

South Midlands The Labour Market

July 2024

The
**South Midlands
Authorities**



HM Government



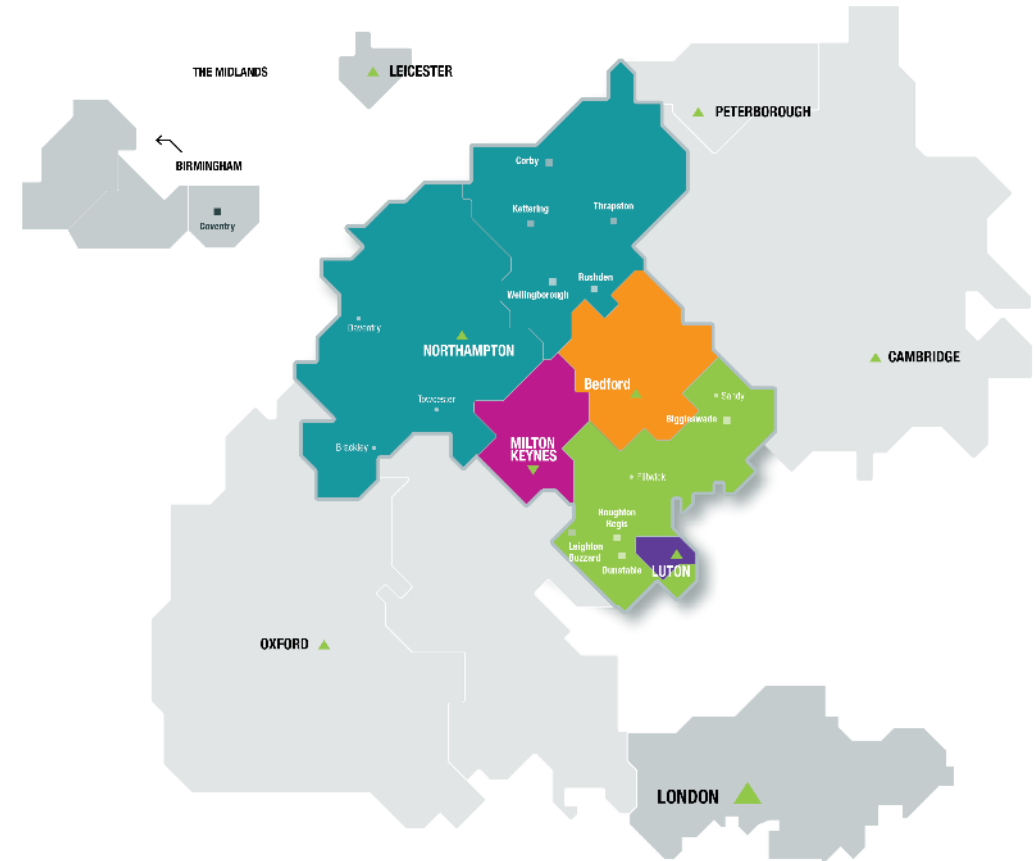
Introduction

The
**South Midlands
Authorities**

South Midlands comprises:

- Bedfordshire
- Luton
- Milton Keynes
- Northamptonshire

Our role is to help economic growth thrive across the South Midlands by supporting job creation, a pipeline of talented people and skills development for the future prosperity of the local communities.



