

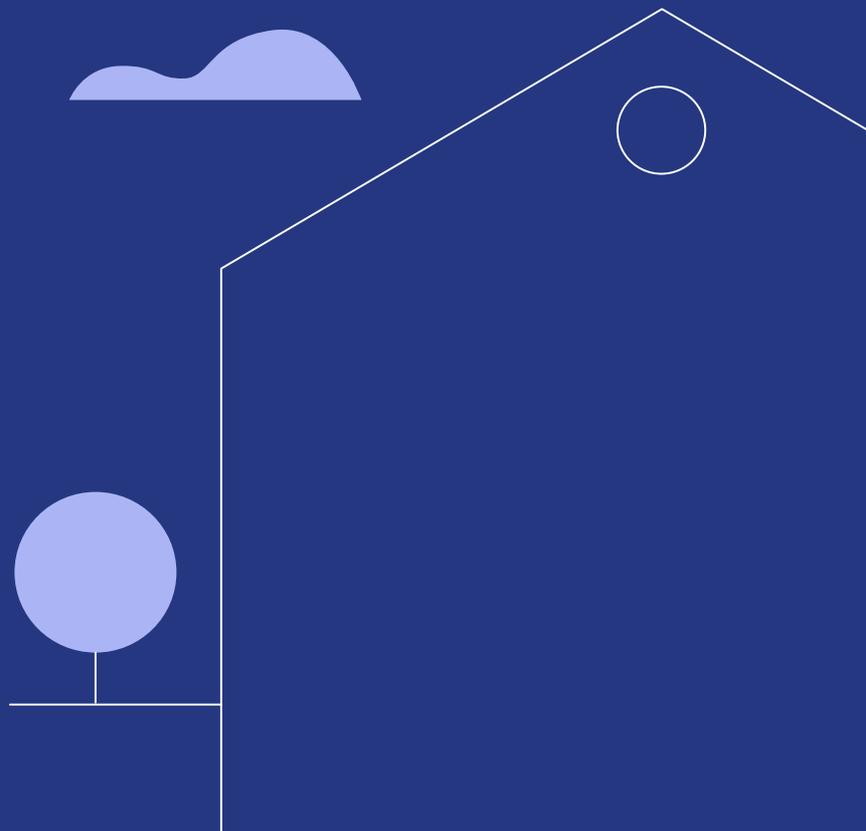
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# From Lockdown to Locked Out: Getting People Back to Work

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[hiringlab.org/uk](https://hiringlab.org/uk)





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The Indeed Hiring Lab is an international team of economists and researchers dedicated to delivering insights that help drive the global labour market conversation.

The Hiring Lab produces research on global labour market topics using Indeed's proprietary data and publicly available sources. Our work is available to media, researchers, policymakers, jobseekers and employers to help them better navigate the world of work today.

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This report can be downloaded from: <https://www.hiringlab.org/uk/blog/2020/08/05/state-of-labour-market-after-lockdown/>

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# Executive Summary

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In this report, we take a close look at Indeed's unique and timely data to evaluate the state of the labour market four months after the UK lockdown began. Official labour market data paint a confusing picture of the job situation because of the unprecedented nature of the crisis and the fact that these statistics lag real-world developments by weeks or months. By contrast, Indeed data on online job postings, jobseeker clicks and CVs are close to real time and offer one-of-a-kind insights into employer and jobseeker behaviour unavailable from conventional sources. We use these data through July to analyse:

- how COVID-19 has altered job opportunities;
- which jobs are seeing rising jobseeker competition and which remain hard to fill;
- how jobseeker behaviour has shifted during the crisis;
- what these changes mean for employers, jobseekers and public policy.

We find that:

**1.** \_\_\_\_\_

**The profile of jobseekers and the composition of available jobs have changed significantly since the onset of the crisis. One-fifth of job titles in postings in July 2020 were different than those posted the year before.**

**2.** \_\_\_\_\_

**In general, job opportunities are scarcer than they were before the pandemic and more people are competing for the jobs that are available.**

**3.** \_\_\_\_\_

**Some occupations have become a lot more competitive, while others remain hard to fill despite rising unemployment and inactivity.**

**4.** \_\_\_\_\_

**Low- and mid-paid jobs are harder to get, which is bad news for lower earners, who represent a growing share of job searches.**

**5.** \_\_\_\_\_

**Jobseekers are casting a wider net and reacting rapidly to perceived opportunities. People from shuttered sectors increasingly are looking for jobs outside their fields, while essential workers are less likely to consider other occupations.**

**6.** \_\_\_\_\_

**If these shifts persist — as seems likely at least in the short-to-medium term — then matching people as well as possible to job opportunities will be key to navigating this extraordinarily tough period for the labour market, in addition to stimulating overall job creation.**

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# Introduction

At the start of 2020, the UK jobs market was in rude health — the tightest in recent memory. COVID-19 turned it completely on its head. Workplaces shut down, newly posted vacancies plunged by three-quarters and [hiring ground to a near halt](#). Those employers that continued looking for staff in the lockdown's early days — like supermarkets, logistics companies and healthcare providers — were [flooded with interest](#) from people urgently searching for work.

Four months later, we are at a crossroads. Government support has kept millions of people off official unemployment rolls, but those schemes are about to start unwinding. Many businesses continue to operate [below their pre-crisis capacity](#). The Office for Budget Responsibility's [central scenario](#) assumes 15% of those who benefitted from the government's job retention scheme will not be able to return to work when support ends in October. Moreover, a recent slew of redundancy announcements suggests the ranks of those out of work will rise further in the coming months.

This is happening at a time when the number of available jobs is near a record low. Job postings on Indeed are less than half of last year's trend and show few signs of recovery. Yet, though the labour market is ailing, it is by no means dead. On Indeed, employers continue to post jobs, and jobseekers are updating their CVs and [searching for work](#). Now though, landing a job has become much more difficult than it was just a few months ago — and it is set to become harder still.



## Part 1: How has COVID-19 affected job opportunities?

Indeed data show clearly both a fall in the quantity and a change in the mix of jobs since COVID-19 hit. Job postings are down dramatically from a year ago and recovery seems out of reach, even as some sectors of the economy reopen.

Not only has the number of job postings fallen significantly, making it harder for jobseekers to find work, but the types of available jobs have changed too. Some 23% of job titles in postings in June 2020 were different than those posted the year before. This eased back slightly to 20% in July after the broader reopening of sectors, but remains elevated. Notices for bar staff, chefs and retail assistants have plummeted, while nurses, carers and social workers represent larger shares. This stands as the biggest shift in job opportunities since the recovery from the financial crisis began in the early part of the decade.



## 1.a Job postings are down 57% and recovery remains elusive

One of the first signs of COVID-19's impact on the labour market became visible in mid-March when Indeed job postings began to slow dramatically. Indeed postings declined steeply through April and into May as the UK locked down. By late May, postings had tumbled more than 60% below last year's trend, a greater decline than those registered in most other developed economies.

