

# Viewpoint

September 2021

## Special edition: Focus on labour shortages

**Economics** from **IGD**



# What's in it for you?

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## The Aim: about this series of reports

Our experts track and monitor multiple sources of information. Combined with our knowledge of the food and consumer goods industry, and rich shopper insights, this shapes our 'Viewpoint'.

We provide this analysis free-of-charge because we believe that it supports better planning and decision-making, to the benefit of the shoppers we all serve and society as a whole.

We will continue to monitor closely the longer-term impact of COVID-19, EU Exit and other forces, keeping you up to date in future issues of this series.

## The Benefits: how this issue will help you

We noted in our [recent quarterly Viewpoint](#) report that, as the economy recovers, new challenges are emerging.

Although not all the causes of current labour market challenges are new, the consequences have emerged powerfully over recent months. In this special edition of Viewpoint, we look at this issue in more depth.

We explore the various long-term influences at work and recent events which have brought matters to a head. We also consider what the future may hold, and the measures which might be taken by businesses to help protect themselves from future workforce challenges.

We have spoken to senior stakeholders at a range of major retailers, manufacturers and foodservice companies, as well as other organisations they work alongside. This insight, combined with desk research and third-party data / forecasts has shaped our view on how to avoid the next labour shortage crisis.

The identity of participants is confidential, but IGD thanks all those who were able to support this work.

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## Meet our experts



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# What's the IGD view?

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Following the recession of 2008–09, the UK experienced over a decade of slow economic growth, weak productivity gains and low inflation.

Immigration, especially from the EU, offset unfavourable demographics and wage inflation was limited, despite high employment.

The situation for food and consumer goods businesses was similar; widespread recruitment from beyond the UK kept wages static in real terms, especially in entry-level roles.

EU Exit, combined with COVID-19, has disrupted this stable situation. Food and consumer goods businesses report widespread shortages of people and difficulty recruiting for certain roles (eg: drivers, vets).

Service to the public has been impacted, with labour shortages manifesting in out-of-stocks and, in extreme cases, closure of outlets.

Challenges relating to COVID-19 seem to be receding, reducing some of the immediate pressure on businesses, but a return to previous conditions seems unlikely. With the UK now outside the EU and inward migration restricted, UK businesses will come to rely more on the domestic labour pool, which is expected to shrink slowly.

Wages are now rising and this is expected to continue, as businesses compete to recruit and retain people. With labour supply stretched thin, vulnerability to further disruptive events will be high.

Food and consumer goods businesses should consider recent disruption to be a warning of future challenges and look to mitigate the risk through a range of possible actions, including:

- ▲ Developing a long-term plan for labour, perhaps in conjunction with key partners
- ▲ Improving pay and working conditions where necessary
- ▲ Attracting more people to work in the industry by raising its profile
- ▲ Developing the skills and capability of those working in the industry
- ▲ Creating workplace cultures where everyone can thrive
- ▲ Exploring greater automation, where possible
- ▲ Reviewing the balance of in-house resource vs agency workers, temporary staff and 3rd party services

## IGD's role in building a workforce fit for the future

# Attract

Over 65,000 young people have developed vital employability skills with us and now have a better understanding of the opportunities available in the food and consumer goods sector

# Develop

We've developed the skills and capability of 3,500 people from 650 companies through our free learning programmes

# Thrive

Supporting businesses to create inclusive workplaces through our benchmarking insight, best practice case studies and learning programmes to inspire action

# What's the current situation?

## Background

Between the recession of 2008-09 and the emergence of COVID-19 in 2020, the UK economy grew steadily, but slowly. Demand for labour remained high, and many overseas nationals came to the UK to work, especially from the EU.

Many UK businesses chose to grow by increasing the number of people employed, rather investing in equipment and technology. Overall productivity growth (ie: output-per-hour-worked) remained persistently slow.

EU Exit and the accompanying changes to immigration / labour policy were expected to challenge UK employers. However, the simultaneous outbreak of COVID-19 introduced unexpected issues, along with severe economic shock.

Around 10% of EU workers have left the UK, although perhaps only temporarily – many have secured the right to return.



## Whole economy

Fortunately, COVID-19 has not led to job losses on the scale initially expected, at least not so far – the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (furlough) appears to have protected employment, albeit at great cost.

With the economy recovering, demand for labour is returning. In June 2021, unemployment was 4.6% and there were 1,034,000 unfilled job vacancies – a record.

Shortage of workers is reported in many industries (eg: construction) and pay is beginning to rise. According to [CIPD research](#) from Summer 2021, 39% of UK employers found it difficult to recruit for at least some roles, with only 16% reporting no difficulties.



## Food and consumer goods

About 4.1m people work in the UK's food and consumer goods industry and more still work in associated industries (eg: packaging, transport).

Many businesses in the industry rely heavily on workers from the EU, making them especially vulnerable to issues connected with EU Exit.

Unsurprisingly, food and consumer good businesses have been hit hard by recruitment and retention challenges in 2020 and 2021.

Shortage of HGV drivers has become severe enough to disrupt food supply and the government has committed to a [package of support](#).

However, IGD's research suggests that shortage of people goes beyond transport – businesses across the supply chain report problems severe enough to affect operations. In some cases, the range of

goods being produced has been reduced and some suppliers have been unable to supply customers in wholesale, retail and foodservice. Some outlets have been forced to close (eg: Nandos).

A recent [report](#) commissioned by organisations from across the food and farming sector estimates there are more than 500,000 vacancies across food and drink businesses.

Shoppers are being impacted – IGD's ShopperVista research shows concerns over availability in Summer 2021, with fresh produce and protein being especially affected.



