

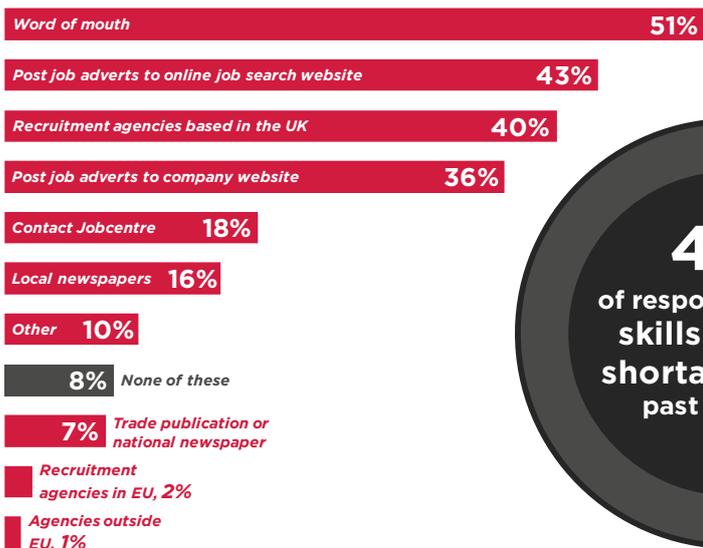
The British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) surveyed over 1,400 business people from all regions of the UK online between 17 July and 1 August 2017 to understand how businesses address skills or labour shortages.

## BRITISH CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE WORKFORCE SURVEY 2017

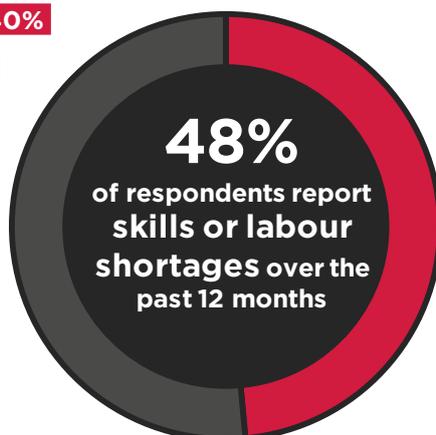
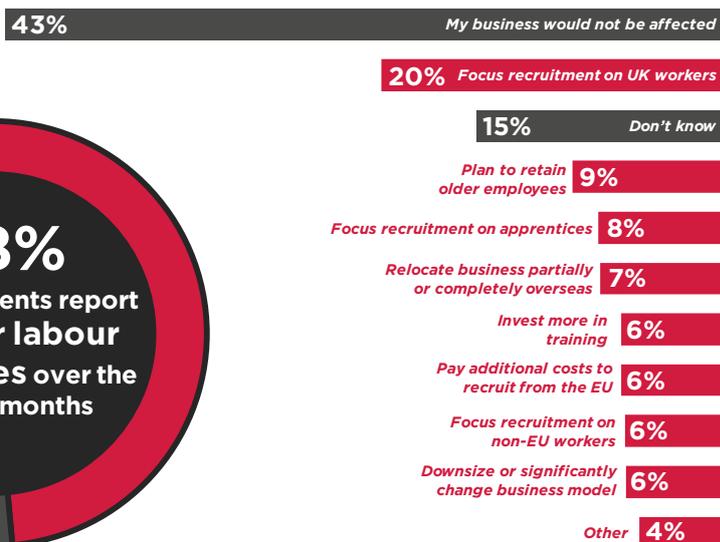
### Firms invest in local labour but still need foreign skills to plug shortages

BCC's annual workforce survey of over 1,400 businesses, held in partnership with Middlesex University London, found that 48% of firms had faced skills or labour shortages over the last twelve months.

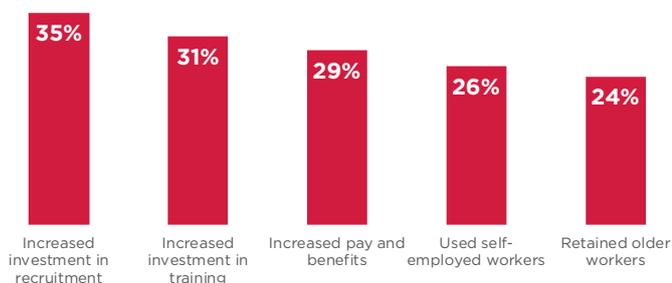
How businesses recruit employees (n=1,395)



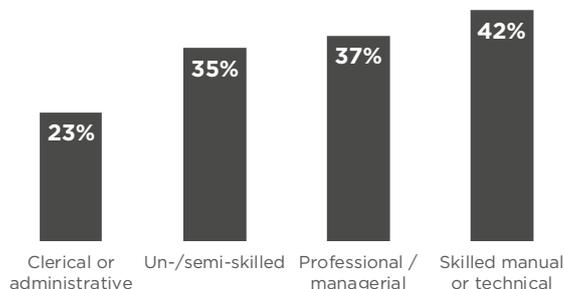
How businesses would respond to a potential restriction on access to EU workers (n=1,354)



How businesses with skills shortages sought to address these - top five answers (n=676)



How businesses who employ non-UK nationals describe the skill levels of these employees (n=608)



**Jane Gratton**  
Head of Business Environment and Skills  
British Chambers of Commerce

“Skills and labour shortages are prevalent across the economy, with half of UK businesses struggling to fill vacancies in the last year. Most companies look to fill posts locally, and through their own networks and contacts, but as that becomes increasingly difficult, businesses are now having to devote more resources to recruit and train the staff they need.

While companies rarely target workers from outside the UK, the internet allows people from all over the world to see and apply for opportunities here. Many of our businesses benefit from having a diverse workforce with staff members from across the EU and beyond, bringing with them a range of skill sets.”

**David Williams**  
Director of Corporate Engagement  
Middlesex University London

“It is essential that we get clarity around the rights of EU nationals and wider immigration policy going forward, but also support for businesses to develop, upskill and retain their workforces through schemes such as apprenticeships, to make sure the UK is able to plan now and compete internationally post-Brexit.

EU and other international students help to give Middlesex University graduates an international outlook that is vital as they enter a global business environment. International academics and staff add huge value to our local workforce through their diversity of knowledge and skills, and our international students spend over £13m per year in the local economy.”

Profile of respondents: 96% of businesses surveyed were SMEs, 29% operate in the manufacturing sector, and 71% operate in the services sector.

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