The
**South Midlands
Authorities**



HM Government

**South East
Midlands**
CAREERS HUB

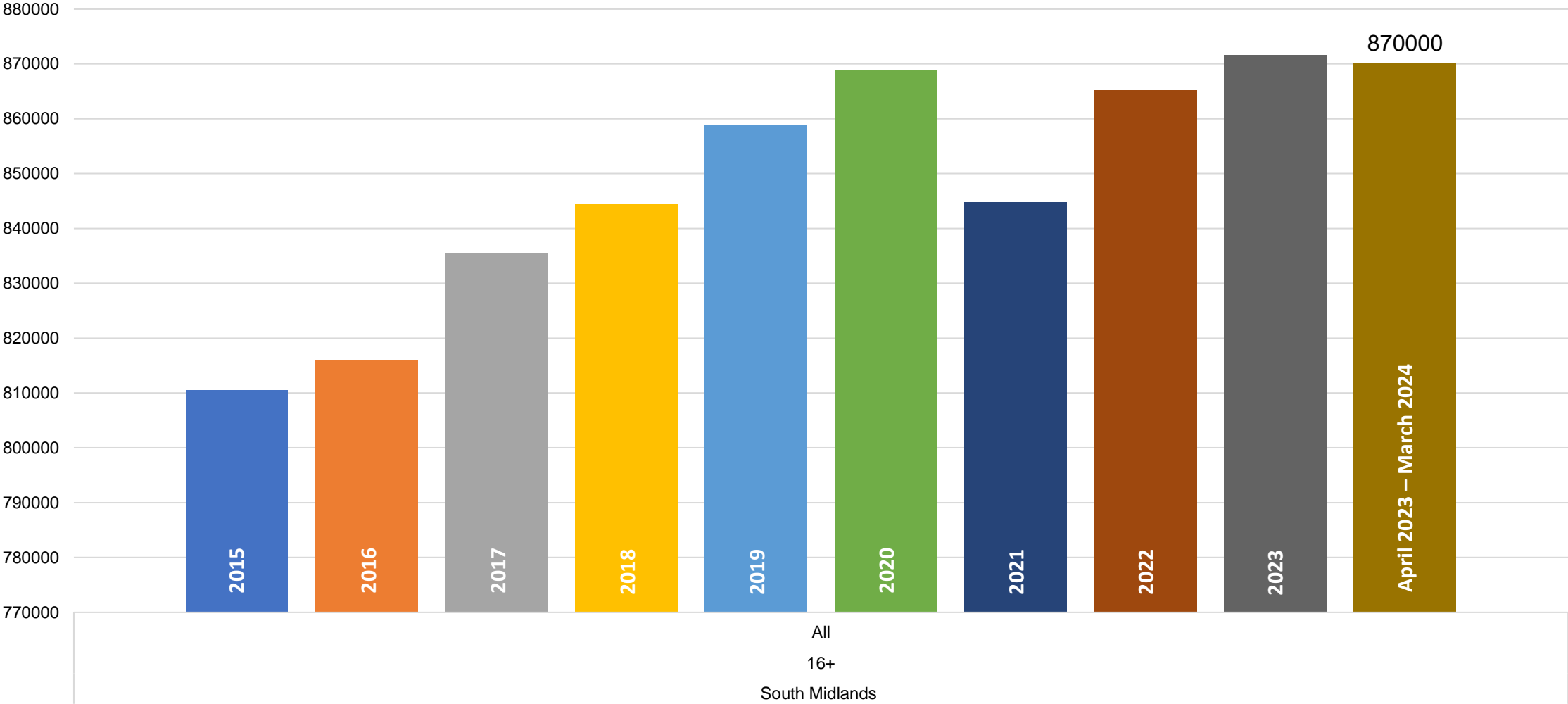
THE **CAREERS &
ENTERPRISE**
COMPANY

Opportunities in the Labour Market

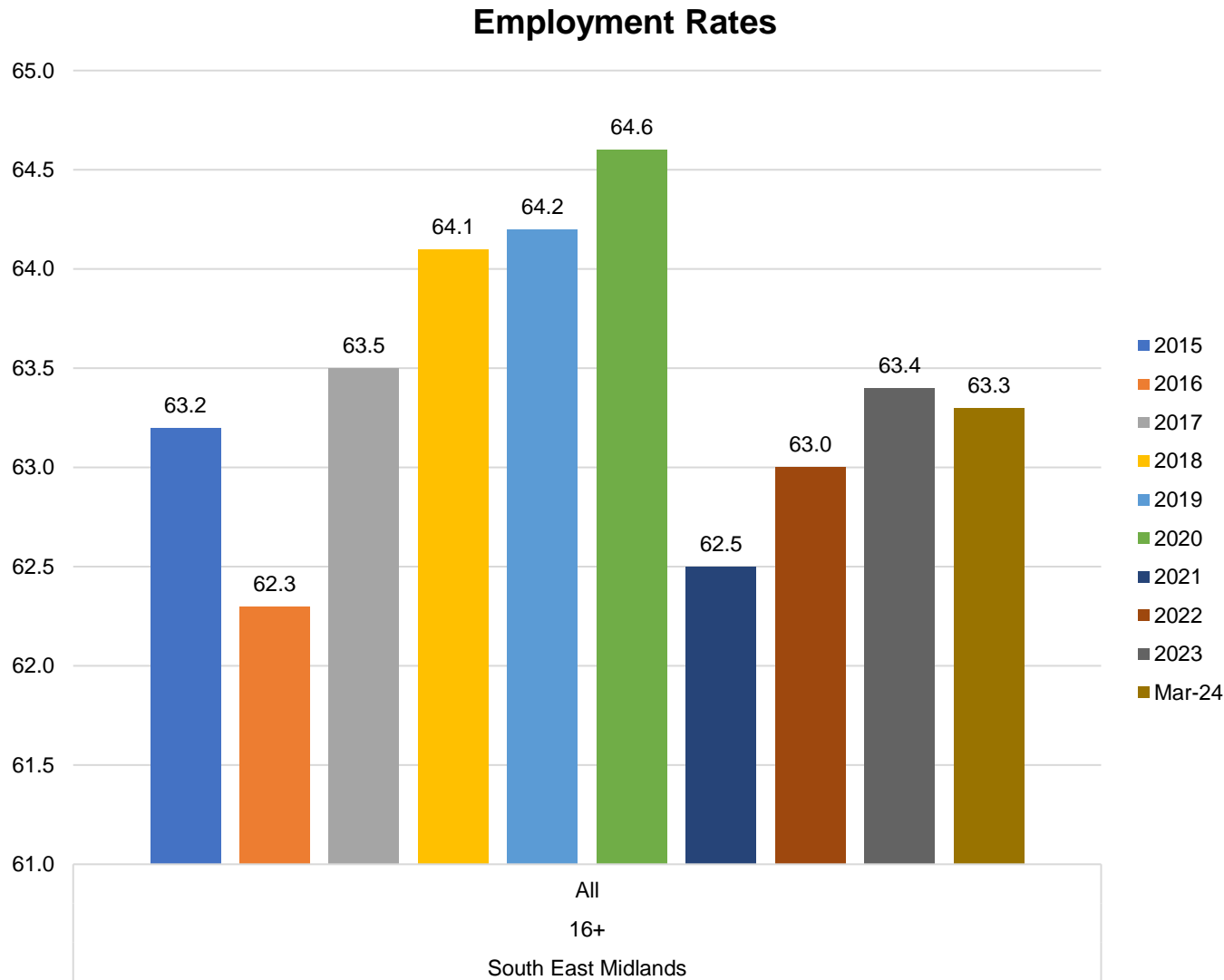


Employment

Employment Numbers +16



Employment



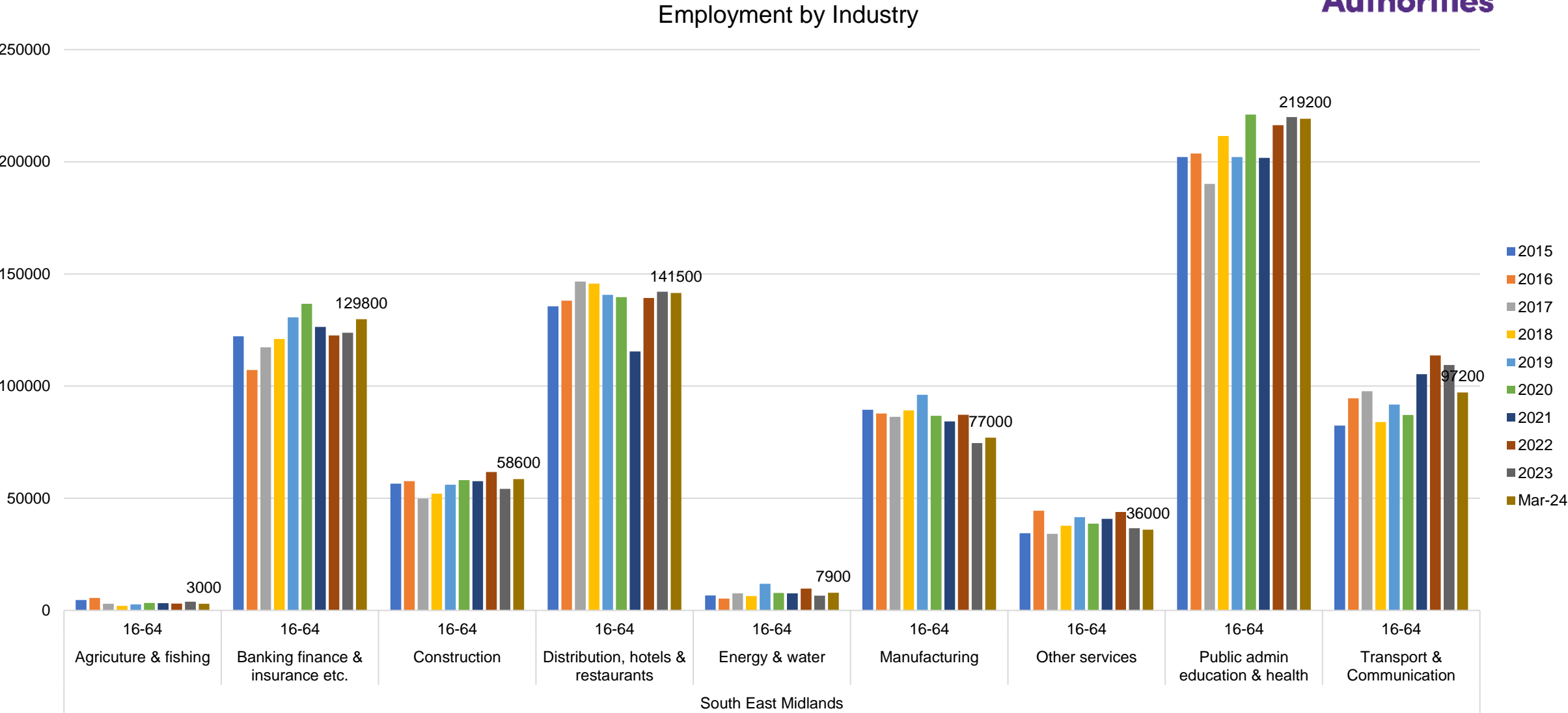
Facts

High employment rates (people of working age who are working) compared to the national average

South Midlands
England 63.3%
61.1%

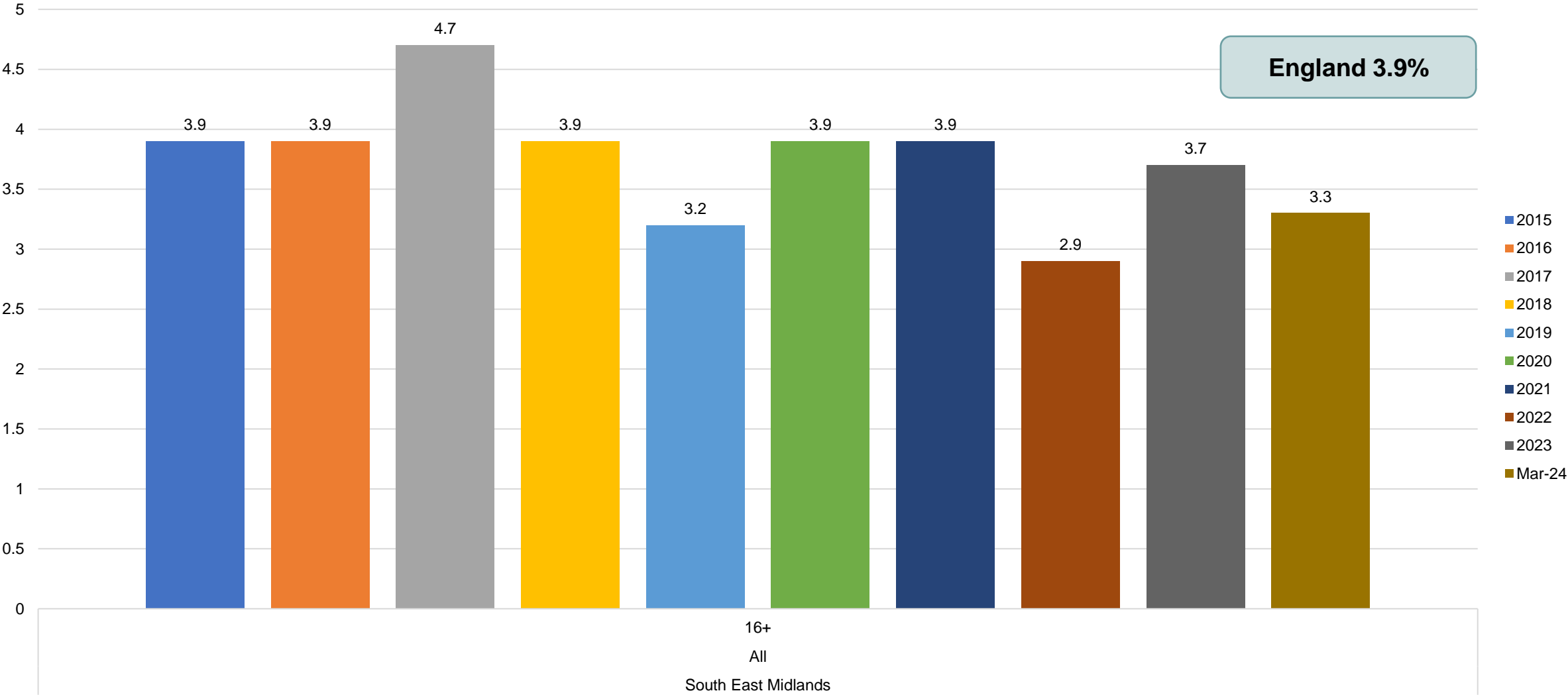
Central Bedfordshire 66.4%
Bedford 65.5%
Milton Keynes 63.2%
West Northants 62.6%
North Northants 62.2%
Luton 60.3%

