



Graduate Employers Survey 2022

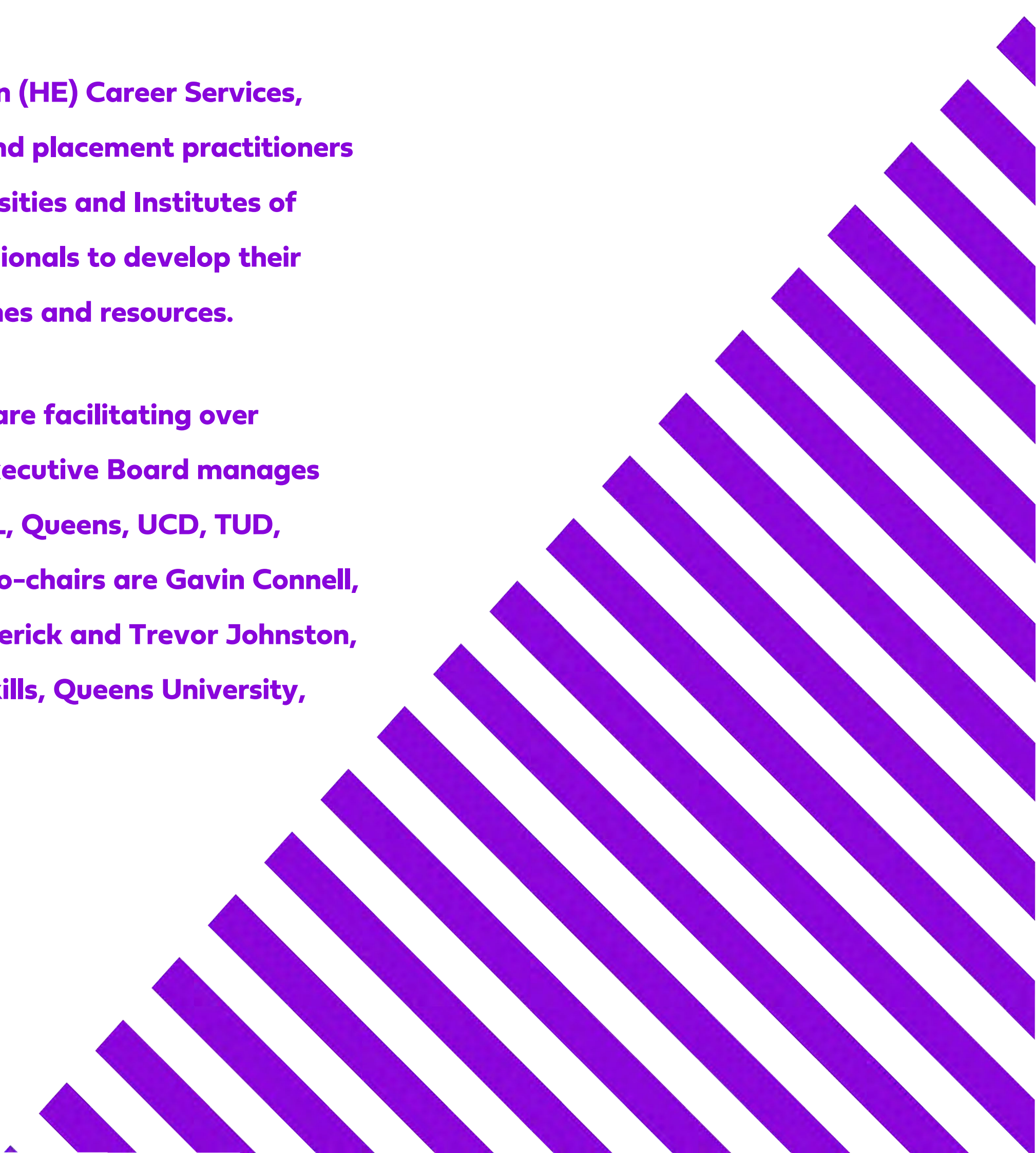
An employers perspective
Graduate Trends and Salaries



ASSOCIATION of HIGHER
EDUCATION CAREERS SERVICES

AHECS is the voice of Higher Education (HE) Career Services, representing careers, employability, and placement practitioners across Ireland. Representing 25 Universities and Institutes of Technology, we enable careers professionals to develop their skills and share best practice approaches and resources.

Together, our members and partners are facilitating over 400,000 students to get ahead. An Executive Board manages the Association with members from UL, Queens, UCD, TUD, NCI, DKIT and SETU, and the current co-chairs are Gavin Connell, Head of Careers, the University of Limerick and Trevor Johnston, Head of Careers, Employability and Skills, Queens University, Belfast.





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Welcome to the AHECS Graduate Market Survey 2022

Research results compiled by AHECS represent an annual snapshot of graduate recruitment across Ireland. Participants of this survey are graduate employers who have engaged with AHECS members in 2022. These include local, national and global companies, multinationals and SMEs, not-for-profit, from all sectors and disciplines. 345 graduate employers participated in this year's survey, the third year of the survey.

AHECS surveyed graduate employers between April and May 2022. Feedback from the organisations proves to be highly beneficial in preparing our graduates for their future careers. The 2022 survey captures placement and graduate recruitment trends, including.

- Average Salaries
- Disciplines in demand
- Employment by location
- Employment by sector
- Job vacancies
- Recruitment levels
- Work Placement activities

345

graduate employers
participated in the survey,
a 14% increase on last year

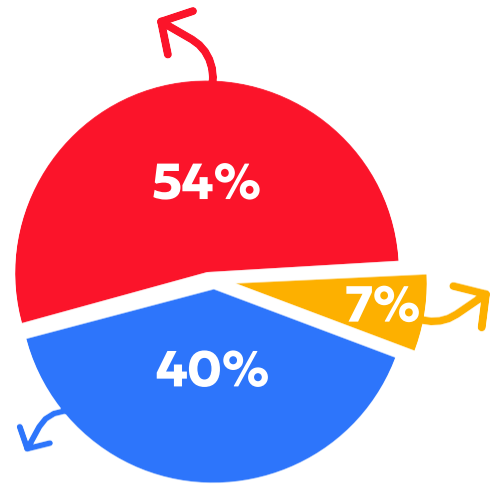
- Recruitment processes
- Top technical and soft skills, ranked by employers
- Recruitment challenges
- Employment sectors - overview of top five

The Graduate Market Survey 2022 provides employers, students, and AHECS with invaluable insights into the placement and graduate recruitment market. A particular word of thanks to everyone who supported and participated in the survey. We invite you to view the results and trends as part of your ongoing exploration of the placement and graduate recruitment market.

Organisation Type



Small - Medium Enterprises (SME)
Less than 250 employees



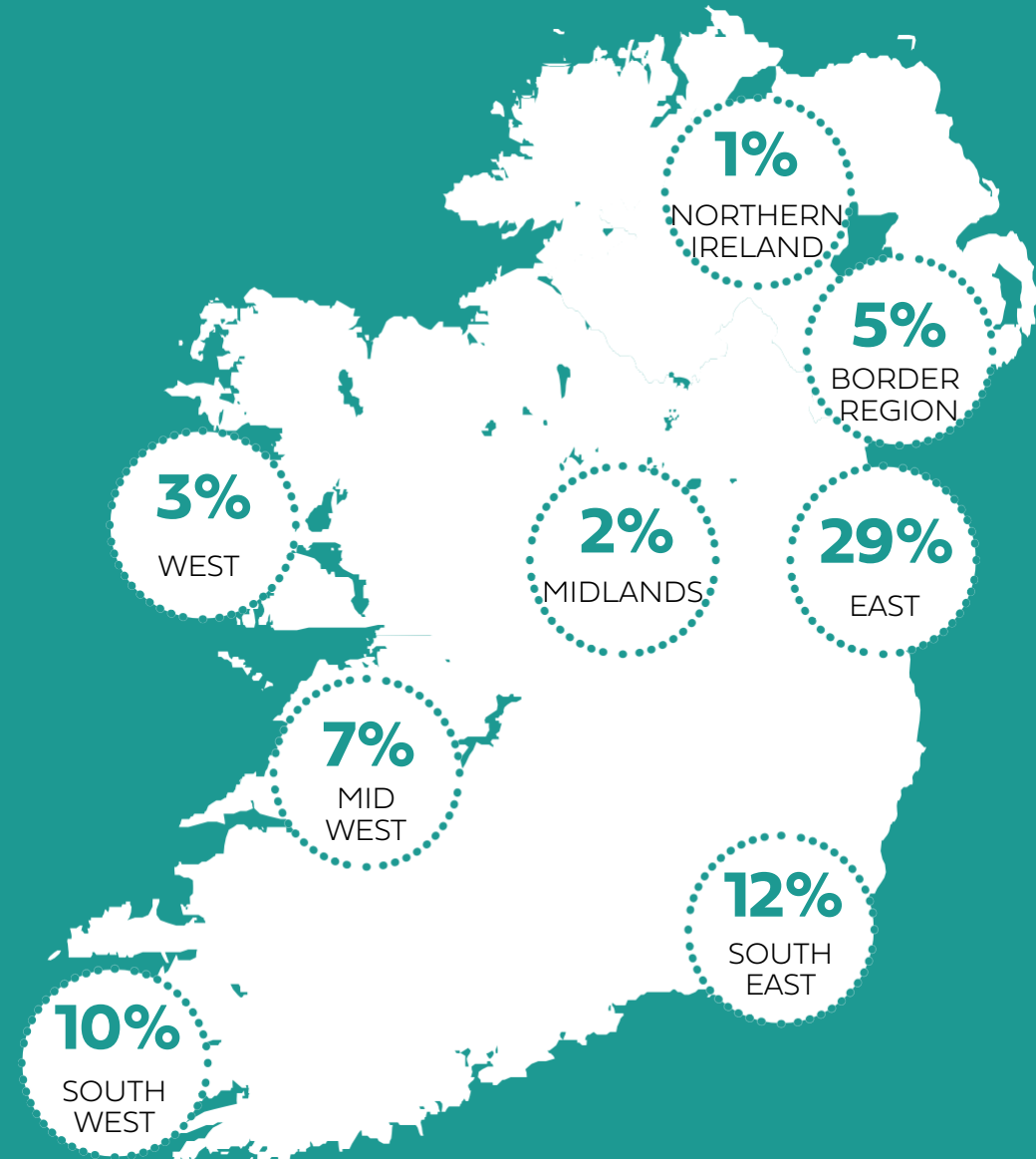
Charitable or Not-for-profit



Large Organisations
Over 250 employees

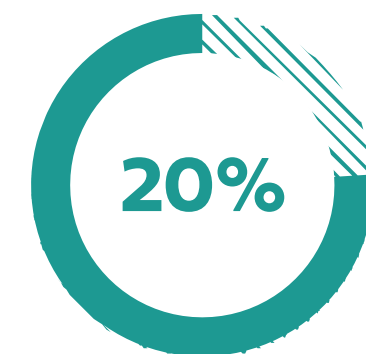
2022 has seen a 10% increase in Small – Medium Enterprise organisations participating in the survey. SMEs make up 54%, large organisations make up 40%, and charities or not-for-profit comprise the last 7% of the organisation types in Ireland.

Organisation Location

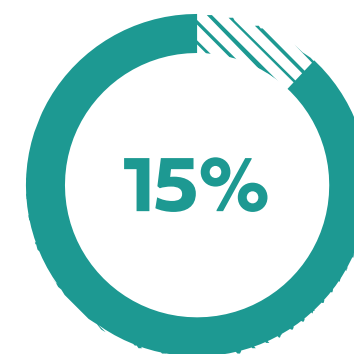


Sectors Surveyed

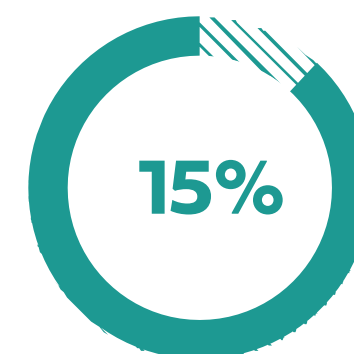
The Graduate Market Survey uses NACE, which is also used by the Central Statistics Office (CSO) and the Higher Education Authority (HEA) to ensure the standard classification of economic activity. NACE is an acronym derived from the French title Nomenclature générale des Activités économiques dans les Communautés européennes. NACE is the statistical classification of human health and social activities in the EU. For NACE classifications go to CSO.ie



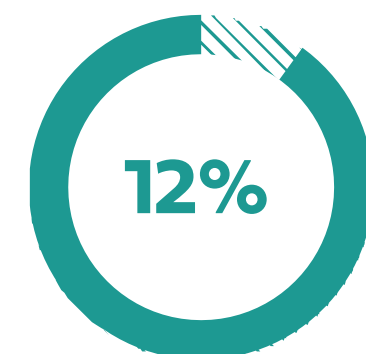
Professional, Scientific & Technical Activities



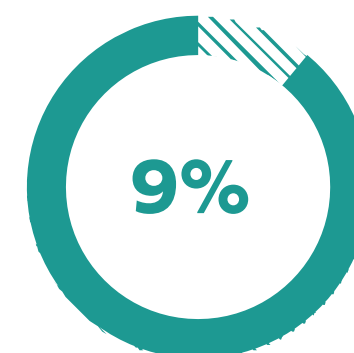
Industry



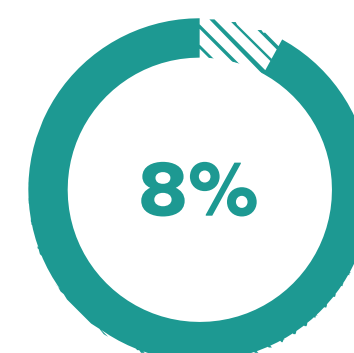
Construction



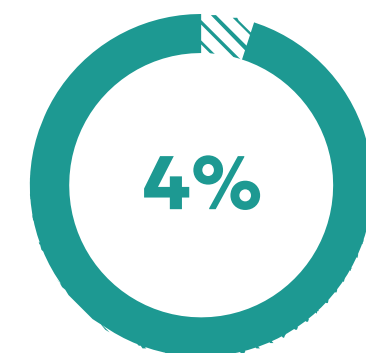
Financial & Insurance Activities



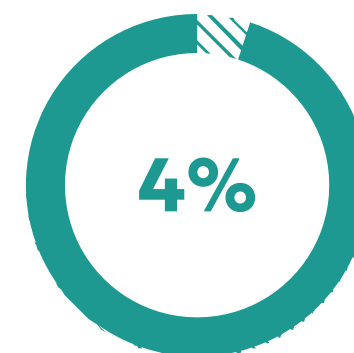
Information & Communication



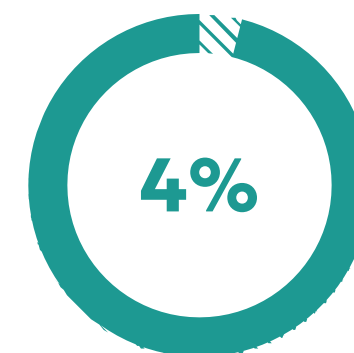
Education



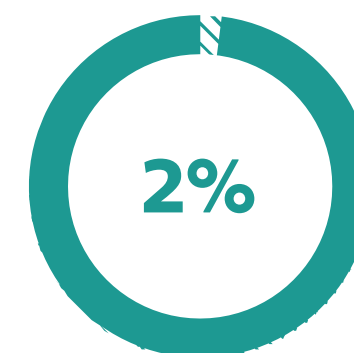
Wholesale & Retail Trade



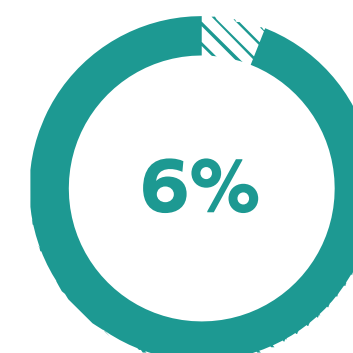
Human Health & Social Work



Arts, Entertainment & Recreation



Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing



All Others

Work Placement

Work Placement is a planned period of professional learning or experience, which may be accredited, where the learning outcomes are part of a Higher Education programme or module.

