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COMPAS Research Project:
“Changing status, changing lives? The socio-economic
impact of
EU accession on low wage migrant labour in the UK”

**IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW
AGENCIES**

(March 2004)

BUSINESS PROFILE

Interview Number:

Name of Agency	
How many offices	
Where offices located	
Partnership with other agencies - UK	
Partnership with other agencies - abroad	
Sectors provide for	
Membership of professional organisations	
Numbers of workers deals with (ranges)	
Number of clients (employers) deals with	
Position of interviewee	

1. Can you tell me about the history of your agency, when it was founded and why the founders went into recruitment?

Objective: to understand how the agency developed

- Have they always specialised in the sectors they work in now?
- Have they always dealt with migrant labour? When did this start, and what nationalities (EU, accession, non-EU) have they worked with?
- Do they specialise in particular nationalities, jobs, training?
- Do they trade on local contacts?
- Who would be there “typical” client – how big a company?
- Do they offer supervision or any additional services?
- What would they see as the selling point of their agency?

2. Could you give a breakdown of the employees currently on your books by country of origin?

- UK nationals?
- accession nationals by country
- EU workers
- non EU workers
- gender of the above
- Do certain nationalities cluster in certain jobs or sectors?
Why?
- Do they expect any changes with accession?

3. What are the contractual arrangements that they have with workers?

Objective: To understand how the agency participates in contracting and sub-contracting chains

- What proportion of workers does this agency directly employ?
- What proportion of workers do they place with an employer and the employer directly employs the workers?
- What proportion of workers that they have access to come from other sub-contractors? In this instance would they employ those workers, or would they be employed by the sub-contractor?
- What proportion of workers are self-employed?
- What sorts of insurance arrangements and responsibilities do they have?
- Which of all of these is their preferred arrangement? What the advantages and disadvantages of these different arrangements?

4. Do they recruit from overseas?

Objective: to understand the relation between employment placement and immigration.

- Do they have overseas partners, or offices?
- Do they assist with immigration requirements (either by applying for work permits etc or by assisting those currently here with changing/extending status)
- Do they assist with travel arrangements?
- Do they have workers on SBS, SAWS, au pairs, working holidaymaker schemes?
- Do they have foreign students?

5. Is there a specific demand for foreign labour? Why do you think that UK workers are not suitable or available for certain jobs?

- for what jobs and what geographical areas there is a demand for migrant labour?
- why is there a demand for migrant labour? Is it about availability or are there other qualities that make migrants particularly desirable?
- is there any preference for particular nationalities? If there is, can you explain this?
- are there any nationals that are particularly hard to place?

6. Could you tell us how you attract clients (employers) and how you would meet their requirements?

- do they advertise for clients? How and where?
- do they have any requirements for clients? Do they have to produce any documentation?
- how do they charge clients, by the job or by the worker?
- average periods of contract
- who supervises workers, agencies or employers? (e.g. who would note how many hours have been worked)
- is there any “matching” involved, or is it simply a question of provision of labour? If there is matching, how is this done?
- do they perform any services for the client other than placing the workers

7. Could you tell us how you attract workers and how you would meet their requirements?

- do they advertise a) locally; b) nationally; c) countries of origin; d) internet
- do they contract with the worker?
- how do they charge the worker?
- what documentation does the worker have to show them?
- how are hours and rates of pay determined?
- what happens while the worker is unemployed?
- do they offer any services in addition to job placement (accommodation, insurance, immigration advice, transport)
- do they offer any assistance with finding language schools

8. What do you do in case of difficulties between employer and employees? Or between other employees and those provided by your agency?

- Do you have a role?
- Have you had any difficulty with trades unions?

9. How can you tell a cowboy operator? What kind of practises give the industry a bad name and how can they be prevented?

10. Do you feel that the current systems for obtaining permits for non-EU nationals (eg SBS, SAWS, au pairs) is functioning well. Would you have any suggestions on how to make it work better?

11. What do you think the impact of accession will be on the sectors within which you operate, and on your agency in particular?

- Do they think the requirement for workers to register is a good idea? Why (not)?
- Have they made any changes or are they planning to make any changes to business practises in line with accession?
- Have they had any concerns expressed by employers regarding the impact of accession?