our team has strong knowledge on the ground, working out of our 10 offices all around the country. Using their insights and understanding of the local markets we have prepared some estimates for the year ahead for each county.





**Healthcare**  
**Doctors**  
**Nurses**  
**Allied Health**

## Healthcare - Doctors

With 2022 having marked a shift in the handling of the pandemic as society opened up once more, you would be forgiven for thinking that there would be a correlating reduction in demand for doctors. However as our medical recruiters put it there are only three certainties in life - death, taxes and the need for more doctors!

Last year our doctor recruiters say the demand increased by a further 30% on 2021 levels. The roles were across the country. Regional roles normally dominate in this field but in 2022 the number of opportunities in Dublin were also quite apparent.

While there is always interest in all forms of doctors, in particular the roles that dominated in 2022 were for NCHDs (Non Consultant Hospital Doctors) in regional hospitals - especially those who practice emergency medicine, temp/ locum appointments across the country, consultant psychiatry positions and private sector roles at NCHD and consultant grades.

Such was the demand for locums that we estimate the market rates shifted upwards by between 5 - 25%, depending on the location and urgency of need.

There were also some newer types of positions that came to the fore in 2022, such as telemedicine general physicians as well as urgent care/ minor injury unit doctors in the private sector.

On the flip side there was also a drop in demand for general surgery NCHDs as well as all grades of obstetrics and gynaecology roles.



The recurring issue in medical recruitment is a shortage of qualified candidates and this continued to be a significant factor across the board in 2022. As a result there was a push to bring in more non-EU candidates, many of whom require critical skills visas. We also noticed an increased level of these candidates filling more senior grades and greater interest from EU doctors with Sláinte care contracts in HSE roles.

On a positive note for the HSE there was also a marked uptick in queries regarding the consultant salary contract.

However the cost of living and inflation is also beginning to impact on the recruitment of doctors. We have already started seeing demand for higher salaries from doctors based in city hospitals. While locums are beginning to ask for expenses in addition to their standard rates to cover the cost of fuel, etc.

This rising cost of fuel has also resulted in doctors being less likely to travel for work.

While the general inflation across the economy, coupled with the difficulty sourcing accommodation in cities and larger towns has made it more challenging to attract overseas candidates. In fact such candidates seem to have become less likely to take public sector jobs which can be more beneficial for their longer term careers in favour of better paying private sector positions.

## Looking ahead to 2023

For the year ahead we expect to see a further growth in demand for doctors. In particular we are anticipating an increase in contract and locum positions, along with a steady growth in telemedicine roles.

In terms of the specialities, we are anticipating a rise in the number of paediatrics and special interest paediatric positions (ie paed radiology/ orthopaedics, etc) as well as general orthopaedics. There is also likely to be further demand in psychiatry – continuing on the growth experienced in 2022.

On the back of the ending of the special Covid funding for the health service there is also likely to be a decline in the number of NCHD roles in certain specialities such as respiratory, anaesthetics ICU and public health.

The continued demand coupled with the ongoing cost of living is also likely to have further ramifications on the locum rates.

**Overall we expect the number of doctor roles to grow by 15 – 25% in 2023.**



## Healthcare - Nurses

As was the case with doctors, if anyone thought moving to the stage of living with the pandemic would reduce they need for nurses, they would have been mistaken. In fact we estimate that the demand for nurses rose again in 2022, increasing by about 25% year on year.

The demand was across the country as per usual, with nursing vacancies available in all regions. With the hospitals generally being located in the cities and larger towns there was some variation in the type of role on offer between the various locations - more ICU, emergency, theatre nurses being required in those urban areas for example. However there was also a notable need for community nurses and geriatric nurses all across the country.

There has also been an increase in the number of fixed term contracts/ maternity cover roles being offered, although on the other side of the coin the number of temporary/ relief nursing positions to cover ad hoc shifts is down.

There was also a drop in the number of acute/ clinical roles, with candidates preferring non bedside work and a push for enhanced work life balance as we emerged from the pandemic. This also aligned with more candidates seeking remote and working from home nursing positions, along with non acute roles in the community.

In fact we noticed a significant move towards some more modern forms of nursing roles emerging in 2022, especially remote friendly positions such as telephone triage, nurse coder, occupational health advisor and clinical care co-ordinator type jobs.

Another significant trend in 2022, which is likely to continue to impact the market, was the number of roles being turned down. With more opportunities in the market there was a notable shift towards candidates playing the field, often securing 2 or 3 offers at a time and then cherry picking. One of the key motivations for candidates last year was the location of the job, with a significant number opting for roles that were outside of the larger cities such as Dublin or Cork, due to the lack of accommodation and the higher cost of living.