Employment

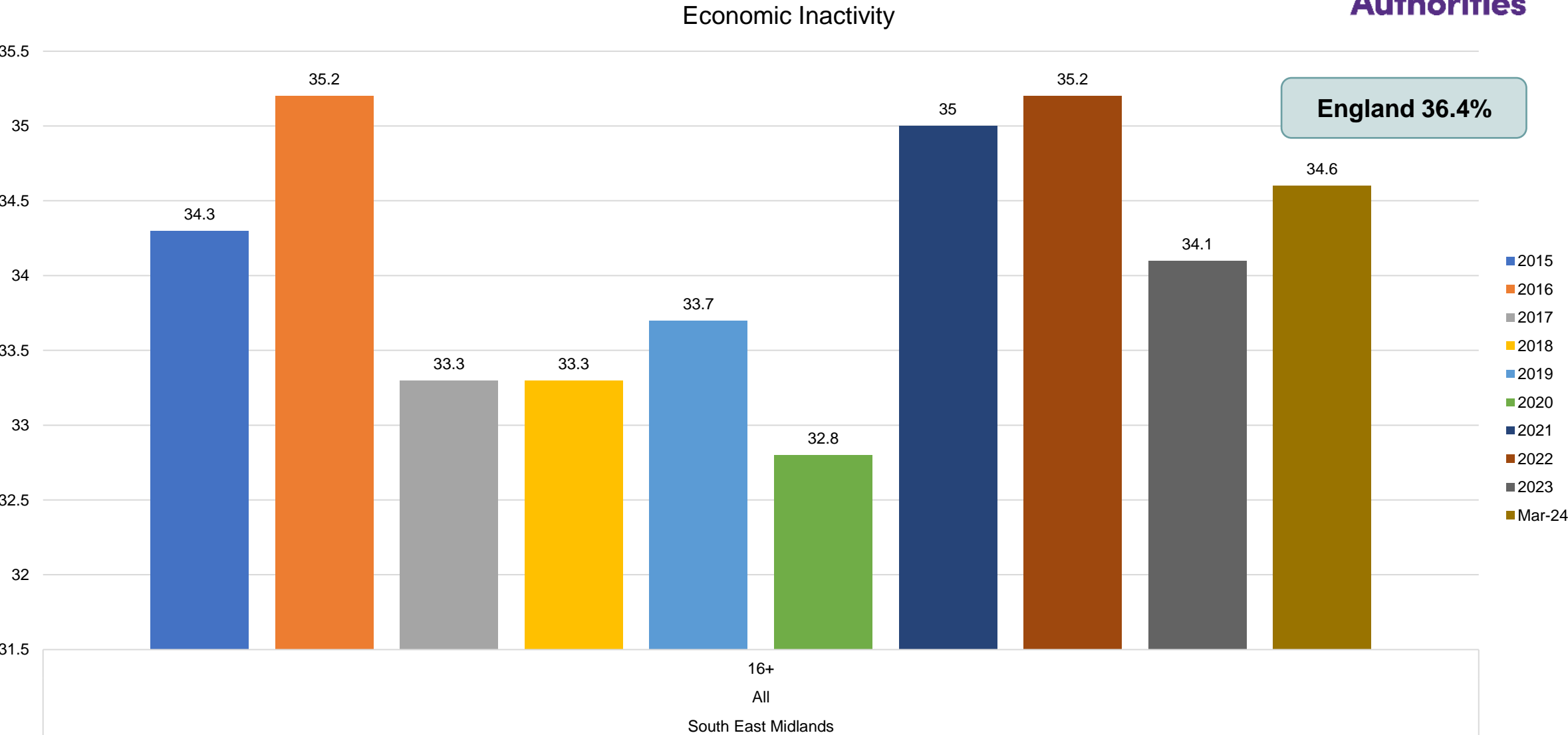


Unemployment

Unemployment Rate +16

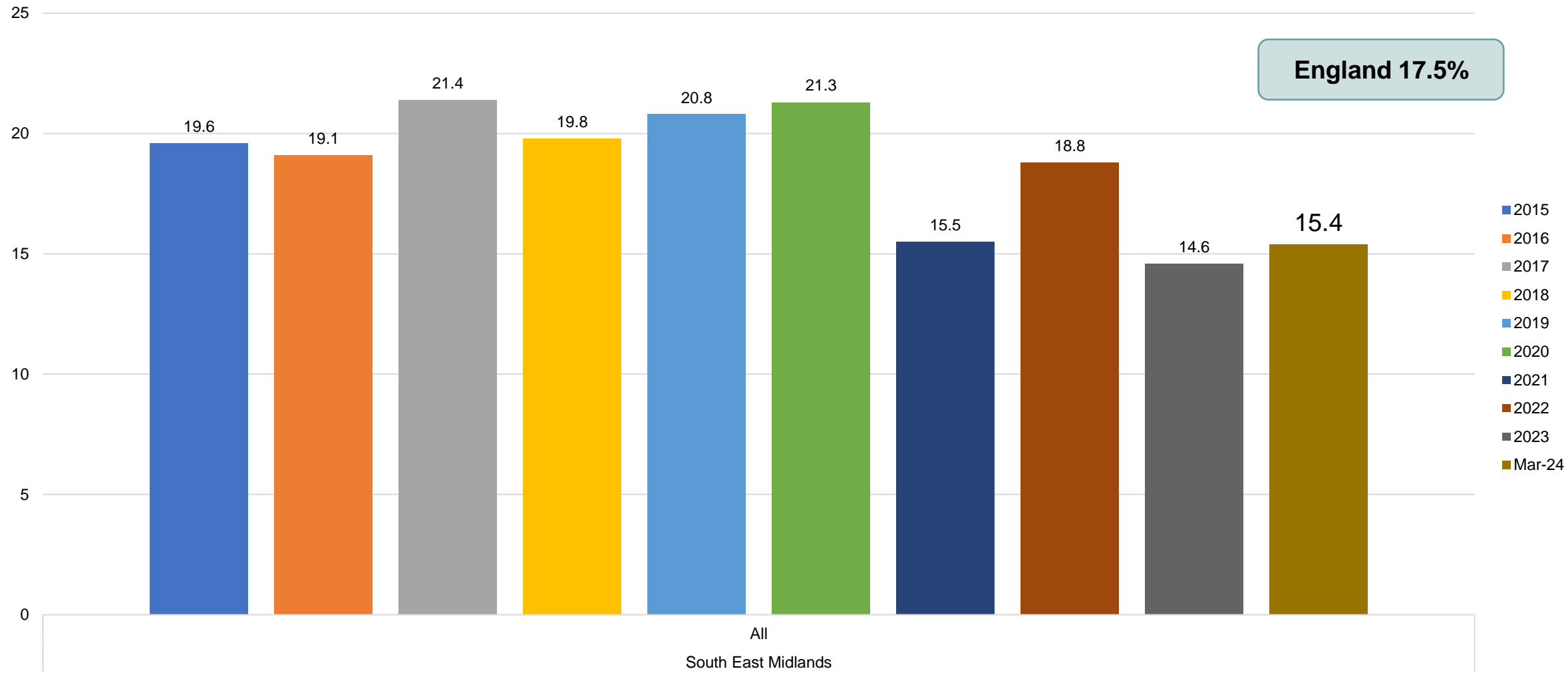


Economic Inactivity

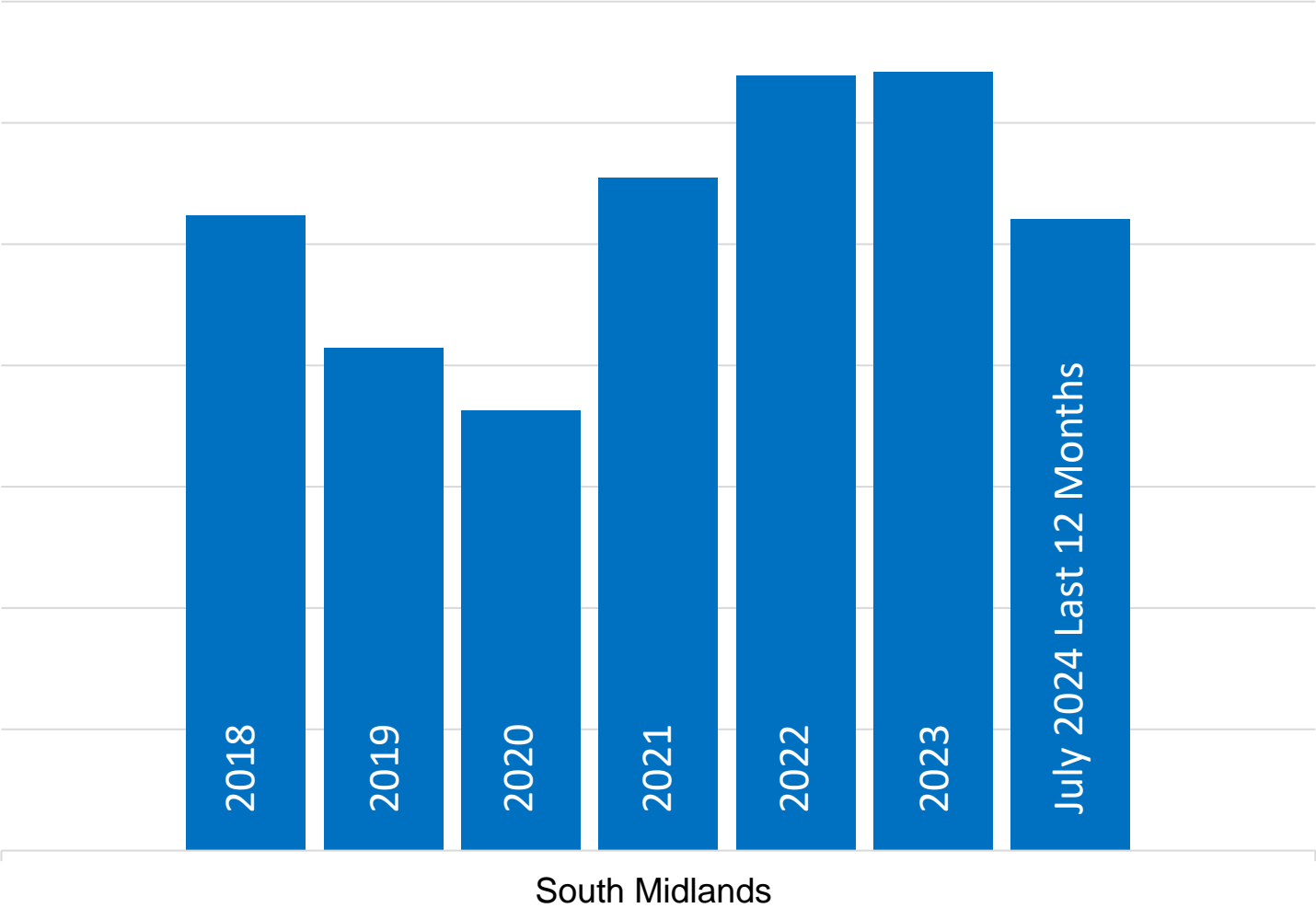


Economic Inactivity

Percentage Inactive Who Want a Job



Job Vacancies Trends

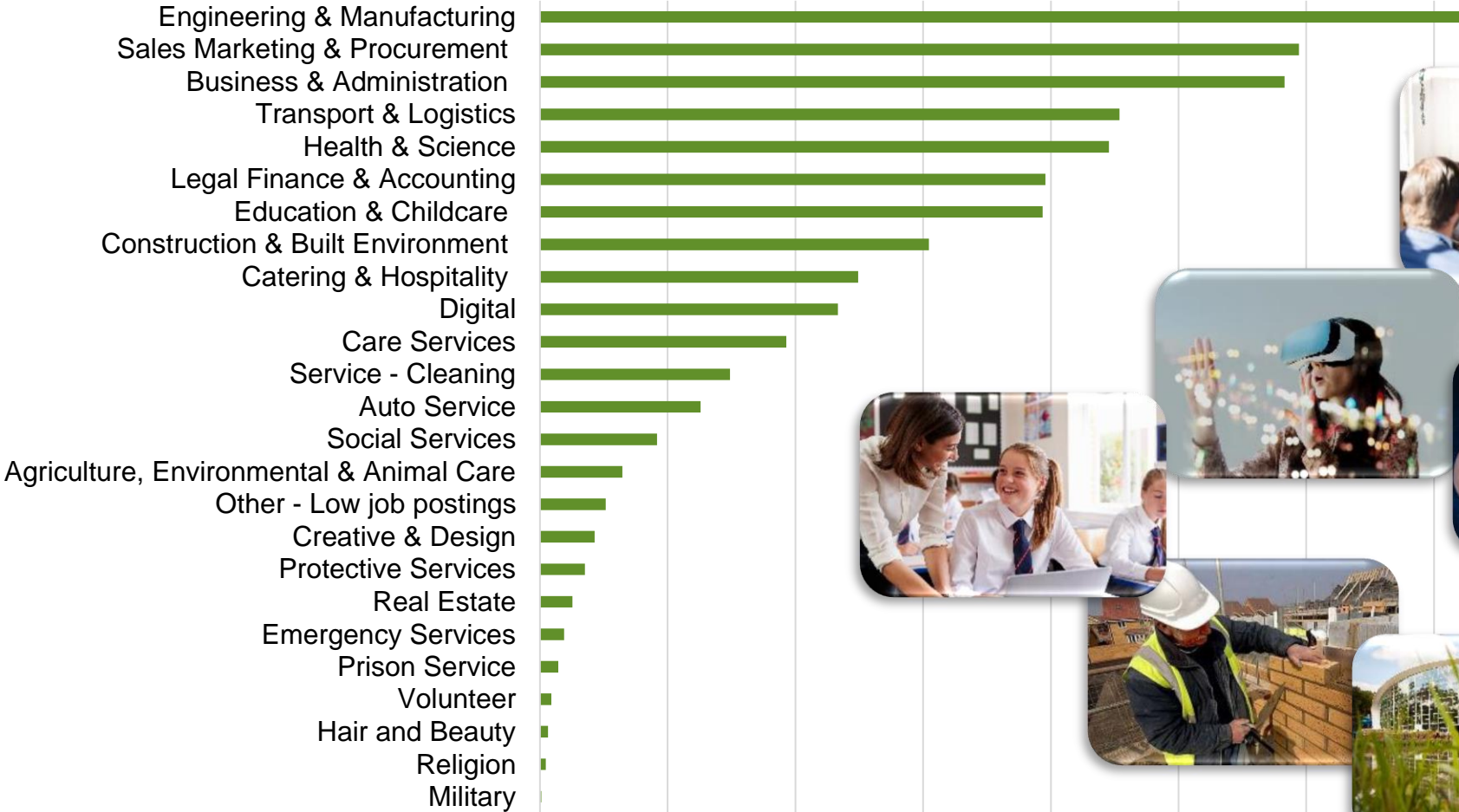


Facts

Job vacancies are the
higher than pre pandemic

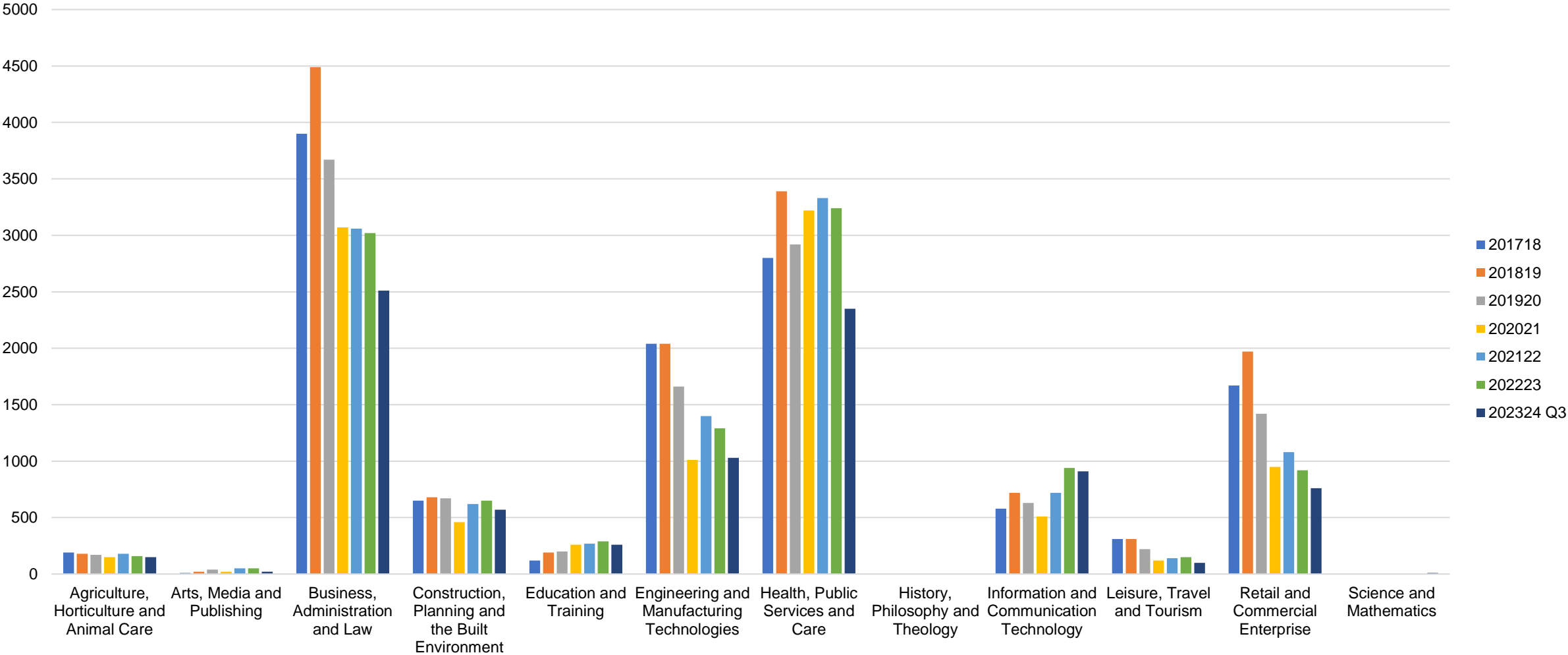
Top occupational groups in demand now

Job Postings Last 12 Months - Occupational Routes and Pathways



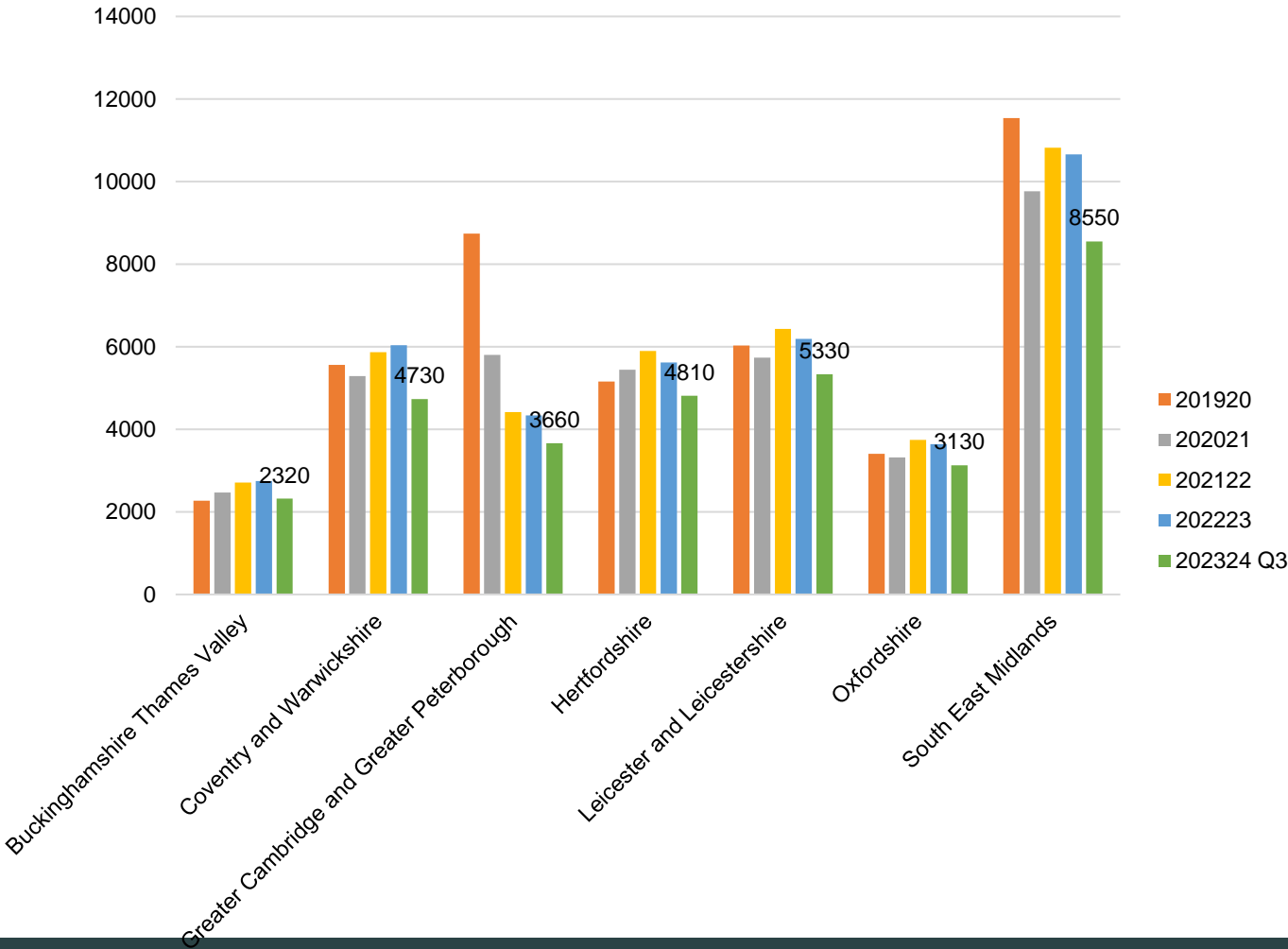
Apprenticeships

Apprenticeship Starts South East Midlands

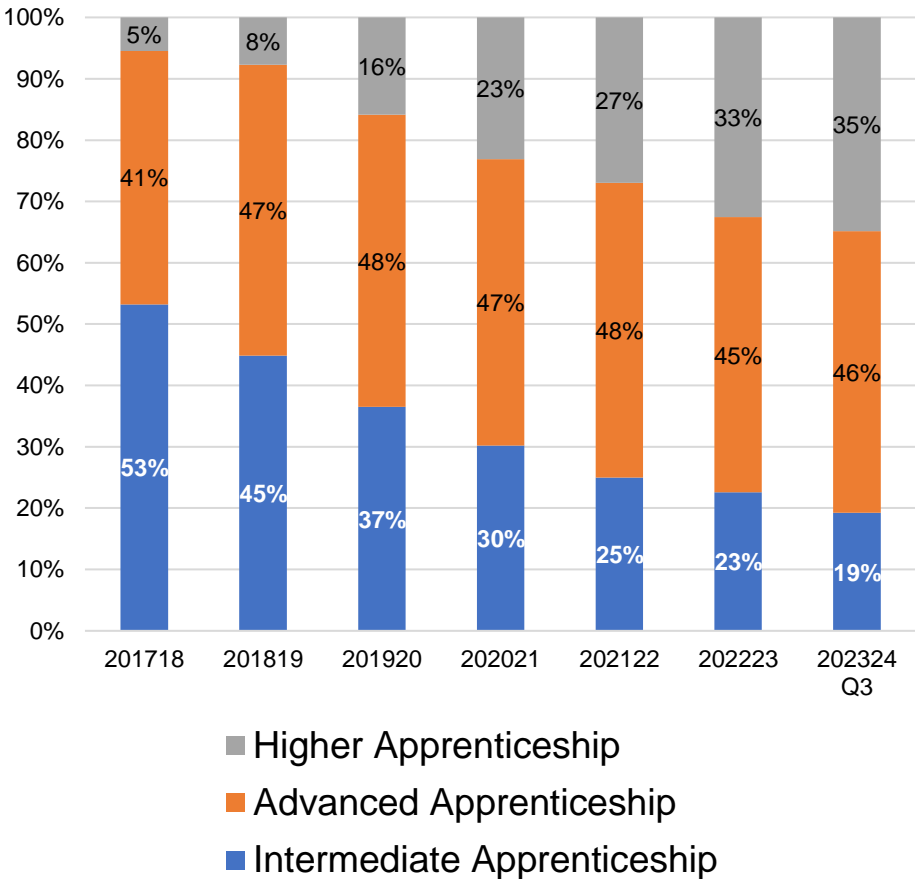


Apprenticeships

Apprenticeship Starts



Proportion of Achievements by Level



“Employability Skills”

Attitudes & Behaviours

- Work ethic
- Detail orientated
- Willingness to learn
- Enthusiasm
- Self-motivation
- Independent working
- Flexibility/Adaptability
- Honesty
- Reliability
- Politeness
- Humility
- Empathy
- Curiosity

Core Transferable Skills

- Expressing yourself/Active listening
