



Migrant workers in West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber

LSC Yorkshire and Humber

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For and on behalf of Experian	
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Executive summary

Background and purpose

The objective of this study was to investigate the issues surrounding migrant workers in West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber

- This study has been funded from the European Social Fund with the objective of identifying migrant workers' experiences in the West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and Humber¹ labour markets and their support needs.

Quantifying migrant workers

- The range of sources used to measure the impact of migrant workers in the UK and its regions is imperfect. Each source measures something different and therefore it is difficult to compare sources in a meaningful way.
- Nearly 40,000 migrant workers from A8 countries registered to work in West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber between May 2004 and December 2006.
- Based on Workers Registration Scheme data and assumptions from other sources we estimate that there were around 24,000 migrant workers from A8 countries in West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber in early 2007.
- The majority of the region's migrant workers live in the major cities in West Yorkshire and in Hull. However, migrant workers often have a relatively more significant impact in market towns and rural areas of the region, where resources to support them are underdeveloped.

Characteristics (occupations, qualifications, age, gender, origins)

The main demographic difference between migrant workers and the resident UK population is that migrants are predominantly young

- The majority of migrant workers from A8 countries are young and single (in the sense that they have no dependent children). Poland is the most significant origin country for migrant workers followed by Slovakia, Latvia and Lithuania.
- Migrant workers are reportedly highly motivated and possess a range and level of qualifications which matches that of UK nationals.

Motivations

- Migrant workers come to the UK to find employment, earn better wages than they could at home, learn English, develop careers, join families / friends and have experiences.

¹ Throughout the report, references to 'the region' or 'regional' should be taken to mean West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber (i.e. the Yorkshire and Humber government office region excluding South Yorkshire).

West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber is a positive choice for many migrant workers seeking to work in the UK

- The particular attractions of West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber are that it has employment opportunities in a range of industries (including considerable seasonal employment that is in demand with migrants) and that it is sometimes preferable to London or other large cities as a destination.

Recruitment processes

- Employers use a range of methods to recruit - word of mouth, the internet and specialist agencies (with bases in A8 countries) are particularly important to attracting migrant workers.
- Migrant workers are rarely a unique source of labour for employers, other than in seasonal sectors like agriculture where local labour supplies are insufficient.

Employment experiences

- Employers generally treat their migrant workers the same as other employees and use similar methods in the recruitment process.
- There is no evidence of systematic skills shortages amongst migrant workers as employers are usually able to pick the most appropriate workers to fill the roles that they have.
- There is some evidence from employers that migrant workers sometimes lack basic English skills. However, this is not usually a barrier to the employment in the roles that they fulfil.

Support and enablers

Informal networks, the voluntary sector and public agencies all play important roles in helping migrant workers to settle in the region

- Informal networks of friends and family are the most significant resource available to migrant workers to help them settle and find work.
- Other important sources of support are trade unions, churches, Job Centre Plus and the voluntary sector.

Language issues

- Language is the most important issue facing migrant workers – acquiring English language skills is important to help migrant workers settle, navigate UK systems, find and keep work, deal with problems and work to their full skills potential.
- ESOL provision – particularly when it is free to workers - has been important for migrant workers in order to help meet short term confidence-building needs.

Barriers

- In addition to the language barrier, which pervades all aspects of life for a migrant with a low level of English competence, lack of accurate information is also a key barrier. Frequently, migrant workers use the people they know to acquire information rather than use the relevant

Migrant workers frequently are employed below their full skills potential and will continue to do so until their English language skills are improved

public agencies. This carries a risk that the information migrant workers obtain is not accurate.

- The main reason why migrant workers perform roles below their skills potential relates to level of English language competence. However, another reason is that employers either do not recognise or value the qualifications that they do have.

Community integration

- There is some evidence of tensions between migrant communities and host communities but the findings from this research are that such issues are not widespread.
- The existence of a language barrier exacerbates some perceptions, on both sides, that the other community is 'different' in terms of culture and values.
- In some instances, community tensions are not helped by the housing of migrant workers in areas where they are arguably most likely to face hostility (e.g. areas of high unemployment).

Policy implications

English language training is the most important area for policy attention as regards migrant workers but there are also significant issues around qualifications, housing, community cohesion and information provision

- The most important area for policy attention is the development of flexible language training provision and methods to empower migrant workers to manage their own language learning.
- Policy planning in all areas of governance suffers from lack of robust data on migrant workers – agencies need to share data and a lead agency needs to coordinate requirements for intelligence with available data.
- In order to ease information barriers, agencies should (a) improve the quality of the informal networks that migrants currently rely on and (b) help official sources of information to become more user-friendly in order that migrants use them.
- Actions to engender better community cohesion should be focused on disseminating information on cultural diversity through civic and public mechanisms (e.g. schools), through recruitment agencies and through working with the local press.
- Working with housing providers to ensure better quality information, service delivery and accommodation decisions.

1 Introduction

1.1 BACKGROUND

The Learning and Skills Council Yorkshire and Humber identified a need to ascertain whether migrant workers are reaching their potential in the region and whether their support needs are being met

In 2006 Regional European Social Fund (ESF) research group and the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) commissioned Experian to deliver research on migrant workers in West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber². The research was designed to estimate the size and spatial distribution of the migrant worker population in these areas and to investigate their skills levels and support needs.

1.2 STUDY OBJECTIVES

In response to the large flows of economic migrants into the UK since the accession of eight Eastern and Central European countries (Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia – henceforth called the A8) into the EU in May 2004 there was an identified need to quantify and understand the new migrant populations in West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber.

The main objectives of the project were to:

- Estimate the size and spatial distribution of the migrant worker populations in these areas;
- Identify which sectors are most affected by migrant workers and how;
- Identify the skill strengths that migrant workers have, and the also the skills gaps;
- Identify migrant workers' expectations from working in these areas, and whether they are being met;
- Identify the available support for migrant workers.

1.3 STUDY METHOD

Chapter 2 of this report uses publicly available data sources to quantify the size and characteristics of the A8 migrant worker population in West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber.

The study method involved a mixture of quantitative and qualitative research. The starting point for the study was to review the existing literature and research on the flows of A8 migrant labour into the UK and West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber. Particular attention was given to the role of barriers to migrants accessing the labour market and formal and informal support networks used by migrants. Given that A8 migration is a relatively recent phenomenon there is a limited volume of existing literature particularly specific to the region.

The next phase of the research was to construct a solid evidence base using the best official and administrative sources of data. There is no single comprehensive data source on migrants entering the UK and a picture has to

² Throughout the report, references to 'the region' or 'regional' should be taken to mean West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber (i.e. the Yorkshire and Humber government office region excluding South Yorkshire).

be built up using a variety of different sources: we reviewed each of these in turn including the International Passenger Survey (ONS), the Workers Registration Scheme (Home Office) and National Insurance Number Registrations (the Department for Work and Pensions).

The primary research phase of the study followed the desk research. This involved a range of consultations and focus groups with employers of migrant labour, job brokers, community representatives and A8 migrants themselves. This stage of the research was vital in achieving many of the research aims and objectives. The consultations and focus groups were valuable in uncovering the decision-making process, expectations, integration experiences, barriers, information channels and networks of migrant workers. In addition, the field work helped to validate the findings from the quantitative phase of the research.

2 Estimates of migrant worker populations in Yorkshire and Humber

This chapter estimates the size and spatial distribution of the migrant worker population in West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines the flows of A8 workers into West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber since the A8 joined the EU in May 2004. We analyse the volume of migrant worker flows into West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber as a whole and the three sub-regions separately. We also use these flow estimates to suggest some broad implications for the population (stock) of migrant workers in the region and sub-regions.

2.2 ESTIMATES BASED ON OFFICIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE SOURCES

There is no one data source that provides comprehensive coverage of migration activity. However, by analysing data from a range of official and administrative sources it is possible to build up a picture of A8 migration in Yorkshire and Humber. In the following review of the data we use a number of official data sources and administrative data sources:

- International Passenger Survey;
- Annual Population Survey;
- National Insurance Number Allocations;
- Workers Registration Scheme.

Migration can be either long-term or short-term and it is useful to distinguish between the two. A long term migrant is defined by the United Nations as:

A person who moves to a country other than that of his or her usual residence for a period of at least a year (12 months) so that the country of destination effectively becomes his or her new country of usual residence.

A short-term migrant is defined by the United Nations as:

A person who moves to a country other than that of his or her usual residence for a period of at least 3 months but less than a year (12 months) except in cases where the movement to that country is for purposes of recreation, holiday, visits to friends and relatives, business, medical treatment or religious pilgrimage.

The data sources currently available mean it is not possible to distinguish between a short and long term migrant

The data sources currently available make it difficult to distinguish if a migrant is long-term or short-term. Given that short-term migrants use local services, contribute to the economy, impact on labour supply and are part of

the UK consumer base it would be useful to develop reliable short-term migration statistics. The ONS is currently undertaking work to develop a definition and method for measuring short-term migration. However, in the following analysis it is not possible to accurately measure short-term migrant inflows or indeed stocks of short-term migrants from the A8 countries.

2.2.1 International Passenger Survey

A8 citizens migrating into the UK have risen dramatically since accession in May 2004.

The International Passenger Survey (IPS) is a large multi-purpose survey that collects information from passengers as they enter or leave Great Britain. It provides a rich source of information on migration. It is based on voluntary, face-to-face interviews with a sample of passengers travelling via the principal airports, sea routes and the Channel Tunnel. The IPS interviews a quarter of a million passengers at GB seaports and airports every year, of which approximately 1 per cent are migrants. The migrant contacts are grossed up to produce national migration estimates using a complex weighting system based on total traffic flows. Reliable regional and sub-regional migration data are not available from this source.

Headline ONS international migration data is available for 2005 at a UK level. These show that the estimate of A8 citizens migrating into the UK for a period of at least a year increased by over 50 per cent from 52,000 in 2004 to 80,000 in 2005. This increase can be explained by 2005 being the first full calendar year following the date of accession in May 2004 for which migration by A8 citizens could be estimated. Analysis of long-term in-migration of A8 citizens since the second half of 2004 shows fairly consistent inflows of about 40,000 every six months.

Estimated outflows of A8 citizens migrating long-term also increased notably for the first time in 2005, with almost 80 per cent of this outflow in the second half of the year. Any trends in A8 out-migration, however, will not become clear until future years when more data is available. These higher outflows in the second half of 2005 resulted in lower net flows during this time compared with the equivalent period in 2004.

In 2005, based on IPS estimates, A8 citizens who migrated for a period of at least a year were more likely to come to the UK for work reasons compared with other migrant groups. About 60 per cent of A8 migrants coming to the UK for at least 12 months came for work related reasons (e.g. a definite job to go to or business reasons) compared with about 25 per cent of all other migrants.

More long-term migrants of Polish citizenship came into the UK in 2005 than citizens of any other foreign country.

Further IPS analysis shows that more long-term migrants of Polish citizenship came into the UK in 2005 than citizens of any other foreign country. An estimated 49,000 Polish citizens migrated into the UK in 2005, almost three times the estimate of 17,000 in 2004. Consequently, the proportion of Polish citizens within the A8 group migrating into the UK for at least a year increased from about 35 per cent in 2004 to over 70 per cent in 2005.

2.2.2 Annual Population Survey

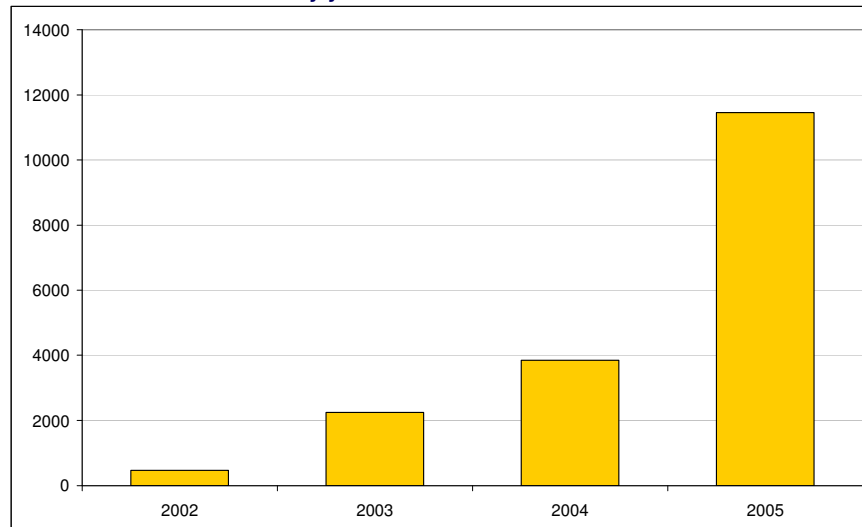
The Annual Population Survey (APS) is a survey of households in Great Britain. Its purpose is to provide information on key social and socio-economic variables between the 10-yearly censuses, with particular

emphasis on providing information relating to small geographical areas. The survey covers a large range of employment-related variables and non-employment-related variables, allowing cross-linking analyses to be undertaken (for example, year of arrival in the UK by nationality). Therefore it is a useful source of information for analysing migrant labour in West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber.

The APS suggests that 18,460 A8 nationals were working in West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber in June 2006.

APS data allows us to examine migrant workers who are currently working in West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber by year of arrival to the UK. This data reveals that as of June 2006 there were 18,460 A8 nationals working in West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber. Figure 1 clearly demonstrates the significant increase of A8 migrant workers entering the UK after accession in May 2004: 3,850 of the stock of West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber A8 workers entered the UK in 2004 and another 11,460 in 2005. Males account for 60 per cent of this stock and females 40 per cent. Most of the A8 workers are young: 77 per cent are aged between 16 and 34.

Figure 1: A8 migrant workers currently working in West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber by year of arrival in the UK.



Source: Annual Population Survey

2.2.3 National Insurance Allocations

National Insurance allocations data provides a useful source of information on inflows of A8 migrant workers into the region

National Insurance Number (NINo) allocations are made by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to overseas nationals entering the UK who wish to work or claim benefits in the UK. Therefore, statistics about NINo allocations made to overseas nationals entering the UK are a useful source of information. They provide details of an individual's nationality, year of entry and local area of registration within the UK.

The DWP NINo data does not show when overseas nationals subsequently depart the UK, nor their length of stay in the UK. The DWP figures therefore give a measure of inflow of overseas nationals registering for a NINo and probably seeking work. However, it does not measure outflow or overall stock of overseas nationals in the UK.

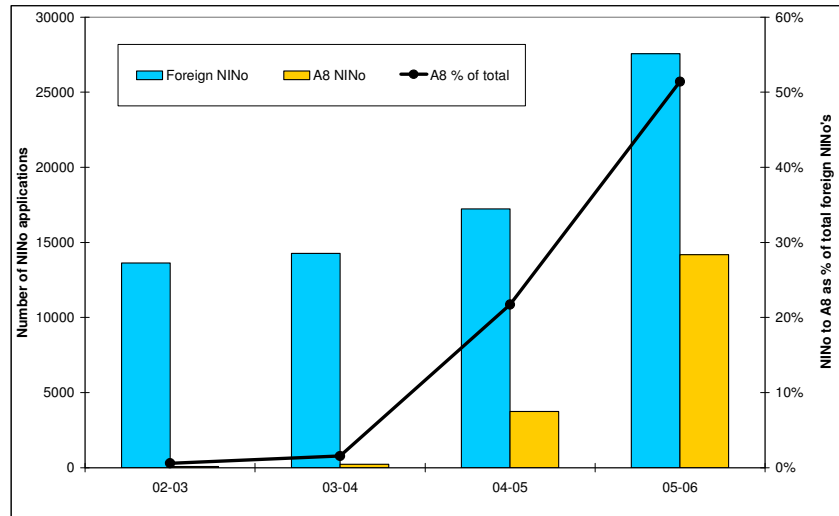
The following analysis uses NINo registrations data for the West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber region to build up a picture of the number of A8 nationals working in the region and sub-regions. It is illustrated in figure 2.

National Insurance allocations in West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber have increased significantly in recent years due to the influx of A8 migrant workers since May 2004

The NINo data indicates that the accession of the A8 states to the European Union in 2004 greatly increased both the scale and pace of change of immigration into the UK. In 2005/06, 662,000 new national insurance numbers were issued to foreign nationals, almost twice as many as in 2002/03. In Y&H in 2005/06, 27,580 NINos were issued to foreign nationals compared to 13,620 in 2002/03. The share of A8 nationals of all foreign NINo applications increased from 1 per cent in 2002/03 to 51 per cent in 2005/06. This is a higher proportion than across the UK as a whole where A8 nationals accounted for 40 per cent of overseas national NINo registrations.

The latest available data shows that 14,180 A8 nationals registered for NINos in West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber in 2005/06, this was up from 4,180 in 2004/05 and just 80 in 2002/03. Therefore the pace of change in A8 economic migration has been rapid.

Figure 2: Foreign and A8 NINo allocations in West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber 2002-03 to 2005-06



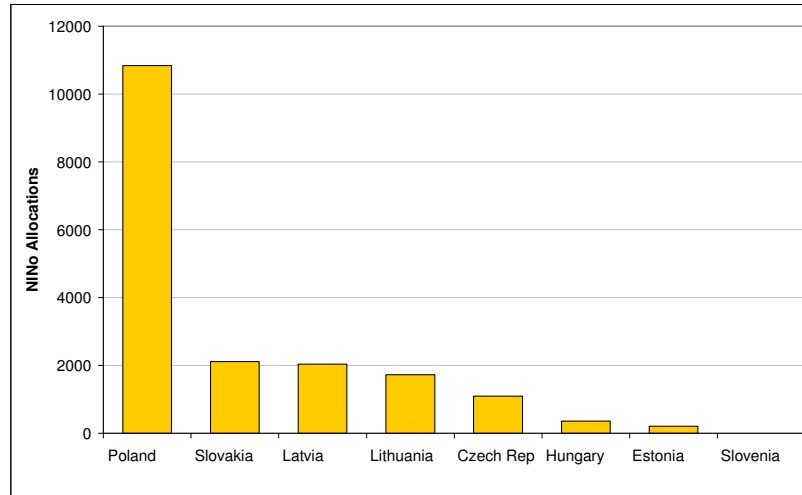
Source: Department for Work and Pensions

Amongst the A8 nationals registering the majority were Polish nationals. Figure 3 shows that 10,840 Polish nationals registered for a NINo in West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber in 2005/06. This accounted for 59 per cent of all A8 nationals. The next largest group was Slovaks and Latvians accounting for 11 per cent each.

