



Market Insights Update: Technology Sector Overview



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Who We Are

About DRC Search

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

Our Specialisms:

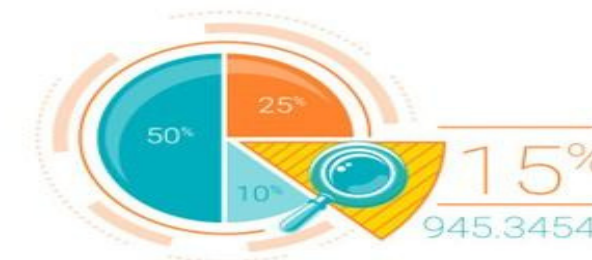
- All C-Suite & Leadership Roles: NED, Board Advisory, Chief Data, Chief Marketing, Chief Digital, Chief Information, Chief Technology, Chief Revenue, etc
- Non-Executive & Advisory Appointments: Access to our **exclusive NED Library** for board, growth, M&A and scale-up expertise.

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 current market, how best to structure, hire and retain new Marketing, 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, attract and retain the ideal talent for your organisational culture and goals. 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

The latest data shows a technology recruitment market that remains stable but is changing quickly. Overall vacancy levels are holding firm, although demand is shifting towards AI, data and cybersecurity skills that are becoming increasingly important to business growth and transformation.

It is also positive to see employers continuing to invest in permanent talent despite wider economic uncertainty. This suggests businesses are focused on building long-term digital capability rather than relying only on short-term resource.

Insight:

The continued growth in AI-related hiring should be a clear signal to employers and policymakers. The UK has a strong opportunity to build its position as a global technology leader, but this will depend on continued investment in skills, workforce development and effective talent attraction.

Recruiters will play an important role in helping businesses access the specialist expertise needed to adopt and scale emerging technologies. Progress on salary transparency is also encouraging, although further improvement is still needed. Greater openness around pay remains one of the most effective ways to attract talent in a highly competitive market.

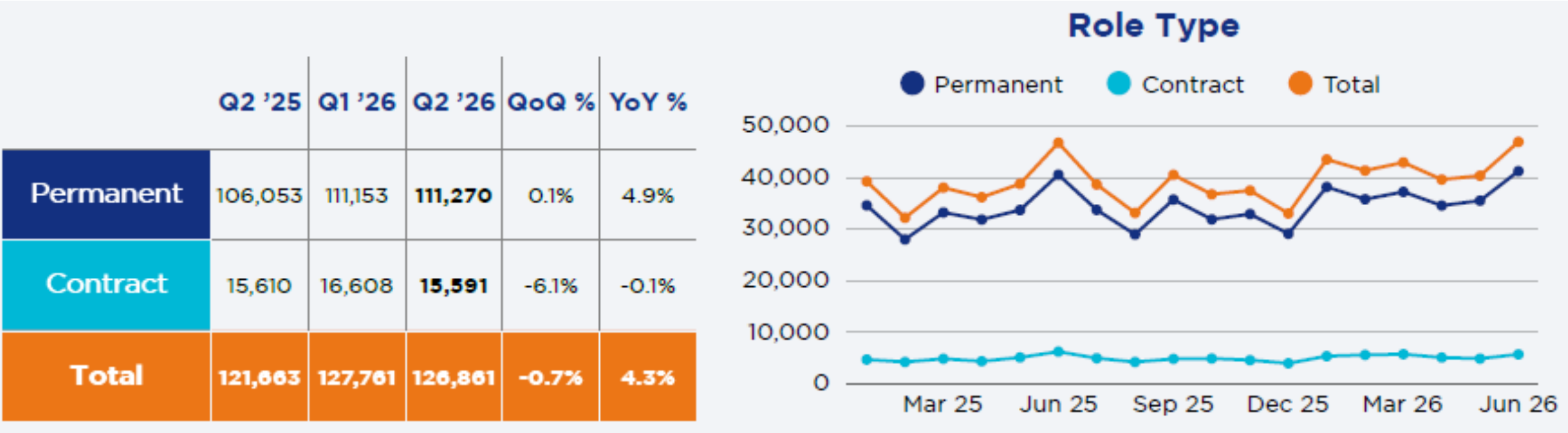
While overall vacancy growth remains modest, the data shows a clear change in employer priorities. Demand for AI skills is rising quickly, while businesses continue to favour permanent hiring over more flexible workforce models.

