

## Why are my vacancies getting harder to fill?



The skills shortage is nothing new, nor is the theory that Brexit will only add to the problem.

However, it now seems that this theory may be turning into fact. Research from Indeed last month stated that EU job searches for UK-based roles had seen the sharpest drop ever recorded by the site (18%).

The Guardian spoke to those involved with the operational running of SMEs to see how their experiences compared with Indeed's findings – and what it means for hiring managers.

Sarah Heward, Owner of The Real Food Café, said the applications had dried up – and her recruiter couldn't help.

She explained: "After Brexit it was like someone turned off the tap on job applications, they were down by more than a half.

"We spoke to our recruitment agent and he says it's the same for all British companies. The East European people he specialised in placing in jobs feel less welcome in the UK now and, since the devaluation of the pound, they'd far rather be earning euros in a country they know they can settle down in if they choose."

But this does have benefits for recruiters. While some employers are scrambling for candidates, others are turning to recruitment agencies for the first time. Now, more than ever, the value of using a recruiter far outweighs the time, effort and expense of in-house recruitment.

Here at Across-the-Board Recruitment Ltd we are finding that many of our EU temp workers are asking us to find them permanent roles before we exit.

Julia Munder, Marketing Manager for York-based leather accessories company Maxwell Scott Bags, said the firm had to use a recruitment agency for the first time. She described her experience: "We'd normally have enough speculative CVs coming in or a job ad would bring in a pile of applications.

"But since Brexit it's dried up. Even with an agency on board we haven't managed so far to fill this key role. We offered it to two people but they turned it down for jobs they considered to be more suitable in mainland Europe."

Ben Martin, Founder of Brexit Tracker, an online research resource looking at the impact of Brexit on SMEs, explained why recruitment is, and will continue to be, a top concern for companies now and in the years to come: "If you're an EU citizen, the weakened Pound means you've now got to earn 15% more than last year to make Britain attractive.

"So, it's not a huge surprise that people are favouring earning Euros in places they feel more welcome and there isn't the risk they could be asked to leave in two years' time."