**Low vacancies mean it's hard for people to find work as businesses lay off more workers and government wage and income support rolls off.**

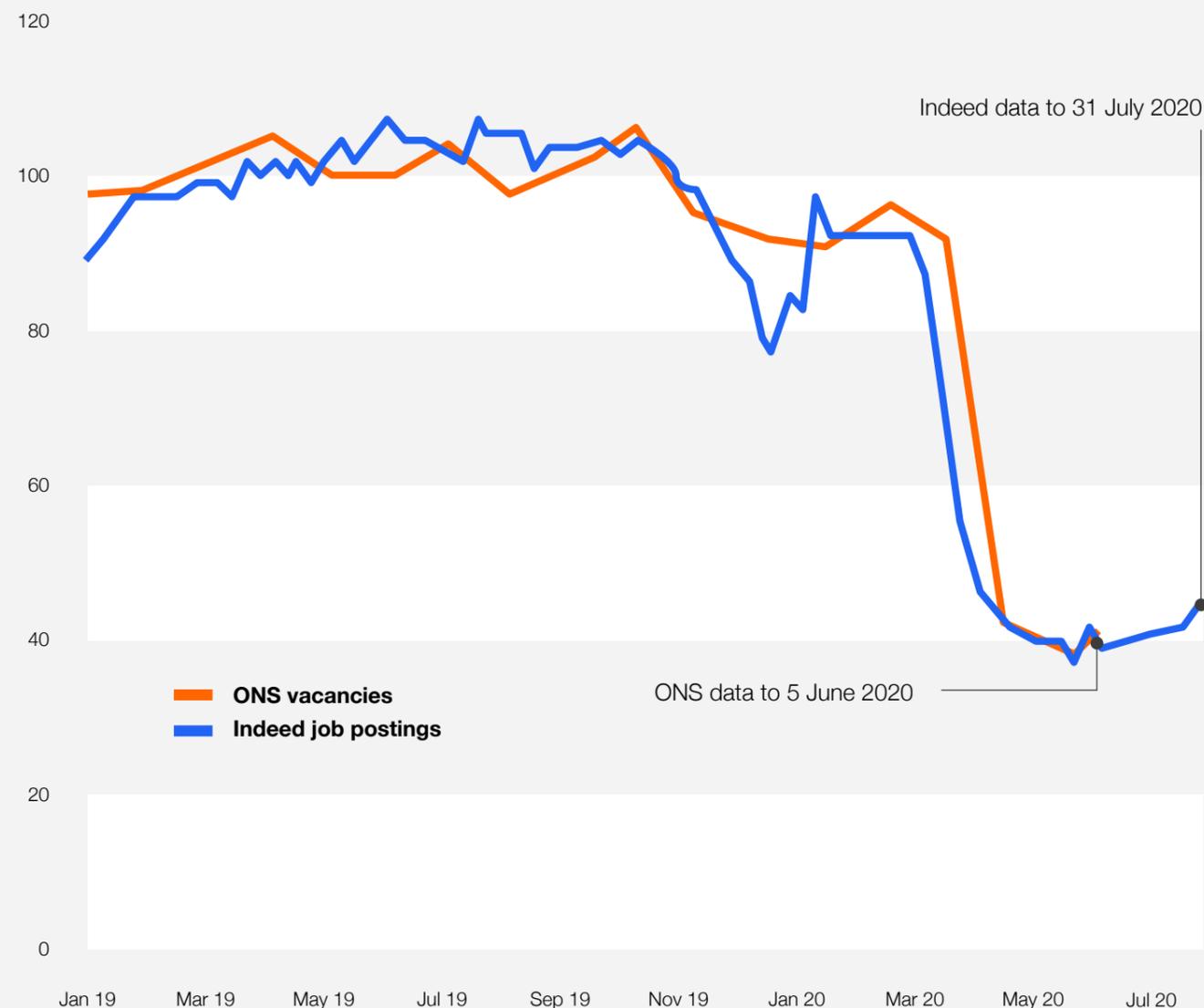
To date, hiring has shown little sign of a meaningful recovery as employers grapple with an uncertain economic outlook. As of July 24, job postings on Indeed UK were still 57% below last year's trend despite reopening of some sectors of the economy in June and July.

Job vacancies are a barometer of an economy's health, highly

correlated with employment and economic output. High vacancy numbers keep unemployment low as employers Hoover up both new entrants to the labour market, like school leavers and graduates, and workers who become redundant. By contrast, low vacancies mean it's hard for people to find work as businesses lay off more workers and government wage and income support rolls off.

## Job vacancies are slow to recover from the crisis

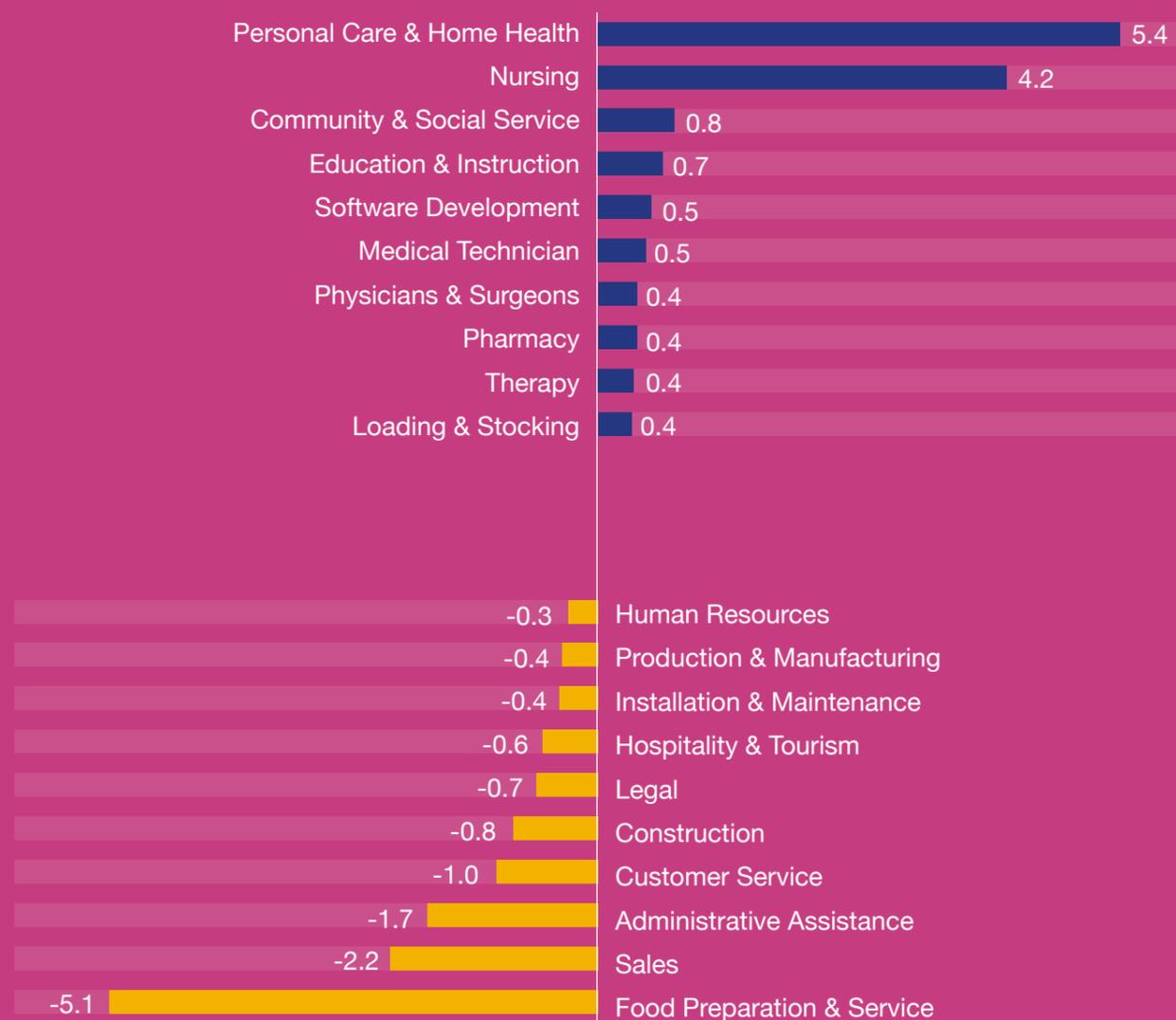
ONS vacancies (monthly) vs. Indeed job postings (weekly)  
(Index, 2019 avg = 100)



Source: Indeed, ONS  
Indeed job postings are weekly counts. ONS vacancies are monthly estimates from business surveys.

## Mix of job postings is changing

Change in share of overall job postings (ppts), June 2020 vs. June 2019



Source: Indeed.

## 1.b The mix of job postings has changed significantly

The decline in job postings has been broad-based, with no sectors escaping the downturn entirely. But demand for new workers has held up better in some areas than others, leading to big shifts in the mix of available jobs.

