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Migrant Workers in Dumfries & Galloway

Final Report

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IONAD NÀISEANTA NA H-IMRICH
NATIONAL CENTRE FOR MIGRATION STUDIES

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Introduction

Like many areas across Scotland, Dumfries and Galloway has seen an increasing number of migrant workers, mainly from the EU Accession countries coming in to the area to take up hard to fill jobs in key sectors. This section sets out the background and context to this research and outlines the overall objectives and detailed research questions that the study addresses.

Background

On 1st May 2004 Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Slovenia, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Malta and Cyprus joined the EU ('A10'). Bulgaria and Romania subsequently joined in 2007. Nationals from Malta and Cyprus have had full free movement rights and have been able to work throughout the EU. Workers from the remaining eight countries ('A8') are eligible to apply for permission to work in the UK through the Worker Registration Scheme (WRS). The WRS was introduced to monitor and control immigration from the A8 countries.

The large increase in migrants registered as working in the UK has primarily been absorbed into hospitality and catering, agriculture, food processing and administration and business. Since international migration is an ongoing process, policy-makers need a sound information base to ensure that both the receiving countries and the migrants can benefit from European enlargement now and in the future.

Scottish Enterprise Dumfries and Galloway on behalf of the Dumfries and Galloway Local Economic Forum have commissioned this research to help them understand how migrant workers interact in the local economy so that they can effectively plan and direct support in the future.

Objectives

The brief outlines several objectives of the study, with a particular emphasis being placed on European Union (EU) nationals. The objectives are to:

1. Quantify the size and make up of the migrant labour workforce in Dumfries and Galloway concentrating on the following key sectors:

- Food production and processing
- Forestry
- Tourism
- Agriculture
- Energy
- Construction

2. Assess and quantify the current scale, nature, contribution, skill level and impact of the migrant labour workforce to these sectors of the economy. The assessment will take a long-term view of the impact on sectoral growth.

3. Assess the views of migrant workers on the benefits and challenges of living and working in Dumfries and Galloway.
4. Assess the views of employers on the key issues that they face in the recruiting and retaining of migrant workers with the skills to meet their business needs and assess the willingness of employers to invest in training for migrant workers.
5. Identify the key factors to be considered in the integration of migrant workers into the socio-economic infrastructure of Dumfries and Galloway. Issues to address include, but are not limited to:
 - Accommodation
 - Medical Care
 - Language and orientation
 - Childcare and Education
 - Health and Safety in the workplace
 - Involvement in the local community
6. Assess the medium to long term intentions and career aspirations of migrant workers in terms of their future in Dumfries and Galloway.
7. Identify current support and infrastructure to address and respond to the issues raised under (5) and make recommendations for further actions by organisations in the public, private and voluntary sectors.

Approach

The study has involved both primary and secondary research and included:

- A review of the labour market context in Dumfries and Galloway, with a focus on the key sectors identified by SE Dumfries and Galloway in their economic strategy.
- A review of existing research on the impact of migrant labour in Scotland and the UK;
- A review of National Insurance Number (NiNo) registration information from the Department of Work and Pensions;
- A survey of employers in Dumfries and Galloway, with 103 responses;
- In-depth interviews with 14 Polish migrant workers from Dumfries and Annan, conducted with an interpreter;
- A Stakeholder workshop involving agencies providing support or services to migrant workers; and
- A survey of migrant workers, which received 85 responses.

Report Format

Following this introduction, the report is structured under the following sections:

- The impact of migrant workers on the local economy;

- Migrant workers' experiences;
- Developing migrant workers role in the economy; and
- The way forward.

The impact of migrant workers on the local economy

This section looks at the size and nature of the migrant labour population in Dumfries and Galloway in the context of the local labour market. It also identifies the reasons why employers have chosen to recruit migrant workers and the impacts that employers identify from accessing these workers.

The migrant worker population

The large increase in non-UK workers has been mainly attributed to EU enlargement in May 2004. A8 nationals registered as working in Scotland have been absorbed into hospitality and catering, agriculture, food processing and administration and business¹. In Dumfries and Galloway, anecdotal evidence suggests that migrant workers are contributors especially in the food production and processing, forestry, tourism and agriculture sectors.

Overall, levels of migration of A8 nationals have been greater than that predicted by the government. This was because forecast figures did not take into account a number of events or issues including the unforeseen restrictions imposed by many of the other European Union members and the fact that the predictions were based on permanent rather than temporary migration flows. Seasonal increases also occur over the summer making accurate macro-data difficult to use².

There is no one reliable source of information to give an accurate picture of the total number of workers (or migrant population) in Dumfries and Galloway. We have therefore gathered information on the number of migrant workers from several sources to provide an overall estimate of numbers. The sources we have used are:

- National Insurance Registrations;
- Survey of employers; and
- Data gathered by the Ethnic Minority Support Worker.

Since 2002/03 an estimated 2,100 overseas workers have registered for a National Insurance number in either Dumfries or Stranraer. However this will not be an accurate picture of the total number of workers as many will have left the area while others may have moved to the area after registering elsewhere (particularly the larger cities).

Our survey conducted with employers showed that 4.8% of their employees were migrant workers, equivalent to 2,600 workers across the region. However as our survey targeted sectors which employed migrant labour this is likely to be an upper estimate.

The Ethnic Minority Support worker at Dumfries and Galloway CAB has identified from locally gathered information that there are 1,800 Poles alone living across Dumfries and Galloway (including non-active family members). If we assume that Poles make up 60% of migrants then this would mean a total population of around 3,000.

¹ Scottish Economic Report, June 2006

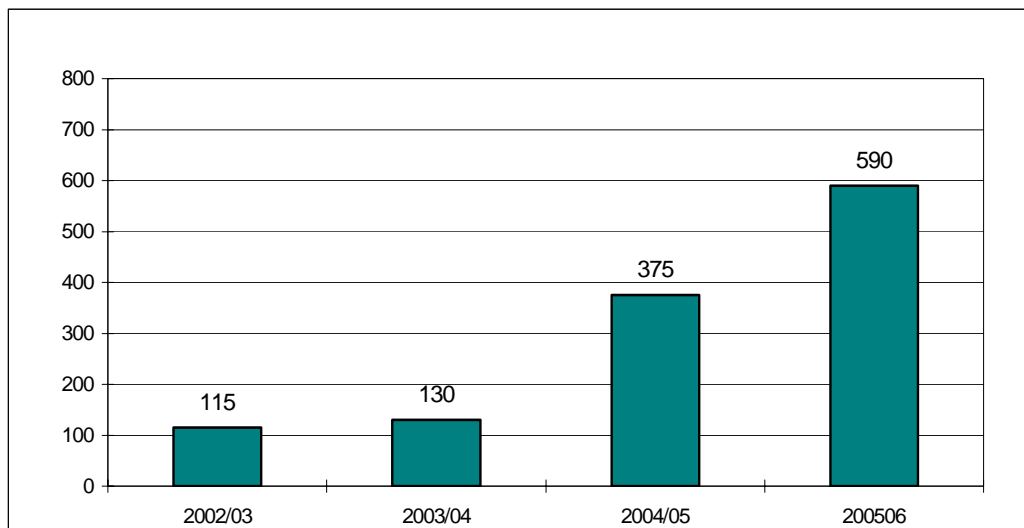
² IPPR (2006)

National Insurance Registrations

National Insurance Number (NINo) registrations for overseas nationals increased slightly between the tax years 2002/03 (120) and 2003/04 (140). However, as might be expected, there was a marked increase in the tax year 2004/05 following EU enlargement, when the number of NINo registrations for overseas nationals more than doubled, rising from 140 to 340. While this very high rate of increase tailed off in the subsequent year 2005/06 still saw a rise in NINo registrations of 75% (to 590) as shown in Figure 1.

Initial figures for 2006/07, provided informally by Jobcentre Plus, suggest a further increase to between 750 and 800 overseas workers registering at Dumfries. If we assume a similar proportional increase registering at Stranraer, then this would mean around 880 migrant workers for the 2006/07 year.

Figure 1 NINo registrations of non-UK nationals (2002/03 – 2005/06)



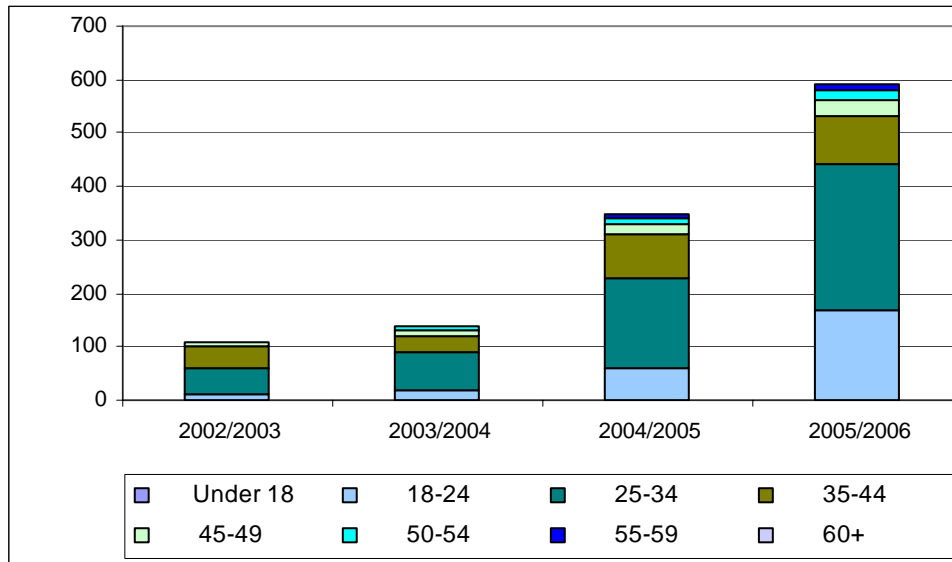
Source: Department for Work and Pensions (2007)

This pattern reflects the wider Scottish situation to some degree. Between 2003/04 and 2004/05, there has been a more pronounced increase in registrations in Dumfries and Galloway than in Scotland as a whole: the number of registrations rose by 50% in Scotland and by 200% in Dumfries and Galloway. However, between 2004/05, when Dumfries and Galloway's NINo registrations for overseas nationals went up by 75%, the Scottish figure rose by nearly 90%.

NINo registrations for overseas nationals by age

As is the case Scotland wide, the bulk of the NINo registrations in Dumfries and Galloway have been in the 34 years or younger age group. While there have also been a few registrations for the 45+ age group since 2004, the number of registrations has remained at around 10% of the total in 2004/05 and 2005/06, as can be seen in Figure 2.

Figure 2 NINo Registrations of non-UK Nationals by age group (2002/03-2005/06)

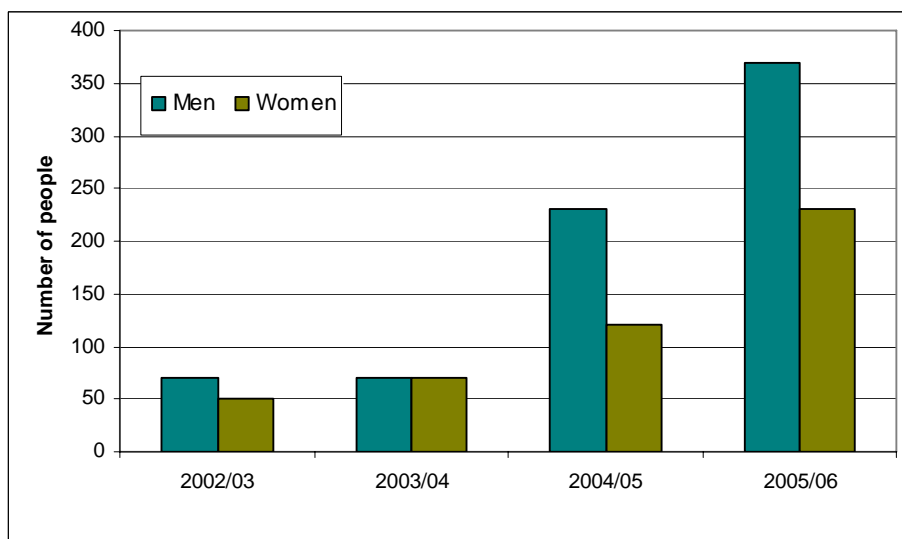


Source: Department for Work and Pensions (2007)

NINo registrations of overseas nationals by gender

The most striking feature of the NINo registrations for overseas nationals by gender is the fact that the overseas population has been very much dominated by men since 2004/05. In 2004/05, the number of men in this group is almost twice as high than that of women at 230 compared with 120. Males therefore accounted for two thirds of non UK NINo registrations in Dumfries and Galloway during 2004/05 (66%). This gender gap narrowed a little in 2005/06 with men making up 62% of the total, as illustrated in Figure 3.

Figure 3: NINo registrations of non-UK nationals by gender (2002/03 – 2005/06)



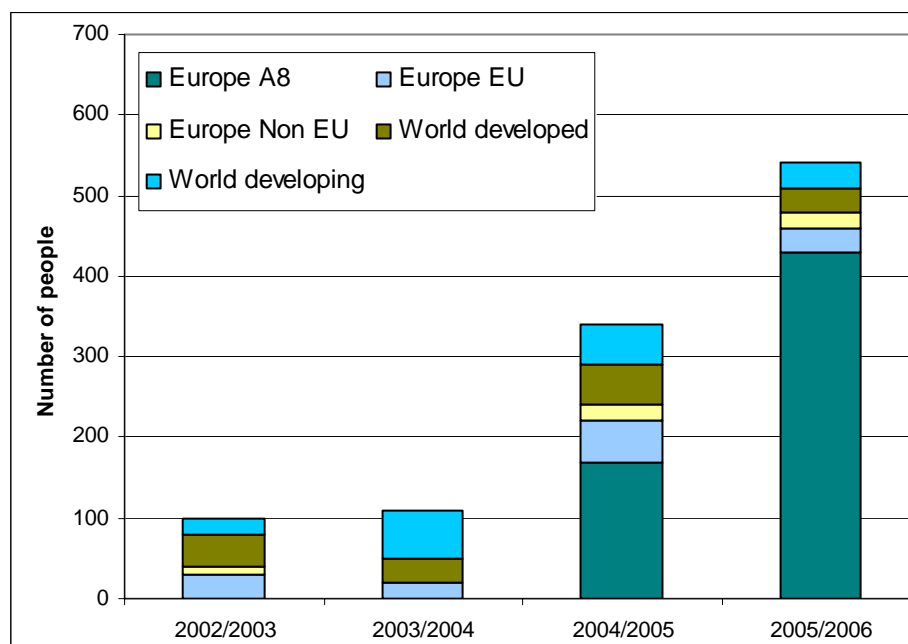
Source: Department for Work and Pensions (2007)

This is a different situation to the wider Scottish picture where the gender distribution of migrants is more balanced. Nationally there were only slightly more men than women (about 12,000 compared with 10,700) in 2004/05. While this gap increased in 2005/6, where men made up 56% of the total registrations, the difference is still less pronounced than in Dumfries and Galloway.

NINo registrations of overseas nationals by country

As with Scotland as a whole, Dumfries and Galloway has benefited significantly from the EU Accession 8 population. This group contributed 50% (170) of the registrations in the tax year 2004/05, and over 70% (420) in the tax year 2005/06. The number of registrations from nationals other than the accession states has declined slightly between 2004/05 and 2005/06. This is particularly the case among non-Europeans which suggests that there may be some displacement of other groups due to the removal of restrictions for A8 workers.

Figure 4 NINo Registrations for non-UK Nationals by Country of Origin (2002/03 – 2005/06)



Source: Department for Work and Pensions (2007)

Again as with experiences in Scotland as a whole, the largest proportion of registrations has been for Polish nationals. Registrations for Polish people made up 76% of all registrations for the Accession 8 nationals (other nationalities consisting of Latvians, Lithuanians and Slovaks) in 2004/05. This percentage increased only slightly to 79% in 2005/06 (other nationalities comprising Latvians, Lithuanians, Slovaks and Czechs).