- Organisation
- Digital literacy/Interaction with computers
- Planning
- Problem solving
- Decision making
- Creativity/Innovation
- Leadership/Developing Teams
- Time management
- Analysing/Evaluating
- Teamwork
- Collaboration
- Resilience

Technical & Vocational

- Job specific
- Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Maths (STEAM)
- Specialist digital skills
- Education
- Commercial acumen
- Financial awareness
- Customer service
- Sales
- Management
- Working with hands
- Driving

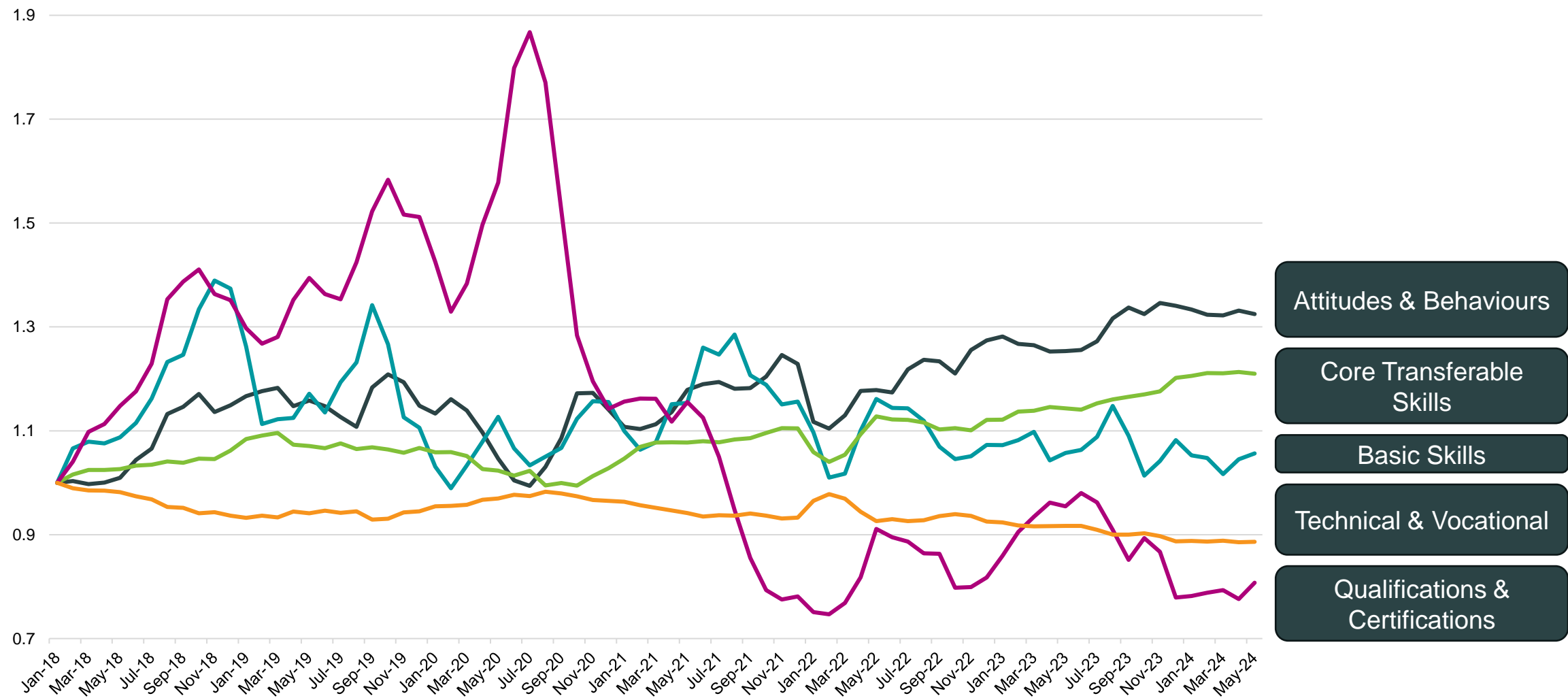
Basic Skills

- Literacy
- Numeracy
- English
- Basic digital

Qualifications & Certifications

- Technical Qualifications
- Academic Qualifications
- Technical Certification
- Vocational Certification

Employability Skills Trends



Digital Skills

Increase in demand for digital literacy

Software	Vs 2020
Microsoft Excel	++
Microsoft Office	++
Microsoft Outlook	++
Microsoft PowerPoint	=
Microsoft Azure	=
Microsoft Word	=
Power BI	++

Most requested computer programming languages

Rank	Software	Vs 2020
1	SQL	+
2	JavaScript	++