Polish nationals accounted for the largest proportion of A8 NINo registrations in Y&H

This pattern differs slightly from the pattern observed across the UK as a whole where Polish nationals account for 64 per cent of all A8 NINo registrations, Lithuanians 11 per cent, Slovaks 10 per cent and Latvians and Czech's 5 per cent. Therefore West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber has an over-representation of Slovaks and Latvians and an under-representation of Poles and Lithuanians in NINo allocations in 2005/06 compared to the UK as a whole.

Figure 3: Total number of A8 nationals registering for NINo in West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber between 2004 & 2006 by nationality.



Source: Department for Work and Pensions

It is compulsory for A8 migrant workers to register on the WRS and this provides information on both numbers and characteristics.

2.2.4 Workers registration scheme

The Worker Registration Scheme (WRS) was introduced by the Home Office just prior to 2004 EU Accession phase in order to monitor the impact of EU Accession on the labour market, and to restrict access to benefits among A8 nationals. Workers must register when they first begin working for an employer in the UK, and must re-register each time they change employer, or take on an additional job. After 12 months of continuous employment in the UK, WRS registration is no longer necessary and A8 nationals can apply for an EEA residence permit.

The WRS data can be seen as providing a count of in-migration of workers from these countries. However, the data has various limitations - primarily that it records new registrations but not departures, and thus cannot provide an indication of out-flow, net-flow or migrant stocks. If the WRS were to include such information it would be possible to assess the extent to which workers are coming in as short-term or long-term migrants. The WRS data therefore provides a cumulative figure of the number of workers applying to the WRS since May 2004.

Various groups of people from A8 countries do not need to apply to the WRS scheme to work legally in the UK. These include those that are self-employed, and those who have been working continuously for 12 months, or were doing so before May 2004. It is likely that some people who should register are continuing to work illegally. However, the WRS data provides information on A8 migrant workers at a UK level.

579,000 had applied to the WRS in the UK since 1st of May 2004, 65% were Polish.

- Between May 2004 and December 2006 there were 579,000 applications to the WRS in the UK. However, there is no way of knowing how many of these migrants are long term;
- In the period 1 May 2004 to 31 December 2006, the highest proportion of applicants were Polish (65% of the total), followed by Lithuanian (11%) and Slovak (10%) applicants;
- The vast majority of workers since May 2004 are young: 82% aged between 18 and 34;

The majority of those applying to the WRS are young with no dependants

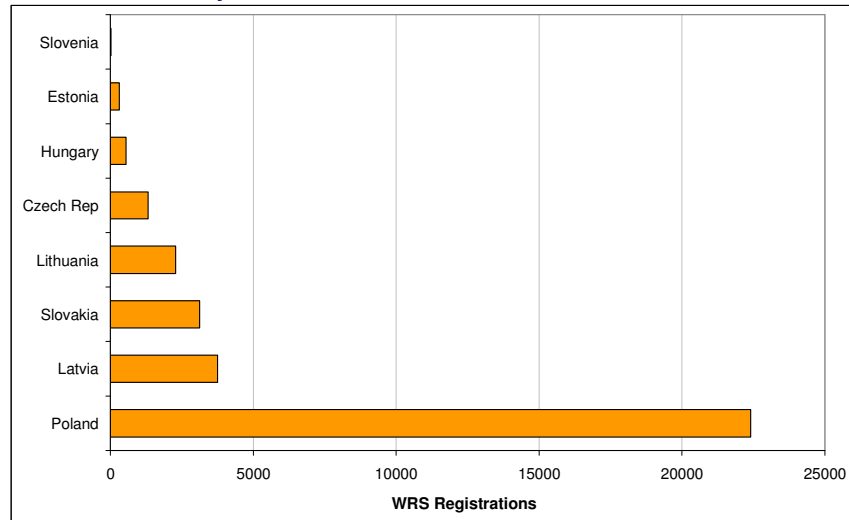
- A small minority (6%) of registered workers who applied between May 2004 and December 2006 declared that they had dependants living with them in the UK when they applied. Amongst those who did have dependants, the average number of dependants was 1.5;
- The male: female ratio for those who applied between May 2004 and September 2006 was 57:43.

The WRS data also provides some detail at a regional level. For West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber the latest available data shows:

- Between May 2004 and December 2006, there were 33,730 applicants to the WRS in West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber;
- In the period 1 May 2004 to 31 December 2006, the highest proportion of applicants were Polish (66% of the total), followed by Latvian (11%), Slovak (9%), Lithuanian (7%), Czech (4%), Hungarian (2%) and Estonian (1%) (see figure 4);
- The male: female ratio for those who applied between May 2004 and September 2006 in West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber was 63:37. Thus there is a higher proportion of males registering on the WRS in Y&H than in the UK as a whole;
- As with the trend in the UK as a whole, a small proportion (7%) declared that they had dependants living with them in the UK when they applied;
- The majority of migrants registering in West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber are young, 82 per cent were aged between 18 and 34.

33,730 had applied to the WRS in Y&H since 1st of May 2004, 66% were Polish.

Figure 4: WRS registrations by nationality in West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber May 2004 – Dec 2006



Source: Home Office 2007

2.3 THE STOCK OF MIGRANT WORKERS

Estimating the stock of A8 workers currently in West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber is difficult as data sources only provide information on inflows.

The various data sources which are currently available do not readily enable estimation of the current stock of A8 migrant workers in West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber with any reliability because they only measure inflows of migrants. There is, however, evidence on the intended length of stay which provides an indication of how the inflows of migrant workers recorded by the WRS and NINO allocations may relate to the overall stock of migrants.

An individual's length of stay will be influenced by a variety of factors including:

- Economic conditions;
- Social networks / structures;
- Income differentials between host and origin country;
- UK immigration policy changes.

The fact that many migrant workers are well educated and /or experienced - despite working in low wage, low status occupations - has implications for duration of stay: evidence suggests that migrants in this situation tend to view their employment status as temporary and as a trade-off to other benefits gained from living and working in a foreign country. The degree to which stay is temporary will depend on the individual's tolerance of their situation. For some it may be days for others it could be years.

The WRS provides some evidence on the length of stay of A8 migrant workers. Around half of those registering with the WRS do not intend to stay in the UK for a year or more, and would therefore not be defined as long-term migrant workers. This is evidenced by the fact that around half of registered workers state that they are in temporary employment and only around 6 per cent have dependants living with them in the UK. Indeed, similar research in the Republic of Ireland shows that of the 50,000 Personal Public Service Numbers issued to A8 nationals in the period May to December 2004, less than 50 per cent were still in use in Irish Inland Revenue returns at the end of December 2004.

Information on the length of stay in the UK is important in estimating levels of stock.

Information taken from details on the WRS application forms on the applicant's intended length of stay in the UK from May 2004 to 30 September 2006 provided this information:

- 283,000 or 59% of all those registered answered this question;
- 190,000 (41%) left this part blank or answered "do not know";
- 207,000 (45%) ticked "less than 3 months";
- 7,000 (2%) ticked "3 to 5 months";
- 13,000 (3%) ticked "6 to 11 months";
- 17,000 (4%) ticked "1 to 2 years";
- 29,000 (6%) ticked "more than 2 years";

Much of the A8 migration appears to be temporary or seasonal in nature.

This indicates that nearly half of migrants registering for the WRS view their employment in the UK as very short-term. However, care should be taken

when using the above data as the applicants' situation may change significantly from the time when the application form is completed, which may affect their continued stay in the UK.

A key indicator of a migrant worker's intentions to stay longer term in the UK is whether they plan to bring additional family members over to join them

Survey evidence on Polish migrants on their perceived duration of stay in the UK was undertaken by the Centre for Research on Nationalism, Ethnicity and Multiculturalism. This research lends support to the theory that much of the recent flows of migration are temporary:

- 22% of the respondents identified themselves as seasonal migrants;
- 33% of respondents stated that they intended to stay less than two years in the UK;
- 30% do not know how long they will stay in the UK;
- 5% of respondents said they wanted to stay in the UK permanently;
- 30% of respondents said that they intend to bring their families and children over or that their families are already in the UK. This would appear to indicate their intent to stay in the UK for the medium to long term.

There is limited survey evidence for intended length of stay of migrants in West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber. However, some primary research undertaken by Selby Together, although it has a very small sample size, indicates that migrant workers there are also adopting a 'wait and see' approach:

- 53% did not know how long they would stay;
- 38% of respondents said they would stay for 2 years or more;
- 10% of respondents said they would stay less than 2 years.


Migrant workers' views on the duration of their stay in the region depend on a range of factors and are continually evolving in response to events and experiences

Overall, this evidence suggests that much of the recent inflows are temporary in nature. A high proportion of migrants view their employment in the UK as seasonal or for a short period (less than 3 months). It also appears a relatively high proportion of recent migrants are adopting a 'wait and see' approach to the duration of their stay. A multitude of factors may determine if this turns into a longer-term stay, for example, career progression, integration into the community and economic conditions in the migrants' home countries.

The evidence on length of stay indicates that the stock of A8 migrants in West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber will be significantly lower than the cumulative inflow.

In figure 5, we present an approximate method for estimating the stock of migrant workers at the beginning of 2007 using available sources. This method uses the cumulative flow of registrations on the WRS as the base, and makes adjustment for under-count and outflows. The WRS was chosen as the base as it is the data source that provides us with the best fit in relation to the definition of migrant workers most frequently used in this research study. The central estimate is that there were around 24,000 migrant workers living in West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber in early 2007. A possible range for this estimate is 8,000 to 38,000.

Figure 5: Estimating A8 migrant stock in West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber (2006).

				
1. Stage	Cumulative WRS registrations	Adjustment for under-count	Adjustment for migrant workers who have since left	Final rounded estimate
2. Rationale	This source provides the most appropriate fit with the definition of migrant workers	Other research source suggest that a significant proportion of migrant workers do not register	Our research suggests that the duration of stay for migrant workers is often very short (3 to 12 months)	
3. Notes	This is the total number of people who have registered on the WRS between May 2004 and December 2006. It includes people who were resident in the UK prior to accession and registered as well as migrants who	For each scenario we used the following estimates of under-count: *Central – 40% *Low – 20% *High – 60%	For each scenario we used the following estimates of under-count: *Central – 50% *Low – 80% *High – 30%	
4. Central estimate	33,730	47,222	23,611	24,000
4a. Low estimate	33,730	40,476	8,095	8,000
4b. High estimate	33,730	53,968	37,777	38,000

Source: Experian 2007

National Insurance and the Workers Registration Scheme provide a guide to the inflow of A8 migrants into the region. There are numerous factors that may make inflow higher or lower than these sources may indicate:

- Many A8 workers will not register for the WRS and/or a NINo;
- A8 migrants may be drawn to another region of the UK (particularly London) upon initial entry into the UK and then move to the Yorkshire and Humber region and so will not be picked up in these measures of inflow;
- A8 migrants may have registered on the WRS but not been able to find work.

We estimate that there were around 24,000 migrant workers in West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber in early 2007

According to NINo allocations the inflow into the region was 18,360. The number of WRS registrations over a similar period was higher at 24,270. The reason for the difference in these two sources is dependent on a range of detailed factors relating to the specific data collection procedures and timings. However, it provides a range for the level of inflow into the region between accession and June 2006.

It is important to note that it is both stock and flow estimates of migrant workers in the region that have policy relevance. The stock estimate provides an approximate guide to the level of the migrant worker population (from A8 countries) and therefore the demand for accommodation and the impact on the labour market.

However, the flow estimate is also important because there are far more migrant workers living in the region for some duration over, say, a two year period that there is at any one point in time. Each new migrant arriving in the

region may have a requirement for translation services, employment support or a language course. So whilst migrant workers will only require 24,000 units of accommodation at any one time, according to the estimates above, over a two year period there is a total potential demand for 30-40,000 language courses or translation services.

2.4 SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION AND LOCAL EVIDENCE ON A8 WORKER POPULATIONS

For policy makers it is necessary to understand the spatial distribution of A8 migrant workers in West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber as concentrations of migrant workers in one area may have implications for the provision of public services. National Insurance and Worker Registration Scheme data both provide data on migrants at a local level.

As would be expected the majority of NINo registrations occurred in urban areas within West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber. Leeds had the highest number at 3,710 between 2004 and 2006, followed by Bradford (2,800) and Hull (2,590). These three areas accounted for 49 per cent of all registrations. This is shown in figure 6.

Hull has a large number of NINo registrations relative to working age population – indicating a potentially larger impact on the labour market

Figure 6: A8 NINo registrations, % share of total and as a proportion of working age population by Council Area – 2004 to 2006

	Number of A8 NINo registrations	% share of total A8 registrations in Y&H	A8 NINo registrations as % of working age population
Leeds	3710	20%	0.8%
Bradford	2800	15%	0.9%
Kingston upon Hull	2590	14%	1.6%
Wakefield	1710	9%	0.8%
East Riding	1350	7%	0.7%
Harrogate	890	5%	0.9%
York	860	5%	0.7%
Lincolnshire	830	5%	0.9%
Kirklees	790	4%	0.3%
Calderdale	730	4%	0.6%
Lincolnshire	610	3%	0.6%
Selby	430	2%	0.9%
Hambleton	270	1%	0.5%
Ryedale	250	1%	0.8%
Scarborough	240	1%	0.4%
Craven	150	1%	0.5%
Richmondshire	150	1%	0.5%
Total	18,360	100%	0.8%

Source: Department for Work and Pensions

By examining registrations as a proportion of the working age population it gives an indication of the likely impact on the labour market in any given year. Annual registrations of A8 nationals in Yorkshire and Humber accounted for 0.6 per cent of the region's working population.

The NINo data indicates a 'clustering' of nationalities in specific areas within the region – this may highlight the importance of social networking amongst migrant groups

Hull stands out as having the highest proportion of registrations as a proportion of working age population at 1.6 per cent compared to 0.9 per cent across West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber as a whole. Selby, Bradford and Lincolnshire had the next highest proportion of registrations per working age population at 0.9 per cent. Although Leeds had the highest absolute number of registrations, these accounted for just 0.8 per cent of the working age population. Kirklees had the lowest proportion at 0.3 per cent, indicating a minimal impact on the labour market.

The NINo registration data highlights significant clustering of nationalities in council areas which may indicate the existence of networking amongst citizens of the same nationality. These clusters have been identified by examining the dispersion of NINo allocations of each nationality in specific council areas compared to the dispersion of all nationalities and are shown in figure 7. The largest 'cluster' of nationals in 2005/06 was the 2,340 Polish nationals who were allocated a NINo in Leeds, this accounted for 22 per cent of all Polish NINo allocations in West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber. Other significant clusters include:

- Latvians in Bradford, Hull and East Riding;
- Lithuanians in Leeds;
- Hungarians in Harrogate;
- Czechs in Bradford;
- Slovaks in Bradford.

Figure 7: Clusters of NINo registrations by nationality and council area – 2004 – 2006

Nationality	Council	Number of registrations	% of total nationality registrations in Y&H	Councils % share of Y&H A8 NINo
Polish	Selby	390	4%	2%
Polish	Leeds	2340	22%	20%
Polish	Wakefield	1240	11%	9%
Slovakian	Bradford	720	34%	15%
Latvian	Bradford	460	23%	15%
Latvian	Hull	480	24%	14%
Latvian	East Riding	360	18%	7%
Lithuanian	Leeds	480	28%	20%
Hungarian	Harrogate	80	22%	5%
Czech	Bradford	230	21%	15%

Source: Department for Work and Pensions

The WRS data broadly corresponds with the NINo data, the majority of registrations are in the key urban centres of the region: Leeds, Bradford, Hull and Wakefield account for 55 per cent of all registrations in the region.

Figure 8: WRS registrations – May 2004 to Dec 2006

	Number of WRS Registrations	% of all registrations in Y&H
Bradford	6,263	19%
Leeds	5,088	15%
Wakefield	3,860	11%
Kingston upon Hull, City of	3,209	10%
East Riding of Yorkshire	2,786	8%
Kirklees	2,761	8%
Calderdale	2,520	7%
North Lincolnshire	1,367	4%
Harrogate	1,285	4%
York	871	3%
North East Lincolnshire	854	3%
Selby	776	2%
Ryedale	549	2%
Hambleton	530	2%
Scarborough	395	1%
Richmondshire	332	1%
Craven	287	1%

Source: Home Office

Limited local research has been undertaken in Yorkshire and Humber. However, the local evidence that does exist helps to inform our knowledge of the A8 migrant worker population.

A report compiled by the Bradford Central & Eastern European Working Group in January 2006 states that A8 migrant workers have been settling in five main inner city areas of Bradford which have an abundance of cheap housing and a history of migrant populations: Leeds Road, Great Horton Road, Girdlington, Manningham and West Bowling. Anecdotal evidence suggests that migrants from Poland are often single male or females, whereas Czechs and Slovaks are often larger family groups. There is evidence of community tension due to local cultures clashing and misunderstandings around migrants' backgrounds and ways of living.

2.5 SUMMARY OF DATA SOURCES – A PROFILE OF A8 MIGRANTS IN Y&H

The accession of ten new states to the European Union in 2004 greatly increased both the scale and pace of change of immigration into the UK. The various sources of immigration data examined all indicate rapid growth in the number of A8 migrants coming to work in West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber.

The speed, scale and geographical spread of migration since 2004 exceeded expectations. These expectations were based on previous EU enlargement. The arrival of migrant workers has been welcomed by the government, the Confederation of British Industry and the Trades Union Congress. In many national and local surveys, employers are very positive about their economic contribution.

Inflows of A8 migrants into West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber have been large:

- 40,190 applicants to the WRS registrations between May 2004 and December 2006;
- 18,360 NINo applications between January 2004 and 17th June 2006.