Experience, skills & qualifications

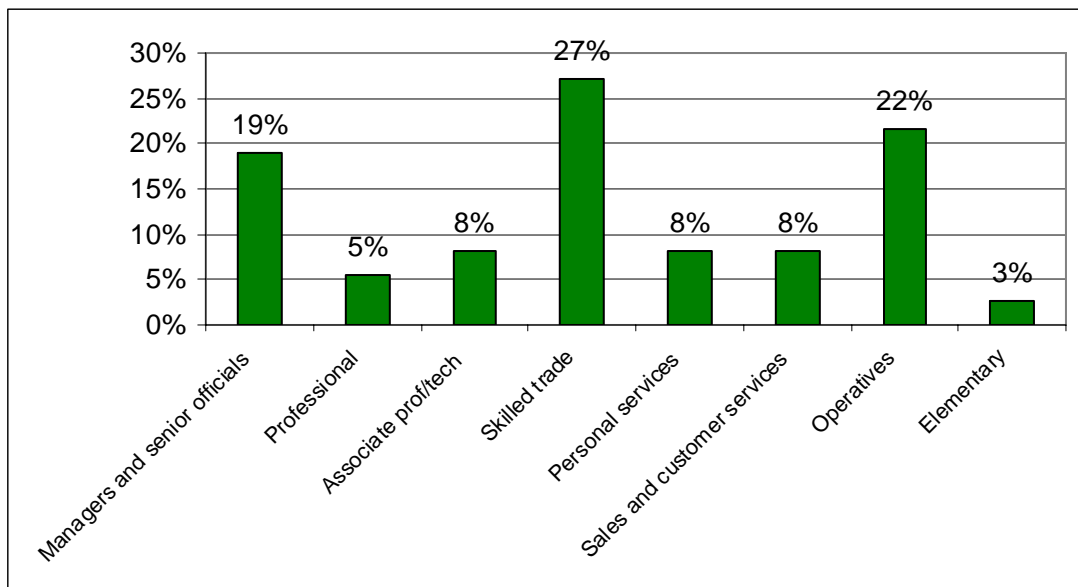
Our findings on skills and qualifications are largely based on 85 responses from our survey of migrant workers in Dumfries and Galloway. Some 63% of respondents were Polish with the rest from 17 different countries. This broadly mirrors the pattern of NiNo registrations for the region.

Prior experience

Over three quarters (78%) of migrant workers had worked prior to coming to Scotland. Males were much more likely to have worked (84%) compared to females (68%).

Figure 5 shows the previous occupations of respondents and suggests that almost a quarter were managers, senior officials or professionals (24%). And more than a quarter had a skilled trade (27%). Some 22% had worked as process, plant or machine operatives. The demand for operatives (such as drivers) in Scotland is strong as is the demand for skilled trades, particularly in construction. Interestingly, personal contact was more important than average (42%) for how these workers found their current job.

Figure 5 Previous occupations of migrant workers

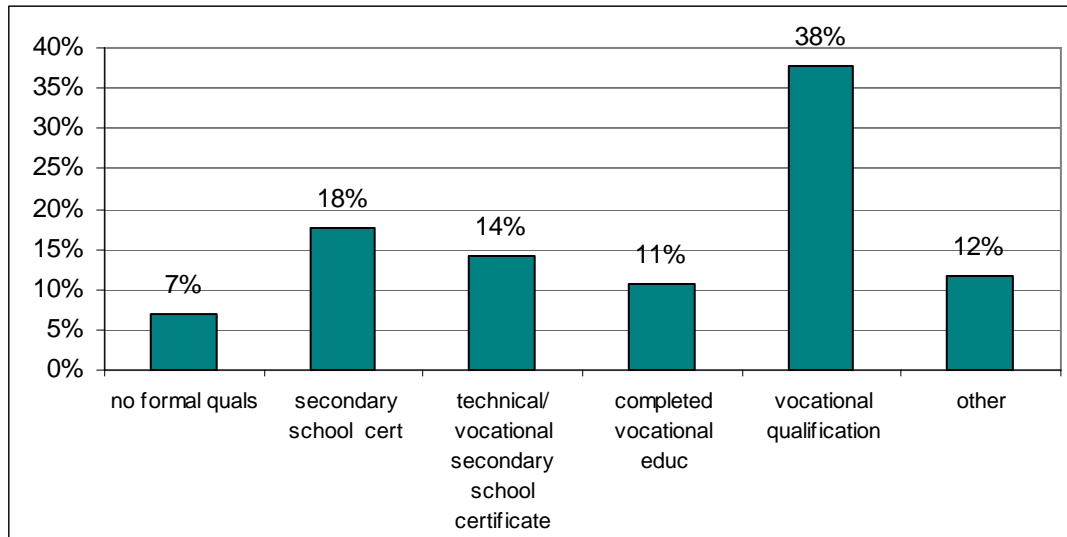


Source: Migrant worker survey n=85

Qualifications

Figure 6 shows the highest qualification levels of the respondents. It shows that around half of the respondents had either a vocational qualification (38%) or had completed a vocational education course (11%). Only 7% of the respondents had no formal qualifications which compares to 15% of the working age population in Dumfries and Galloway (APS, December 2005).

Figure 6 Highest school qualification level



Source: Migrant worker survey n=85

When we examine age against qualifications, it appears that those with lower skills (general secondary education or below) are more likely to be in the under 30 age group (around a third) compared with those over 30 (one in seven).

In terms of gender, females were more likely than males to have a school based vocational qualification (47% against 31%).

Polish post-school qualifications

In Poland where the majority of A8 migrants come from there appear to be broadly three levels of post-school vocational or professional qualification. The Technikum is a three year post-compulsory vocational qualification delivered by University style institutions. However the SQA compare this to Higher National Certificate (HNC) level. There are three types of qualifications that would be classed as Higher Education (equivalent to SVQ4). Applying this to our survey sample::

- 6% have magisters/ degrees
- 15% would appear to have HND equivalence, through indicating time at university, 3 years further/ higher education (licencjat or inzynier).
- 50% have qualifications at, or components of, HNC level. That is having attended a technical school or a post secondary vocational school and has something above technikim but below HND.

The impact and contribution of migrant workers

Background

We used an email database to contact employers and to provide them with a link to a web-based questionnaire. Some 1,300 employers were contacted using email. Approximately 70% of the email addresses were valid and we received 103 responses (a valid response rate of 11%) after two email circulars to employers.

One third of respondents were in the hospitality and catering sectors. Approximately equal numbers were engaged in farming and agriculture (10%) and construction (11%). Despite this there was a great diversity in business which ranged from recycling to research in China.

A quarter of respondents were based in Dumfries (24%) with smaller clusters in Castle Douglas (9%), Newton Stewart (8%), Lockerbie (6%) and Annan (4%). Respondents were distributed across the whole of the region with some active across the whole of southern Scotland. Smaller locations identified included Thornhill and Caulkerbush.

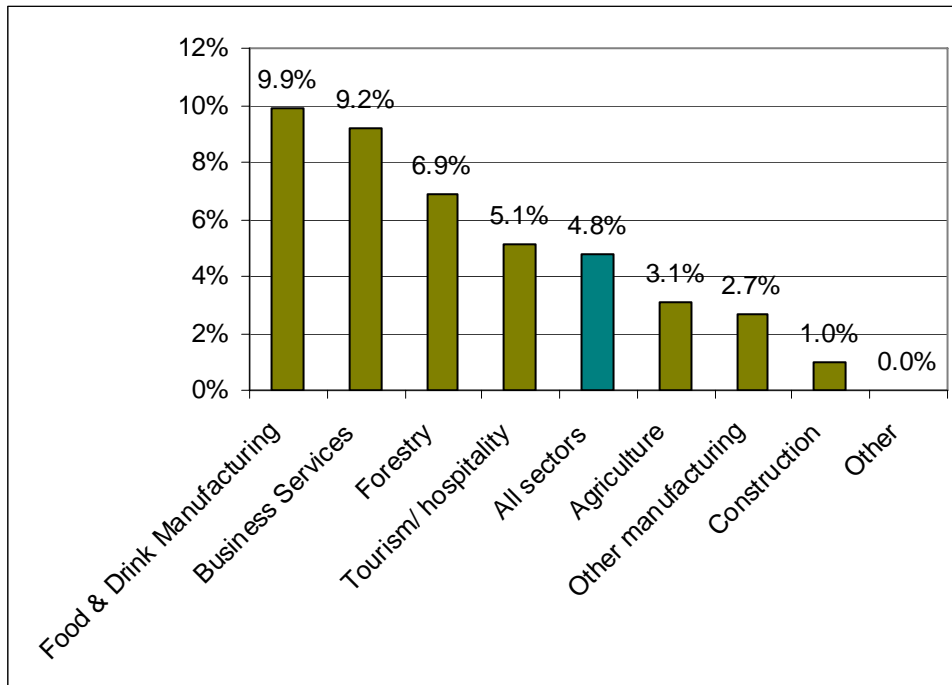
Employers' experience of migrant workers

Around a quarter of employers had employed migrant workers since May 2004 (24%). This is similar to the wider Scottish picture. A further 13% indicated that they intended to employ migrants in the future.

Of the 1,736 people employed by responding employers, 84 were overseas migrant workers. This is equivalent to 4.8% of all workers. If this average was applied to all employee jobs in Dumfries and Galloway, this would equate to an overall migrant labour population of around 2,600 workers.

As Figure 7 shows, there are some sectors which appear to have a higher proportion of migrant workers. Among food and drink manufacturers almost 10% of their current workers are overseas migrants, while more than 9% of business service employees in the sample were also migrant workers. The forestry (6.9%) and tourism and hospitality (5.1%) sectors also have higher than average proportions of migrant workers. However the agriculture, construction and other manufacturing employers surveyed had lower than average proportions of migrant workers in their workforce.

Figure 7 Proportion of migrant workers by sector



Source: Employer survey (n=105)

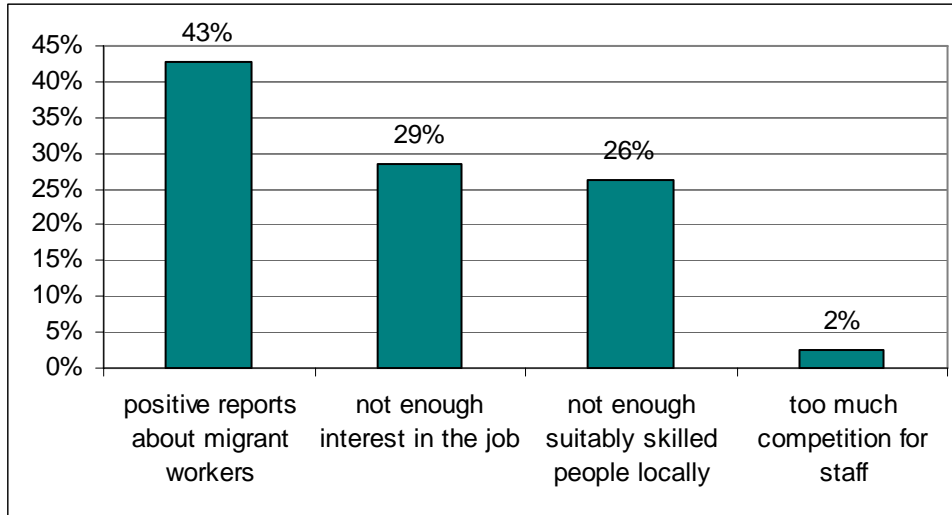
The majority of migrant workers employed by respondents were Polish (52% of reported number of workers). Other migrants came from the Czech Republic, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and 'Other' countries including Portugal. The individual percentages for each nationality were very small; between 2% and 10%.

As with the NINo registrations there appear to be more male than female workers in Dumfries and Galloway. Among our sample of employers 62% of migrant workers were male and only 38% were female.

Reasons for recruiting migrant workers

We asked employers why they had recruited migrant workers. As Figure 8 shows, the most common reason identified by employers was that they had received positive reports about migrant workers, which was identified by 43% of our sample. Just under three in ten employers identified a lack of interest in the job by the local labour pool (29%) and around a quarter thought that the local workforce lacked the skills or attributes needed (26%). Very few employers identified competition for staff as a determining issue (2%).

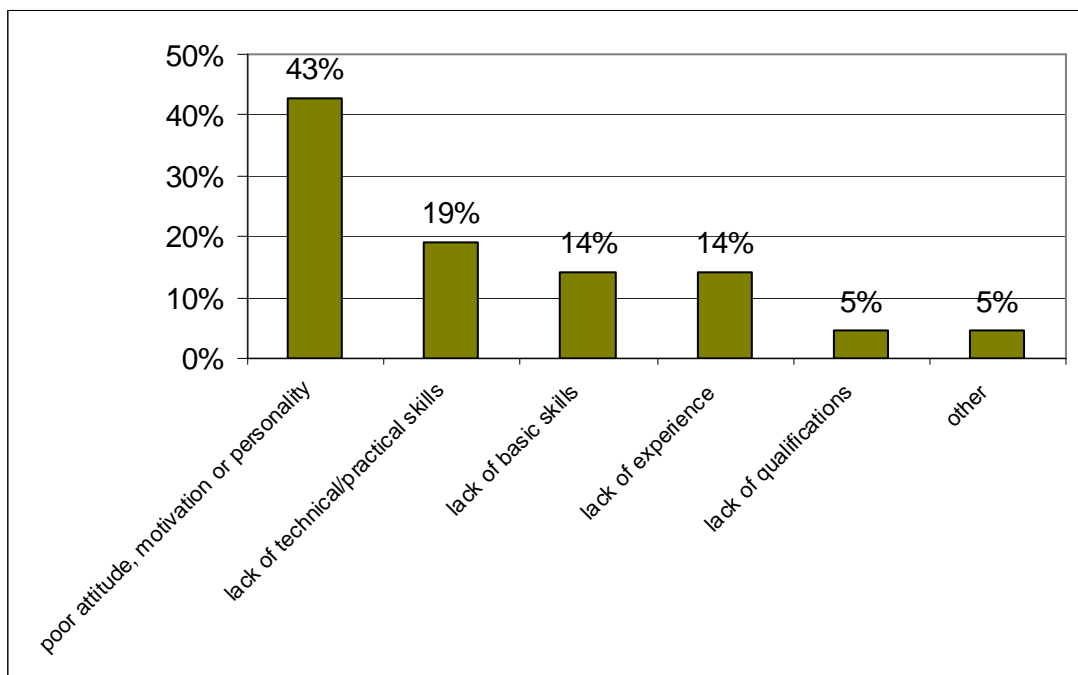
Figure 8 Reasons why employers recruited migrant workers



Source: Employer survey (n=105)

As Figure 9 shows, of the 21% of employers who identified problematic issues with the local labour force as a reason for recruiting migrant workers 43% indicated that the Dumfries and Galloway labour force displayed poor attitudes, motivations or personality. Also important were lack of technical/ practical skills (19%), lack of basic skills (14%) and lack of experience (14%). However a lack of qualifications was not considered to be important issue by employers.

Figure 9 Issues around lack of skills and attributes locally

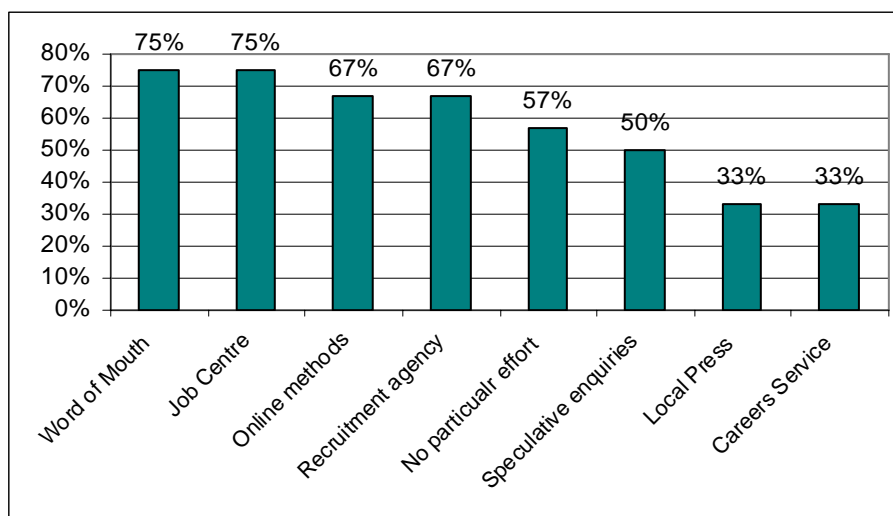


Source: Employer survey (n=105)

Recruitment methods

The most frequently cited methods of recruitment were word of mouth and recruitment agencies. A smaller number of employers had used formal channels of recruitment such as the Job Centre and the Careers service. However it is interesting to note that only a third of employers actively recruited migrant workers (33%), the majority (67%) did not. This suggests a strong supply-side role in the migrant labour market, where workers are proactively approaching employers rather than the employers targeting workers.