Unsurprisingly, the biggest hits were in sectors that were mostly or completely shut down, such as hospitality, restaurants, tourism and personal services. Postings in these sectors dropped as low as a tenth of 2019 levels.

**Jobseekers who may have considered a role in shrinking sectors will need to look elsewhere.**

As a result of this fall-off, these sectors' shares of overall job postings are down substantially. Food preparation and service is off around five percentage points compared with last year. Sales and administration jobs have also been declining in share. Conversely, the job posting shares of healthcare, social services and education have been rising.

The big question is how permanent these shifts are. The answer will depend on the evolution of the pandemic, the path of economic recovery and consumer demand. If the outlook for sectors like hospitality, travel and retail remains [subdued for the foreseeable future](#), then jobseekers who have focused on these shrinking sectors and the people laid off from jobs in them will need to look elsewhere.

### 1.c Job opportunities in low-wage occupations are down most

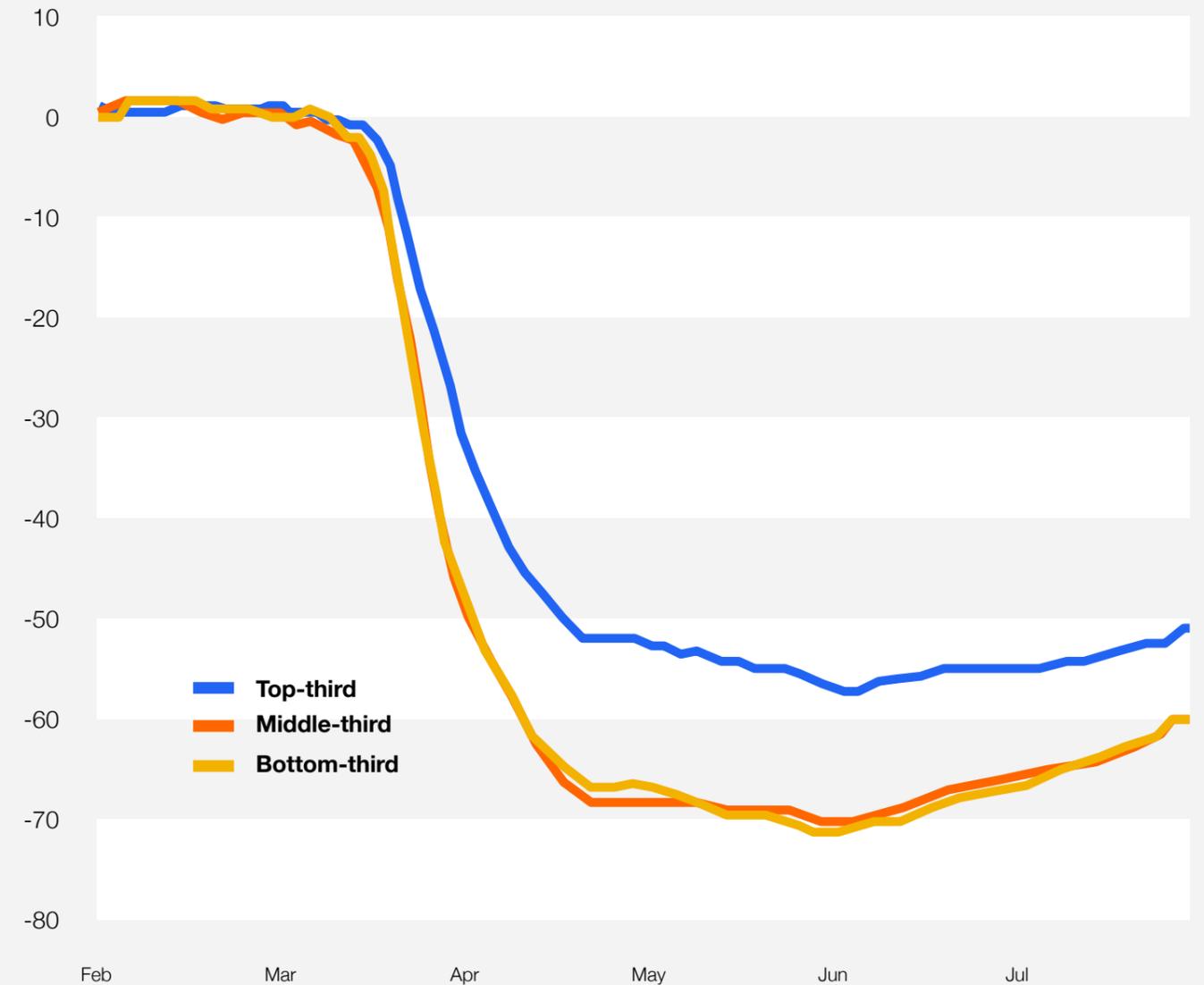
The crisis has pounded lower-wage occupations such as hospitality and leisure particularly hard. This can be seen clearly by dividing job postings into three tiers ranked by wages, each representing a third of all job titles. We mapped job titles into these tiers based on median wages for each title. The downturn has most severely affected jobs in the bottom and middle tiers. Jobs in the top tier so far have held up notably better.

In other words, the number of opportunities for jobseekers who would normally apply for lower-paid jobs has shrunk more than the number for those likely to apply for high-paid jobs. This is particularly detrimental to people with low qualifications. It also hurts students looking for part-time work, who would typically search for lower-paying jobs.

**The number of opportunities for jobseekers who would normally apply for lower-paid jobs has shrunk more than the number of opportunities for those likely to apply for high-paid jobs.**

### Low-wage job postings hit hardest

2020 vs. 2019 % gap in trend through Jul 28 by job occupation wage tier



Source: Indeed

### 1.d The job postings mix has changed more rapidly than at any time in the recent past

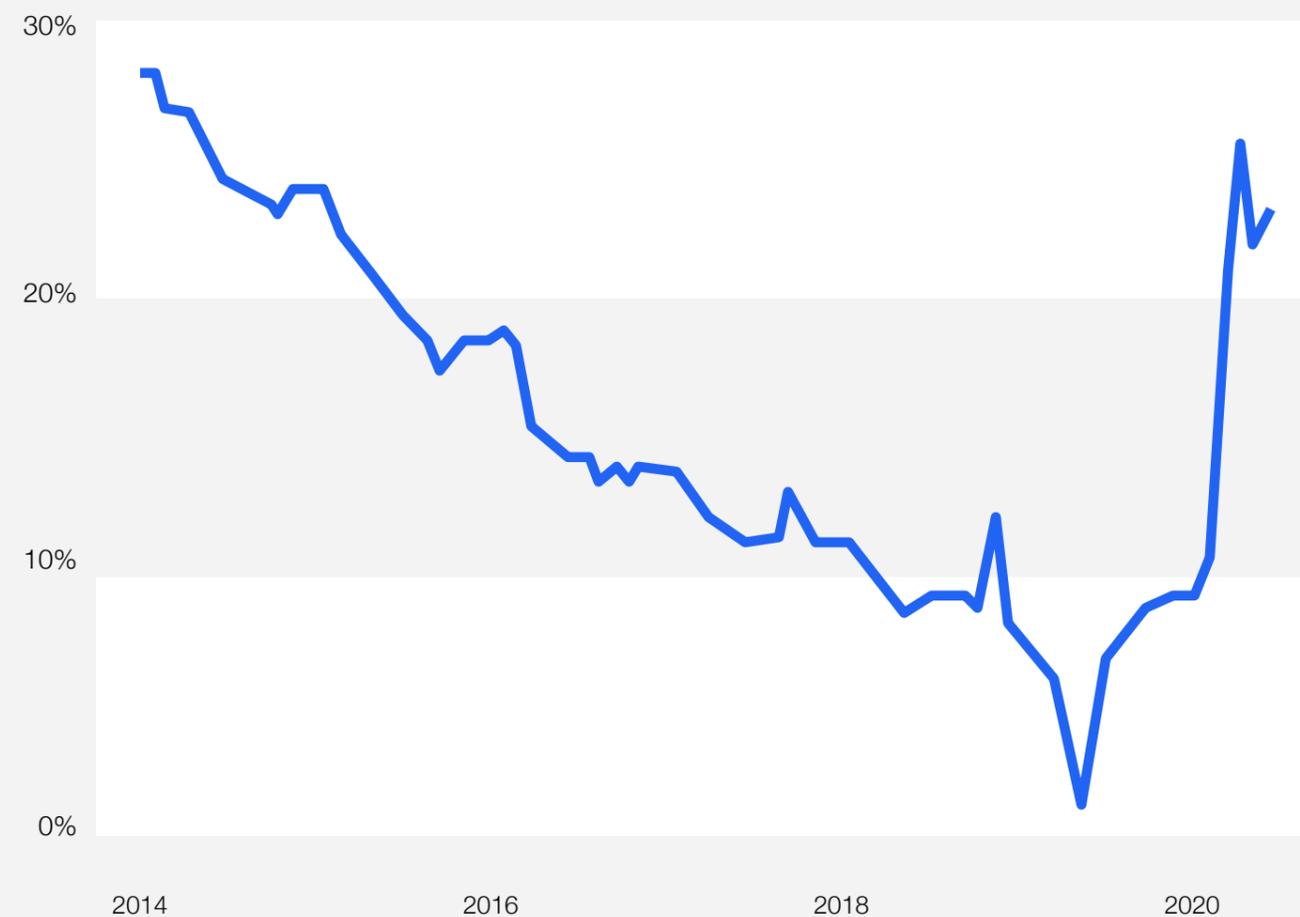
During the COVID-19 crisis, the mix of job opportunities has changed at an extraordinarily fast pace because of sharp shifts in demand for new workers. To quantify changes in demand, we use a measure called a job dissimilarity index, which gauges how much the mix of job titles has shifted compared with a fixed point in the past. The job dissimilarity index was