The demand also had an impact on salary pressure. The HSE announced an increased payscale in October which resulted in higher salaries from the end of 2022 and into 2023. There has also been a significant increase in many private sector salaries. For example in nursing homes we have seen the hourly rate go up by about €1 - €3.50, while for staff nurses the hourly rate rose from €18 per hour to about €20 per hour on average.

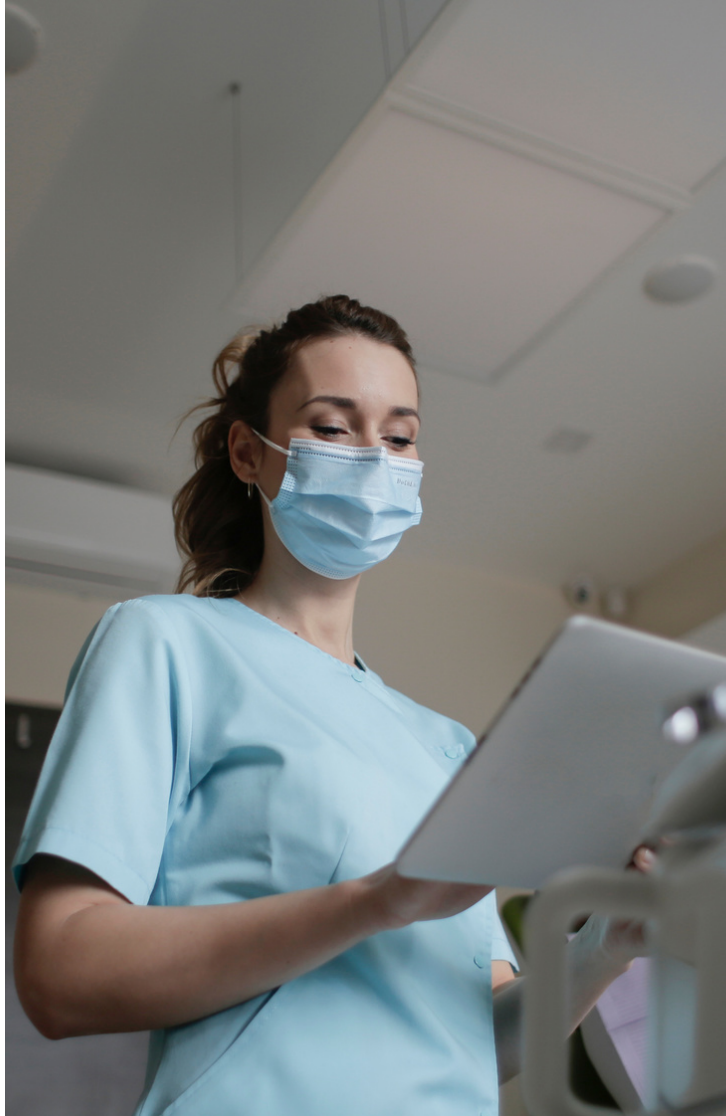
## Looking ahead to 2023

We expect the increased demand for nurses will continue into 2023. This will be further exacerbated by the HSE's recruitment drive, which will create some fluctuations in the market across private and public roles.

With candidates continuing to be in a strong position this year, this is likely to have continued implications on salaries in the private sector as well as the type of roles being pursued.

With that in mind we expect there will be a continued focus from candidates on roles which provide remote/ hybrid working options, or alternatively a move to locations which require shorter commutes so as to reduce their transport costs.

This is likely to be coupled with a further reduction in the number of candidates pursuing acute and bedside care roles.



**Overall we expect the number of nursing roles to increase by approximately 20% in 2023**

## Healthcare - Allied Health

As in line with the rest of the health roles discussed in this report, the demand for allied health professional was on the rise in 2022 as well. We estimate there was an increase of approximately 20% in the number of roles handled over the course of the year.

Like in the other parts of the health service, the increased demand for staff created greater opportunity for candidates. This was something they seized on and many focused on securing jobs that were away from busy city centres, based on their concerns about the lack of accommodation and the rising cost of living. We also noticed that as the pandemic eased there was a move of people seeking to relocate to more regional parts of the country.

Across the country there was an increased demand for a wide range of roles. These included, but are not limited to the following: radiographers, radiation therapists, medical scientists, cardiac physiologists, psychologists, social workers, CAMHS roles and primary care roles.

We were also seeing a move towards more assistant roles coming on board, such as radiography assistants, occupational therapy assistants, speech and therapy assistants etc.

There was a particularly acute need for more medical scientists in the west of Ireland. While locations like Donegal and Mayo continued to have a strong need for more community/ primary care type roles, for example occupational therapists, social workers and physiotherapists.