Figure 10 Proportion of employers rating recruitment methods as effective/ very effective



Source: Employer survey (n=105)

As Figure 10 shows, word of mouth was the most effective method of recruitment with three quarters of the 12 employers who used this approach rating it as effective. Although a similar proportion rated the Job Centre as effective, only four employers had used this approach to access migrant workers. Online recruitment and using recruitment agencies were rated as effective approaches by around two thirds of employers (67%).

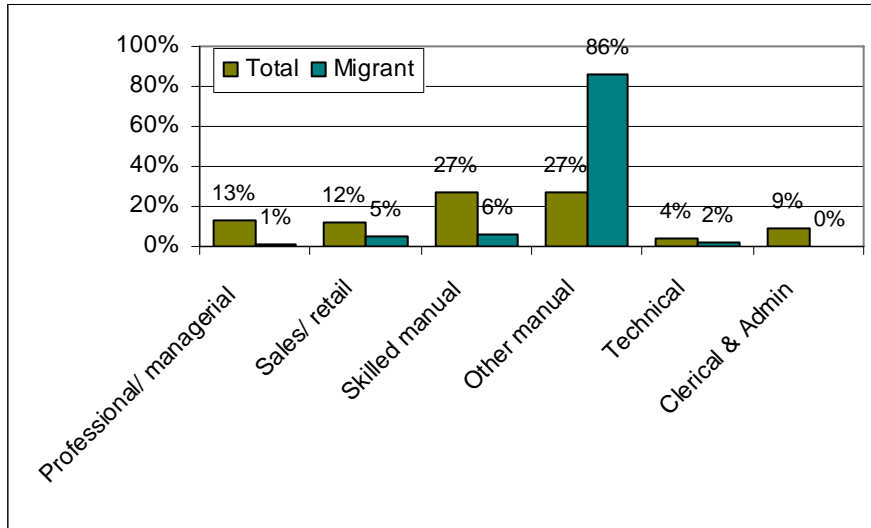
'Other' types of recruitment methods used included developing academic linkages; a pro-active approach by the girlfriend of a worker who asked if she could help out during school holidays; and migrants who originally came to work for a cleaning agency who had been recruited in Portugal. One employer reported that all their workers had been related to their first employees.

Occupations of migrant workers

As Figure 11 shows, the vast majority (86%) of migrant workers employed by responding employers were Other (unskilled) manual workers. A further 6% were working in skilled manual jobs and 5% in sales or retail posts. Migrant employment was closest to the overall employment rate for technical jobs which accounted for 2% of migrant posts compared with 4% of total employment among the employers

responding. Only one migrant had been employed in a professional or managerial post within this sample and none had found work in clerical or administrative jobs.

Figure 11 Comparison of total occupations and migrant occupations

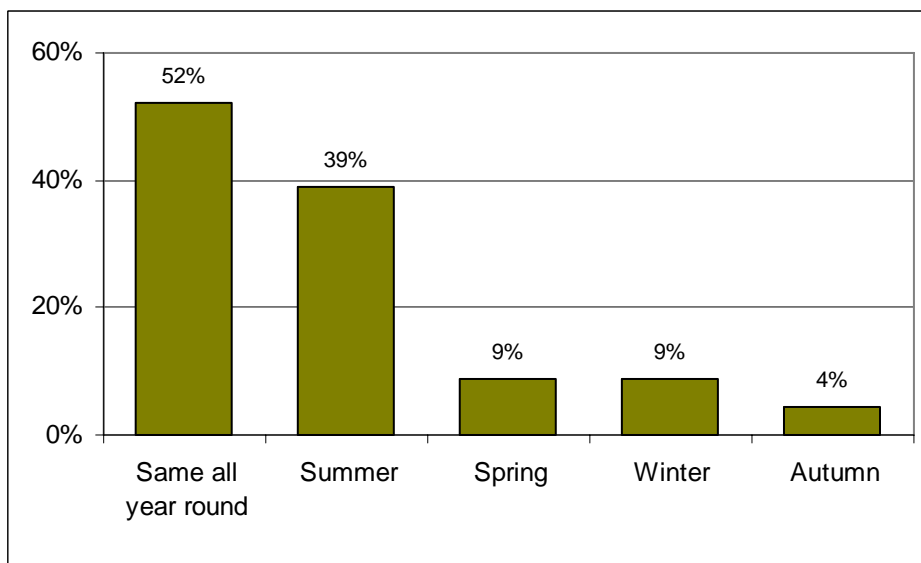


Source: Employers survey n=103

Type of jobs

The vast majority of migrant staff were employed full time (88%) with 12% working part-time. As Figure 12 shows, more than half of employers had a year-round demand for migrant labour (52%). However almost four out of ten employers identified a higher demand during summer (39%). Smaller proportions of employers identified greater demand during spring and winter (9%).

Figure 12 Seasonal demand for migrant workers



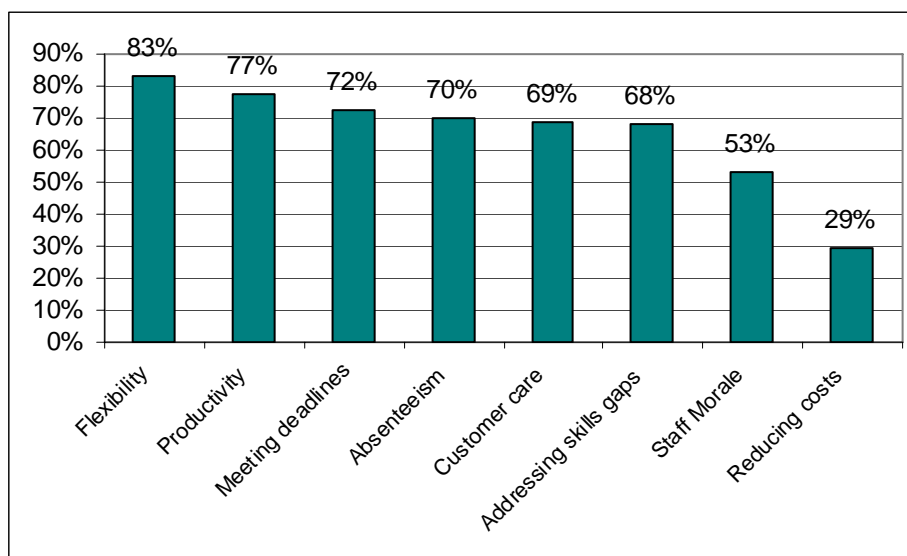
Source: Employer survey (n=105)

Migrant worker impact

We asked employers to identify the impact of migrant workers on their business. The vast majority of employers felt that migrants had had positive impacts on their business with the highest proportions identifying impacts on:

- Flexibility (83%)
- Productivity (77%)
- Meeting deadlines (72%); and
- Absenteeism (70%)

Figure 13 Proportion of employers identifying positive or strongly positive impacts from migrant workers



Source: Employer survey (n=105)

The majority of employers also identified positive impacts on customer care, addressing skill gaps and on staff morale. However only around three in ten employers identified reducing costs as a positive impact of recruiting migrants. This may be because employers have not been able to pay lower wages, but have been more able to recruit staff at the minimum wage level. So the impact is perhaps on keeping costs low rather than reducing costs.

One employer who commented further identified a positive and refreshing attitude towards work on the part of the migrant employees while another found that after employing migrant workers s/he was able to spend more time with their family over the summer.

Other comments added by employers include positive reports of migrant attitudes:

'I would find it difficult to meet service expectations. Attitude to work is very positive. I have found that team want to come to work. Will do their best rather than the minimum.'

Several employers however comment on the limited number of people available locally to do lower level jobs:

I would be short of staff. The amount of locals who look for housekeeping jobs is minimal.

Unreliability of local labour pool would mean poor customer care.

I cannot find cleaners anywhere else. No one else is willing to do the job.

We would find great difficulty in properly staffing the business.

Unable to recruit locally so the impact could be serious, reduced levels of service etc.

Conclusions

We estimate that by early 2007 there were between 2,000 and 2,500 overseas migrant workers in Dumfries and Galloway. In addition there were a further 500 to 1,000 members of the migrant community who were not economically active, including spouses, partners and children of migrant workers.

More than three quarters of migrants were from the A8 countries with Poles making up the vast majority of these. Numbers of National Insurance registrations among migrants have increased significantly since 2003, with Dumfries and Galloway showing the biggest increase of any LEC area. The increase in A8 migrant workers may be displacing workers from outside Europe.

The majority of migrant workers are aged under 35 a similar pattern to other parts of Scotland. However there are much higher proportions of male workers registering in Dumfries and Galloway than females in contrast with wider trends. This may be due to the sectors recruiting migrant workers in Dumfries and Galloway; and particularly the role of forestry, agriculture and food processing.

Migrant workers appear to have high levels of skills and experience. A quarter were previously working as either professionals or senior managers, and 27% had a skilled trade. Around half of those we surveyed had a vocational level qualification and the proportion with no qualifications was half the rate of the overall Dumfries and Galloway workforce at 7%.

Younger migrants (under 30) were less likely to have higher levels of qualification. In the Republic of Ireland, qualification rates dropped when economic opportunities improved and more young people chose to enter the labour market directly from school. This may be a similar situation for migrant workers, particularly those from Poland (around two thirds of the total sample) with economic opportunities improving significantly after EU membership in 2004.

Around a quarter of employers had employed migrant workers since May 2004, with a further 13% hoping to do so in the future. Overall migrant workers made up 4.8% of the workforce among the businesses we surveyed. However there were higher proportions in Food processing, Business Services, Forestry and Tourism. However there were lower rates among Construction, Other manufacturing and Agriculture. This suggests that there are still likely to be opportunities for migrant workers in sectors which are growing and have identified hard to fill vacancies.

Most employers have recruited migrant workers because of the positive reports they have heard about their attitude and flexibility. Three out of ten identify not enough interest in the job and a quarter feel there are not enough suitably skilled people locally. But most of the skills gaps employers identify are around the poor attitude, lack of motivation or absence of basic skills. Only one in five employers identifying a lack of skills locally mention technical or practical skills. The demand appears to be mostly for workers with the right attitude to do jobs that there are too few people interested in locally. This is backed up by the fact that 86% of migrant jobs are unskilled or semi-skilled manual jobs compared to only 27% of total jobs among the sample.

Employers rely largely on word of mouth and recruitment agencies to recruit migrant workers. However those that used the Job Centre rated it as effective. It is interesting to note that only a third of employers with migrant workers say they actively recruited them suggesting a strong supply-side role in the migrant labour market. This is supported by our interviews and migrant survey which found that migrant workers increasingly rely on friends and relatives to identify potential jobs rather than more formal methods such as agencies or job adverts.

Half of employers had a demand for migrant labour all year round. But four out of ten employers stated that demand was higher during the summer. Around nine out of ten migrant workers were working full-time.

The biggest positive impacts employers identify are on flexibility (83%) and productivity (77%). Other positive impacts are on meeting deadlines (72%) and reducing absenteeism (70%). However there is evidence from our migrant interviews that flexibility tends to be from the employer rather than the employee perspective, with migrants subject to changing shift patterns and extra work demands often at very short notice.

Clearly employers like the level of motivation and commitment they get from migrant workers and often contrast this with the lack of reliability among the local labour pool.

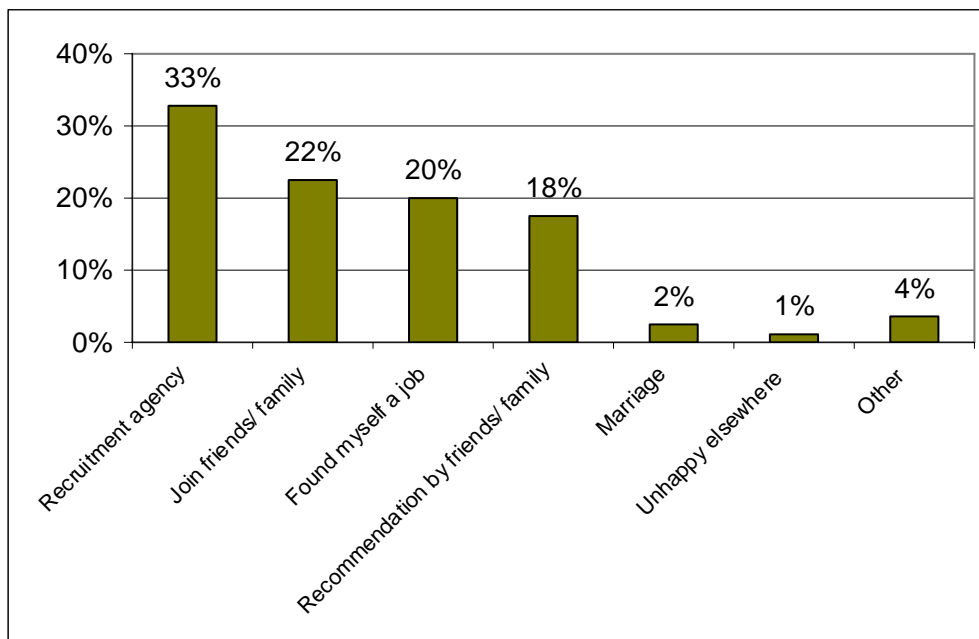
Migrant workers' experiences

This section looks at some of the issues which migrant workers face in finding jobs and settling down in Dumfries and Galloway. It explores migrants' reasons for coming to the region, their experiences in accessing work and in employment, as well as their views on issues of housing, other services and the social life in the area. Where relevant, stakeholders' views on some of the issues raised by migrants are provided. The section is based primarily on the findings from the migrants' interviews, migrants' survey and a stakeholders' workshop.

Motivations for coming to Dumfries and Galloway

Our migrant survey asked respondents for the reason they chose to come to Dumfries and Galloway. While a third of respondents had been placed in jobs through a recruitment agency, around four out of ten migrant workers were either joining friends or family (22%) or basing their decision on a recommendation from them (18%). And a further one in five had found a job in the region by themselves (20%). Recruitment agencies placed migrants from Hungary, Poland, Brazil, Spain and Slovakia. The survey also picked up migrants who had come to Dumfries and Galloway for other reasons. For example, one woman from Thailand had come to Scotland to marry her husband.

Figure 14 Reasons for choosing Dumfries & Galloway



Source: Migrant survey (n=85)

For around three quarters of respondents (76%) Dumfries and Galloway was not necessarily their preferred choice of location. A fifth of respondents liked working in the area as members of their family were also working in Dumfries and Galloway. For over a quarter (26%) Dumfries and Galloway was a preferred location as they had friends in the area. And 44% of respondents liked the area but only 7.5% felt that there were good job opportunities in the area.

More than half of migrants surveyed had arrived in the region alone (56%). However 22% arrived with family and 21% with friends. Around 5% had arrived with a spouse or partner, and 4% had children with them. One individual, from South Africa was accompanied by his mother.

Interview data showed that there were three main ways in which interviewees had arrived in Dumfries and Galloway. Firstly, the majority of migrant interviewees had joined friends or family who were already in the area and who were able to arrange jobs for them prior to their arrival in Dumfries and Galloway, or who could offer a base and possibly advice for the migrant's own job search.

Secondly, migrants arrived through agencies which had arranged jobs for them in Dumfries while they were still in Poland. This applied to three care assistants, who had little say over their destination, although in one case, the interviewee had been able to state his preference for a mountainous area, wishing to come to Wales or Scotland.