“

**Last Saturday, there were 600 stores we could not deliver to... We're in a driver shortage crisis**

Ash Amirahmadi, Arla  
[quoted by BBC](#)

”

“

**The UK food industry has been experiencing disruption across its supply chain due to staff shortages ... Nando's will be lending seventy of our brilliant team members to support key suppliers**

Nando's spokesman  
[quoted by Evening Standard](#)

”

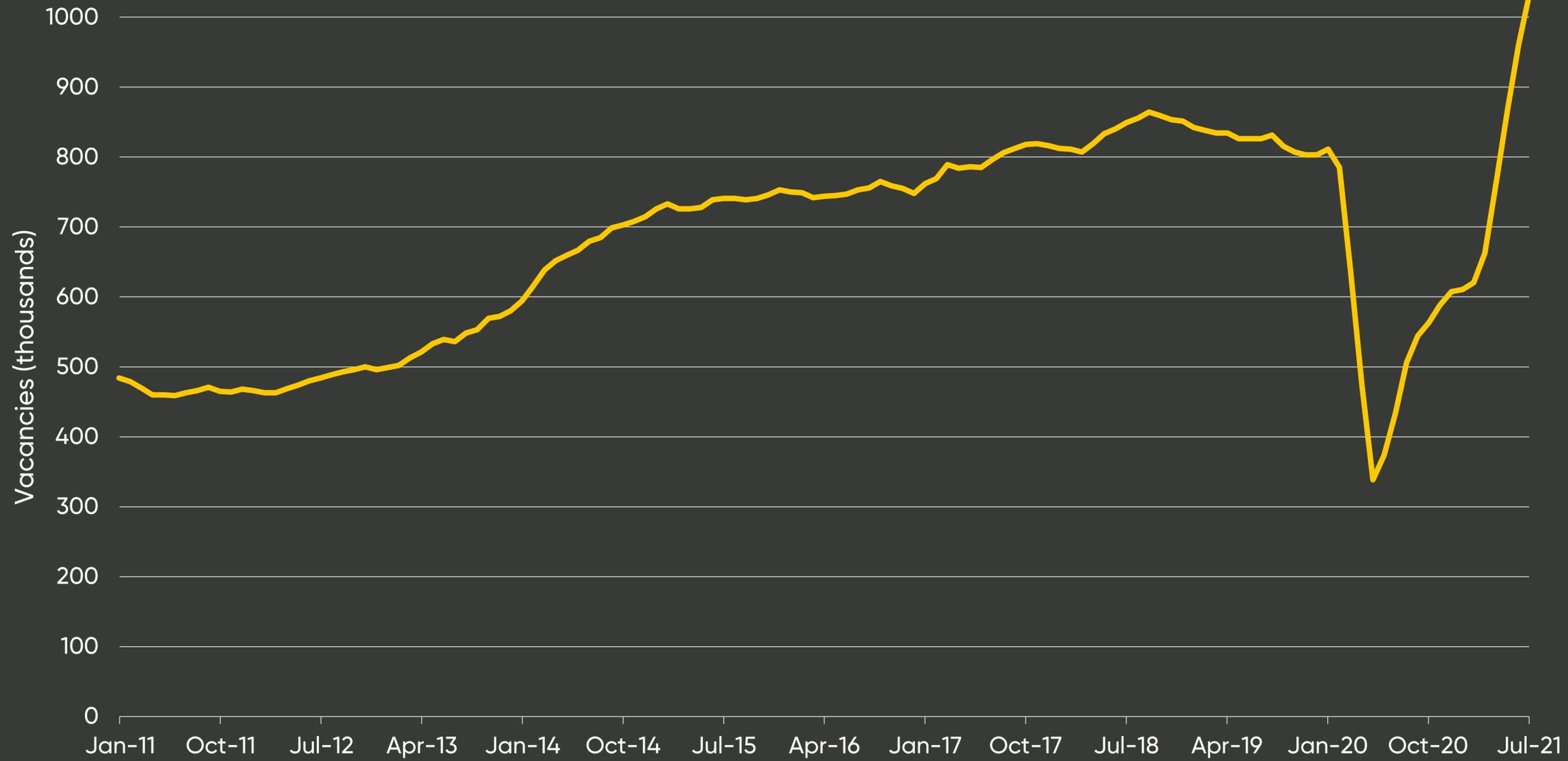
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**The British poultry meat industry is facing a significant shortage of workers across farming and processing with businesses reporting an average vacancy rate of over 16% of their total workforce.**

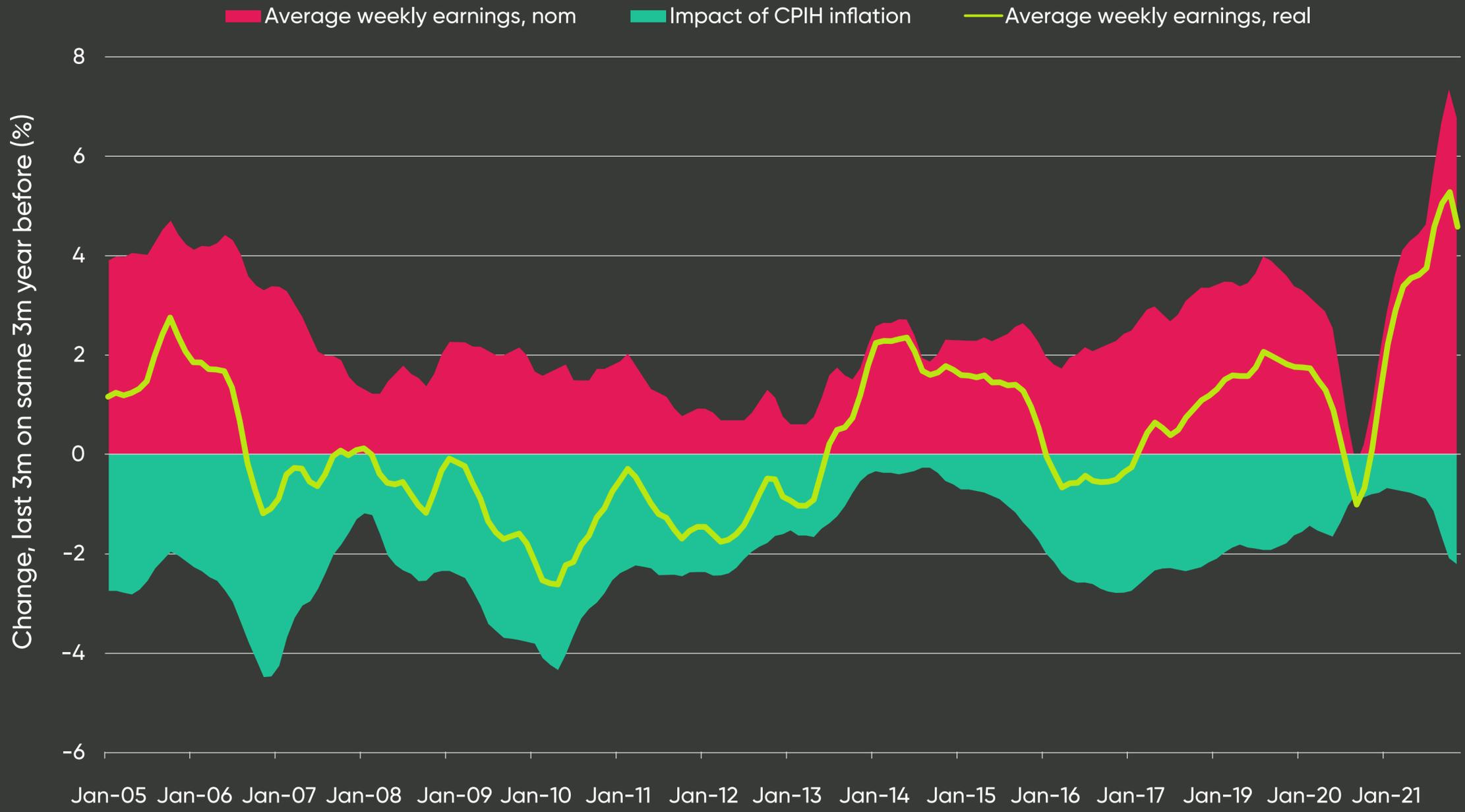
Press release  
[British Poultry Council](#)