**The mix of job postings changed faster from June 2019 to June 2020 than it had in the previous four years.**

before. The mix of job postings changed faster from June 2019 to June 2020 than it had in the previous four years. As we show below, these changes coincided with a significant shift in how people search for jobs.

23% in June 2020, using June 2019 as a baseline. That means 23% of current job titles would need to be different in June 2020 for the mix of job postings to be the same as it was a year

The mix of job opportunities has changed rapidly during the crisis  
**Share of job titles that would need to change for the job postings mix to be the same as in June 2019**



Source: Indeed

## Part 2:

# How has jobseeker behaviour changed?

**People are shifting their searches toward sectors they believe offer more opportunities, which often means they are looking outside their current occupations.**

jobseeker responses to the labour market crisis: Overall, people are shifting their searches toward sectors they believe offer more opportunities, which often means they are looking outside their current occupations. This trend is especially pronounced in parts of the UK where competition for jobs is highest.

The changes in posted job opportunities are paralleled by significant shifts in the mix of jobseekers and the job postings they click on. People in low-paid occupations represent a growing proportion of job searches, suggesting that the segment of the workforce hit **hardest by the crisis** needs work the most. Several trends are evident in



## 2.a Job search carries on

The mix of jobseekers and the nature and pace of their job searches are changing as the crisis wears on. The initial stage of the lockdown was particularly difficult for job hunting. Nevertheless, search activity continued and is currently at a high volume. Indeed's UK site had 42 million visits in June and Indeed's CV database currently shows 1.5 million CVs uploaded or updated in the past three months, more than the latest official number of unemployed people. Not all UK jobseekers have an up-to-date CV on Indeed, but these numbers demonstrate that people want jobs. This activity could be driven by the reopening of the economy and [rising mobility](#), which makes it easier for people to look for work. It could also reflect the approaching tapering of the support schemes for employees and self-employed people, a group due to receive final payments in August.

## 2.b Low-wage earners disproportionately resuming job search

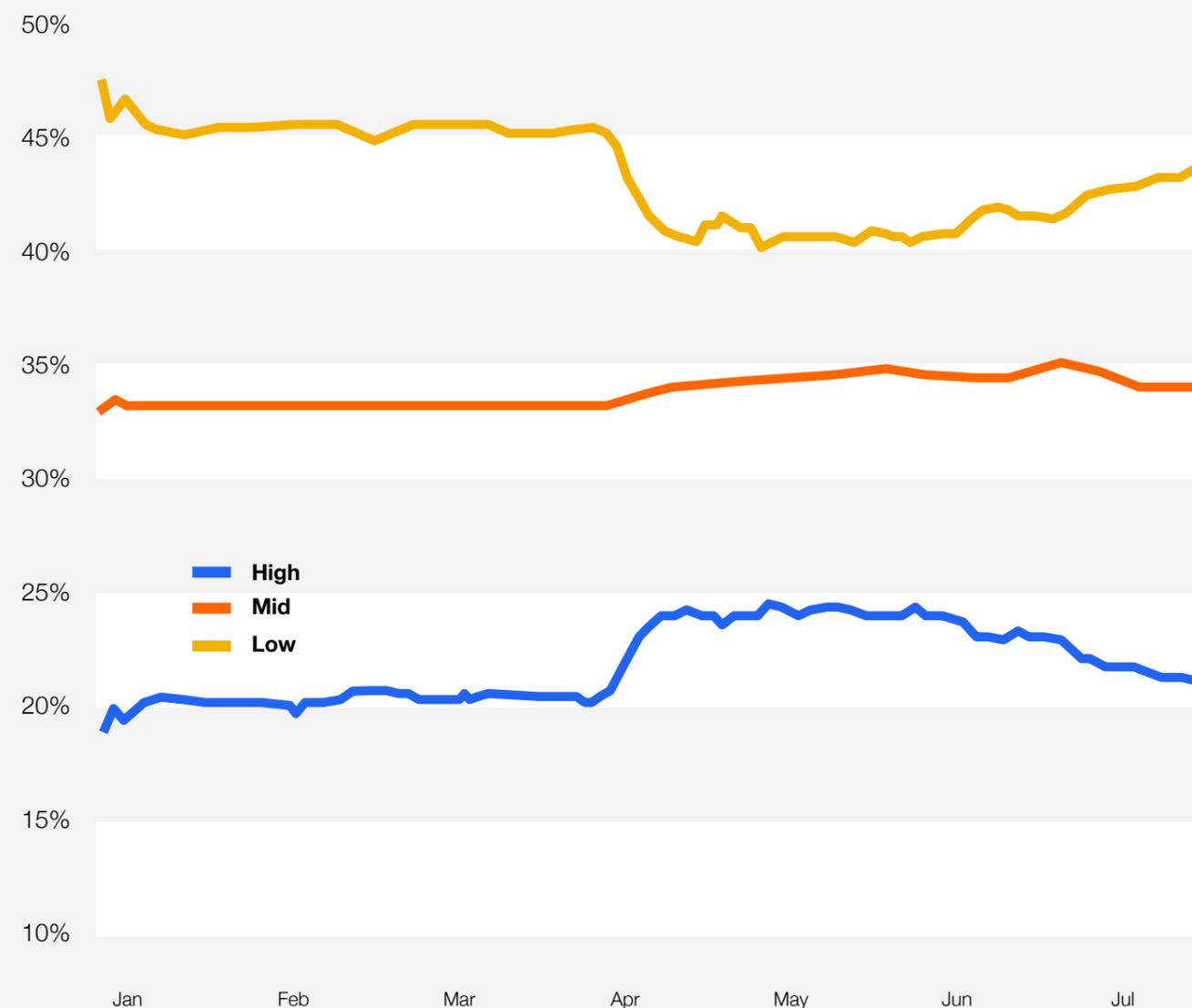
**Jobseekers in low-paid occupations are disproportionately resuming job search. In some cases, this may reflect diminishing prospects of returning from furlough.**

at some point. In recent weeks, this group's share has started to recover, suggesting jobseekers in low-paid occupations are disproportionately resuming job search. In some cases, this may reflect diminishing prospects of returning from furlough.