Experian estimate the stock of A8 migrants in the region in June 2006 to be around 24,000. Migrant workers are drawn to the key employment centres in the region; Leeds, Bradford and Kingston-upon-Hull. The majority of A8 migrants are young (82% aged between 18 and 34) and work in poorly paid, low skilled jobs. Most migrants work full-time and have no dependants. Much of the flow of migrants into the region appears to be temporary or seasonal in nature, with 45 per of WRS applicants indicating they expected to stay for less than 3 months.

The recent increase in migrant worker numbers in the region is unlikely to be repeated in the foreseeable future. It is likely that the enlarged numbers of A8 nationals in the region will continue attract steady flows of nationals from these countries to migrant to West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber. However, a more significant issue is that over the next few years other EU members will relax their barriers on migrant workers from A8 countries. As this occurs, UK and Ireland will cease to become uniquely accessible in the EU and may be competing with other EU countries for migrant labour, many of which are closer to A8 countries.

3 Migrant workers and the labour market – data and literature review

This chapter contains a literature review of migrant workers in the UK

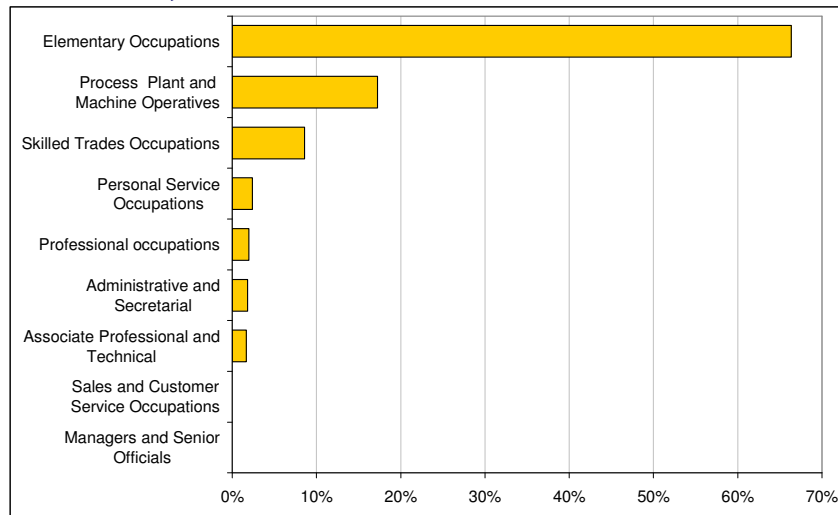
3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines which occupations the A8 nationals in Yorkshire and Humber are employed in; the skills they have; and the barriers that hinder their functioning in the labour market. This chapter draws on the recent research literature on the experience of migrant workers in the UK, as well as some quantitative data.

3.2 OCCUPATIONS OF MIGRANT WORKERS

The Annual Population Survey provides information on the occupations of A8 nationals. This shows that the majority are employed in low skilled occupations: 66 per cent in elementary occupations and 17 per cent as process, plant and machine operatives. Skilled trade occupations account for 9 per cent of A8 workers in West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber; personal service occupations, professional occupations and associate professional and technical occupations all account for 2 per cent each. There are no A8 workers employed in sales and customer service occupations or as managers and senior officials.

Figure 9: Occupational profile of migrant workers - % of total A8 workers in West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber – 2005



Source: APS, LFS Spring 2006

Most A8 workers are in relatively low skilled work, such as manufacturing operatives and picking and packing roles

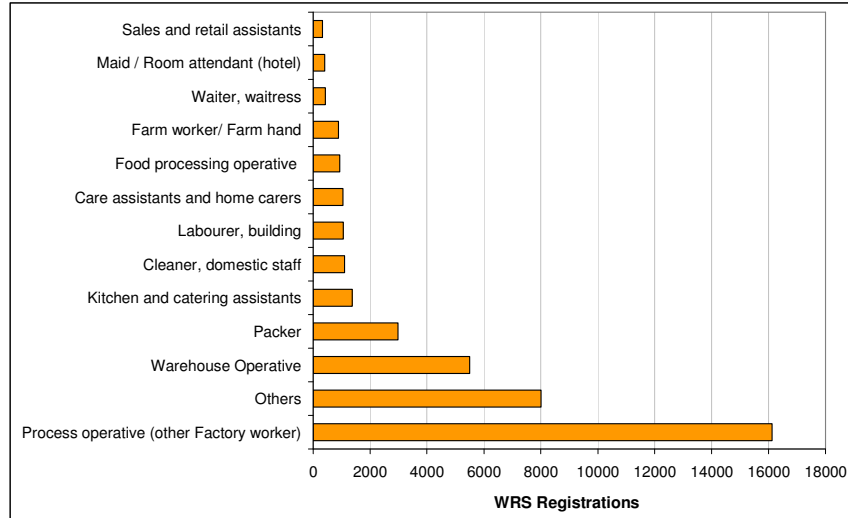
The evidence from the Workers Registration Scheme (WRS) data for West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber confirms that the majority of A8 migrants are employed in low skilled, low paid occupations. See figure 10. The biggest group of workers registered with the WRS in West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber is in process operatives – other factory workers (40%), others (20%), warehouse operatives (14%) and

packers (7%). The majority (78%) of registered workers were earning £4.50 - £5.99 per hour.

A8 workers are more likely to be employed as process operatives and similar occupations than the national average

The WRS occupation profile in West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber differs from the UK in that there is a higher proportion of process operatives or other factory workers in West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber: 40 per cent compared to 26 per cent. There is also a higher proportion of warehouse operatives: 14 per cent in West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber compared to 8 per cent in the UK.

Figure 10: WRS registrations by occupation in West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber May 2004-Dec 2006



Source: Home Office 2007

There is considerable anecdotal evidence that migrant workers are playing an important role in supplying the construction industry with labour. However, often these workers are ‘hidden’ from official data sources. Agencies such as ConstructionSkills estimate that as much of 6% of the UK construction workforce is comprised of migrant labour but they believe that the Labour Force Survey may be systematically under-estimating their importance, due to the prevalence of self-employment and the difficulties with capturing self-employees in the sampling.

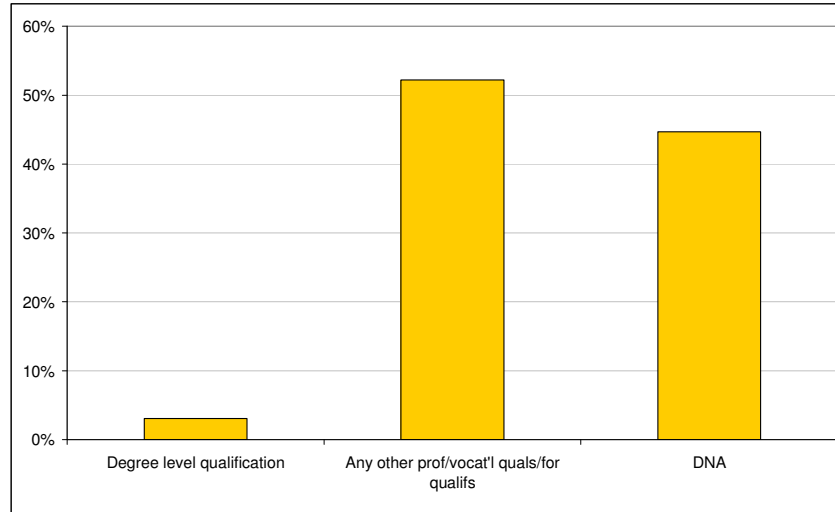
Reliable estimates of migrant labour in the construction industry in West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber are not available. However, research being undertaken for ConstructionSkills suggests that migrant workers are more prevalent in core urban areas of the UK and in areas which have some history of immigrant labour. This would appear to suggest areas such as Leeds, Bradford and Hull are hosting significant numbers of migrant workers in their construction workforces.

3.3 SKILLS MIGRANT WORKERS POSSESS

There is very limited information from official and administrative data sources regarding the skills and qualifications A8 migrant workers possess. The APS provides some data on qualifications, and is shown in figure 11. When asked about levels of qualifications 3 per cent had a degree qualification, 52 per cent said they had another type of qualification (either professional, vocational or foreign) and 45 per cent did not answer.

Data on migrant workers' skills is not well developed but anecdotal and survey evidence suggests they are often highly skilled

Figure 11: Qualification levels of the A8 population in West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber



Source: APS Spring 2006

3.4 BARRIERS FACING MIGRANT WORKERS

From a policy perspective it is vital to understand the barriers that may be preventing A8 migrant workers from entering the UK labour market, and maximising their contribution to the economy by working to their full skills potential. If effective public policy and partnership responses can be designed to overcome these barriers, the economic and labour market outcomes for West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber are likely to benefit.

3.4.1 Administrative Barriers

Nationals originating from the A8 countries who wish to work for more than one month are required to register with the Workers Registration Scheme (WRS), and will need a new card if they change jobs³. The charge for the first application for a WRS card is £70. Once applicants have been working legally in the UK for 12 months without a break they will have full rights of free movement and will no longer need to register on the Worker Registration scheme. They can then get a residence permit confirming their right to live and work in the UK. The registration process may appear complex to some individuals, particularly for workers whose native language is not English, and who have recently arrived in the country.

There are a number of other administrative barriers that A8 nationals have to overcome when entering the UK labour market. Foreign nationals working in the UK are also required to register for a national insurance number. They will also need to open a UK bank account which will require them to prove their identity and provide current proof of address.

The WRS system and general tax and benefits systems are inevitably a barrier for migrant workers

³ IPPR (2006) *Irregular migration in the UK*.

A range of consultations undertaken in a study in Bradford⁴ found that migrants had problems in understanding the UK benefit, council tax and National Insurance system, as well as other official documentation. These consultations found that migrant workers experienced difficulties in completing application forms and communicating with government staff (although this is closely linked to language barriers, which are covered separately in this chapter).

3.4.2 Informational Barriers

Information is a key resource for migrant workers – social networks are important in providing this

Information barriers have the potential to prevent many migrant workers who have come to the UK accessing the labour market. The Institute for Employment Research suggests that the barriers faced by migrants include a lack of understanding of the labour market and the job-search process⁵. Many migrants do not understand what labour market and vacancy information is available, and from where⁶.

According to research undertaken by Chiswick (1982), the majority of migrants are unlikely to have arranged employment before migrating and are therefore less likely to be employed initially. The resulting job search activity of migrants is likely to be less effective than that of recent home born labour market entrants, due to a lack of knowledge of where the most appropriate labour market opportunities lie. In the UK context, some migrants, entering through the work permit system are required to have jobs arranged as a requirement of the various scheme⁷. It is not known how applicable this finding will be to the more recent experience in the UK, especially as there is now an active base of agents recruiting direct from A8 countries. However, the majority of migrants from the A8 are likely to search for jobs on arrival in the UK.

Services for migrant workers may form out of existing family and social connections

McKay and Winkleman-Gleed (2005) describe how in the East of England, word of mouth and family connections are the most likely route into employment. In addition to work opportunities, these methods provide a basis for community formation and adaptation and it is becoming increasingly recognised that the migration ‘industry’, including travel agents and lawyers, develop from these networks⁸.

Data from the LFS shows the main method of looking for work, see figure 12. For almost a quarter of A8 migrant workers in West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber in October to December 2006 the main method was to be on the books of a private employment agency. Research undertaken in Selby confirms that the usual method of employment, particularly for the farming and food processing industries, is via an employment agency⁹.

⁴ Bradford Central & Eastern European Working Group (January 2006) *A8 Migration in Bradford: A Template for Action*.

⁵ Green, A., Owen, D. and Wilson, R. (2006) *Changing Pattern of Employment by Ethnic Group and for Migrant Workers*, Warwick: Institute for Employment Research.

⁶ Learning and Skills Council (2007) *Migrant Workers and the Labour Market*.

⁷ Chiswick (1982) cited in *The labour market outcomes and psychological well-being of ethnic minority migrants in Britain*, Shields, M and Wheatly Price, P (2003). Home Office online Report

⁸ McKay and Winkleman-Gleed (2005) cited in IPPR, (2006) *Irregular Migration*.

⁹ Selby Communities and District Industrial Mission (August 2005) *Mapping Migrant Workers*.

Figure 12: Main method of looking for work by A8 nationals in West Yorkshire – Oct-Dec 2006

Main method of job search	
On books of private employment agency	24%
Visit a Jobcentre	22%
Study situations vacant in newspapers or journals	22%
Answer ads in newspapers and journals	9%
Ask friends, relatives, colleagues, TUs	8%
Advertise in newspapers or journals	7%
Do anything else to find work	7%

Source: LFS, Oct-Dec 2006

Lack of information can make migrant workers vulnerable to undertaking inappropriate work

Local evidence from Bradford¹⁰ indicates that migrants' lack of knowledge and support means that people are at risk of undertaking illegal or unethical employment, as well as being vulnerable to discrimination by new employers.

The evidence indicates that information, advice and guidance is important in facilitating access to both training and education and also to the labour market itself. Consequently there have been developments in the services available, with commercial, public and voluntary initiatives to fill information gaps. Equally, social networks appear to retain a major role in the flow of information.

3.4.3 Language Barriers

Language proficiency is a key issue which determines the quality of life of migrants and their labour market outcomes

Several research studies suggest that language proficiency is one of the major determinants of labour market success, both in terms of participation rates and also wage gaps¹¹. Indeed, for many employers, language barriers were the only disadvantage of employing migrant workers. This barrier has been overcome in a variety of ways, including using fellow workers as translators, running language training classes and placing migrant workers among English-speaking workers so they can acquire language skills¹².

However, in the hospitality and tourism sector, 59 per cent of economic migrants do not speak English at home, and almost a quarter have experienced difficulties keeping a job due to language difficulties. Research has also indicated that migrants with good language skills can earn 20 per cent more than those with poor skills. The chances of finding work are better for migrants with English-speaking backgrounds, a statistic that is consistent across all skill and qualification levels¹³.

¹⁰ Bradford Central & Eastern European Working Group (January 2006) *A8 Migration in Bradford: A Template for Action*.

¹¹ Dustmann, C., Fabbri, F., Preston, I. and Wadsworth, J. (2003) *Labour market performance of immigrants in the UK labour market*. Home Office 05/03

¹² Dench, S., Hurstfield, J., Hill, D., and Akroyd, K. (2006) *Employers' use of migrant labour: main report*. Home Office online report.

¹³ Ibid.

Local evidence from Bradford¹⁴ highlighted the problems with language barriers. Consultations found that language barriers are preventing people accessing employment, as well as inhibiting integration into other areas of life. The A8 migrant worker community was in need of language support, in the form of helping people to access English language courses, and by providing information and advice in their own language.

Local research undertaken in Selby found that a lack of language skills left migrant workers liable to be misunderstood or vulnerable to being deceived. In addition, language barriers had caused problems in implementing Health and Safety matters in the farming and food processing industries.

Employers increasingly need to access translation services as well as training provision for English language requirements for migrant workers

The Regional Language Network (Yorkshire and Humber) (thereafter RLN) were consulted for this research project. Although set up to improve UK business' awareness and understanding of languages and cultures other than English, the Network has increasingly become involved in issues relating to migrant workers in the UK. Recently the Network has been approached by employers whose needs are for interpretation and translation services, as well as for English language training for migrant workers.

In relation to communication, the needs that employers and migrant workers have are quite broad ranging, covering reading, writing, speaking and listening skills in the English language. Specific needs depend on the actual requirements of the job. For example, in jobs where the worker needs to be able to read labelling or understand health and safety requirements, accurate reading skills are needed. On the other hand, speaking and listening skills are more relevant to the hospitality and catering sector.

The demand for language provision is driven by a demand for higher productivity and the need to be compliant

There are two key drivers for language demand: productivity and compliance. In other words, employers are keen that employees attain the language skills they need to be as effective as possible; and employers also want to ensure they are not left open to litigation as a consequence of workers not understanding instructions. For these reasons, ESOL¹⁵ provision is not always appropriate for employers' and workers' needs.

Viewing the issue of language barriers from another perspective, namely that employers have a poor understanding of languages other than English, there has been some increase in interest from employers and service providers in improving their cultural and language skills in relation to key migrant worker communities. Some of this interest has come about from proactive organisations, but mostly the RLN is working to stimulate this interest within organisations.

Across the region, demand for services and language skills comes from a range of types of organisation, including private employers, community policing, legal advisors and the emergency services. The availability of services varies across the region. In Bradford, there tends to be greater availability and diversity of support services due to the history of immigration in the city. By contrast, services in rural areas which have experienced a rapid escalation in the number of foreign migrant workers, such as North East Lincolnshire, are under developed.

¹⁴ Bradford Central & Eastern European Working Group (January 2006) *A8 Migration in Bradford: A Template for Action*.

¹⁵ English for Speakers of Other Languages

In summary, language issues are central to policy considerations in relation to migrant workers. They are also a key dimension to many of the challenges that migrant workers face. The needs that workers and employers have are varied, and there are gaps in the availability of services to meet these needs.

3.4.4 Skills Barriers

A key issue is how well migrant workers' skills match what employers need

Prospects of high pay and training are one reason that migrants seek employment in the UK. However, they are often faced with the realisation that their foreign qualifications are not recognised in the UK, and they end up working in lower skilled jobs than they would in their home countries. This mismatch between recognised and international qualifications means that many migrant workers are working below their skill level, even when the skills they possess are in short-supply within the region. Local research in Bradford found that many migrants were having problems with the transfer of professional qualifications.

An employer survey conducted by the East of England Development Agency indicated that one in four employers felt that the migrant workers they employed were over skilled for the job they were doing¹⁶. A third of migrants have 'unrecognised' qualifications, compared to less than 10 per cent of UK born individuals¹⁷.

There is an inherent difficulty in effectively matching migrants to skill shortage vacancies. Although migrant workers are an important source of labour for some sectors, particularly agriculture and hotel and catering industries, in the high-skill sectors such as business services, finance and accounting, migrant workers are less crucial and there are fewer opportunities.

Migrant workers fill vacancies across the skills spectrum and there is no uniform picture, although many jobs are characterised as dirty, difficult and dangerous and relatively concentrated in the lower skill end of the labour market.

3.5 INTERGRATING INTO LOCAL COMMUNITIES

The pace and scale of short term immigration from A8 countries has inevitably led to concerns about community cohesion

A cohesive community can be characterised as a community where people have sufficient common interests to enable positive relationships to be forged across groups with different backgrounds. Lack of understanding between different communities can lead to social tensions and problems.