On a more general, countrywide level however the demand for social workers and physiotherapists were the two positions which probably dropped off the most.

We also noted a cohort of people who had worked in the industry seemed to have moved on to other sectors following on from the pandemic. Some have cited burnout as the reason behind this. Whatever the reason it is certainly impacting on the supply of qualified personnel in the market.

With demand being high for most positions across the sector, we found many employers were turning to offering temporary roles in order to secure a quick hiring turnaround. There have also been greater challenges in attracting overseas candidates than before, with qualified candidates noticing the difficulties with securing accommodation and the ongoing cost of living issues.

## Looking ahead to 2023

The demand is not going to drop off, in fact we expect it to see it grow again next year.

Qualified allied health personnel are being snapped up by an increasing range of employers, such as private pharmaceutical companies. This coupled with the growth in demand within primary care, community and mental health settings, along with the constant changing of the guard in hospitals, means there will continue to be a sizeable list of vacancies in the market.

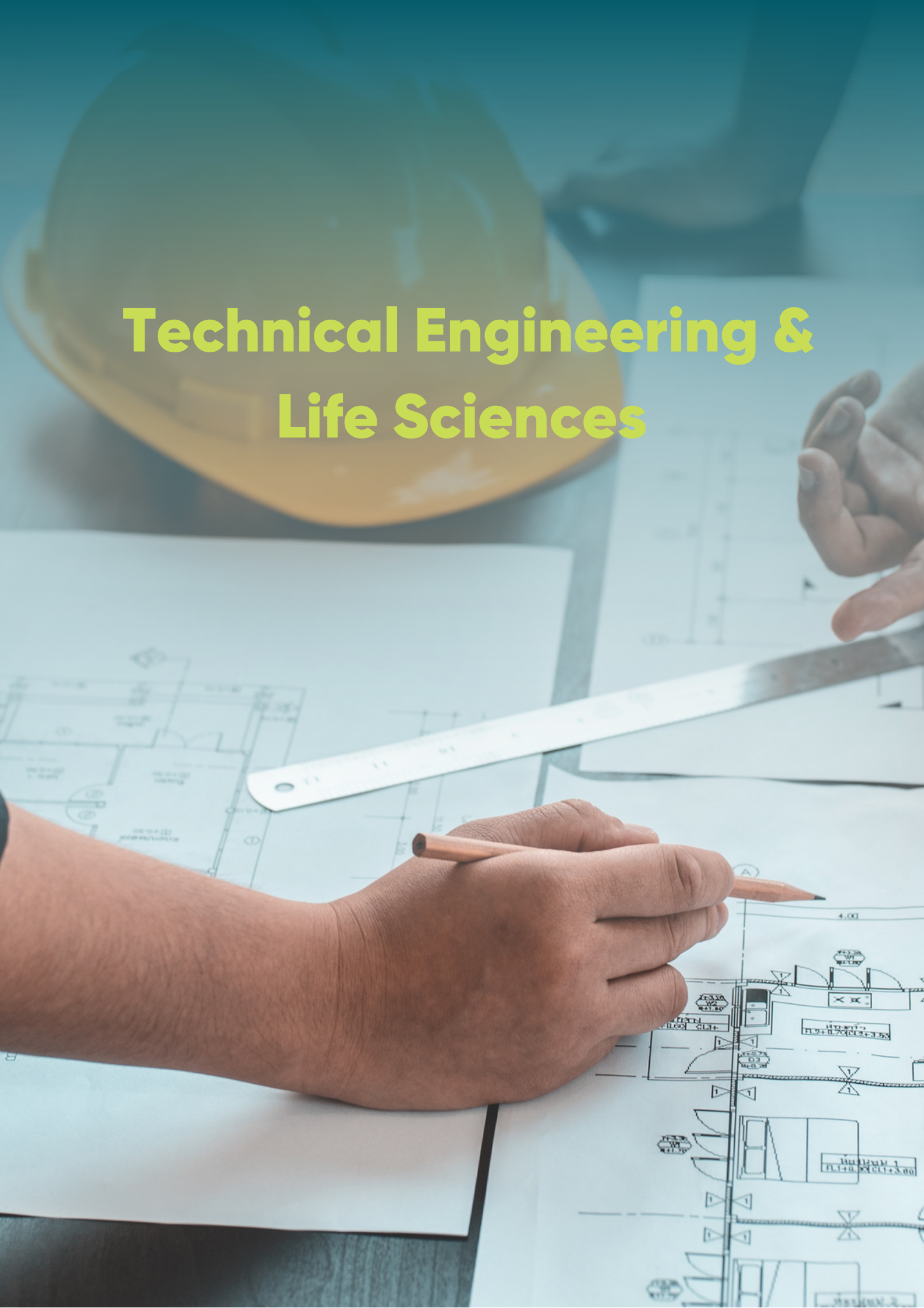
In particular we anticipate there will be a need for more radiation therapists, radiographers, psychologists, dieticians, occupational therapists and occupational therapists in 2023.