Different groups of workers are coming back to the labour market at varying rates, which can be seen by breaking jobseekers down into low-, medium- and high-wage occupations. At the start of the crisis, the share of overall searches by jobseekers in the lowest wage tier dropped, perhaps because they were more likely to be furloughed and might be returning to their jobs

### Search by lower earners dipped but is recovering

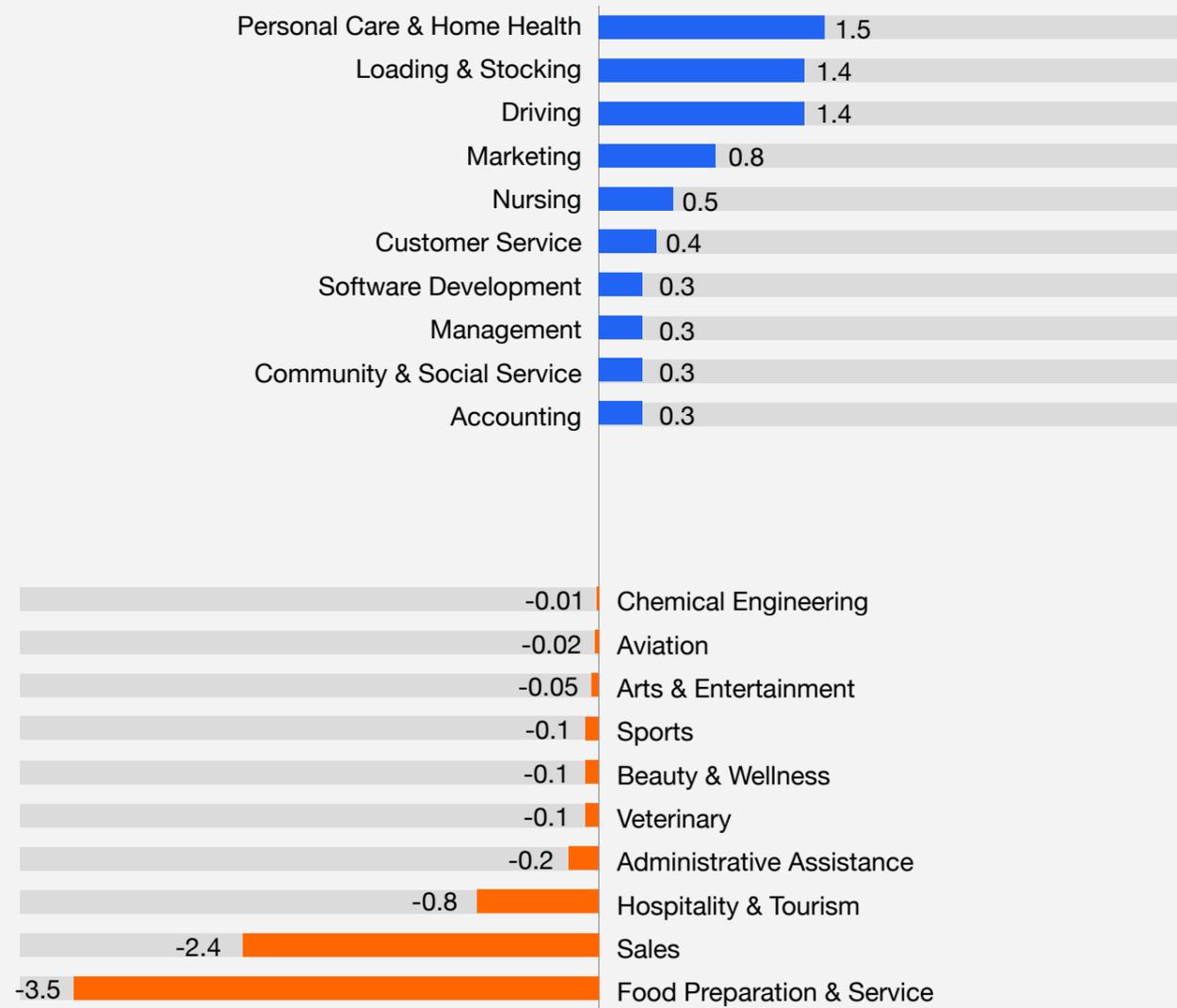
Share of searches by salary tier of last occupation



Source: Indeed

## Jobseeker interest is also changing

### Change in share of clicks (ppts), June 2020 vs June 2019



Source: Indeed.

## 2.c The mix of jobseeker interests has shifted

How often jobseekers click on jobs that appear in Indeed search results is a good indicator of their interest in different types of work and is highly correlated with applications. Examining the occupations people are more likely to click on now than in the past shows that the kinds of jobs people are interested in has changed substantially during the crisis.

**The rise in clicks on some occupations may reflect jobseeker perceptions of where opportunities can be found in this difficult market.**

The shift in clicks toward some occupations may reflect jobseeker perceptions of where opportunities can be found in this difficult market. One piece of evidence is that searches for jobs in sectors that came back in the past two months rose in anticipation of reopening. For example, searches for keywords and phrases like 'barista', 'café'

and 'car sales executive' climbed in late May and early June as those businesses opened their doors. Then, in anticipation of the reopening of pubs, restaurants and cinemas in early July, the fastest-rising job search terms in late June included keywords and phrases like 'bar staff', 'waiter', 'restaurant', 'cinema' and 'hospitality'. [Jobseekers also reacted](#) to job notices by large retail and food and drink chains, such as Primark, B&Q and Subway, as soon as they announced they were reopening.

## 2.d Jobseekers are searching outside their occupations

The rise in jobseeker interest in some roles may also reflect a belief that they must consider switching occupations. Workers in particularly hard-hit sectors, like food preparation and service, beauty and wellness and hospitality and tourism, have reacted to the scarcity of opportunities in their fields by looking at jobs in other sectors. Indeed data show these sectors have registered the biggest increases in one particularly telling measure: out-click rates to jobs in categories other than jobseekers' current occupations, based on the most recent job titles listed on their CVs.

**Workers in particularly hard-hit sectors like food preparation and service, beauty and wellness and hospitality and tourism, have reacted to the dearth of opportunities in their current fields by looking at jobs in other sectors.**

At the other end of the scale, healthcare and supply chain occupations have experienced some of the largest decreases in out-click rates, indicating that these essential workers have been looking more within their current fields than they were a year ago.

Workers in hard-hit sectors looking further afield

### Top 10 categories with the biggest increases/decreases in out-click rates June 2020 vs June 2019

<b>Biggest increases</b>	2020 share (%)	Chg 2020 v 2019 (ppts)
<b>Occupation</b>		
Food Preparation & Service	86.9	+14.7
Beauty & Wellness	95.9	+7.5
Hospitality & Tourism	96.4	+6.8
Administrative Assistance	71.5	+6.4
Sales	84.9	+5.8
Construction	71.5	+5.4
Arts & Entertainment	93.4	+3.1
Human Resources	74.4	+2.9
Installation & Maintenance	77.3	+2.9
Media & Communications	82.0	+2.5

<b>Biggest decreases</b>	2020 share (%)	Chg 2020 v 2019 (ppts)
<b>Occupation</b>		
Community & Social Service	92.9	-0.3
Customer Service	84.4	-1.1
Cleaning & Sanitation	56.3	-2.3
Information Design & Documentation	71.9	-3.1
Driving	49.7	-3.2
Nursing	85.0	-3.5
Loading & Stocking	69.1	-4.3
Security & Public Safety	64.9	-5.3
Marketing	63.0	-6.1
Personal Care & Home Health	66.2	-9.3

Source: Indeed.

## 2.e The positions jobseekers search for outside their current fields

When people look for work outside their current sector, there is little variation in the types of jobs they click on despite differences in their skills, experience and interests. Jobs such as cleaning, retail, customer service and distribution have become increasingly important for jobseekers in fields as diverse as arts and entertainment, food preparation and service and beauty and wellness.