Research conducted in Bradford with members of established migrant communities revealed that there is general concern that the needs of new A8 migrants be addressed, and members of the community are prepared to work to support them. However, some felt that unrealistic demands are being placed on established communities as a consequence of a lack of national or

¹⁶ People1st (2005) *Impact of migrant workers on the People 1st Footprint*.

¹⁷ Dustmann, C., Fabbri, F., Preston, I., Wadsworth, J., Shields, M., Wheatley Price, S. and Kempton, J. (2002) *Migrants in the UK: their characteristics and labour market outcomes and impacts*. The Research Development and Statistics Directorate.

strategic policy for addressing the challenges of integration. Community members felt that if relevant policies had been in place to educate the public and promote integration, this would lessen the clash of cultures and weakening of community cohesion¹⁸.

Integrating minority ethnic groups is important in creating a society that ensures everyone has equal opportunities¹⁹. For sometime there have been widespread regional and national differences in whether people thought immigration was 'under control' in the UK, but by 2000 attitudes towards migrant groups in general had changed for the better. Despite this, there has been an increase in concerns about unemployment, loss of social welfare and a drop in educational standards, and those who who, at the same time, blame minorities for these changes²⁰.

Community tensions are not inevitable but there are conditions which make them probable

However, community tensions are not inevitable consequence of immigration. The impact of immigration on neighbourhoods varies depending upon many factors including the local socio-economic context, the history of previous settlement and ethnic profile, and the actual and perceived ethnicity and identity of new immigrants. The success of local agencies in mediating between established and incoming populations is also critical. Evidence suggests that, regardless of status and origin, new immigrants often live in poor quality housing in deprived areas and face harassment and hostility²¹.

Unfortunately there has been little research in the past five years on social exclusion experiences amongst recent immigrant groups. Part of the problem is that it can be defined as racial discrimination in the case of immigrants, but is also often discussed in terms of ethnicity²².

In summary, the speed of population change in some communities has been rapid following EU enlargement. This has led to tensions in some areas and a clear political will to address causes of these tensions.

3.6 RELIANCE ON SOCIAL NETWORKS

Social networks are crucial to the social and economic circumstances and opportunities available to migrant workers

A social network refers to the links made through personal relationships including kinship, friendship and community ties. These networks include immigration networks concerned with the actual movement of people, family units and chain migrations.

The social needs of migrant workers are not met through the formal economy and formal institutions alone. The social networks by which new migrants follow initial migration of family or community members are of vital importance in transferring resources and information²³. For instance, migrants are able to speed-up their access to the job market through the

¹⁸ *Migration in Bradford*. The Bradford Central and Eastern European working group, (2006).

¹⁹ Delorenzi, S. Introduction in *Going Places*. IPPR.

²⁰ Crawley, H. (2005) *Evidence on attitudes to asylum and immigration: what we know, don't know and need to know*. Centre on Migration, Policy and Society: working paper: number 23.

²¹ Joseph Rowntree Foundation, (2006) *Experiences of new immigration at the neighbourhood level*

²² Haque, R. et al (2002) *Migrants in the UK: their characteristics and labour market outcomes and impacts*. The Research Development and Statistics Directorate.

²³ Von Weizsacker and J, Brugel (2006) *Welcome to Europe*, Issue Three

assistance of fellow migrants around administrative requirements, accommodation, job searching, and language barriers.

There is some statistical evidence of 'social clustering' along the lines of national groupings – this is backed up by anecdotal evidence

The NINo registration data (chapter 2) highlighted clusters of nationalities in specific council areas which suggests the existence of networking amongst citizens of the same nationality. Research into migrant communities in Bradford revealed that while crude communication networks exist between established and new migrant populations of the same nationality (through friends, relatives and neighbours) there is little formal or organised infrastructure in place. It was not evident whether new and older communities were working together²⁴. A lack of networks and familiarity with the 'host' community can be expected to depress the occupational achievement of migrants, relative to their skills and education.

3.7 MIGRANT WORKERS AND HOUSING NEEDS

It is important that the housing policy implications of the growth in migrant workers are considered

An important and under-researched issue is how migrant workers' accommodation requirements are being met. The West Yorkshire Housing Partnership was consulted as part of this research to inform our understanding of the issues. A key issue for strategic housing bodies is that data is limited on the volume, distribution, future intentions and families of migrant workers. This makes accurate housing planning and strategy formation difficult.

In addition to inadequacies in the available data, migrant workers are further off the housing strategy radar because of their propensity to be housed in the private rented sector. The private rented sector tends to be a diverse and diffuse collection of, usually small, landlords. As such, there is often no overarching body that monitors the sector or is able to provide information, leadership or guidance on trends in the sector. At the time of writing (summer 2007) there were two ongoing research studies looking at migrant worker housing issues in the private rented sector, one in West Yorkshire and one in the Humber.

Migrant workers are relatively poorly paid and often their housing is arranged through agencies, or provided by employers. This tends to increase the likelihood of workers living in overcrowded conditions. Correspondingly, health and safety issues may exist, for example, fire hazard due to standard occupancy level being exceeded. These factors will be exacerbated if private landlords do not apply for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) licenses.

Strategic housing organisations have concerns that migrant workers are being inadequately and sometimes unsafely housed. Ideally, workers would be able to access better quality housing in the social rented sector which is regulated and housing is required to meet minimum standards. Conversely private rented accommodation does not have to meet any statutory minimum standard.

There are some exceptions. For example, some migrant workers in Calderdale have been re-housed in social housing after the Local Authority discovered that they were being badly housed in the private rented sector and were able to house them in low-demand stock of their own.

²⁴ The Bradford Central and Eastern European Working Group (2006) *Migration in Bradford*.

Migrant workers require access to a wide variety of information on the UK housing system and their rights

As in other areas of social and cultural integration, it is likely that migrant workers find it difficult to access and understand information on their housing options. Additionally, they may be unaware of their rights as private tenants and options they have as citizens to enforce their rights.

Housing and wider community integration issues are closely related: where migrant workers live determines the social opportunities available to them and the potential problems or challenges they may experience. There is anecdotal evidence of some community cohesion problems between new migrant worker communities and more established communities in some neighbourhoods.

4 Consultations

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the results from the consultation phase of the research programme.

The objectives of this primary research were to:

- Fill gaps in information, where quantitative sources and the available research literature do not provide enough information;
- Gain further understanding of migrant workers' characteristics, why they come to the region and their experiences in the area;
- Understand employers' motivations for choosing to employ migrant workers;
- Understand the processes used to recruit migrant workers.

The following key groups were involved in this part of the research:

- Migrant workers (5 focus groups and 6 one-to-one interviews);
- Community representatives (6);
- Employers (13);
- Recruitment agents (10);
- Job Centre plus offices (4).

4.2 DESCRIPTION OF FIELD WORK

Employers

A total of 13 employers were contacted for the research study. In terms of sub-regions this was broken down as follows:

- Humber (4);
- West Yorkshire (5);
- North Yorkshire (4).

The employer field work involved the following sectors of the economy:

- Hotels and catering (3);
- Retail (3);
- Health sector (3);
- Manufacturing (4);

Job brokers

The field work with job brokers comprised the following:

- 4 Job Centre Plus offices;
- 10 recruitment agencies;

The purpose of the consultation phase of the research was to fill gaps in available information and validate the desk research

Employers and job brokers from each of the three sub-regions were consulted for their experiences of recruiting and employing migrant workers

The 10 recruitment agencies were a mix of generalist recruiters and more specialist recruiters, including one engineering specialist and a Central and Eastern European labour specialist. In terms of geography, they covered:

- Bradford (3);
- Hull (4);
- Leeds (2);
- Hartlepool (1).

Migrant workers

The research was also informed by 5 focus groups with migrant workers, the details of which were:

- Hull, June 2007 (11 Polish migrants);
- York, May 2007 (9 participants);
- York, May 2007 (8 participants);
- Bradford, May 2007 (6 Polish migrants);
- Bradford, May 2007 (20 Czech migrants).

In addition to the focus groups, 6 face-to-face interviews took place with migrant workers:

- Female Hungarian;
- 2 Male Poles;
- Female Pole;
- Male Slovak;
- Female Czech.

Community Representatives

Lastly, the field work also included one-to-one interviews with community representatives who have day to day contact with migrant workers. The details of this field work are:

- Employment advisory agency working with migrant groups;
- Public and voluntary partnership working group in Bradford;
- Community group in Kirklees;
- Community Leader for a community organisation in Bradford;
- Churches group;
- Community employment agency in West Yorkshire.

The field work also involved interviews with migrant workers themselves – both one-to-one and in focus groups

The views of community representatives were also obtained as a counterpoint to the views of migrant workers, employers and job brokers

4.3 FIELD WORK THEMES

A number of key themes ran throughout all elements of the field work

The field work for the project revolved around a number of key themes. Within each theme there were key research questions that were addressed consistently through all aspects of the field work. Figure 4.1 presents the themes and some of the key research questions.

Figure 4.1: Framework for field work



4.4 MOTIVATIONS

Introduction

It is important to understand migrant workers' motivations in order to anticipate future behaviour and needs

In considering the profile and experiences of migrant workers in the region, it is useful to gain an understanding of the motivations of workers and employers. If, for example, A8 migrants intend to stay only for a short period, perhaps to improve their language skills, problems of over-qualification and career barriers become less critical. If migrants are settling for some time, then it is advantageous to the success of the region that they are able to fulfil their potential. Likewise, understanding employers' motivations can provide valuable insights into problems of local skills shortages and recruitment difficulties.

Employers

Evidence from employer interviews suggests that the majority of migrant workers in the region are intending to settle, with the possibility of bringing family over at a later date. Social networks seem to play a key role in this process, as communities of A8 migrants have developed in cities across the region. Many employers responded that their migrant workers had many

friends from their home country living locally, with some living with partners.

Employers generally do not go out of their way to employ migrant workers, other than in some agriculture roles where they fill crucial labour gaps

The vast majority of the employers spoken to stated that they did not specifically target migrant workers. Employers typically said that they employ “whoever is right for the job”, with the three employers from retail sector being particularly keen to emphasise an attitude of non-discrimination. Of those interviewed, only one employer targeted A8 migrants directly, and this was an agricultural employer in North Yorkshire. For this kind of elementary work the employer stated that there was no other supply of labour readily available, and migrant workers were increasingly essential to the success of the business. With this exception, employers felt that they could comfortably fill vacancies with local labour if necessary, and migrant labour was not filling specific skills shortages.

The views of employers are reinforced by some of the perceptions amongst migrant workers themselves. One of the migrant worker focus groups, which took place in York, demonstrated a widespread view that finding work in York was more difficult during the summer because students return and work in the tourism industry.

Recruitment agencies

Employers and recruitment agencies suggest that migrant workers are required more for their aptitude and attitude than their specific skills

Evidence relayed to job brokers from employers shows that employers demand a supply of labour that is hard working, conscientious and reliable. Whilst traditional qualifications are acknowledged as fair indicators of skills, characteristics such as the ability to be reliable, motivated and efficient are given priority by many employers, particularly in the manufacturing sector. Interviews with job brokers indicate that migrant workers are satisfying this demand for a motivated workforce.

The equilibrium between the supply and demand for migrant workers who access employment through job brokers in West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber appears to be dependent on the geographical location. For example, the manufacturing profile of towns and cities in the region provides plentiful employment opportunities in the form of manufacturing and processing positions. Many agricultural jobs, however, are subject to the seasonality of the crops, which curbs opportunities for continual year-round work.

Migrant workers

Migrant workers say they are motivated to come to the UK for a range of economic reasons but wider motivations, common to young people of all nationalities, are also evident (e.g. seeking independence)

The most common motivations for working in the region were “better wages” and “social” reasons, although this was by no means universal. Some migrants were moving to the region to be with family and partners, others were looking to pick up better English language skills, whilst some had come for better employment opportunities. As many migrants are working in the region primarily for a better quality of life, this suggests that numbers of migrant workers may diminish somewhat as labour markets become more liberal on the continent, or as the standard of living improves in the A8 countries. The aim of learning English is an objective of many migrant workers contacted for this research.

One of the questions of interest in this research is the extent to which West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber represents a positive, specific choice for migrant workers. There was some evidence, particularly from the focus groups, that towns and cities in West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber are a positive choice. One Polish worker expressed a desire not to work in a ‘big city’ and her agency suggested York as an alternative. This is backed up by the experiences of some focus group participants who tried living in London but then moved to West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber because they thought it would be more difficult to remain in a big city.

Another reason why migrant workers chose locations in West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber as places to live and work is that they already had friends or families in the area, a factor cited by focus groups in Hull, Bradford and York. Such connections are a key driver of migration trends, related to the objective of making the migration and settlement processes easier:

“It would have been much more difficult to move here if you didn’t know anyone”.

Focus group participant

The process of migrants joining friends and families is cumulative and self-reinforcing, demonstrated by the following migrant who claimed his wife did not want to return to Poland because:

“She has invited all her friends to live in Hull”

Hull focus group participant

However, there is also evidence that the location of some migrant workers is more opportunistic and accidental:

“We didn’t choose Hull, Hull chose us”

Hull focus group participant

Many migrant workers consulted for this research had positive experiences of the region and intended to stay longer

It was also evident from the focus groups that experiences of living in Yorkshire and the Humber were generally positive and many migrant workers have intentions of remaining in the area. This was particularly evident amongst focus group participants in York and Hull.

Some migrant workers are evidently motivated by a desire to improve their qualifications. This appears to reflect a view that qualifications gained in the UK are highly marketable:

“If you have a degree from the UK, in Latvia it looks better than a degree from Latvia”

Latvian focus group participant

Migrant workers are predominantly and their motivations reflect this – stating that they are seeking experience, adventure and a desire for independence

In addition to these economic motivations, it is also important to highlight that migrant workers cite other reasons for migrating to the UK. These reasons are often more related to the idea of adventure and experience than specifically to improve skills or acquire experiences that may command an economic return in future years. Common reasons offered by migrant workers are the opportunities to:

“See something different” and “being independent”

Focus group participants

The desire to achieve independence, particularly from parents, was mentioned by a number of migrant workers. This is probably related to the average age of migrant workers from Central and Eastern Europe but also reflects cultural differences between families in parts of Central and Eastern Europe and the UK. This issue is explored in more detail in the Community Integration section.

“I feel I did the right thing by coming here because I get what I want. I’m now independent. I don’t have to rely on my parents. I don’t have to rely on anyone. I just want to work hard to improve my situation now”.

Interview with migrant worker

Not all migrant workers have had their positive expectations of life in the UK fulfilled:

“If you come from a country like mine you are told we have to catch up with the rest of the world, you are told we are backward and you just expect things being so much better, but this isn’t always the case”

Interview with migrant worker in social care sector

The evolving relationship between expectations and actual experiences has important implications for migrant workers' future plans

This observation illustrates an important point. Expectations are a key driver of migration and therefore, equally, actual experiences can reverse or reinforce the original motivation to move.

Community representatives

The views of community representatives reflected those of migrant workers themselves. From their contact with migrant workers, community representatives confirmed that migrants are seeking work, better opportunities, English language skills, an opportunity to build up savings, experience and independence.

Summary

Employers’ labour requirements are very diverse and migrant workers’ motivations for coming to work in the UK are equally, if not more, diverse. Nonetheless, there seems to be a broad equilibrium between what employers want from their workforce and what migrants want from work.

The general finding from employers and recruitment agents is that although migrant workers are frequently not a uniquely important source of labour,

they are happy to employ migrant workers along with other sources of labour.

In summary, migrant workers cite both economic and non-economic reasons for choosing to come to the UK

Migrant workers and community representatives provided a wide range of reasons why migrant workers seek employment in the UK. They broadly fall into economic reasons (e.g. wages, building up savings, earning for family, skills, career development) and non-economic reasons (e.g. joining family / friends, experience, independence) with the desire to learn English language skills supporting both economic and non-economic reasons.

It is also clear that although West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber is generally meeting the needs and expectations of migrant workers, there are some exceptions.

4.5 ASPIRATIONS

Introduction

As important as what motivates migrant workers to come to West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber is what they intend to do in the future. This section reviews the consultation responses around the theme of aspirations, the extent to which aspirations relate to remaining in West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber and how they relate to employment.

Employers and recruitment agencies

In general employers and migrant workers had very little information on, or ideas about, what migrant workers' longer term intentions are. Most employers expressed the view that it was not in their interests to have any understanding about migrant workers' aspirations.

Migrant workers

Many of the migrant workers contacted for this study expressed some level of commitment to staying in the UK for a number of years but not permanently. Amongst Polish workers in one focus group there was a general aspiration to return to Poland after a number of years in the UK.

The evidence from the focus groups was that migrant workers were happy to remain in the area. This was particularly the case in the York and Hull focus groups. However, it appears that commitment to these cities was secondary to career aspirations. Most participants in these focus groups said that whilst they liked living in the area, they would move elsewhere in the UK if better employment and career prospects became available. All focus group participants expressed intentions to find better employment or begin careers (e.g. accountancy, starting a business) in the UK.

Migrant workers held a variety of views on how important being in the region (or the UK) was to their future plans – much depends on developments back home and in the UK

As might be expected, some migrant workers in the focus groups stated that their future intentions depend on developments in the origin countries as well as in the UK. On the one hand there was a clear consensus that experience in the UK was valuable to them and would be valuable on return to their homelands. On the other hand, some migrant workers perceived a risk that if positive developments (e.g. economic progress) were taking place in their countries of origin they would be missing out by remaining in the UK.

Community representatives

Community representatives were generally aware that migrant workers that they have contact with hold a range of views on the length of time they wish to spend in the UK and what their ultimate objectives are for being in the UK.

Summary

There is evidence that the UK forms a significant stage in the life and career aspirations of migrant workers from A8 countries. The same is also true of West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber – migrant workers expressed a desire to stay in the region but only if it continues to meet their needs for employment, skill and career development. As discussed in section 4.4, the region is generally meeting the needs and expectations migrant workers have but it is not uniquely important to their plans in the UK or longer term.

The ‘wait and see’ attitude demonstrated by migrant workers also confirms what was evident from the literature review reported in chapter three. This attitude reflects a desire to monitor developments in the UK, elsewhere and in their origin-countries in particular, to identify where their best future prospects lie. Within this there is a general balance of opinion in favour of ‘returning home’.