Permanent roles accounted for 88% of all technology vacancies in Q2, increasing by 4.9% year-on-year. Contract and temporary hiring remained broadly flat annually and fell by 6.1% compared with the previous quarter.

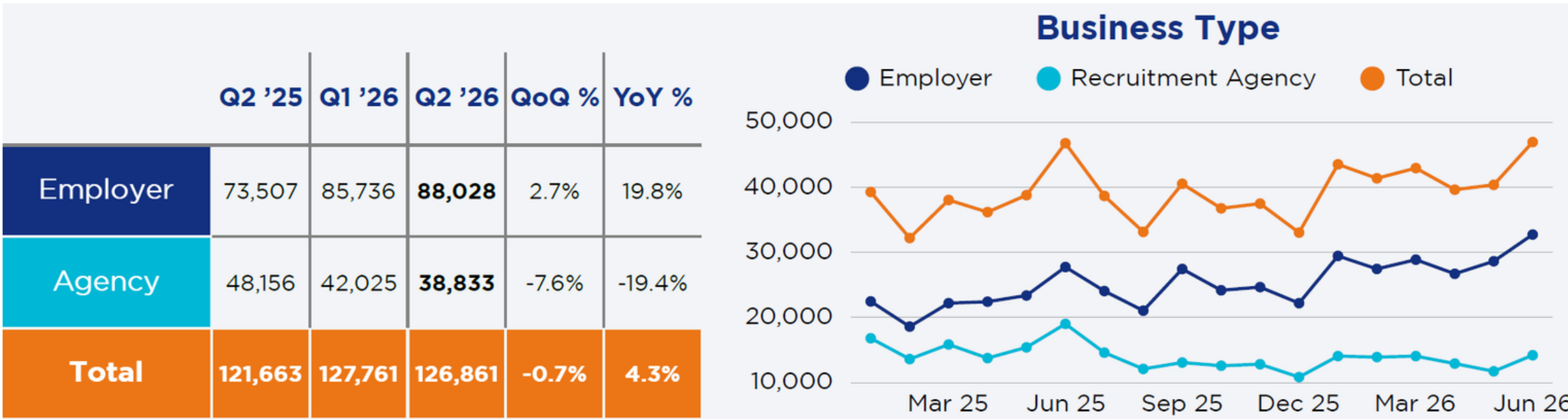
AI-related vacancies were the strongest area of growth, rising by 23.7% quarter-on-quarter and 41.8% year-on-year. AI roles now represent 4.6% of all technology vacancies, compared with 3.4% a year earlier. Demand for Artificial Intelligence Engineers increased by 74.4%, with average salaries of £78,821, the highest among the leading technology roles analysed.

Job Posting Volumes

There were 126,861 unique tech vacancies posted in Q2 2026, broadly flat quarter-on-quarter, but up 4.3% year-on-year. The market is holding steady rather than accelerating, with modest but consistent growth. Permanent roles dominate the market with an 88% share, edging up 0.1% QoQ and growing 4.9% YoY. Contract and temporary postings declined 6.1% QoQ and are flat year-on-year, suggesting employers are favouring long-term headcount over flexible resourcing in the current climate.



Direct employer postings account for 69% of all tech vacancies in Q2 2026, with recruitment agencies making up the remaining 31%. Employers grew postings 2.7% QoQ while agency volumes fell 7.6% QoQ — a signal that in-house hiring teams are becoming the dominant channel for tech talent acquisition.

