

Quantitative Baseline Employer Survey

FINAL REPORT

Prepared for the Employment Service

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Glossary of abbreviations and terms

ES:	Employment Service
MES:	Modernising the Employment Service
Recruiter:	Employer who has recruited or tried to recruit during the past 12 months
ES user:	Employer who has used the Employment Service during the past 12 months
Micro-employer:	Employer with less than ten employees

Executive Summary

This report presents results from a national telephone survey of employers, undertaken as a key part of the evaluation of the modernisation programme, known as 'Modernising the Employment Service' or MES. It was conducted by the Policy Research Institute, at Leeds Metropolitan University, on behalf of the ES Research Partnership for Performance. The aim of the survey was to obtain up to date information about the role of employers as customers of the Employment Service – about their views on, and levels of satisfaction with, the services provided by the ES and views on new or planned MES related products and services. The 2001 survey constitutes a baseline survey in the context of the MES evaluation and, together with a subsequent follow-up survey, will provide the basis for identifying changes in employers' perception, use and satisfaction with the ES attributable to the MES programme.

- There is a relatively high level of awareness of ES services amongst employers, with 81% aware of at least one service. Awareness of recruitment services is higher than more specialist advice and information services.
- Some 45% of employers had used the ES during the past year and 54% had used it at some time in the past.
- Just under a third of vacancies are notified to the ES nationally and the ES is the most widely used channel for recruitment, used by nearly half of all employers. However, employers are significantly more likely to use the ES for semi-skilled and unskilled manual vacancies and clerical and sales jobs than for managerial and professional positions.
- Overall, 59% of employers were satisfied with the service they had received. Larger employers and those in production tended to be more satisfied but there were 'pockets' of dissatisfaction amongst smaller employers and those in sales and repair and hotels, restaurants and recreation.
- Employers' views on Jobcentre services and their staff were generally positive but some employers expressed concerns about the quality of candidates submitted and the extent to which ES staff understand the needs of their business. Many employers wanted to see better screening of applicants for vacancies.

Awareness and use of the Employment Service

Four out of every five employers who had recruited or attempted to recruit during the past year were aware of at least one service provided by the ES. However, around one in ten of 'recruiting' employers were unaware of the available services, suggesting some scope for improved promotion activity, particularly among smaller employers and those in the transport, communication, business and financial services sectors.

Around 45 per cent of employers had used at least one ES service during the previous 12 months. In the vast majority of cases, this involved the use of recruitment services. There are considerable variations by sector and size in the extent to which ES services are used. Usage rates are highest among employers in the sales/repair sectors and among larger employers.

Employer awareness of recruitment-related ES services has remained broadly steady, or increased slightly, since 1995, but there is some evidence of a fall in the use of these services between 1999 and 2001. There has been a steady decline in employer awareness of ES information and advice services since 1995, but use of such services has remained broadly constant.

Use of the Employment Service for recruitment

Just under one third of vacancies are notified to the Employment Service.

Employers with managerial and/or professional vacancies are much less likely than average to notify these job opportunities to the ES. Conversely, employers are more likely to notify manual, clerical and, to a lesser extent, craft jobs to the ES.

The ES has a comparative advantage over methods such as press advertising in relation to the fact that costs are low and the ES produces the greatest volume of applicants. However, employers are less likely to feel that the ES produces the highest quality of applicants and the findings indicate a need for continued focus on this issue.

Contact with the Employment Service

Over 40 per cent of employers obtain information about the ES through personal contact with ES staff or with Jobcentres. One in five employers stated that they did not receive any information at all about the ES and its services.

Telephone is by far the most used method by which employers advise the ES of vacancies, used by some 88 per cent. In most cases this involves telephone contact with a local Jobcentre. Over 70 per cent of ES users feel that it is important to have a regular named contact person for vacancies, and to have a contact based in the local Jobcentre. Fieldwork took place prior to the roll out and marketing of Employer Direct.

Opinions of services provided by the Employment Service

Some 59 per cent of employers that had used ES services in the previous 12 months stated that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the service that they had received. Employers in the production sector expressed the highest levels of satisfaction while higher than average rates of dissatisfaction were recorded for smaller employers and for those operating in sales, repair, hotels, restaurants and recreation.

Satisfaction levels are higher for ES advisory and information services than for recruitment services, although there is a relatively high level of dissatisfaction with advice and information on workforce training.

Improved screening of applicants is the single most important change that would encourage employers currently using ES to make more use of ES services, and non-users to become ES customers. A significant proportion of employers would welcome regular contact by the local Jobcentre, especially larger organisations and those in the public sector.

It is difficult to make accurate comparisons over time, but the evidence suggests that there may have been a slight decline in the satisfaction of users with ES services between 1999 and 2001. However, the longer term picture is relatively stable, with employers feeling that the knowledge levels of ES staff have improved since 1995.

Employers and the modernisation programme

Only about one in ten of employers are aware of the 'Modernising ES' programme, and even fewer are familiar with specific initiatives under this programme. However, most employers that expressed an opinion feel that the MES changes are likely to lead to improved service from the ES, although of all the changes Employer Direct receives the least positive endorsement. The

research took place prior to full rollout of Employer Direct and before any marketing had taken place.

For over half of employers publicising of vacancies beyond the local labour market area is not important but larger employers and those in the production sector are more likely to feel that it is important to them.

Most employers feel that the use of technology by the ES is at least on a par with, and in many cases compares favourably with, other organisations that they deal with.

1 Introduction

The Modernisation Programme (MES)

1.1 The modernisation programme, known as “Modernising the Employment Service” or MES, is a package of measures introduced, mostly in 2001/02, to transform ES services and to lay the foundations for the labour market service of Jobcentre Plus. MES forms part of the ongoing IT development programme.

1.2 The key objectives of the MES programme are to:

- Improve the effectiveness of the ES’ services for Jobseekers, particularly for those who are at a disadvantage in the labour market;
- Improve the effectiveness of the ES’ services for employers, and
- Improve the efficiency, accuracy, flexibility and responsiveness of the ES’ work processes in meeting the needs and changing priorities of Ministers, customers, and partners.

1.3 The objectives have been addressed through changes and improvements to ES service provision, including the introduction of: touch screen jobpoints replacing vacancy display boards, centralised vacancy taking via customer service centres and the availability of all ES notified vacancies via the ES Internet Job Bank. The modernisation programme also includes the replacement and upgrade of IT hardware and software.

1.4 The MES programme is subject to a comprehensive evaluation, and a number of reports are to be published in 2002 and 2003. The MES evaluation comprises two rounds of research. Round one is designed to provide early feedback on MES rollout as well as forming a baseline against which later changes can be measured. Round two will provide information on the development of the programme and will identify any changes from the baseline.

1.5 The following research outputs are planned:

- **Baseline nationally representative telephone survey of employers;**
 - Follow-up employer survey planned for summer 2002 to measure any changes from baseline;
- Qualitative interviews with employers and with staff in customer service centres;
 - Follow-up interviews planned for spring 2002;
- Exit survey of Jobseeker and Jobcentre traffic count at Jobcentres;
 - Follow-up traffic survey planned for summer 2002 to measure any changes from baseline;

- Study of early views on the Internet Job Bank;
- Jobcentre case studies: interviews with staff and partners of jobcentres;
 - Follow-up sweep of Jobcentre case studies planned for spring 2002;
- Econometric analysis of impact of MES on ES performance and the labour market in 2001 and 2002;
- Summary evaluation reports at the end of first and second year work.

The Employer Survey

1.6 This report presents results from the national telephone survey of employers, undertaken in August-September 2001 as a key part of the evaluation of the MES programme. The aim of the survey was to obtain up to date information about the role of employers as customers of the Employment Service – about their views on, and levels of satisfaction with, the services provided by the ES and views on new or planned MES related products and services. The 2001 survey constitutes a baseline survey in the context of the MES evaluation and, together with a subsequent follow-up survey, will provide the basis for identifying changes in employers' perception, use and satisfaction with the ES attributable to the MES programme.

1.7 More specifically, the objectives of this element of the MES evaluation are:

- to gather any baseline evidence on the proportion and composition of employers using the ES
- to gather any evidence on employer satisfaction levels prior to and post-MES
- to assess whether the level of service to employers has improved; are employers helped to fill vacancies more quickly and efficiently?
- to determine if there has been an increase in employers' willingness to notify vacancies to the ES.

1.8 The survey was undertaken by telephone during August-September 2001 with employers across Great Britain who had recruited or tried to recruit staff during the previous 12 months. A total of 2057 interviews were obtained. The survey was designed to achieve a sample that includes employers of all sizes and sectors (excluding agriculture, forestry and fishing, and schools). The resulting data has been weighted in order that the results are representative of the size and sector composition of employers in Great Britain. A summary of the methodology pursued is provided in Annex A.

1.9 An explanatory letter was sent to sampled employers in advance of the survey and a copy of this is provided as Annex B. The survey covered a range of topics relating to the awareness of employers of the services provided by the ES, the extent to which they have made use of these services and their level of satisfaction with the services provided. A copy of the survey questionnaire is provided in Annex C. Particular attention has been paid to the awareness of

employers of the changes that are currently under way through the MES programme.

1.10 Where appropriate, the questions in the 2001 survey have been asked in such a way as to enable comparisons to be undertaken with a similar survey carried out by the Institute for Employment Studies in 1999 (1) and also, in some cases, with a survey undertaken in 1995 by IPSOS-RSL (2). There are, however, important differences between the sampling methods used in the 1999 and 2001 surveys, so caution needs to be exercised in interpreting the results of any comparisons (see Annex A for details).

2 Awareness and Use of the Employment Service

Key findings

- The vast majority of 'recruiting' employers are aware of at least one service provided by the ES. However, around one in ten of 'recruiting' employers are unaware of the available services, suggesting some scope for improved promotion activity, particularly among smaller employers and those in the transport, communication, business and financial services sectors.
- Around 45 per cent of employers had used at least one ES service during the previous 12 months. In the vast majority of cases, this involved the use of recruitment services.
- Just over one third of recruiters are aware of the services offered by the ES, but have never used any of them.
- There are considerable variations by sector and size in the extent to which ES services are used. Usage rates are highest among employers in the sales/repair sectors and among larger employers.
- There appears to be considerable scope to increase awareness and use among employers of the information and advice services offered by the ES, as well as more specialised recruitment services such as New Deal and the Disability Service.
- Employer awareness of recruitment-related ES services has remained broadly steady, or increased slightly, since 1995, but there is some evidence of a fall in the use of these services between 1999 and 2001.
- There has been a steady decline in employer awareness of ES information and advice services since 1995, but use of such services has remained broadly constant.

Awareness and use of ES services

2.1 This section reports findings on employers' awareness and use of ES services. Respondents were asked to state whether they were aware of a range of services provided by the ES and for each service, whether they had ever used it and whether they had used it in the 12 months prior to the survey.

2.2 Table 2.1 indicates that just over four out of every five employers are aware that the ES is able to help employers with the recruitment of jobseekers to fill their vacancies. Awareness of specific recruitment services such as New Deal and the Disability Service is between 44 and 49 per cent of all employers. Between 30 and 38 per cent of employers are aware of the ES as a source of advice about various issues such as recruitment, employment legislation and training.

2.3 Those employers that had used the ES for recruitment purposes during the past year were asked a further set of questions about their awareness and use of four specific services aimed at recruiters.

- 55 per cent of recent ES users (26 per cent of all recruiters) are aware of the possibility of using Jobcentres in order to conduct interviews, and eight per cent had indeed done so.
- The most commonly used additional service among recruiters is the facility for the ES to distribute application forms on behalf of the employers. 18 per cent of ES users (eight per cent of recruiters) had taken advantage of this service in the past year.
- 14 per cent had made use of the applicant screening service.
- However, only one third of recent ES users are aware that Jobcentres are able to run recruitment events, and only three per cent had participated in such events.

2.4 Just over half (54 per cent) of employers had used at least one ES service at some time in the past, and 45 per cent had used the ES in the past 12 months (Table 2.2).

- It is clear that by far the most used service is the recruitment of job-seekers, accounting for around three-quarters of all users.
- For all other specified services, fewer than ten per cent of respondents had ever used each service and fewer than five per cent had used them during the past 12 months.
- The ratio between use and awareness is particularly low in relation to disability services, advice about training, New Deal and other government programmes.