”

## Unfilled job vacancies Source: ONS, September 2021



## Average pay growth Source: ONS and IGD calculation, September 2021



**Actual real wage growth may be slightly lower than shown in 2020 and 2021**

**Note:** Calculating change in prices and wages over 2020 and 2021 has been made more difficult by COVID effects

# Causes Long Term



## Demographics

Fertility rate in the UK (ie: average live births per woman) is below 'population replacement' level (ie: about 2.1 babies per woman). The crude birth rate (ie: live births per 1,000 people) in the UK is also declining.

In spite of this, the total UK population has risen steadily, due to a combination of longer life expectancy and net inward-migration. The working-age population grew up to 2020, but it may now have peaked – looking ahead, the number of workers is expected to level-off (best case) or – more likely – decline, due to reduced migration. Even if the number of workers remains steady, the growth of the total population means that the proportion of workers to other citizens will fall.

Increasing dependency on those of working age will challenge government and businesses – there will be fewer people to do work and pay taxes.

Basic demographic drivers (ie: births, deaths, life spans) are unlikely to change significantly in the near future, although migration might be adjusted up or down more readily, via policy.

Low fertility rates are not unique to the UK. There is no country in the EU where fertility rates are above 2.1 and so population ageing and reliance on migration can be observed across the continent. Few nations have managed to reverse declining fertility once the fertility rate has fallen below 2.1 – IGD is only aware of one country which has managed it, barely: Tunisia.

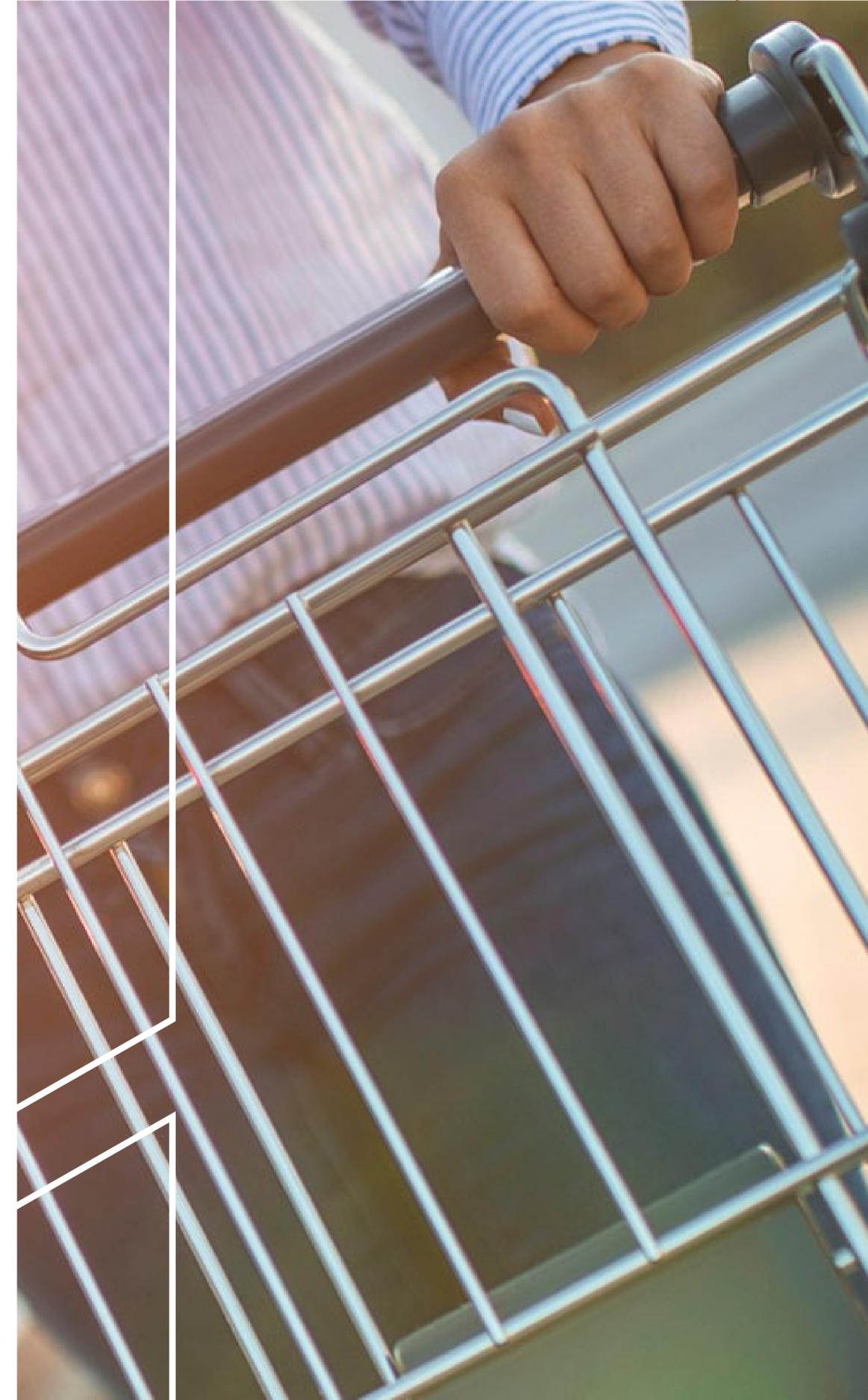


## Market evolution

The UK population has grown steadily for decades, with growth accelerating in the first part of the 21st Century. More food, drink and consumer goods are consumed and more labour is needed to provide them.