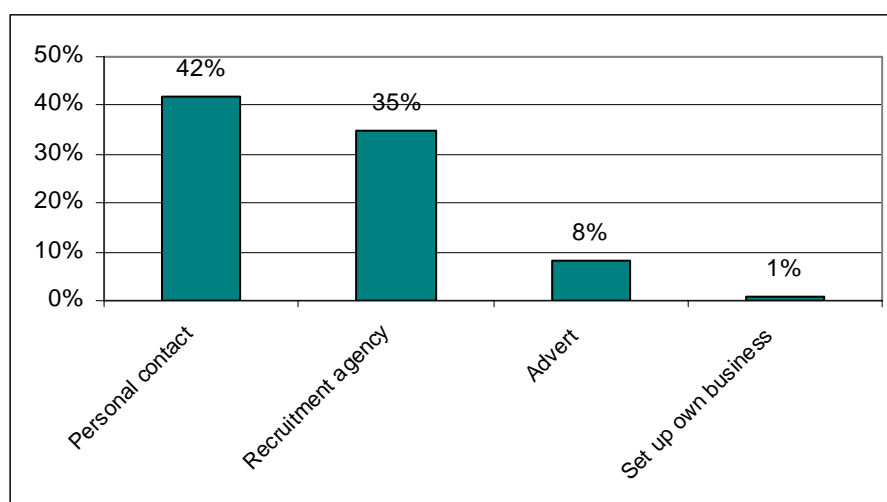
Thirdly, in one case, a person moved from England to Dumfries and Galloway after he was first placed with an agency in England under conditions he did not like. He found his subsequent job in Scotland through a newspaper advert. Having gradually established contacts with some employers, he also found a (low-skilled) job for his wife. Only after she was reasonably established in her job did their three children join the couple.

Experiences of employment

Finding a job

Figure 15 shows how migrant worker in our survey found out about their current job. It shows that while recruitment agencies have a strong role to play, the biggest proportion had secured jobs through personal contact (42%). This backs up our findings from employers that suggest a more supply-led approach, with workers approaching employers, or being recommended by friends or family.

Figure 15 How migrants found their current job



Source: Migrant survey (n=85)

All those that we interviewed had managed to find employment, although in all cases, the jobs were low-skilled with an associated relatively low income. In some instances, migrants had experienced an initial time of unemployment, and one young man reported that he had spent over a year in illegal employment before his friends found a legal job for him a month before the interview. Some 7% of our migrant survey sample were not currently working.

The work which migrants had taken up in Dumfries and Galloway was rarely related to the qualifications or work experiences they had gained in Poland. For example, two university graduates were employed as care assistants for the elderly and as a cook respectively; a paramedic as a lorry driver; a financial consultant as a caterer and house-keeper; a former nurse as a factory worker; a teacher who had worked with children with dyslexia and behavioural problems as a care assistant for elderly people; a hairdresser and a beautician as cleaners. A Slovakian who described himself as a non-destructive testing specialist engineer worked as a process technician. He had found his job using an agency and was aiming to improve his language skills.

This situation reflected one key issue several of the interviewees had identified: while finding a job in itself may not be too difficult with some communication ability in English, it was considered challenging to gain employment in a job which required some significant level of qualifications, and which paid above the minimum wage. One of the main reasons advanced for difficulties in accessing highly qualified jobs was a lack of sufficient English language skills. And it was pointed out that there were not many 'better jobs' available, at least not in the Dumfries and Galloway area. Several interviewees assumed that if their English language was proficient, and jobs available, there would be no problem for them accessing employment comparable to the positions they held in Poland.

However, this was not the actual experience of an interviewee with excellent English. He worked as a care assistant but was keen to move into the hospitality sector in which he had much experience and qualifications. He could not understand his lack of success.

"I have a University degree, and I don't want a simple job. I would like to work at a reception or something like this. But nobody wants to hire me. I sent all my documents to different hotels, references from previous workplaces in Germany and Italy, and also in Warsaw, where I worked at the Intercontinental hotel. But everywhere I sent my CV and qualifications, people told me they were not enough for a job at the reception or a supervisor's post. I don't know the reason why. Because when I go to reception desks in hotels here, I can tell who has experience and who has not. And there are many people without experience." (Male, care assistant)

One respondent to the migrant survey wrote on their survey form that Scottish Employers preferred Scottish workers.

It is also noteworthy that at least in one case, a former nurse was content with her job as a factory worker, as it allowed her to combine her employment with her family responsibilities. However, that same person and her husband pointed out that even for low-skilled jobs, the labour market had become tight over the past two years.

This could result in some employers taking advantage of people's desperate need for employment.

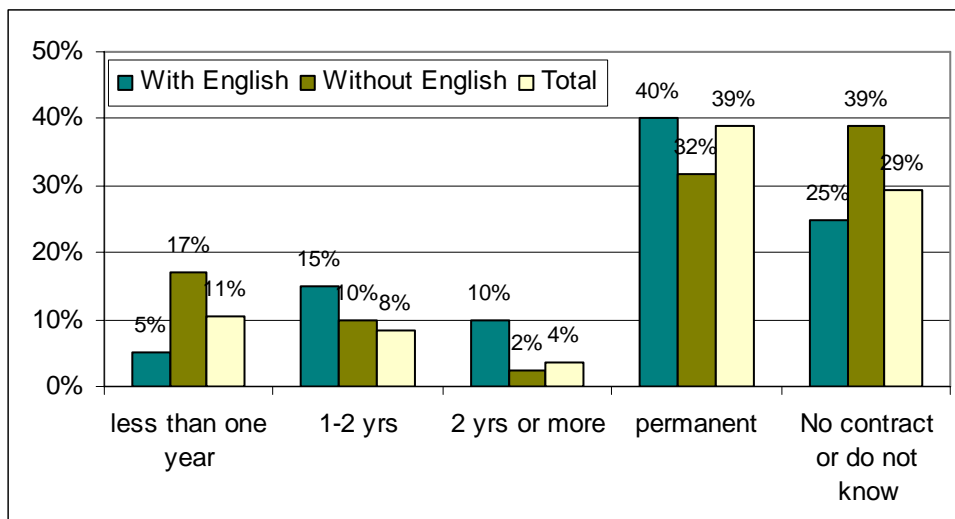
"The job situation has become much more difficult here over the past two years. Two years ago, you could apply to three different businesses, and at least one would answer - not any more. It would be very difficult for me to find a job for a friend now."
 (Male, lorry driver)

"Because at the beginning, there were a lot of jobs, and a small number of Poles - now it's the other way round. The worst thing is that some people are desperate, and work for £2.50 an hour. I know people like this. They come here, and they have to live somehow. They had high hopes - they hoped to raise their families here. And now, they don't even have enough money to go back. It's like they are being caught in a cage. Sometimes, the job for them has been pre-arranged, and then they come, and the job has already gone. When they don't speak any English, they are helpless."
 (Female, factory worker)

Rights and responsibilities in employment

Our migrant survey found that the majority of migrant workers had a contract of some kind. As Figure 16 shows, around one in five workers have contracts of up to two years (19%), although this figure rises to 27% among workers who have limited English skills. Workers who say they have reasonable or good spoken English skills are more likely to have a permanent contract (40% against 32%) or a contract of any kind (70% against 61%).

Figure 16 Type of contract by English language ability



Source: Migrant Survey 2007 (n=85)

Training

Only a few interviewees had been offered training (although some got health and safety, fire safety and food hygiene training). Interviewees themselves did not regard training as a component that would be particularly helpful or appropriate for the jobs they were performing, or their prospects in the businesses in which they worked. The only exception was among the care assistants, who in some cases

were offered to complete a Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQ). However, neither of the two migrants reporting their awareness of this opportunity – both very fluent English speakers - had been considered by their management for an SVQ.

Hours worked

The numbers of hours worked per day as reported by survey respondents ranged from three to fifteen. Nearly half of respondents (48%) worked an eight hour day. A further 13% worked a nine hour day. A fifth of respondents (20%) typically worked ten or more hours. Some 9% worked for seven hours a day and finally, another 9% worked for between three and six hours per day.

Hours worked per week varied greatly from one individual who worked for five hours a week to another who worked 72 hours per week. Only 7% worked less than 30 hours per week. Just under a quarter (23%) of respondents worked for between thirty and thirty nine hours a week. A further 38% worked for 40 hours a week. Some 12% worked between 41 and 49 hours per week while 20% worked 50 or more hours per week.

The survey shows therefore, great variation in the number of hours worked either per day or per week by migrants, but that many are working towards the upper end of the scale. There are no indications as to whether they are receiving fair pay for these efforts.

Information provided by employers

Migrants taking part in the survey were asked about whether they felt well-informed about a number of topics: sick leave, holidays, pensions, and unresolved queries. Some 54% felt that they were well informed about sick leave; 72% were well informed about holidays; however, only 29% reported being well informed about pensions. Sixty per cent of migrant felt that they knew someone who could help them with employment issues. These sources of help included supervisors, the CAB and a named individual.

Just under a quarter (23%) of migrants identified an issue about which they had an unresolved query. These included questions about holiday payments, pensions and long term contracts.

General atmosphere at work

The majority (90%) of the 77 respondents to the survey questions on the nature of their relationship with UK workers said that their relationship was either good or very good. Some 81% reported that their relationships with other workers were also good or very good. An equally large ratio (84%) indicated that their relationship with their supervisor was either good or very good. No-one said that any of these relationships were less than neutral.

Some interviewees were very happy with the working relationships with their colleagues. A woman who worked in a hospital refectory, where she was the only Pole, thought it felt “like being one family”. This was despite her having only a little English. Another person, similarly with little English, also felt pleased with the working relationship he had with his colleagues. He explained how he used to get

regular lifts to work from a Polish colleague. When this fell through, his Scottish line manager stepped in. Others commented that Scottish colleagues are happy to “party with us” and to include migrants in activities (Male, craftsman). And the fact that some businesses were employing many Polish people was interpreted in one case as a sign that Poles were regarded as good workers.

There were also in-depth interviewees who reported poor relationships with their Scottish co-workers, particularly in pressurised work situations. A person working as a cook reported that he was doing a job, which was originally designed for two people. On an occasion when he burnt some food, his Scottish colleagues reported him to his supervisor immediately, who issued a warning to him. He felt comfortable with his Polish co-workers, but not the Scottish ones. Similarly, a woman working as a housekeeper in a hotel complained about a shortage of staff, which could easily create misunderstandings, thereby compromising relationships with colleagues.

An example was also mentioned which indicates that ‘flexibility’ at work seems to benefit mainly employers. An interviewee mentioned the situation of a colleague, who was a lone mother with a young child. She had asked her manager in a fish processing factory for day shifts only.

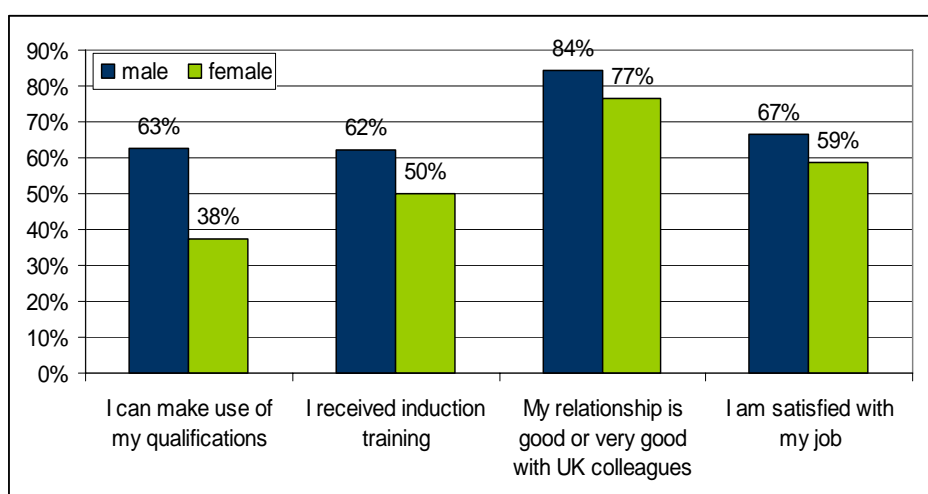
“But he didn’t care, and she has to work night shifts. Us colleagues have arranged support for this lady, so that there is always a carer for her little girl.” (Female, factory worker).

Gender and work

Female respondents were three times more likely than male respondents to have no job (12% against 4%). For those that were in work, the experience appears to be much less satisfying. Figure 17 shows that in terms of induction, use of existing qualifications and general work satisfaction, women are worse off than men.

They are much less likely to feel that their qualifications are being utilised in their current job - this is despite females being 50% more likely than males to have a vocational qualification.

Figure 17 Female migrant worker experience



Source: Hall Aitken Migrant Survey 2007 (n=85)

One probable reason for this is that the choice to live and work in Dumfries and Galloway was, overall, less theirs compared with men. Two results support this:

- Twice as many women came to Dumfries and Galloway with a family member as men (32% against 16%).
- Women were also almost twice as likely to have come to Dumfries and Galloway because the recruitment agency found them a job there (44% against 25%)

There are also other factors at play – for example women were less likely to have had a job before coming to Scotland (68% against 84%) – this would perhaps mean they would have greater difficulty securing a job they wanted through lacking sufficient work experience.

In-depth experiences of work

Six out of the 14 interviewees had positive experiences in employment in that they had a (permanent) contract which clearly outlined their rights and responsibilities. In case of any additional queries, these interviewees had colleagues or supervisors at hand who they thought would give competent and friendly advice and information. One interviewee had even received a contract in Polish from his small employer, where three out of 16 workers were Polish.

Others had experienced greater insecurity however. In one case, a migrant working as a cook had not been given any formal document outlining his rights or responsibilities. While he always had been paid, his pay had sometimes arrived late. Moreover, his working hours had recently been cut from 45 to 25 hours per week. This meant he had to look for a new job.

A young woman with very little English worked as a bank staff member for a cleaning agency. She also had no formal document informing her about her rights and responsibilities. In addition, because her hours were irregular, so that (deliberate?) misunderstandings could occur. She reported that recently, she had worked for nine hours a day and her supervisor claimed she had been off that day. The interviewee had to rely on her colleagues as witnesses to clarify the situation, and on one Polish co-worker to translate the communication between her and the supervisor.

Relatively short contracts contributed to feelings of insecurity. One person reported that after continuous employment for a certain number of months for an employer, the rule was that employees were offered a permanent contract. She knew she had to work two more months to achieve this, but had also observed that sometimes, people were laid off for one week just before reaching the required two months in work, so that the contract could remain temporary. This could cause enormous stress, especially if the person had caring responsibilities for children. Just as in the context of seeking employment, according to the interviewee, the situation in employment had also changed:

“First, everyone supported us and said you can work here and bring your kids. And now, there is all this uncertainty.”

Another feature of people’s employment was the requirement for flexibility, especially in the hospitality sector. A house-keeper in a hotel with a 16 hours contract reported that she could be called whenever she was needed. Even when shifts had been planned beforehand, she was often asked on the day to come in earlier or later. This made it difficult for her to plan anything, but she felt she had no choice in the matter, as she needed the extra hours to supplement another part-time job she had.

Perhaps partly because of the prominent role of one migrant in the Polish community in Dumfries, who had recently qualified to work as a volunteer for the local Citizens Advice Bureau, many interviewees felt this would be the place where they would go if they needed advice on their employment rights.

One interviewee, who had signed a contract but who was never given a copy of it, commented that the problems with migrants' employment was not so much related to their rights and entitlements, but rather to the low pay for their work. Poor wages were considered particularly difficult given the high living costs, especially for accommodation. Migrants would take on extra hours for this reason, sometimes amounting to a 60 hours week, which was described as "normal" (Male, care assistant). It was regretted that regardless of the overtime or the unsocial hours worked, the pay rate always remained the minimum wage.

It also appears that a possible oversupply of labour has resulted in unequal wages. A lorry driver had observed that Polish drivers sometimes earn less than their UK equivalents. While he found that this was the fault of the Poles who just accepted any wage offered to them, his interview partner asked the rhetorical question: "What else can they do?"

Anecdotal evidence of serious infringements on migrants' employment rights were also provided by stakeholders in a workshop, where it was mentioned that problems such as excessive working hours were by no means confined to small, less well known employers.