It's probable that many of these searches focus on occupations without high barriers to entry, such as lengthy training periods or extensive qualification requirements. Searches in low-barrier fields may stem from a sense of urgency to find work, which in a tough labour market may trump long-term career planning. These searches indicate people exploring job opportunities have become highly flexible in today's challenging environment.

**When people look for work outside their current sector, there is little variation in the types of jobs they click on despite differences in their skills, experience and interests.**

Top 5 job categories by increase in click share from **Arts & Entertainment** workers

Job title	Share June 2020 (%)	Chg since June 2019 (ppts)
Driving	4.7	+3.1
Loading & Stocking	5.0	+2.8
Personal Care & Home Health	4.2	+2.7
Customer Service	7.2	+1.8
Cleaning & Sanitation	3.5	+0.9

Top 5 job categories by increase in click share from **Food Prep & Service** workers

Job title	Share June 2020 (%)	Chg since June 2019 (ppts)
Loading & Stocking	9.0	+4.9
Personal Care & Home Health	6.7	+4.1
Cleaning & Sanitation	9.1	+2.9
Driving	4.7	+2.6
Customer Service	9.3	+1.7

Top 5 job categories by increase in click share from **Beauty & Wellness** workers

Job title	Share June 2020 (%)	Chg since June 2019 (ppts)
Personal Care & Home Health	9.6	+5.6
Loading & Stocking	7.0	+5.0
Driving	4.8	+3.8
Cleaning & Sanitation	9.5	+3.1
Customer Service	10.3	+2.9

## 2.f Jobseekers are casting a wider net

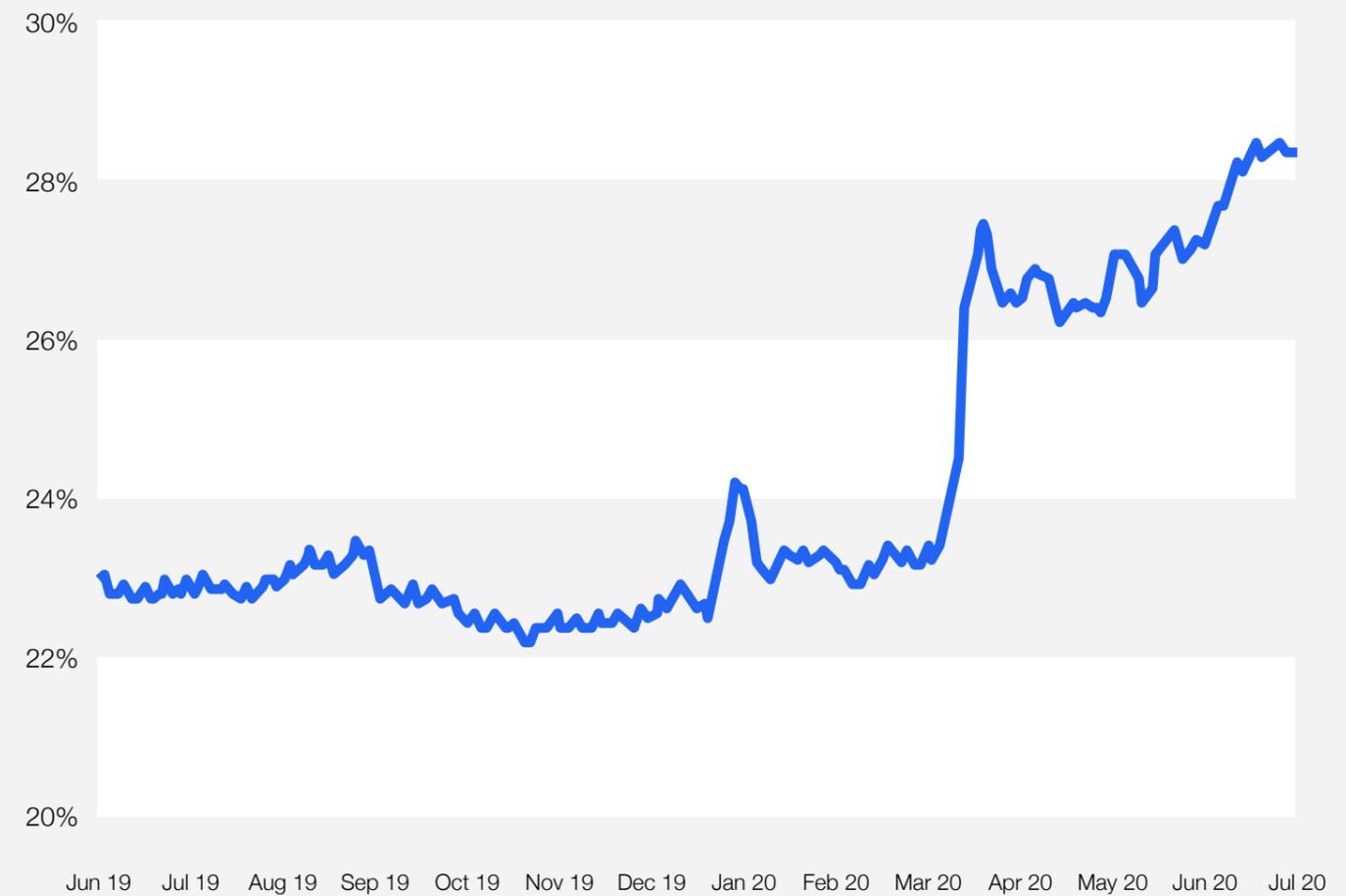
A popular way to search on Indeed is to specify a location in the ‘where?’ box and leave the ‘what?’ box blank — what might be called the ‘I’ll take anything’ approach to finding work. Jobseeker interviews before the crisis suggest these searches are a way to explore what’s out there before narrowing the job hunt. Since the crisis hit, blank searches have become more common, rising five percentage points to 28% over the year ending June 2020, with most of the increase occurring in March.

**Since the crisis hit, blank searches have become more common, rising five percentage points to 28% over the year ending June 2020, with most of the increase occurring in March.**

Recent Indeed research in collaboration with the Centre for Cities found that jobseekers tend to be less focused in their searches in places where jobs are harder to

come by. In the top quarter of cities with the largest number of jobseekers per job posting, 34% of searches were blank in June compared with 29% in the bottom quarter of cities with the least competition for jobs. At the extremes, only 18% of London searches were blank in June compared with 54% in Dundee. These differences across cities do not appear to be driven purely by city size and are consistent with other evidence presented here indicating jobseekers are casting a wider net as job opportunities dry up.

Share of searches with “What” box left blank (%)  
7-day moving average



Source: Indeed

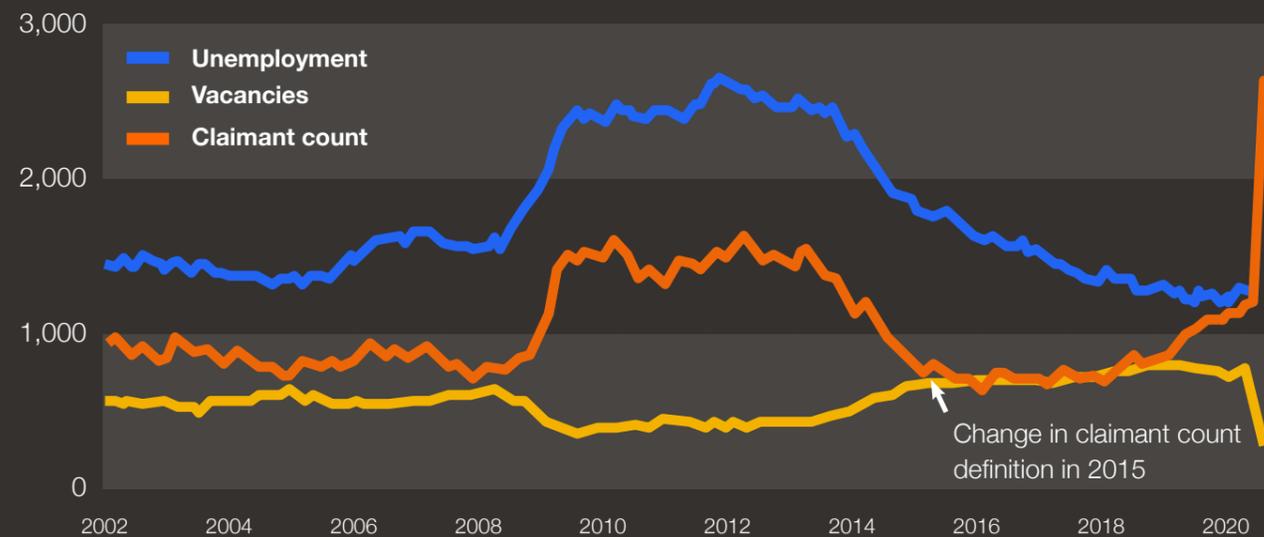
## Part 3: A jigsaw where the pieces don't fit together

