DRC Search

Market Insights Update: London

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Who We Are

AboutDRC Search
DRC Search is the executive search division of The Digital Recruitment Company, specialising in senior management andC-suite appointments.We partnerwith high-growth, investor-backed and transformation-focused businesses, helping them attract and retain leadership talent that drives growth.

Our Specialisms:

- All C-Suite & Leadership Roles: NED, Board Advisory, Chief Data, Chief Marketing, Chief Digital, Chief Information, Chief Technology, Chief Revenue, etc
- Non-Executive & Advisory Appointments: Access to our **exclusive NED Library**for board, growth, M&A and scale-up expertise.

Geographic Coverage:UK, East Coast US, and major European tech hubs.

About The Digital Recruitment Company
The Digital Recruitment Company was founded in London in 2010 and has become a leading provider of global recruitment solutions across the Technology, Marketing, Product, Data and Creative sectors.

The team focuses on mid-level to senior hires, providing permanent, freelance and fixed-term recruitment, as well as payroll management and market insight consulting.

What We Do

We work across the Technology, Marketing, Product & Data Sector in both the UK, Europe & USA. We aim to create long-lasting partnerships with our clients.

We work across the following specialisms:

Client Services, Sales, AI, Creative Software, Developers, Engineers, Data & Analytics, Executive Appointments, Innovation & Service Design, Insight & Research, CRM, Strategy, Tech & UX. Marketing, Media Planning & Buying, Performance Media, Project Management / Product Management.

We supply permanent hires, executive search, freelance & fixed term contracts and payroll management services.

Our Service

With our clients we work along side them not to only recruit but to consult on the currentmarket, howbest to structure, hireand retainnewMarketing,Creative, Technology, Sales, Digital & Data & Insights divisions.

Our service is split into two distinct services:

Initial consulting - a scoping of your requirements and a follow up document putting forward our recommendations on market insights, department structure, salaries, packages etc - this is completely free of charge and does not come with any obligation to use us for the hiring.

Recruitment & Retention – delivery of a recruitment strategy and hiring plan to identify, attractand retain theideal talent foryourorganisationalcultureandgoals. Our fee structure is based upon the scale of any project.

our purpose is to strengthen the target market so that the business will grow

Introduction

London has always been one of the main drivers of the UK economy, and the latest Vacancysoft data shows that the capital continues to perform strongly, even as the wider labour market becomes more cautious. Employers may be taking a more selective approach to hiring, but London's strength across financial services, technology and professional services continues to create demand for highly skilled professionals.

However, market growth does not automatically make hiring easier. Demand is increasing for people with specialist expertise in areas such as artificial intelligence, digital transformation and cybersecurity. As competition for this talent grows, businesses need to take a more strategic approach to workforce planning, recruitment and the development of their existing teams.

This report, produced in partnership with Vacancysoft, looks at how London's labour market is changing and highlights the sectors, roles and employers driving recruitment activity. We hope it provides useful insight for recruitment firms, employers and policymakers as they make decisions around hiring, investment and the future development of London's professional workforce.