Experiences of living in Dumfries & Galloway

Accommodation

There was general agreement amongst interviewees in the in-depth section of this research that finding accommodation in itself was not a significant problem. Interviewees had managed to access housing either through friends, colleagues, newspapers or estate agencies. Five interviewees voiced complaints about an estate agency in Dumfries. Two people commented that they had to pay just to register an interest in hiring a place with the agency; a couple reported about the same agency that it encouraged interested parties to bid above the advertised renting price; and another person knew that the agency had a record of refusing to let flats to Polish people, which had resulted in some Citizens Advice Bureau cases.

Most respondents in the survey were renting privately (72%), with a further 11% staying with friends and relatives. Only 2% had bought their property and one person had rented from Dumfries and Galloway Housing Partnership. Equally small numbers were living in hotels, in caravans or employer-provided accommodation. Some 42% were spending in excess of £70 per week on accommodation while seven people did not know how much their accommodation cost. A quarter (25%) spent less than £50 per week on accommodation and a further 25% spent between £51 and £70 on their living quarters.

In terms of organising accommodation 42% organised their accommodation themselves while 32% had their accommodation organised for them by their employer. In 22% of cases family or friends organised somewhere to stay and a recruitment agency worked on behalf of 4% to find living space.

More than half (53%) said that their accommodation was inadequate. The same percentage felt that their living accommodation was not comfortable. The majority (74%) considered their rent to be expensive. For 85% their living accommodation was not warm and most (92%) considered their accommodation to be crowded.

The issue of expensive rents was echoed in the in-depth interviews. Rents were regarded as extremely expensive, especially compared with salaries. Moreover, council tax was seen as a considerable burden. This meant migrants had to share flats, sometimes to an extent where it led to overcrowding. However, at least to some extent, living in overcrowded accommodation had some choice element to it: where the priority was on saving as much money as possible, this was a condition some interviewees were ready to accept. Of course, this does not mean that those who are paid below the minimum wage, working illegally, or on insecure contracts are in a position to make such choices.

At least four young interviewees had opted to pay a little more for accommodation to enjoy privacy, even if that meant they could not save as much money as others. In two cases, however, it turned out that initial attempts to live alone or just with one other person had to be re-visited when this turned out to be unaffordable in the medium-term.

A woman over the age of 50 commented that there were also limits to the willingness to share depending on people's age, and of course, whether they arrived by themselves or with small children. As an interviewee with young children remarked, the situation could become particularly precarious when one parent was in danger of losing their job, but when two salaries were needed to afford accommodation costs.

Some interviewees commented on poor quality accommodation, which could still be very expensive:

“My flat is brilliant, but where my friends are living, it is sometimes, to be polite, so-so. Some places are awful, and the rent is still quite expensive – maybe £15 cheaper than a reasonable place.” (Male, care assistant)

There were mixed reports about social housing. Not only was it difficult to get a place (an observation which was uncontroversial), but one woman with a child had eventually been offered a place, but felt she had to turn it down due to its poor quality. By contrast, another interviewee stressed that he would very much like to get into council housing, and that he had no concerns about its quality. He thought that the problem was that the Council was not building any new housing any more.

Several interviewees referred to cases in which repairs - some of which are urgent - had not taken place over a long time. This included the case of a mother who worked as a medical professional and her young child. They moved into a flat with mice, no central heating and “broken things”. There was no warm water, and it took two months for the key items to be repaired. The most serious example of poor quality housing was cited by a young man who shared a flat with two others:

“The place is damp. There are old carpets which should be replaced. The kitchen and bathroom need desperate replacement. The pipes under the sink are broken, and the waste comes out through the pipes – we tried to block the leak with a cloth. The pipes out to the garden are also broken. A window is broken and all the doors damaged. We decided to stop paying

rent, and the landlord has recently said that if we pay half the arrears, he would renovate the flat.”

A complaint was also made about Scottish Gas. When one interviewee moved into his new flat, his pre-paid gas tokens did not allow him access to the gas supply. Rather, the metre reader displayed a message that he should call assistance. When he reported the fault, he was asked to call again the following week, leaving him without the use of a cooker, heater or hot water. (Male, van driver)

One case illustrated the importance of being fully aware of tenants' rights and responsibilities – an awareness not easy to achieve in a foreign country with limited communication abilities. A woman with poor English skills wanted to change flats, but was not aware of the fact that she had to give notice to the landlord a significant time period beforehand.

“The lease is unfavourable to tenants. When you want to change flats, you can lose your deposits, and when the landlord cannot find a replacement, you may have to pay an extra month rent although you don't live there any more. It happened to me, and I was crying. I hadn't realised this was the arrangement.” (Female, caterer)

Some suggestions were made how the search for accommodation could be made easier for new arrivals to Dumfries and Galloway. This included the advertisement of accommodation on the internet (e.g. on the Dumfries web-site). Also, it was considered helpful if housing associations and estate agents were to employ a Polish speaking member of staff. Moreover, it was proposed that especially for those on low incomes, accommodation should be made available by local authorities or employers.

Concerning the discussion of accommodation at a stakeholder meeting, sub-standard housing was particularly singled out as a matter of concern. There are on-going cases which have come to the attention of the Citizens Advice Bureau where landlords let flats of unacceptable quality. It was agreed that to some extent, good value accommodation was an issue not only relevant for the migrant population (although there may be specific issues due to possible discrimination and challenges posed through a lack of English language skills), but for the wider (especially low paid) population.

Health services

All in-depth interviewees either had positive experience with the health service (including a person who worked illegally at the time of needing health care), or reasons to believe that any possible future use of such services would be positive. Only one interviewee had not registered with a GP. Positive aspects of the health system included free treatment (for example, for a child's asthma) when this would have cost significant amounts of money in Poland; considerate care providers who were eager to help; the existence of an interpreter at the hospital (although the latter point was controversial, as an interviewee who had actually used the hospital pointed out that no interpreters had been available).

The results from the survey showed that registration with a GP was not in fact, universal. Some 63.1% had registered with a local doctor but only 11.9% had registered with a dentist. Over half of respondents (51.8%) had actually used the services of a doctor and over a quarter (25.3%) had used the services of a hospital.

At least one person was not happy with their experience with a GP, writing that they did not think that the doctor had been very professional. However, this seems to be a minority experience.

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

All interviewees agreed that good English language skills were one of the most important assets to have, and the key to (better) employment opportunities. All expressed an interest in ESOL classes. However, the usual problems observed in other parts of Scotland also seem to apply to Dumfries and Galloway: the provision of classes can clash with shifts migrants have to work, or they are just too busy with their employment to be able to make time for the classes.

Results from the survey show a high demand for some form of English Language Training. But respondents noted that there seemed to be a general lack of both provision and free places. One person said that they did not know where to find information about the classes from. For others free time itself was a problem.

In addition, several migrants had not been able to access adequate information as to when and where classes were, and what they may cost. This applied particularly to those people who had no Polish colleagues, and thus perceived themselves as being cut off the informal network of information. In some cases, access to relevant information had occurred by coincidence ("I overheard people in the library talking about it."). In one case, enquiries about them had remained unanswered.

Interviewees who had attended classes had mixed experiences. One fluent speaker had started on an advanced course, from which he benefited for the first two classes. Then more and more new students joined, some of whom had very little English, and the interviewee felt that he benefited so little that he (and his friend) left the course. Another interviewee with a more modest level of English reported how he enjoyed classes provided at Dumfries Academy, but he regretted that they only took place once a week.

Two parents were very pleased about the extra provision of English tuition, which will be offered to children for the first time this summer. While there is continuous tuition for migrant children, this consists of one hour per week, which was considered too little.

Given that many migrants use the library for access to Polish printed materials and to the internet, it was suggested that ESOL classes should be advertised there. It was also proposed that information on such classes could be inserted in local papers with a wide circulation, such as the Dumfries Standard.

ESOL providers and stakeholders with an interest in ESOL provisions were aware of most of the problems migrants had mentioned on the subject, with some differing views on how effective the 'marketing' of courses had been. While some thought the fact that there had been a substantial demand for classes reflected a successful information campaign, others felt there had been shortcomings with the information transfer. In any case, there was agreement that Dumfries and Galloway Adult Literacy and Numeracy Partnership providers and especially the Community Learning and Development Service, as well as Dumfries and Galloway College, had responded swiftly and positively to a rapid increase in demand for ESOL classes. All 44 classes provided by the Partnership and the Community Learning Development Service throughout Dumfries and Galloway were provided for free. While this

provision may not cater for everyone's level of ability, and the time on offer may not suit everyone, these issues are difficult to solve, given a lack of human and financial resources.

Financial services

All interviewees were pleased with the financial services available in Dumfries, especially with one bank, which provided all application forms for different services in Polish. One interviewee compared the service with his experiences in Poland, where he had to wait for several months to get access to the services he required. In Scotland the process took only three days. Most people in the survey (95.2%) had used the banks and one person who did not have a bank account at the time of the survey added that they would soon get one.

Areas of concern included the fact that there were high charges for transfers of money from a UK to a Polish account; low interest rates; and restrictions on overdraft facilities. However, concerning the latter two, it was explained that problems of this kind could be solved by shopping around for the right bank. However, this required good English language skills.

Library

Some Polish printed material was available in the local library. One interviewee had his parents sending him Polish magazines and books on a monthly basis. Once he finished with those, he passed them on to the library to share with other Poles. Another interviewee had a friend in Edinburgh who was sending him regularly a number of copies of the free Polish magazine 'Voice of Poland'. He was then taking those magazines to the library.

Interviewees were aware of, and liked to use, the internet services in the library. The only drawback mentioned was that the service was available for one hour at a time only.

Job Centre Plus

Very few migrants had had contact with Job Centre Plus, although several were aware of the Centre's existence. One migrant had a job interview arranged through the Job Centre, but found out subsequently that the pay rate was half the minimum wage. He managed to find a new job with better conditions by himself.

Police

Few migrants had been in contact with the police. One interviewee reported the case of a Polish acquaintance, who had been threatened by the so-called 'Polish mafia', a group of Polish people extorting money from him. When he reported incidences of extortion to the police, he was ignored. He finally fled from Scotland, but had experienced such serious bullying that he tried to commit suicide in London. Now back in Poland, his mother had asked his friends in the UK to report the incident to the police.

Help for general queries

Several interviewees commented that general advice should be available on issues such as pension entitlements; the tax system in the UK, including council tax; child benefit; the Worker Registration Scheme. It was also recommended that forms should be made available in other languages. It was mentioned that a child benefit form has been designed for Polish citizens, asking for the person's Polish tax number and something called the personal evidence number, and yet, the form was only available in English.

In addition, while interviewees were often aware of a Welcome Pack covering nation-wide issues, they thought a similar means of information in Polish on services and advice available in Dumfries and Galloway would be helpful. Some migrants proposed a Polish telephone helpline, which could provide general advice in Polish on issues such as the ones listed above.

Interviewees were impressed with the Tax Office in Dumfries, where almost all forms are translated into Polish.

Other services

Some eight people (9.6%) have used Dumfries and Galloway Housing Partnership and a further three had used Housing Association services. Just over 36.1% had used some form of education provision. Only two individuals (2.4%) had used childcare. Ten people (12%) had cause to need some sort of services but had not been able to access the services they required. Unfortunately, they failed to provide any further information about the nature of the services they wanted.

Some people who responded to the survey missed taking part in a wider cultural environment, sports or being able to go to a gym. The absence of rock concerts was a problem for one individual. Many did take part in some form of sporting activity.

Transport was raised as an issue by one person. Another commented that their village was too small for a big social life. When asked whether they would like to add any further comments about their life in Dumfries and Galloway only one person filled in the reply space – to say that the area was cold!

Life outside employment

Many interviewees commented that they liked Dumfries and Galloway for the landscape, and the town for its size. In fact, Dumfries was often contrasted with perceived grey, busy and noisy cities, such as Glasgow and Aberdeen. It was regarded as advantageous that everything was close by. Public provisions interviewees appreciated included the library, the church with Polish mass, the swimming pool, and the gym. Private provisions which were mentioned favourably included a Polish shop, and a pub which served Polish beer. One individual, writing on the survey form, did wish for somewhere other than the Church to act as a meeting place for fellow migrants.

Still, only very few individuals had established a strong connection with the place, but rather "had got used to it." An important factor for migrants was the presence of friends, but all agreed that if a better job was offered to them elsewhere, they would move without hesitation. Interestingly, it was mainly two relatively older migrants (in their 40s and 50s) who had a particular interest in moving to a Scottish city (partly

related to the culture on offer), of course provided that they would find employment there.

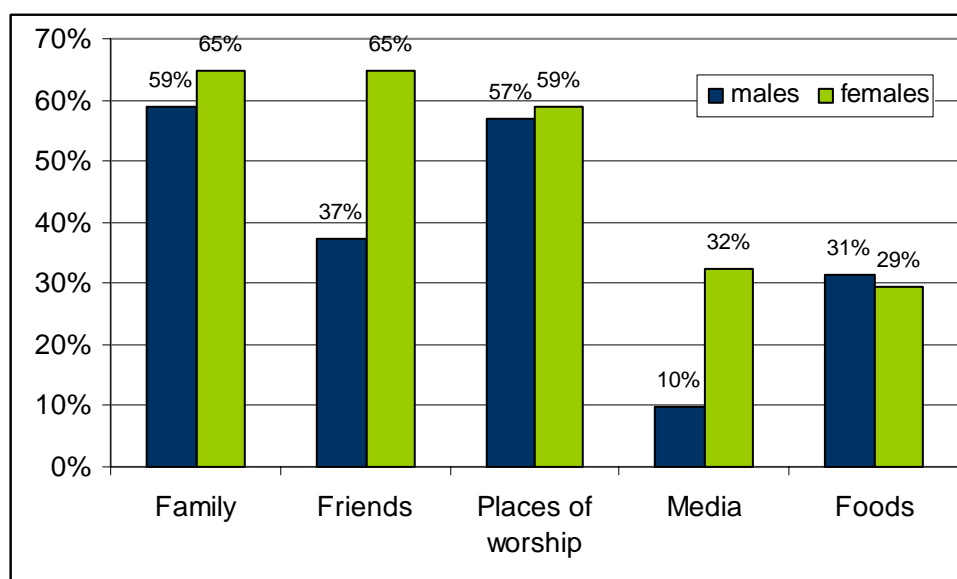
On the whole, local Scottish people were seen as friendly, with some exceptions.

“But sometimes, there are people who don’t like us. They think we are taking their jobs. We are always on time. But if Scottish people get drunk on Sunday night, they won’t come in on Monday. ...I hear a lot from my colleagues. One Scottish supervisor said he didn’t like Poles, that there were too many Poles in the area.”

Social life

Figure 18 shows the things that survey respondents missed from their home country. It shows that women tend to miss some aspects of home more than men, particularly in terms of their broader network of friends and their home media. As a result women are much more likely to spend time emailing and contacting friends and family via email and telephone. The former may be a reason why a much higher proportion of women use libraries (50%) which would have internet access than men (33%).

Figure 18 Things missed from home



Source: Hall Aitken Migrant Survey 2007 (n=85)

In terms of suggestions for new or improved provisions, it was recognised that the Polish community had contributed to introducing a Polish mass, and that this was important to many migrants. However, it was argued by two interviewees that more activities could be organised, as the Polish mass took only place once a month, and there was nothing on offer for people who were not religious. Another interviewee, who used to play football in Poland, expressed his interest in starting up a team in Dumfries. However, he did not know how to go about finding a place for training. He added that it would also be nice if the team was able to receive some sponsorship in the form of shirts or other sports goods.

One person had hoped that following the introduction of civil partnerships in December 2005, greater tolerance for homosexual people would ensue, but did not think that this was reflected in terms of provisions for this group. He would have liked to see a meeting place for gay people in Dumfries.

Conclusions

Reasons for coming

While a third of migrants had been placed in Dumfries and Galloway by a recruitment agency, around four out of ten had either found a job themselves or been recommended the area by friends or family. And a further 22% had moved to the area to join friends and family. This tends to support the finding from the employers' survey that migrants themselves are playing an increasingly important role in labour supply.