3	C#	+
4	Java	+
5	Python	+

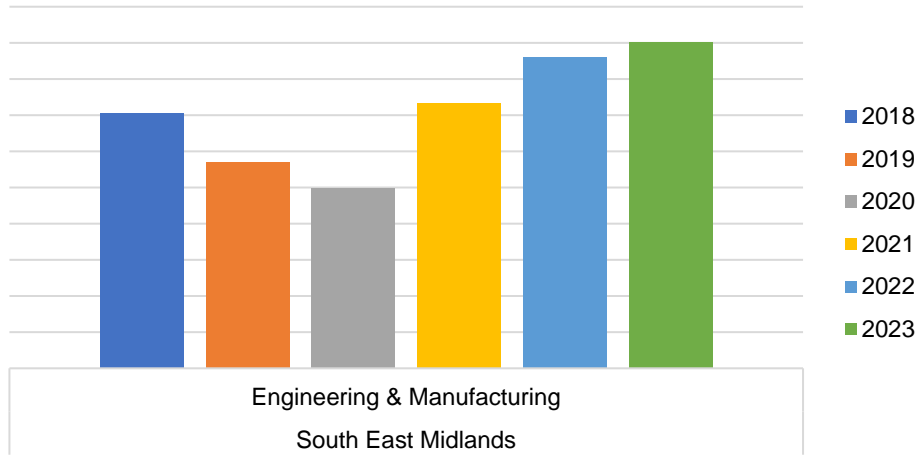
Other digital systems

Software	Vs 2020
SAP Applications (Business)	++
Amazon Web Services (Business/Sales)	+
AutoCAD (Design)	+

All sectors show a demand for Microsoft Excel and Outlook

1. Engineering & Manufacturing

Job Postings



Top Opportunities

- Maintenance engineers
- Mechanical engineers
- Manufacturing managers
- Electrical/Electronic engineers
- Industrial engineers
- Quality control
- CNC operation/programming
- Welding
- Manufacturing production line



Comments

- Fast growing demand
- Diverse sectors from space/aerospace to food production
- Centre nationally for auto testing, motorsport and high-performance technology
- Ageing workforce opening up opportunities
- Increasing need for mechanical and electrical/electronic engineers
- Need for maintenance technicians and engineers in many sectors

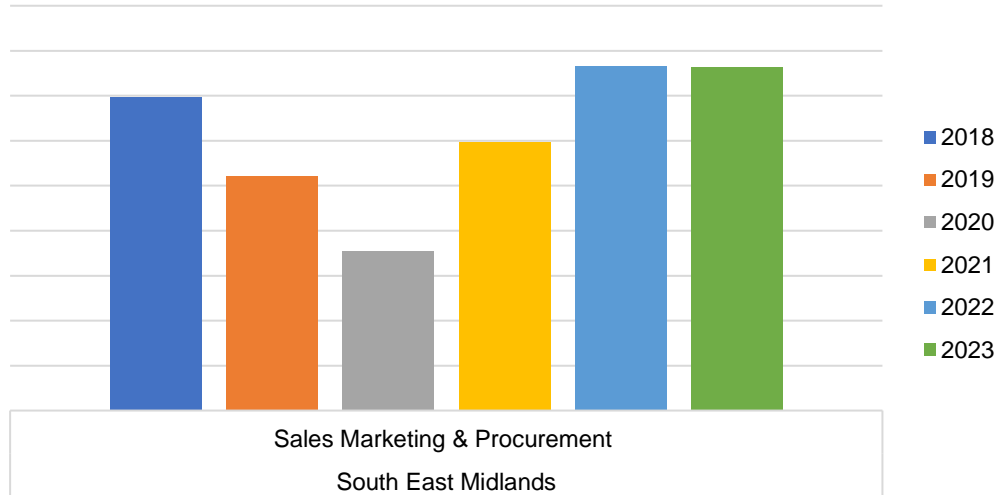
Employer Preferred Pathways

- Further education college
 - Apprenticeships
 - University
- (check pathways for each occupation)