Table 2.1: Awareness and use of ES services (percentage of respondents)

	Aware	Ever used	Used in past 12 months
Recruitment Services			
Recruitment of jobseekers to fill notified vacancies	80.7	46.9	37.2
Recruitment through the New Deal programme	48.8	8.4	4.2
Recruitment through the Disability Service	44.2	3.5	1.8
Other Government programmes (such as Work Based Learning for Adults, Job Interview Guarantee, Work Trials)	37.0	3.8	2.0
Conducting interviews at Jobcentres	26.2	n.a.	4.0
Distribution of application forms for vacancies	22.4	n.a.	8.4
Applicant screening service	20.6	n.a.	6.9
Recruitment events to attract applicants	15.9	n.a.	1.6
Advice and Information Services			
Advice and information about the availability of suitable applicants	37.6	9.9	6.2
Advice and information about employing people with disabilities	37.4	4.5	2.7
Advice and information about general employment legislation	36.8	6.1	4.7
Advice and information about training the workforce	35.0	4.1	3.2
Advice and information about recruitment methods	34.7	6.4	4.3
Advice and information about difficulties in filling vacancies	29.6	3.7	2.8
N (weighted) =	2120	2120	2120

Base: all respondents that recruited or tried to recruit at least one new person in the past 12 months

Table 2.2: Awareness and use of the Employment Service by employer characteristics (percentage of respondents)*

	Aware of ES services	Ever used ES services	Used ES in past 12 months	N (weighted)
Sector				
Production	92.6	63.2	48.8	385
Sales and repair	90.6	70.4	59.1	506
Hotels, restaurants, recreation	91.8	59.5	52.9	357
Transport, communication, finance, business service	84.2	35.9	29.7	680
Public administration, health	92.3	50.0	44.8	192
Number of Employees				
1-9 employees	87.6	52.3	43.5	1435
10-49 employees	92.8	56.1	47.5	549
50-199 employees	86.0	63.3	50.0	64
200-499 employees	96.8	54.9	40.0	20
500+ employees	97.8	78.3	67.3	52
All Employers	89.3	54.4	44.8	2120

Base: all respondents that recruited or tried to recruit at least one new person in the past 12 months

** Figures refer to the percentage of respondents that were aware of, or had used, at least one ES service*

2.5 Awareness of ES services does not vary significantly by sector, although Table 2.2 suggests that employers in the transport, communication, business and financial services sector are less likely than average to be aware of the ES. However, the likelihood of an employer using an ES service does vary by sector. Employers in sales and repair, followed by hotels, restaurants and recreation are most likely to have used the ES in the past 12 months, whereas fewer than 30 per cent of employers in transport, communication, finance and business services have done so (see Figure 2.1).

2.6 The smallest employers, with fewer than ten employees, are least likely to be aware of and/or to have used ES services. However, even among this group 88 per cent are aware of at least one service provided by the ES. At the other end of the scale, almost all larger employers (over 500 employees) are aware of the ES, and two thirds had used an ES service in the past year. Although employers with 200-499 employees are almost as likely to be aware of the ES as the largest employers, they are less likely to have used the ES in the past 12 months or at any time in the past (see Figure 2.2).

Figure 2.1: Employers' Use of ES Services: By Sector

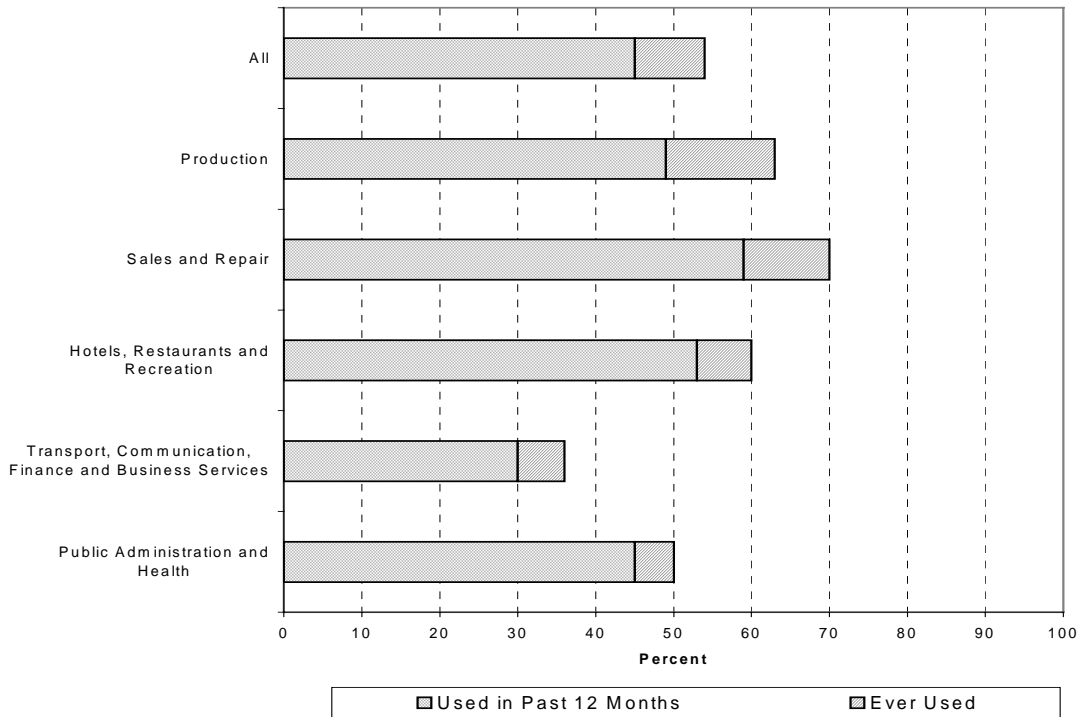
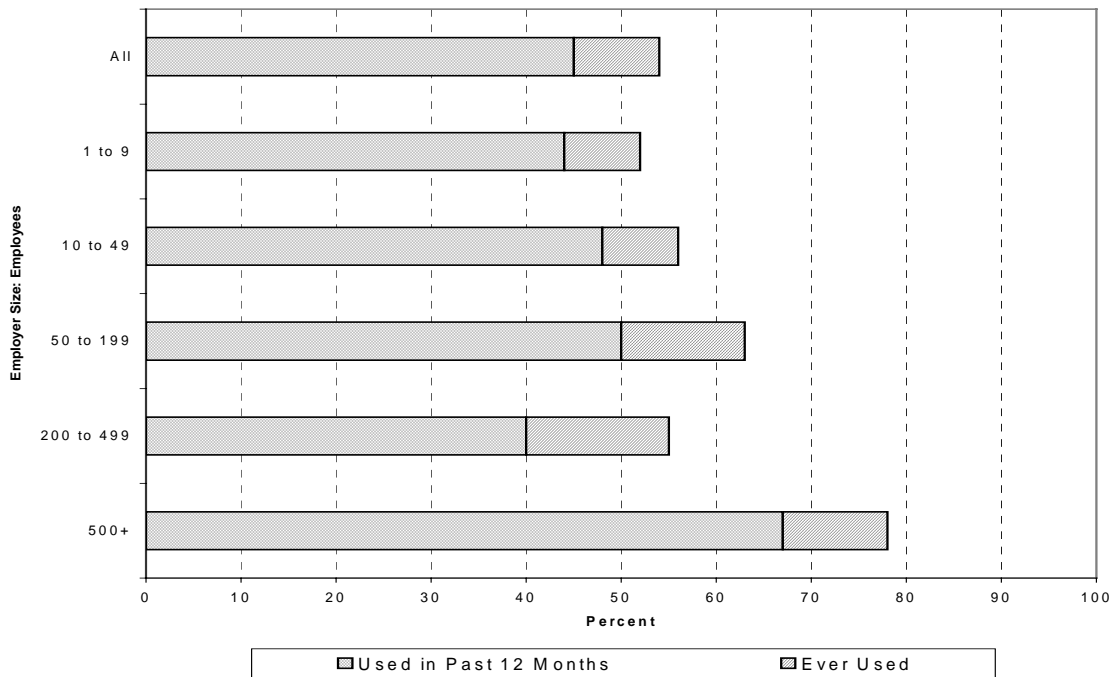


Figure 2.2: Employers' Use of ES Services: By Size



Changes over time

2.7 As noted in section one, comparisons with the results of the earlier surveys by IES in 1999 and CBI in 1995 should be treated with some caution at this stage, due to changes that have taken place in sampling techniques and in the specific questions that are asked of respondents. In addition, the results of the IES survey were presented primarily in the form of charts, so it has been necessary to estimate numerical values from the published material. Finally, the 2001 data presented in Table 2.3 differ from that presented earlier, in that employers with fewer than ten employees have been excluded in order to provide comparability with the 1999 figures.

2.8 Notwithstanding these provisos, it is possible to obtain a broad picture of changes in employer awareness of, and use of ES services over the period 1995 to 2001. Table 2.3 summarises the awareness of three groups of employers – recent users of the ES, past users and non-users – in relation to a number of specific ES services.

Table 2.3: Awareness and use of ES services, 1995-2001 (percentage of respondents)

		Aware of service					Using service	
		Users	Past users	Non-users	All	Private sector users	Current ES users	All
Recruitment services								
Distribution of application forms	1999	50	48	44	48			23
	2001	49	13	28	44			10
Interviews at Jobcentres	1999	52	46	62	54			5
	2001	59	62	67	60			6
Recruitment events	1999	35	44	43	40			10
	2001	44	58	29	43			4
Applicant screening service	1995					43		
	1999	34	46	39	38	45		11
	2001	44	58	37	43	41		7
New Deal	1999	56	55	38	51			6
	2001	56	69	39	50			3
Other programmes for unemployed	1999	51	48	56	53			7
	2001	50	42	33	42			2
Recruitment of people with disabilities	1999	51	45	40	47			7
	2001	55	49	34	46			2
Advice services								
Recruitment methods	1999	44	58	32	n.k			8
	2001	41	51	29	37			10
Availability of recruits	1999	45	51	35	n.k			20
	2001	42	35	29	36			11
People with disabilities	1995					61		
	1999	53	57	56	n.k	56		8
	2001	48	35	27	39	45		7
Training	1995					42		
	1999	29	42	20	n.k	33		2
	2001	38	32	32	35	36		5
Employment legislation	1995					57		
	1999	51	62	48	n.k	56		9
	2001	43	42	38	41	41		9

Base: employers with ten or more employees that recruited at least one person in the year prior to the survey

2.9 The results suggest that awareness of specific recruitment services such as the use of Jobcentres for interviews and recruitment events has remained steady or indeed increased slightly since 1999. However, the use of such services – with the exception of Jobcentre interviews – would appear to have declined. A similar pattern applies to the New Deal and/or other initiatives relating to unemployed people or people with disabilities.

2.10 Comparisons with earlier surveys suggest a steady decline over time in awareness among employers of the information and advice services that are offered by the ES. However, while the use of such services is relatively modest, there appears to have been little decline over time in the percentage of employers seeking information or advice from the ES. The exception relates to a decline in the use of information or advice regarding the availability of recruits.

3 Use of the Employment Service for Recruitment

Key findings

- **Just under one third of vacancies are notified to the Employment Service, with some scope to increase this figure among smaller employers, public sector organisations and those in the transport, communication, financial and business services sectors.**
- **One factor explaining the sectoral pattern of ES use is the fact that employers with managerial and/or professional vacancies are much less likely than average to notify these job opportunities to the ES.**
- **Conversely, employers are more likely to notify manual, clerical and, to a lesser extent, craft jobs to the ES than they are to notify managerial vacancies.**
- **The ES has a comparative advantage over methods such as press advertising in relation to the fact that costs are low and the ES produces the greatest volume of applicants.**
- **However, employers are less likely to feel that the ES produces the highest quality of applicants.**

Use of the Employment Service

3.1 As outlined in section two, the recruitment of job-seekers through the notification of vacancies is the ES service that is by far the most used by employers. Table 3.1 provides more detail regarding the extent to which employers use this service. Overall, 31 per cent of the vacancies reported by survey respondents had been notified to the ES.

3.2 As Figures 3.1 and 3.2 illustrate, there is more variation between sectors in the use of the ES for recruitment than there is between size groups. Of particular note is the relatively high use by employers in the hotels, restaurants and recreation sector, half of whom had notified vacancies to the ES during the past year. The production and sales and repair sector are close to the average whereas transport, communications, finance and business (25 per cent) and

especially public administration and health (17 per cent) show relatively low use. Figure 3.2 shows that the percentage of vacancies notified to the ES tends to increase broadly with the size of the employer, although it appears to be relatively low in the 200-499 size category.