Although three quarters of migrants stated that Dumfries and Galloway was not their preferred location, 44% liked the area. However only 8% thought there were good job opportunities in the region.

More than half of migrants arrived alone; although around one in five arrived with a family member and a similar proportion arrived with friends. Only 5% arrived with a partner or spouse and 4% with children. However there were many instances where migrants had waited until they had settled into their job and found suitable accommodation before bringing family members over.

Accessing jobs

While most migrants had been able to secure a job within a reasonable timescale, there were several instances where people had experienced a period of unemployment before finding work. There is anecdotal evidence that the increasing supply of labour is leading to a tightening of the migrant labour market. However this may have been exacerbated by redundancies at one of the large food processing plants.

Most migrants were working in jobs that were unskilled or semi-skilled and well below their level of qualification and experience. Workers felt that limited language ability and the lack of higher level job opportunities in the region made it difficult to secure a job that matched their skills and experience. Workers with better language skills were more likely to have a permanent contract, or indeed a contract of any kind.

It appears that recent developments in the Dumfries and Galloway labour market have led to a situation where low paid jobs, too, are becoming increasingly difficult to access for migrants. Insecure or no employment will make many individuals particularly vulnerable in the labour market as well as in other areas, such as housing and health. The employment situation should be monitored, involving agencies such as Job Centre Plus and Citizens Advice Bureau. Information on the levels of need for low-skilled labour should be disseminated effectively, possibly also through the use of web-sites, and in different languages.

Experiences at work

The vast majority of migrant workers enjoyed a good working relationship with their UK co-workers (90%). And 85% though their relationship with their supervisor was good or very good. However a small number of negative experiences were reported through in-depth interviews.

Our survey suggests that women were less likely to have positive experiences in work. They are less likely to be using their qualifications, less likely to have received induction training and less likely to be satisfied with their job. This may be because women are more likely to have vocational qualifications, and therefore more likely to resent not being able to make use of them. It also may be linked to the finding that women are less likely to have chosen to work in Dumfries and Galloway. Women are more likely to have been placed in their job through an agency or to have arrived with other family members.

Many migrant workers reported a lack of formal employment contracts as being an issue, although for most workers the biggest problem was the low level of pay. Many received rates at or slightly above the minimum wage regardless of the number of hours or overtime worked.

Matching skills and jobs

Most migrants commented in interviews that they would like to move on from low-skilled employment to jobs for which their qualifications and previous experiences were relevant - a priority also for stakeholders. Migrants tended to think that the barriers to moving on consisted primarily of their limited English skills, as well as a lack of employment opportunities in Dumfries and Galloway for those with significant qualifications.

Stakeholders identified additional barriers, including the challenge of translating qualifications into the Scottish education and labour market context - an area which they thought should be addressed, possibly through a new service. In addition the information on the availability of more qualified jobs was deemed to require better co-ordination (involving Job Centre Plus, Scottish Enterprise, and large employers) and dissemination, for example, through web-sites migrants are likely to check.

Matching migrants' skills and jobs was also a priority for stakeholders, but they identified additional barriers to this process. While the Scottish Qualifications Authority provides a brief guide to Polish qualifications (excluding university degrees), there is still a lack of knowledge on the part of both, (potential) employers and employees, on how to translate qualifications into the Scottish education and labour market context. It was proposed that a service is needed to help both sides to gain better understanding in this area.

Stakeholders suggested that mapping available jobs would be one pre-condition to address migrants' under-employment. This would apply in particular for the higher level jobs available through the NHS or the Council, which are not usually brought to the attention of Job Centre Plus. Any available jobs should be displayed on the Dumfries and Galloway web-site.

Rights, entitlements and responsibilities

Around eight out of ten migrant workers surveyed worked more than seven hours a day, with a third typically working nine or ten hour days. Just over half of the workers surveyed felt that they were well-informed about sick leave entitlement (54%) but only three out of ten were well informed about pension issues. However six out ten workers new someone who could help them with employment issues.

A lack of information on rights, entitlements and responsibilities has been reported by migrants in several areas, including employment, housing, welfare benefits, and taxes. An all encompassing information pack, a telephone help-line, and possibly wider translation services were considered effective mechanisms of dealing with this challenge. In addition, migrants suggested it would be useful to have more information documents, benefit claim forms and application forms available in different languages. It was suggested that the employment of Polish speaking staff members in important agencies and also private organisations, such as estate agencies, would solve many problems. This could be illustrated with a Polish speaking volunteer working for a Citizens Advice Bureau, who had become an important point of support and advice for many migrants (and local Scottish people). His own role, and thereby the role of the Citizens Advice Bureau, had become common knowledge in the Polish community.

ESOL provisions

For both groups, stakeholders and migrants, acquiring good English language skills was a key priority, facilitating integration in general, and access to 'better employment' in particular. Issues which arose from the migrants' interviews revolved around an effective information transfer from providers to migrant communities about the availability of classes and their costs. They also thought the compatibility of classes with migrants' employment commitments (e.g. shift work) was important. They also wanted an appropriate range of levels of courses which matched the different language abilities of migrants.

While workshops with ESOL providers underlined their eagerness to provide suitable ESOL classes to all interested migrants, they also recognised clearly the constraints within which they operated.

Accommodation

The two main accommodation issues which have emerged relate to, first, accessing housing, and second, the quality of accommodation. Concerning the former, there have been reports by migrants about dubious charges made by estate agents, and allegations of discrimination. As to the second concern, migrants and some stakeholders knew of the fact that sub-standard accommodation had been offered to migrants. The vast majority of migrants surveyed thought that their accommodation was too expensive, not warm enough and overcrowded.

While cases of malpractice and discrimination need obviously to be investigated and addressed, it is also key that migrants are well informed about the standard of accommodation they are entitled to expect, including health and safety issues. Avenues of support in case migrants expect sub-standard provisions must be clearly signposted.

Preparing communities for migrants

Many migrants reported on positive experiences with local Scottish colleagues and friends. This seems to reflect a recent report by the Commission for Racial Equality³, which suggests that at least for white migrants, Scotland was by and large a welcoming place. However, some migrants had also experienced difficulties, including individuals with views that there were too many migrants, who limited the job opportunities for local Scottish people. While so far, the Scottish Executive and even the national media have tended to emphasise the positive aspects of immigration, this approach needs further strengthening, for example, through support from, and information campaigns by, the local media.

³ Institute for Public Policy Research (2007) The reception and integration of new migrant communities. Commission for Racial Equality: London.

Developing the role of migrant workers in the local economy

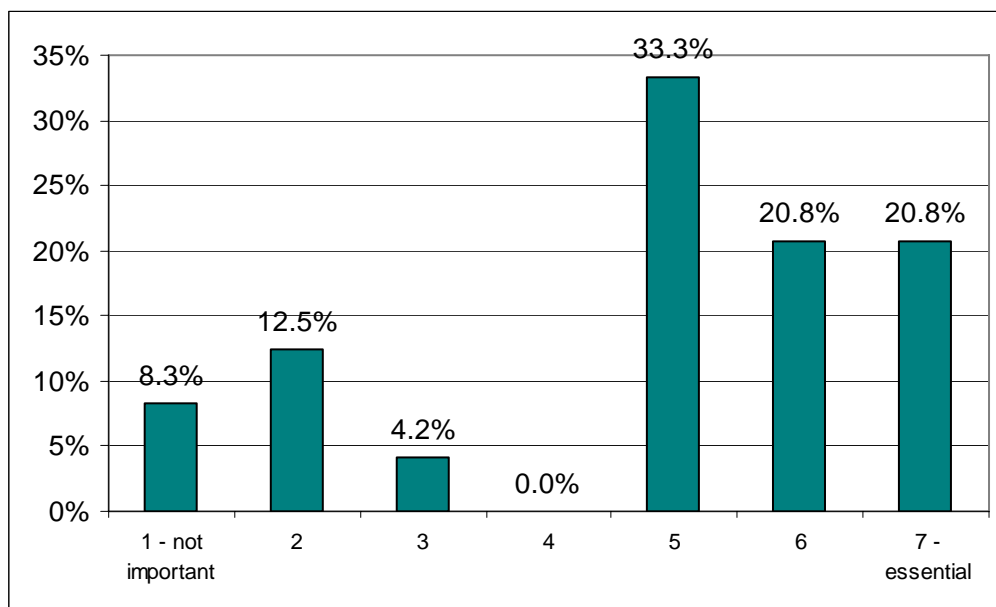
This section examines the potential for improving the way in which migrant workers interact with the local economy in terms of their skills and working experience. It will look at what skills employers say they will need in the short to medium term, the skills and aspirations of the migrant population and their wider support needs. The section will conclude by identifying the key issues that partners will need to address to help migrant workers progress within the local labour market.

Issues facing employers

Role of migrant workers

We asked employers to identify on a scale of one to seven how important migrant workers would be to the business over the next three years. As Figure 19 shows three quarters of respondents thought that migrant workers would be important over the next three years (75% rating their importance as 5 or over on a scale of 1 to 7). Some 21% indicated that migrant workers would be essential to their business operations. Only 8.3% of employers rated migrant labour as not important.

Figure 19 How important are migrant workers to your business over the next three years?



Source: Employer Survey (N=105)

Fifteen individuals commented further on the impact on their business if they could not employ migrant workers. The comments ranged from those related to lack of staff:

'I cannot find cleaners anywhere else. No one else is willing to do the job.'

To comments on the impact on productivity:

'We find migrant workers willing to work & more productive than some of the local workforce. I would suggest that migrant workers are now part of our team who contribute greatly to productivity.'

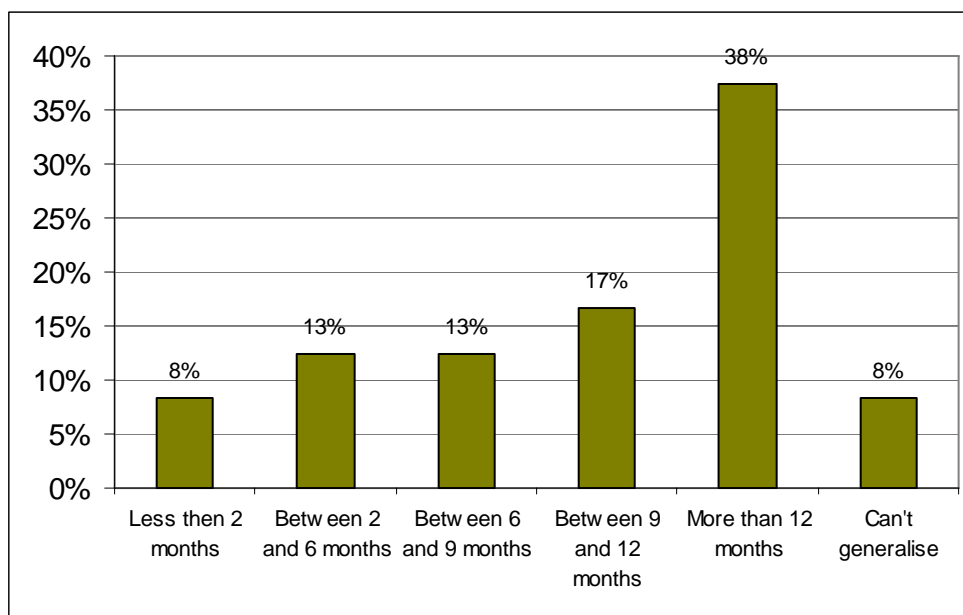
To individuals who commented more specifically on cost implications:

'I would have to offer a higher wage structure and try and lure staff from other businesses in the same sector as ourselves as there is an acute shortage of reliable, competent and conscientious possible employees in the local area as most applicants do not want to work for a living. This measure would only rebound as the hospitality trade would then all have to raise prices to compensate for the increased costs in keeping good staff. This would probably have a detrimental effect on the whole county.'

Length of stay

Twenty four employers indicated the length of time migrant workers stayed with the company or business. Just under four in ten employers (38%) indicated that workers stayed with their businesses for more than twelve months, while 30% had workers who stayed for between six and nine months. However around one in five migrant workers stayed with their employer for six or fewer months on average (21%).

Figure 20 Average length of time that migrant workers stay with employer



Source: Employer Survey (N=105)

Support for recruiting migrant workers

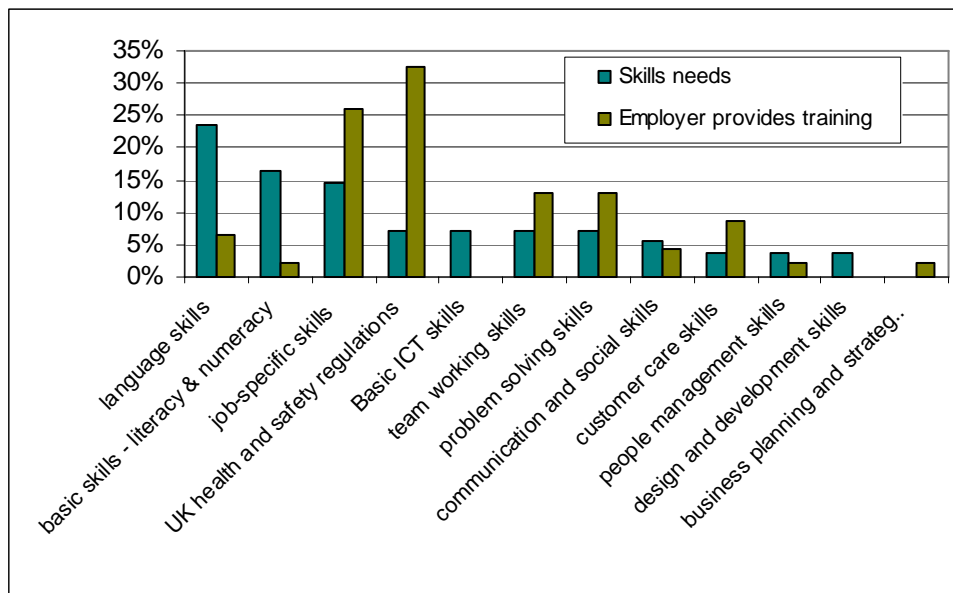
When asked what kind of support would be most useful in recruiting migrant workers respondents came up with a range of replies. One employer stated that more information about those looking for employment in the UK would be useful and a second suggested some kind of central pool of information on a website. A third had found using recruitment agencies very expensive and suggested that an alternative to this route would be useful. More specifically an employer wanted skilled sewing machinists and another was looking for more housing in rural areas which needed staff to work in the tourism industry. Only one commented on the need for basic language skills.

Migrant workforce skills needs

Our survey asked about the skills needs which employers thought migrant workers had. Just under a quarter (24%) of employers believed that migrant workers did not have the necessary language skills while a further 16% felt that migrants lacked basic literacy and numeracy skills. However we believe that it is likely that many employers have conflated literacy, numeracy and linguistic skills. Migrant workers were also thought to lack certain job specific skills such as an understanding of food hygiene issues or machine operational abilities.

However as shown in Figure 21, employers are most likely to provide on the job training in health and safety and job specific technical skills. The biggest gaps in terms of skills needs that employers do not address are in language skills, basic literacy and numeracy and Basic ICT skills.