STEM Focus

2. Sales, Marketing & Procurement (Buying)

Job Postings



Top Opportunities

- ▶ Retail (shops and stores) including management and supervisor roles
- ▶ Sales (more business-to-business)
- ▶ Sales management
- ▶ Marketing (communications, events, advertising, research, public relations)
- ▶ Procurement (purchasing, sourcing products, analysis)



Comments

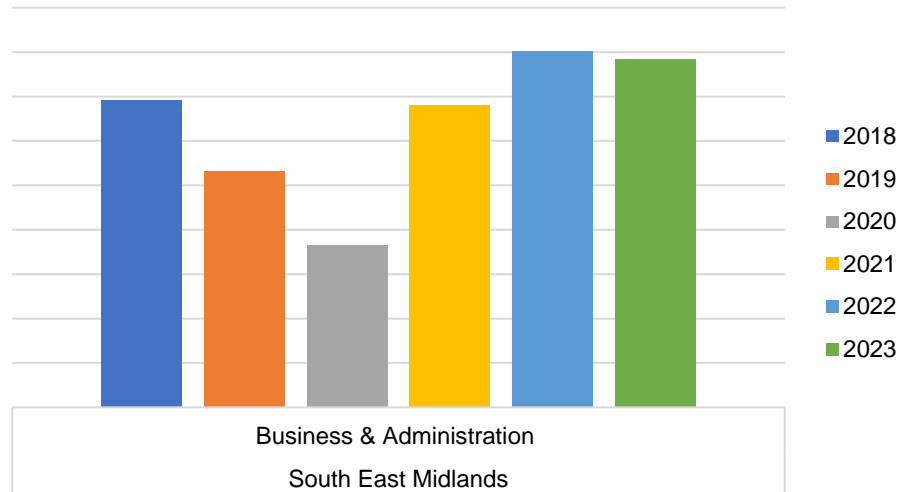
- ▶ Increasing demand in business-to-business sales and service
- ▶ Procurement (buying) and marketing roles are in demand and increasing and transferable
- ▶ Need to be outgoing, a good listener and problem solver

Employer Preferred Pathways

- ▶ Further education college
 - ▶ Apprenticeships
 - ▶ University
- (check pathways for each occupation)

3. Business & Administration

Job Postings



Top Opportunities

- ▶ Administration (mainly admin assistants or receptionists)
- ▶ Human resources
- ▶ Management
- ▶ Project management
- ▶ Account management



Comments

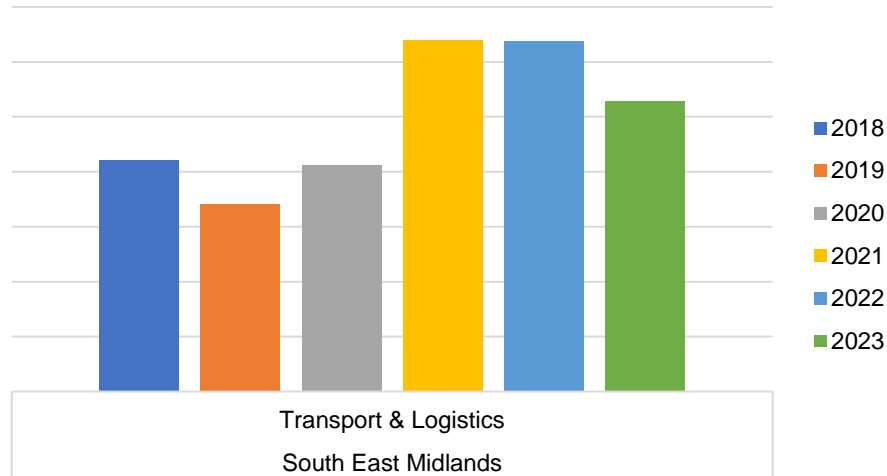
- ▶ Job postings slowed slightly in 2023
- ▶ Many positions are hidden jobs in businesses and most organisations have roles in this occupational group
- ▶ Also increasing need for foreign languages
- ▶ These occupations are transferable across sectors

Employer Preferred Pathways

- ▶ Further education college
 - ▶ Apprenticeships
 - ▶ University
- (check pathways for each occupation)

4. Transport & Logistics

Job Postings



Top Opportunities

- ▶ Warehouse staff
- ▶ Drivers (heavy and light goods vehicles and vans)
- ▶ Forklift operators
- ▶ Operations (transport planning, stock control)
- ▶ Management roles



Comments

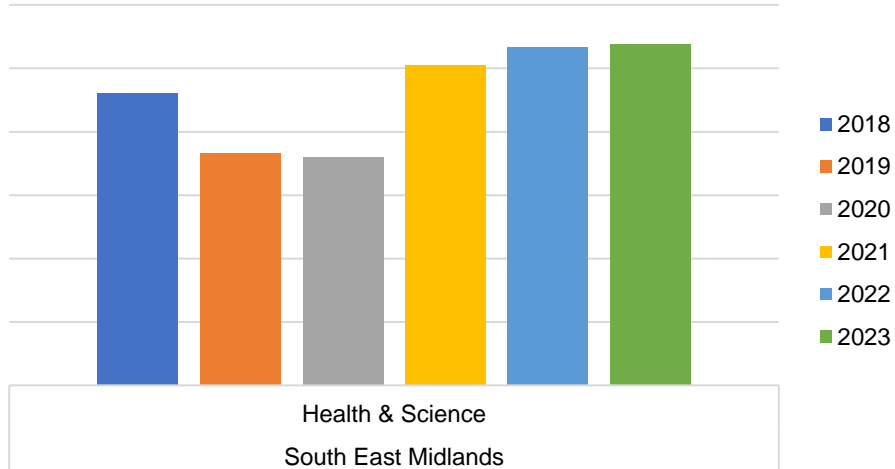
- ▶ Our central location is driving opportunities
- ▶ Slowdown in demand in 2023 but demand is still high
- ▶ Large demand for drivers at all levels and recent changes allow 18-year-olds
- ▶ High need for warehouse staff and forklift drivers
- ▶ Over 45% of job posting in the logistics sector are for Business Operations, Digital and Engineering

Employer Preferred Pathways

- ▶ In house and independent training providers
 - ▶ Further education college
 - ▶ Apprenticeships
 - ▶ University
- (check pathways for each occupation)

5. Health

Job Postings



Top Opportunities

- ▶ Nursing (general nursing and many specialist roles including midwives, practitioners, etc.)
- ▶ Specialist roles (e.g. medical assistant, case managers, radiologists, podiatrist, etc.)
- ▶ Pharmacists
- ▶ Psychologists
- ▶ Physicians (doctors, surgeons)
- ▶ Management
- ▶ Occupational therapists
- ▶ Sports and leisure (coaching, personal trainers)



Comments

- ▶ Very high demand for nurses, especially nurse practitioners
- ▶ Increasing need in pharmacy, psychology and administration
- ▶ The ability to empathise is sought in all occupations
- ▶ New pathways emerging for entry into sector
- ▶ Will continue to grow to support an ageing population
- ▶ Other occupational groups in need within sector such as Digital, Business Operations and Maintenance

Employer Preferred Pathways

- ▶ Further education college
 - ▶ Apprenticeships
 - ▶ University
- (check pathways for each occupation)

6. Legal, Finance & Accounting

Job Postings



Top Opportunities

- ▶ Accountancy (accountants, clerks, bookkeepers)
- ▶ Legal (lawyers, legal assistants, legal secretaries)
- ▶ Financial management roles
- ▶ Insurance (estimators, claims roles, agents)
- ▶ Financial analysts
- ▶ Finance advice (consultants, counsellors, tax specialists)
- ▶ Payroll roles



Comments

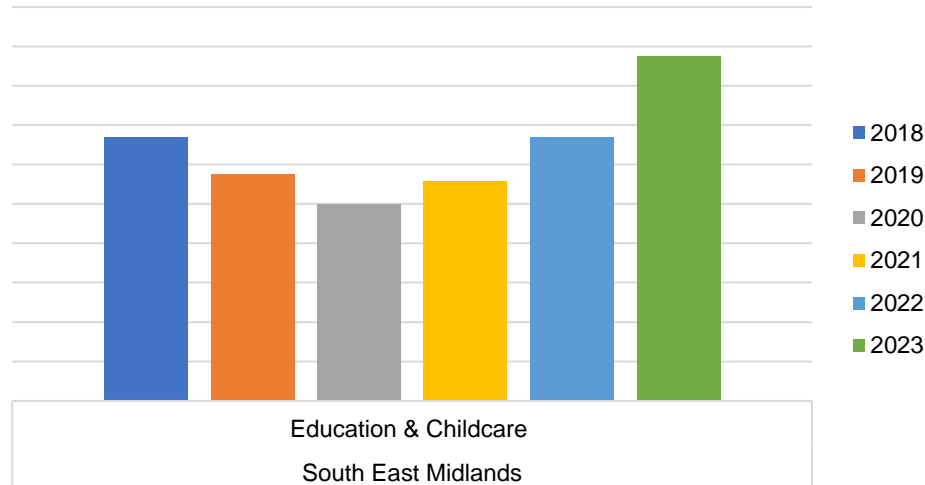
- ▶ Growing occupational group
- ▶ Large and increasing demand for accountancy and financial management roles
- ▶ Increasing demand for lawyers
- ▶ Demand for specialist roles in credit control and payroll (paying people)
- ▶ Occupations cut across sectors and roles are transferable

Employer Preferred Pathways

- ▶ Further education college
 - ▶ Apprenticeships
 - ▶ University
- (check pathways for each occupation)

7. Education & Childcare

Job Postings



Top Opportunities

- ▶ Childcare
- ▶ Preschool/Primary school teachers
- ▶ Teaching assistants
- ▶ Further education tutors
- ▶ Secondary education teachers
- ▶ Special educational needs and disability teachers
- ▶ Maths, Science and Art teachers
- ▶ Support roles (school administrators, counsellors)