It is a three-way partnership between an employer, a student and a HEI, where a student is given the opportunity to work and learn in a professional environment relevant to their studies, in order to achieve set goals.

Almost 64% of all employers are offering summer internships. The number of employers offering summer internships rose by 8% from 2021.

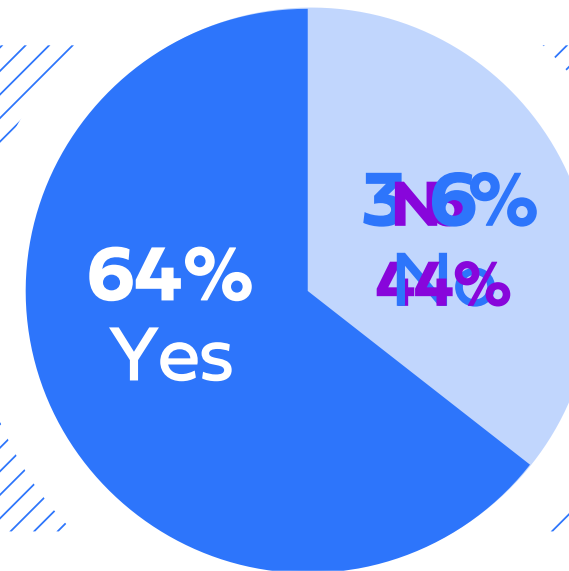
Employers are even more engaged in offering work placements. 76% of employers surveyed offer work placement opportunities, a 2% increase from last year.

The duration of the placement offered has been similar to the previous year, with a slight increase in 12-month (19%) and 3–6-month (49%) placements.



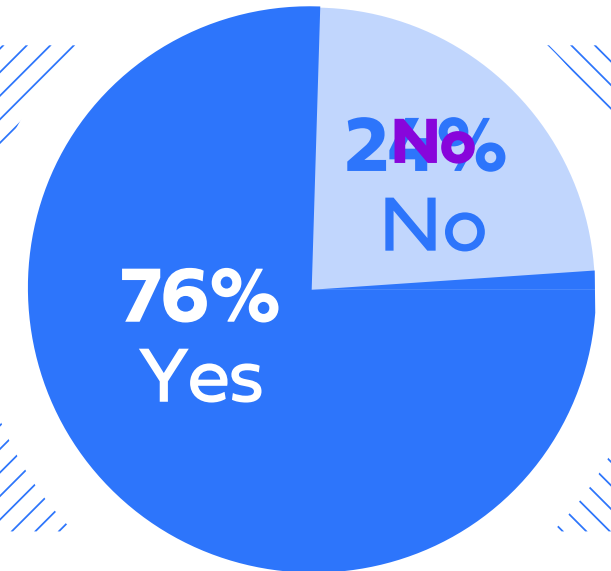
Summer Internships

Q. Do you offer Summer Internships?



Work Placements

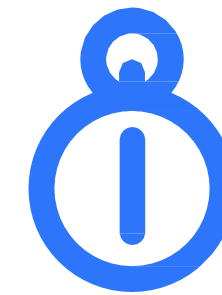
Q. Do you offer Work Placements?



Duration of Work Placements



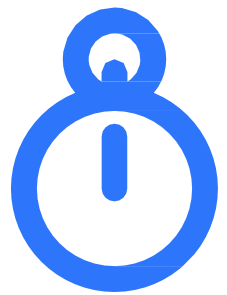
24%
Up to 3mths



49%
3 - 6mths



55%
6 - 12mths



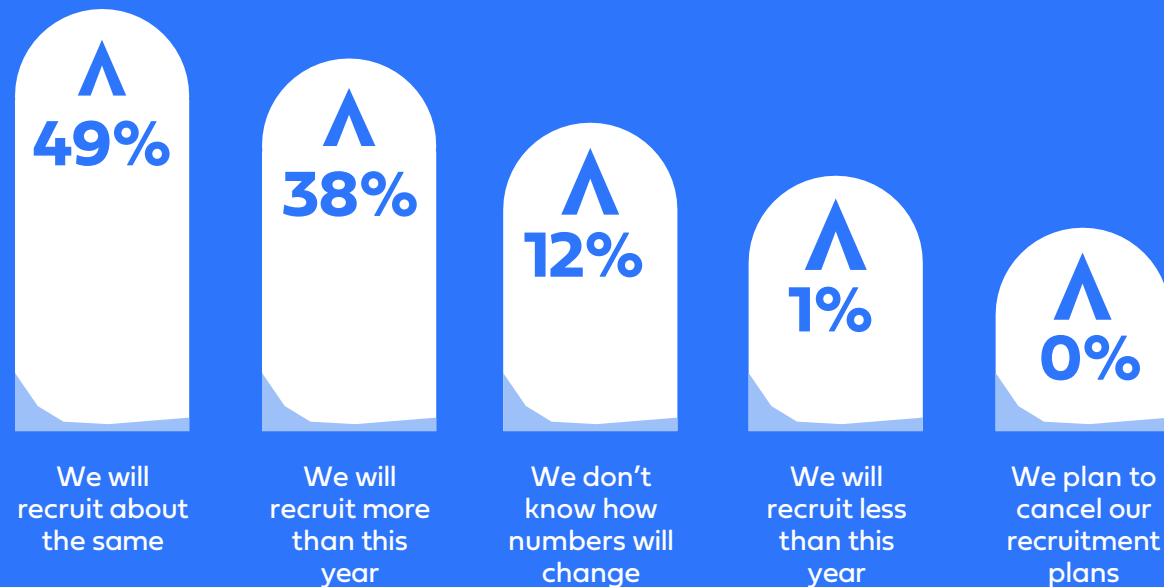
19%
12mths +

Change in Hiring

49% of employers indicated that their summer internships and work placements intake numbers would remain the same as in previous years. 13% more organisations will look to increase their intake of placements and internships; this means a total of 38% of the organisations who partook in the survey will recruit more this year.

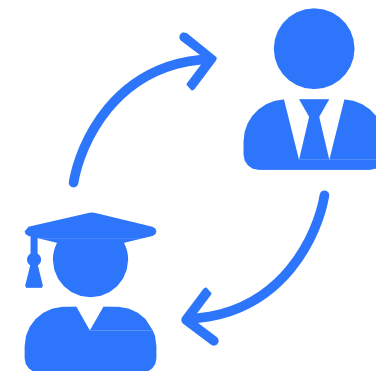
The conversion rate of work placements to graduate hires has increased by 3% to 40%.

Q. How do you expect the total number of work placements to change during 2022/23?



Conversion Rates

Q. Typically, what percentage of work placement students converted to graduate hires?



Average Conversion Rate

40%



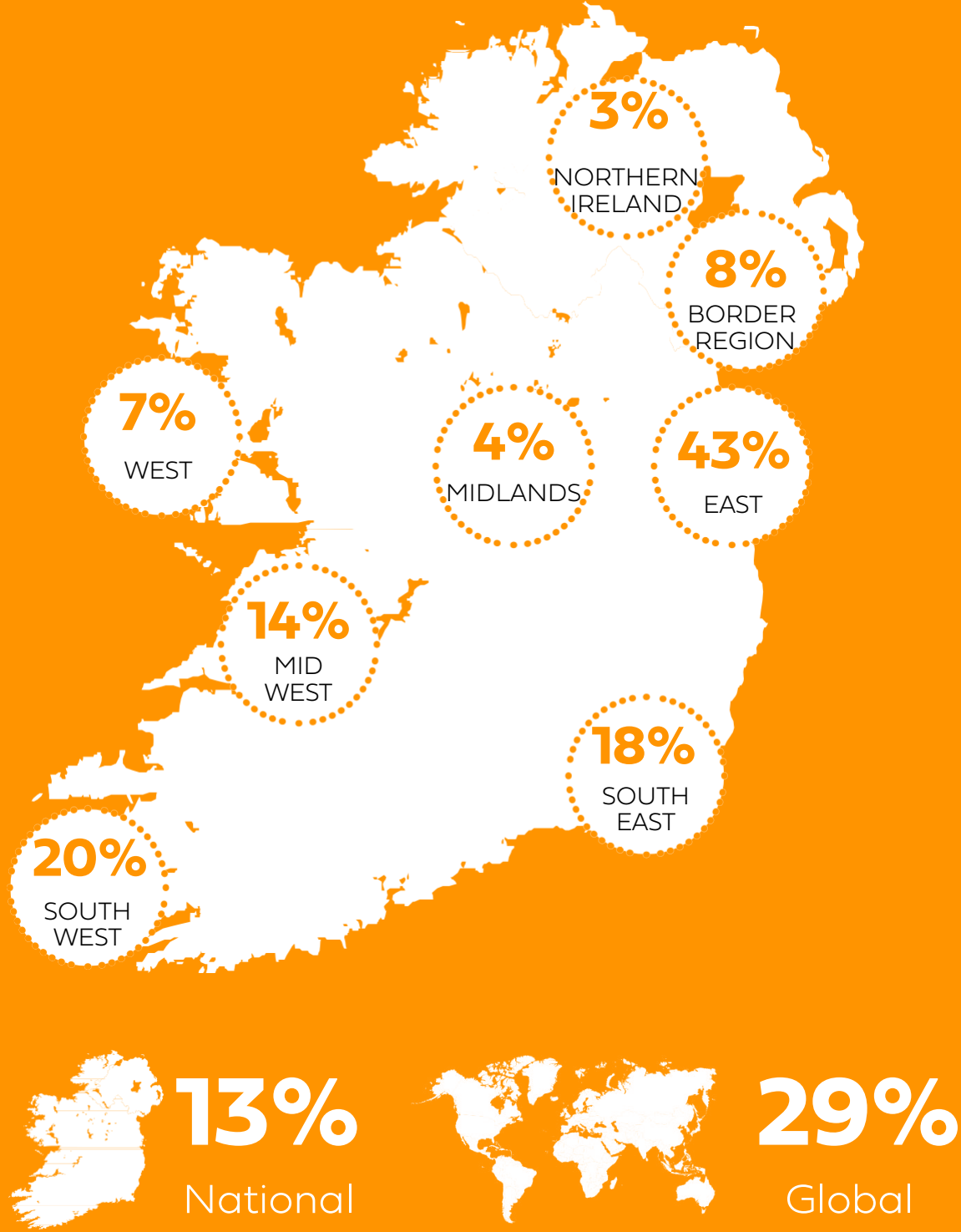
Graduate Recruitment



The East continues to have the highest percentage of graduate roles with 43%, followed by the southwest at 20%, Southeast at 18% and Midwest at 14%. 13% of the jobs are national and 29% are global.

There has been significant growth (8%) in the Southeast, whilst opportunities within the East dropped by 10%.

Location of Graduate Vacancies





Number of Graduate Vacancies

Location of graduate vacancies

Due to the increased organisation participation rate, we have a more accurate representation of graduate vacancies. The jobs available in the graduate market in 2022 reveal the highest percentage of jobs available are in the East region at 43%, followed by the South-West at 20%, South-east at 18% and the Mid-West at 14%. 13% of the jobs are national, and 29% are global.

Expected number of graduate vacancies: 2022 results

Q. How many graduate vacancies does your organisation expect to have for 2022/23, and how does this compare with 2021/22?

Overall, 88% of respondents indicate they will recruit the same or more graduates as last year, possibly more; this is an increase from last year, (75%). 5% will recruit less than 2021, and 0% plan to cancel their graduate recruitment plans for 2022. 11% of employers do not know how their graduate recruitment numbers will change for 2022.

Recruitment Level



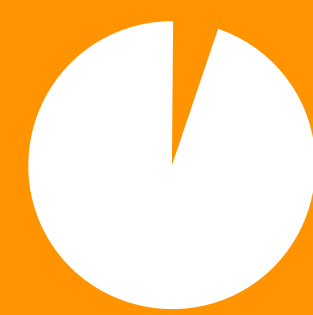
41%

We will recruit more than last year.



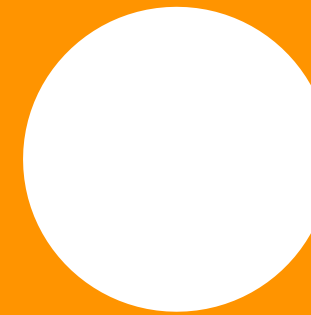
43%

We will recruit about the same as last year.



5%

We will recruit less graduates this year.



0%

We are planning to cancel our graduate recruitment plans.



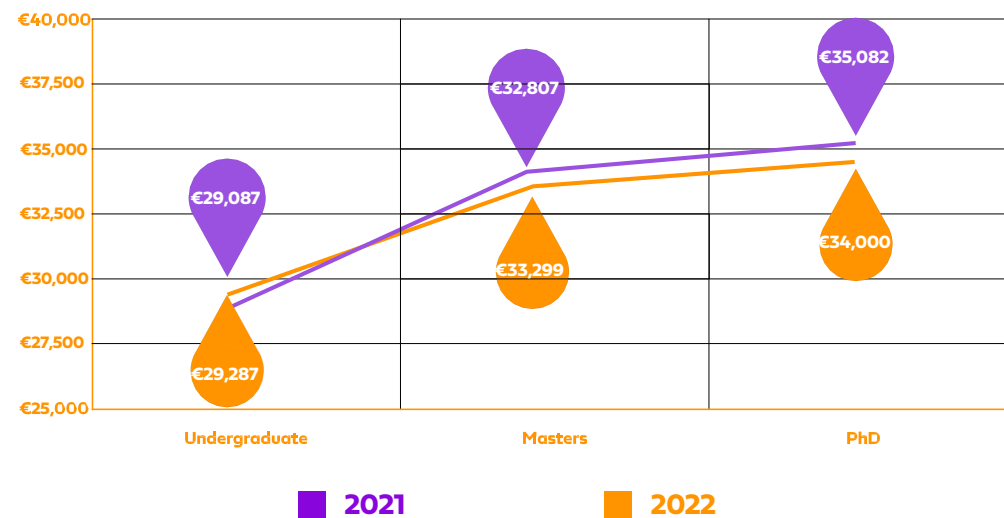
11%

We don't know how numbers will change yet.

Graduate Salaries

Average trending data.