Table 3.1: Notification of vacancies to the ES in the past 12 months

	Vacancies			Employers	N
	Total	Notified to ES	ES as % of total	% with at least one vacancy filled through ES	(weighted)
Sector					
Production	3176	960	30.2	32.4	385
Sales and repair	5310	1514	28.5	30.2	506
Hotels, restaurants, recreation	6757	3380	50.0	30.0	357
Transport, communication, finance, business service	8249	2029	24.6	13.5	680
Public administration, health	3558	622	17.5	13.5	192
Number of Employees					
1-9 employees	8255	2291	27.8	22.4	1435
10-49 employees	3964	1219	30.8	25.1	549
50-199 employees	1886	633	33.6	29.7	64
200-499 employees	1217	337	27.7	30.0	20
500+ employees	11727	4026	34.3	34.6	52
All Employers	27049	8505	31.4	23.6	2120

Base: all respondents that recruited or tried to recruit during the past 12 months

Figure 3.1: Percentage of Employers' Vacancies Notified to ES During Past 12 Months: By Sector

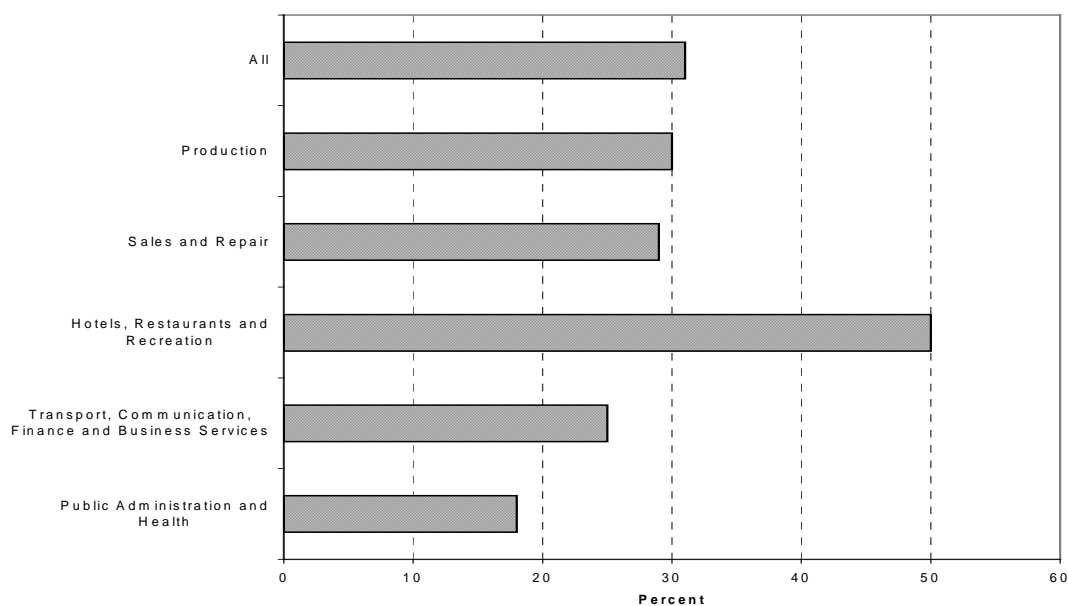
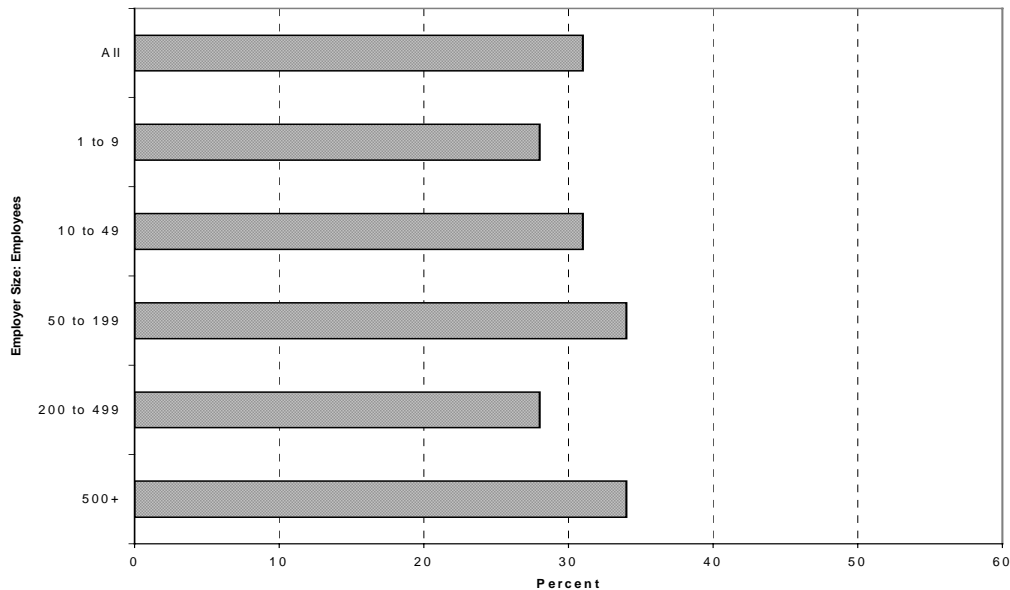


Figure 3.2: Percentage of Employers' Vacancies Notified to ES During Past 12 Months: By Size



3.3 About a quarter (24 per cent) of respondents stated that at least one vacancy had been filled through the ES during the 12 months prior to the survey. Again, there are clear differences by sector and size of employer, with production businesses being most likely to have filled at least one vacancy through the ES. Micro employers and those in transport, communication, finance or business services are the least likely to have filled a vacancy through the ES, along with employers in public administration and health, consistent with their relatively low overall use of the ES for recruitment.

Employers' recruitment methods

3.4 Table 3.2 shows the recruitment methods used by employers during the past 12 months. Across all vacancies, the Employment Service is the most widely used channel for recruitment, used by 48 per cent of employers (this is broadly consistent with the 45 per cent indicating that they have used the ES during the past year in Table 2.1). Other methods used by over 40 per cent of employers are the local press (purchased) and word of mouth.

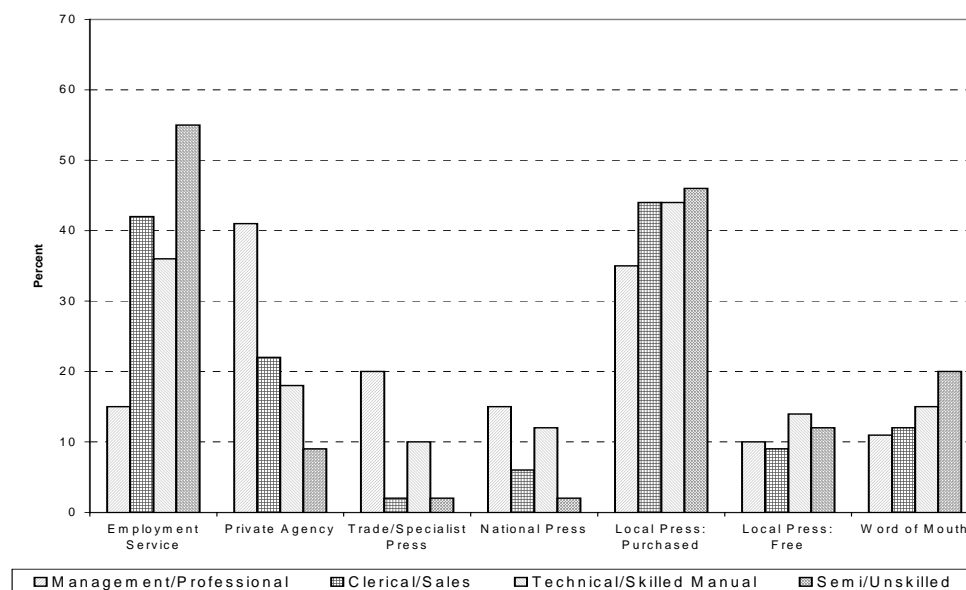
3.5 It can also be seen from Table 3.2 that recruitment methods are closely related to the occupation in which the vacancy occurs. Respondents were asked to provide details of up to two methods used to recruit new staff in the main three occupations for which vacancies occurred in the past year. While the Employment Service is the most widely used channel for recruitment across the whole range of vacancies, its importance relative to other methods (notably press advertising, word of mouth and recruitment agencies) varies significantly by occupation. This is shown graphically in Figure 3.3.

Table 3.2: Recruitment methods used: all vacancies and selected occupations (percentage of respondents)

	All vacancies	Man/ prof	Clerical/ sales	Tech/ skilled	Semi / unskilled
Employment Service	48.1	14.7	41.6	34.7	54.7
Local papers (purchased)	43.6	34.8	43.5	43.9	46.2
Word of mouth/personal recommendation	41.7	10.6	11.9	15.5	20.3
Local papers (free)	25.4	10.0	8.8	14.2	12.1
Notice boards/shop windows	18.0	2.1	17.7	3.2	13.1
Fee charging private employment agencies	14.1	40.5	21.8	18.4	8.8
Internal notices	8.1	7.1	11.1	9.8	9.0
National Press	6.9	14.8	6.4	11.8	1.8
Internet / Web-based recruitment	5.7	9.0	3.1	4.7	1.8
Trade/specialist press	5.3	20.1	2.3	10.3	1.5
Own website	4.0	3.9	1.8	1.8	0.4
Job fairs	3.9	4.0	4.6	3.9	5.1
Direct / speculative enquiries	3.6	3.1	4.4	2.3	3.9
Re-employing former staff	2.9	0.3	0.6	1.0	0.6
Careers service	2.0	2.4	1.1	1.1	0.5
Promotion/transfer	1.7	1.4	0.9	0.1	0.2
Radio	1.0	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Government Programmes and Schemes such as New Deal	0.5	0.1	0.3	0.6	0.1
Non – commercial agency (eg trade union)	0.3	0.1	0.3	0.1	0.2
N (weighted) =	2120	701	1494	824	1293

Base: Column 1; all respondents that recruited or tried to recruit during the past 12 months. Columns 2-5; employers reporting vacancies in the specified occupation in the past year.

Figure 3.3: Employers' Main Recruitment Methods by Job Type



3.6 Thus, only 15 per cent of organisations with vacancies for managers or professional staff referred such vacancies to the ES, compared with 55 per cent in the case of manual workers and 42 per cent for clerical and sales staff. It is notable that the pattern for fee charging private employment agencies is almost a 'mirror image' of the ES profile, with an emphasis on management, professional, clerical and technical occupations. Local newspapers (especially purchased) are widely used for recruitment for all types of vacancies, although the national and/or trade/specialist press is more commonly used for managerial, professional and technical vacancies than for recruitment to clerical, sales or manual posts. Recruitment through the Internet and/or the use of employers' web sites to advertise posts is used by a small minority of employers, but is more common for managerial or professional vacancies than for other occupations.

Reasons for using the ES and other recruitment channels

3.7 Tables 3.3-3.5 summarise the responses of employers to a series of questions that probed the reasons why employers prefer to utilise different methods of recruitment. In Table 3.3 employers are divided into those that have used the ES (either alone or in combination with another method) and those that have not used the ES during the past year for recruitment into specific occupations. Table 3.4 presents responses to a general question asked of all employers that had used the ES as a method of recruitment for any occupation during the past 12 months.

Table 3.3: Reasons for use of recruitment methods: users and non-users of the ES (percentage of respondents)

	ES users	Non – ES users
Produces local candidates	30.6	16.4
Produces lots of candidates	29.2	19.1
Produces good / the best candidates	27.6	48.1
Easy to use	16.8	10.4
Quick	16.5	12.6
There is no charge	15.4	4.6
Reliable	12.3	14.6
Low cost	10.8	6.9
Company Policy	8.7	8.8
Good professional service	8.1	7.1
It is better than the available alternatives	7.4	7.8
Good understanding of our requirements	7.0	10.0
Because I have a named contact there	1.3	0.7
Required by law	0.3	0.3
N (weighted) =	1019	1101

Base: all respondents that recruited or tried to recruit during the past 12 months. Responses relate to recruitment methods used for three main occupations recruited in past 12 months.

Table 3.4: Reasons for use of the ES for recruitment (percentage of respondents)

	Identified	Most important
Produces lots of candidates	22.5	11.2
Easy to use	21.6	9.4
There is no charge	19.3	8.1
Produces local candidates	16.8	7.3
Quick	16.0	5.2
Local presence of a Jobcentre	15.6	7.0
Good professional service	13.5	6.0
Low cost	10.0	4.8
Reliable	9.9	5.7
Produces good / the best candidates	9.5	5.8
It is better than the available alternatives	4.8	2.3
Good understanding of our requirements	4.1	1.5
Company Policy	2.7	1.6
Because I have a named contact there	1.9	0.7
Applicants are pre-screened	1.6	0.5
Required by law	-	-
Other	11.6	11.7
N (weighted) =	1019	1019

Base: Respondents that had used the ES for recruitment in the past year.

Responses relate to recruitment methods used for any occupation recruited in past 12 months.

3.8 Despite the slightly different bases for Tables 3.3 and 3.4, a broadly consistent pattern emerges:

- Amongst 'ES users', the Employment Service is seen as rather more able to produce sufficient numbers of local candidates than to produce good or the best candidates, whereas the reverse is the case for users of other recruitment methods. This is consistent with the picture presented by Table 3.2, which shows relatively high usage of the ES for clerical and sales and semi/ unskilled manual jobs whereas employers recruiting managerial/ professional and technical/skilled staff tend to use other recruitment methods more than the ES.
- The ES is also perceived as relatively easy to use and quick, and the low direct and indirect costs involved in using the ES are also mentioned by more than ten percent of employers.
- Differences between the ES and alternative recruitment channels, in terms of attributes such as professionalism of service, reliability and understanding of employer requirements are relatively small.