Across the sector the challenge will be to recruit and retain qualified staff. This is likely to result in two developments over the next 12 months. Firstly we will see a move towards hiring more overseas talent to address personnel gaps in the market. This will be coupled with pressure being placed on salaries in the private sector, with candidates who are mindful of the cost of living issues seeking stronger compensation.



**Overall we expect the number of Allied Health roles to increase by approximately 20% in 2023**

# Technical Engineering & Life Sciences



## Technical Engineering & Life Sciences

The last 12 months have been another busy period for FRS Recruitment's technical engineering and life science's team, with the number of roles estimated to have risen by about 20%.

Life sciences in particular were thriving, with a particular focus on roles relating to quality assurance and regulatory affairs. Such was the demand for these positions that there were jobs on offer from specialist right up to director level. It truly was a booming area when it came to growth over the last year, with the demand completely outstripping the availability of qualified candidates.

This was partly driven by employers being very keen to find candidates who worked in similar fields. For example biotech companies concentrating only on quality assurance personnel who have previous biotech experience. However with the shortage of supply in the marketplace, as the year progressed employers became more pragmatic in their outlook, adapting a more generalist approach - for example they began broadening the pool to include any pharmaceutical background.

There was also a strong demand for other roles in this sector, such as in quality assurance and quality control, a wide range of engineering vacancies, electricians, fitters and maintenance technicians.

On the life sciences side there has also been a major push for more supply chain and procurement professionals. Initially this demand grew on the back of Brexit and has been sustained since, taking on an even greater focus all through the pandemic and beyond. Especially of interest to employers were supply chain management personnel, planning professionals as well as direct and indirect procurement specialists.

Another area of growth is across roles relating to sustainability as this becomes an increasing element of focus throughout the sector. Openings in demand included sustainability engineers, sustainability buyers as well as environmental and sustainability co-ordinators.

It was also true that the demand for graduates was on the rise across most of the sector.



While most areas experienced growth, there were certain roles where demand did drop in 2022, with a minor decline in the number of science, pharmaceutical and food sector opportunities available.

Although demand may not have been as high in those sub sectors, the general hiring environment throughout the wider sector was of strong competition over the course of the year. This obviously led to pressure being placed on the salary packages on offer. However for many employers, salaries can only go to certain levels. Instead these companies are trying to sweeten their overall packages, building in more benefits such as pension contributions, family healthcare provision and even sign on bonuses in order to sway talent.

Another key aspect has been the move towards remote/ hybrid working. We estimate that about 40% of the roles handled in this sector last year included some element of working from home.

## Looking ahead to 2023

Rising costs are likely to be a factor on recruitment attitudes in 2023, with employers adapting in order to address their rising cost base, supply chain expenses and increased salary expectations.

As a result we are forecasting a slight drop in the number of opportunities that come on stream over the course of the year. However these are likely to be lower skilled roles such as in the general operative category.

The general demand and need for highly skilled talent is unlikely to be quenched any time soon. Employers still have gaps in their teams that need to be addressed. As a result we don't expect to see any drop off in the number of highly skilled roles available. In particular we anticipate an even stronger push for engineering and technical skills as well as scientific roles.

At that end of the market the pressure on salaries and packages is likely to continue and there will be further movement on the benefits packages as well as measures to enhance work life balance where possible.

Further sustainability related roles are also likely to come on stream in the year ahead as they take up a larger corporate focus and becomes more enshrined in the working culture of companies throughout the sector.

**Overall we expect the number of technical engineering and life science roles to decrease by approximately 10% in 2023.**

# Information Technology

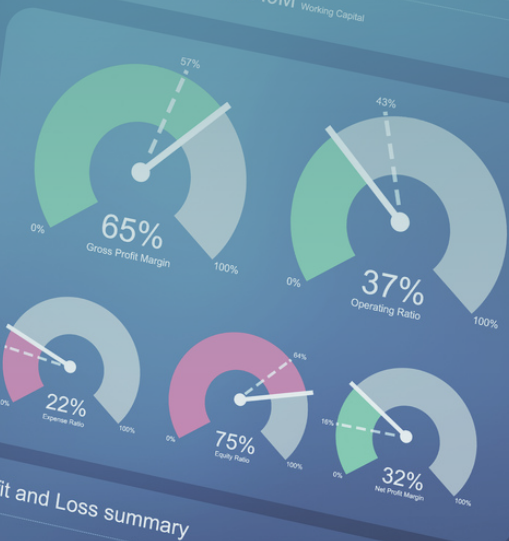
## Daily Signups



## Liquidity



## Monthly Sales



## Retention



## Profit and Loss summary





# Information Technology

It is fair to say that in recent years, candidates with strong tech skills possessed the equivalent of a recruitment golden ticket... they could pick and choose what type of job they wanted and where. Employers have been competing and competing to try to attract the best candidates for the surge of tech related positions available, scouring the market for suitable personnel.