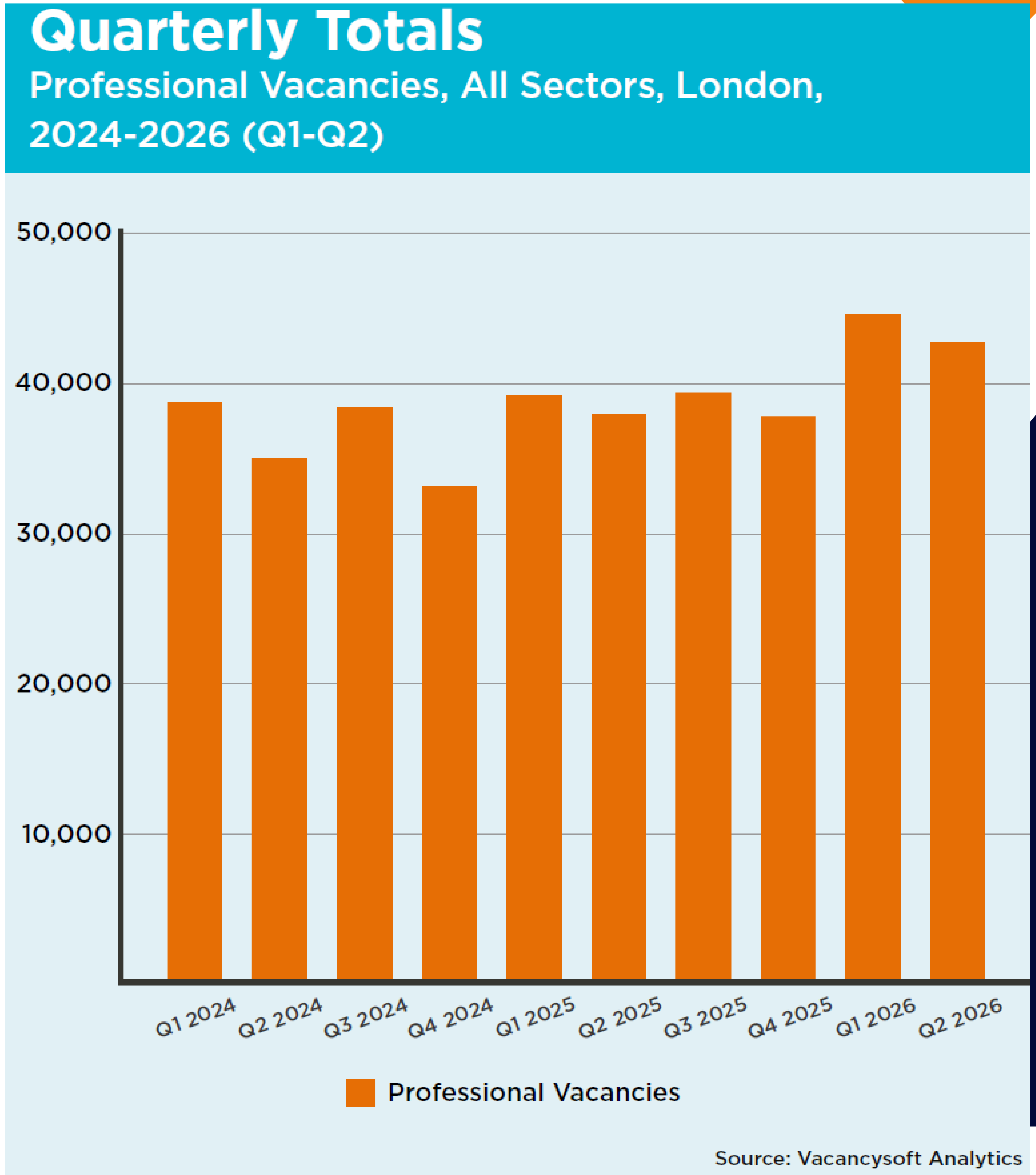
Overview

While the Office for National Statistics (ONS) continues to report a cooling UK labour market, London remains a notable exception. Professional vacancies in the capital are forecast to increase by 13.5% in 2026, significantly outperforming the rest of the country. Unlike many regional economies, London's labour market is heavily concentrated in financial services, technology and professional services, sectors that have continued to attract investment despite broader economic uncertainty. This concentration has enabled the capital to sustain recruitment activity while many employers elsewhere remain cautious.

Hiring trends throughout the first half of 2026 reinforce this resilience. Professional vacancies increased by 14.2% between February and March, making March the strongest recruitment month of the year, while January recorded the weakest hiring activity following a subdued start to the year. This recovery reflects renewed business confidence as organisations restart projects that were delayed during 2025 and continue investing in areas such as digital transformation, financial technology and business services. Although hiring remains selective, employers are increasingly prioritising specialist skills that support long-term growth and productivity.

Outside London, professional vacancies are forecast to increase by a more modest 3.9% during 2026. While this represents positive growth, the wider UK labour market continues to moderate, with the ONS reporting a slight decline in overall national vacancies. The difference eflects contrasting regional investment patterns. London continues to benefit from sustained recruitment across banking, financial services and technology, while many regional employers remain more cautious as higher operating costs and economic uncertainty continue to influence expansion plans.