There has been growth in some of the more labour-intensive retail channels such as convenience and online retail. This may undermine overall productivity in some parts of the supply chain. However, this may be balanced by the expansion of discount retail, which typically minimises labour input, at least at outlet level.

Regulation may also play a role. Businesses have greater regulatory obligations and are increasingly focused on the Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) agenda, requiring new skills and greater management bandwidth. Industry interviews reveal particular demand for workers with specialist ESG knowledge.



## Low unemployment

Unemployment rose briefly in the aftermath of the Credit Crunch and the Great Recession of 2008, but has been low since then, averaging 4.5% over 2015 to 2019.

Labour market interventions such as the National Living Wage and compulsory pension schemes do not seem to have changed this, as some analysts predicted when they were introduced.

Socially, this is positive, but it means that many businesses in the UK do not have a large pool of uncommitted local workers to recruit from.

## Price competition at retail

Retail prices for food and consumer goods have risen over the last decade, but have not kept pace with general inflation, meaning that they have become relatively cheaper (foodservice has been less affected). Intense and sustained price competition is a reason for this, with major supermarkets aligning their offerings closely to discount rivals.

Abundant, affordable food is a social benefit, but a decade of static or falling prices creates consequences in the supply chain.

Some of this pressure has been offset by (patchy) productivity gains and by fairly stable commodity / energy prices. However, pressure may also manifest in the form of persistently low and stable 'real' wages for many people working in the industry.

Relatively static wages have been made possible by inward movement of new workers, a process that ended with EU Exit.



## Working culture

Several people we spoke to recognised that work in food and consumer goods is not seen as particularly desirable, especially in entry-level roles. Work may be physically demanding (eg: vegetable picking), uncomfortable (eg: working in refrigerators), anti-social (eg: night shifts) or otherwise unfavourable.

This is less of an issue in technical or leadership roles (eg: engineers, managers), but even here the profile of the industry was seen as a barrier to employment.

Expectations of work are also changing and some we spoke to noted issues such as work-life-balance, and desire to work from home as challenges to recruitment and retention.

Loyalty to employers was seen as fairly low. Unsurprisingly, lower-paid workers move readily to pursue better opportunities, but low-level managers were also increasingly mobile, creating issues around lost expertise.



## EU Exit

The number of non-UK nationals present in the UK workforce has risen steadily over time, with workers coming from both EU and non-EU countries. The food and consumer goods supply chain has been a key beneficiary of this; non-UK workers are present at every level and in all functions, including senior and technical roles.

In 2019, 13% of workers in food preparation roles came from the EU and 17% from other countries. In hospitality, 13% came from the EU and 16% from elsewhere (source: Migration Observatory, January 2021).

Recruitment of new EU workers to the UK began to slow down from 2016 onwards – well before the referendum on EU Exit. This may be because the relative value of Sterling began to fall, making the UK less attractive as a destination for migrant workers. It may also reflect the increasing attractiveness of other work opportunities.

Whatever the reason, EU Exit has not made the UK more attractive for overseas nationals. Recent changes to migration and labour policy are explicitly intended to reduce inward migration of less-skilled workers.

## The key point

Demographic trends progress slowly, but change is difficult to reverse or divert.

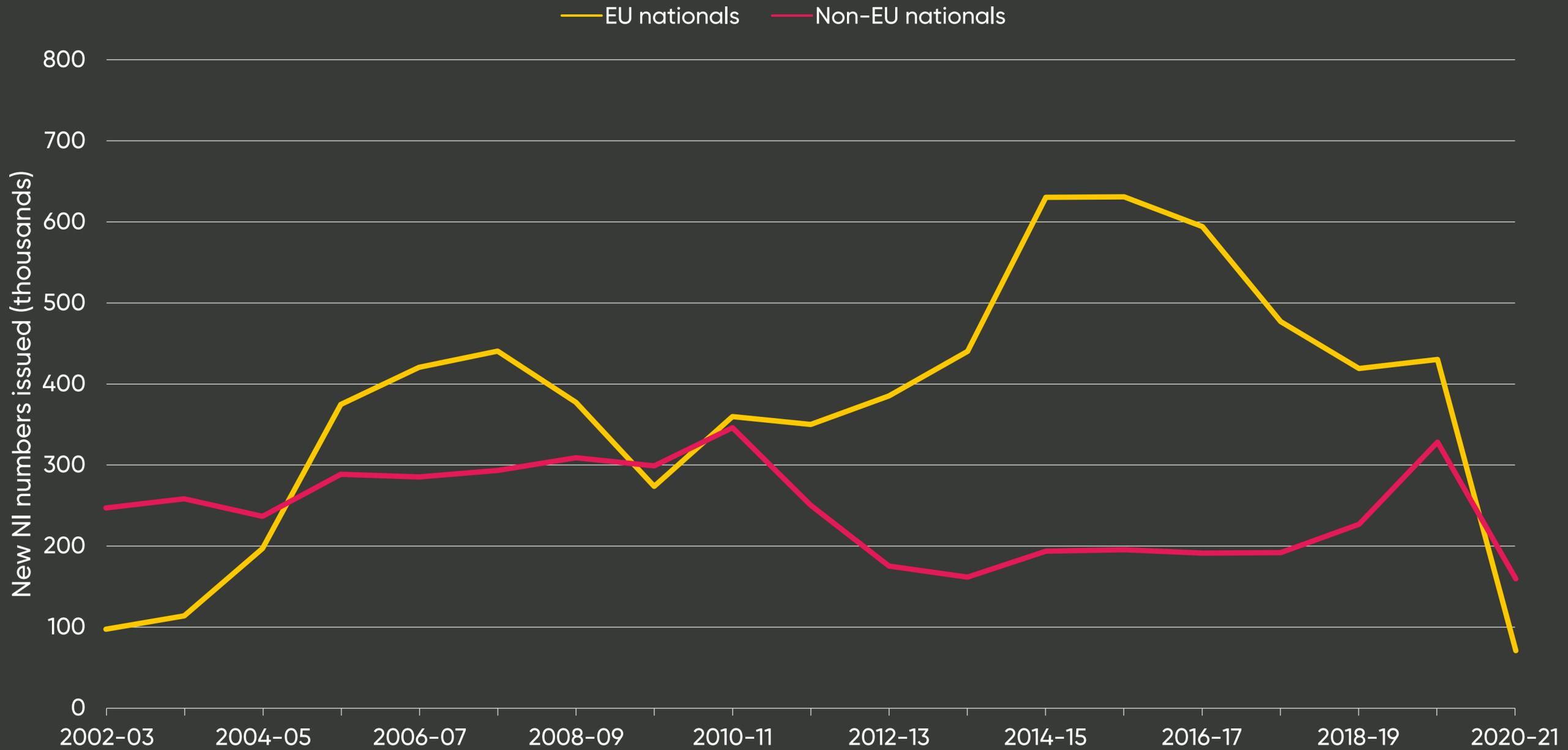
The peaking and likely decline of the UK working population will challenge business of all kinds, but especially food businesses – more people must be fed by a shrinking domestic pool of workers.