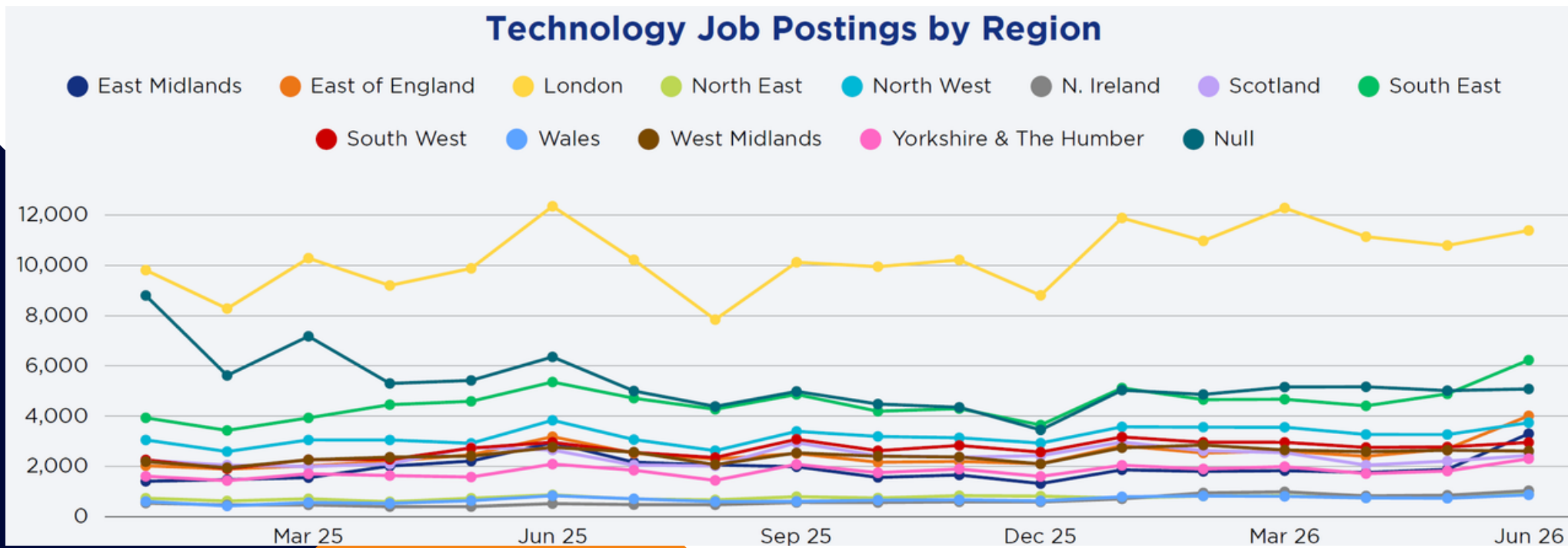


Job Posting Regional

The quarterly picture is mixed, with the East Midlands (+26.3% QoQ) and the East of England (+14.4% QoQ) recording the strongest growth momentum, while Scotland (-17.7% QoQ) and the South West (-6.7% QoQ) saw the sharpest declines. London remains the largest market at 33,312 postings but slipped –5.2% quarteron-quarter.

Year-on-year, ten of twelve regions are in growth, with Northern Ireland more than doubling its volume (+103.9% YoY). Scotland (-10.8%) and East Midlands (-3.1%) remain the only two regions in annual decline.

UK Region	Q2 '25	Q1 '26	Q2 '26	QoQ %	YoY %
East Midlands	7,179	5,503	6,953	26.3%	-3.1%
East of England	7,854	7,974	9,119	14.4%	16.1%
London	31,423	35,133	33,312	-5.2%	6.0%
North East	2,205	2,410	2,436	1.1%	10.5%
North West	9,813	10,702	10,285	-3.9%	4.8%
Northern Ireland	1,333	2,653	2,718	2.5%	103.9%
Scotland	7,521	8,151	6,705	-17.7%	-10.8%
South East	14,407	14,454	15,529	7.4%	7.8%
South West	7,974	9,094	8,489	-6.7%	6.5%
Wales	2,014	2,435	2,359	-3.1%	17.1%
West Midlands	7,547	8,248	7,845	-4.9%	3.9%
Yorkshire & The Humber	5,313	5,946	5,843	-1.7%	10.0%
NULL	17,080	15,058	15,268	1.4%	-10.6%
Total	121,663	127,761	126,861	-0.7%	4.3%



Most in Demand Job Titles

AI Engineer is the standout role in permanent hiring, up 41.8% QoQ and 74.4% YoY, reflecting sustained employer investment in AI capabilities. Data Engineer (+21% QoQ) and Database Architect (+9.3% QoQ) are among the fastest growing, while UI/UX Designer/Developer is in decline (-31.2% QoQ), pointing to a structural shift as AI-powered design tools increasingly automate work. AI Engineer leads temporary hiring too, up 26.4% QoQ and 96.3% YoY, reflecting the same sustained demand seen across permanent hiring. Data Engineer (+8.6% QoQ) and Computer Systems Engineer/Architect (+4.1% QoQ) also performed strongly, while UI/UX Designer/Developer (-33.3% QoQ) and Business Intelligence Analyst (-45.5% YoY) recorded the sharpest declines.