Comments

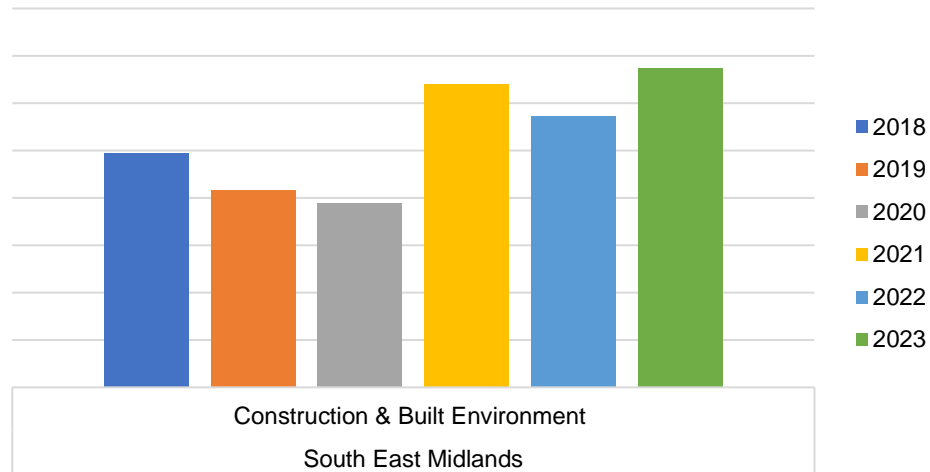
- ▶ Rapidly increasing job postings
- ▶ Opportunities rising rapidly in childcare and teaching assistants
- ▶ Increasing demand for teachers/tutors in secondary schools and colleges
- ▶ Need for science, technology, engineering and maths teachers and specialist teachers for special educational needs and disability
- ▶ Ageing workforce (no offence!) and increasing youth population
- ▶ Financial incentives to become a teacher
- ▶ Need digital literacy skills

Employer Preferred Pathways

- ▶ Teaching school hubs (Denbigh and Brooke Weston)
 - ▶ Further education college
 - ▶ Apprenticeships
 - ▶ University
- (check pathways for each occupation)

8. Construction & Built Environment

Job Postings



Top Opportunities

- ▶ Trades (electricians, carpenters, plumbers, heating engineers, decorators, roofers)
- ▶ General workers and labourers
- ▶ Utilities roles for green energy, gas, telecommunications and insulation
- ▶ Management (site and project)
- ▶ Quantity and land Surveyors
- ▶ Civil engineers
- ▶ Architects and structural engineers



Comments

- ▶ Opportunities in all occupations at all levels
- ▶ Green economy starting to create opportunities in utilities including retrofit (making housing more energy efficient) and green energy (solar/heat pumps)
- ▶ Large building programmes locally
- ▶ Will need other certification (CSCS card)

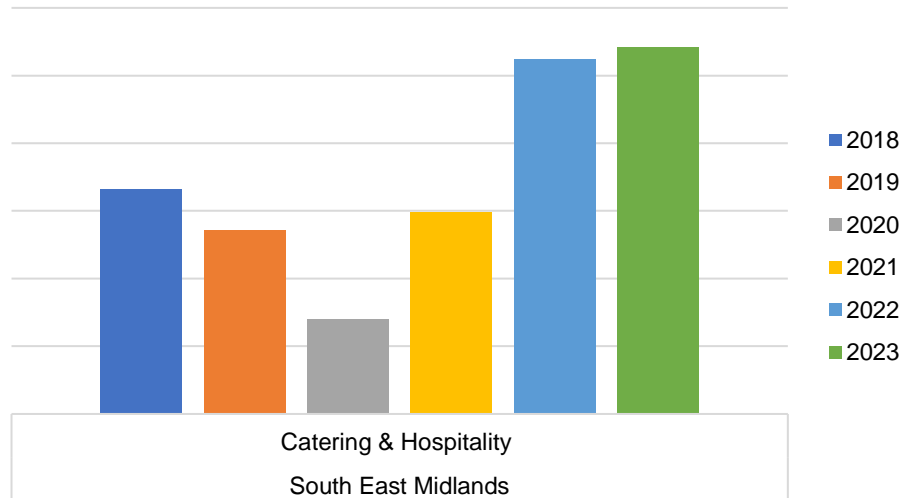
Employer Preferred Pathways

- ▶ Further education college
 - ▶ Apprenticeships
 - ▶ Construction Industry Training Board
 - ▶ University
- (check pathways for each occupation)

CITB National Skills Academies
STEM Focus

9. Catering & Hospitality

Job Postings



Top Opportunities

- ▶ Front of house (waiters/waitresses, food service, supervisory and management roles)
- ▶ Back of house (chefs, cooks, kitchen staff, dishwashers)
- ▶ Beverage (baristas, bartenders)
- ▶ Accommodation (housekeeping, hotel desk clerks, hotel managers)



Comments

- ▶ Demand for chefs, kitchen staff and front of house (people in the restaurants/cafes) at all levels increasing
- ▶ Need for baristas and bartenders
- ▶ Many part-time jobs which look great on a CV

Employer Preferred Pathways

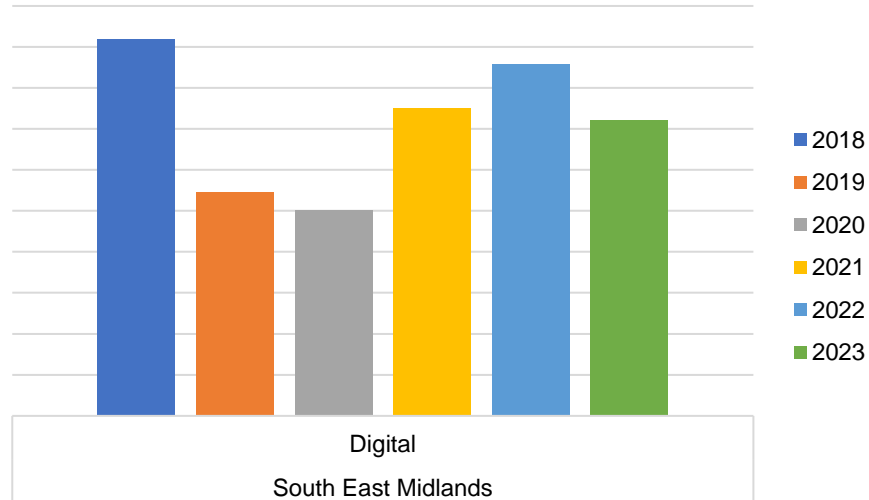
- ▶ Further education college
- ▶ Apprenticeships

Have a look at

<https://academy.grandecuisine.co.uk/learn/>

10. Digital

Job Postings



Top Opportunities

- ▶ Programmers
- ▶ Networks/Systems engineers and technicians
- ▶ Web/Media developers
- ▶ IT Management
- ▶ Data and systems analysts
- ▶ Cloud, data and enterprise architects
- ▶ Support roles such as help desks and administrators



Comments

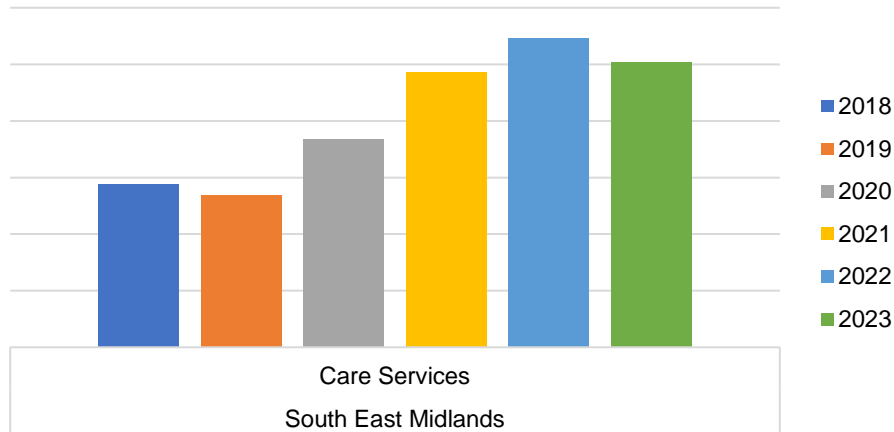
- ▶ Slowdown of job postings in 2023 for digital occupations but demand is still high
- ▶ Over 60% of occupations are in sectors outside of the specialist digital businesses

Employer Preferred Pathways

- ▶ Further education college/Institute of Technology
 - ▶ Apprenticeships
 - ▶ University
- (check pathways for each occupation)

11. Care Services

Job Postings



Top Opportunities

- ▶ Carers (personal care aides, home health aides)
- ▶ Administration (nursing home and home health administrators)
- ▶ Social and human service managers



Comments

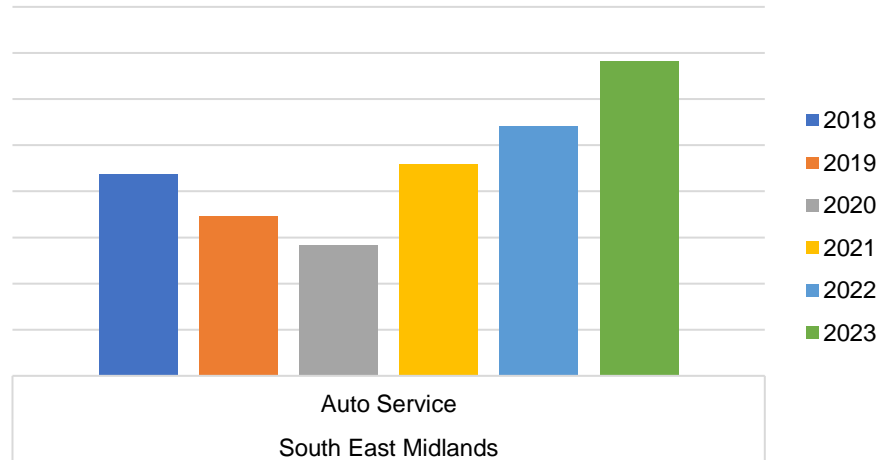
- ▶ Large demand for care aides
- ▶ Increasing need for administration support
- ▶ UK leaving the EU and ageing workforce driving need for replacements
- ▶ Ageing population and drive to keep elderly people in their own homes will mean demand will continue to increase
- ▶ Other health occupations related to need