The rate of change will be sufficient for businesses to react and adapt, if they take the issue seriously – and they may be forced to do so as events unfold.

The shrinking of the domestic workforce will mean increasing vulnerability to new 'shocks' (eg: new disease outbreaks), new trends (eg: UK nationals emigrating) or simply the continuation of current negative trends.

Labour problems encountered in 2021 should therefore be seen as a warning of what may happen again in future, if no action is taken.

## New National Insurance numbers Source: DWP, September 2021



**Note:**  
Arrival of new workers from the EU was declining before the referendum on EU Exit in 2016

# Remedies Long Term



## Labour planning

In speaking to a number of businesses we discovered a range of capabilities in the field of labour planning.

Very large businesses – especially large retailers – typically have a vision of likely future labour needs and pursue this vision in a rational manner, over a long period: numbers, skills, locations, career plans etc. One employer even mentioned training workers on a speculative basis, investing in areas that might be needed in future, even where there is no immediate need for those skills. These businesses tended to be more upbeat and confident around long-term labour issues.

Others – usually those with limited management bandwidth – were forced to work on a shorter-term basis, having to react to demand and creating vulnerability to sudden shock events.

This would appear to give larger, more capable businesses a competitive edge, but no supply chain is stronger than its weakest link. There may be value in extending 'big business' know-how to smaller partners, helping to develop overall system resilience.



## Automation

Some parts of the food and consumer goods supply chain have benefited from rapid automation in recent years, especially manufacturing – productivity in manufacturing has risen as a result. Other parts have seen less investment, either because roles are hard to automate (eg: fruit picking, restaurant kitchens) or because the financial case for investment was insufficient.

Historically, pay in some roles has been low and labour has been in plentiful supply, due to inward migration. As a result, many businesses have chosen to employ human workers in place of advanced machines (ie: they have substituted labour-for-capital).

Technology continues to advance, potentially making it more useful and allowing each worker to create more economic value.

Not limited to production and handling of goods, it may also be applied to support or back-office tasks such as accounting and payroll. If, as IGD anticipates, labour costs rise above the historical level then the case for investment in automation will be strengthened.

However, other considerations will also apply. In addition to the future path of labour costs, businesses will also consider likely future interest rates, price for goods etc. Also, there are still limits to what technology can do – some roles still defy mechanisation and are likely to continue to do so – IGD calls this the 'automation gap'.



## Investing in skills

Some we spoke to noted that certain skills have been in short supply for some time. Ongoing industry evolution (eg: growing online demand, increasing automation) is likely to increase this shortage in years ahead.

Inward migration is expected to remain difficult in the years ahead meaning that it will be more difficult to bring in workers from outside the UK.

Government education and training provision is changing, helping to meet employer needs more closely, but this process is slow.

In future, food and consumer goods businesses may have to invest more to develop the skilled people that they will need.

This is an area of focus for IGD, providing free learning programmes for those working in the industry to equip everyone with the capability and potential to thrive in the workplace (see page 40).

Anticipated evolution of the supply chain as whole (eg: development of new farming techniques) may also change the way that workers are valued and rewarded.

Historically, more experienced workers have tended to command the highest wages but if the supply chain changes radically experience may be less valuable – workers with new skills may be more valuable, even if they have less practical experience.



## Investing in reputation and profile

The people we spoke to consistently told us that working in the food and consumer goods industry is often not a first choice for potential workers, either due to its low profile or reputation.

Developing the profile of the industry as an employer is essential. That is a priority for IGD, and we are harnessing the passion of those working in the food and consumer goods industry to develop employability skills in young people and showcase opportunities through initiatives such as our virtual work experience programme and school workshops (see page 40).

## Reducing reliance on labour and third parties

Labour shortages are currently most acute for contractors and labour providers (eg: 3rd party logistics seem more affected by driver shortages than in-house logistics).