For most of 2022, this continued to be the general recruitment environment in tech. However there have been some grey clouds on the horizon as we came to the end of the year. The significant number of layoffs from many of the major tech companies has created an air of uncertainty and led to a degree of pause across the market. Hiring didn't exactly stop, such is the need for talent and capable personnel – but these developments did lead to a slight change in attitudes in the last quarter of 2022.

One of the key trends in the IT sector over recent years has been the move from candidates towards greater and greater levels of remote/ hybrid working. In this sense IT employees and employers were somewhat ahead of the curve.

This expectation has continued to be a major factor for qualified candidates, with as many as 80 – 90% of the roles in this sector featuring a hybrid or remote working dimension. This has also led to something of a move away from the capital. Previously Dublin had the highest number of jobs going with many of the largest and most appealing companies located there. While Dublin continues to have the most roles available, we are seeing an increasing trend of candidates seeking out more regional roles. In fact we've also seen companies in Cork, Galway and Limerick manage to lure employees away from jobs in Dublin by taking advantage of the possibilities provided through remote working.

Within the software sector, the main trends were to see strong demand for candidates proficient in Java, Python, Ruby and .NET. Newer languages were also attracting interest from employers – with demand for candidates with expertise in Kotlin, Golang or Rust also growing and a shortage of these skillsets across the industry. While the number of PHP roles decreased over the last 12 months.

On the data and design side, there was a particular increase in the number of machine learning and data science opportunities. Computer vision experts were also a newer area of importance for employers. The most notable drop in positions came for Oracle development and DBA roles.

On the infrastructure side, following on from the cyber attacks on the HSE, there was a notable rise in the number of cyber security roles across the market. IT support roles at lower levels were also difficult to source, which hadn't previously been the case but became a recurring trend in 2022.

One of the few sub sectors of IT to experience decline, although only minor, last year were the number of temporary positions available. This was impacted by the major tech company redundancies, with many other players reducing their number of contractors in an effort to cut costs. There was a notable drop in the number of low level SQL analyst positions available, while employers were still seeking out temporary staff to fill developer, DevOps and support staff positions. Machine learning roles were also becoming a factor in the temp market.

## Looking ahead to 2023

There may be a slight alteration of approach in the earlier part of the year as the market adjusts to the new economic realities and the ramifications of job cuts from some of the major tech companies in the latter part of 2022. This may also create opportunities for other employers to attract skilled labour with ample experience, qualities that have been desperately sought over recent years.

This adjustment may also impact on candidate attitudes. Job security is likely to become a much more important factor and potentially this could slightly dampen salary growth over the course of 2023. However what is unlikely to alter is the importance of remote working to many candidates.

On the software side we don't expect to see massive fluctuations in the market. The need for more talent persists so it won't be dramatically impacted by any short term downturn. Broadly speaking we anticipate demand for staff will be at more or less the same level as in 2022. Modern programming languages such as Kotlin, Golang and Rust will be more in demand, while there will probably be a drop in opportunities for PHP and older frontend technology specialists, particularly those using basic JavaScript, HTML, CSS and older frameworks.



Data science roles will also continue to be in significant demand in 2023. While a more bottom line focused sector may regard UX design and UX research roles as being of less importance, with some employers seeing them as a flexible overhead at times. Within this space we expect the market to plateau over the next 12 months before rising again in 2024.

Given the nature of the roles, we would also expect the demand for talent on the infrastructure side to remain fairly constant in 2023. Cyber security will continue to be in demand, especially with a shortfall in the number of qualified candidates available in the market. We believe there are likely to be a significant number of opportunities for security and network roles, DevOps, cloud and SRE.

The number of temp IT roles is also expected to grow in the year ahead, with contractors delivering more control over costs as employers become more cost conscious. These contractors are also likely to be used for more defined projects, rather than as headcount substitutes. As such specialised skillsets are likely to see an increase in demand, while there may also be a drop in temp support staff positions.



**Overall we  
expect the  
number of IT  
roles to  
increase by  
approximately  
10% in 2023**

# Commercial



## Commercial

The commercial sector covers a wide range of different areas, including everything from accounting and finance, to legal and compliance, sales and marketing as well as business operations.