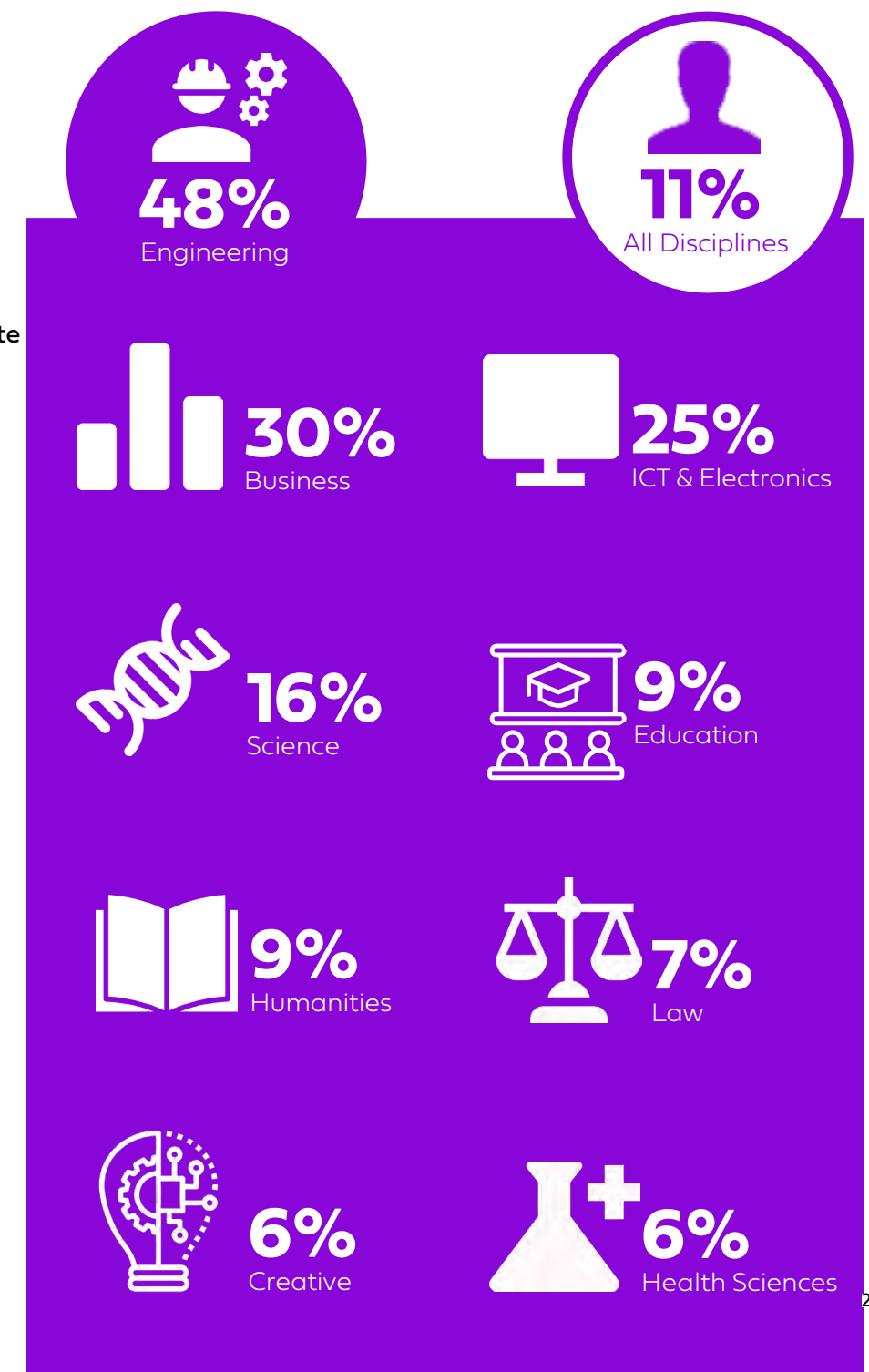
Average Graduate Salaries - Trending Data



This table presents the average starting salaries on offer to graduates, based on their level of educational qualifications. It clearly illustrates the correlation between a graduate's level of education and the starting salary they can command in the market. The average salary for Undergraduates is €29,287 (an increase of €200), for Postgraduate Master's degrees is €33,299 (an increase of €500), and PhD graduates is €34,000 (a decrease of €1,000).

Who should apply?

Results for 2022 indicate little change in the discipline demand from 2021, 11% of respondent employers are looking for graduate applicants from all disciplines. This highlights the general aim of many employers to diversify their talent pool. Of the companies surveyed, there is little changed in the demand for the top 9 disciplines. 48% are looking for engineering graduates, 30% for business graduates, and 25% for ICT and electronics graduates.



Application & Selection Tools

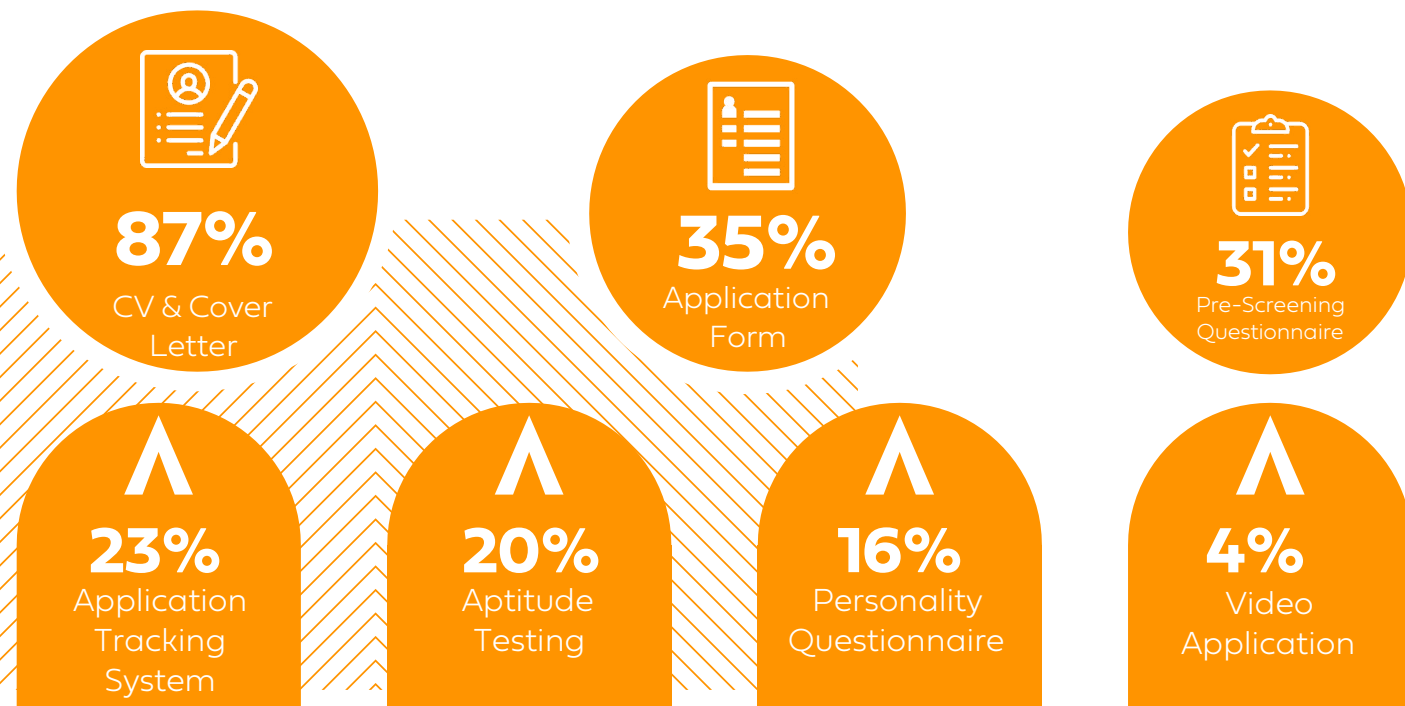
Application Stage

Results highlight the importance of having an excellent CV and cover letter with 87% of respondent employers indicating the requirement for a CV and cover letter at the application stage. Online applications are popular, used by 35% of the organisations surveyed. 31% of respondents are now using pre-screening questions at the application stage.

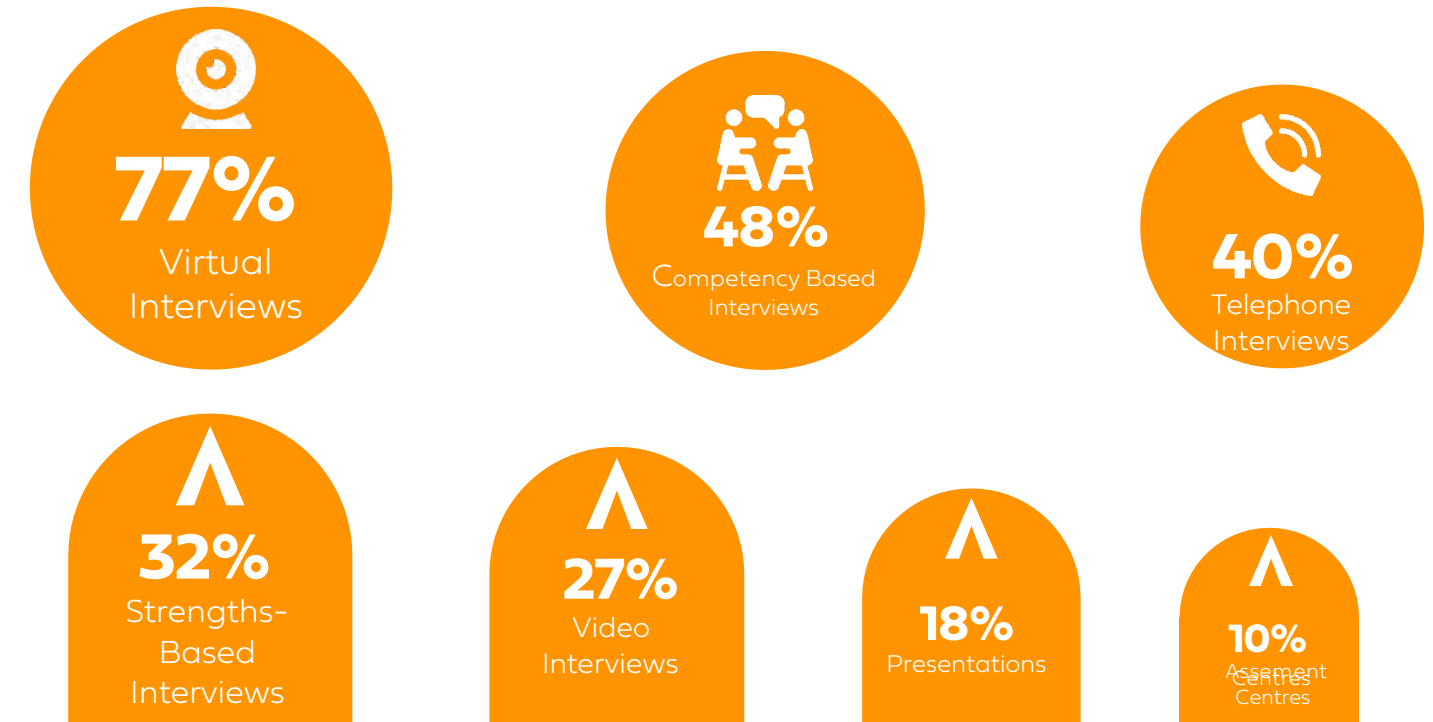
Selection Stage

The 2022 survey examined the most widely used selection methods. Survey participants could select more than one method from the list. The survey results reveal that 48% of the organisations use competency/behavioural-based interviews. Virtual and telephone interviews remain popular, with 77% and 40% respectively of companies surveyed using this method in their recruitment process. 18% of respondents use presentations, and 10% of respondents use assessment centres. 32% of organisations use strengths-based interviews. Other recruitment screening methods include reference checking (48%) and social media checks (13%).

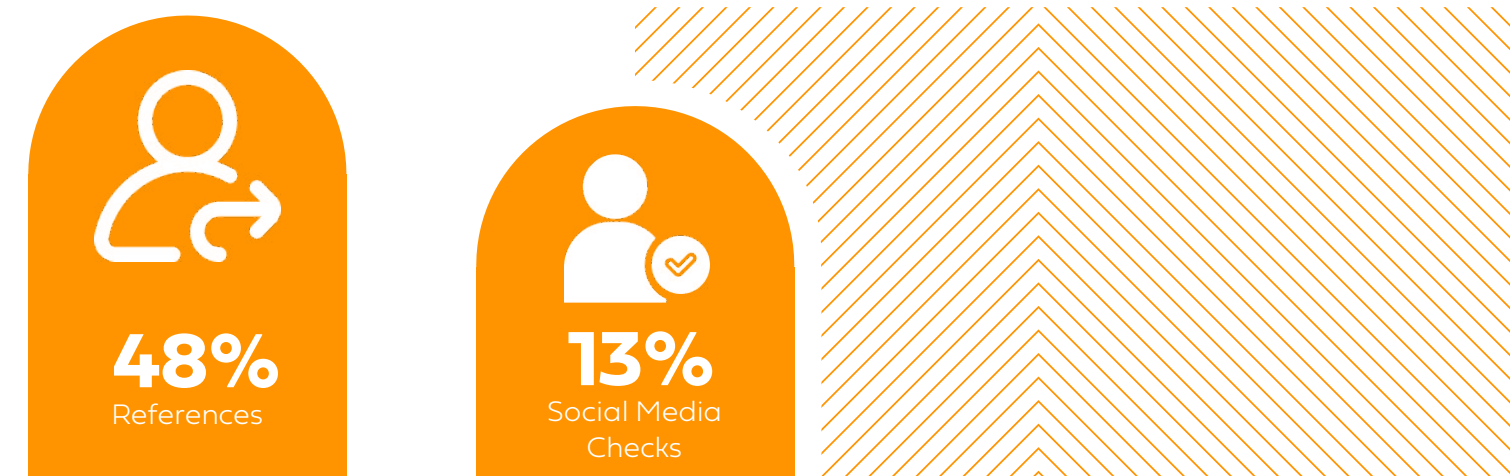
Application Process



Interview Process



Pre-Employment Process



Employers Ranking

Q. Please rank the following of how positively you view them when reviewing applications?



Graduate recruitment challenges

Q. Please rank the challenges you face in your graduate recruitment this year

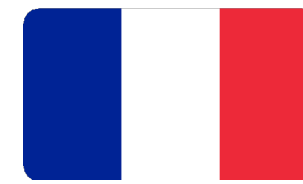
As the recovery from the covid-19 pandemic is in full swing, and many organisations are returning fully to pre covid operations, the Covid-19 virus is no longer seen as the most significant challenge dropping to the number 5 slot.

Competition for graduates from employers in the same sector has been identified as the biggest recruitment challenge by organisations; it is followed by the number of available graduates from specific degree skills/sets and graduate expectations at the entry-level stage.