4.6 RECRUITMENT PROCESSES

Introduction

In section 4.4 we presented clear evidence that migrant workers and employers positively choose to engage with each other in the labour market. The processes by which this supply and demand are matched are of interest for a number of reasons. Firstly, it is important to have an understanding of the most significant recruitment methods in order to understand how efficiently the labour market is clearing. Secondly, the relative preferences for these methods have implications for how well labour market information flows and the ease with which workers can find the work they want. Thirdly, recruitment methods have implications for matters concerning employee rights and, for example, ensuring that contracting is legitimate.

Within this section, there is specific emphasis on recruitment agencies and job brokers and the roles they play in relation to migrant labour. Job brokers, encompassing both private and public sector organisations, provide employment services to a significant section of the labour market. The market has grown substantially and there is an increasing amount of competition for business, from both people seeking work and from the employers themselves.

Employers

In line with employers’ claims that they do not distinguish between migrant and local workers, employers said that recruitment methods were the same for all potential employees. The three employers in the retail sector which were consulted for this research were particularly keen to emphasise this “lack of discrimination”. Many of the larger firms have, however, begun posting job adverts on the internet, resulting in a substantial rise in applications from workers still living in the A8 countries. Employers were divided as to how they dealt with such applications. A large hospitality

Many migrant workers do not yet have settled views on the extent to which their future will be in the UK or ‘back home’ – for many it depends on whether they obtain skilled employment

Job brokers play a crucial role in the recruitment of migrant workers, particularly in key sectors seeking significant quantities of labour (e.g. food production)

employer from North Yorkshire reported flying applicants over to the region for second round interviews, whilst a large health care provider in Leeds stated that they could not take such applications any further.

The majority of employers did not use recruitment agencies to find staff. The retail and hospitality sectors relied largely on ad hoc applications, as well as applications made through websites they were using to advertise (including the company website). There were some employers that did rely on recruitment agencies to fill specific employment shortages. In the agricultural sector, for example, an agency that supplied predominantly A8 labour was used due to a lack of supply of local labour. A large retailer also reported using an agency to supply cleaning staff, of which the vast majority originated from A8 countries.

Recruitment agencies

When seeking to attract migrant workers to their services, job brokers acknowledge that formalised recruitment methods, such as advertisements in local press and recruitment fairs, have a role to play. However, the text-based nature of these mediums means they are subject to the inconsistencies in English language fluency of the migrant worker population. Thus, job brokers unanimously stated that promotion of their services was largely achieved through word of mouth in local migrant community networks.

The job brokers canvassed for this research were predominately generalist, necessitating a broad approach when marketing their services to prospective employers. Again, traditional practices, such as print-based adverts and cold calling, were still part of the typical tool kit when hoping to attract business. However, the increasing computer-literacy of organisations has engendered a substantial rise in the use of the internet for placing vacancies and associated recruitment practices. Job brokers are modifying their marketing practices to accommodate this change.

Employer Direct, a subsection of the Jobcentre Plus network that works exclusively with employers, was the prevailing channel through which vacancies were placed on the Jobcentre Plus system. In addition, there are Employer Engagement teams across the country that operate at a local level to engage employers and make them aware of diversity issues, along with incentivised schemes, such as New Deal. There are also a number of community-based initiatives within the Yorkshire and Humber area. These are voluntary organisations that provide intermediary services that signpost and direct potential workers towards the services that the Jobcentre offers.

Job brokers reported that the permanency of work required was dependent on the role sought and intentions of the workers themselves. Within this, however, there was significant evidence that many migrant workers are looking for seasonal work. This may be because they know that this type of work is available, or it may be that it suits their needs better than more permanent work. For instance, if a migrant worker would prefer to get some experience of working in the UK before committing to living here longer term, temporary employment may be more suitable than a permanent contract.

For several of the brokers in Yorkshire, the number of migrant workers who use their services is relatively small. Any generalisations made concerning

Recruitment agencies emphasised the importance of 'word of mouth' to attracting migrant workers to their books

Agencies suggest that many migrant workers state a preference for temporary work – this is likely to reflect the unsettled nature of their future intentions in the UK

the migrant workforce profile would be unreliable because of this small sample size.

Migrant workers

The focus groups with migrant workers confirmed the importance of specialist recruitment agencies to the employment of migrant labour in Yorkshire and the Humber. This was particularly the case for participants from countries such as Poland and Hungary. These specialist agencies have bases in Central and Eastern European countries and specialise in finding UK employment for people from these countries. This practice was mentioned in relation to certain sectors of the economy such as traditional manufacturing (e.g. food production) and social care.

Job Centre Plus appears to be a more significant resource to employers than migrant workers

Field work with migrant workers found little evidence that Job Centre Plus offices play a significant role in the job search behaviour of workers. One view of Job Centre Plus (JCP) was:

“What are they for? They don’t understand you, the process is so slow. None of us will ever get a job through them. We are better off using our contacts in the community”.

Focus group participant

It should be noted that JCP was not mentioned frequently by migrant workers and that this does not necessarily represent a widely held opinion of the agency.

Community representatives

Some of the community representatives interviewed for this study were also aware that recruitment agencies are used to bring migrant labour over from Central and Eastern Europe to workplaces in West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber. Over and above this knowledge, representatives are generally aware of the importance of word of mouth and informal networks to migrant workers’ job search behaviour. Informal networks include community groups, such as churches, circles of friends and family members.

Summary

Recruitment of migrant workers does not differ markedly from the recruitment of labour more generally

Recruitment agencies that specialise in the recruitment of migrant labour from Central and Eastern Europe play an important role in matching the supply and demand for migrant labour. Their use is particularly evident in relation to certain sectors of the economy, particularly food production.

There appears to be a low level of usage or awareness of the services available from Job Centre Plus. Although the agency provides support, this is not available to workers who have not been in the UK for twelve months or more. However, there may also be low use of the agency for job search.

In apparent contradiction to findings from migrant workers, many employers report relying on Job Centre Plus as the single most important mechanism for advertising vacancies. Vacancies placed with Job Centre Plus offices are also posted on the internet, making it difficult to identify which source is actually attracting applicants. However, the JCP offices themselves appear to play a relatively minor role in migrant workers’ job search behaviour.

4.7 EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCES

Introduction

Once in employment migrant workers face a range of issues – for example; contracting, rights, progression and relationships with co-workers

One of the most important areas of interest in this study is the employment experiences that migrant workers are having in the UK. Firstly, it is important to know what type of work migrant workers are doing and the extent to which the roles they are performing match their skills. Secondly, it is important to explore issues relating to how migrant workers are treated in employment. This is wide ranging, including issues such as contracting, pay, leave entitlement and other administrative issues as well as fair treatment compared with UK nationals and career development opportunities.

Employers

Despite anecdotal evidence from job brokers suggesting that many migrant workers are over-qualified, employers were generally keen not to fill vacancies with over-qualified migrant labour. There was an appreciation that over-qualification often leads to frustration and high turnover, and the surge in applications from A8 workers meant that employers could recruit workers with appropriate skills and qualifications. This competition for places also meant that employers did not report any specific skills deficiencies amongst their migrant workers (with the exception of language skills). As a result, the majority of employers reported that their migrant workers had the same level of skills and performed the same tasks as local workers.

Across the spectrum of employers interviewed, however, there were some noticeable differences between local and migrant workers. A large retailer in North Yorkshire reported that almost all the cleaners were from A8 countries, whilst there were no migrant workers employed in customer facing roles. The employer reported that many of the A8 workers were over-qualified for the work they were doing. Two manufacturing employers also reported hiring over-qualified migrant workers. A manufacturer in Leeds reported having qualified teachers working in packing jobs, whilst another reported hiring an A8 worker with a university degree to perform similar elementary tasks. It was noted that many local workers with degrees often apply for such jobs whilst they are searching for better paid work.

In many cases recognising non-UK qualifications is not an issue for employers as no particular qualifications are required (however, in certain sectors – e.g. nursing – it is crucial)

As mentioned above, many employers require that workers have specific skills or work experience, as opposed to particular qualifications. However, this is not the case for all organisations. Many employers recognised that the qualification frameworks from many A8 countries are not directly transferable to those in the UK, making it hard to assess the skills and qualifications of potential workers. Whilst a university degree level qualification is relatively recognisable, the same can not be said of vocational qualifications.

The majority of employers felt that their migrant workers did not face any unique sets of problems or barriers in the workplace. One agricultural employer believed that migrant workers were frustrated by working below their actual skill level, and another employer said migrants were struggling with their paperwork and language issues. Three employers also reported slight tensions between migrant and local employees.

Recruitment agencies

Job brokers frequently placed migrant workers in ‘picking and packing’ positions or in factory settings, partly reflecting the sectoral profile of the

regional economy. The popularity of these positions could also be attributed to the low skill, language and qualification requirements of these positions, which go some way in overcoming the qualification transferability and language issues faced by some migrant workers. Hospitality and construction jobs were also popular roles for migrant workers across the region.

The Jobcentre Plus system does not record specific information on the skill and qualification levels of migrant workers. However, anecdotal evidence from job brokers suggests that the skill levels of migrant workers have a tendency to be polarised between those who are exceptionally highly skilled (NVQ Level 4 /5 +) and those who have only very basic skills.

Migrant workers do not always use their full skills and abilities at work – frequently English language ability is the key explanation for this trend

Across both public and private sector job broker services, opinion was divided as to whether the migrant workers who found employment utilised their skills sets sufficiently. Anecdotal evidence suggests that there is a trend towards migrant workers filling vacancies that require only the lower end of their capabilities. Some workers requested lower-skilled positions, despite holding superior qualifications. Language capabilities were thought to be the moderating factor in this instance. In addition, workers who wish to pursue skilled trade positions may be required to undergo further training in order to fulfil UK health and safety legislation.

Migrant workers

Field work with migrant workers confirms the views of employers and agents that the work migrant workers do does not necessarily reflect the skills that they have. There are two significant drivers behind this. Firstly, the English language ability of any given migrant worker is a key determinant of the extent to which they are able to work to their full skills potential. Secondly, there is the issue that qualifications gained outside the UK may not be recognised by UK employers.

The following view is fairly typical:

“I’m a nurse and I worked as carer. When I applied for jobs they only wanted to know about my British qualifications, none cared about what I did back home”

Focus group participant

It is not clear whether this view would apply equally well to all non-UK qualifications or whether qualifications gained in Central and Eastern European countries are either viewed less favourably or just not well understood. One migrant worker offered this view:

In relation to qualifications there are a number of potential issues. Non-UK qualifications may not be:

- Understood,
- Relevant,
- Comparable; or
- Respected.

“If I was German, for instance, it would be different. I could come here and do the same job I do in my country”

Focus group participant

An important question is whether a mismatch between the work migrant workers do and the jobs that they have in the UK is important. In this regard, the following view is interesting:

“When I first came here I was angry [about doing a job she was over-qualified for] but now I just don’t care”.

Migrant worker (qualified as a nurse in Hungary but working as a care assistant in the UK)

Migrant workers were also asked about their treatment as employees. There were some anecdotes offered about the long hours expected of them:

the agency told us we have to do this...I used to get up at 3.30am every morning to get to work by 6am and I didn't get home until 8.30pm'

Focus group participant

Migrant workers offered experiences of apparently unscrupulous behaviour on the part of some employers and recruitment agents

The focus groups also reported accounts of agencies and employers deducting money from payslips that workers felt they should not have.

Migrant workers also offered views on their relationships with co-workers from the UK and other countries. There was a range of views expressed here and there was no overwhelming impression that inter-racial or inter-national tensions are pervasive.

Community representatives

Community representatives provided some useful information on employment experiences, often being able to understand both workers' issues and administrative requirements in the UK which employers have to comply with.

In terms of administrative requirements, one representative mentioned that there was no reluctance on the part of workers to register on the Workers Registration Scheme. However, there is a lack of understanding as to the purpose of the scheme.

Another representative thought that administrative requirement such as the Workers Registration Scheme were a barrier for some employers and prevented more employers from recruiting migrant workers:

"Employers either assume that they cannot work or that the paperwork and legal checks involved in employing these people would take too much of their time. Employers do not want to waste their time taking part in what they believe to be UK bureaucracy."

Community Representative

This representative expressed a view that employers sometimes did not know the difference between a refugee and a worker from an A8 country and therefore assumed that A8 nationals would not be able to work in the UK.

Summary

There is a clear trend that migrant workers often work below their full skills potential – this is an issue for many migrant workers but it is less clear whether it represents an economic cost to the region

There was widespread evidence from the field work that migrant workers are often employed below their skills levels. Employers reported some difficulties in understanding how foreign qualifications compare with UK qualifications and some migrant workers complained that their qualifications are viewed negatively compared with other European qualifications. Although both employers and migrant workers offered some evidence that working below skills capabilities creates some frustration this did not appear to be a general problem. Employers also reported that specific qualifications are generally not required for the roles migrant workers are performing.

There is evidence that some employers are reluctant to employ over qualified migrant workers for less skilled positions. It is possible that some migrant workers, being aware of this issue, are not revealing their true skill or qualification levels to prospective employers. However, this possibility is not substantiated by the research undertaken for this study.

A more significant issue apparent from the consultations is that the extent to which migrant workers work to their skills potential is determined by their English language skills. In considering whether 'under-employment' of migrant workers represents a 'cost' to the regional economy it is worth bearing in mind that this cost is theoretical – without additional investment in language training, many migrant workers will continue to work below their full skills potential. Moreover, for all migrant workers to work at their full skills potential there would need to be sufficient demand for these skills to avoid displacement effects, and the possibility of labour shortages in lower skilled occupations (e.g. picking, packing, cleaning) is created.

Migrant workers also reported that some agencies and employers are attracting a bad reputation. Common complaints by migrant workers include issues regarding deductions from pay, working hours, annual leave entitlement and, sometimes, aggressive responses, when issues are raised by migrant workers.

Both employers and migrant workers offered examples of tensions between migrant workers and other workers but this was not perceived to be a general problem.

4.8 LANGUAGE ISSUES

Introduction

The issue of English language skills pervades all aspects of life for a migrant in the UK and is the single most significant issue

English language ability is the single most significant issue faced by migrant workers in the UK. It affects all stages and aspects of their experience in the UK, including finding a job, being employed, settling, forming relationships, navigating UK systems (e.g. housing) and understanding their rights and responsibilities.

Difficulties with the English language were consistently reported as being the main barrier faced by migrant workers when attempting to find employment in the UK. The implications of this are evident through the entire recruitment process, from filling in application forms and participating in telephone interviews, to understanding health and safety instructions.

Employers

In general, employers were up-beat regarding the English language abilities of their migrant workers. The strong competition for places from both A8 and local applicants meant that employers could filter out those with poor language skills. In the hospitality sector employers stressed that migrant workers had to have strong reading skills as well as verbal skills in order to assist customers with problems. The health sector placed particular emphasis on language skills, which are essential to help many elderly patients feel at home. In separate interviews, which did not result in completed consultations, numerous employers in the health sector reported that none of the A8 applicants possessed adequate language skills to gain employment.

Job Centre Plus offers a number of language and ESOL courses to those who have successfully completed the registration process. Many of the employers interviewed for this study also said that they provided language training if and when necessary. Employers were generally happy to provide funds for language training and many had enrolled migrant workers on college courses. In instances where employers did not provide training, some were keen to receive more information about how to go about providing formal training. Another solution utilised by employers was to recruit several workers from one country, who could help each other with their English. A number of the employers reported using those with strong English skills to act as translators or “go betweens” and this system had been implemented successfully.

Employers did not present language issues as a fundamental problem but there were instances of co-worker tension and frustration caused by English language deficiencies

Some employers reported slight tensions between local and migrant workers due to language problems. This generally occurred when migrant workers talked amongst themselves in their home language. Employers stressed, however, that this was only a very minor and occasional problem. In addition, language difficulties did not appear to be a significant problem for the workers themselves. One employer noted a lack of interaction between the migrant workers and local workers although this was largely due to the different roles they were performing. Another employer noted that some migrant workers became frustrated due to their difficulty understanding English.

Recruitment agencies

Estimations as to the general level of English language proficiency of migrant workers who approach job brokers in the Yorkshire and Humber area vary. Some brokers stated that 80% of potential migrant workers who

approached the agency did not have a sufficient command of the language, whilst others thought this issue was not a problem. When attempting to generalise, a number of brokers felt that workers from Asia and India had a better command of English than those from A8 countries. In addition, workers applying for professional or trade positions were thought to have a higher standard of English than those who wished to work in more elementary occupations.

Migrant workers

Field work with migrant workers consistently found that migrant workers are at least partly motivated to come and work in the UK by a desire to gain or improve their English language skills.

Often, migrant workers reported that employment in the UK offers them important opportunities to develop English language skills. However, some focus group participants noted that where work places are predominantly resourced by migrant workers, the opportunities for language development are more limited.

A participant in one of the focus groups regarded English Language skills as crucial and likened travelling to work in the UK without such skills as akin to:

“Going travelling without any money”

Focus group participant

In common with evidence collected from other sources, migrant workers also confirmed that lack of English language skills can make migrant workers vulnerable. One focus group participant claimed that migrant workers sometimes worked longer hours than UK nationals and that their lack of English language skills and confidence with the English language prevented them from ‘speaking up’.

The participants in one focus group also illustrated how an academic understanding of the English language is necessary but not sufficient to meet their needs in the work place and elsewhere. A specific challenge here is developing an understanding of different pronunciations and regional accents.

An important issue raised by many migrant workers was access to English language courses. Migrant workers tend to be very keen on language courses as they believe they will help them to achieve their longer term aspirations in the UK as well to help them settle and integrate in the short term.

There were mixed views offered on ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) courses. A few focus group participants report that the courses were ‘too easy’ and that their English was not progressing as quickly as they would have liked. Many respondents complained about the length of time it took to gain a place on a course, with an example of one migrant worker who had to wait two years. There was also some consensus that course places were becoming harder to come by and that the provision of free courses were not meeting the needs many migrant workers have as they are too basic. On the other hand, many migrant workers were very positive about the quality of the teaching on ESOL courses.