Given the scope of the sector there have obviously been varying trends within those different strands of activity, but on a broad level it would be fair to say that the first half of the year was stronger and that the level of opportunities began to drop off in the second part of the year.

As with many of the other sectors in this report, there is also (generally) a push from candidates to move away from Dublin, with commuting costs, lack of accommodation, cost of living and work/ life balance all being cited. For most of the roles in this sector jobs in Dublin city centre are only appealing to candidates who are living in or very close to the heart of the capital. That said, for legal and compliance candidates, Dublin city centre remains appealing.

Within the accounting and finance space, the major demand last year was for financial accountants, payroll and accounts payable personnel. However it is also fair to say for much of the year the level of demand was outstripping the availability of talent. We even noted a push for contract roles to be converted into permanent positions as employers struggled to recruit suitable candidates.

This strength of demand led to a jump in salaries with many roles increasing their terms by 10 - 20% to attract candidates. Candidates are responding to this and noticing the shift in the market, seeking out stronger terms. In fact once a candidate becomes fully qualified their salary expectations are immediately jumping by approximately €10k.

Work life balance has also become a significant motivating factor, with more candidates seeking better remote/ hybrid working conditions. Such is the importance of this element that we have even seen some roles that were 100% office based attracting zero applications.

On the sales and marketing side the notable areas of growth were in digital marketing positions as well as for technical sales within the medical device/ pharmaceutical and IT sectors (especially in SaaS roles). In the case of digital marketing there was a particular need for more personnel across retail, financial services and hospitality as clients sought to boost their online presence.

We also saw a stronger demand for customer success managers and client relationship managers. At the other end of the demand spectrum, there was a drop in the number of field sales executive opportunities coming on stream.

In business operations the demand concentrated on customer service and administration opportunities with lower level entry positions being consistently needed. There was also a high volume of HR manager and HR generalist roles available. Another growth area was in claims handling positions on the back of the boost in travel post pandemic.

As for legal and compliance, there were a wide range of legal counsel opportunities available, particularly working in industries such as pharmaceuticals, construction, technology and asset management. Solicitors shifting from private practice to working in house roles may become a significant trend, with companies offering better working from home flexibility than practices being a key motivator.

We also saw a rising interest in sustainability and ESG roles within law firms, while there was a drop in the number of paralegal positions in 2022.