Foreign Languages

Q. What foreign languages do you require in your organisation?



9%
French



9%
German



8%
Spanish



5%
Italian



3%
Chinese



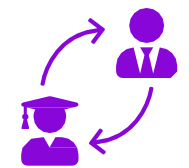
2%
Dutch



2%
Portuguese



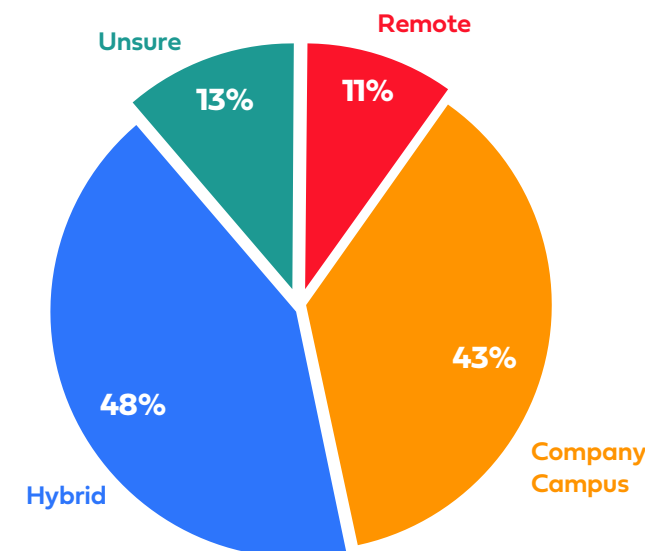
1%
Japanese



88%
No Foreign Languages

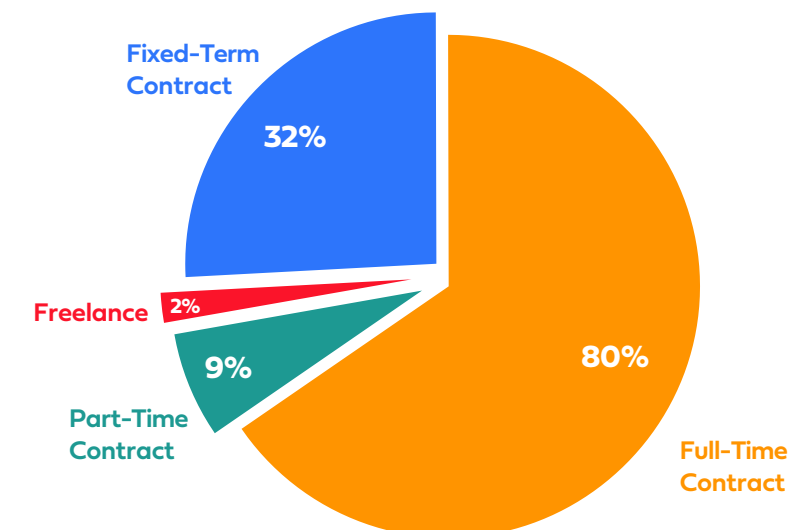
Onboarding

Q. What are your plans for onboarding new graduate hires?



Contract Type

Q. What type of graduate contract do you offer graduates?



Global Technical Skills



Respondent employers were asked to rank **12 global technical skills**, according to the value of those skills to their organisation.

Economic and technological changes are facilitating the internationalisation of business. Many companies, large and small, have international customers/operations and international recruitment patterns. The jobs market for highly skilled graduates is becoming increasingly global.

Top five global technical skills 2022:

1. Self-Motivated
2. Analytical thinking
3. Collaborative
4. Flexibility
5. Qualifications related to job

Top five global technical skills 2021:

1. Analytical thinking
2. Self-motivated
3. Collaborative
4. Flexibility
5. Comfortable with complex situations

Global Soft Skills

Respondent employers were asked to rank **12 global soft skills**, according to the value of those skills to their organisation.

Organisations are challenging the national expectations of the graduate workforce. As the requirements of employers for their global workforce continue to change, graduates and providers of higher education must adapt to succeed.

Top five global soft skills 2022:

1. Positive attitude and energy
2. Ability to cope with pressure
3. Work ethic
4. Seeks opportunities for continuous learning
5. Reliability

Top five global soft skills 2021:

1. Positive attitude and energy
2. Ability to cope with pressure
3. Work ethic
4. Reliability
5. Seeks opportunities for continuous learning



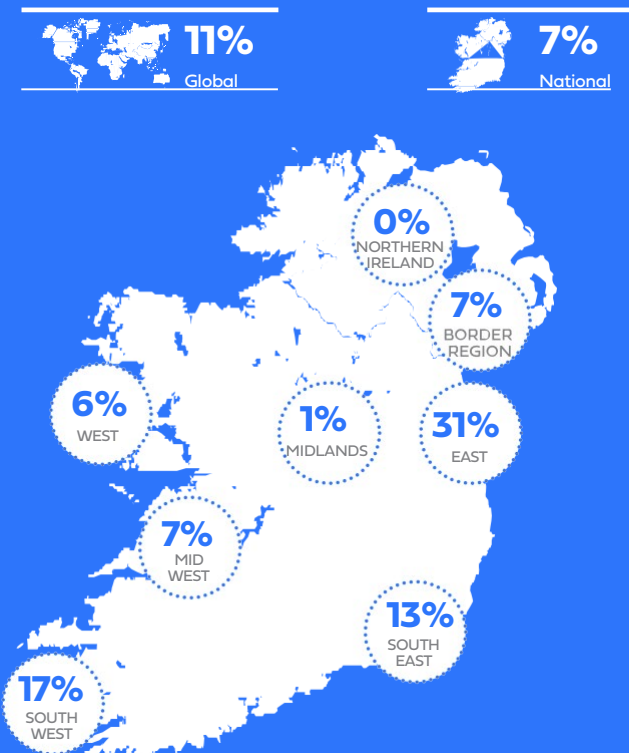
Sector Analysis

Construction

Survey results reveal that the East is the primary location for jobs in the construction sector, with 31% of jobs on offer in this region. The South-West followed them at 17%, the South-East at 13% and Mid-West at 7%. 2022 results reveal that 86% of companies will hire the same number or more graduates as they did in 2020; 2% will hire slightly less than last year.

Results also reveal that the average starting salary for Undergraduates is €30,963, Master's degree is €35,759, and PhD graduates is €35,286.

Construction in the Southwest (17%) and Southeast (13%) has grown significantly by 4% and 5%, respectively. Both global 11% and national 7% also experienced a decrease compared to 2021, when global stood at 21% and national at 13%.



Construction Technical Skills Ranked 1 – 12



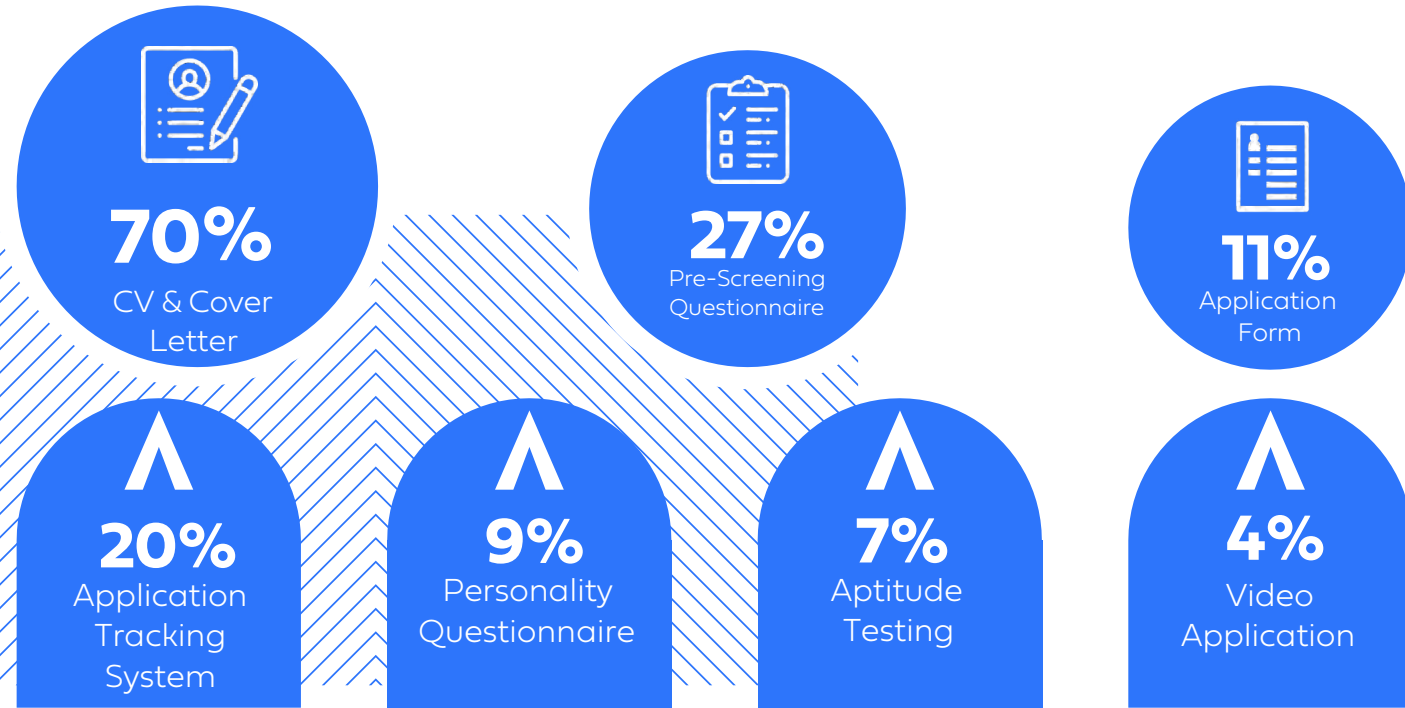
Construction Soft Skills Ranked 1 – 12



The top three Technical Skills are Self-Motivated, Flexibility and Analytical Thinking. The top three Soft Skills are Ability to Cope with Pressure, Positive attitude and energy and Work ethic.

Sector Analysis | Construction

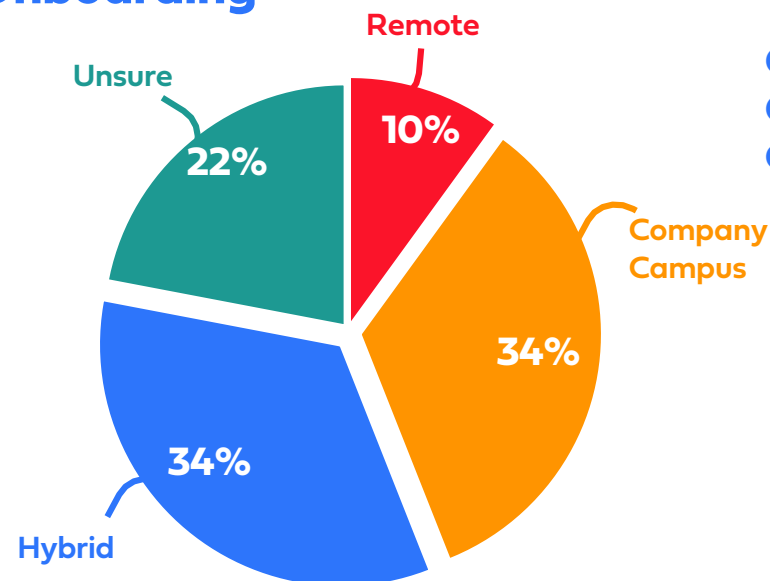
Application Process



Graduate Recruitment Challenges



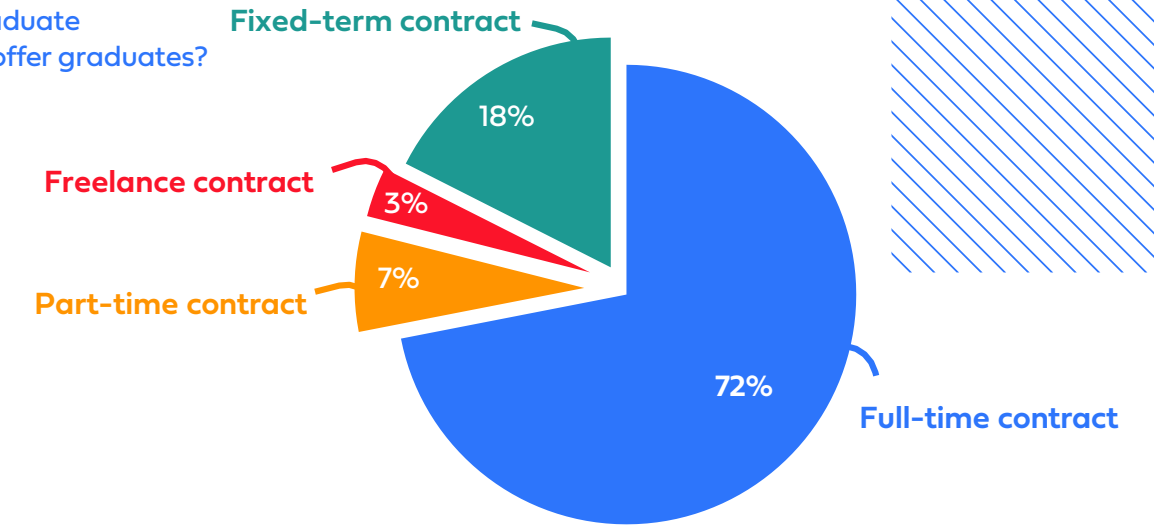
Onboarding



Q. What are your plans for Onboarding new Graduate Hires?

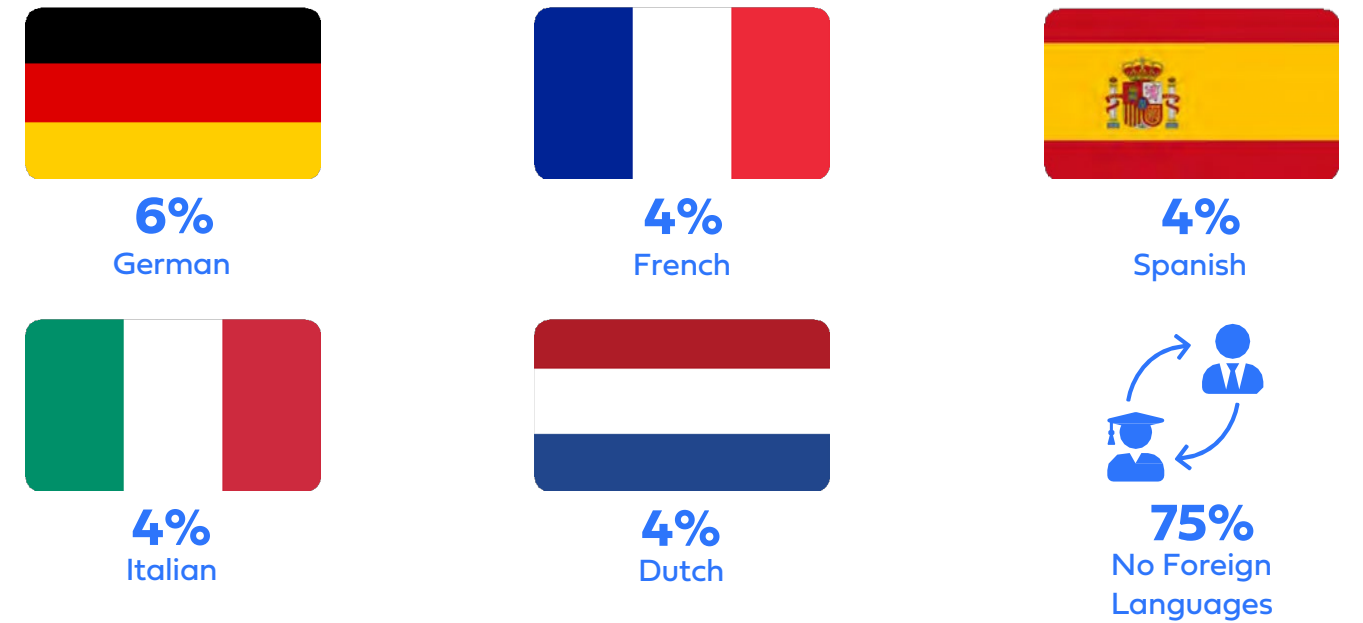
Contract Type

What type of graduate contract do you offer graduates?