A desire to learn or improve English language skills is a key motivating factor behind migration from A8 countries to the UK

Migrant workers expressed a variety of views on the importance of ESOL courses – many were positive although some felt that they were too basic for their needs

Community
representatives
suggested that one side-
effect of inadequate
English language skills is
that migrant workers
lower their expectations

Community representatives

Community representatives interviewed for this study confirmed many anecdotes and experiences offered by migrant workers, employers and recruitment agencies. A common observation was that where migrant workers lack English language skills *and* the confidence to use the language they lower their aspirations. Once aspirations have been lowered in this way, migrant workers appear to be keen to pick up work that is below their skills potential, in order to build their English language skills and to provide income:

“Once they have got an initial job such as being a cleaner they can begin to pick up the language.”

Community Representative

Some representatives also illustrated the scale of the challenge faced by migrant workers in terms of becoming fluent in a new language. Again, pronunciation is a key challenge that requires time.

Representatives also confirmed that the supply of language courses, particularly affordable courses, was not matching demand. This was particularly evident in areas with high concentrations of migrants such as Bradford.

The mismatch between available language courses and willing learners extends beyond basic supply and demand to encompass aspects of how they are delivered. Representatives emphasised the fact that many migrant workers are relatively poor, work long hours and have limited availability of time and money:

Polish people will always put work before any courses because they are so poor and so work and earning money is always the main priority. The courses on offer need to fit in with their shift patterns or at least take place in the evening or on the weekends.

Community representative

There is, however, some local evidence of colleges responding to these issues by providing courses at weekends, for example.

Community
representatives thought
that often ESOL courses
are useful to help boost
migrant workers’
confidence, particularly
when they are still new to
the UK

Community representatives also offered some views on ESOL provision. Some were aware that the courses will cease to be free from September 2007 onwards, which will deter many migrants from accessing them. Other views on the provision were that although it was basic, it plays a useful role in boosting workers’ confidence, particularly when they are still relatively new to the UK.

Training is not the only way in which migrant workers can bridge the language gap. Community representatives were often aware of the availability, or absence, of other services to help migrant workers. In some instances, useful information is translated into other languages, although not always for all A8 languages for example. There are also translation services in some areas. However, outside of the major cities, for instance Kirklees, service development has fallen behind the growth in migrant worker populations. In some instances, such services are also not perceived as being flexible enough. For example, a service might provide a translator for four

pre-arranged General Practitioner visits a year but this does not fit well with, say, emergency medical episodes.

Summary

The field work found clear evidence that English language ability is the key determinant of whether a migrant worker is able to obtain employment that reflects their full skills potential

The language barrier is the single most important issue facing migrant workers in the UK. Learning the language is vital to migrant workers, both in terms of a motivation for being in the country, as well as in order to achieve their financial, career, experience and social aspirations. Moreover, employers, workers and agents all confirmed that competence with English language is a key determinant of the skill level of the work that migrants undertake.

Views on the provision of language training to help migrant workers were diverse. ESOL provision was regarded as being insufficient to meet demand in some instances and many migrant workers reported that it was too basic for their needs. However, community representatives reported that ESOL training had a useful role to play in building migrant workers' confidence in the short term. There was also evidence of employers taking both proactive and reactive roles in meeting workers' needs for English language skills.

In addition to language courses, services such as translated documentation and translators play a role. However, the availability of these services varies considerably across parts of Yorkshire and the Humber and the services are not always well designed for migrant worker needs.

4.9 COMMUNITY INTEGRATION

Introduction

Community integration is potentially an important dimension of how effectively a migrant settles in the region, as well as being an issue with important policy implications

The nature and extent of migrant workers' integration with the pre-existing communities in Yorkshire and the Humber has important implications for their wider employment and social experiences. Community networks are potentially important to finding, keeping and progressing employment prospects. However, such relationships in the community are also important as a way of providing migrant workers with useful information about living in the UK, are useful for developing social relationships, and represent opportunities to develop language skills.

Community integration is also important from a policy perspective. The extent to which migrant and pre-existing communities integrate and form harmonious relationships has important implications for public service planning, community policing and other aspects of public policy.

Employers

Most employers were not aware of any problems that their migrant workers might be facing outside the workplace. Many said that they would be happy to help if anyone in their migrant work force had approached them with problems, but this had not happened. There was evidence, however, that workers had experienced frustrations and misunderstandings regarding local governance, tax rules, legal issues and bureaucracy.

Some employers were keen to state that they did not want to pry into their workers lives outside of the work place.

Recruitment agencies

Recruitment agencies contacted for this research had very little information on migrant workers experiences in integrating with other groups in the community. As labour market intermediaries they have no direct business reasons for needing to know what migrant workers' community integration experiences have been.

Migrant workers

Field work with migrant workers uncovered a range of views and experiences regarding community integration. Some of the views are positive, but there was also considerable evidence of negative interactions between migrant workers and pre-existing communities.

The basis for positive community relations is having something in common. In this regard some migrant workers were pessimistic about the extent to which Poles, for example, and UK nationals could relate to each other, stating that the only thing they had in common was:

“being a human being”

Focus group participant

A migrant worker interviewed one-to-one for this research expanded on this theme, suggesting that Polish and British people had quite different culture and values, covering issues such as family, relationships and religion. Other migrant workers participating in the research also added that the language barrier served to reinforce this sense of difference.

Other participants in the research were more balanced in their views. Some focus group participants stated that they had friends from both Polish and British communities, although others said that networks were mainly Polish due to their shared language and culture. This leads to the practical view that:

“If we knew the language we would meet and speak to our neighbours more”

Focus group participant

A serious manifestation of cultural difference and awareness of difference is racism and other negative interactions. Amongst focus group participants, there were several examples of racism 'in the street' discrimination and accusations by UK nationals that migrant workers were taking 'UK jobs'. An anecdote of an apparently racially motivated attack was also provided. However, the evidence gathered for this research suggests that this is not a general problem.

Community representatives

Community representatives also emphasised the important role that bridging the language barrier can play in developing community integration. Some representatives also thought that there was an onus on all parties to 'celebrate diversity' and that information is the key mechanism required to change negative attitudes of one community by another.

It is also important to note examples of representatives who did not believe that there were any real problems in terms of community integration.

Migrant workers offered a range of views on whether they felt they had integrated positively with pre-existing communities in the region

Many migrant workers were either neutral or sceptical about whether they had anything in common with UK residents – however, experiences of outright racism were not widespread

Community tensions tend to be very localised rather than widespread – however, there was evidence that more effort to engender community integration would generate benefits

Summary

Community integration can play a useful role in helping migrant workers to settle in the UK. However, migrant workers themselves presented a generally neutral view of the extent to which further integration was part of their plans in the UK. Within this general view there were some concerns expressed that the culture and values of people from A8 countries were considerably different from those of people raised in the UK. On a more positive note, respondents suggested that bridging the language barrier was very important to forming closer inter-community links.

The general finding from the consultations is that there are not widespread problems or tensions between migrant workers and other communities in the UK. However, community representatives were keen that more be done to tackle the poor information and misunderstandings that tend to drive instances of discrimination.

4.10 SUPPORT SERVICES

Introduction

When arriving in a new country, migrants tend to be in need of support to enable them to settle effectively. This includes basic administrative responsibilities such as National Insurance Number registration and, from the migrant's perspective, encompasses major aspects of life such as housing, information on services and employment opportunities.

Support for migrant workers comes from a wide range of sources. As discussed elsewhere, migrants are often attracted to areas where they know people as this provides them with support, such as information, accommodation and even cash resources. Beyond these informal networks, employment agencies, employers and public services all play a role. The role of voluntary groups is worth separate mention as they are often the organisations filling the support gaps that exist between the types of provision by other organisations.

Informal networks is a major 'enabler' for migrant workers – facilitating job search, accommodation needs and a wide range of information requirements

Interaction with local migrant community networks has a major role to play in information dissemination - signposting and referring workers to jobs brokers and relevant agencies, for example. This contact is vital for providing social support to those who are new to the country and is thought to be one of the major enablers when migrants are hoping to find work. There are also a range of services and initiatives available from the Jobcentre, including a 'New Arrivals' course and a range of English language classes. Some Local Authorities in the West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber area offer language classes, but these are generally oversubscribed.

Employers

It appears that many migrant workers can rely on social networks to support them with their problems. Many employers reported their workers having many friends from their home countries in the area and an employer in York said that many of them eventually move in together. Some were cohabiting or living with partners.

Migrant workers

A general finding from the migrant worker field work was that friends and networks provide an important support service. The following views sums up the opinions of many migrant workers:

“It’s much harder to come here without knowing anyone. I wouldn’t have moved if I didn’t know people”

Focus group participant

Many migrants reported difficulties with accommodation – ranging from finding a flat, over crowding, quality and service

A particular challenge mentioned by many migrant workers is finding good accommodation. The challenge here partly relates to language, as with many other aspects of migrants’ assimilation, but also relates to knowing the housing system, understanding housing rights and knowing who to contact.

A particular issue in relation to housing is that finding appropriate accommodation is easier when you do not have children. When migrant workers do not have young dependents with them they tend to regard sharing accommodation with friends as acceptable but if they have children it becomes more difficult. These difficulties are also often experienced when migrant workers attempt to find accommodation with social landlords.

Experiences with private landlords are quite mixed. Some of the respondents raised concerns about the cost of this accommodation, the quality and the efficiency of service provided by landlords (e.g. for repairs). There were also some concerns about the neighbourhoods that some migrant workers had been housed in, with specific concerns about crime and the ‘atmosphere’.

Migrant workers from some communities mentioned the significance of religious organisations to the settlement in the UK. For some groups where faith is an important part of their culture, churches offer familiarity, security and opportunities to form relationships. One migrant worker described the service provided by the church as:

Going to the church abroad is different than when you go to church in your country. Here for me it’s also a way to meet people like me who understand and share my values and something different from going to the pub”

Migrant worker

Trade unions were noted by some workers as having been useful and supportive but there was not widespread evidence that migrants have been in contact with unions – also, some workers had negative expectations

Amongst the migrant workers who participated in this research there was not widespread evidence that trade unions had been significant to their assimilation in the UK. This is partly to do with views that certain A8 nationals have of trade unions. In particular, one Polish participant claimed that Polish people do not believe that trade unions can make a difference. However, other participants had more positive views. Some had experienced union outreach work, for instance in Hull, and had positive experiences of it. Others had taken problems to unions, for example regarding wages, and their circumstances had been improved as a result.

Community representatives

Often community representatives themselves are an important form of support for migrant workers. As mentioned above, they are voluntary sector organisations and individuals who help to provide key support and services where there is no affordable, private provision or where the public sector is not meeting the needs of migrant workers.

Representatives appear to have a general awareness that migrant workers lack information on the legal and administrative aspects of life in the UK and their entitlement to public services. This concern encompasses Home Office and Inland Revenue requirements as well as rights in relation to services such as housing and health.

Community representatives appeared to be well aware of the range of housing issues migrant workers face

The community representatives also raised concerns regarding housing issues. In addition to a general opinion that over crowding was relatively common, representatives had specific concerns about the difficulties families had in accessing appropriate accommodation. Private rented accommodation is a particular area of concern, with landlords accused of not being aware of their responsibilities and migrant workers of not knowing their rights.

Representatives contacted for this research also provided some insights into how migrant workers access information. One activist characterised the situation as there being ‘key information holders’ to whom migrant workers turn. The risk here, he said, was that sometimes these ‘holders’ were generalising on the basis of their own specific experiences and sending migrants away with unreasonable expectations or inaccurate guidance.

Another concern raised in relation to access to information was web provision. Although the internet is an increasingly important medium for community groups, recruitment agencies, employers and public agencies, one community representative said that Information Technology skills were actually low amongst the migrant workers they had contact with.

Summary

Migrant workers use a range of resources to help them settle into life in the UK – however, use of public agencies was generally not the most significant of these resources

International migrants are, by definition, at a disadvantage in terms of knowing what they need to do, where to go for information, how various systems operate and their rights in a new country. The single most significant source of assistance for migrant workers is informal networks of friends and families, including religious organisations. However, the risk of reliance on this system is that the community members relied on for information and advice may not always be accurately informed themselves.

A specific issue where support is important to migrant workers is accommodation. This was an area that employers also had some awareness of. In this regard, informal networks are again important for migrants to secure some accommodation, particularly on initial arrival and also when migrants are not accompanied by young children. Migrants and representatives had shared concerns regarding private landlords and social housing, although frequently of a better quality, was not always easy to access.

4.11 SUMMARY

Some clear findings are apparent from the field work

In the figure below some of the key findings emerging from the consultations are summarised under each theme. These findings are also supported by the individual case studies, provided in chapter 5.

Figure 4.2: Summary of consultation evidence

Motivations	Aspirations	Recruitment	Employment	Community	Support
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Better wage levels ▶ Language ▶ Career development ▶ Experience & 'adventure' ▶ Desire for independence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Mixed ▶ Led by developments in UK and home ▶ Led by opportunity ▶ Many wish to return ▶ Some long term, bringing family to the UK 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Specialist agencies ▶ Word of mouth ▶ JCP ▶ Web 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Not working to skills potential - language is key factor ▶ Little evidence of workforce tensions ▶ Some violations of employment rights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Cultural differences ▶ Language important determinant of inter-community interaction ▶ Some inter-community tensions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Reliance on informal networks ▶ Key 'information holders' ▶ Career development

5 Case studies

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The case studies in this chapter provide brief 'stories' of employers and migrant workers' employment experiences

Part of the field work involved speaking to employers and migrant workers in more depth about their motivations and experiences.

5.2 EMPLOYERS

Employer case studies are provided below.

Case study 1 – Hotel chain, Hull

Background

Hull has a long historical experience of international migration given its significance as an international port. This has tended to make many employers quite open to sourcing their labour from communities other than UK nationals.

According to People 1st, the hotels and catering industry tends to struggle to attract people who want to remain and progress in the industry. Wage levels are lower than competing industries and labour turnover tends to be higher than average.

Motivations and recruitment

The hotel stated that there was no particular motive for choosing migrant workers as they recruit from all sources. Students are another important source of labour for them.

Job Centre Plus is the single most significant source for migrant job applicants. Although they receive applications from people whilst they are still based in Poland they do not take them any further as they cannot interview them.

The hotel was generally not aware what was motivating migrant workers to be in the area seeking employment. There was some anecdotal awareness, however, that migrants were joining other family members already living in Hull.

Skill requirements

The company require all staff to possess basic reading and writing skills in English. Verbal skills are also required for interaction with customers. This is important as poor communication could damage the reputation of the company.

Applicants are mostly over-qualified for the work they are required to do. Some have degrees from their own countries, but the company mostly employs migrants for jobs that require no formal qualifications. The view of the company is that over qualification for the job does not have any impacts on the company (e.g. staff turnover) or the worker (e.g. frustration).

Attracting Talent, research study, Experian 2007

Case study 2 – National retail company, Leeds

Background

Leeds has experienced a considerable influx of migrant workers since EU enlargement in 2004. Many are attracted by the city's reputation for community integration and by the availability of employment opportunities.

The retail industry offers migrant workers a range of opportunities. For migrants wanting to improve their English beyond a fairly basic level there are customer facing roles. Other roles, such as stock replenishment and cleaning, offer opportunities for those who lack sufficient English. There are also a variety of working hours and shift patterns.

Motivations and recruitment

The company receive many applications for work, from a cross-section of the labour market. Within this, there are many applications from A8 nationals. A8 nationals are treated the same as the other applicants in the selection process.

Other sources of labour, such as the student population, are seen as substitutable for migrant labour.

The experience of the company is that migrant workers are moving to the UK to escape poverty in their homelands. They are therefore attracted by the relatively high wages in the UK, even for relatively low skilled work. More generally, the company were keen to state that they have no business reasons for acquiring information about why migrant workers are seeking work in the UK. The company are mainly concerned that workers possess the correct documentation and that they are suitable for the work for which they have applied.

The company's general view of migrant workers' aspirations as regards living and working in the UK was that migrants are generally wanting to remain in the UK and bring their families over to join them.

Skill requirements

There are no particular skill requirements for the work. However, basic English language skills are required for working on the tills.

The skills levels and types of qualifications that migrant workers possess are very similar to those possessed by UK nationals. Therefore, there is no particular trend for migrant workers to be over-qualified for positions in the company compared with UK nationals. Additionally, the company reports that they have no problems understanding the qualifications that migrant workers have.

Experiences

There was a general view that migrant workers are making a positive contribution to the company.

In the experience of this company, migrant workers' English language ability was fairly basic but still sufficient to enable them to communicate on a practical level. Generally, the company expects migrant workers to improve their English in the course of their day-to-day work for the company. There is some evidence that migrant workers converse 'in the canteen' in their home language which has caused slight tensions amongst some local workers. However, generally this tends not to be a problem. Any tensions or discrimination between local workers and migrant workers would be taken very seriously and not tolerated.

Case study 3 – Nursing home, West Yorkshire

Background

Social care is a growth industry in the UK as the population of people aged 70 or over continues to grow faster than most other age groups. However, wage levels are relatively low and the industry can sometimes struggle to attract the level and quality of applicants that are required for available positions. Private sector care homes in particular employ significant numbers of migrant workers across the UK¹.

Motivations and recruitment

The organisation views migrant workers positively. They are given as much a chance as other workers. The organisation has discovered that there are not enough local applicants for the jobs available. This provides opportunities for suitable migrant workers to apply.

A variety of methods are used to recruit. The main method is use of Job Centre Plus. This means that vacancies are therefore also posted on the internet, so any potential applicant can access them. Other methods include local newspapers and responding to pro active CV submissions.

Skill requirements

The nursing home currently has migrant workers employed in domestic worker positions. This means that the workers have to be 'genuine', in terms of their commitment to the job, and also that their English language ability has to meet a minimum standard.

In the view of the nursing home, all their staff are qualified to the correct level for the job. Moreover, additional training is offered in order that all workers possess the same standards of training. However, they did say that some migrant workers possess qualifications that are not related to the work that they currently do for the nursing home.

Experience

The nursing home reported that they did not understand all the qualifications that migrant workers possess but as training is provided this was not a significant problem.

The employer reported no problems with language ability or wider issues related to settling in the UK. However, they did say that they would be happy to deal with any problems if they were made aware of them. In their experience, migrant workers rely on social networks to provide them with the support that they need in work.