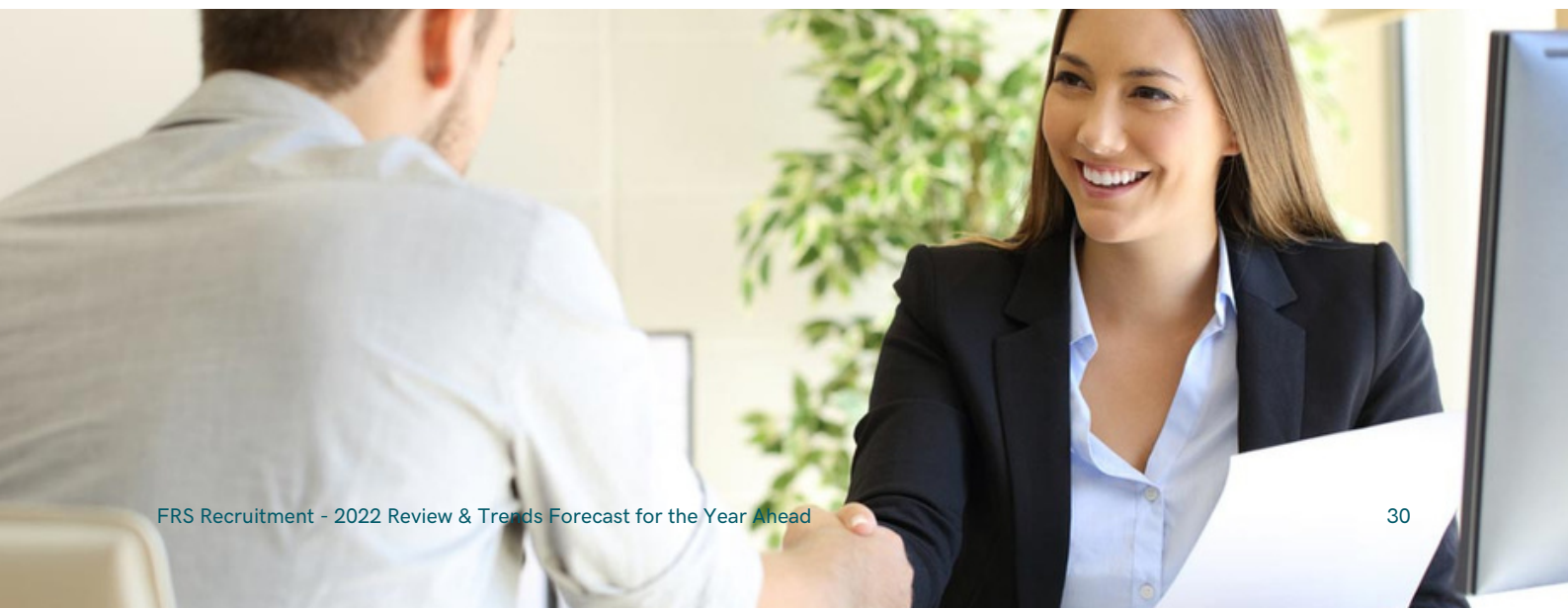
## Looking ahead to 2023

Certainly in the first half of the year, we expect that the slight reduction in the number of opportunities will continue. Employers in this sector will be keenly aware of the macro economic trends and there will certainly be a tightening of belts to tackle the rising costs of business.

All this may lead to a more judicious recruitment approach being adopted across the sector, with many employers seeking to source more senior personnel from amongst their existing teams.

While candidates may also be less likely to want to move, with some already citing their desire to remain in the role they know and ride out any unstable period in the economy.

Within accounting and finance, we expect to see the emphasis to be placed on attracting more junior/ lower level roles, with employers enabling a greater promotion focused culture to help retain senior talent. There will be opportunities though, especially for account assistants, part qualified accountants and credit control roles.



For sales and marketing, again the number of senior opening is likely to diminish. However there will continue to be a significant drive for more marketing and digital marketing personnel, while we also anticipate more business development manager jobs being advertised.

Sales roles will also be susceptible to the movement in the wider economy. For example there are likely to be ramifications for tech sales positions from the loss of jobs announced by many of the major IT players towards the end of 2022.

On the business operations side, there will be more demand for customer service roles in the insurance sector. As is the case with tech sales, there is also a likelihood that customer service positions will be impacted by developments within individual strands of the wider economy. If sales roles drop, customer service positions are likely to follow suit.

Legal and compliance may prove to be the one outlier within this sector, with the expectation being that the number of openings will grow over the course of the next 12 months. There will certainly be an increased need for more legal counsel and compliance personnel, while the move towards ESG/ sustainability positions will probably see further growth this year. The demand for more talent is also likely to put some pressure on salary levels within this sub-sector.



**Overall we expect the number of commercial sector roles to decrease by approximately 10% in 2023**

# Temporary Roles Industrial & Commercial





## Temporary Roles - Industrial & Commercial

Every year in FRS Recruitment our temporary team covering industrial and commercial handles a wide variety of roles. The same was the case in 2022, with considerable employer interest in securing candidates for limited timeframes.

However unlike in previous years, one of the key trends this year was that many companies were bringing people in on temporary contracts and quickly making them permanent - such were the needs and the challenges they were experiencing to plug gaps in their teams.

Like most other sectors, the competition for available talent, along with candidate focus on the rising cost of living, had an impact on the salary expectations. Candidates were seeking higher rates, stronger levels of hybrid/ remote working and shorter commutes in an effort to reduce their transport costs. There was also less flexibility from candidates with working hours.

While many candidates were seeking out only roles which offered a minimum of 6 month placement stints in order to feel secure.

Ultimately employers needed to increase their salary/ hourly rate packages to attract suitable talent. Which made it more difficult for smaller employers to compete.

Generally, unskilled temporary operatives were in strong demand nationwide. Similarly we saw a striking number of openings for drivers, forklift operators and warehouse operators all across the country.

There was also an increased need for HSE clerical officers, for senior level HR temporary positions and skilled administration roles. While there was actually a drop in the number of temporary finance roles coming to market, driven by the shortage of immediate availability and expectations that candidates would not see out their placements due to the number of employers who were offering permanent opportunities.



## Looking ahead to 2023

A lot of the time the temporary job market can actually work contrary to the general direction of the economy. During times of downturn, demand for temporary personnel can actually rise as employers seek solutions while not officially adding to their headcounts.

So if there is to be any drop off in general recruitment activity across the next 12 months, it may actually lead to a further surge in temporary employment opportunities.

What will certainly be true is that the cost of temporary workers is likely to continue to rise. There will be further pressure on hourly rates/salaries and the cost of placements will also be impacted by the evolving nature of employment law and work entitlements. Contract durations will also be on the rise during 2023 and the trend of temporary positions being converted into permanent placements will continue.

At the other end of the market we expect to see a decline in short term bookings such as for holiday cover.

Public sector roles and semi state needs are likely to continue into 2023, creating a strong demand for temporary roles. While it may be more difficult for employers in the logistics, transport and manufacturing spaces to maintain their current levels of temporary recruitment given the rising costs, especially relating to fuel and energy.