Foreign Languages

Q. What foreign languages do you require in your organisation?



Employers Ranking

Q. Please rank the following of how positively you view them when reviewing applications?



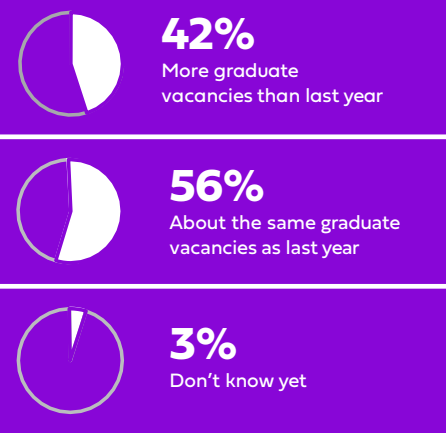
Sector Analysis

Finance & Insurance

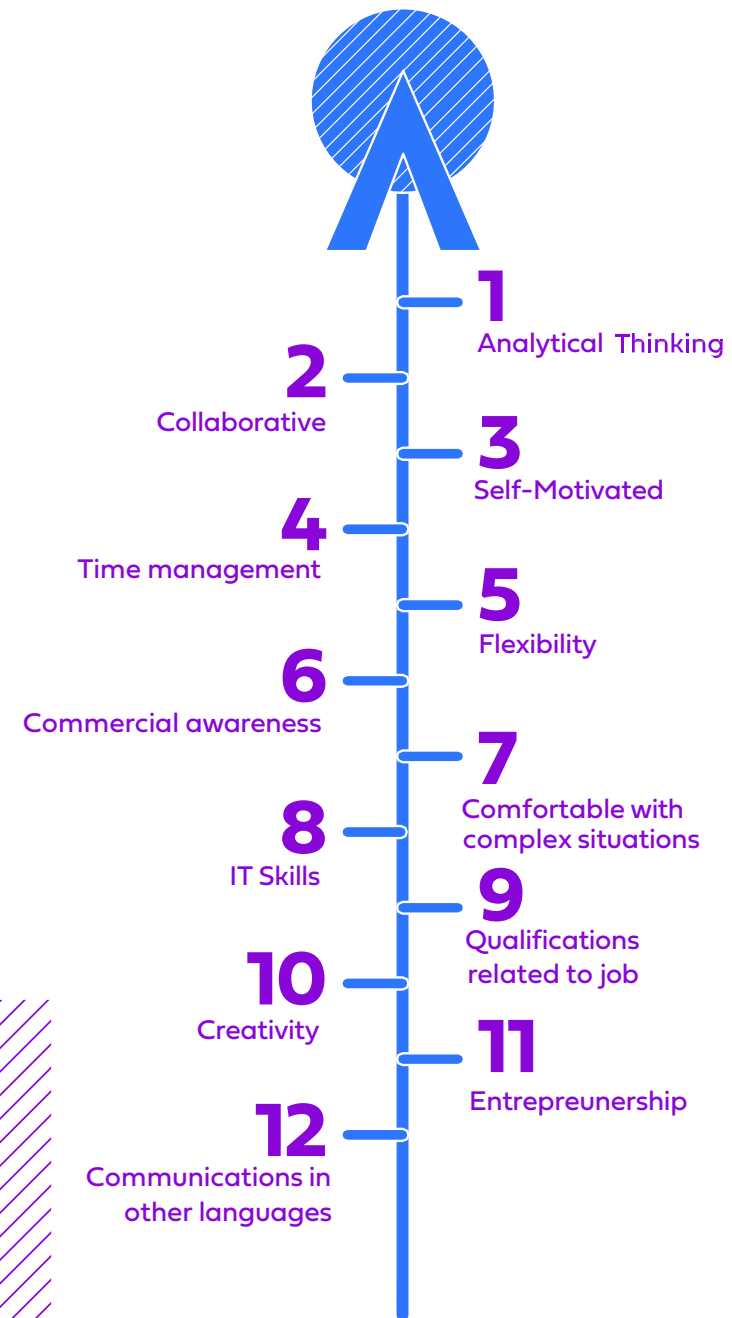
Survey results reveal the East as the primary location for jobs in the finance and insurance sector with 27% of jobs on offer in this region, followed by the South-East and South-West at 12% and the Mid-West at 10%. The 2022 results reveal that 98% of companies will hire the same number or more graduates as they did in 2021, and 3% are unsure. Results also reveal that the average starting salary for Undergraduates is €28,000, Master's degrees is €31,692, and PhD graduates is €30,714.

The most significant increase in opportunities can be seen in the southwest (12%) and global locations (19%). These two sectors experienced an 8% and a 12% increase, respectively. The dispersion away from the East increased the number of jobs in the midlands and the west, both increased by 3%.

Results also reveal that the average starting salary for Undergraduates is €28,000, Master's degrees is €31,692, and PhD graduates is €30,714.



Finance & Insurance Technical Skills Ranked 1 – 12

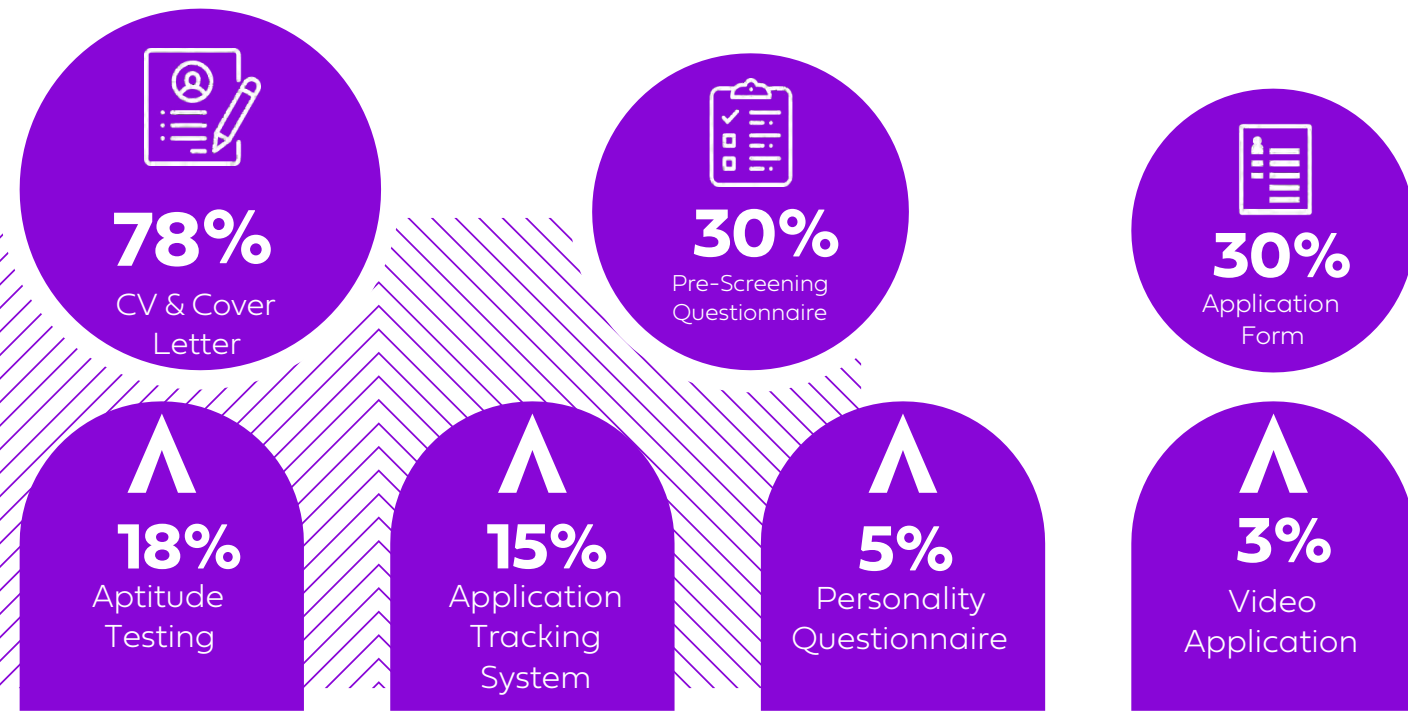


Finance & Insurance Soft Skills Ranked 1 – 12



The top three Technical Skills are Analytical Thinking, Collaborative and Self-Motivated. The top three Soft Skills are Positive Attitude and Energy, Ability to cope with Pressure and Work Ethic.

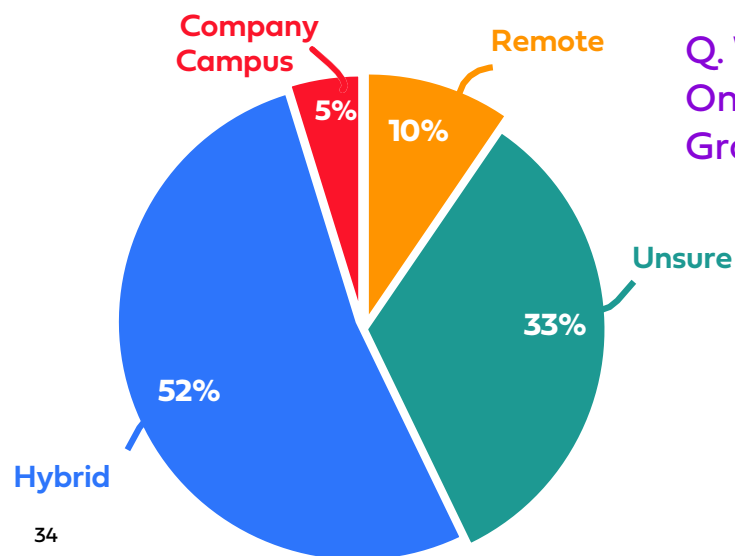
Application Process



Graduate Recruitment Challenges



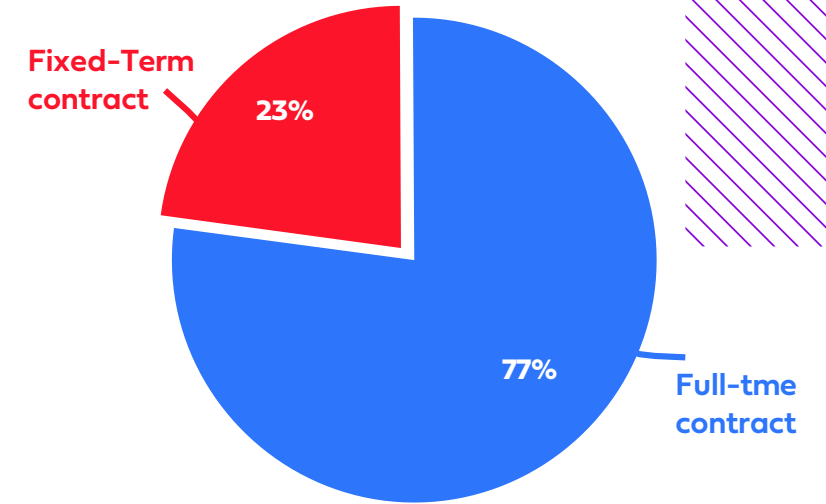
Onboarding



Q. What are your plans for Onboarding new Graduate Hires?

Contract Type

What type of graduate contract do you offer graduates?



Foreign Languages

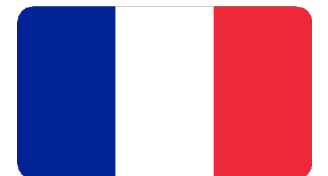
Q. What foreign languages do you require in your organisation?



11% Spanish



9% German



6% French



4% Chinese



2% Italian



62% No Foreign Languages

Employers Ranking

Q. Please rank the following of how positively you view them when reviewing applications?

#1

Degree Discipline

#2

Involvement in Volunteering/ Clubs/ Societies/ Sports clubs whilst in College

#3

Completing a summer internship or work placement

#4

Working to support themselves throughout College

#5

University/ College Attended

#6

Classification of degree (2:1)

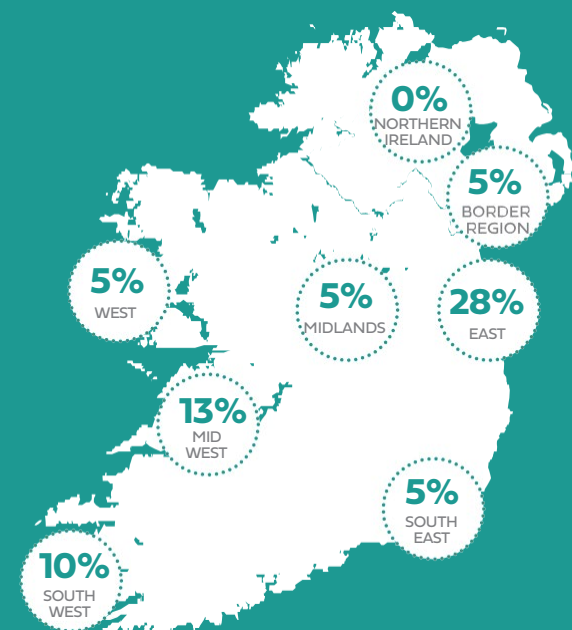
Sector Analysis

Information & Communications

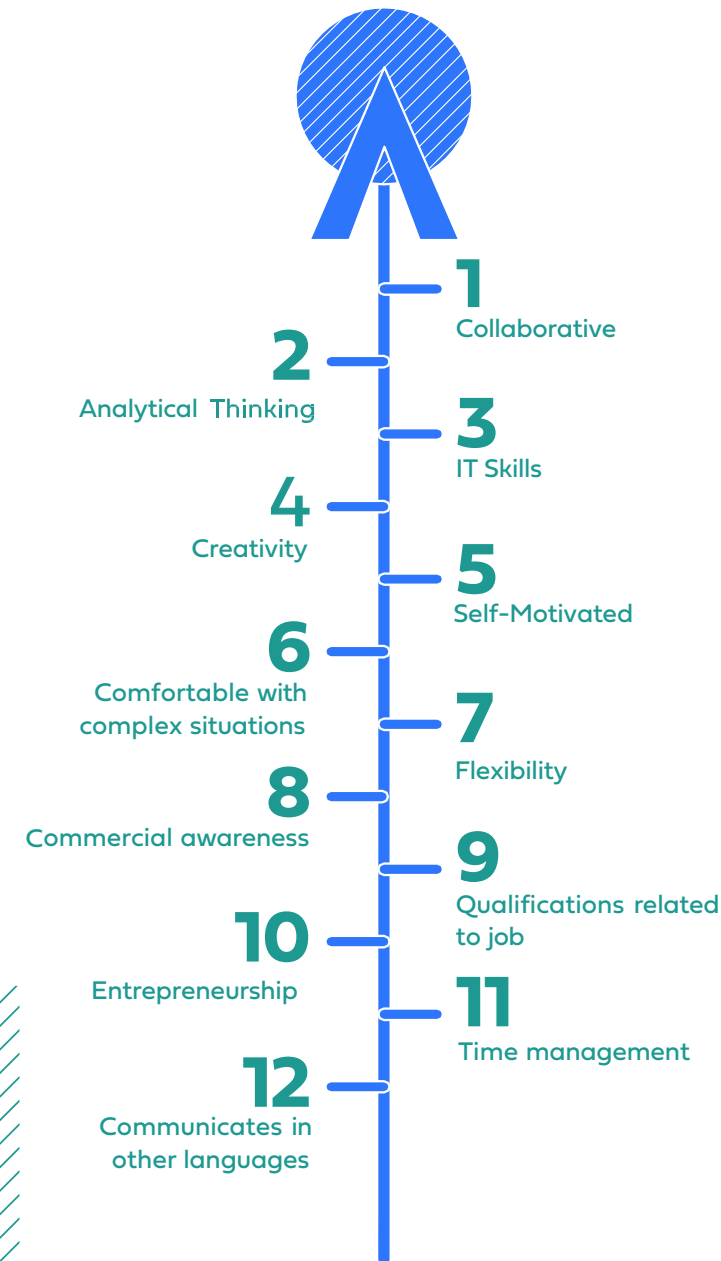
Survey results reveal the East as the primary location for jobs in the information and communication activities sector with 28% of jobs on offer in this region, followed by the South-West at 10% and the Midwest at 13%. The 2022 results reveal that 92% of companies will hire the same number or more graduates as they did in 2021.