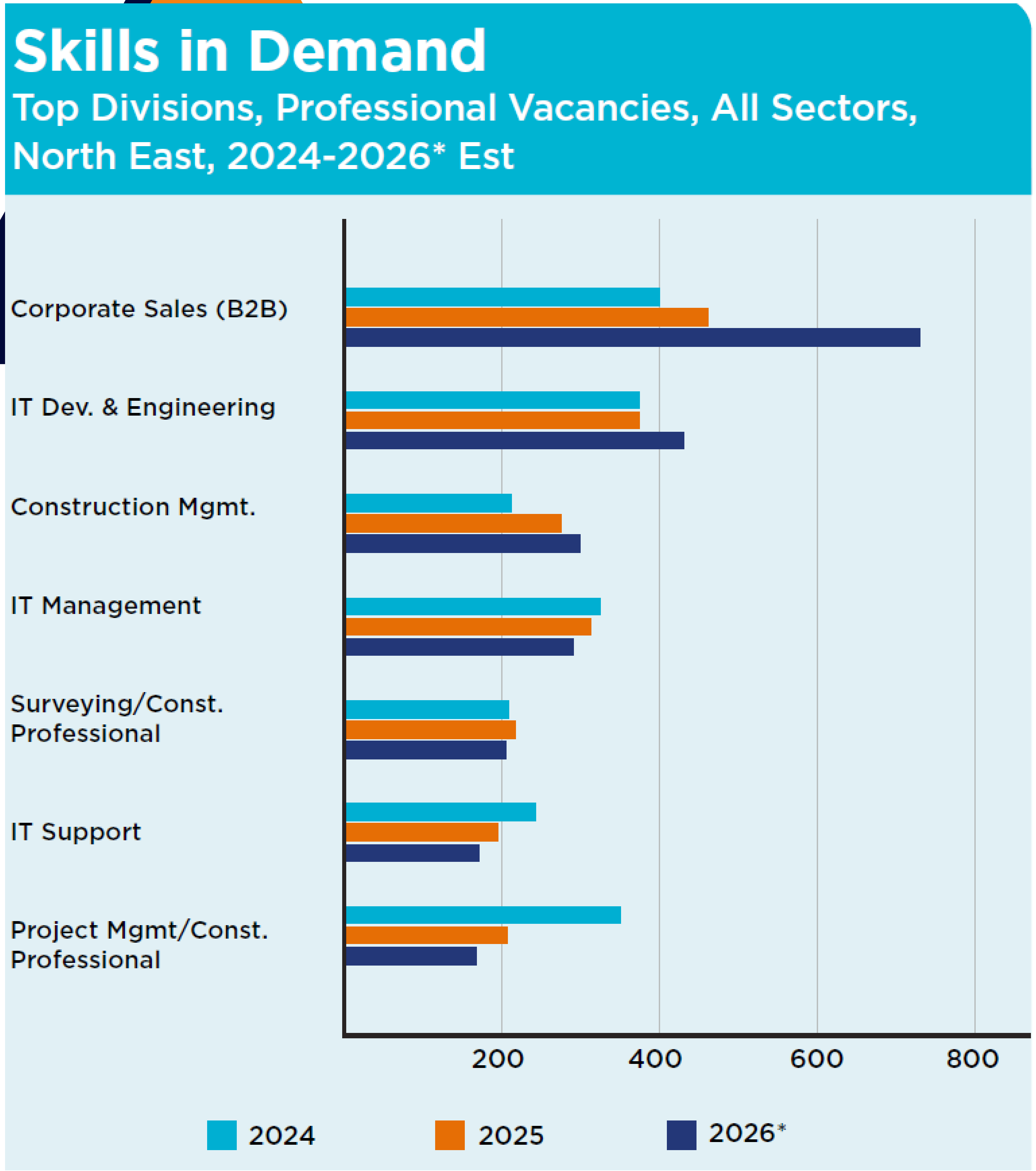
Structural skills shortages are also contributing to London's stronger performance. According to the Confederation of British Industry (CBI), continued investment in banking, financial services and green infrastructure is sustaining demand for specialist talent, while shortages of AI engineers and an ageing construction workforce are extending recruitment timelines across key occupations. As a result, vacancy levels remain elevated in high-value sectors despite the broader slowdown, reinforcing London's position as the UK's strongest professional labour market.