¹ *Attracting Talent*, research study, Experian 2007

Case study 4 – Book retailer, North Yorkshire

Motivations and recruitment

The company receives 'far too many' applications for all positions that they recruit to. In such circumstances, they employ whoever is most capable of performing in the job, including migrant workers.

Migrant workers are not a uniquely important source of labour for the company, with students in particular providing a significantly important alternative source of labour.

Migrant workers are predominantly employed in cleaning positions, via an intermediary. This intermediary has responsibility for ensuring migrant workers undertake the appropriate training.

In the experience of the company, migrant workers exhibit a range of views on the duration of their time in the UK. Many are clearly taking long term views whereas others are as yet undecided.

Skill requirements

The company mainly employs migrant workers in positions such as cleaning.

The company requires only basic levels of English language ability for most of the positions in which migrant workers are employed. Typically, migrant workers have sufficient English language skills for the job they are doing.

Experiences

Some migrant workers are over-qualified, although in general they are no better qualified than local employees. For example, one cleaner is attending business conferences to begin her own catering company – her attitude and ambition mean that she is "over-qualified", although not in the traditional sense of academic qualifications.

In the experience of this company, migrant workers are heavily reliant on networks within their own national group in the UK for support and social networks in general are important to helping workers settle.

Attracting Talent, research study, Experian 2007

Case study 5 – Manufacturer, North Yorkshire

Background

Compared with some other parts of the UK, traditional manufacturing is still an important industry in many parts of Yorkshire and the Humber. This includes the significant food production industry in the region, as well as chemicals, wood industries (such as furniture production) and metals.

Many traditional manufacturing industries, such as food processing and metals, face intense competition from producers in lower cost economies, such as those in South America and Eastern Europe. In order for companies in Yorkshire and the Humber to remain competitive, they need sources of affordable labour. Often, migrant workers are a good choice for manufacturers because their wage expectations are not as high as UK nationals and they are willing to undertake manual, repetitive work, often for long or anti-social hours.

Motivations and recruitment

The employer treats applicants from migrant worker communities in the same as they treat all applicants for work. The company is not especially reliant on migrant workers to provide the human resources for their production processes.

The main recruitment method used is Job Centre Plus, with ad hoc applications also playing a role.

Skill requirements

Only relatively basic skills are required for work in the company on the production floor. The company provides the necessary training so prior qualifications are not particularly relevant. If anything, the company feels that their staff are under-qualified for the work that they do until they are provided with training.

Experience

The skill that migrants most frequently lack is English language skills, although this is by no means always the case. At present the company does nothing to assist migrant workers with English language deficiencies. However, they are hoping to introduce English language classes soon. In their view workers are frustrated at their relative inabilities with the English language.

The company is not aware of any wider issues that employees face that impinge on their ability to perform well at work. However, they did say that if they were aware of any problems they would try to be of assistance.

Attracting Talent, research study, Experian 2007

Case study 6 – Food manufacturer, Hull

Background

Food production is particularly important to the economy of Yorkshire and the Humber. The region is a major agricultural producer, providing processors in the region with a supply chain of meats, vegetables, fruits and seafood (with Grimsby as the centre for frozen seafood production). Flexible supplies of labour are required at all stages, from picking and packing to adding value through industrial processes. Given the seasonal nature of food production, labour requirements are uneven across the year. Migrant workers are often a useful and essential source of labour for the supply chain as they are flexible and able to work for intense, short periods of time as required.

Motivations and recruitment

The company does not particularly target migrant workers but employs a significant minority in its factory. Job Centre Plus is the preferred method for recruiting. Students are another key source of labour that the company uses.

The manufacturer's understanding is that the primary reason migrant workers have come to the UK is to earn better wages than they could in their countries of origin. The firm also thinks that most of the migrant workers they employ are taking a long term view of staying in the UK.

Skill requirements

The work required by the company is quite elementary in nature and therefore no specific skills are required.

The company is aware that some migrant workers are over-qualified for the job and have accepted work in the factory until they find better paid jobs elsewhere. They have had no difficulty understanding the qualifications that migrant workers have. According to the firm, they are not aware of any frustration that being over-qualified for the job causes to migrant workers.

Experiences

As an employer, the firm is pleased with how the migrant workers in their work force perform.

All of their migrant workers have 'extremely good' English language skills, although the company would help any workers that had deficiencies.

In terms of relationships between migrant and non-migrant workers, the firm reports that there are no problems and that people from different backgrounds appear to get on well.

In terms of their wider experience of settling in the UK, the employer believes that social networks have been a significant factor in helping migrants to settle.

Attracting Talent, research study, Experian 2007

5.3 MIGRANT WORKERS

The migrant worker case studies are provided overleaf.

Case study 1 - Polish Migrant worker, male, mid 20s

Background

Lived in York for 1.5 years
A qualified teacher in Poland, now working as a cleaner

Motivations

He moved to the UK to be more independent. His English is fluent and he was an English teacher in Poland. However, his wage was quite low and he was still living with his family and he was dependent on them.

The interviewee did not regret giving up his job in Poland and moving to UK. He felt he did the right thing because his main priority was to become more independent and he felt he had less chance to do this in Poland in the long term.

Employment

The interviewee admitted he found difficult to get a job as soon as he arrived. He is a qualified teacher in Poland with a Masters degree but his qualifications were not taken into account when applying for jobs in the UK. As a result, he had to look for lower skilled jobs in order to keep going. He applied for many different things and through an agency he got his job as a cleaner.

In York he is a cleaner at the council and university. He is also doing volunteer work in different charities in order to get more experience and move to a better job, possibly office – based work.

He felt he experienced discrimination at his work place. He described an episode when he was denied annual leave for a particular period while his employer let somebody else take leave for the same period although they made their request later. He said he has never done anything about discrimination, as he wouldn't know who to go to and speak to about this. Nobody has ever asked him about this or talked to him about it – the interview was the first time he had spoken about discrimination issues.

He felt, having working in a mixed environment with British and other Poles, that Polish people are more committed and work harder. He was told by British people not to work so hard:

"If we work so hard then they have to do it too [so they aren't seen to be] lowering the standards, this is why"

Support

He reported that he had had negative experiences while looking for a flat. He had a place to stay when he first arrived but when he had to move out he found it difficult to find a decent and affordable place. He tried first through estate agencies but he finally found a place through a paper. The conditions of the flats he saw were quite poor.

Aspirations

He is determined to move on with his career in UK. He was advised by an agency to gain some higher skilled work experience. Thus he started at the Alzheimer society as a support worker and at the York CVS doing admin work.

He expressed the desire to study once he could afford it, and when he had only one job he would have more time to do so.

Attracting Talent, research study, Experian 2007

Case study 2- Hungarian Migrant worker, Female

Background

Hungarian Migrant worker, Female
Lived in York for 1.5 years

Motivations

Her main motivation was to find work that matched her qualification levels.

Employment

Kate was disappointed because her professional qualifications were not recognised in England and although she had worked as a nurse in Hungary she could only find work as a care assistant in England

Although she had professional qualifications, she could not find any work in Hungary and said that had she been able to find work at home she would not have come to the UK.

Support

Kate first moved in to the flat shared by her friend and her friend's partner in Lancashire after leaving the care home she was living and working in. Her friend was the only person she knew in the UK, however she moved out within a few weeks because the flat was very cramped and she felt like an intruder and did not want to put her friend and her partner out.

Kate said that she frequently went to Church and attended Church groups because this was an effective way of meeting more Hungarian migrants

Aspirations

In terms of future intentions, and whether this involves staying in the region, she said that this ultimately depended on employment prospects.
If she obtains work that matches her qualification levels then she will be more likely to remain in the area.

Attracting Talent, research study, Experian 2007

Case study 3 – Polish male migrant worker

Background

Polish Migrant worker, Male,
Lived in UK for 11 years

Motivations

Jacques said that he would have come to England even if his brother was not here because he had heard in Poland that that:

“Polish people make a lot of money in England and they have fun there”.

He ‘flew’ through the NVQ course while some of his British co-workers struggled with it and this was when he realised that he was capable of much more.

Employment

Jacques said that he was so desperate to work that he was very grateful for the hotel job he got when he first arrived in the UK. He was prepared to take whatever he could get and he did not have high expectations from his initial employment in the UK.

He prefers working in England because he has rights as a worker and because he feels that his job is more secure.

Support

He does not feel like he is discriminated against at work. The company used by the Hotel to train staff have advised the workforce to approach them if they feel they are being discriminated against

His brother lived in York and he moved in with him when he arrived in the UK. He now lives in a shared flat, which he found advertised on the Internet, with British nationals and a Chinese student.

Aspirations

He would like to work in a more complicated job for which he would be more motivated and from which he would get more satisfaction. Obtaining such a job would also enable him to earn a higher wage. Jacques would like to complete the economics degree he started in Poland but currently cannot afford to study in England.

He may stay in the region but he says that this depends on how things develop in terms of his employment prospects.

Attracting Talent, research study, Experian 2007

Case study 4 – Czech migrant worker

Background

Czech Migrant worker, Female
Worked as a cleaner

Motivations

She felt that even if childcare was made available she would not be able to attend a course as in her country "it is the mother who should look after a child".

Employment

The participant said that she had found it hard to find work, and had found her current job through a Polish friend. She is working as a cleaner part time because she also has sole care of her 8 year-old-son.

Support

The participant spoke little English and did not feel as if she had the time to attend a course as she was busy looking after her son.

The Czech respondent (Bradford) says she is reasonably happy with her local doctor services that provide special care for her son who has speech problems.

Attracting Talent, research study, Experian 2007

6 Policy implications

6.1 KEY FINDINGS

Around 40,000 migrant workers have registered with the WRS since EU accession in 2004 – the current population may be around 24,000

This research suggests that there are a significant number of migrant workers living and working in West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber. Nearly 40,000 people from A8 countries registered to work in the region²⁵ between May 2004 and December 2006 and our central estimate for the current²⁶ population of migrant workers (A8) in the three sub-regions is 24,000.

There is a lack of good quality, appropriate estimates of the migrant worker populations in the region. There are various sources available to develop estimates but they are difficult to integrate and when combined they do not provide a full picture of the population and their characteristics.

This research has confirmed that although migrant workers are a diverse group - in terms of origins, skills, circumstances and motivations – they have some common traits and common themes are evident. There are various reasons why migrant workers are attracted to the UK but economic motivations, in terms of wage levels, job availability and career development, are a key driver of observed migration trends.

This research suggests that migrant workers are having an overwhelmingly beneficial impact on the region's labour markets

A strong finding from the research is that migrant workers are having a beneficial impact on labour markets. Migrants fill a variety of roles across a fairly broad range of economic sectors. However, the skill requirements of roles that migrant workers perform are generally at the lower end of the skill spectrum and certain sectors, such as food & drink, hotels & catering and distribution benefit more from migrant labour than other sectors. Although migrants often work below their skill levels this is largely a function of deficiencies in their English language skills and there is little evidence that workplace tensions are widespread.

Improving English language skills is important to migrant workers, impacting on employment opportunities and career options as well as wider social settlement issues, such as dealing with the Home Office and securing accommodation. Partly due to language barriers, informal networks are a crucial source of support to migrant workers, helping them access information, jobs and housing as well as meeting their wider social needs.

Although there is no evidence that community tensions are a widespread issue for migrant workers, where issues do exist they may be being exacerbated by the housing of migrant workers in particular neighbourhoods (e.g. those with high unemployment).

The evidence suggests that migrant workers have a variety of views on the duration of their stay in the UK and on their specific intentions here. A common view amongst migrant workers is that West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber is meeting their needs at present and they will remain, in the UK at least, for a few years.

²⁵ Excluding South Yorkshire

²⁶ As at early 2007

6.2 PLANNING SERVICES

Better data and intelligence on migrant workers would improve service planning and policy development

Some agencies report that they are ‘planning blind’ due to the lack of good quality demographic estimates for migrant workers in the region. However, in addition to range of official sources some regional and local agencies hold administrative data on migrant worker populations. There is a requirement for greater sharing of this type of data between agencies and the identification of a single agency that will take the lead role in coordinating data.

6.3 LANGUAGE ISSUES

Addressing language issues is the arguably the most important area for public policy development. Effective interventions in terms of language support and learning provision will help migrant workers to settle, gain employment, avoid problems, integrate effectively in communities, and achieve their aspirations. There are also benefits to employers and also to those agencies that are concerned with community cohesion issues.

Ultimately, public agencies should be working towards the development of a flexible range of affordable English language training for migrant workers. The ESOL provision currently available often fails to meet the needs of migrant workers in terms of convenience, cost and level of complexity. However, given that such as ideal outcome may be difficult to support financially, public agencies should also consider appropriate methods for empowering migrants to take control of their own learning and providing the necessary support and guidance to assist them. This is likely to be a successful option in many instances as many migrants are reportedly highly motivated to learn English.

It is important to note that the effectiveness of language training provision depends not only on the design, content, format and appropriateness of the course but also on the quality of the trainer. Therefore it is important that investment in training also focuses on investing in the skills of trainers and ensuring that trainers are aware of the contexts their learners operate in and what their specific language needs are.

The process of improving language provision should involve key agencies and organisations that migrant workers have contact with

It will also be important to involve employers in developing language services. Employers will benefit from workers improving their language skills (e.g. improved productivity) and they also have a stake in determining when training is provided, to fit around work patterns.

Another area of action will be to develop communications with recruitment agencies. Agencies should be informing potential migrants of the benefits of developing some English language skills prior to travelling to the UK in order to avoid potentially harmful scenarios including exploitation, illegal working, community tensions and homelessness.

6.4 QUALIFICATIONS

This study has found that migrant workers from A8 countries are at least as well qualified, on average, as UK citizens. However, they are also, on average, more likely to be working below their full skills potential and in relatively low skilled occupations. The field work for this study also found

strong evidence that migrant workers would like to work in occupations in the UK that better reflect their skills potential. A key issue within this is the extent to which UK employers are able to recognise non-UK qualifications.

Piloting conversion courses for specific occupations may be a useful way of beginning to address qualification recognition issues

One possible area for policy attention is developing conversion courses that enable people with non-UK qualifications to undertake some additional training to ‘convert’ their non-UK qualification into a UK equivalent. The advantage of this to migrant workers and employers would be that migrant workers would not need to undertake the full duration of relevant UK training but would be instead ‘converting’ the qualifications they already possess.

The ease with which this can be done will vary from occupation to occupation. Also, although there is demand from migrant workers for some processes to help their qualifications work for them in the UK, there would need to be sufficient interest from employers, trade bodies and professional organisations to enable such an initiative. A pilot initiative for a specific occupation may be an appropriate first step.

6.5 INFORMATION

Access to accurate information to enable good decision making is something that can easily be taken for granted if you have lived in a country for a long time. However, for migrant workers unfamiliarity with UK systems (e.g. benefits, housing, taxation, health registration, waste services and education) compounds difficulties associated with language barriers to create additional challenges for migrants.

Improving access to information for migrant workers should include improving the channels migrant workers do use as well as ensuring that official information channels are used more

This research has identified the significance of informal networks to providing migrants with the information they need. Moreover, there is evidence that individuals who are perceived as possessing useful knowledge are frequently relied on to inform their migrant worker networks. A potentially useful strategy for public agencies is to identify key ‘information hubs’ in the community and work with them to ensure they have accurate information in areas of interest to migrant workers (e.g. housing, employment, language training, translation and interpretation services, tax and benefits).

6.6 COMMUNITY COHESION

Addressing the language barrier will have added benefits in helping to meet community cohesion objectives

Efforts to bridge the language barriers between migrants and pre-existing communities will be helpful in resolving community tensions. In this regard, the recommendations regarding language skills will also have benefits for community cohesion. However, it is also important that there is greater mutual understanding and acceptance between migrant and host communities.

In areas where migrant workers are known to be living and working, more information should be provided on issues around cultural diversity. Delivery mechanisms for this could include education authorities providing handouts for parents of children, information in doctor's surgeries and in civic buildings (e.g. libraries). It is also important that migrant workers have more information on what to expect from life in the UK and possible areas where cultures may be different. Key community leaders and 'informers' in the community would be appropriate targets for this information. Moreover, recruitment agencies working with potential migrants in A8 countries should have access to information that they can provide on what migrant workers can expect if they live and work in the UK.

The role of the local press is also important in fostering positive inter-community relationships. In this regard, local agencies should work with the local press to ensure that news coverage is fair and supports the development of good relationships.

6.7 ACCOMMODATION

Housing is a key issue – improving experiences here relies on greater partnership working to improve information provision to migrants and to improve shared understanding of the issues amongst key organisations, including landlords

This research uncovered a range of concerns in relation to housing, including lack of information, overcrowding, cost, quality, location and poor landlord services. Some of these issues present a challenge for policy coordination as they primarily relate to the private rented sector, which is a diffuse and uncoordinated sector of the housing system.

In terms of information, migrant workers need a better understanding of their housing rights (particularly as private tenants) and how housing systems in the UK operate. As with other areas of information provision and developing familiarity with UK systems, community contacts are an appropriate target for agencies to distribute information on accommodation choices, rights and responsibilities.

Social landlords also need to be sensitive in their housing allocation decisions to ensure that any potentially vulnerable migrant workers (e.g. those with young children) are not housed in areas where they may feel threatened.

6.8 SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The figure below provides a summary of the main recommendations.

Planning services	Language	Qualifications	Information	Cohesion	Accommodation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Services to share their administrative estimates of migrant workers & their characteristics ▶ One agency to be given lead role for data coordination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Flexible provision ▶ Invest in trainers ▶ Empower learners + support ▶ Partnership with employers ▶ Partnership with recruitment agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Pilot the idea of qualification conversion courses to 'fast track' non-UK workers towards UK-accredited qualifications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Inform the 'informers' ▶ Develop guidelines for public agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Diversity information – via schools, civic areas, surgeries, community leaders, recruitment agencies ▶ Work with local press to ensure balanced news coverage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Work with social landlords to ensure appropriate housing decisions (e.g. neighbourhoods) ▶ Work with private landlords to ensure better understanding and delivery of their responsibilities ▶ Distribute information through community contacts

Policy and service planning to date has tended to be reactive but with improved information, more coordinated, forward-looking planning is possible

The growth in migrant workers from A8 countries has been an issue that has developed rapidly since spring 2004. The scale, impacts and policy implications of this issue were not accurately anticipated at national, regional or local government levels. Moreover, the absence of comprehensive and accurate data and intelligence on these migration dynamics since spring 2004 has hindered service planning and policy development to date. As a result of these issues, policy development in relation to migrant workers in West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber has tended to be reactive.