Results also reveal that the average starting salary for Undergraduates is €28,545, Master's degrees is €33,941, and PhD graduates is €35,200.

Whilst in 2021, the east region played host to 45% of the sectors vacancies, it only accounts for 28% in 2022. The most significant increase is in the national (possibly remote working, i.e. no location requirements), which is now at 13% (7% increase), Midwest at 13% (7% increase) and the border regions at 5% (5% increase).



Information & Communications Technical Skills Ranked 1 – 12



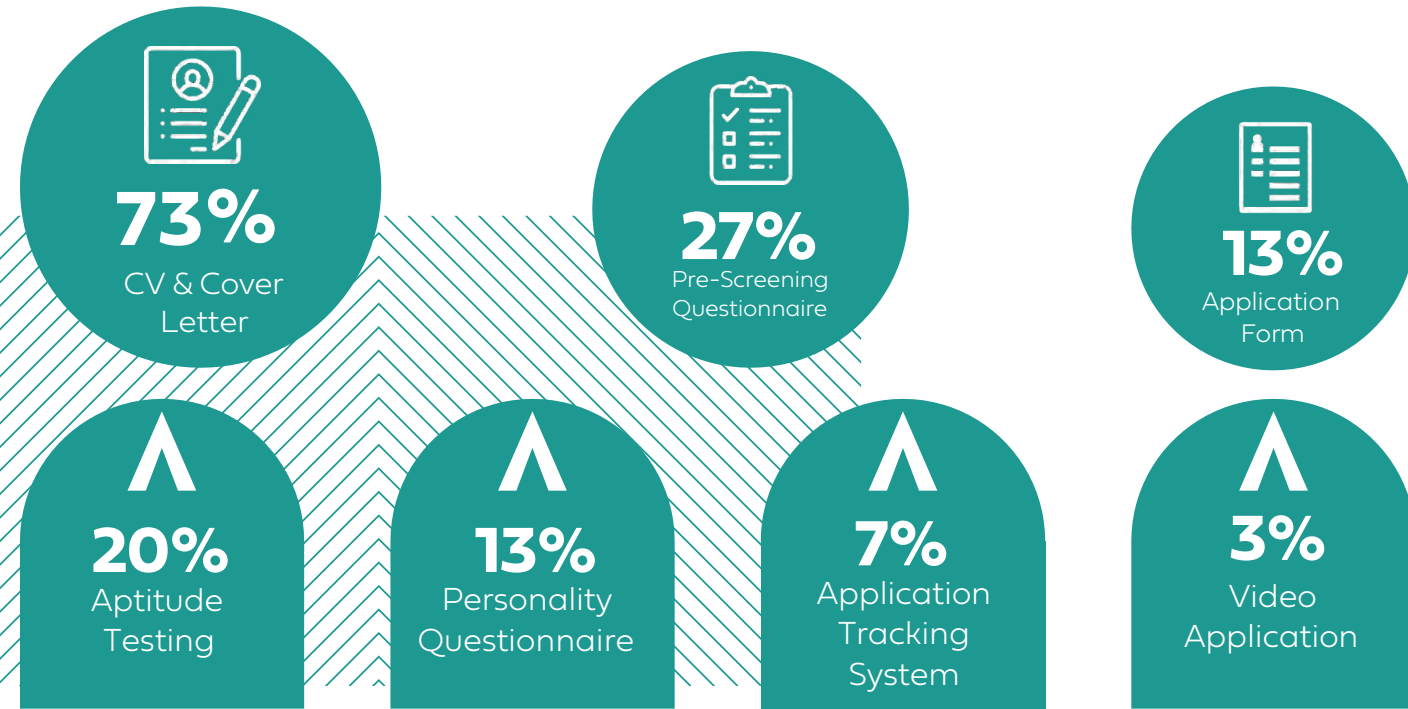
Information & Communications Soft Skills Ranked 1 – 12



The top three Technical skills are Collaborative, Analytical Thinking and IT Skills. The top three Soft Skills are Positive Attitude and Energy, Ability to Cope with Pressure and Work Ethic.

Sector Analysis | Information & Communications

Application Process

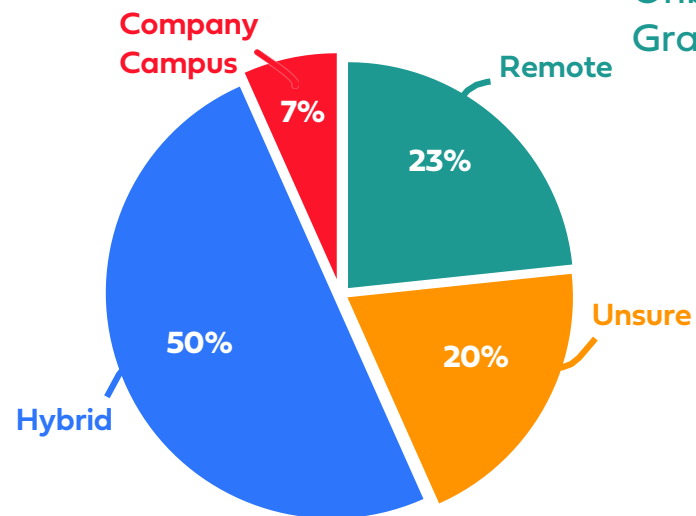


Graduate Recruitment Challenges



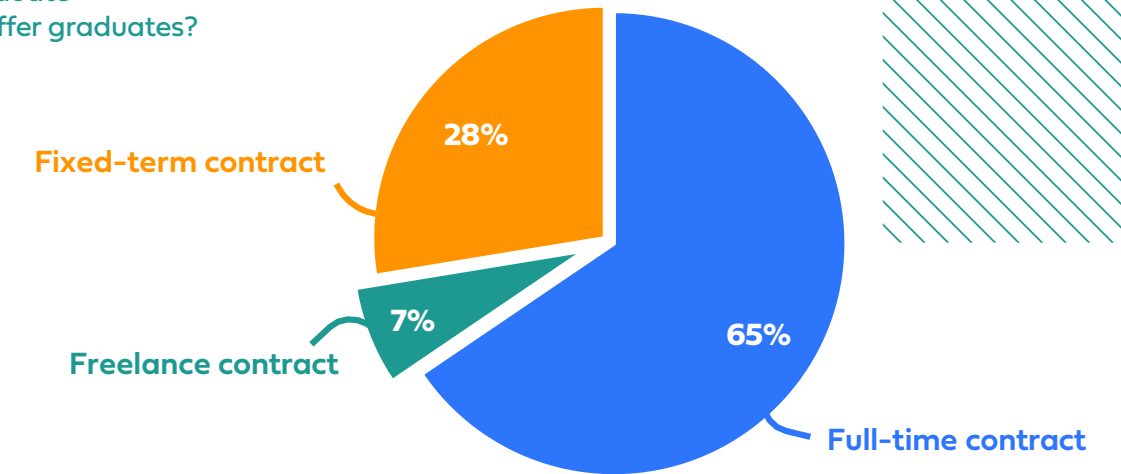
Onboarding

Q. What are your plans for Onboarding new Graduate Hires?



Contract Type

What type of graduate contract do you offer graduates?



Foreign Languages

Q. What foreign languages do you require in your organisation?



10%
German



7%
French



7%
Spanish



3%
Italian



70%
No Foreign Languages

Employers Ranking

Q. Please rank the following of how positively you view them when reviewing applications?

#1

University/ College Attended

#2

Working to support themselves throughout College

#3

Classification of degree (2:1)

#4

Involvement in Volunteering/ Clubs/ Societies/ Sports clubs whilst in College

#5

Completing a summer internship or work placement

#6

Degree Discipline

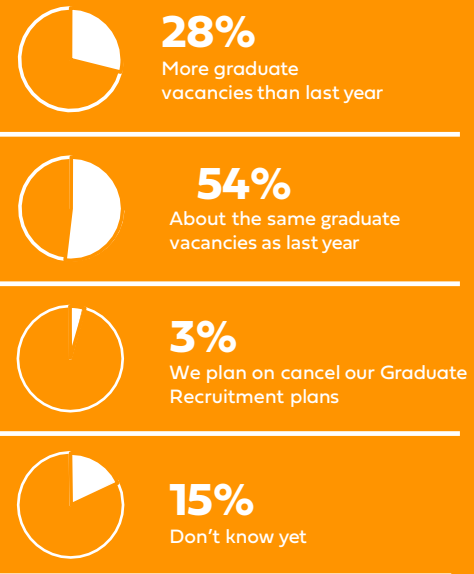
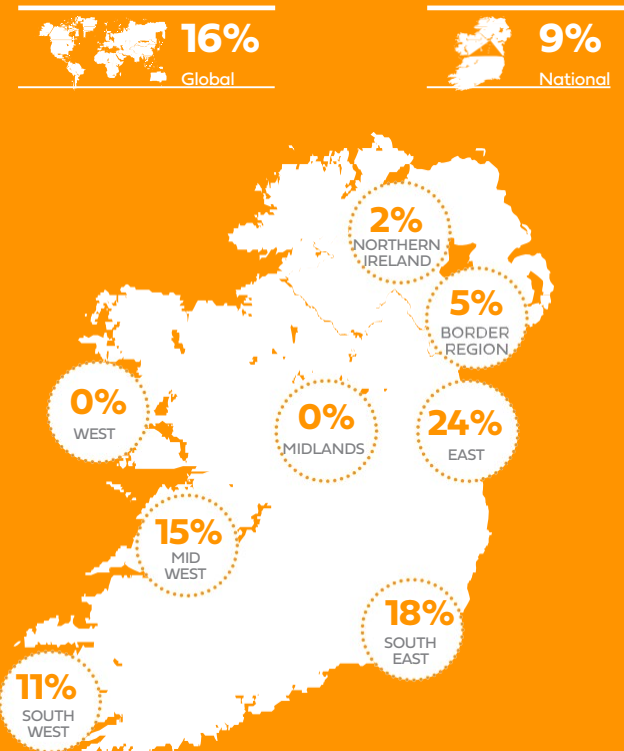
Sector Analysis

Manufacturing

Survey results reveal the East Region as the primary location for jobs in the manufacturing sector with 24% of jobs on offer in this region, followed by the South-East at 18%. The Mid-West and South-West at 15% and 11% respectively. The 2022 results reveal that 82% of companies will hire the same number or more graduates as they did in 2021, and 3% will hire slightly less than last year.

Results also reveal that the average starting salary for Undergraduates is €31,667, Master's degrees is €36,652, and for PhD graduates is €36,636

The manufacturing sector has experienced an increase in the number of vacancies in the East to 24%, by 4% on 2021 figures. The Midwest and Southeast increased to 15% and 18%, respectively. Global jobs have decreased by 4% to 16%, and National has remained at 9%.



Manufacturing Technical Skills Ranked 1 – 12

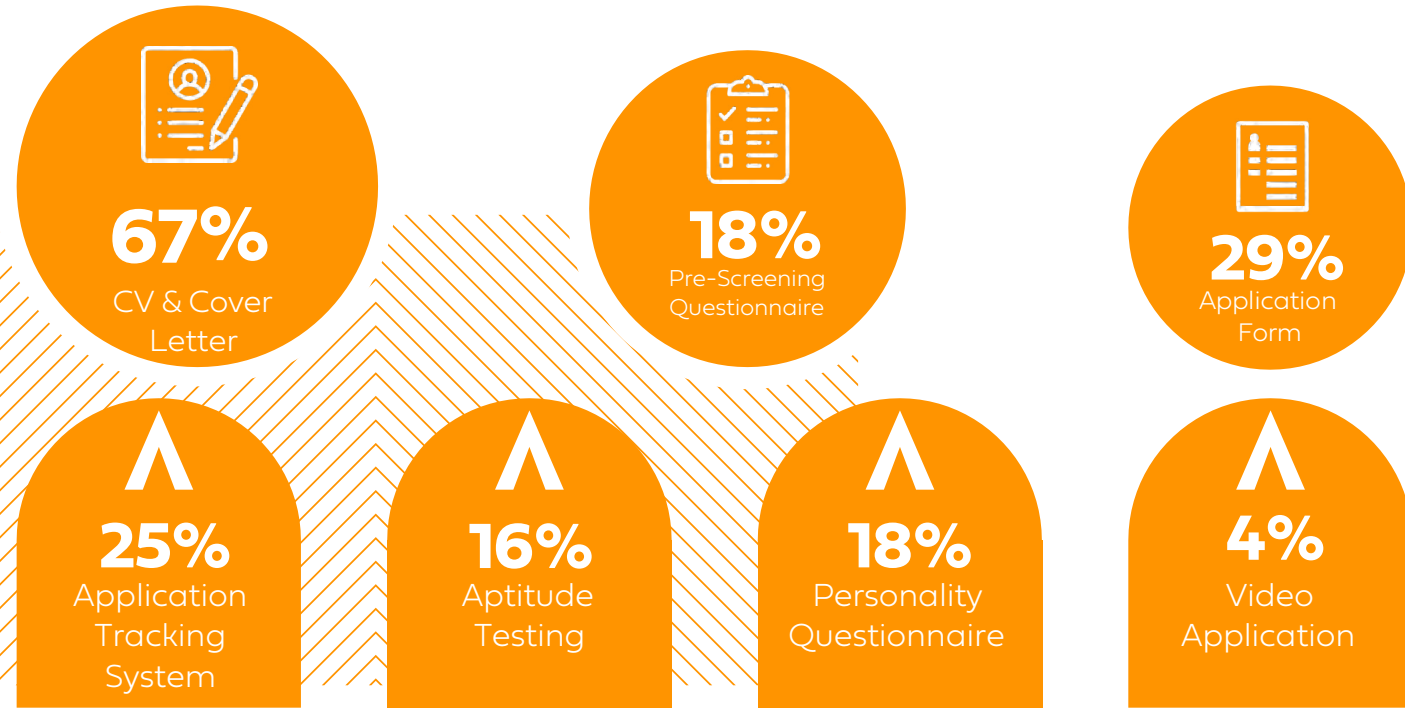


Manufacturing Soft Skills Ranked 1 – 12



The top three Technical Skills are Qualifications related to the Job, Analytical Thinking and Self-Motivated. The top three Soft Skills are Positive Attitude and Energy, Ability to Cope with Pressure and Seeks Opportunities for Continuous Learning.

