

Number of recruitment companies has skyrocketed 500% since 1999

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The number of recruitment companies in the UK has grown by a staggering 500% in the last 20 years, according to an analysis of the sector by the Association of Professional Staffing Companies (APSCo), which is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year.

According to a comparative analysis undertaken for the International Confederation of Private Employment Agencies by Deloitte, there were an estimated 6,500 private employment businesses in the UK in 1999.

However, in 2019, there are 39,232 recruitment agencies trading in the UK, according to figures from Companies House. This growth has increased particularly rapidly over the last decade, with 84% of company registrations in taking place from 2008 to 2018. In fact, in 2018 alone, 8,488 agencies were registered with Companies House.

Commenting on the analysis, Ann Swain, Global CEO at APSCo, said:

“It’s fantastic to see the continued growth of the staffing sector, which has been flourishing despite the rise of job boards and social media– which many felt would negatively impact recruitment firms. At APSCo, we’re proud to have played our part in supporting the sector over the last 20 years.”

“With a change to working attitudes and cultures, the fourth industrial revolution, and Gen Z entering the workforce – recruitment companies will need to be as agile and innovative as ever to ensure that they continue to add value and remain competitive for the next 20 years.”

“The fact that the sector has grown so much, and now employs over 115,000 people, makes it more important that high quality and standards are upheld across the board. At APSCo, we have made great strides in ensuring the professionalisation of the sector – introducing the first ever Executive MBA in Human Capital for example, and will continue to do so for the next two decades, and beyond.”

- Ends

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