In the last two years, research and intelligence on migrant workers has been improved, from national to local levels. There is now a greater understanding amongst regional agencies of the extent, nature and impacts of migration in the region. This is increasingly enabling agencies to collaborate to develop policy which anticipates, rather than reacts to, the social and economic requirements which will result from migrant worker populations in the region in future.

Appendix A

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Appendix B

Field work Topic Guides

Employers Topic Guide

Introduction (1 minute)

- Who Experian are
- Aims of the research
- Purpose of this interview
- Use of quotations
- Duration (30mins)
- Can they offer names of workers to speak to

1. Employer motivations and practices

Why do you choose to employ migrant workers?

- Low cost
- No other labour supply
- Productive
- Skills
- Other

What methods do you use to recruit migrant workers?

- Specialist agency
- General private agency
- Recommendations from existing employees
- Foreign recruitment fairs
- Other

How important are migrant workers to your business?

- Not very – could use any labour (e.g. UK students) instead
- Essential – not other labour to use
- Essential – enables us to compete with overseas low cost competitors

2. Skills & sectors

What skill levels do your migrant worker employees possess?

- Professional level
- Associate professional
- Technical
- Trade
- Other
- None

What skills do they need for the job?

Are they over or under qualified for the work they are required to do?

Does being over or under qualified present any operational issues for the business (e.g. frustration, labour turnover)

Are you aware of what qualifications your migrant worker employees possess?

Do you understand these qualifications in terms of how they relate to UK level / quality and how relevant they are for the work they do?

What skills do migrant workers tend to lack?

3. Motivations and intentions

Do you know why migrant workers on your payroll came to the UK?

- Experience
- Learn language
- Escaping poverty or persecution
- Reputation of UK
- Better wages
- Opportunity to accumulate wealth
- Other

Do you know how long your migrant workers intend remaining in the UK?

- Varies, no standard duration
- Less than six months but likely to return
- 6-12 months
- 12 months plus
- Want to settle and bring family over

4. Language

How would you describe the level of English language ability your migrant workers possess?

- None
- Basic but not sufficient for needs of work
- Adequate for job but inadequate for social life in UK
- Very good
- Fluent

How do you deal with English language deficiencies?

- Do nothing
- Use better speakers to translate and interpret
- Provide training
- Provide funds for training
- Provide advice for how to access training

Have you provided any language training?

What impacts do language deficiencies have on your business?

- None
- Loss of sales
- Health and safety challenges
- Onerous management resource implications
- Tensions
- Misunderstandings

What impact do language deficiencies have on the migrant workers themselves?

- None
- Frustration
- Tensions between migrant and other workers
- High turnover rates
- Inability to progress further in company

- They work below their actual skill level

5. Barriers and enablers

What difficulties are you aware that migrant workers face working in the business?

- Working below skill level
- Tensions between staff
- Racism
- Inability to progress further in the company
- Frustration working below actual skill level
- Access to child care

What wider difficulties do your migrant worker employees face?

- Access to decent standard of housing
- Lack of access to social networks
- Lack of understanding of UK systems and their rights
- Access to health
- Access to transport

Do you provide any assistance to help migrant workers with any of these issues?

- Accommodation provided
- Transport provided
- Point them in the direction of advisory services and organisations that can help them
- Mediation
- Language training
- Mentors

Are you aware of any support that your migrant workers have accessed that has helped them settle as employees?

- Social networks
- Churches
- Previous / other employers
- Local Authority departments (e.g. housing, social work)
- Social landlords
- Private landlords
- Recruitment agents

6. Close

Would you be happy for us to quote you and your organisation in the research output and to note your involvement in the research?

Recruitment Agencies Topic Guide

Introduction

- Who Experian are
- Aims of the research
- Purpose of this interview
- Use of quotations
- Duration (30mins)
- Can they offer names of workers to speak to

1. Agency's position in the market

How do migrant workers find out about your services and contact you?

- Friends / word of mouth
- Other intermediate agents
- Advertising
- Foreign recruitment fairs
- Overseas universities and other organisations in origin countries
- Other

How do employers find out about your services and contact you?

- Current employees
- Other intermediate agents
- Advertising

What type of agency are you?

- Industry specific
- Specialist – central and eastern Europe
- Specialist – international workers
- General
- Other

2. Skills & sectors

Do you recruit only to particular sectors?

- Hospitality and catering
- Manufacturing
- Food and drink processing
- Agriculture
- Business services / office
- Retail
- Construction
- Other

What skill levels do migrant workers have?

- Most have degrees
- Most are professional
- Big mixture, no pattern
- Low skilled
- Trade skills
- Other

What skills to migrant workers tend to lack?

- English language
- Soft skills
- Technical skills
- Other

What are their skill strengths?

- People skills
- Technical
- IT
- Sales
- Organisational
- Productivity
- Aptitude / attitude

What qualifications levels do migrant workers have?

- None
- Degree or equivalent
- College level
- Secondary school education
- Don't know – couldn't compare with UK levels

Do they have trouble having their qualifications recognised by employers and agencies?

What is your brief from employers – what do they ask for?

- Any hard working employees
- Specifically migrant workers, C&E European
- Just specify in terms of skill levels

To what extent do they want high skilled workers?

To what extent are high skilled migrant workers being matched to high skilled jobs?

In general, how do they skills required and the actual skill levels of migrant workers match up?

3. Motivation and intentions

What type of work are migrant workers seeking?

What duration of work do migrant workers want?

Does reality of life and work in UK match expectations (if not, why not)?

4. Language

What level of English language ability do migrant workers have?

How well does this match the ability level employers require?

How does this affect their employability?

5. Barriers and enablers

What barriers do migrant workers face in accessing opportunities through your agency?

How do you help workers overcome these barriers?

6. Can you provide contact details or names of companies that we could contact for further research?

7. Close

Would you be happy for us to quote you and your organisation in the research output and to note your involvement in the research?

Focus Group Topic Guide

Questionnaire to fill in on arrival:

Age
Sex
Country of origin
Sector worked in
Current salary (optional)
When did you move to England
Estimated length of stay in England

Introduction

- Description of *Inclusion*
- Aims of the research
- Issues covered during the focus group
- Recording
- Use of quotations
- Duration of focus group (1.5 – 2 hours)
- Any further questions / clarification?
- We want to carry out a few 1-1 interviews. If anyone is interested in doing this can they leave contact details (phone number or address).

Notes:

‘Country of origin’ can be replaced with the given country if only one nationality is present.

‘Yorkshire and the Humber’ can be replaced with the given city/area name.

The language of the questions may need to be modified if the participants English is not totally fluent.

1. Moving to Yorkshire and the Humber

Why did you decide to come to the UK?

- Money
- Employment
- Standard of living
- Wanted to move here permanently

Did you face any difficulties entering the UK?

What do you think of the Worker's Registration Scheme: what could be done to make it more user-friendly?

Did you have any friends or family already in the UK?

- If so, do you think you would have moved here if you didn't?
- What kind of help/information did they provide?

Why did you decide to come to this area of the UK?

- Did you always intend to come to this area, or did you come to the UK and then decide to move to Yorkshire and the Humber?
- Did you receive information from other migrants/support services that made you decide to come to Yorkshire and the Humber?

Do you intend to stay in Yorkshire and the Humber while you are in the UK?

- Are there other parts of the country where you would rather be living and working?
- If so, why?

Did you have employment arranged before your left your country of origin?

- Through what channels/agencies?

Did you face any difficulties finding work in Yorkshire and the Humber?

Are some kinds of work more available than others in Yorkshire and the Humber?

What could be done to make Yorkshire and the Humber a more attractive destination for migrant workers?

What could be done to make moving to the UK to work more attractive to migrant workers?

2. Working in the UK

Is your work in the UK as you expected?

- Are you doing the job you expected to be doing?
- Are you getting paid what you thought you would be paid?
- Are health and safety standards/hours of work/support from employers better or worse than expected?

How does your job compare to your previous job in your country of origin?

- Was anyone previously workless?
- Are they doing the same type of job, or is this a lower/higher skilled job?
- Are they getting paid more or less than they would in their country of origin?

Are you happy with your current wage?

Do you understand all the deductions that are made from your wages (tax, NI etc)?

Have you had difficulty getting your Polish/Latvian/Slovak/ qualifications recognised in the UK?

Do you have to travel far to get to work?

Does this present difficulties?

Do you feel you have been the victim of any discrimination at work?

- Do you feel this was because of your nationality?

Are the people you work with mainly English, or mainly of the same country of origin as your own, or a mix?

Are you looking for career development/promotion in the UK (or just to earn money and return)?

- Do you see your long-term professional future in the UK or your country of origin (or another country)?
- Would you consider setting up your own business in the UK? What kind of business and why?
- Is anybody currently doing so or thinking of doing so? What kind of business and why?

3. Experiences of the UK

How easy was it to find accommodation in Yorkshire and the Humber?

- Was accommodation arranged by your employment agency or employer?

Are you happy with your current accommodation?

- Is the standard of housing acceptable?
- Is there over-crowding?
- Are you aware of your rights as a tenant in the UK?
- Are accommodations standards lower than those you are used to in your country of origin?

Is anyone in receipt of state benefits/social housing?

Has anyone investigated whether they were eligible for state benefits/social housing?

Has anyone faced difficulties in claiming for state benefits/social housing?

What are your experiences of using public services in England?

- Hospital
- Doctors
- Social housing

Do you feel you experienced any discrimination when trying to access public services?

Have you accessed any support services in Yorkshire and the Humber?

- Have you accessed support services elsewhere in the UK?
- Were they helpful?

Are any of your family members from Poland/Czech Republic etc living in England with you?

- Who?
- Did they come with you initially or did they join you later?
- Do they plan to stay here with you?

Do you feel that you live in a Migrant community or in an English community?

- How much contact do you have with English nationals?
- Would you like to have more contact with English nationals?

What do you think could be done to make the integration of English and migrant communities easier/more successful?

Do you feel you have been the victim of any discrimination in Yorkshire and Humberside?

- Do you feel this was because of your nationality?
- Did you report it to anyone?
- Are you aware of discrimination legislation/your rights/the law with regard to discrimination?

What have been the good things and bad things about moving to the UK?

Interview Topic Guide

Introduction

- Description of *Inclusion*
- Aims of the research
- Issues covered during the focus group
- Recording
- Use of quotations
- Duration of Interview (1 hour)
- Any further questions / clarification?

Notes:

Primary questions are in normal text; supplementary questions and prompts are shown as bullet points.

‘Country of origin’ can be replaced with the given country if only one nationality is present.

‘Yorkshire and the Humber’ can be replaced with the given city/area name.

The language of the questions may need to be modified if the participants English is not totally fluent.

Introductory Questions

Age

Sex

Country of origin

Sector worked in

Current salary (optional)

When did you move to England

Estimated length of stay in England

Where do you live?

Where do you work?

1. Moving to Yorkshire and the Humber

What is your country of origin?

Why did you decide to come to the UK?

- Money
- Employment
- Standard of living
- Wanted to move here permanently

Did you face any difficulties entering the UK?

What is your experience of the Worker's Registration Scheme?

- What could be done to make it more user-friendly?

Did you have any friends or family already in the UK?

- If so, do you think you would have moved here if you didn't?
- What kind of help/information did they provide?

Why did you decide to come to this area of the UK?

- Did you always intend to come to this area, or did you come to the UK and then decide to move to Yorkshire and the Humber?
- Did you receive information from other migrants/support services that made you decide to come to Yorkshire and the Humber?

Do you intend to stay in Yorkshire and the Humber while you are in the UK?

- Are there other parts of the country where you would rather be living and working?
- If so, why?

Did you have employment arranged before your left your country of origin?

- Through what channels/agencies?

Did you face any difficulties finding work in Yorkshire and the Humber?

Are some kinds of work more available than others in Yorkshire and the Humber?

What could be done to make moving to the UK to work more attractive to migrant workers?

What could be done to make Yorkshire and the Humber particularly a more attractive destination for migrant workers?

2. Working in the UK

Is your work in the UK as you expected?

- Are you doing the job you expected to be doing?
- Are you getting paid what you thought you would be paid?
- Are health and safety standards/hours of work/support from employers better or worse than expected?

How does your job compare to your previous job in your country of origin?

- Was anyone previously workless?
- Are they doing the same type of job, or is this a lower/higher skilled job?
- Are they getting paid more or less than they would in their country of origin?

Are you happy with your current wage?

Do you understand all the deductions that are made from your wages (tax, NI etc)?

Have you had difficulty getting your polish/Latvian/Slovak/ qualifications recognised in the UK?

Do you have to travel far to get to work?

What difficulties does this present?

Do you feel you have been the victim of any discrimination at work?

- Do you feel this was because of your nationality?

Are the people you work with mainly English, or mainly of the same country of origin as your own, or a mix?

Are you looking for career development/promotion in the UK (or just to earn money and return)?

- Do you see your long-term professional future in the UK or your country of origin (or another country)?
- Would you consider setting up your own business in the UK? What kind of business and why?
- Is anybody currently doing so or thinking of doing so? What kind of business and why?

3. Experiences of the UK

How easy was it to find accommodation in Yorkshire and the Humber?

- Was accommodation arranged by your employment agency or employer?

Are you happy with your current accommodation?

- Is the standard of housing acceptable?
- Is there over-crowding?
- Are you aware of your rights as a tenant in the UK?
- Are accommodations standards lower than those you are used to in your country of origin?

Is anyone in receipt of state benefits/social housing?

Has anyone investigated whether they were eligible for state benefits/social housing?

Has anyone faced difficulties in claiming for state benefits/social housing?

What are your experiences of using public services in England?

- Hospital
- Doctors
- Social housing

Do you feel you experienced any discrimination when trying to access public services?

Have you accessed any support services in Yorkshire and the Humber?

- Have you accessed support services elsewhere in the UK?
- Were they helpful?

Are any of your family members from Poland/Czech Republic etc living in England with you?

- Who?
- Did they come with you initially or did they join you later?
- Do they plan to stay here with you?

Do you feel that you live in a Migrant community or in an English community?

- How much contact do you have with English nationals?
- Would you like to have more contact with English nationals?

What do you think could be done to make the integration of English and migrant communities easier/more successful?

Do you feel you have been the victim of any discrimination in Yorkshire and Humberside?

- Do you feel this was because of your nationality?
- Did you report it to anyone?
- Are you aware of discrimination legislation/your rights/the law with regard to discrimination?

What have been the good things and bad things about moving to the UK?

Community Interview Topic Guide

Introduction

- Description of Inclusion
- Aims of the research
- Issues covered during the focus group
- Recording
- Use of quotations
- Duration of Interview (1 hour)
- Any further questions / clarification?

Notes:

Research is specifically about Migrant workers, not migrants in general/refugees/asylum seekers.

Primary questions are in normal text; supplementary questions and prompts are shown as bullet points.

'Migrant workers' can be replaced with 'Polish workers'/'Czech workers' etc if appropriate.

'Yorkshire and the Humber' can be replaced with the given city/area name.

Questions in blue refer only to individuals who provide services to migrant workers.

1. About the Organisation (Where appropriate)

Can you describe the role of your organisation?

Which individuals do you represent?
Where are you based?

How much demand is there for your services in this area?

Do you think there are enough organisations providing these kind of services in this area?

Language

Do you think it is important for migrant workers in the UK to speak English? Why?

Do you think it is important for migrant workers in the UK to read and write English? Why?

In your experience, what difficulties can migrant worker's face if they can not speak English?

Whose responsibility do you think it to ensure migrant workers learn English?

Do you know what support and provision is available for migrant workers who want to improve their English?

Do you think there is enough support and provision for migrant workers who want to improve their English?

2. Working in the UK?

In your experience, what do people find most difficult about moving to the UK to work?

Do you feel that the Worker's Registration Scheme works well? Why/why not?

Do you have experience of migrant workers who come to the UK before they have found a job? Or do people tend to have found employment before they move?

In your experience, what difficulties (if any) do migrant workers face in finding employment in the UK?

In general, do you think that migrant workers are paid fairly in the UK?

Do you have experience of migrant workers who feel they have faced discrimination in the workplace?

Were these workers aware of the rights regarding workplace discrimination?

3. Support for Migrant Workers in the UK

Do you think there are sufficient sources of advice and information for migrant workers in this area?

Can you tell me which of these sources you consider most important/most useful and why?

In general, what experiences do migrant have of accessing public services in this area (doctors/hospitals/benefits)?

- Are they told they are not entitled to help?
- Have they ever faced discrimination?
- Do they find services over-stretched?

Which public services do you think are most important for migrant workers and why?

Do migrant workers in the UK use the Citizens Advice Bureau?

What do you consider to be the priorities for improvements to public services for migrant workers?

In your experience, have migrant workers had difficulties with the tax system for migrant workers?

Do you know of any migrant workers who have been the victims of fraud or deceit by employers/landlords etc?

- What do you think could be done to reduce such behaviour?

4. Housing

Are you aware of any difficulties that migrant workers face in finding suitable accommodation?

- Cost
- Discrimination
- Lack of knowledge about their social housing rights

In your experience, are migrant workers living in accommodation of a suitable standard?

If no, what problems are they experiencing?

- Over-crowding
- Poor health and safety standards (Lack of HMO Licenses)

In your experience, are private landlords aware of their obligations towards tenants? (Are some landlords taking advantage of migrant workers or are they genuinely ignorant of the law)?

In general, are the people you know of who have had difficulties with accessing suitable accommodation aware of their rights and entitlements and of where they can go for more information and advice?

In your experience, are migrant workers aware of their rights regarding social housing?

What do you think could be done to ensure that migrant workers can access safe and affordable housing in this area?

5. Community integration

In your experience, is it important for migrant workers to live and work with other migrant workers?

If so, why?

Are you aware of any tensions in this area between the groups of new migrant workers and established residents?

What do you think are the reasons for these tensions?

What do you feel could be done to ensure successful integration of new migrant workers within established communities in this area?