



Documenting the lives of undocumented workers in Europe

The Working Lives Research Institute has started a European Framework Six research project that will explore the factors underlying migration flows, focusing on undocumented and semi-documented migrant workers and their transitions between different countries, jobs and statuses. The Undocumented Worker Transitions (UWT) project will consider the link between work and migration flows, what knowledge such migrants have of their host labour markets, how they find work, what work they do, what transitions between different jobs and statuses take place and what impact their working arrangements and migration have more generally in the host country.

The UWT project is being co-ordinated by the WLRI and is working with six partners in other EU Member States: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, Italy and Spain. This co-operation with countries of varied geographical locations, political and social structures will enable an understanding of migration flows into and within Europe and explorations of both the impact of migrant workers on different labour markets and the effects of differing regulatory regimes on migrants' experiences of work and status transitions. The project will use both quantitative and qualitative methods and will include more than 200 in-depth interviews with migrant workers, in addition to key stakeholder interviews.

The project's objectives are:

- to give more reliable estimates of migration and refugee flows into the EU;
- to deepen understanding of the impact of migration flows on EU labour markets;
- to theorise the relationship between the presence of 'informal' or 'shadow' industry labour markets and migration flows;
- to map and model migrant and refugee pathways into and within the EU;
- to deepen knowledge of how legal status interacts with migrant labour market positions;
- to deepen understanding of the impact of migration flows on countries of origin;
- to test key theories concerning human capital and social capital in relation to migration; and
- to explore the particular consequences of migration for women workers, including trafficked workers.

The UWT project started in March 2007 and will run for two years when a final conference will be held to present the major findings.

The project website will be launched in September 2007.

For more information about the project, contact:

Tessa Wright, Senior Research Fellow, Working Lives Research Institute, London Metropolitan University, 31 Jewry Street, London, EC3N 2EY.

Telephone: +44 (0) 20 7320 1389; E-mail: t.wright@londonmet.ac.uk