3.9 When asked about their specific reasons for not using the ES as a channel of recruitment (Table 3.5), almost half of all non-users of the ES simply stated that they found their other recruitment methods to be adequate to meet their needs. There is little variation by sector or size in this proportion. In terms of

factors specific to the ES service, by far the most important reasons relate to the perceived quality and attributes of job applicants supplied by the ES. Thus, one in five non-users felt that the ES provides applicants that are under qualified to meet their requirements, and seven to eight per cent felt that candidates sent by the ES were unsuitable and/or not interested in working. Six per cent had some (unspecified) bad experience with the ES in the past, but all other possible reasons for non-use of the ES, including unreliability, unprofessional behaviour and excess bureaucracy received fewer than five per cent of responses.

Table 3.5: Reasons for not using the ES for recruitment (percentage of respondents)

No need to / other sources are adequate	48.7
Provides under qualified applicants	20.3
Provides applicants who aren't interested in working	8.1
They send us too many unemployed applicants who are unsuitable	6.6
Bad experience in the past	5.6
Do not have the right applicants	3.9
Not sure of services offered	3.8
Jobcentre staff do not understand our requirements	3.3
Unreliable	2.8
Company Policy	2.8
Applicants failed to attend interview	2.7
Doesn't provide enough applicants	2.4
Too much paperwork / too bureaucratic	2.4
Not available locally	2.3
Takes too long	2.0
The ES does not market itself very well	1.9
They are unprofessional when I see them in person	1.3
Provides over qualified applicants	1.2
Produces too many applicants	0.8
Wrong image for our organisation	0.7
Follow up process is time consuming	0.5
They are unprofessional on the telephone	0.4
Not allowed for legal reasons	-
N (weighted) =	1101

Base: Respondents that had not used ES for recruitment in the past year

4 Contact with the Employment Service

Key findings

- **Over 40 per cent of employers obtain information about the ES through personal contact with ES staff or with Jobcentres. The remainder obtain information through direct mail, media or a range of formal and informal contacts.**
- **One in five employers stated that they did not receive any information at all about the ES and its services.**
- **Telephone is by far the most used method by which employers advise the ES of vacancies. In most cases this involves telephone contact with a local Jobcentre.**
- **Most users of the ES feel that it is important to have a regular named contact person for vacancies, and to have a contact based in the local Jobcentre. Since only 20 per cent report having a regular contact for telephone notification of vacancies, there may be scope to enhance the service provided through a personalised service in local Jobcentres.**
- **Awareness of the Employment Service Direct service is limited, particularly among small employers. However, those employers that have recruited jobseekers who have used Employment Service Direct are broadly positive about it, and around 50 per cent of ES users feel that such a service would make them more likely to use the ES.**

Sources of information about the Employment Service

4.1 All respondents, including those that had not used the ES, were asked about the main ways in which they obtained information about the ES and the services that it offers. The results are summarised in Table 4.1, indicating that 28 per cent of employers have some form of personal contact with Jobcentre staff, and 15 per cent said that their main information came through actually using Jobcentre services. Ten per cent of employers saw leaflets or other types of written communication as their main source of information and six per cent obtained information through the press or other media. One in five employers

stated that they did not receive any information about the ES through any channel, formal or informal.

Table 4.1: Main source of information about the ES (percentage of respondents)

Personal contact with Jobcentre staff	27.8
Personal experience of using Jobcentre services	14.8
Leaflets, posters or literature	10.1
Press or media	6.3
A colleague in your organisation	2.7
Employer networks or associations	2.1
Jobcentre staff regularly phoning me	1.7
Other	8.6
None	20.1
N (weighted) =	2120

Base: all respondents that recruited or tried to recruit during the past 12 months

Table 4.2: Methods used to notify vacancies (percentage of respondents)

Telephone: All	87.7*
Local Jobcentre	64.5
Centralised office	16.6
Don't know	6.6
Regular contact	19.5
'Whoever answers the call'	64.9
Don't know	3.4
Fax	23.5*
Personal visit to Jobcentre	13.6*
Visits from Jobcentre	4.6*
Other	2.3*
N (weighted) =	1019

Base: Respondents that had used the ES for recruitment in the past year

**Figures do not sum to 100 per cent because multiple methods may be used*

Contact with the Employment Service

4.2 Those employers that had notified at least one vacancy to the ES were asked to state how they normally communicated details of their vacancies to the ES (Table 4.2). Some 88 per cent of Jobcentre users normally contact the ES by telephone to advise them of any vacancies. In most cases, telephone contact is made with the employer's local Jobcentre, but in 17 per cent of cases, contact is with a centralised office. Only one in five Jobcentre users said that they spoke to a regular contact when notifying vacancies by telephone. In most cases, the employer speaks to 'whoever answers the call.'

4.3 There is some evidence from Table 4.3 that employers who use Jobcentres would appreciate the existence of a regular named contact with whom to discuss vacancies, particularly if the person were to be based in the local Jobcentre. Between 70 and 81 per cent felt that such a facility would be 'important' or 'very important', compared with around 20 per cent who currently deal with a regular contact when notifying vacancies by telephone.

Table 4.3: Importance of personal contact in Jobcentres (percentage of respondents)

	Very Important	Important	Not Important
Having a regular named contact person who I can contact about vacancies	30.5	39.7	25.8
Having someone based in the local Jobcentre that I can contact about vacancies	32.6	48.8	15.5
N (weighted) =	1019		

Base: Respondents that had used the ES for recruitment in the past year

Figures exclude 'don't know' responses.

Employment Service Direct

4.4 Finally, employers were asked about their awareness, use and perceptions of the Employment Service Direct service. Table 4.4 suggests that awareness of this service is relatively low, even among employers that have recently used ES services. Only 12 per cent of respondents said that they were aware of Employment Service Direct, and only a handful (around one per cent) reported that they had filled any vacancies with jobseekers who had used this route. Awareness of Employment Service Direct among ES users in the hotel, restaurant and recreation sector is particularly low, and it appears that there is considerable scope to promote awareness of this service across a broad cross section of employers.

4.5 Amongst those who were not aware of Employment Service Direct, over half responded positively when asked whether it would make them more likely to use the ES. It can be seen from Table 4.4 that this service tends to be relatively more attractive for larger employers and those in the hotels, restaurants and recreation sector and in public services.

Table 4.4: Awareness and use of Employment Service Direct, by employer characteristics (percentage of respondents)

	Aware of ESD	Filled vacancy through ESD*	Percentage of those unaware of ESD who feel it would make them more likely to use ES
Sector			
Production	11.0		31.0
Sales and repair	10.5		50.0
Hotels, restaurants, recreation	6.5		67.7
Transport, communication, finance, business service	15.8		51.2
Public administration, health	21.1		70.0
Number of Employees			
1-9 employees	9.6		50.0
10-49 employees	14.8		52.1
50-199 employees	22.5		49.8
200-499 employees	16.2		56.5
500+ employees	24.5		57.1
All Employers	12.1	1.1	50.9
N (weighted) =	1019	1019	886

Base: Respondents that had used the ES for recruitment in the past year

** Sample size too small to permit disaggregation by sector and size*

5 Opinions of Services Provided by the Employment Service

Key findings

- The majority of employers that had used ES services in the previous 12 months stated that they were satisfied with the service that they had received. Employers in the production sector expressed the highest levels of satisfaction.
- About one in six users felt dissatisfied with some aspect of ES service. Higher than average rates of dissatisfaction were recorded for smaller employers and for those operating in sales, repair, hotels, restaurants and recreation. Satisfaction levels are higher for ES advisory and information services than for recruitment services.
- ES users are broadly positive about customer service from the ES and about the knowledge of ES staff. However, a significant minority of employers feels that the ES does not produce the best candidates and that ES staff do not have a good knowledge of their business needs.
- Views are polarised on whether employers would like to do more business with the ES through electronic means; 41 per cent agree but 36 per cent disagree, and larger employers are most likely to agree.
- Improved screening of applicants is the single most important change that would encourage ES users to make more use of ES services, and non-users to become ES customers. A significant proportion of employers would welcome regular contact by the local Jobcentre, especially larger organisations and those in the public sector.
- However, a substantial minority of employers does not feel that there are any changes that would persuade them to make (more) use of the ES.
- It is difficult to make accurate comparisons over time, but the evidence suggests that there may have been a slight decline in the satisfaction of users with ES services between 1999 and 2001. However, the longer term picture is relatively stable, with employers feeling that the knowledge levels of ES staff have improved since 1995.

Satisfaction with ES services

5.1 Employers that had used the ES during the 12 months prior to the survey were asked a series of questions designed to elicit their opinions of the services that they had received. Their responses are summarised in Tables 5.1 to 5.4. Table 5.1 suggests that the majority (around 59 per cent) of ES users are either 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the services that they have received. 17 per cent had some reason to be 'dissatisfied' or 'very dissatisfied'.

5.2 The pattern of satisfaction by sector and size groups is illustrated in Figures 5.1 and 5.2. There is no clear correlation between levels of use and satisfaction. It can be seen from Figure 5.1 that satisfaction levels in production and hotels, restaurants and recreation, which have quite high levels of use of the ES, are relatively high (although views in the latter sector are more polarised, with a significant minority expressing dissatisfaction). On the other hand, sales and repair is a relatively 'high use' sector but satisfaction levels are relatively low. There is some evidence from Figure 5.2 that, while the majority of smaller employers express satisfaction with the service they have received from the ES, there is a higher rate of dissatisfaction among this group (who are relatively lower users) than among larger employers.

Table 5.1: Overall satisfaction with ES services, by employer characteristics (percentage of respondents)

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neither	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	N (weighted)
Sector						
Production	16.5	53.4	14.6	7.2	5.8	188
Sales and repair	11.7	39.1	29.4	12.8	5.4	299
Hotels, restaurants, recreation	15.0	49.3	13.1	13.1	9.4	189
Transport, communication, finance, business service	26.0	34.3	23.7	7.9	7.8	202
Public administration, health	11.4	42.3	31.4	10.4	2.2	86
Number of Employees						
1-9 employees	16.1	42.9	22.2	11.6	6.3	624
10-49 employees	16.4	43.3	20.5	9.2	8.5	261
50-199 employees	16.1	43.5	28.0	8.0	2.7	32
200-499 employees	17.2	46.1	25.4	8.0	2.2	8
500+ employees	17.8	45.8	29.9	6.2	0.2	35
All Employers	16.2	43.2	22.3	10.5	6.5	950

Base: Respondents that had used any ES service during the past 12 months; excludes 'don't know' responses.

Figure 5.1: Employers' Overall satisfaction with ES Services: By Sector

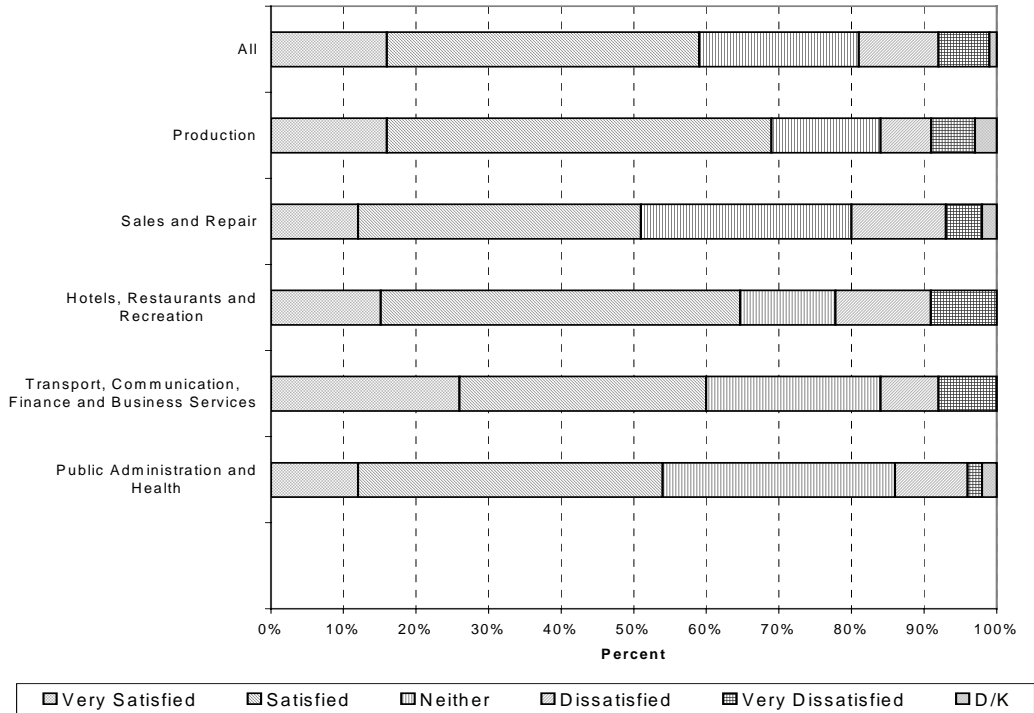
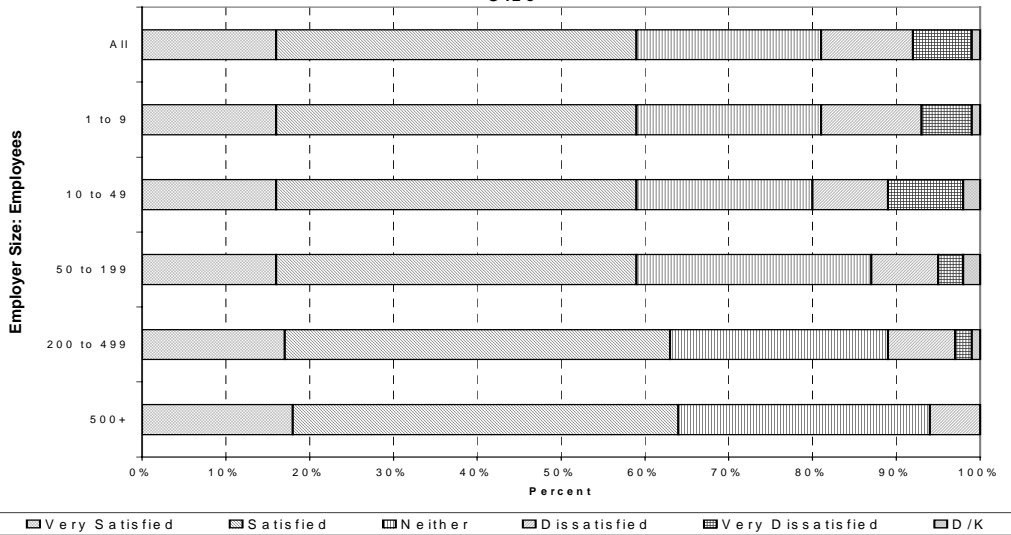