**With vacancies down, benefit claimants up and a slew of companies announcing redundancies, the UK is on the verge of an unemployment crisis.**

Due to the unique nature of the COVID-19 crisis, official labour market data currently tell a confusing story (Resolution Foundation has produced a useful [explainer](#)). One thing is clear though. With vacancies down, benefit claimants up and a slew of companies announcing

redundancies, the UK is on the verge of an unemployment crisis. Overall, the number of candidates for each position has jumped sharply, meaning it has become easier to hire and harder to find a job. This marks a complete turnaround from conditions before the crisis, when the labour market was the tightest in living memory.

Fewer opportunities available for those who need them  
**Unemployment, claimant count and vacancies, 2002-2020**



Source: ONS



### 3.a Most competitive sectors

Within the overall pattern of labour market weakness, there are differences across sectors. Some have become a lot more competitive for jobseekers, while others still face a shortage of candidates. This is in part because both the mix of jobs and the mix of jobseekers and their interests have changed quickly and substantially.

**High unemployment doesn't mean it's any easier for the NHS to hire nurses or for schools to hire teachers.**

Exploring which jobs have the most clicks per posting and which have the fewest shows the range of competition in

the labour market. High unemployment doesn't mean it's any easier for the NHS to hire nurses or for schools to hire teachers. These jobs get the fewest clicks per posting and are as hard to fill as before the crisis. Many health-related roles saw decreases in candidate interest relative to demand for staff. Conversely, roles with low qualification requirements in sectors such as hospitality, restaurants, customer service and administration already had high levels of clicks per posting and are now even more competitive.

### Jobseekers are flocking to customer-facing jobs Labour market tightness index (Clicks share / posting share, June 2020)

#### Biggest increase in candidates per job posting

Rank	Occupation	Index	Annual change
1	Hospitality & Tourism	4.07	1.34
2	Food Preparation & Service	1.68	0.88
3	Customer Service	2.85	0.73
4	Administrative Assistance	2.11	0.61
5	Construction	1.41	0.57
6	Driving	1.56	0.57
7	Media & Communications	2.62	0.57
8	Marketing	1.51	0.46
9	Production & Manufacturing	1.86	0.43
10	Sports	2.24	0.43

#### Biggest decrease in candidates per job posting

Rank	Occupation	Index	Annual change
1	Veterinary	1.79	-0.86
2	Social Science	2.69	-0.70
3	Medical Technician	0.96	-0.69
4	Pharmacy	0.85	-0.68
5	Medical Information	1.67	-0.56
6	Community & Social Service	1.17	-0.53
7	Real Estate	1.22	-0.42
8	Arts & Entertainment	1.54	-0.40
9	Logistic Support	2.01	-0.19
10	Therapy	0.43	-0.17

Source: Indeed. Occupations with at least 250 postings

### 3.b Mismatch between jobseekers and available roles has grown

Individuals and businesses experience this challenging labour market differently depending on their circumstances. Those experiences are coloured by rapid changes in the mix of jobs and, to a lesser extent, the mix of jobseekers and their interests. Jobs and jobseekers have shifted in different directions — meaning that the interests of jobseekers are less well matched with available jobs than they were before the crisis. The shift is substantial. The evidence is that the mismatch between jobseekers and job opportunities changed more in the past three months than it did in the previous five years.

#### Mismatch between jobseekers and job opportunities changed more in the past three months than it did in the previous five years.

That is not to suggest that, if people and jobs were better matched, an unemployment crisis could be averted. Vacancies simply aren't sufficient to absorb all the slack in the labour market over the coming months, including people who may not have jobs to go back to when the furlough scheme ends, workers made redundant and new workforce entrants. But the wider gap between jobseekers' interests and available jobs creates a need to inform both workers and employers about which sectors are most competitive and which sectors offer the best opportunities so they can plan accordingly.

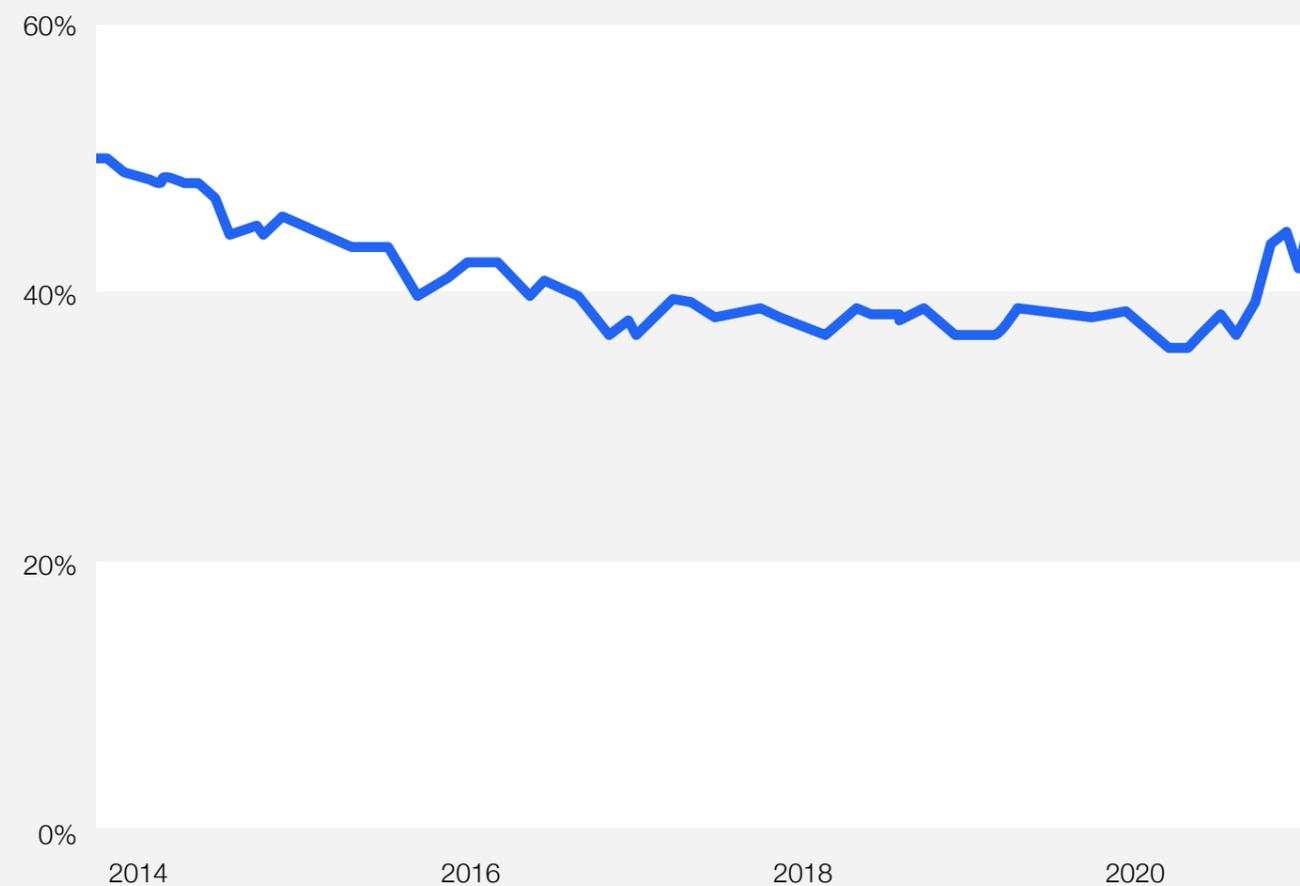
In a recession, mismatches between jobseekers and job opportunities commonly increase because different sectors are typically affected differently by downturns. What distinguishes this crisis is the marked rapidity of the change. The gains made over the past several years when the labour market was tightening have evaporated in just a few months.