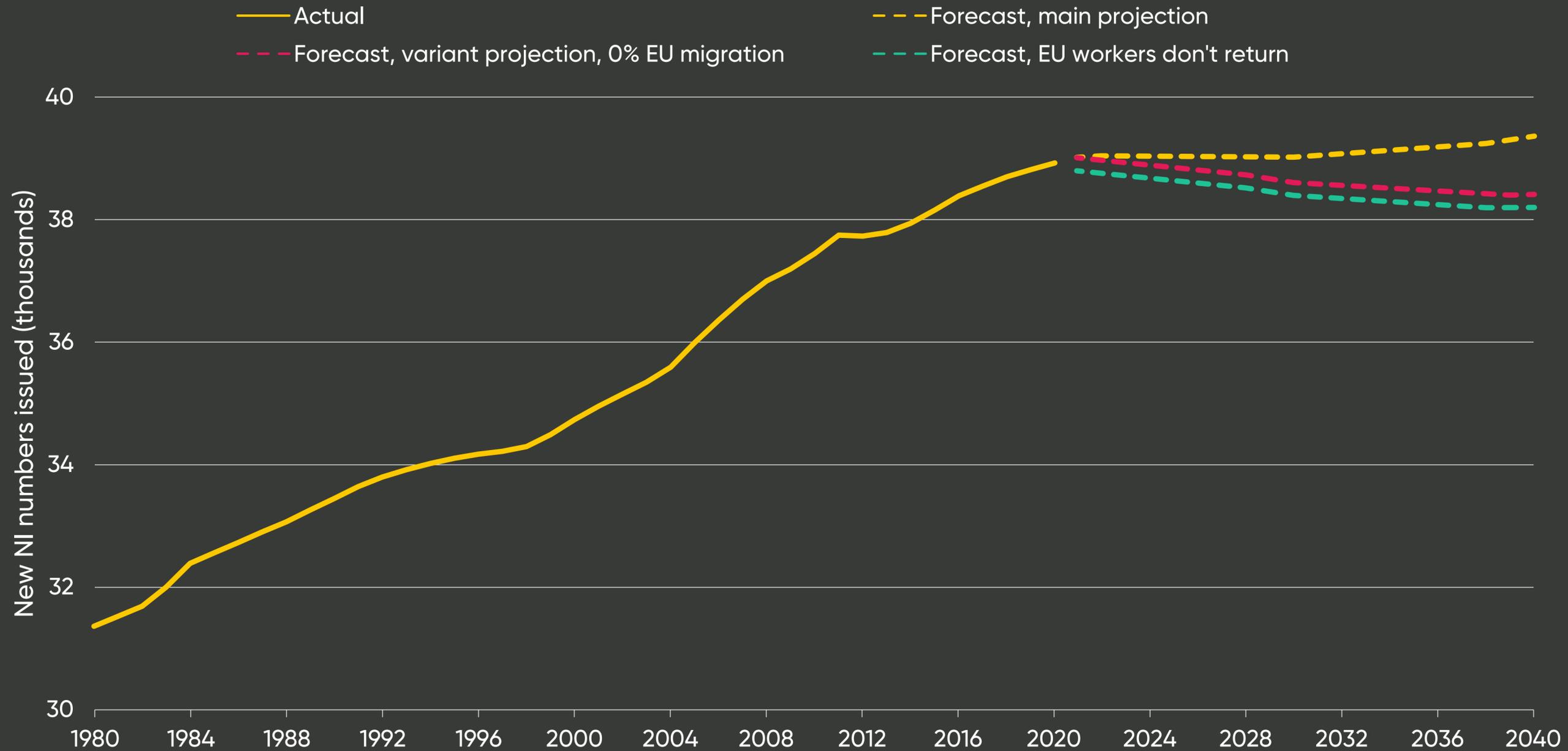
Contracting-out some functions offers advantages (eg: ability to take on labour as needed), but it may increase vulnerability in times of labour shortage. If labour shortages remain persistent, food and consumer goods businesses may respond by taking more functions in-house, which could reduce vulnerability.

## Migrating production

In the long-term, if UK labour remains in short supply, some elements of production may be moved overseas, to where more workers are available.

However, trade friction at the UK border may restrict this, especially for agri-food goods, which are subject to complex regulation. Development of UK trade policy will have a role in determining where UK food and drink are manufactured and the standards which will apply.

## UK working age population - future outlook Source: ONS, September 2021



**Note:**  
Working age is defined as 20-64 years

# Causes Short Term

In addition to long-standing pressures on the UK labour market outlined above, a number of one-off and, hopefully, short-acting factors have acted to bring matters to a head.



## COVID-19

Food and consumer goods businesses have been greatly affected by COVID-19, with retail demand increasing massively whilst foodservice was largely shutdown for extended periods of time. Overall, supply of essential products to the public was not badly affected and so businesses have succeeded, albeit with great effort and sacrifice, leaving many workers exhausted.

COVID-19 has had complex effects on the labour market. Sickness and mandatory isolation have taken large numbers of out of work – sometimes whole teams – placing still more pressure on businesses.

## Furlough

The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, or furlough, appears to have preserved employment in the UK through the pandemic. Unemployment does not appear to have risen, suggesting that the policy has succeeded in its aims.

However, the number that are economically inactive has gone up. These may represent demoralised or discouraged job seekers, or those choosing to stay in education rather than working.

Most furloughed workers are now back at work, so the final winding-up of furlough is not expected to bring many workers back into the labour market.



## Cultural shift

The biological threat of COVID-19 now appears to be receding, but it leaves behind a legacy for business leaders, who must deal with two challenges:

- The impact of COVID-19 on ways of working, with working-from-home, part-time or full-time, now proven to be feasible in many roles
- Some we spoke to told us that the COVID-19 pandemic has led many workers to reconsider what they want from their lives and to pursue new roles – perhaps outside the industry, although this is hard to quantify

## Departure of EU nationals

Most EU workers present in the UK before EU Exit have secured their right to work via the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS). Nevertheless, many appear to have left the UK in 2020 and 2021. ONS data suggests that the number of EU employees in the UK fell by 211,000 between Q1 2020 and Q2 2021, a reduction of 9%.

Many of the People Directors we spoke to highlighted the issue of EU nationals leaving employment in the food and consumer goods supply chain. It is not clear whether these workers left the UK due to EU Exit, COVID-19 or some other factor. Nor is it clear that these workers can be expected to return to the UK when stability returns.

Having left, they may require a compelling reason to return.

## Returning demand

Contraction of the consumer-facing economy during COVID-19 may have masked labour shortages in the UK, but only briefly. Relaxation of COVID-19 restrictions and the reopening of the economy has led to a surge in consumer demand in Q2 2021, placing more demands on workers, especially in foodservice and transport. This has brought these issues back onto the commercial agenda.