Figure 5.2: Employers' Overall satisfaction with ES Services: By Size



5.3 Table 5.2 explores the degree of satisfaction expressed by users of a range of services provided by the ES. The highest levels of satisfaction are recorded for the information and advisory services provided by the ES, particularly in relation to hard-to-fill vacancies, people with disabilities and

employment legislation. Advice and information provided by the ES in relation to workforce training is less positively received, in general, with 29 per cent of users expressing some degree of dissatisfaction.

Table 5.2: Satisfaction with ES services amongst users (percentage of respondents)

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neither	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	N (weighted)
Recruitment:						
Jobseekers	15.3	40.2	16.2	17.1	11.1	788
New Deal	15.0	49.4	18.1	3.9	13.6	88
Disability Service	27.2	26.7	36.8	4.2	5.2	38
Distribution of application forms for vacancies	22.8	53.0	11.0	12.2	0.5	179
Conducting interviews at Jobcentres	21.2	55.8	22.2	0.7	0.1	85
Recruitment events to attract applicants	37.8	29.1	19.6	13.4	0.1	35
Applicant screening service	19.0	32.4	18.9	14.8	11.8	147
Advice and information:						
Recruitment methods	21.6	53.4	13.9	10.6	0.4	91
Difficulties in filling vacancies	32.7	52.8	5.4	9.1	-	59
Availability of suitable applicants	31.0	34.5	14.3	8.3	11.9	132
Employing people with disabilities	44.3	40.3	13.0	2.2	0.1	58
Training the workforce	27.1	41.9	1.9	13.7	15.4	67
General employment legislation	42.8	38.6	12.1	5.5	0.1	101
Other:						
Other Government programmes	2.7	72.4	8.0	6.3	10.7	42
Other service	8.2	27.5	13.8	5.0	5.6	100

Base: Respondents that had used the specified service during the past 12 months; excludes 'don't know' responses.

5.4 There was a wider range of responses to questions exploring user satisfaction with services that are directly related to the recruitment of new staff (for which the number of users is significantly higher than for information and advisory services):

- While 55 per cent of users of the general recruitment service for jobseekers felt at least 'satisfied', 28 per cent expressed some degree of dissatisfaction.
- There was also a small but important group (14 per cent) of users of the New Deal programme who felt 'very dissatisfied' with the service received.
- Users were more neutral about their experience of the Disability Service, with 37 per cent being 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied'.

- There are relatively high levels of satisfaction with specialised services for recruiters (distribution of application forms, conducting interviews, recruitment events).
- However, 27 per cent of users had reason to be dissatisfied with the applicant screening service. This is consistent with the relatively high dissatisfaction with jobseeker recruitment, and with the views reported in section three on the use of the ES to recruit staff, where relatively few employers felt that the ES produced the best candidates.

Views on Jobcentres

5.5 In order to explore further the views of users about Jobcentre services, employers were invited to respond to a number of statements regarding the service provided. These responses are summarised in Table 5.3:

- In broad terms, users are positive about the quality of the service that they have received from the ES. In particular, 86 per cent of users agreed that Jobcentre staff deal with them in a professional manner and 72 per cent agreed that Jobcentres offer good customer service.
- Respondents gave more negative responses to questions regarding the quality of the candidates supplied through the ES. Just over one third agreed that the Jobcentre provides suitable candidates, but over 40 per cent disagreed with this statement.
- Around 50 per cent of respondents were positive about the skills and knowledge of ES staff in relation to the local labour market and employment legislation. However, employers were less positive about the extent to which ES personnel are familiar with the skills that are required in their business or sector. Around 30 per cent of ES users did not agree that 'Jobcentre staff have a good knowledge of our kind of business and the sorts of skills we need'.

5.6 Respondents were also asked to express their opinion about the range of services offered by the ES and the prospect of doing more business with the ES on an electronic basis. The responses suggest a range of views:

- 29 per cent feel that the additional services provided by the ES are important to them, but 24 per cent feel that such services are not particularly important and 23 per cent having no strong opinion.
- although a significant proportion (41 per cent) welcomed the idea of doing more business electronically with the ES, 36 per cent were not positive about this prospect. Larger employers are most likely to respond positively.

Section six of this report explores in more detail employers' reactions to a number of changes in the way in which the ES does its business with employers, including the more widespread use of new technology.

Table 5.3: Views about Jobcentres amongst users of ES recruitment service (percentage of respondents)

	Agree strongly	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Disagree strongly
It is easy to get to talk to the right person	17.9	45.3	14.4	13.7	5.1
The Jobcentre produces suitable candidates	9.0	24.8	21.9	26.8	14.6
The Jobcentre produces too many candidates for me to deal with	2.8	12.3	16.1	41.1	23.9
The Jobcentre produces candidates quickly	12.8	40.6	20.7	13.1	8.9
Jobcentre staff have a good knowledge of the local labour market	12.6	37.6	16.3	6.8	8.0
Jobcentre staff have a good knowledge of employment legislation eg Health & Safety, Equal Opps	14.1	36.1	10.6	1.5	1.6
Jobcentre staff have a good knowledge of our kind of business and the sorts of skills we need	9.2	31.8	21.5	19.6	10.8
Jobcentre staff deal with me in a professional manner	31.7	54.0	5.8	4.9	2.2
The Jobcentre offers good customer service	23.0	49.0	10.5	9.3	5.2
Jobcentre staff are good at keeping in contact while handling a vacancy	17.9	42.2	17.7	12.3	6.5
The Jobcentre offers additional services which are important to me	5.7	23.6	22.5	18.0	6.2
I'd like to do more of my business electronically with the Employment Service	11.4	30.0	15.8	19.1	16.8
N (weighted) =	1019				

Base: Respondents that had used the ES for recruitment in the past year; excludes 'don't know' responses

Views on service changes

5.7 Employers, both users and non-users of the ES, were asked to react to a number of suggestions regarding ways in which the services provided might be developed in order to attract more employers to use them. Table 5.4 suggests that just under 40 per cent of ES users either felt that there were no changes that would encourage them to make more use of the ES, or could not think of any specific suggestions. Among non-users, the extent to which employers could imagine service changes that would attract them to use the service is even more limited, with 47 per cent unable to suggest any changes that would lead them to make (more) use of ES services.

5.8 In terms of the specific suggestions put forward in the questionnaire, improvements in the way in which applicants are screened by the ES prior to interview may encourage up to 40 per cent of users and 25 per cent of non-users to make more use of the ES. This is consistent with the concerns reported above about the quality of candidates provided by the ES. Most of the other specific suggestions received limited support from employers, although between 11 and 13 per cent of respondents felt that the ES should promote their services more widely and/or provide more information about the services on offer.

Table 5.4: Changes that would encourage respondents to make more use of the ES (percentage of respondents)

	ES users	Non-users
Screen out unsuitable applicants	22.9	13.5
(Better) screening of applicants	16.9	11.5
More promotion / information	13.0	10.5
Closer checking of whether candidates turn up for interview	7.0	1.3
A named contact to deal with	6.3	1.0
Send more candidates	5.8	1.2
Keep in touch about vacancy	5.8	2.4
Better follow up to check whether vacancies are filled	5.4	1.2
Better communications with ES via email/internet	4.8	4.0
(Better) trained staff	3.4	1.9
(Wider) circulation of vacancies	3.4	0.7
Staff more specialised between different kinds of employer/sector	3.3	5.5
Better treatment as a customer	2.6	0.8
Staff should treat me (more) professionally	2.3	2.1
Display of vacancies on the Internet	1.8	0.6
Staff more aware of local labour market conditions	1.5	0.2
Provision of detailed advice on employment legislation	1.2	0.5
Send fewer candidates	1.0	0.9
Provide better qualified candidates	n.a.	5.0
Do not know	10.6	34.8
None	28.1	12.2
Other	8.3	5.4
N (weighted) =	1019	1101

Base: all respondents that recruited at least one new person in the past 12 months

5.9 Finally, ES users were asked how helpful it would be to be contacted by the ES on a regular basis, such as once a month, to try to obtain current vacancies. The reaction to this suggestion was mixed, with 36 per cent feeling that it would be 'fairly helpful' or 'very helpful', but 33 per cent stating that such contact would be 'very unhelpful'. Opinions vary by size of employer, with 37 per cent of micro businesses (fewer than ten employees) being very negative about the idea. Employers in the public sector, and the majority of larger organisations would, on balance, welcome more pro-active contact from the ES.

Changes over time

5.10 Table 5.5 compares the responses to the question on overall satisfaction with ES services between 1999 and 2001. Bearing in mind the caution that is needed in making such comparisons – particularly in light of the slightly different wording and ordering of questions in the two surveys – there appears to have been a decline in overall satisfaction ratings over the two years under consideration.

5.11 However, Tables 5.6 and 5.7 suggest little change in the views of respondents in relation to a number of specific statements about the service that they had received from the ES. However, the increase in perceived knowledge of

employment legislation on the part of Jobcentre staff is notable, although awareness of this service amongst private sector users of the ES declined between 1999 and 2001 (see Table 2.3). Part of this variation might be explained by the relatively low sample response for this question.

Table 5.5: Overall satisfaction with ES services, 1999* and 2001: ES users (percentage of respondents)

	1999	2001
Very satisfied	44	17
(Fairly) satisfied	44	45
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	2	23
(Fairly) dissatisfied	5	9
Very dissatisfied	6	7
N (weighted) =		332

Note: Text in brackets is the wording used in the 1999 survey

Base: Employers with ten or more employees that have used ES services in the past year; excludes 'don't know' responses.

**Source of 1999 figures is ref. (1)*

Table 5.6: Views about ES services, 1999* and 2001: ES users (percentage of respondents)

		Agree strongly	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Disagree strongly	N (weighted)
Jobcentre staff have a good knowledge of the local labour market	1999	19	53	20	7	2	
	2001	20	54	16	8	2	315
Jobcentre staff have a good knowledge of our kind of business and the sorts of skills we need	1999	15	40	15	24	5	
	2001	12	37	21	22	7	348
Jobcentre staff deal with me in a professional manner	1999	45	51	1	2	1	
	2001	32	58	6	3	1	370
The Jobcentre offers good customer service	1999	26	58	8	5	2	
	2001	27	54	9	7	3	366

Base: Respondents with ten or more employees that had used the ES for recruitment in the past year; figures exclude 'don't know' responses

**Source of 1999 figures is ref. (1)*

Table 5.7: Views of private sector ES users on aspects of ES service 1995*, 1999* and 2001 (percentage agree or agree strongly)

Opinions of Services Provided by the Employment Service

	1995	1999	2001	N (weighted) 2001
Jobcentre staff deal with me in a professional manner	86	96	91	316
Jobcentre staff have a good knowledge of the local labour market	67	70	74	270
Jobcentre staff have a good knowledge of employment legislation	47	58	87	201

Base: Respondents in private sector with ten or more employees that had used the ES for recruitment in the past year; figures exclude 'don't know' responses.