Top 20 Permanent Roles					Top 20 Temporary Roles				
#	Job Title	Q2 '26 Postings	QoQ %	YoY %	#	Job Title	Q2 '26 Postings	QoQ %	YoY %
1	Software Developer/Engineer	20,473	2.7%	-7.4%	1	Software Developer/Engineer	2,550	-14.8%	-8.6%
2	Computer Systems Engineer/Architect	10,964	2.4%	11.4%	2	Computer Support Specialist	2,076	6.1%	-9.5%
3	Computer Support Specialist	10,702	-0.7%	1.2%	3	Computer Systems Engineer/Architect	1,295	4.1%	14.5%
4	Cyber/Information Security Engineer/Analyst	7,888	7.8%	22.3%	4	Cyber/Information Security Engineer/Analyst	884	5.4%	14.1%
5	Artificial Intelligence Engineer	5,743	41.8%	74.4%	5	Data/Data Mining Analyst	910	2.4%	15.3%
6	Data/Data Mining Analyst	4,288	3.4%	22.5%	6	IT Project/Program Manager	808	10.1%	21.0%
7	IT Project/Program Manager	4,278	0.1%	11.6%	7	Artificial Intelligence Engineer	532	26.4%	96.3%
8	Database Architect	4,271	9.3%	34.3%	8	Data Engineer	505	8.6%	36.1%
9	IT Manager/Director	4,544	5.1%	10.4%	9	Database Architect	590	-17.4%	23.7%
10	Data Engineer	3,033	21.0%	37.1%	10	Network Engineer/Architect	544	-4.7%	13.1%
11	Mobile Applications Developer	4,250	-7.5%	-3.8%	11	Network/Systems Administrator	595	4.0%	8.8%
12	Network Engineer/Architect	2,976	-1.0%	-2.5%	12	Database Administrator	449	-12.0%	-2.2%
13	Network/Systems Administrator	3,424	-1.1%	5.1%	13	UI/UX Designer/Developer	320	-33.3%	-24.3%
14	Web Developer	2,219	1.2%	-18.7%	14	Business Intelligence Analyst	287	-21.6%	-45.5%
15	Data Scientist	2,040	3.0%	7.9%	15	IT Manager/Director	346	-4.9%	9.5%
16	UI/UX Designer/Developer	2,119	-31.2%	3.2%	16	Web Developer	273	19.2%	-13.6%
17	Technology Consultant	2,100	0.4%	-6.7%	17	Mobile Applications Developer	378	-20.8%	-23.9%
18	Database Administrator	2,028	-12.6%	-3.3%	18	Data Scientist	284	-29.5%	-2.1%
19	Software QA Engineer/Tester	1,490	-2.4%	0.3%	19	Software QA Engineer/Tester	207	-11.9%	-6.3%
20	Business Intelligence Analyst	1,538	-8.0%	-14.0%	20	Technology Consultant	190	-30.1%	-22.8%