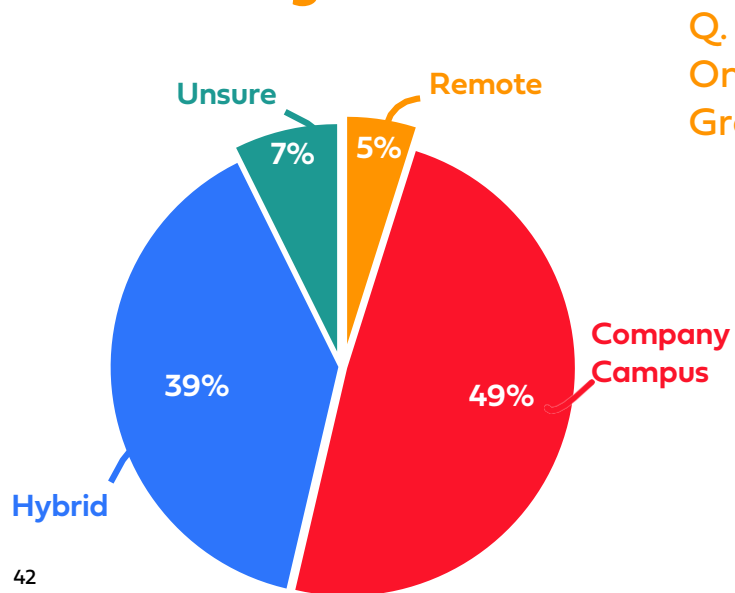
Application Process



Graduate Recruitment Challenges

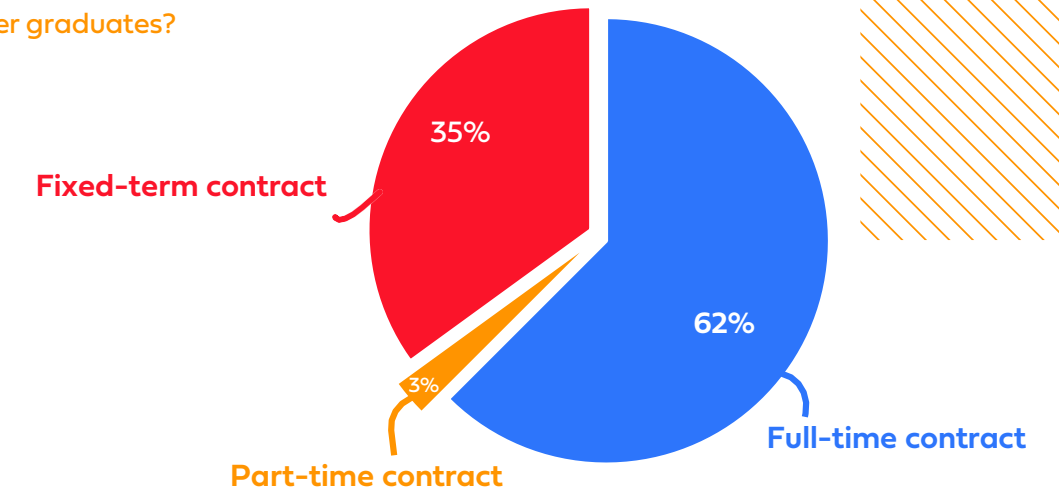


Onboarding



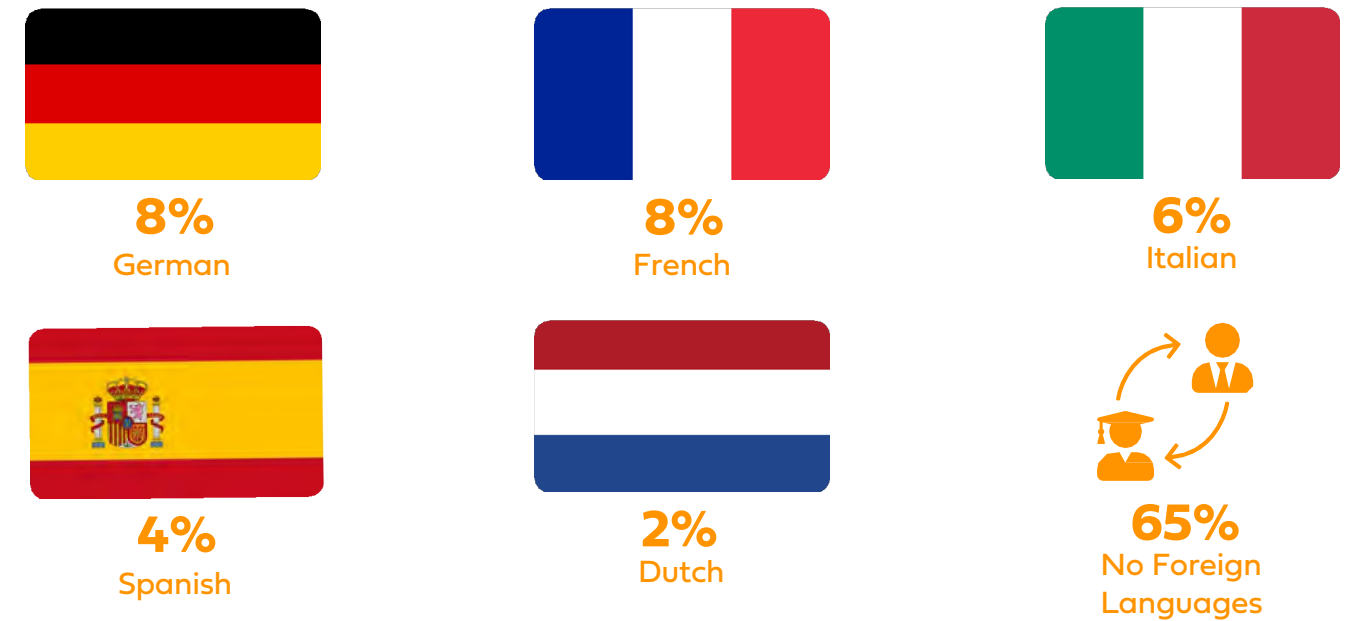
Contract Type

What type of graduate contract do you offer graduates?



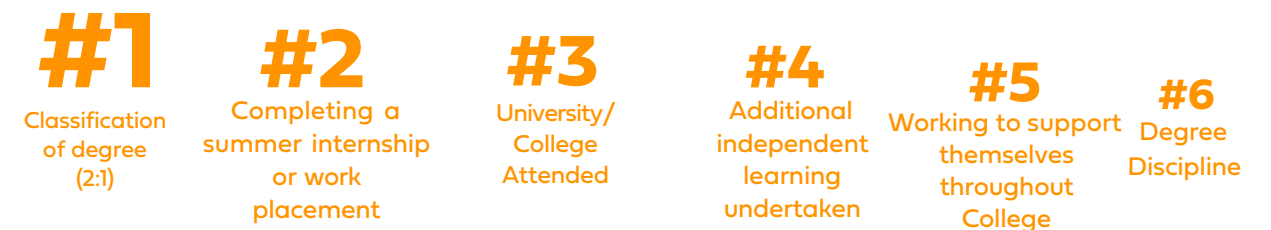
Foreign Languages

Q. What foreign languages do you require in your organisation?



Employers Ranking

Q. Please rank the following of how positively you view them when reviewing applications?



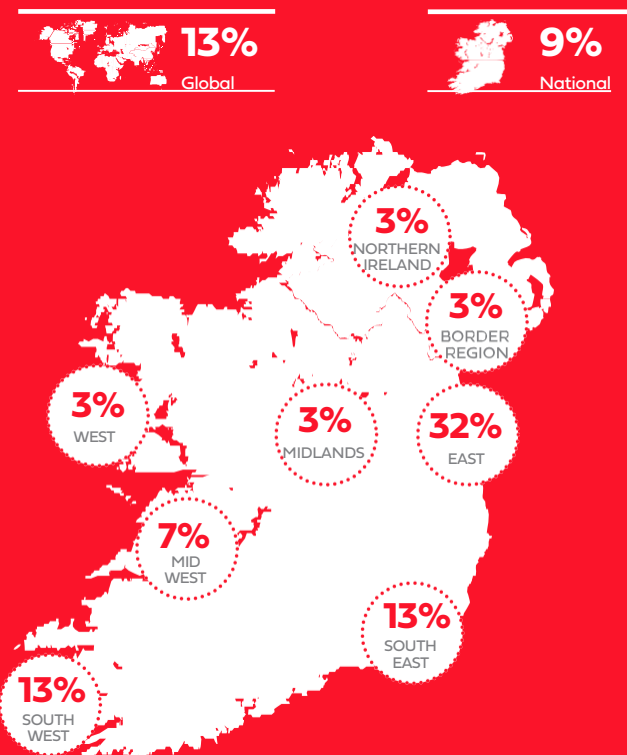
Sector Analysis

Professional, Scientific & Technical Activities

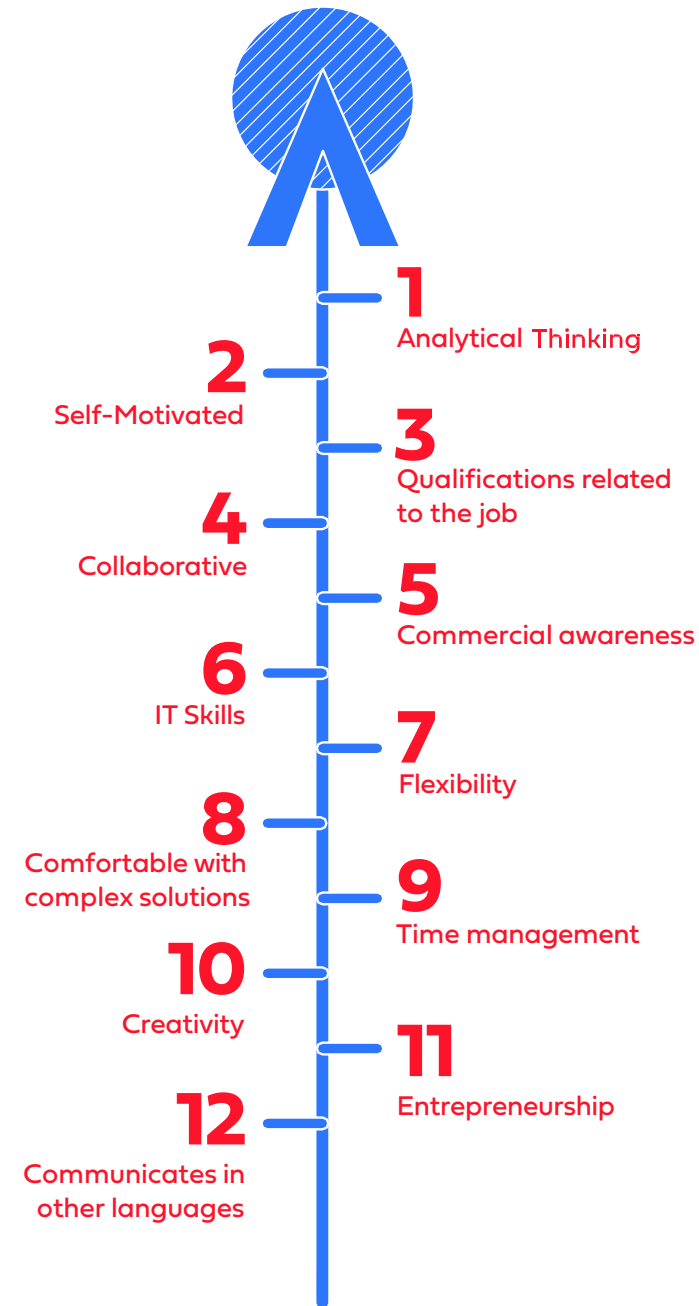
Sector Analysis Survey results reveal the East as the primary location for jobs in the professional, scientific, and technical activities sector with 32% of jobs on offer in this region, followed by the South-West at 13%, South-East at 13% and the Mid-West at 7%. The 2022 results reveal that 86% of companies will hire the same number or more graduates as they did in 2021, and 10% will hire slightly less than last year.

Results also reveal that the average starting salary for Undergraduates is €30,226, Master's degrees is €32,778, and for PhD graduates is €34,333

While the East continues to offer the most opportunities, 32%, it has decreased from last year's 35%. The numbers in the Southeast increased by 7% to 13%. The southwest is also at 13%, having grown by 2% from last year. Like the East, the West has seen a 4% reduction in roles. Global jobs have decreased by 8% to 13%, while the national number rose by 5% to 9%



Professional, Scientific & Technical Activities Technical Skills Ranked 1 – 12



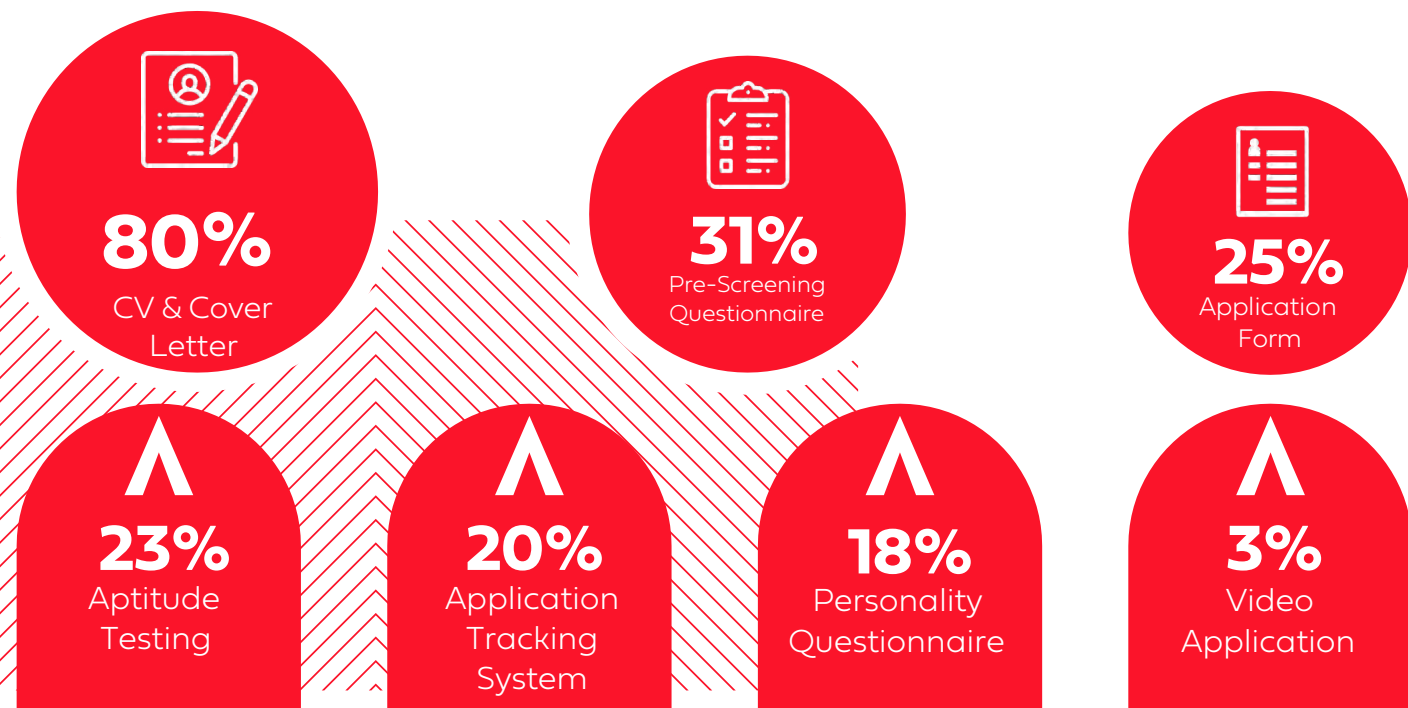
The top three technical Skills are Analytical Thinking, Self-Motivated and Qualifications related to the Job. The top three Soft Skills are Positive Attitude and Energy, Work Ethic and The Ability to Cope with Pressure.