Figure 21 Migrant worker skill needs and training employers provide



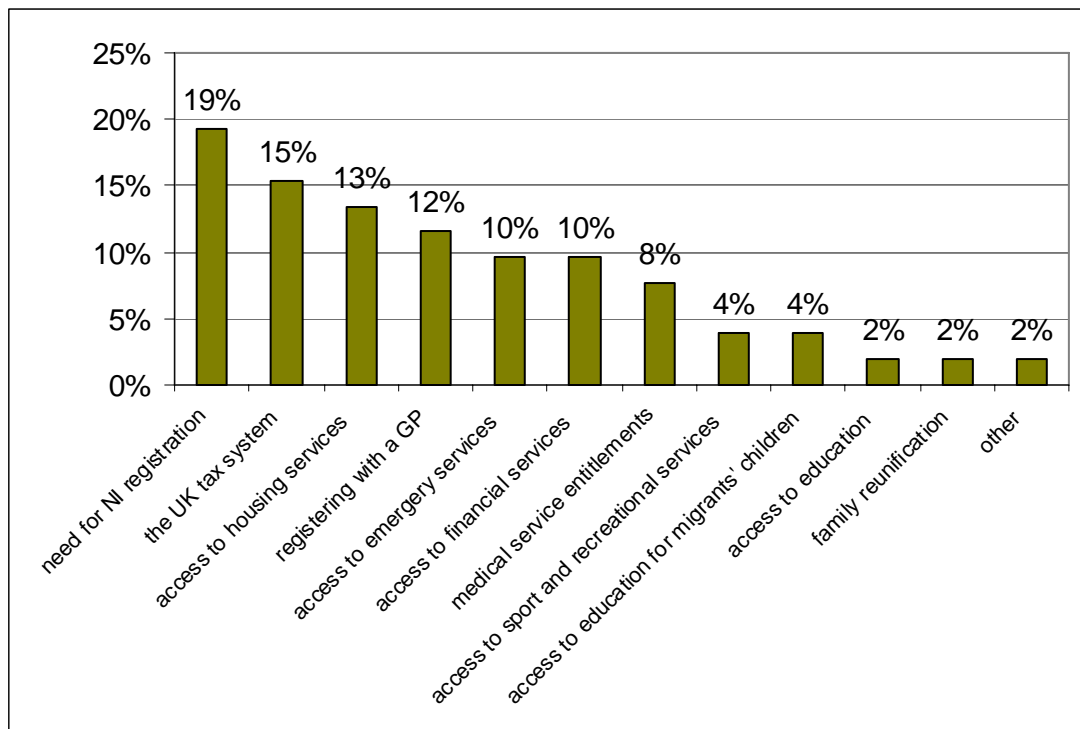
Source: Employer Survey (N=105)

These results indicate that while this group of employers are prepared to offer certain, business specific training they appear to be reluctant to invest in more long-term training or support for basic skills.

Employer support

We asked employers about the type of support that they provided for their migrant workers. The areas in which employers most frequently provided support related to work-based issues such as NINO registration (19%) and tax issues (15%). Some 13% of employers had also assisted their workers with housing issues. Six employers (12%) had helped their workers register with a GP and four had provided advice or help on medical service entitlements while five (10%) had helped with emergency services or financial issues. Only one or two employers had helped with education for migrants or their children and family re-unification.

Figure 22 Support employers provide for migrant workers



Source: Employer Survey (N=105)

These employers appear to be willing to provide practical support in terms of work-related issues but more reluctant to become involved with social support issues.

Aspirations of migrant workers

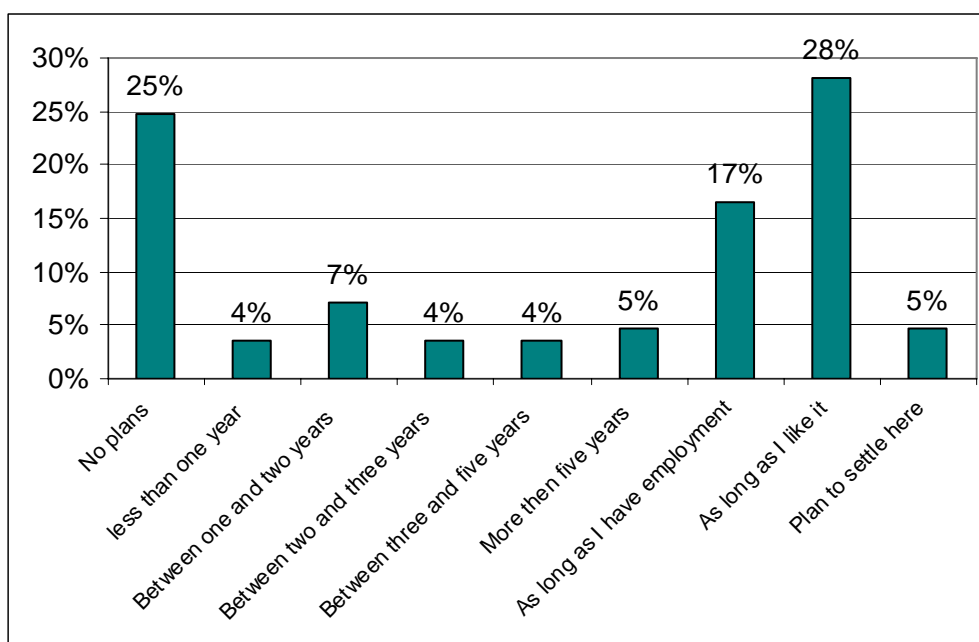
Staying or leaving

It was already mentioned above that migrant interviewees participating in this study were prepared to leave Dumfries and Galloway and Scotland for a job with better conditions than the one they held. Apart from this, hardly anyone interviewed had any fixed plans as to how long they were going to stay in the area, or in Scotland or the UK as a whole. Important factors which influenced decisions was the presence of other adult family members in Scotland ("if they leave, I might leave, too"), or of children who had already started school in Scotland. However, in the survey a small number of respondents did write of their long term plans: two wrote that they

planned to settle with their families and two more also stated their intentions to remain and to apply for residency. Following through on this subject showed that some migrants had plans to bring other family members to Scotland. For instance, on young woman from Serbia, living in the Dumfries and Galloway area with her brother reported that she planned to bring her parents and friends to Scotland. A Hungarian noted that he would like to bring his brother and the brother's girlfriend to the area. A Polish worker, who had previously worked in Cyprus before arriving in Dumfries and Galloway wrote that he would like to bring his niece over to the area.

As Figure 23 shows, a quarter of respondents had no firm plans for staying in Dumfries and Galloway and for 45% staying was contingent on them either having work (17%) or continuing to enjoy living in the region (28%). Around one in ten migrants planned to stay for two years or less (11%) and a further 8% for between two and five years. Only 5% planned to stay for more than five years and a similar proportion planned to settle in Dumfries and Galloway indefinitely.

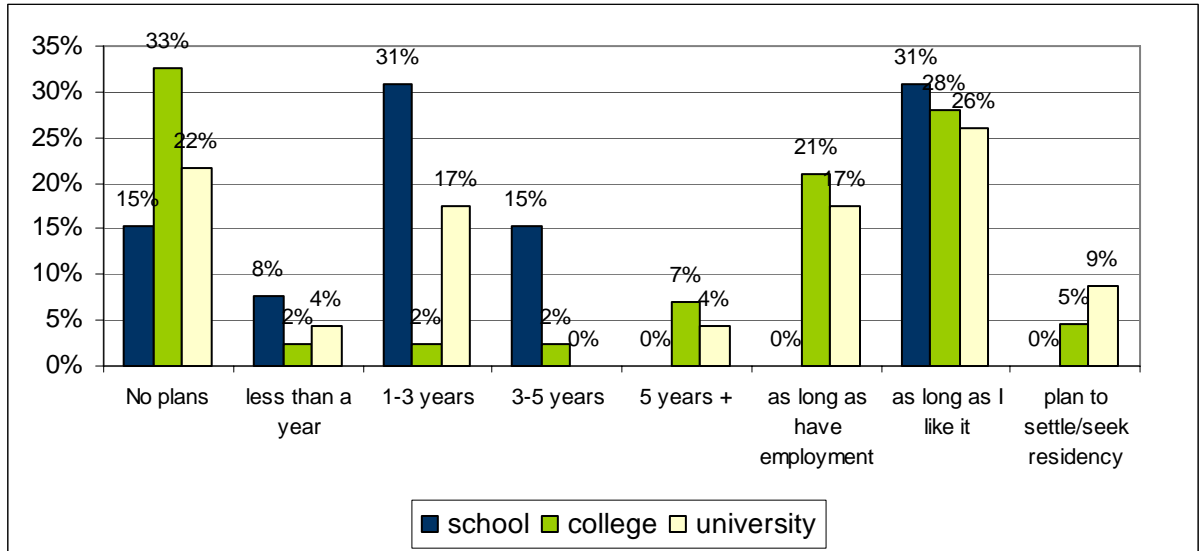
Figure 23 Plans to stay



Source: Migrant survey (n=85)

As Figure 24 shows, those with higher levels of education were more likely to plan to stay in Dumfries and Galloway for longer. Almost one in ten of those who attended University planned to settle in the area (9%), with a further 4% planning to stay for at least five years. This contrasts with those whose highest level of education was school, with none of this group having any firm plans to stay more than five years. Half of all whose most recent education was at school have made time-bound plans to stay in Dumfries and Galloway compared to about one in seven who have attended college and one in five who have attended university. This suggests that those with school level education are a more mobile and transient element within the overall migrant labour force, and that those with higher levels of education are more likely to make a longer term contribution to the region's economy.

Figure 24 Intentions to stay by last education institution attended



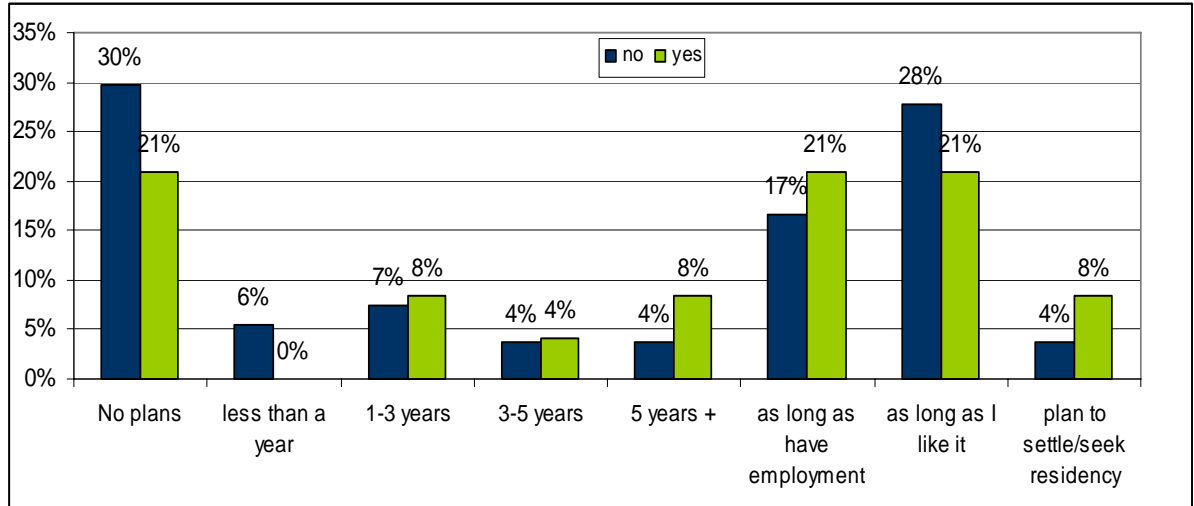
Source: Migrant survey (n=85)

Qualifications and intentions

It also appears that the ability to make use of existing skills and experience is an important factor in people’s plans to stay. Those that are in jobs that require qualifications are more likely to have made plans about staying or leaving. As Figure 25 shows, 8% of those who have jobs using their qualifications plan to stay indefinitely and a further 8% plan to stay for at least five years. So those in a job which requires a formal qualification are much more likely to see a long term future in the area. This may be related to the satisfaction at being in a job which uses their qualifications.

There is a suggestion that those in jobs that require no qualifications may place more importance on the whole migrant experience rather than work. A lower rate stipulated that “As long as I have employment” as a reason to stay while a third more stipulated “as long as I like it” compared to those in jobs requiring formal qualifications.

Figure 25 intentions to stay by whether current job requires qualifications

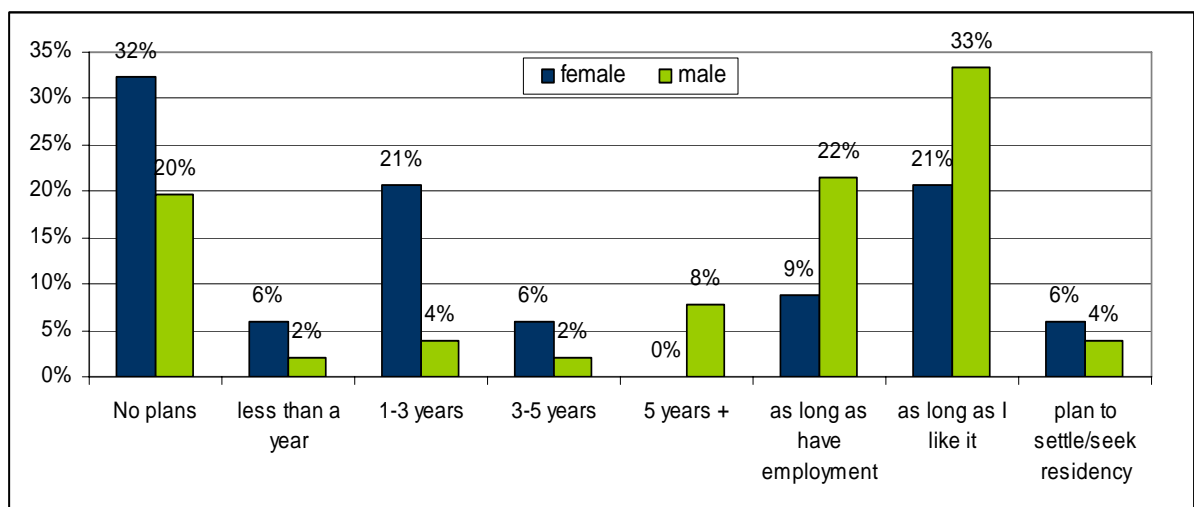


Source: Migrant survey (n=85)

Gender and intentions

In gender terms, over four times as many women as men intend leaving Dumfries and Galloway in the next three years. Over a quarter of women (27%) intend leaving within this timescale compared to 6% of men. This perhaps reflects lower female satisfaction levels with life in Dumfries and Galloway. Males were more likely to give a conditional response with over half answering that they will stay as long as they like it (33%) or as long as they have a job (22%).

Figure 26 Plans to stay by gender



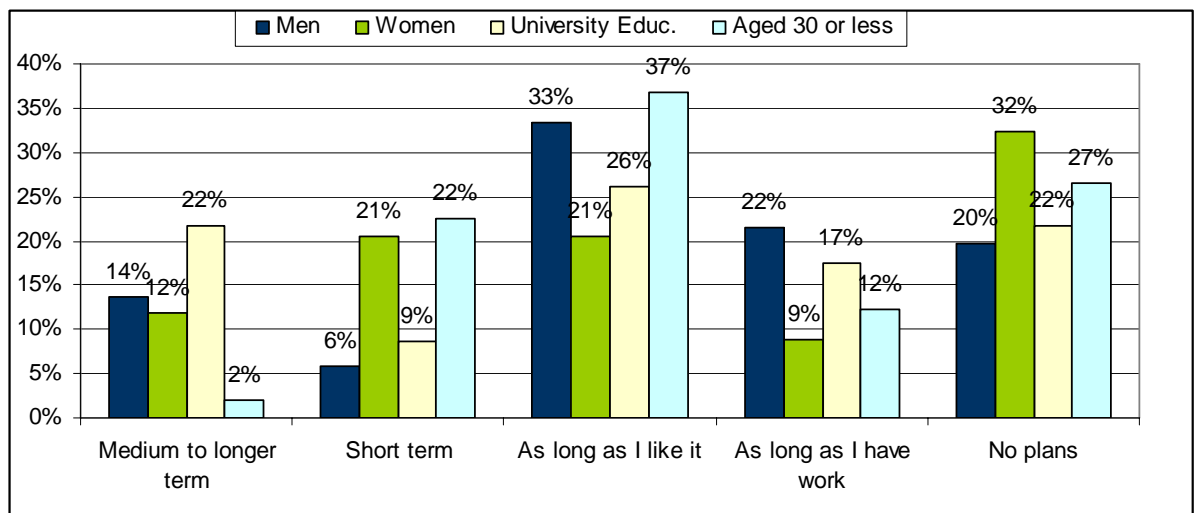
Source: Migrant survey (n=85)

Workers planning to stay in the longer term

As Figure 27 shows, there are certain characteristics among migrant workers that may determine how long they are likely to remain in the region. Those with University level education are most likely to envisage remaining for three years or more. Younger migrant workers (under 30) are the least likely to have made a plan to stay in the area in the medium to longer term. The majority have either made no plans (27%) or will stay for as long as they like it (37%).