**Overall we expect the number of temporary – industrial and commercial roles to increase by approximately 8 – 10% in 2023**

# Construction



## Construction

Perhaps one of the most widely discussed elements of the economy over the last year has been the construction sector, with a particular emphasis put on house building in light of the current accommodation crisis. In light of those circumstances it should come as no surprise that the number of construction roles were up last year. Our team estimates we saw an 25% rise in the number of opportunities across the sector.

Construction of course encompasses a lot more than just house building and the fact is that the demand across most of the industry has been at a high level for a sustained period now. While most of the jobs were coming on stream in the main cities such as Dublin, Cork and Limerick, with such competition across the market candidates are becoming more location focused when deciding on what roles to pursue.

From a sizeable cohort of candidates, there was a strong push to find roles that were based anywhere but Dublin. In light of the cost of living issues and the rise in fuel prices, the length of the commute was also cited by a number of candidates as being a key factor in their decision making. Even when candidates were willing to take on these longer commutes or Dublin based roles, there was a significant push for higher salaries to justify those locations.

While the construction sector itself is not immune to the shortage of available accommodation, with this concern also cited by a high number of candidates over the course of the last 12 months.

In terms of the types of role available there are opportunities in most disciplines in construction. Being more specific, we especially noticed a keen need for more engineers and project managers, as well as plenty of openings relating to health and safety positions.

There was also a steady stream of work relating to projects on pharmaceutical construction sites.



## Looking ahead to 2023

The demand for more construction personnel won't be declining any time soon. The housing shortage is likely to continue for several more years, creating a steady stream of public sector and private sector activity.

When you also consider the significant tranche of public projects announced by the Government over recent years, including the National Development Plan and the National Retrofitting Scheme, there is a significant pipeline of necessary construction projects and activity in the works for many years to come.

The upshot of all this is that opportunities across construction will continue for several more years.

However within construction recruitment we anticipate the areas of greatest demand to continue to be for engineers, project managers, as well as health and safety related roles as the market needs that existed in 2022 are maintained into 2023. There will also be a need for more site foremen in the coming year.

The demand for personnel will also continue the salary pressure and we fully expect to see even more candidates seeking out roles outside of Dublin and which involve shorter travel. Candidates are watching the cost of living and if they have to travel, they will want to get compensated for it.



**Overall we expect the number of construction roles to increase by approximately 30% – 40% in 2023**

# Agriculture



## Agriculture

Last year was a challenging year for Irish agriculture. The rising prices and cost of living imposed pressures across the sector, with the impact being felt across the industry. However despite these challenges, it was also a busy year on the recruitment side. FRS Recruitment estimates that we experienced a 15% increase in the number of roles we handled over the course of the last 12 months.

Client demand was particularly high in the Munster region, with a specific focus on candidates for commercial roles as well as technical support. In fact such was the demand for new talent in these areas, coupled with a limited supply, that salary levels started to come under pressure over the course of the year with a slight increase in the packages provided as employers sought to attract those difficult to find candidates.

Another area of growth in 2022 was the focus on sustainability, driven by the changing requirements implemented by the Government in this area. There was a marked increase in roles which specified knowledge of sustainability, with employers seeking out candidates who had completed courses or even modules in this speciality as part of their studies. It was also impacting on the type of roles coming to market. For example one household name brand was recently seeking candidates for an Additional Agricultural Sustainability Support Programme Advisor role. While another well-known body was actively seeking Sustainability Advisors throughout the year.

It was also interesting to see how the candidate market was reacting to this changing focus, with many candidates now pursuing additional studies in sustainability or climate change and how it relates to agriculture.

Another 2022 trend was the cautious attitude from candidates when it came to changing roles. A sizeable contingent of candidates preferred to seek out pay increases or counter offers from their current employers before accepting new roles.

There was also a notable decrease in the number of young candidates available in the market with many recent graduates choosing to go travelling post pandemic, which also impacted labour availability as the year progressed.



## Looking ahead to 2023

In 2023, we expect a lot of the issues that have impacted the market over the last 12 months to continue.

The level of demand is likely to continue to grow, which will put further pressure on the supply of talent as the pool of qualified personnel has its limits. This will also impact on salaries (and commission structures where applicable) across the sector as employers have to become more competitive in order to attract the right people for their available roles.

This is also strongly linked to concerns around the cost of living, with many candidates quite happy to play the market and potentially encouraging different employers to counter offer before making their decision.

For 2023 we also anticipate there will continue to be a strong focus on roles relating to commercial and technical sales, while there should be an even stronger push to bring sustainability focused positions to the market.



**Overall we expect the number of agriculture roles to increase by approximately 10 – 20% in 2023**



# We work for you.

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