Employer Preferred Pathways

- ▶ Further education college
 - ▶ Apprenticeships
 - ▶ University
- (check pathways for each occupation)

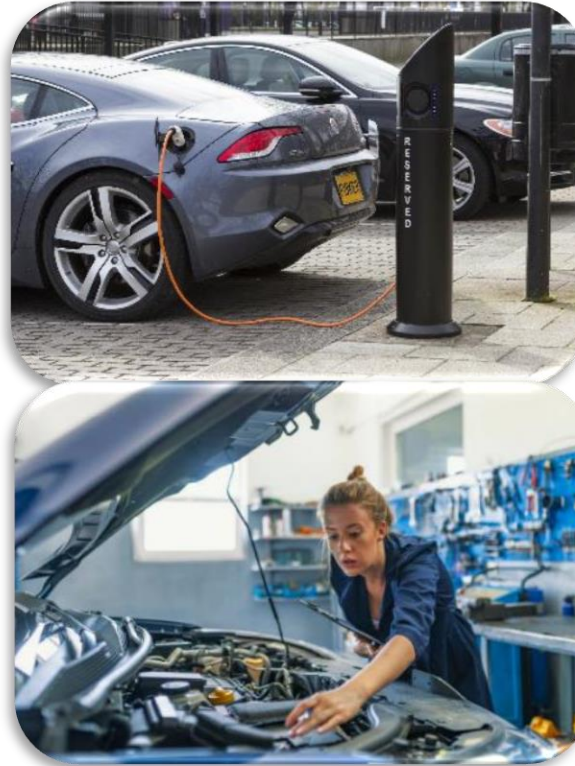
12. Auto Service

Job Postings



Top Opportunities

- ▶ Automotive service technicians and mechanics
- ▶ Heavy equipment mechanics
- ▶ Diesel mechanics
- ▶ Parts specialists
- ▶ Car or vehicle sales representatives



Comments

- ▶ Increasing demand due to growth in the sector especially for used vehicles
- ▶ Manufacturers, garage groups and large resellers recruiting
- ▶ Need for mechanics for HGV and heavy plant
- ▶ Ageing workforce driving need for replacements
- ▶ New technology such as electric vehicles changing skills required

Employer Preferred Pathways

- ▶ Further education college
 - ▶ Apprenticeships
 - ▶ University
- (check pathways for each occupation)

STEM Focus

Future Opportunities

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Modern Methods of
Construction



Aerospace/Space



Manufacturing



Intelligent
Mobility



Logistics



Artificial Intelligence
Internet of Things
5G
Data Science/Analytics



Technology/Automation
Environment/Net Zero
Labour Costs/Globalisation
Aging Population



Non-Carbon
Fuelled Transport



Health and Care



Creative



Agri-tech

Green Economy
Net Zero
Sustainability



Future opportunities

New Jobs and Changes in Occupation Roles

Automation driven service industries

- Digital
- Engineering and technology
- Education
- Health
- Care

Net Zero/Green Economy/Sustainability

- Scientific research
- Engineering and technology
- Machine operators/technicians
- Agriculture
- Regulatory professionals

Population Serving

- Health
- Care
- Education

Pathways – Innovative Further Education

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**Northampton
College
Daventry**



Moulton College



Northampton College



Tresham College



**The National College
for Motorsport**



**Milton Keynes
College**



**The South
Central Institute
of Technology**



**Central
Bedfordshire
College**



Bedford College



**Shuttleworth
College**



**Barnfield
College**



Pathways – Higher Education

University of Northampton



University of Buckingham
Medical School



MK:U



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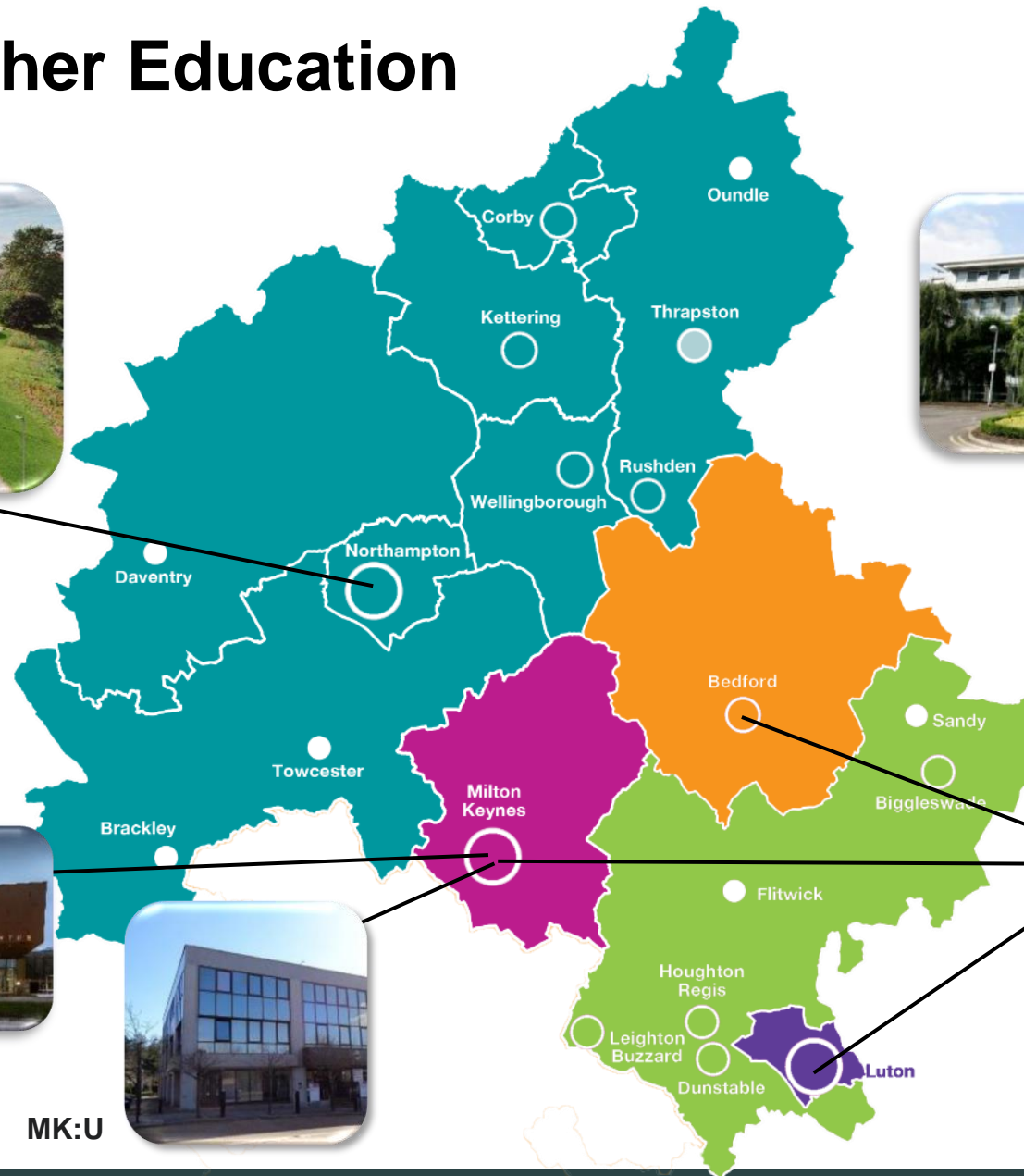
The Open
University



Cranfield
University



University of Bedfordshire



Updates – Post General Election

- **National Industrial Strategy and Local Growth Plans**
- **Review of pre-16 education curriculum** - Education for 11-16 Year Olds Committee's report published in December 2023, [Requires improvement: urgent change for 11-16 education](#), debated in the House of Lords on Friday 26th July. Video of debate with Government response at <https://parliamentlive.tv/Event/Index/0877d77f-8fbf-40d7-960b-95d24f55da1a> (starts t 10:10)
- Cancelled plans for a new qualification (ABS) to replace A-levels and T-levels in England
- **Back to Work Plan - Work and Pensions Secretary Liz Kendall (11/7/24)**
 - A new national jobs and career service to help get more people into work, and on in their work.
 - New work, health and skills plans for the economically inactive, led by Mayors and local areas.
 - A youth guarantee for all young people aged 18 to 21.<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/back-to-work-plan-will-help-drive-economic-growth-in-every-region>

Updates – Post General Election

- Government's Growth Mission - a White Paper to Get Britain Working "soon".
 - Creating more good jobs in clean energy and through Modern Industrial Strategy.
 - Making work pay and improving the quality of work, through the New Deal for Working People.
- Reforms
 - Overhaul of Jobcentres through a new jobs and careers service, bringing together Jobcentre Plus and the National Careers Service with enhanced support for employers.
 - Establish a new youth guarantee to offer training, an apprenticeship, or help to find work for all young people aged 18 to 21.
 - Empower Mayors and local areas to take the lead in driving down economic inactivity and driving up economic opportunity through delivery of ambitious Local Growth Plans. Will give local places the responsibility and resources to design a joined-up health, work and skills offer that's right for local people.
 - Establishing a new Labour Market Advisory Board to provide insight, ideas, etc.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/getting-britain-working>

Updates – Post General Election

Skills England

- New body to “meet the skills needs of the next decade across all regions”.
- Skills England is tasked with identifying current and future skills gaps and driving forward plans to enable young people and adults to develop skills they need to seize opportunity.
- Skills England will bring together central and local government, businesses, training providers and unions providing strategic oversight of the post-16 skills system aligned to the Government’s Industrial Strategy.
- Particular focus on construction and healthcare - Government’s mission to raise growth sustainably.
- Working with the Migration Advisory Committee, Skills England will be tasked to reduce reliance on overseas workers.
- The organisation will identify the training for which the **Growth and Skills Levy** will be accessible – a reform, giving businesses more flexibility to spend levy funds on training for the skills.
- The Skills England Bill announced transfer of functions from the IfATE to Skills England.
- This will sit alongside work to simplify and devolve adult education budgets to Mayoral Combined Authorities to address adult skills needs directly and support growth in areas.
- The government will also bring forward a strategy for post-16 education.

Contact

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