Skills In Demand

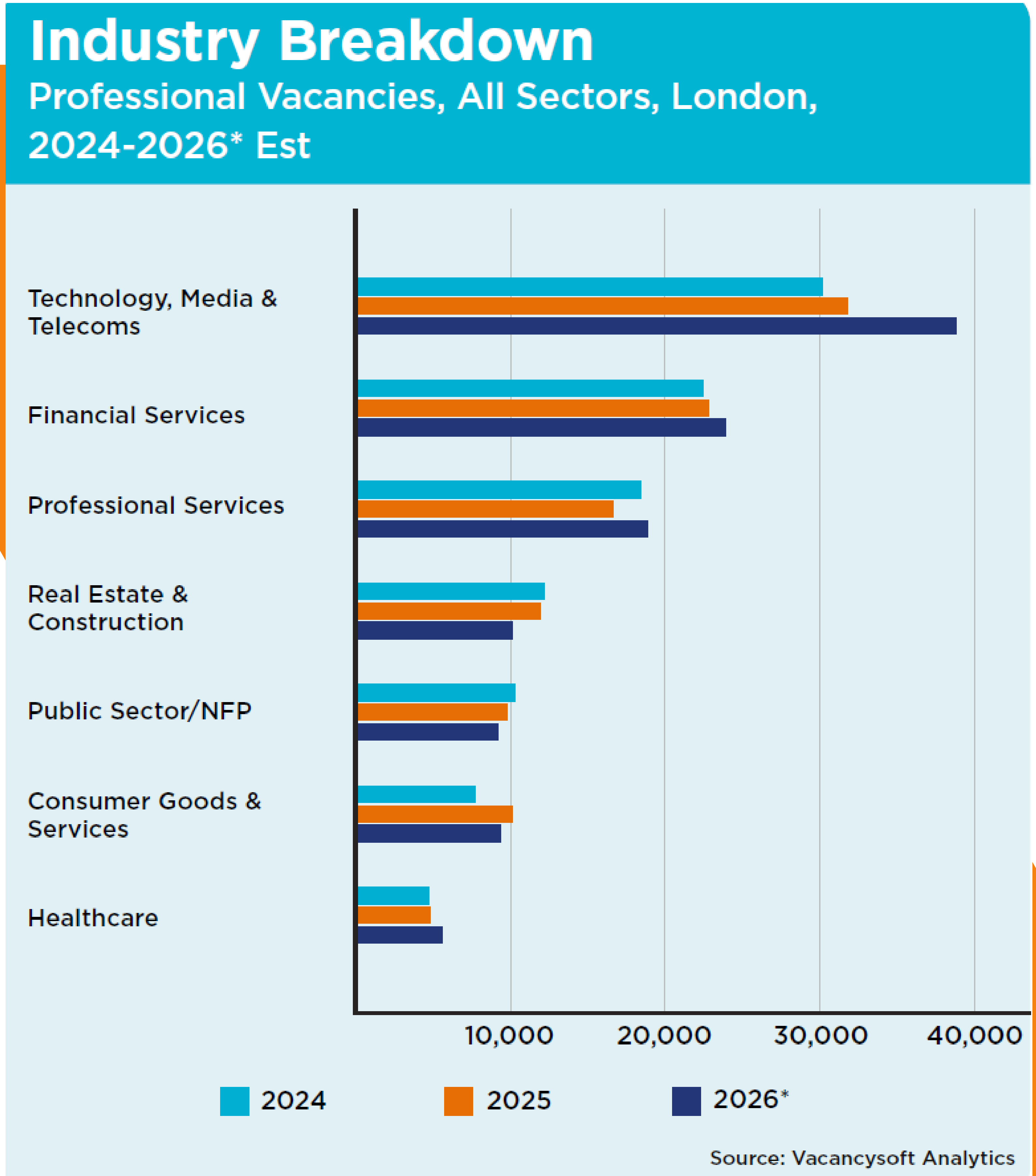
IT Professionals are forecast to remain London's largest occupational group in 2026, with vacancies increasing by 26.1%, while their share of total professional vacancies rises from 27.8% to 30.8%. Demand continues to be driven by organisations investing in digital infrastructure, cybersecurity and artificial intelligence, as businesses prioritise tecnology to improve efficiency and remain competitive. The European Commission's State of the Digital Decade highlights that shortages of ICT specialists persist despite improvements in digital skills across Europe, reinforcing continued competition for experienced technology professionals.

Within IT, the Development & Engineering division is forecast to grow by 32.4%, accounting for 30.0% of all IT Professional vacancies. Growth is being fuelled by sustained investment in software development, cloud computing and AI-enabled applications, while organisations also continue modernising legacy systems and strengthening cybersecurity capabilities. As demand increasingly centres on experienced engineers with specialist technical expertise, employers are likely to face ongoing challenges in securing skilled talent.