**Source of 1995 and 1999 figures is ref. (1) and ref (2).*

6 Employers and the Modernisation Programme

Key findings

- Only a small minority (around one in ten) of recruiters are aware of the 'Modernising ES' programme, and even fewer are familiar with specific initiatives under this programme.
- The vast majority of employers that expressed an opinion feel that the MES changes are likely to lead to improved service from the ES, although of all the changes Employer Direct receives the least positive endorsement.
- There is support from some employers for the more widespread publicising of vacancies beyond the local labour market area, especially amongst larger employers and in the production sector, but for a majority it is unimportant.
- Longer weekday opening of telephone lines is favoured by a majority of employers that expressed an opinion, but there is limited call for telephone lines to be open on Saturdays.
- Views on Apply Direct are polarised but just over a third of employers indicated that they would use it; larger employers are more likely to say that they would use Apply Direct.
- Most employers feel that the use of technology by the ES is at least on a par with, and in many cases compares favourably with, other organisations that they deal with.
- The use of the Internet for the recruitment of staff is relatively limited at present, but there are strong indications from employers that this will increase in future.

Use of new technology

6.1 Employers were asked to indicate their awareness of, and opinions about, a series of current and planned changes that are taking place in the way in which the ES communicates with, and does business with, employers. The results presented in Table 6.1 suggest that employer awareness of the modernisation programme is fairly limited. Just over ten per cent of respondents are aware, in general terms, that the ES is trying to utilise new technology to improve its service to employers and jobseekers.

6.2 When asked about specific initiatives, awareness levels are even lower, typically between two and six per cent of all recruiters. Nevertheless, it is clear that employers who are aware of the changes the ES is making through the use of new technology are generally positive about their likely impact in terms of improving the ability of the ES to meet their recruitment needs. Although the 'don't know' responses are quite high, it can be seen that the most positively received ideas are the Internet Job Bank, the Jobseeker Bank and Open File (which has now been re-named Apply Direct), while Worktrain and Jobpoints are also seen by a majority as likely to result in improvements. Employers are least enthusiastic about Employer Direct (and there is a high 'don't know' response).

Table 6.1: Awareness of ES use of new technology (percentage of respondents)

	Aware	Likely impact on ability of ES to meet needs (percentage of those indicating general awareness)			
		Improve significantly	Improve slightly	No effect	Don't know
General use of new technology	10.5				
Employer Direct	2.6	15.2	30.1	23.4	31.3
Jobpoint	5.7	18.4	39.4	16.6	25.5
Internet Job Bank	5.4	27.5	38.9	6.9	26.7
Worktrain	2.8	13.7	49.5	9.7	27.1
Jobseeker Bank	3.6	21.0	46.0	7.2	25.8
Apply Direct (Open File)	2.0	21.5	44.4	5.6	28.6
N (weighted) =	2120	223			

Base: Column 1 - all respondents that recruited or tried to recruit during the past 12 months.

Columns 2 to 5 - respondents that are aware of the modernisation programme.

Vacancy handling

6.3 In relation to the notification of vacancies to the ES, it is clear that there is a substantial minority of employers that is keen to ensure that vacancies are publicised outside their own labour market area (Table 6.2). However, 45 per cent of those employers that are aware of the modernisation process feel that such widespread publicising of vacancies is 'very unimportant'. More detailed analysis of the responses to this question suggests that the widespread publicising of vacancies is particularly important to larger employers and/or those

in the production sector. In contrast, two thirds of employers in sales/repair and 46 per cent in hotels/restaurants/recreation feel that this type of service would be 'very unimportant'.

6.4 Employers are also positive about the idea of extending the number of hours for which it is possible to notify the ES about vacancies, and the possibility of notifying vacancies by email. However, the extension of telephone line opening hours to Saturdays would be of benefit to only a minority of ES users (Table 6.3).

Table 6.2: Importance of publicising vacancies outside the local area (percentage of respondents)

Very important	19.1
Fairly important	15.3
Neither important nor unimportant	3.0
Fairly unimportant	9.8
Very unimportant	44.8
N (weighted) =	223

Base: respondents that are aware of ES use of new technology

Table 6.3: Importance of different channels for notifying vacancies (percentage of respondents)

	Important	Neither	Unimportant	Don't Know
By telephone, weekdays 8am-8pm	50.9	14.7	30.8	3.6
By telephone, Saturdays 10am-4pm	17.3	16.2	62.5	3.9
By fax, anytime	46.2	10.8	39.3	3.6
By email, anytime	44.8	12.7	38.8	3.7
N (weighted) =	223			

Base: respondents that are aware of ES use of new technology

Apply Direct

6.5 Employers were asked for their views on Open File, which has now been re-named Apply Direct. Amongst employers that are aware of the modernisation process, views about the potential benefits of the Apply Direct system are polarised. While 38 per cent of these employers felt that they would use the system for at least some vacancies, an approximately equal proportion indicated that they would not use it, with 22 per cent unclear at the time of the survey (Table 6.4). Further analysis by sector and size suggests few sectoral variations in potential use of Apply Direct, but there is clearly higher interest among the largest employers. Some 64 per cent of those with 500+ employees that are aware of Apply Direct would use the system for some or all vacancies, compared with around one third of organisations with fewer than 200 employees.

Table 6.4: Likely use of Apply Direct system (percentage of respondents)

Yes, for all vacancies	20.8
Yes, for some vacancies	16.9
No, I prefer candidates to be screened by Jobcentre staff	5.8
No, I would not use this service	35.0
Don't know	21.5
N (weighted) =	223

Base: respondents that are aware of ES use of new technology

6.6 Those employers that are aware of the modernisation process were asked to provide their assessment of the use to which the ES puts new technology in relation to other organisations with which they are in contact. Not surprisingly, a large percentage of respondents were unable to make meaningful comparisons. However, it is clear from Table 6.5 that employers do not feel, in general, that ES use of technology compares unfavourably with the use made in other private or public sector organisations with which they are familiar.

Use of the Internet

6.7 Finally, Table 6.6 indicates that the use of the Internet by employers in relation to recruitment is currently limited, particularly in the production and sales/repair sector. Micro businesses also make limited use of the Internet for recruitment. However, employers views on anticipated future internet use indicate the prospects of rapid growth in its use by most types of employer over the coming years. It is notable that relatively high levels of anticipated growth in internet use are reported by employers in transport, communications, finance and business services and in public services, sectors with relatively low levels of use of the ES. These are clearly trends that will present challenges to the ES and Jobcentre Plus in developing the Modernisation programme.

Table 6.5: Rating of ES use of technology (percentage of respondents)

Rating relative to:	Compares favourably	Broadly similar	Compares unfavourably	Don't know
Private sector	27.8	34.7	3.3	34.1
Public sector	16.6	28.8	6.1	48.5
Other suppliers / partners	32.4	35.9	4.1	27.5
N (weighted) =	223			

Base: respondents that are aware of ES use of new technology

Table 6.6: Current and expected future use of the Internet for staff recruitment, by sector and size (percentage of respondents)

	Current use of Internet	Anticipated future Internet use
--	-------------------------	---------------------------------

Employers and the Modernisation Programme

	Extensive	Limited	None	Increase	No change	Decrease	Don't know
Sector							
Production	2.3	11.3	85.8	55.2	35.5	2.4	6.9
Sales and repair	4.7	10.1	81.4	63.3	25.7	-	11.0
Hotels, restaurants, recreation	5.3	16.0	75.8	58.4	31.6	-	10.0
Transport, communication, finance, business service	12.8	25.2	61.0	67.0	26.6	-	6.4
Public administration, health	13.5	37.4	48.8	66.4	20.1	0.5	13.3
Number of Employees							
1-9 employees	7.0	14.6	76.7	62.3	29.0	0.3	8.3
10-49 employees	6.2	22.0	68.6	62.7	28.0	0.8	8.5
50-199 employees	12.5	37.4	48.8	66.0	20.0	1.5	11.9
200-499 employees	20.0	67.3	25.8	78.6	9.8	-	11.6
500+ employees	34.6	52.5	13.3	52.2	26.5	-	21.3
All	7.6	18.6	71.8	49.7	40.7	0.3	9.3

Base: all respondents that recruited at least one new person in the past 12 months

7 CONCLUSION

This survey of employers provides a range of baseline results as part of the evaluation of the MES programme. This provides the basis for tracking changes in employers' awareness and use of, and satisfaction with, ES services and contributing to the analysis of the impact of MES.

As a baseline analysis, the survey provides some valuable findings on employers' views of the ES that are largely supportive of previous research:

- There is a relatively high level of awareness of ES services amongst employers but scope exists to improve awareness and use in particular amongst smaller employers and in the transport, communication, business and financial services sector and in public services. Also, there is scope to improve employers' awareness of information and advice services and of specialised services related to recruitment.
- Just under a third of vacancies are notified to the ES nationally but manual and clerical jobs are more likely to be notified to the ES than managerial and professional jobs. Employers indicated significant concerns about the quality of applicants provided by the ES and it is evident that continuing attention will need to be given to applicant screening and preparation, especially if the ES is to attract more business from employers with higher skill vacancies.
- Most employers notify vacancies by telephone and a significant majority value local, personal contact with Jobcentres. Many employers appear to be uncertain about the benefits to them of Employer Direct so in addition to the provision of high quality service by the Customer Service Centres, attention needs to be given to the development of personal contact between Jobcentres and their local employers.
- The development of such contact would also help to improve the knowledge and understanding of Jobcentre staff about the needs and circumstances of local employers. Notwithstanding relatively high levels of employers satisfaction overall with ES services, employers had some concerns about the extent to which their needs are understood, which can be related to dissatisfaction in some cases about the appropriateness of many submitted candidates for vacancies.
- Employers' current knowledge of the MES programme is limited so there is considerable scope to improve awareness in the context of broader marketing initiatives. However, of the employers who expressed an opinion, most were optimistic about the potential for the MES changes to improve the service provided by ES. Nevertheless, it appears that larger employers are more inclined to do more business through electronic media and to use Apply

Direct and internet-based recruitment. In the move to modernise service delivery therefore, it is important that the needs of smaller employers are recognised and that capacity in the ES is enhanced to tailor service provision effectively to meet the needs of employers with diverse circumstances and requirements.

Bibliography

(1) Atkinson, J., Kersley, B. and Kodz, J. (1999) *Employers as Customers*, Employment Service Research Report ESR28, Sheffield: Employment Service.

(2) *Employers' Attitudes to the Employment Service*. IPSOS-RSL, 1996

Annex A: Survey Methodology

The Employer Survey is a key element in the MES evaluation. This baseline survey and a subsequent follow-up survey will provide the basis for identifying changes in employers' perception, use and satisfaction with the ES attributable to MES programme.

The aim of these surveys is to determine employers' views on, and their levels of satisfaction with, the ES and views on new or planned MES related products and services

More specifically, the objectives are:

- to gather any baseline evidence on the proportion and composition of employers using the ES
- to gather any evidence on employer satisfaction levels prior to and post-MES
- to assess whether the level of service to employers has improved; are employers helped to fill vacancies more quickly and efficiently?
- to determine if there has been an increase in employers' willingness to notify vacancies to the ES.

The baseline survey was undertaken by telephone between 20th August and 11th September 2001 in partnership with Bostock Marketing Group (BMG). The contracted aim was 1500-2000 interviews with employers who have recruited or tried to recruit during the past year. The actual number of interviews achieved was 2057.

The survey was designed to allow comparison to be made with previous ES employer surveys, in particular the 1999 survey undertaken by the Institute of Employment Studies (IES) in conjunction with IPSOS-RSL(1) and the 1995 survey undertaken in conjunction with the CBI (2).

The sample frame was obtained from The Business Database (TBD). Like the previous surveys the sample excluded agriculture, forestry and fishing and schools. However, unlike these surveys, businesses employing less than ten people were included in order to provide information about this important group of employers. Some 10,000 records were obtained from which to achieve 1500 - 2000 completed interviews.

Quotas were set for the target sample in terms of SIC sector and size group in order to ensure that sufficient numbers were obtained in each cell to provide a reliable basis for weighting. Weights were calculated using the latest available data (1999) for Great Britain from the Annual Business Inquiry (ABI).

Employers were contacted by letter prior to the commencement of the fieldwork in order to inform them about the survey. A copy of the letter is provided in the Appendix.

The survey was targeted on employers who had recruited or tried to recruit during the past year. At the start of the interview, respondents were asked about this and full interviews were conducted only with those who answered in the affirmative. Interviews were conducted with a person responsible for recruiting staff at the establishment.

Unlike the 1999 survey, no quotas were set on employers who have used the ES to recruit during the past year. It was decided that the survey should be used to derive a reliable estimate of the proportion of 'recruiting' employers who have used the ES.

The questionnaire was designed to address key issues in the MES evaluation and to provide comparability with previous surveys on certain questions. A copy is provided in Annex 1 to the full report. The length of interviews varied between ten and 20 minutes according to whether or not the employers had used the ES during the past 12 months.