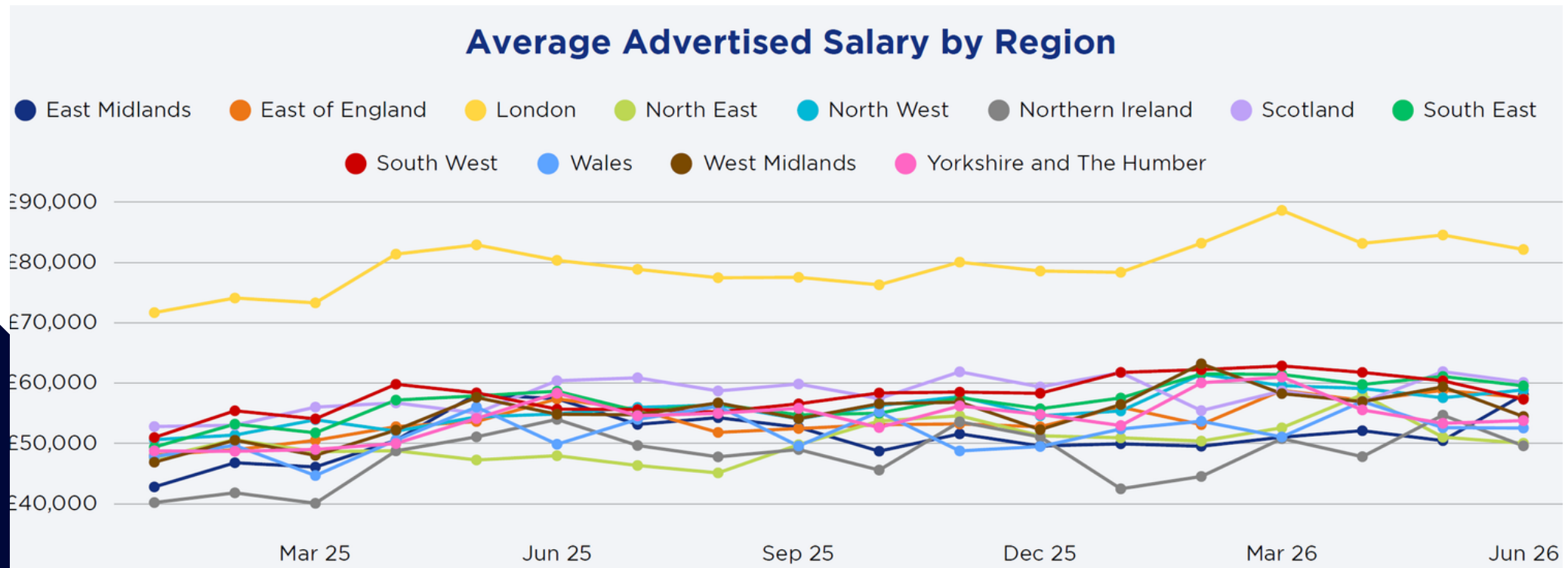
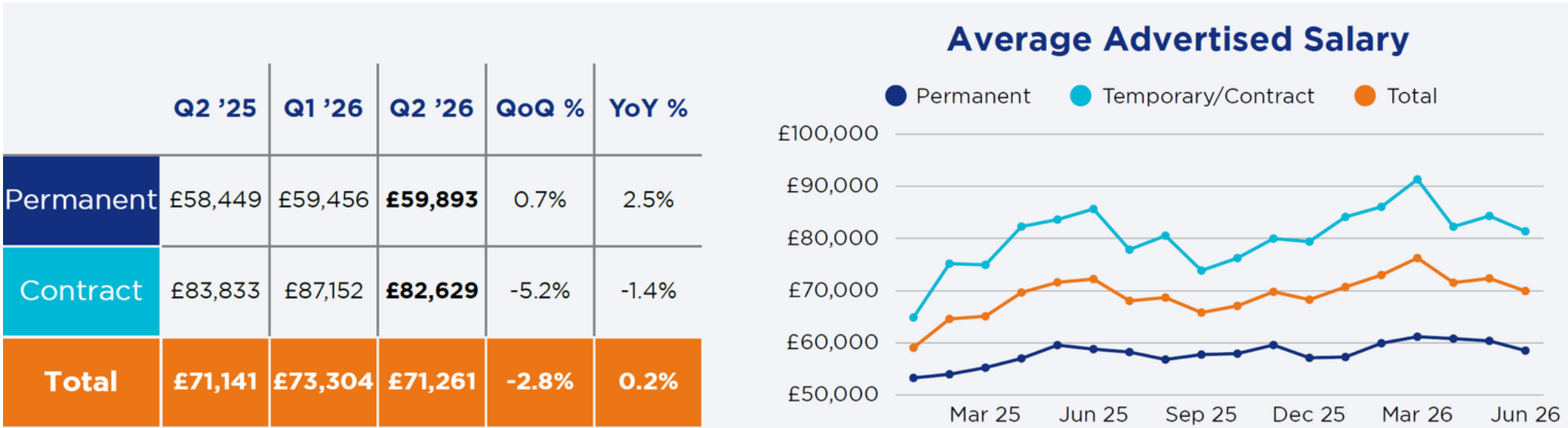
AI Related Jobs

Among AI-related roles, Data Scientist is the largest by volume at 1,660 postings in Q2 2026, growing 29% YoY, while AI Engineer leads growth at scale, up 213% YoY and 57% QoQ to become the second largest AI title. Growth is broad-based across the category, with AI Architect (+247% YoY) and AI Platform Engineer (+960% YoY, albeit from a small base) among the fastest growing, pointing to accelerating demand for dedicated AI expertise.