Sales vacancies are projected to increase by 32.5% in 2026, with their share of total vacancies rising from 7.8% to 9.1%. Rather than reflecting growth in traditional sales functions, this trend mirrors the increasing adoption of technologyled products and services across the economy. As businesses invest in AI and digital solutions to improve productivity and customer engagement, demand is rising for professionals capable of managing complex, solution-based sales processes and building long-term commercial relationships.

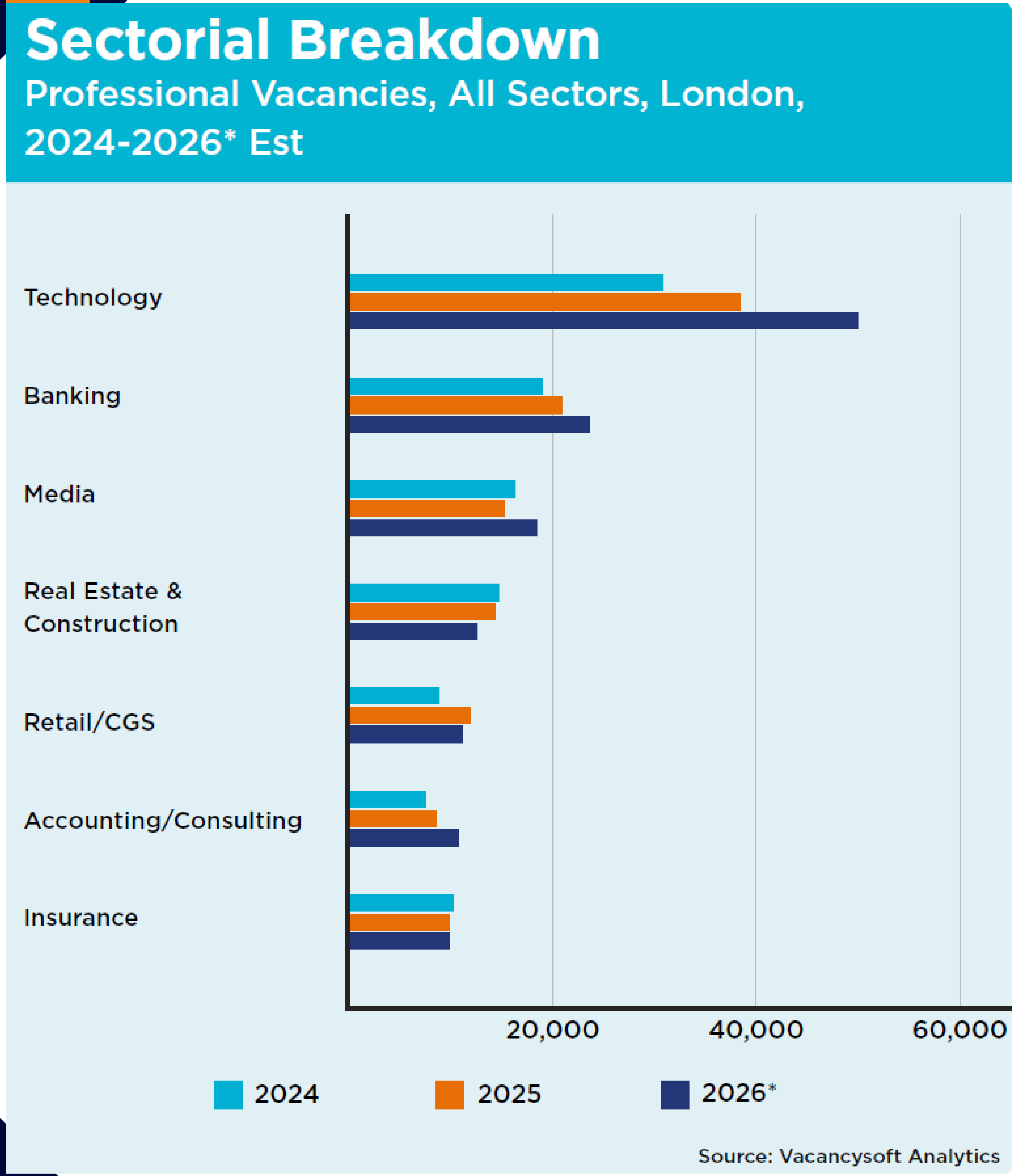
Corporate Sales (B2B) is expected to account for 91.5% of all Sales vacancies after growing by 36.6% during 2026. The division's dominant position reflects continued demand for professionals selling enterprise technology, digital platforms and business services to corporate clients. As organisations continue investing in long-term digital transformation, experienced B2B sales professionals with both commercial and technical expertise are expected to remain among London's most sought-after talent.