We don't know how long it will take to rebound from this shock, but there are reasons why it might be easier than the recovery from the financial crisis a decade ago. First, hiring in shuttered sectors may restart as businesses reopen. Second, people looking for work may adapt as the lockdown eases. Shifting job search patterns on Indeed show that jobseekers are moving from areas where there are few opportunities, such as hospitality, to others where job vacancies exist.

At the same time though, this recovery may be harder than the previous one. Such factors as ongoing restrictions, shifts in demand for goods and services, and the financial weakness of many businesses could slow recovery. So far, the pick-up in activity at non-essential businesses in retail, construction and elsewhere has not prompted massive hiring increases, in part because employers are more likely to bring people back from furlough rather than hire from the ranks of the unemployed. And the great uncertainty produced by COVID-19 means employers aren't hiring for growth.

Mismatch between jobseekers and jobs has risen sharply

#### UK labour market mismatch index (Indeed postings and click data), 2014-2020



Source: Indeed

## Part 4:

# Key takeaways for employers, jobseekers and policymakers

This has been a period of compressed change. Job opportunities still exist, but there are fewer of them and more people are competing for them. People from shuttered sectors are increasingly looking for jobs outside their fields, even though they may lack required qualifications and experience. As a result, some jobs have become significantly more competitive. At the same time, others remain hard to fill. Jobs at the bottom of the pay scale are hardest to find — and that's bad news for low earners.

What needs to be done to match people with jobs in the period ahead? We focus on key takeaways for employers, jobseekers and policymakers.

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### 4.a For employers

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Generally, there are lots of unemployed people for each vacancy, but the situation varies considerably by sector. Many organisations are cutting back hiring plans, and that makes it all the more important to ensure that those who are brought on are good fits.

- **Some employers will be overwhelmed with applicants.** To manage this, they will need to adapt recruitment processes, make greater use of online tools to handle high volumes and avoid the temptation to hire overqualified candidates who may leave when the economy picks up.
- **Others will still struggle to hire.** These employers should consider tapping into new talent pools, including career switchers, remote workers and demographic groups that get hit disproportionately in economic downturns. Some attractive candidates previously drawn to other sectors may now be available. Becoming more competitive in compensation, benefits and protection against health risks can also be important for employers in sectors that struggle to hire like health and social care.
- **Organisations able to hire for growth have an opportunity to secure talent.** To capitalise, these employers should maximise their visibility, focus on strong branding and showcase their organisations' strengths.

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## 4.b For jobseekers

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Many people won't be able to quickly go back to the work they were doing before the pandemic. For these jobseekers, the environment is tough because the number of available positions is very low compared with the number of those who need a job or will need one in the near future. But there are practical steps jobseekers can take to improve their prospects.

- **Stress transferable skills.** Use all available resources, including JobCentre advice and online tools, to identify occupations that require similar skills. For example, candidates with customer-facing backgrounds who have strong interpersonal skills may be good fits for care work.
- **Use the downturn to re-/upskill.** For many people, a downturn is a good time to acquire marketable skills. The most useful skills to get now are those required in jobs that are still hard to fill, that can be performed remotely or are resilient in recessions. Training may not guarantee a job right away, but it positions people well for the future. And with jobs scarcer now, there is less to lose from taking time off for training. But taking time out for education or training is still a financial burden, making it important for local and national governments to fund training opportunities.
- **Look for remote work opportunities.** Working from home isn't always possible, but such arrangements are becoming increasingly common. Indeed UK job postings noting remote work options have more than doubled to almost 5% of all notices since before the pandemic. Jobseekers who qualify for jobs that can be done remotely may be able to widen the geographic range of their search.

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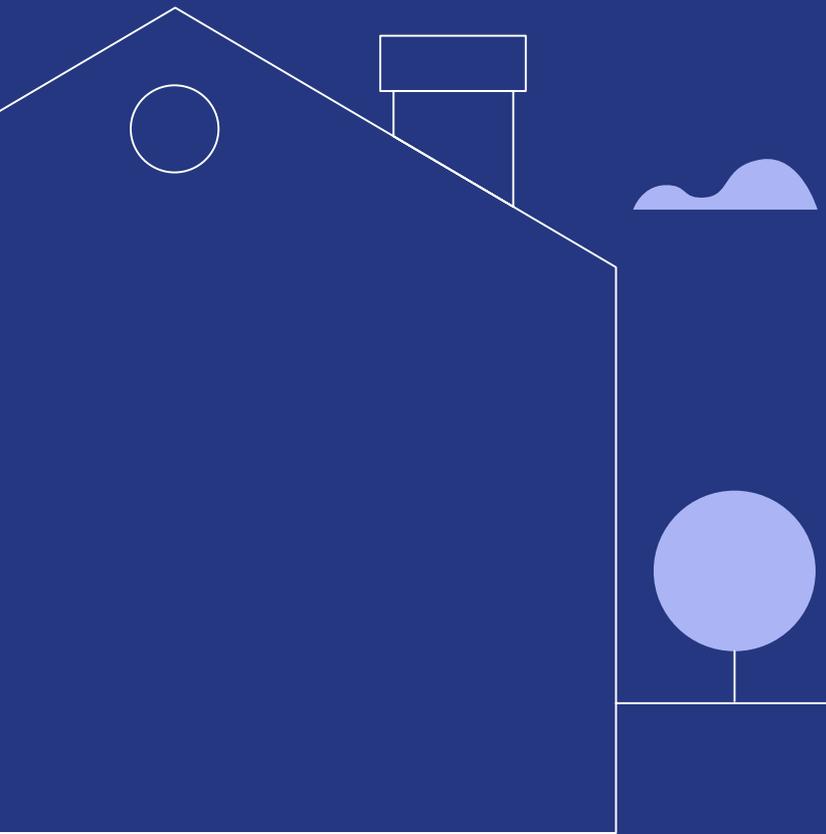
## 4.c For policymakers

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Policy needs to address the sudden dislocation of the labour market, in addition to stimulating output and creating jobs.

- **Information and training.** The shifts in the mixes of job opportunities and jobseekers puts a premium on training. But with businesses facing a squeeze on costs, fewer employers will be able or willing to invest in workforce preparation. It's unclear whether today's labour force changes are permanent. But, in the short-to-medium term, government should work to mitigate some of the effects. To help smooth transitions of displaced workers into new occupations, funding training and offering practical information for navigating the job market will be invaluable. In particular, policy should address the digital divide by ensuring that certain groups get support to improve basic digital access and skills so they can search and apply for jobs effectively.
- **Migration policy.** Despite rising unemployment, some vacancies in sectors such as healthcare and tech are still difficult to fill. It isn't significantly easier now to hire teachers or nurses than it was a year ago. Post-Brexit migration policy must take this into account. Employers must be able to access the global talent pool for jobs with specialised qualifications.
- **Analytics.** The UK needs data and analytics based on occupational switching patterns to match people and jobs. For example, click pattern data could help JobCentres direct people toward positions they have shown an interest in and are qualified for. This will be important when the labour market starts to recover, especially if some of the sectoral shifts in demand for workers are long-lasting.

The labour market has suffered an acute shock and is about to be eased off life support. As state support is unwound, the UK appears to be headed into a downturn in which demand for labour will be weak. Nevertheless, we can take steps to make the best of this difficult situation. Doing a better job of matching jobseekers with the work that is available should be part of our strategy for navigating the brewing storm and the future recovery.



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