## HGV driver shortage crisis

A number of factors have reduced the number of HGV drivers available in the UK, specifically:

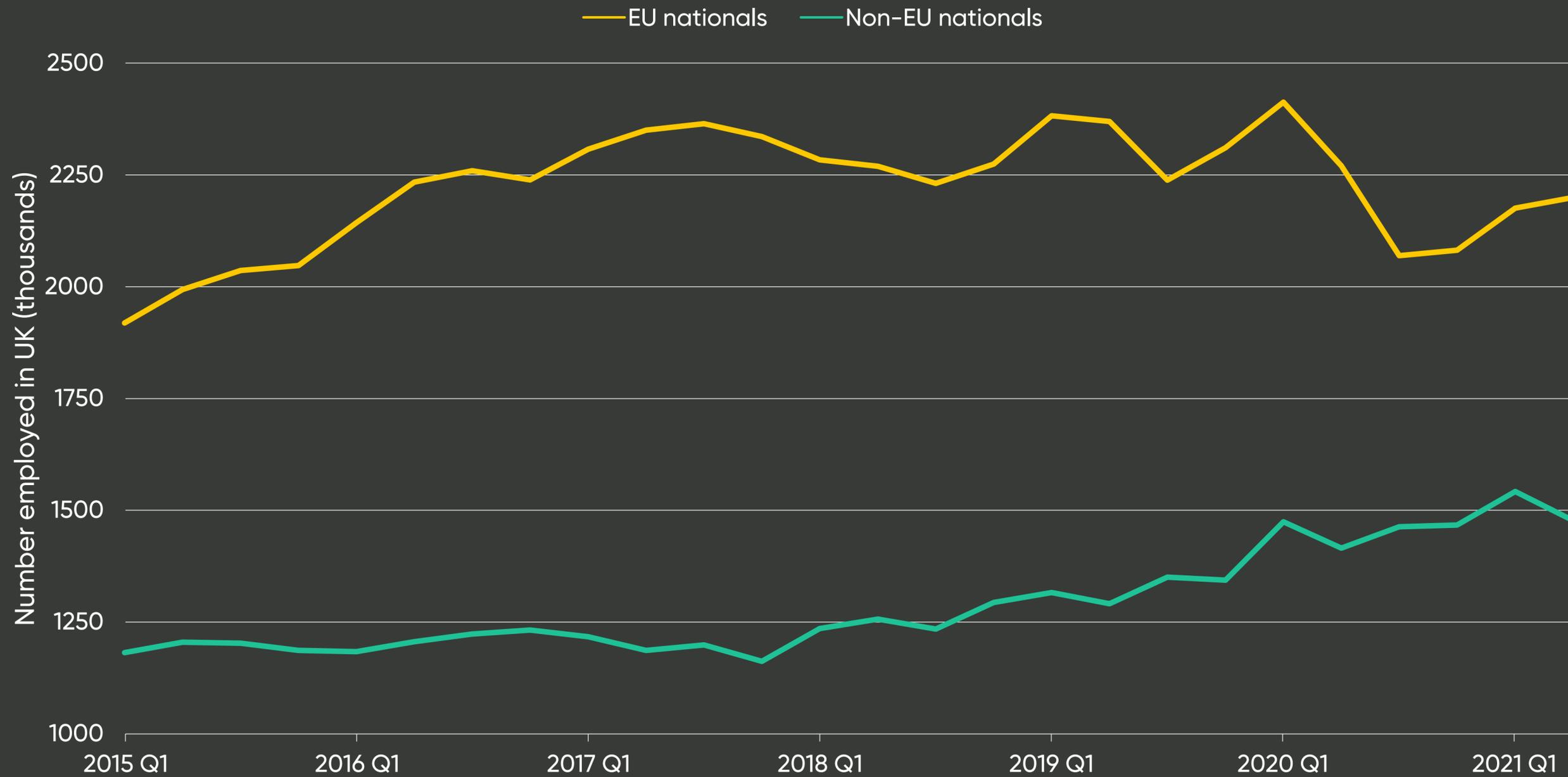
- ▲ Training and qualification disrupted by COVID-19
- ▲ New tax regulations (IR35), changing labour market economics
- ▲ An ageing workforce – with more drivers retiring and an undeveloped pipeline of new entrants
- ▲ Challenging working conditions (eg: high stress, long periods away from home)
- ▲ Non participation – many people qualified to work as HGV drivers do not do so
- ▲ Demand for drivers from non-food employers, especially couriers
- ▲ Difficulty obtaining insurance for younger drivers

## Is it a problem of people or skills?

Although some of the current challenges relate to a shortage of highly trained workers such as HGV drivers, our recent conversations with industry leaders suggest that most immediate issues relate to simply not having enough people to do the necessary work.

Looking ahead, evolution of the food and consumer goods supply chain is expected to mean more demand for highly skilled workers, especially in connection with digital technology and sustainability.

## Non-UK nationals employed in the UK Source: ONS, September 2021



# Remedies Short Term

Employers in the food and consumer goods supply chain have implemented various measures in response to labour market pressures.



## Improved pay

Several of the industry leaders consulted by IGD said that they had improved remuneration packages, or planned to do so, in order to recruit and retain people. This took several forms:

- ▲ Better benefits (eg: healthcare, pensions)
- ▲ Better facilities (eg: canteens, gyms)
- ▲ Bonuses for recruitment, retention and performance
- ▲ Higher base pay, especially in entry-level roles

This is to be expected in any free market – where supply falls short of demand, prices go up. Of course, pay is not solely a commercial and economic consideration – it is also emotional and political:

- ▲ Bonuses for new recruits may alienate established workers, who will also wish to be rewarded
- ▲ Competition for workers can trigger 'pay wars', in which the most profitable enterprises have an edge
- ▲ Raising pay for entry-level workers creates pressure to raise pay elsewhere, to maintain 'differentials'
- ▲ The cost of better conditions may need to be passed on down the supply chain, eventually to shoppers

Ability to pass on higher cost is the key question. In a competitive market like food and consumer goods, businesses are unwilling to raise prices unless it is absolutely necessary.

Price rises for essential items also create social impacts, potentially harming economically-vulnerable households.

## Improved conditions

In addition to pay, some employers said that they were considering other aspects of employment in order to make work more attractive, especially to those with caring responsibilities. Job-shares, flexible hours, school-friendly shifts and willingness to adapt to health issues were all mentioned. However, not all roles can provide such flexibility.

## Investing in employer brand

Some employers are making efforts to build their employer brand, aiming to increase awareness of, and desire for, work in their business. Providing assurance of a clear, rewarding career path is a key objective, and a sense of social purpose was also seen as important, especially for recruiting young adults.