Industry Breakdown

Technology, Media & Telecommunications (TMT) is forecast to generate 22.3% more professional vacancies in 2026, increasing its share of total vacancies from 28.4% to 32.0%. The sector continues to benefit from sustained investment in artificial intelligence, cloud computing, digital infrastructure and telecommunications networks as organisations modernise operations and expand digital capabilities. At the same time, persistent shortages of ICT professionals across Europe are making it more difficult to fill specialist roles, helping to sustain recruitment activity despite a more cautious economic backdrop.

The Technology sector is expected to record even stronger growth, with vacancies rising by 30.0% and its share of total professional vacancies increasing from 25.0% to 28.6%. Demand is being driven by the widespread adoption of AI, cloud technologies, cybersecurity and advanced digital solutions across multiple industries rather than within the technology sector alone. As businesses continue embedding digital capabilities into dayto-day operations, employers are increasinglycompeting for experienced software engineers, cloud specialists and cybersecurity professionals.



Financial Services vacancies are forecast to increase by 4.4% during 2026. Although the sector's share of total vacancies is expected to ease slightly from 20.4% to 19.6%, this reflects faster growth in technology-led industries rather than weakening recruitment. Continued investment in digital transformation, cybersecurity and operational resilience is supporting steady hiring across technology, risk and regulatory functions as financial institutions adapt to evolving customer expectations and compliance requirements.

Banking is forecast to generate 13.1% more professional vacancies in 2026, while maintaining a stable 13.6% share of the labour market. Banks continue to invest heavily in digital banking platforms, artificial intelligence and cybersecurity to improve customer experience and strengthen operational resilience. At the same time, evolving regulatory requirements are sustaining demand across compliance, risk and technology functions, ensuring recruitment remains resilient even as hiring becomes increasingly focused on specialist, high-value roles.

Top 20 Companies

J.P. Morgan Chase & Co. is forecast to increase professional vacancies by 24.5% in 2026, supported by continued investment in technology and AI. With around US$20 billion expected to be invested in technology, demand is likely to remain strong for software engineers, AI specialists, data professionals and transformation teams. Barclays is projected to grow vacancies by 24.8% as it expands the use of AI and digital technology across customer service, operations and compliance. Hiring is expected to focus on technology, analytics and digital transformation professionals who can support the bank's long-term modernisation plans.

GroupM is forecast to increase professional vacancies by 39.4%, driven by the continued growth of AI, automation and data-led advertising. This is expected to create further demand for specialists across marketing technology, digital strategy, analytics and customer insight.

Deloitte is expected to see the strongest growth, with vacancies forecast to rise by 67.3%. Increasing demand for support across AI, cybersecurity, digital transformation and technology implementation is likely to drive continued hiring across its consulting, technology and cyber teams.

Top 20 Companies

Professional Vacancies, All Sectors, London, 2024-2026* Est

Company	Sector	2024	2025	2026*
J.P. Morgan Chase and Co	Banking	1687	2139	2664
Barclays	Banking	688	1050	1310
Publicis Groupe	Media	1431	898	1178
Group M	Media	768	842	1174
Turner & Townsend	Industrials / Engineering	3176	1258	1086
Deloitte	Accounting / Consulting	440	642	1074
AECOM	Real Estate & Construction	917	809	928
CBRE	Real Estate & Construction	477	663	830
Accenture	Accounting / Consulting	341	526	778
Wise	Technology	336	624	756
Visa	Banking	772	784	702
EY	Accounting / Consulting	515	532	692
LSEG	Banking	555	684	674
Amazon	Technology	617	814	640
Sainsburys	Retail / CGS	518	610	594
TikTok	Technology	720	557	540
JLL	Real Estate & Construction	523	586	520
Legal & General	Insurance	575	597	516
GSK	Life Sciences	554	466	472
Howden	Insurance	470	480	464

2026* - Estimation

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Thank You

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We hope you've enjoyed our Market Insight Survey. If you would like to discuss the survey or would like to work with us on your next hire or your next career move, then please get in touch.

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