Weights were applied in the analysis of the survey data so that the reported results are representative in terms of size and industrial sector of establishments in Great Britain. An alternative set of weights were derived for comparisons with previous surveys which required employers with under ten employees to be excluded.

The characteristics of the unweighted and weighted samples, in terms of industrial sector and size groups, are shown in Table A1. The unweighted totals are the numbers of employers interviewed while the weighted totals reflect the actual proportions of businesses in each group in Great Britain.

In presenting the results of the survey, tables have been used throughout the report with an indication of the sample bases. Of course, these vary according to the 'filtering' structure of the questionnaire and three key bases are shown in Table A2.

Table A1: Characteristics of unweighted and weighted sample by industrial sector and size groups

	Unweighted		Weighted	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Industrial sector group				
Production	525	26	385	18
Sales and repair	457	22	506	24
Hotels, restaurants, recreation	302	15	357	17
Transport, communication, finance, business service	536	26	679	32
Public administration, health	237	11	192	9
Total	2057	100	2120	100
Size group				
1-9	316	15	1435	68
10-49	590	29	549	26
50-199	445	22	64	3
200-499	378	18	20	1
500+	328	16	52	2
Total	2057	100	2120	100

Table A2: Definitions of sample bases

	N (weighted)
Employers who have recruited or tried to recruit during the past year ('recruiters')	2120
'Recruiters' who have used the ES for recruitment during the past year ('ES users')	1019
'Recruiters' who have not used the ES for recruitment during the past year ('Non users')	1101

Annex B: Advance Letter to Employers

Employment Service
Serving People through Jobcentres

Manager responsible for recruitment

Employment Service
Steel City House
West Street
Sheffield S1 2GQ
Telephone 0114-259 5004 / 5005
GTN Code 5301 5004 / 5005
Fax 0114-259 6079
GTN Code 5301 6079
Email: c.dodgson@employment.gov.uk
Clare Dodgson
Chief Operating Officer

Dear colleague,

26 June 2001

Employers' Views on the Employment Service

The Employment Service is committed to achieving continuous improvement in the service provided to our customers and we are presently embarking on a programme of change as part of the Government's agenda to modernise public services and enhance service delivery through electronic means.

Through our Jobcentres, and increasingly through 'Employment Service Direct', we play a major role in helping employers to fill their vacancies, so it is vital that we provide a high level of service to employers who use, or might potentially use, our services.

We have commissioned research to provide the information that we need about how employers use our services, levels of satisfaction and views on how we might improve them. We are keen to find out from employers who do not use our services why this is and how we might be of help in the future. I am writing to you now in the hope that you will be prepared to take part in this research.

You will be contacted very soon by the Policy Research Institute (PRI) at Leeds Metropolitan University or the Bostock Marketing Group (BMG) to determine whether you will be able to take part in the survey and, if so, to fix a convenient time for an interview. The interview will be undertaken over the telephone and will last no more than twenty minutes.

I can assure you that the interview will be entirely confidential and no individual or organisation will be identified in the results.

I do hope that you will be able to participate in this research; the information that you can provide will be of great value to us in our continuing efforts to provide a better service to employers.

If you have any queries about any aspect of this research, please contact Penny Wymer at the Policy Research Institute on 0113 283 1747.

Yours sincerely,
Clare Dodgson
Clare Dodgson

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Annex C: Survey Questionnaire

ID Number				
SIC				
SIZE				



LEEDS METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY

MES EVALUATION - EMPLOYER QUESTIONNAIRE TELEPHONE SURVEY

Good morning/afternoon, my name is and I'm calling from the Policy Research Institute at Leeds Metropolitan University. We have been commissioned by the Employment Service to conduct a survey of employers' experiences of recruiting staff and views about the services provided by the Employment Service. Could I speak, please, to someone who is responsible for recruitment.

Thinking about people employed at your establishment, do you recruit from this establishment, or are they all recruited elsewhere?

- Yes, recruited here 1
- No, recruited elsewhere 2 **If recruited elsewhere terminate interview and ask:**

Please may I have the name and telephone number of the person/people who is/are responsible for recruitment.

Company Name:

ID No:

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

- a) Name:
- Position:
- Department:
- Telephone No.:
- b) Name:
- Position:
- Department:
- Telephone No.:
- c) Name:
- Position:
- Department:
- Telephone No.:

On reaching the relevant person

Good morning/afternoon, my name is and I'm calling from the Policy Research Institute at Leeds Metropolitan University. We have been commissioned by the Employment Service to conduct a survey of employers' experiences of recruiting staff and views about the services provided by the Employment Service. A letter has been sent explaining the purpose of the survey addressed to the manager responsible for recruitment at your establishment; do you recall seeing this?

Would you be willing to take part in the survey? It should take no longer than 20 minutes to complete. Everything you say will be treated in the strictest confidence and no individuals or organisations will be identifiable in the results of the survey.

Throughout the survey when questions are directed to 'you', we assume your response to represent that of your business or organisation.

First of all can I just check.....

1) What are the main products/services of your business at this site?

..... SIC _____

2) How many people do you employ at this site?
(Total to be full head count to include all full & part time staff)

--	--	--	--	--

3) Have you actually recruited or tried to recruit any staff from outside the organisation in the last 12 months?

- Yes 1 **Go to Question 6**
- No 2
- Don't Know 3

4) Is there someone else who may have recruited staff for this organisation?

- Yes 1
- No 2 **Terminate Interview**
- Don't Know 3 **Terminate Interview**

5) If yes, can you give me their contact details

Name:

Position:

Department:

Telephone No.:

Transfer details to new questionnaire and start from beginning with new contact

- 6) The Employment Service provides a range of services for employers. Could you please say:
- Whether you are aware of the following services, **and if yes,**
 - Whether you have ever used the service, **and if yes,**
 - Whether you have used the service during the last 12 months.

(Read out list & circle all that apply)

		(a)		(b)			(c)		
		Are you aware of this service?		If Yes, have you ever used this service?			If Yes, have you used this service during last 12 months?		
		Yes	No	Yes	No	D/K	Yes	No	D/K
1	Recruitment of jobseekers to fill notified vacancies	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3
2	Recruitment through the New Deal programme	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3
3	Recruitment through the Disability Service	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3
4	Other Government programmes (such as Work Based Learning for Adults, Job Interview Guarantee, Work Trials)	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3
5	To provide advice and information about recruitment methods	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3
6	To provide advice and information about difficulties in filling vacancies	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3
7	To provide advice and information about the availability of suitable applicants	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3
8	To provide advice and information about employing people with disabilities	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3
9	To provide advice and information about training the workforce	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3
10	To provide advice and information about general employment legislation	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3

- 7) Have you used the Employment Service for any other reason during the past 12 months? **(Circle one option only)**

Yes 1
 No 2
 Don't Know 3

- 8) If yes ask, **for what reason?** (Write in below)

.....

If the respondent has used any ES service during past 12 months as indicated in Q6(c) or Q7, ask Q9 & Q10

If respondent has NOT used any ES services during past 12 months as indicated in Q6(c) or Q7, ask Q11

- 9) For each of the services that you have used during the past 12 months, could you please say, using a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being very satisfied and 5 being very dissatisfied, how satisfied you have been with that service?

- 1 Very Satisfied
 2 Satisfied
 3 Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
 4 Dissatisfied
 5 Very dissatisfied

		Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neither	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
1	Recruitment of jobseekers to fill notified vacancies	1	2	3	4	5
2	Recruitment through the New Deal programme	1	2	3	4	5
3	Recruitment through the Disability Service	1	2	3	4	5
4	Other Government programmes (such as Work Based Learning for Adults, Job Interview Guarantee, Work Trials)	1	2	3	4	5
5	To provide advice and information about recruitment methods	1	2	3	4	5
6	To provide advice and information about difficulties in filling vacancies	1	2	3	4	5
7	To provide advice and information about the availability of suitable applicants	1	2	3	4	5
8	To provide advice and information about employing people with disabilities	1	2	3	4	5
9	To provide advice and information about training the workforce	1	2	3	4	5
10	To provide advice and information about general employment legislation	1	2	3	4	5
11	Other (If Specified in Q7)	1	2	3	4	5

- 10) Again using a scale of 1 to 5, overall how satisfied have you been with the services provided for you by the Employment Service over the past 12 months?

(Circle one option only)

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Very satisfied | 1 |
| Satisfied | 2 |
| Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied | 3 |
| Dissatisfied | 4 |
| Very dissatisfied | 5 |

ASK ALL RESPONDENTS

- 11) In the last 12 months, how many job vacancies has your business or organisation had, for which you were actively seeking recruits from **outside** the organisation?

--	--	--	--	--

- 12) How many of these vacancies have actually been filled?

--	--	--	--	--

If respondent indicated in Q6 that they had used ES recruitment services (Options 1, 2 or 3) during last 12 months, ask Q13

If respondent did NOT use recruitment services at Q6, go to Q16

- 13) Of all the vacancies you have had in the last 12 months, how many did you notify to the Employment Service?

--	--	--	--	--

If any vacancies notified to ES ask Q14;

If none notified go to Q16

- 14) Have you actually recruited to these vacancies through the Employment Service?
(Circle one option only)

- | | | |
|------------|---|--------------------------|
| Yes | 1 | |
| No | 2 | Go to Question 16 |
| Don't Know | 3 | Go to Question 16 |

- 15) If yes, were those recruited....? **(Circle all that apply)**

- | | |
|--|---|
| Jobseekers | 1 |
| Through New Deal | 2 |
| Through Disability Service | 3 |
| Through another ES Service (Please specify): | 4 |

.....

ASK ALL RESPONDENTS

- 16) What methods of recruitment have you used in the last 12 months?

(Probe & circle all that apply. After each response ask 'anything else?')

	Used
Promotion/Transfer	1
Word of mouth / personal recommendation	2
Internal notices	3
Notice boards / shop windows facing street	4
Direct / speculative enquiries	5
Re-employing former staff	6
Local papers (Free)	7
Local papers (Purchased)	8
National Press	9
Trade / Specialist press	10
Employment Service: Jobcentre, Internet Job Bank, Employer Direct centralised vacancy notification service	11
Government Programmes and Schemes such as New Deal	12
Fee charging private employment agencies	13
Internet / Web-based recruitment	14
Your own website	15
Careers service (including university careers services)	16
Non – commercial agency (eg trade union)	17
Other (Please Specify)	18
Don't know	19

- 17) Which are the 3 main job types you have recruited for, or tried to recruit for, in the last 12 months?
(Write in job titles)
- 18) What are the 2 main recruitment methods you have used for each of these jobs?
(Write in the two options from those listed in Q16)
- 19) Have you had any difficulties filling vacancies of this type?
(Circle one option only for each Job Title)

	Question 17		Question 18		Question 19	
	Job Title	SOC	2 Main Methods Used		Hard to fill vacancy?	
			1st	2nd	Yes	No
A					1	2
B					1	2
C					1	2

For each of the 3 job titles specified in question 17 ask,

- 20) Why do you mainly use these methods of recruitment for this job?

(Probe & circle all that apply for each job type. After each response ask 'anything else')

Please ensure that for the Job Title recorded in question 17 against A, column A is completed etc.

	Job A	Job B	Job C
Produces good / the best candidates	1	1	1
Produces lots of candidates	2	2	2
Produces local candidates	3	3	3
Quick	4	4	4
Low cost	5	5	5
There is no charge	6	6	6
Easy to use	7	7	7
Good professional service	8	8	8
Because I have a named contact there	9	9	9
Reliable	10	10	10
Company Policy	11	11	11
Required by law	12	12	12
It is better than the available alternatives	13	13	13
Good understanding of our requirements	14	14	14
Applicants are pre-screened	15	15	15
Other (Please Specify)	16	16	16
Job A:			
Job B:			
Job C:			
Don't Know	17	17	17

If the Employment Service was specified as a method of recruitment in Q16, ask Q21

If Employment Service was NOT specified as a method of recruitment in Q16, go to Q23

If The Employment Service was selected in Q16, ask:

- 21) You said that you have used the Employment Service for recruiting staff in the last 12 months, why is this?
(Probe & circle all that apply. After each response ask ‘anything else’?)
- 22) **If more than one reason specified ask,** Of those reasons stated, which is the single most important reason for using the Employment Service? **(Circle one option only)**

	Q21) Used	Q22) Most Important
Local presence of a Jobcentre	1	1
Produces good / the best candidates	2	2
Produces lots of candidates	3	3
Produces local candidates	4	4
Quick	5	5
Low cost	6	6
There is no charge	7	7
Easy to use	8	8
Good professional service	9	9
Because I have a named contact there	10	10
Reliable	11	11
Company Policy	12	12
Required by law	13	13
It is better than the available alternatives	14	14
Good understanding of our requirements	15	15
Applicants are pre-screened	16	16
Other (Please Specify):	17	17
Don't Know	18	18

Go to Question 24

If The Employment Service was not selected in Q16, ask:

- 23) You said you have not used the Employment Service for recruiting staff in the last 12 months. Why is that? (**Probe & circle all that apply. After each response ask 'anything else'?**)

No need to / other sources are adequate	1
Provides over qualified applicants	2
Provides under qualified applicants	3
Provides applicants who aren't interested in working	4
Doesn't provide enough applicants	5
They send us too many unemployed applicants who are unsuitable	6
Takes too long	7
Unreliable	8
Produces too many applicants	9
Applicants failed to attend interview	10
They are unprofessional on the telephone	11
They are unprofessional when I see them in person	12
Follow up process is time consuming	13
Wrong image for our organisation	14
Company Policy	15
Not allowed for legal reasons	16
Not available locally	17
Bad experience in the past	18
Jobcentre staff do not understand our requirements	19
Too much paperwork / too bureaucratic	20
We DO use this method (Go back to Q16, then follow routing)	21
Other (Please Specify)	22
Don't Know	23

ASK ALL RESPONDENTS

- 24) What would you say has been your main source of information about the Employment Service and the services they provide? (**Circle one option only**)

Personal contact with Jobcentre staff	1
Personal experience of using Jobcentre services	2
Leaflets, posters or literature	3
Press or media	4
A colleague in your organisation	5
Employer networks or associations	6
Jobcentre staff regularly phoning me	7
Other (Please Specify)	8
.....	
None	9
Don't Know	10

If ES recruitment services were used during past 12 months go to Q25

If ES recruitment services WERE NOT used during past 12 months go to Q40

- 25) The Employment Service is able to offer a range of help to employers who use their recruitment service. Are you aware of any of the following?
- 26) **If yes:** Have you used this service in the last 12 months?