Professional, Scientific & Technical Activities Soft Skills Ranked 1 – 12



Professional, Scientific & Technical Activities

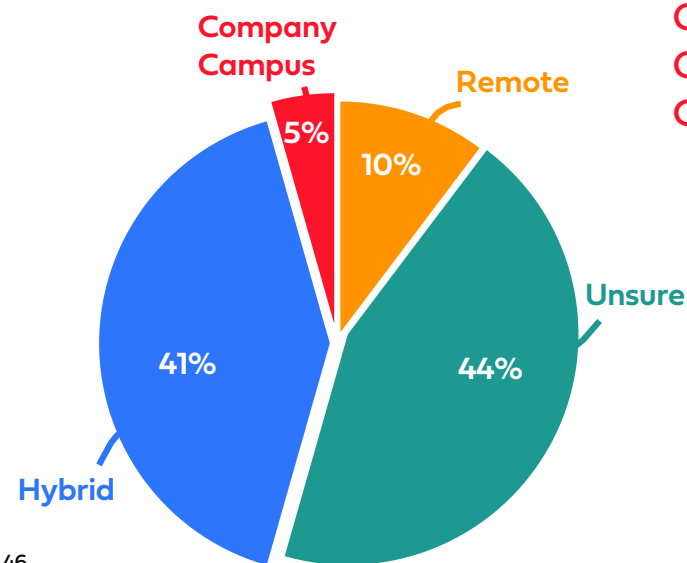
Application Process



Graduate Recruitment Challenges



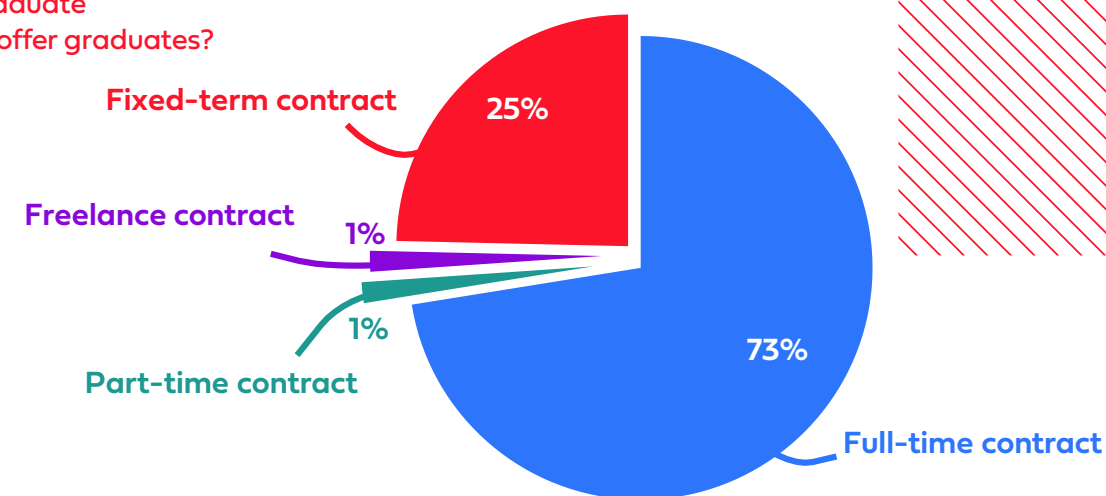
Onboarding



Q. What are your plans for Onboarding new Graduate Hires?

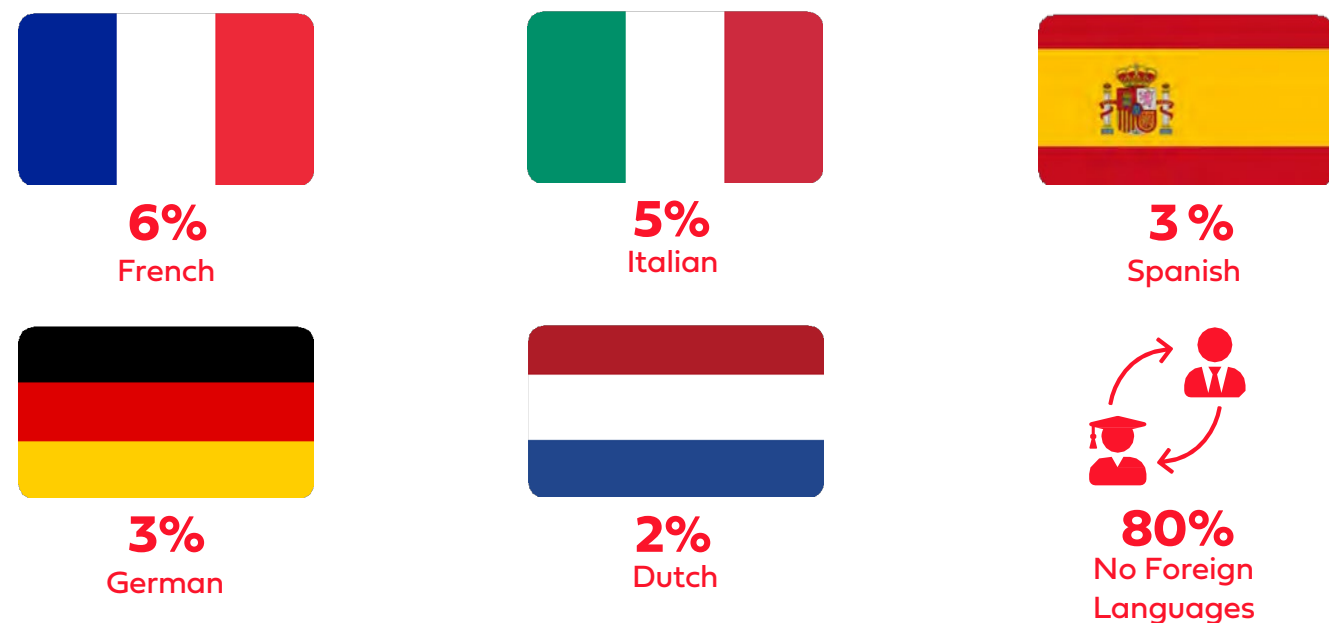
Contract Type

What type of graduate contract do you offer graduates?



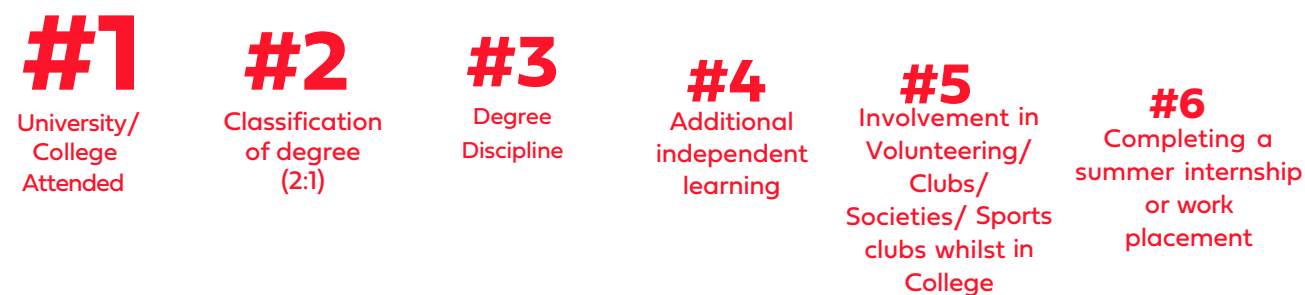
Foreign Languages

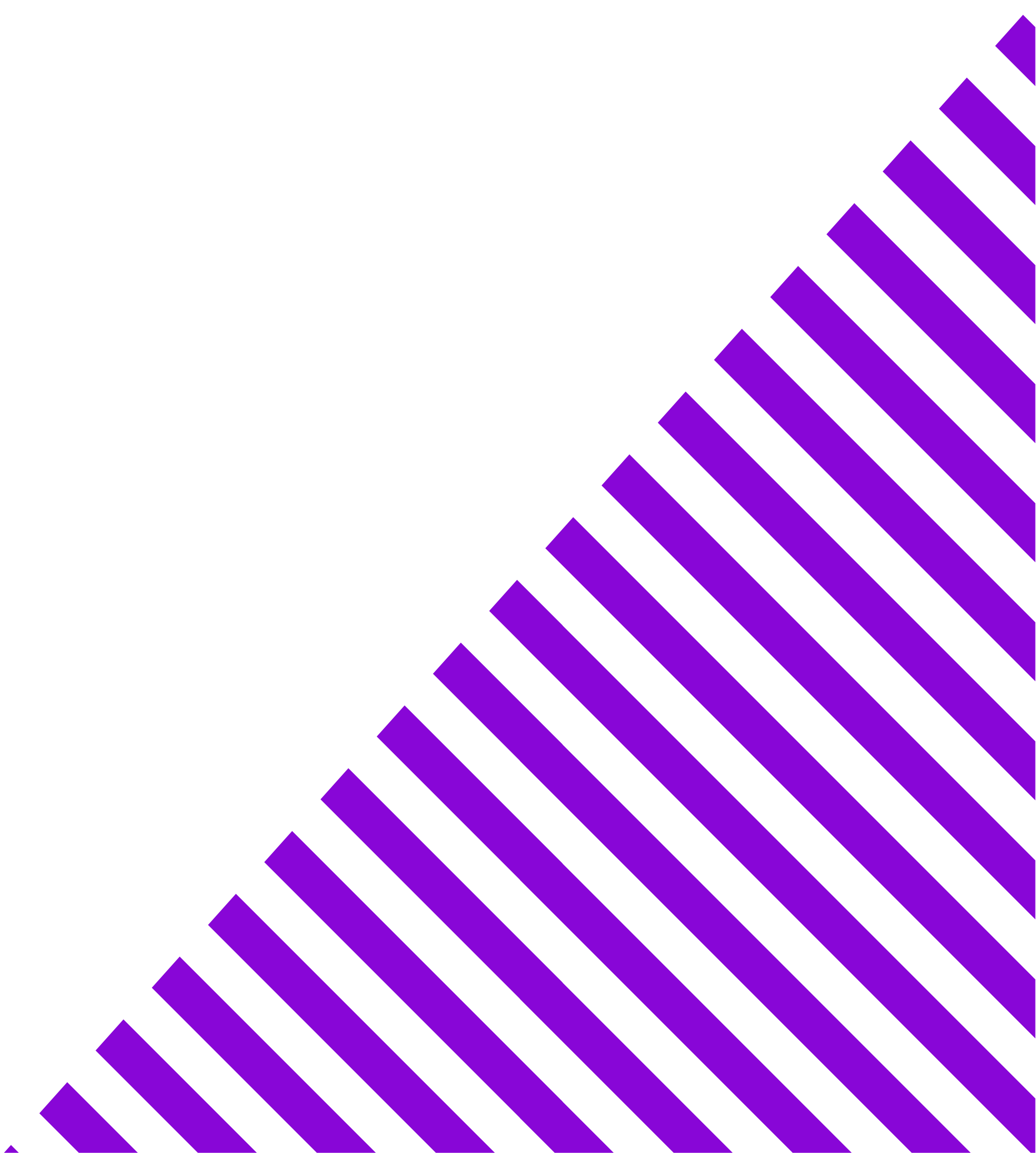
Q. What foreign languages do you require in your organisation?

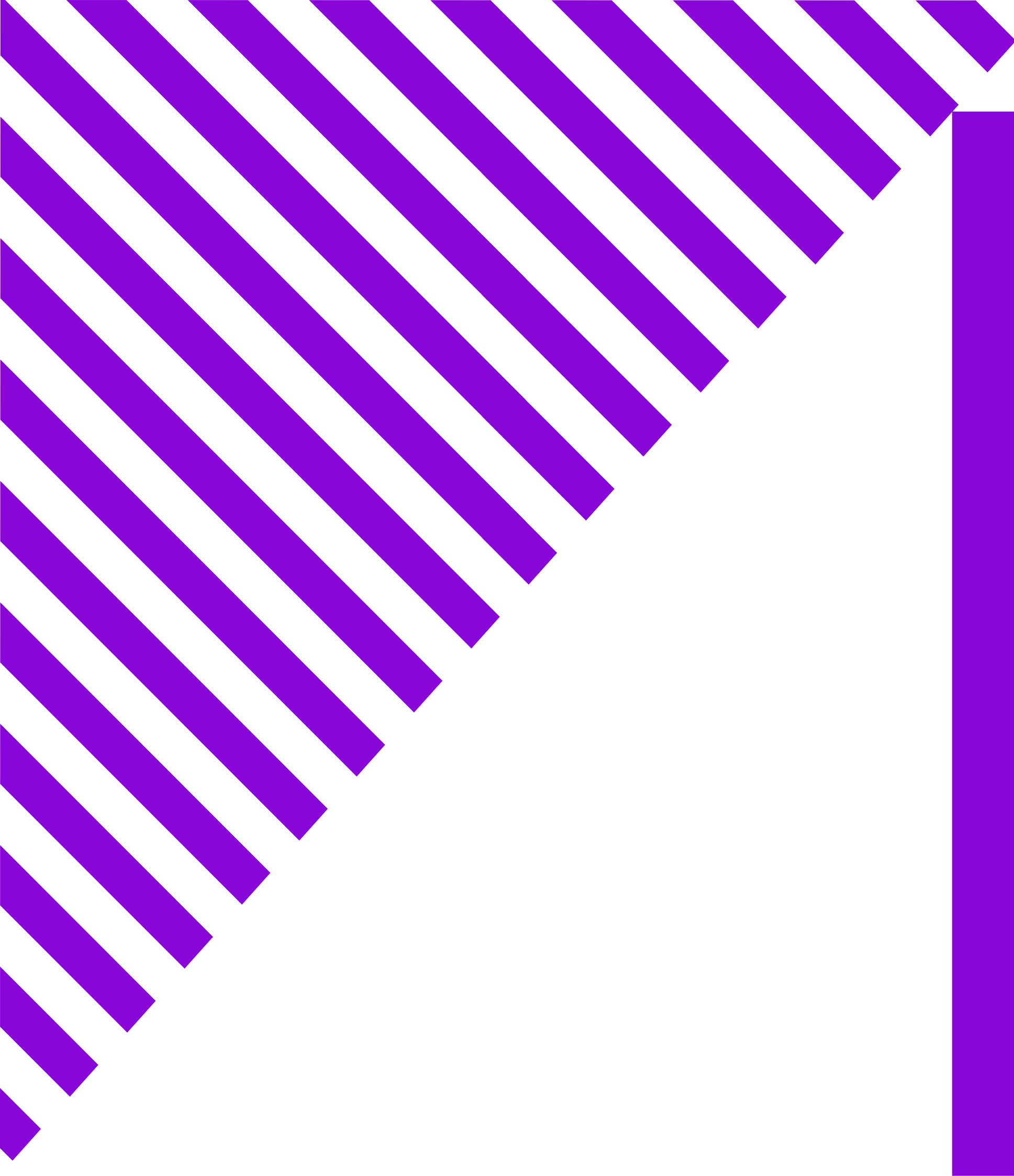


Employers Ranking

Q. Please rank the following of how positively you view them when reviewing applications?







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