

# The Pulse – Employment Insight

Brought to you by Working Links

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## What is The Pulse?

It's an insight into job trends in the UK by employment and skills experts Working Links, combining Office for National Statistics (ONS) figures with evidence from the front line in today's welfare to work industry – giving an overall view of today's and tomorrow's employment market.

## Who we are

We run more than 100 government contracts helping people on their journey to a brighter future – whether that's through finding them work or updating their skills. We operate in more than 180 locations across Great Britain and have helped more than 160,000 people since our inception in 2000. To find out more, visit [www.workinglinks.co.uk](http://www.workinglinks.co.uk)

## Public sector jobs in surprise increase but experts say customer service, care and retail jobs are key to driving unemployment down.

As the UK unemployment level continues to fluctuate – the figure now stands at 2.53m, up 27,000 on the previous three months – the figures reveal an unexpected jump in public sector vacancies in November. But employment and skills provider Working Links believes this curious statistic is due to temporary vacancies related to the UK 2011 Census, such as collectors and interviewers. The organisation is also finding an increasing number of vacancies in the successful customer service, care and retail industries. Overall, vacancies across Great Britain have fallen by 0.7% since the same period last year.

### On the up (% increase in vacancies year on year - Nov 2010-Jan 2011)

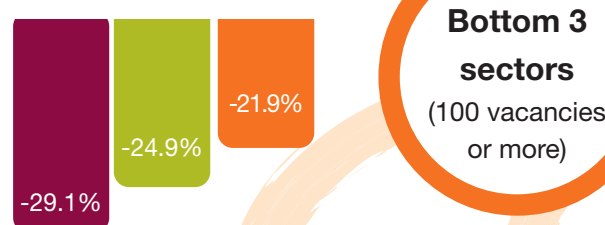


Public Sector

General Business

Agriculture

### Down we go (% decrease in vacancies year on year - Nov 2010-Jan 2011)



Bottom 3  
sectors  
(100 vacancies  
or more)

Energy

Health and Social work

Education



### Trends in employer demand and jobseeker profile

Commenting on the current trends, Working Links Director Karen Masterson said: “Each region across Britain is different but we are consistently seeing more jobs in customer service, care and retail than in any other sector.

“While the official figures show an increase in the public sector, it is important to emphasise that jobs related to the UK Census are temporary. If we put those positions aside, public sector vacancies are still falling considerably. We’re also noticing that construction and manufacturing jobs are also low, although the latter sector is expected to grow in the coming months.

“More often than not, employers are looking at hiring candidates who have soft skills – those who are reliable, flexible and who have a good work ethic – rather than reams of qualifications.

“However, certain industries still require specific skills and qualifications which is where we’re delivering tailored solutions for hundreds of businesses across Britain every month. We work closely with employers to find out exactly what skills are needed in new starters and work with candidates to ensure they can offer these skills, so they are ready to hit the ground running.”