#	Job Title	Q2 '25	Q1 '26	Q2 '26	QoQ %	YoY %
1	Data Scientist	1,284	1,612	1,660	3%	29%
2	AI Engineer	458	916	1,435	57%	213%
3	Machine Learning Engineer	389	577	719	25%	85%
4	AI Trainer	938	88	204	132%	-78%
5	Controls Engineer	191	140	159	14%	-17%
6	Data Platform Engineer	78	131	127	-3%	63%
7	AI Architect	49	115	170	48%	247%
8	AI Developer	43	140	90	-36%	109%
9	AI Consultant	94	57	56	-2%	-40%
10	Machine Learning Scientist	29	69	128	86%	341%
11	Quantitative Researcher	50	64	60	-6%	20%
12	Head of AI	37	52	95	83%	157%
13	AI Software Engineer	27	64	94	47%	248%
14	Head of Data Science	50	42	31	-26%	-38%
15	Research Scientist	30	36	66	83%	120%
16	AI Specialist	32	57	41	-28%	28%
17	MLOps Engineer	20	46	41	-11%	105%
18	Machine Learning Researcher	20	28	38	36%	90%
19	RPA Developer	42	30	20	-33%	-52%
20	AI Platform Engineer	5	35	53	51%	960%

Average Compensation

The average advertised salary across all tech roles held broadly flat at £71,261, down 2.8% on Q1 2026 but up 0.2% year-on-year, suggesting that while there has been a slight quarterly softening, the market has maintained its overall salary level compared to the same period last year.



UK Region	Q2 '25	Q1 '26	Q2 '26	QoQ %	YoY %
East Midlands	£55,362	£50,171	£53,552	6.7%	-3.3%
East of England	£54,596	£55,981	£57,841	3.3%	5.9%
London	£81,545	£83,390	£83,279	-0.1%	2.1%
North East	£48,006	£51,304	£53,058	3.4%	10.5%
North West	£53,770	£58,810	£58,515	-0.5%	8.8%
Northern Ireland	£51,281	£45,934	£50,698	10.4%	-1.1%
Scotland	£57,379	£58,624	£59,602	1.7%	3.9%
South East	£57,908	£60,160	£60,142	0.0%	3.9%
South West	£57,963	£62,283	£59,824	-3.9%	3.2%
Wales	£52,144	£52,380	£54,042	3.2%	3.6%
West Midlands	£54,889	£59,304	£56,925	-4.0%	3.7%
Yorkshire & The Humber	£54,154	£58,008	£54,227	-6.5%	0.1%
Total	£56,583	£58,029	£58,475	0.8%	3.3%

AI Engineer commands the highest salary at £78,821, growing 2.8% QoQ, while Data Scientist saw the biggest annual jump at +22.2% (£75,300) and Web Developer (+18.2% YoY) also outperformed. At the other end, Database Administrator fell 10.5% QoQ and 6.0% YoY, pointing to pay compression in more established specialisms.

Top Job Titles by Average Advertised Salary

#	Job Title	Q2 '25	Q1 '26	Q2 '26	QoQ %	YoY %
1	Artificial Intelligence Engineer	£71,752	£76,672	£78,821	2.8%	9.9%
2	Computer Systems Engineer/Architect	£73,676	£79,661	£77,165	-3.1%	4.7%
3	Data Engineer	£73,560	£80,418	£76,462	-4.9%	3.9%
4	IT Project/Program Manager	£75,901	£79,474	£75,670	-4.8%	-0.3%
5	Software Developer/Engineer	£75,951	£79,655	£74,383	-6.6%	-2.1%
6	UI / UX Designer/Developer	£68,430	£78,595	£73,433	-6.6%	7.3%
7	Network Engineer/Architect	£67,859	£70,275	£69,769	-0.7%	2.8%
8	Business Intelligence Analyst	£76,659	£75,892	£75,510	-0.5%	-1.5%
9	Data Scientist	£61,622	£71,326	£75,300	5.6%	22.2%
10	Software QA Engineer/Tester	£55,884	£61,546	£63,622	3.4%	13.8%
11	Web Developer	£58,425	£67,255	£69,048	2.7%	18.2%
12	IT Manager/Director	£65,166	£65,733	£63,732	-3.0%	-2.2%
13	Database Architect	£66,590	£69,698	£65,007	-6.7%	-2.4%
14	Cyber/Information Security Engineer/Analyst	£64,945	£66,991	£62,642	-6.5%	-3.5%
15	Database Administrator	£57,316	£60,192	£53,877	-10.5%	-6.0%
16	Technology Consultant	£54,390	£52,077	£53,329	2.4%	-2.0%
17	Data/Data Mining Analyst	£48,801	£47,031	£48,523	3.2%	-0.6%
18	Mobile Applications Developer	£49,168	£48,021	£46,926	-2.3%	-4.6%
19	Network/Systems Administrator	£43,041	£41,662	£43,557	4.5%	1.2%
20	Computer Support Specialist	£37,313	£35,607	£36,227	1.7%	-2.9%

Thank You



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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