	25) Are you aware of this service?			26) If yes, have you used it in the last 12 months?		
	YES	NO		YES	NO	D/K
1 Distribution of application forms for vacancies	1	2		1	2	3
2 Conducting interviews at Jobcentres	1	2		1	2	3
3 Recruitment events to attract applicants for vacancies	1	2		1	2	3
4 Applicant screening service	1	2		1	2	3

If no services used in Q26, go to Q28

For each service used in Q26, ask:

- 27) On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being very satisfied and 5 being very dissatisfied, how satisfied were you with this service?
- 1 Very Satisfied
 2 Satisfied
 3 Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
 4 Dissatisfied
 5 Very dissatisfied

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neither	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
1 Distribution of application forms for vacancies	1	2	3	4	5
2 Conducting interviews at Jobcentres	1	2	3	4	5
3 Recruitment events to attract applicants for vacancies	1	2	3	4	5
4 Applicant screening service	1	2	3	4	5

- 28) Thinking about your experience of Employment Service Jobcentres, on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being agree strongly and 5 being disagrees strongly, please say to what extent you agree with the following statements.

- 1 Agree Strongly
 2 Agree
 3 Neither agree nor disagree
 4 Disagree
 5 Disagree Strongly

(Rotate statements in alternate interviews)

	Agree strongly	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Disagree strongly	Don't Know
It is easy to get to talk to the right person	1	2	3	4	5	6
The Jobcentre produces suitable candidates	1	2	3	4	5	6
The Jobcentre produces too many candidates for me to deal with	1	2	3	4	5	6
The Jobcentre produces candidates quickly	1	2	3	4	5	6
Jobcentre staff have a good knowledge of the local labour market	1	2	3	4	5	6
Jobcentre staff have a good knowledge of employment legislation eg Health & Safety, Equal Opps	1	2	3	4	5	6
Jobcentre staff have a good knowledge of our kind of business and the sorts of skills we need	1	2	3	4	5	6
Jobcentre staff deal with me in a professional manner	1	2	3	4	5	6
The Jobcentre offers good customer service	1	2	3	4	5	6
Jobcentre staff are good at keeping in contact while handling a vacancy	1	2	3	4	5	6
The Jobcentre offers additional services which are important to me	1	2	3	4	5	6
I'd like to do more of my business electronically with the Employment Service	1	2	3	4	5	6

- 29) When you notify vacancies to the Employment Service, which of the following methods do you use.....?

(Read out list & circle all that apply):

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| Telephone | 1 | <i>If Telephone selected, ask Q30</i> |
| Fax | 2 | |
| By visiting a Jobcentre and speaking to someone in person | 3 | |
| Through visits from the Jobcentre | 4 | |
| Some other way: (Please specify) | 5 | |

.....
If Telephone not selected go to Q32

30) When you telephone to register a vacancy with the Employment Service, is the person who you usually speak to based in your local Jobcentre or at a centralised office.....?

(Circle one option only)

- Local Jobcentre **1**
- Centralised office **2**
- Don't know **3**

31) Is the person you usually speak to....?

(Circle one option only)

- A regular contact **1**
- Whoever answers the call **2**
- Don't Know **3**

32) Can you say if the following are Very Important, Important or Not Important to you?

	Very Important	Important	Not Important	Don't Know
Having a regular named contact person who I can contact about vacancies	1	2	3	4
Having someone based in the local Jobcentre that I can contact about vacancies	1	2	3	4

33) When you register a vacancy, the Employment Service is now able to make the vacancy details available through a telephone jobsearch line called Employment Service Direct, which is open to anyone who might wish to call up. Are you aware of this facility?

(Circle one option only)

- Yes **1** **Go to Question 35**
- No **2**

34) Is this a facility that would make you more likely to use the Employment Service for your vacancies?

(Circle one option only)

- Yes **1**
- No **2**
- Don't Know **3**

Go to Question 52

35) Have any of your vacancies been filled this way? **(Circle one option only)**

- Yes **1**
- No **2** **Go to Question 38**
- Don't Know **3** **Go to Question 38**

36) Did this service provide you with? **(Circle one option only)**

- | | |
|---|---|
| Better qualified applicants | 1 |
| Worse applicants | 2 |
| About the same as usual through the Jobcentre | 3 |
| Don't know / Cannot say | 4 |

37) What are your general views of this service? **(Circle one option only)**

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Very good | 1 |
| Good | 2 |
| Neither good nor poor ³ | |
| Poor | 4 |
| Very poor | 5 |
| Don't know | 6 |

38) What changes, if any, could be made to the services provided by the Employment Service to encourage you to make more use of them?

(Probe & circle all that apply. After each response ask 'anything else'?)

Screen out unsuitable applicants	1
Send more candidates	2
Send fewer candidates	3
Staff should treat me (more) professionally	4
Better treatment as a customer	5
A named contact to deal with	6
(Better) trained staff	7
Keep in touch about vacancy	8
Better communications with Employment Service via email/internet	9
(Better) screening of applicants	10
(Wider) circulation of vacancies	11
Closer checking of whether candidates turn up for interview	12
Better follow up to check whether vacancies are filled	13
Less circulation of vacancies	14
Staff more specialised between different kinds of employer/sector	15
Staff more aware of local labour market conditions	16
Provision of detailed advice on employment legislation	17
Display of vacancies on the Internet	18
Other (Please specify)	19
.....	
.....	
Don't know	20
None	21

39) How helpful would it be to be contacted regularly, such as once a month, by Jobcentre staff to try to obtain your current vacancies?

(Circle one option only)

- Very helpful 1
- Fairly helpful 2
- Neither helpful nor unhelpful 3
- Fairly unhelpful 4
- Very unhelpful 5
- Don't know 6

Go to Question 42

Ask respondents who have NOT used ES for recruiting in the past 12 months

40) How would you rate the Employment Service in comparison with other recruitment channels you use, is it.....?

(Circle one option only)

- Much better 1
- Slightly better 2
- About the same 3
- Slightly worse 4
- Much worse 5
- Don't know 6

41) What changes, if any, could be made to the service provided by the Employment Service to encourage you to use it for recruitment?

(Probe & circle all that apply. After each response ask 'anything else?')

Screen out unsuitable applicants	1
Send more candidates	2
Send fewer candidates	3
Staff should treat me (more) professionally	4
Better treatment as a customer	5
A named contact to deal with	6
(Better) trained staff	7
Keep in touch about vacancy	8
Better communications with Employment Service via email/internet	9
(Better) screening of applicants	10
(Wider) circulation of vacancies	11
Closer checking of whether candidates turn up for interview	12
Better follow up to check whether vacancies are filled	13
Less circulation of vacancies	14
Staff more specialised between different kinds of employer/sector	15
Staff more aware of local labour market conditions	16
Provision of detailed advice on employment legislation	17
Display of vacancies on the Internet	18
Other (Please specify)	19
Don't know	20
None	21

ASK ALL RESPONDENTS:

42) Are you aware of the changes the Employment Services' is making to improve its services through the use of new technology? **(Circle one option only)**

Yes, I am aware **1 Go to Q44**
 No, I'm not aware **2**

43) Would you like to receive more information about these changes? **Inform respondent that their contact details will be supplied to ES, so that the information can be posted out.**

Yes **1**
 No **2**

Go to Question 53

44) Now I would like to ask you about various elements of the Employment Services' modernisation programme, firstly, are you aware of the following elements of the programme? **(Circle one option only)**

If not aware please explain each element to the respondent

45) And, secondly, do you think that this will improve the ability of the Employment Service to meet your needs? **(Circle one option only)**

	44) Awareness		45) Will it improve the ability of ES			
	Aware	Not aware	Improve significantly	Improve slightly	No effect	Don't Know
Employer Direct: a single national telephone number for employers to notify vacancies, which is due to be launched later this year	1	2	1	2	3	4
Touch-screen Jobpoint terminals in Jobcentres for jobseekers to search for vacancies across the UK and into Europe	1	2	1	2	3	4
Internet Job Bank: vacancy database containing all ES and other vacancies across the UK and into Europe	1	2	1	2	3	4
Worktrain: Internet site providing information on jobs and training opportunities as well as links to other useful sites	1	2	1	2	3	4
Jobseeker Bank whereby employers will be able to access jobseekers' CV profiles and contact them on the internet	1	2	1	2	3	4
Open File: whereby employers can display their contact details with their vacancies so that jobseekers can apply directly to the employer rather than through Jobcentre staff	1	2	1	2	3	4

46) How important is it to you to be able to publicise your vacancies outside your local area, that is outside daily travelling distance. Is it.....? **(Circle one option only)**

- Very important 1 **Go to question 47**
- Fairly important 2 **Go to question 47**
- Neither important nor unimportant 3 **Go to question 48**
- Fairly unimportant 4 **Go to question 48**
- Very unimportant 5 **Go to question 48**
- Don't know 6 **Go to question 48**

47) Is it important to you to be able to publicise vacancies.....?

	YES	NO
Regionally	1	2
Nationally	1	2
Europe wide	1	2

48) The Employer Direct service will allow employers to notify vacancies by telephone outside normal office hours and by email and fax at any time. How important is it to you **(read out response categories)** to be able to notify vacancies...

- 1 Important
- 2 Neither important nor unimportant
- 3 Unimportant
- 4 Don't know

	Important	Neither	Unimportant	Don't Know
By telephone, weekdays 8am-8pm	1	2	3	4
By telephone, Saturdays 10am-4pm	1	2	3	4
By fax, anytime	1	2	3	4
By email, anytime	1	2	3	4

49) I asked you earlier about the new Open File system (Employer contact details displayed on vacancy), would you be interested in taking up this option? **(Circle one option only)**

- Yes, for all vacancies 1 **Go to question 51**
- Yes, for some vacancies 2 **Go to question 50**
- No, I prefer candidates to be screened by Jobcentre staff 3 **Go to question 51**
- No, I would not use this service 4 **Go to question 51**
- Don't know 5 **Go to question 51**

50) Could you please say which type of job vacancies you would be prepared to submit for Open File? **(Please write in Job Titles)**

- 1)
- 2)

3)

- 51) From your knowledge of the use of new technology by the ES, how would you rate it relative to best practice in (a) the private sector and (b) the public sector?

	Compares favourably	Broadly similar	Compares unfavourably	Don't know
(a) Private sector	1	2	3	4
(b) Public sector	1	2	3	4

- 52) How would you rate ES' use of technology compared with your other suppliers / partners? **(Circle one option only)**

Much better than	1
Better than	2
Same as	3
Worse than	4
Much worse than	5
Don't know	6

- 53) How much use is currently made by your company of the internet for (a) recruiting staff and (b) procuring goods and services?

	Extensive use	Limited use	None	Don't know
(a) Recruiting staff	1	2	3	4
(b) Goods and services	1	2	3	4

- 54) How do you anticipate that the use of the internet by your company will change over the next three years for (a) recruiting staff and (b) procuring goods and services?

	Major increase	Minor increase	No change	Minor decrease	Major decrease	Don't know
(a) Recruiting staff	1	2	3	4	5	6
(b) Goods and services	1	2	3	4	5	6

- 55) The Employment Service is considering conducting further research with employers in order to go into these questions in a bit more depth, would you be willing to take part?
(Circle one option only)

Yes	1
No	2

Thank respondent for taking part in the interview