Social media or dedicated recruitment platforms (eg: LinkedIn, Glassdoor, Indeed) mean that potential workers can easily learn about employers before entering the recruitment process.



## Expanding the scope of recruitment

Failure to develop inclusive and diverse workforces means that some parts of the sector are drawing from very shallow talent pools.

Focusing effort on improving diversity may help to increase the labour supply (eg: in May 2021, JJ Foodservice launched [campaign](#) to recruit more women to HGV driver roles).

The industry leaders we spoke to were open to recruiting from almost any group, including those that often experience difficulty entering the labour market. Ex-servicemen, the disabled and those with convictions were specifically mentioned, although the sizes of these populations are quite small.

Some employers are also keen to recruit from outside the food and consumer goods industry, especially from businesses impacted by EU Exit or COVID-19 (eg: travel and leisure). Attitude and flexibility were emphasised over skills and experience.

However, given the wider labour issues seen in the UK economy, other industries may likewise seek to recruit from food – skills such as digital marketing or driving are adaptable and marketable. Employers that IGD spoke to were aware of the risk of poaching.



## Moving production

Businesses with multiple sites may move production lines from place-to-place, in order to secure labour (eg: moving from rural to urban areas). However, this can be extremely complex and expensive, requiring significant planning and preparation.

A short-term alternative is to provide transport for employees, bussing-in workers from their home towns to their place of work. This is also expensive and is probably not a long-term solution.

## Fleet investment

Special training is needed to drive an HGV, but smaller vehicles can be driven on an ordinary license. By moving some deliveries to smaller vehicles, businesses may be able to increase the number of drivers available, maintaining service to customers. [Birchalls Foodservice](#) recently added smaller vans to its fleet for this specific reason.



# Remedies Government

UK businesses of all kinds must deal with structural issues in the labour market.

Some of these stem from government policy and may therefore only be tackled decisively by government.



## Migration

Current UK policy on migration / labour has been in effect since EU Exit. It is intended to prevent inward-migration for low-wage, low-skill workers from any country (with limited exceptions). Unfortunately, these are the workers that many UK food and consumer goods businesses have come to rely on, creating a serious recruitment / replacement challenge.

Re-opening inward migration for all workers would likely be on the policy wish-list for businesses, but this is recognised as unrealistic at present.

Minor modification of the migration system is seen as more plausible, especially in the run-in period, with possible options including:

- ▲ Adding HGV drivers and other critical functions to the 'shortage occupation' list
- ▲ Expanding the scope of temporary worker visas (currently limited)
- ▲ Increasing quotas for the pilot programme for seasonal agricultural workers (SAWs)
- ▲ Relaxing English speaking requirements for overseas workers that meet the skills criteria

In the long-term, however, UK employers will need to work with an increasingly restricted labour pool.



## Skills and education

There is currently little interaction between businesses and the education system. Education in the UK does not always provide school-leavers or graduates with the skills or mindsets required by employers.

IGD research shows that employers in the food and consumer goods industry find it especially difficult to recruit workers with STEM skills (science, technology, engineering and maths), and those with good soft skills (eg: negotiation, leadership).

The new T-Level qualification (introduced in 2020 and equivalent to 3 A Levels) is intended to fill this educational gap. It combines practical and classroom work.

Courses have been developed in co-operation with employers and, in time, it

is intended to create T-Levels specifically for food roles (eg: agriculture, catering, production), but progress is slow.

Several of the experts consulted by IGD criticised the current Apprenticeship Levy specifically. This adds 0.5% to wage bills for larger employers. Funds can be accessed to pay for specified training for apprentices but, in practice, this system has often proven inflexible, with a limited range of training available for roles in the food and consumer goods industry.

Improvements to the Apprenticeship Levy and the training that it supports may go some way to addressing industry labour issues.



# So, who can work in the UK?

With inward migration for low-skill-low-paid workers now very limited, employers must rely on a limited pool of workers:

- ▲ British nationals overseas
- ▲ Family members of migrants
- ▲ Frontier workers
- ▲ Graduate 2-year visa
- ▲ Irish nationals (under CTA)
- ▲ Refugees
- ▲ Seasonal agricultural workers (SAWs)
- ▲ Skilled worker / shortage occupation route
- ▲ Some asylum seekers
- ▲ Students
- ▲ UK ancestry route
- ▲ UK nationals
- ▲ Workers with EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) recognition
- ▲ Youth mobility scheme

Note that it is an offence to employ a person with no right to work in the UK.

Source: Association of Labour Providers, July 2021

# How IGD is helping to build a workforce fit for the future

Given the short and long-term labour challenges we expect competition for people will be more challenging than ever. The food and consumer goods industry plays a vital role in feeding the nation and we must accelerate our efforts to build a workforce fit for the future.

**1**

**Attract**

**2**

**Develop**

**3**

**Thrive**

## Attract

Attracting young talent is a vital part of building a productive, inclusive and sustainable future workforce. At IGD we support this through our [work experience programme and school workshops](#), showcasing the industry to employees of the future and helping them prepare for the world of work.

Over 65,000 young people have already developed vital employability skills with IGD and have a better understanding of the opportunities available in food and consumer goods industry.

Before a workshop 43% of young people attending would consider a career in our industry, but this rises to 73% after meeting professionals from industry.

## Develop

IGD develops the knowledge and skills of those already working in the industry colleagues, to foster an inclusive and productive workforce.

We expect pace of change to accelerate as we face continual shifts in the ways we work, consumers' expectations and the business models required to succeed.

Ensuring that everyone across the industry (from leaders and line managers to junior employees) can develop and grow is key. We equip everyone with the capability and potential to thrive in the workplace and through our [free learning programmes](#) we trained over 3,500 people from 650 businesses in 2021.

## Thrive

Inclusion helps foster talent and enables individuals to be the best that they can be.

It drives creative thinking and healthy challenge from individuals who see and feel things differently.

IGD is committed to helping businesses address [inclusion and diversity](#) in all parts of their organisation to create a workplaces where everyone can thrive.

We run free learning programmes targeted at senior leaders, line managers and across the grass roots of organisations. We also provide benchmarking insight and best practice case studies to inspire action.



**Get in touch for  
more information**

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from **IGD**