Female workers and those aged under 30 are less likely to have made any plans for how long they will stay. This is likely to be because they are working in the UK as a way to earn money and widen their life experience or because they have been placed in the region by an agency rather than making a conscious decision to locate there.

Figure 27 Migrant worker plans by gender, age and university experience



Source: Migrant survey (n=85)

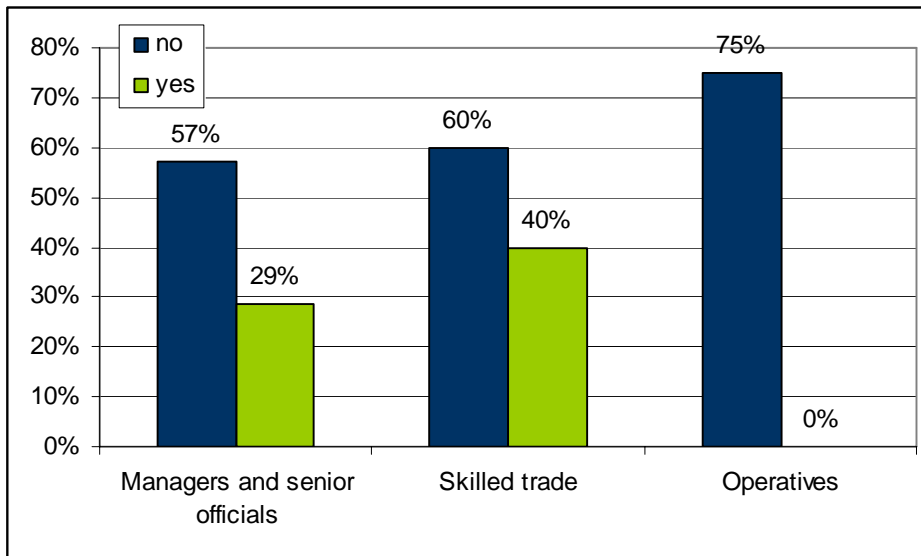
Note: Medium to longer term denotes “3-5 years”, “5 or more years” and “Settle/seek residency”. Short term denotes less than three years

Migrant aspirations in terms of education, training and jobs

Use of qualifications

Many of the qualifications achieved prior to coming to Scotland are not being used in Dumfries and Galloway. We do not know how much of this is through choice. Although the numbers surveyed are low for each occupation responses highlight that 40% of migrant workers who were skilled trades people in their previous jobs are using their skills/qualifications now. The figures for managers and senior officials suggest that only 29% are currently using their past qualifications and experience.

Figure 28 Are you using your qualifications and experience? (against previous occupation)

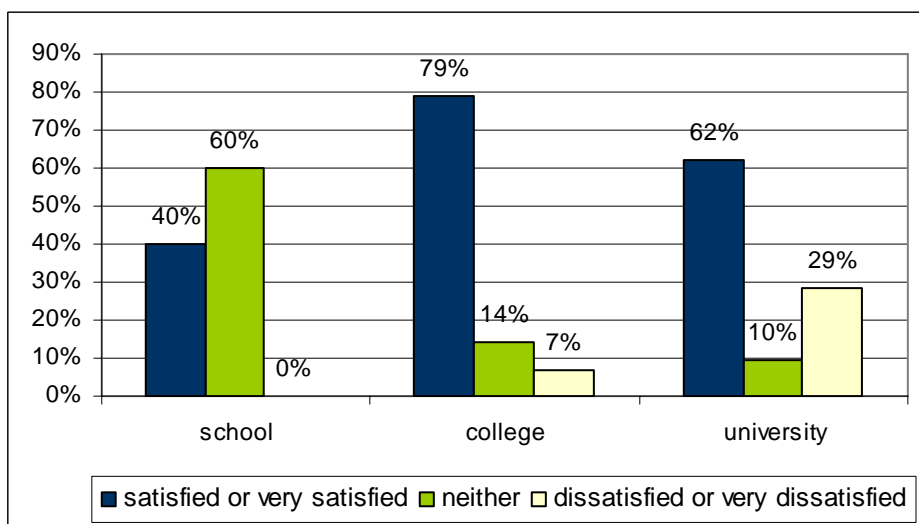


Source: Migrant survey (n=85)

Satisfaction with work

Satisfaction with work is high with over 70% of migrant workers describing themselves as satisfied or very satisfied in their current jobs and just one in ten dissatisfied. However, this masks differing job satisfaction levels according to education levels. Figure 29 shows that the higher the education level, the more dissatisfied the respondent was likely to be with their current job. And around three out of ten of those who received University level education are currently dissatisfied with their job. This is perhaps related to their inability to use their skills in the jobs they currently have (Figure 33).

Figure 29 Satisfaction with current job by last education institute attended



Source: Migrant survey (n=85)

Demand for Scottish qualifications

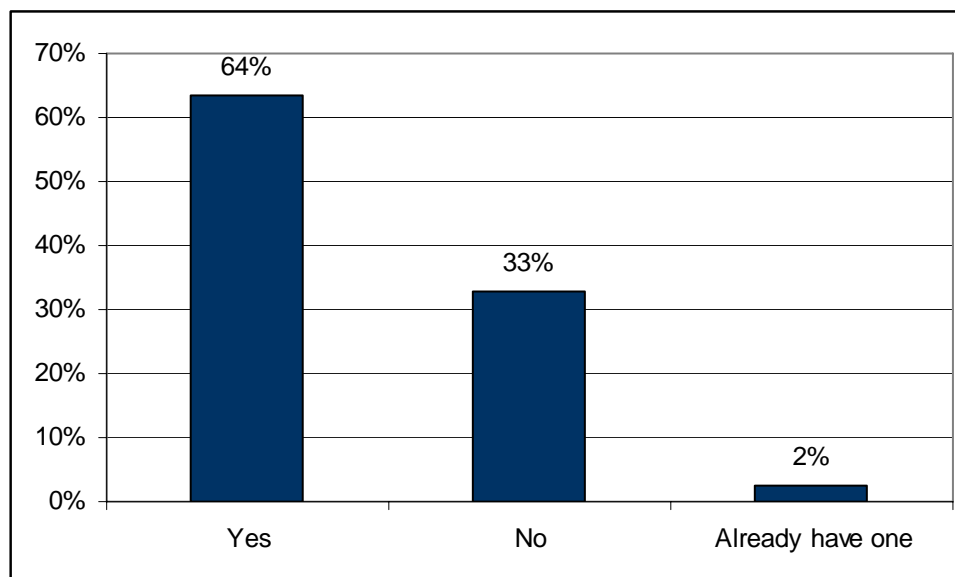
As Figure 30 shows nearly two thirds of respondents (64%) would like to achieve a qualification in Scotland. As other research on skills suggests, the demand for learning is highest among those who have the highest qualification levels – with 75% of those who attended university wanting to achieve further qualifications against less than a third of those whose last formal education was at school.

Types of qualification ranged from the more general ‘further education in carpentry’ to the specific: masters in occupational therapy and in social work. Others were looking to transfer their first aid qualifications and driving instructor qualifications to a Scottish equivalent. One migrant wrote ‘my qualifications are not used sufficiently and I don’t develop my skills’. Another commented: ‘I’d like to work as a driver but I have very poor English’.

Two respondents identified a need to achieve the SVQ Level 2 qualification that is now a requirement in the social care sector.

However, most of those who indicated that they would be interested in further qualifications did not indicate if they had a particular qualification in mind. This may be because they were unaware of the educational opportunities available to them but, they may not, at this stage in their lives, have decided on the topic they wished to pursue.

Figure 30 Are you interested in achieving a Scottish educational or professional qualification?



Source: Migrant survey (n=85)

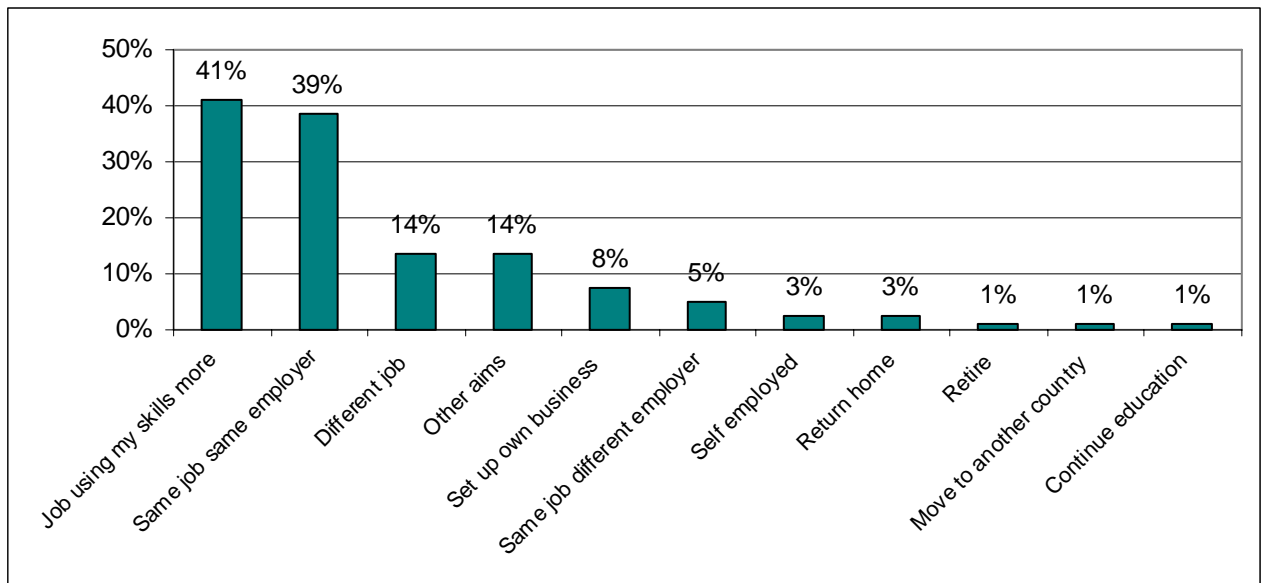
Career in 12-18 months

Figure 31 shows what migrant workers see themselves doing in the next 12 to 18 months. While four in ten see no change, a slightly larger group see themselves finding a job which uses their skills more (41%) and a further 14% see themselves taking a different job. And a further 8% see themselves starting up their own

business - a much higher proportion of potential entrepreneurs than in the wider workforce. A further 3% envisage becoming self-employed – possibly in skilled trades as there are high proportions of self-employment in these occupations.

Returning home and moving to a different country do not appear to be significant aspirations among the respondents.

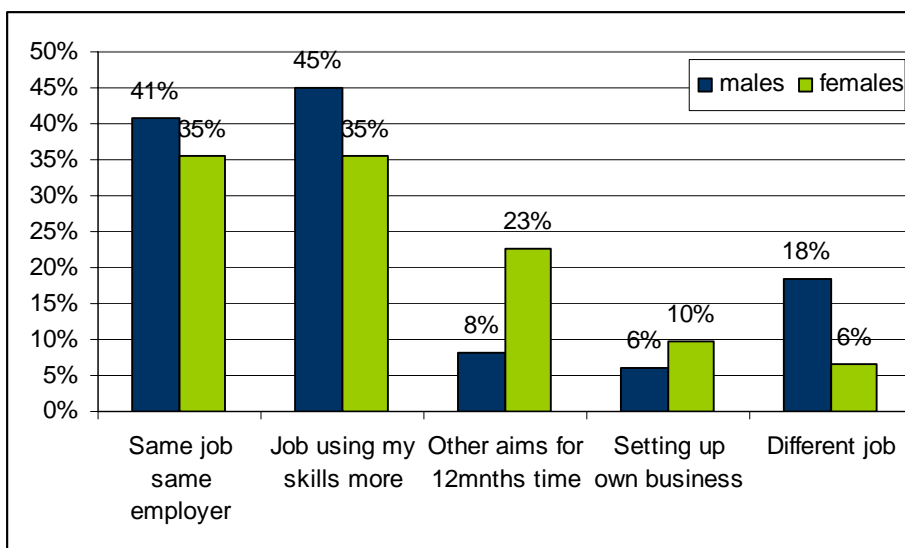
Figure 31 What do you see yourself doing in 12-18 months time



Source: Migrant survey (n=85)

Looking to the next 12 to 18 months, females are less likely to see themselves in the same job than males. Figure 32 shows this and also that females are more likely to see themselves starting up a business – which perhaps reflects the higher qualification levels among females. However the numbers involved are very small.

Figure 32 What do you see yourself doing in 12 to 18 months time by gender

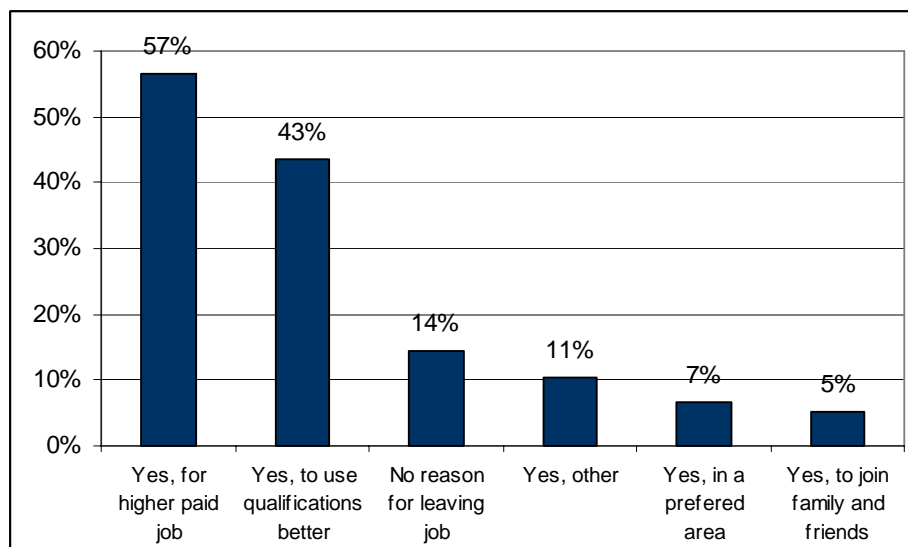


Source: Migrant survey (n=85)

Motivation for changing jobs

The desire to earn more money or make greater use of qualifications and skills appear to be a powerful motivating forces for change among migrant workers. Figure 33 shows that while a higher paid opportunity would cause 57% of migrant workers to leave their current job, the opportunity to make better use of their qualifications is important for over four in ten (43%).

Figure 33 Can you imagine a reason that you would leave this job, other than end of contract?



Source: Migrant survey (n=85)

Those interested in starting a business

Background

The proportion wanting to start their own business appears to be higher among the migrant population than the wider population as a whole. The majority of those wanting to start a business had arrived with other family members rather than alone or with friends (62%). This is a much higher proportion than the overall sample. Half stated that how long they stay depends on having employment and continuing to like it.

Qualifications

Although around two thirds had either a vocational qualification or a technical / vocational certificate, the remaining third had no formal qualifications (a higher proportion than the sample overall). Half had professional qualifications however. And only half of this group were interested in gaining Scottish Qualifications. They seem more interested in finding jobs that match their existing qualifications and experience.

Profiles

We have outlined some of the background profiles of people interested in starting up a business or becoming self-employed.

Person 1 – A Spanish male aged 21 to 30 came to the area in November 2006. Has college level qualifications and his previous job (before coming to the UK) was as a maintenance worker with supervisory responsibilities in a factory. Currently working as Kitchen Porter and very dissatisfied with it. Would like to learn and would welcome the opportunity. Would prefer a job that would make use of experience and qualifications. Plans to stay as long he likes it.

Person 2 – A Polish man aged 31 to 40 who has a wife and two children with him. He previously stayed in Galashiels and plans to bring siblings over to stay. He has HNC equivalent qualifications in both forestry and state security from a Technical College and previously worked as a security guard and had supervisory experience. His current job is as a machine operator and he is satisfied with the job. However he would leave it if he could get a job using his qualifications. He does not intend to return to Poland and plans to stay for as long as he likes it. He prefers working in Dumfries and Galloway as he likes the area. His spoken English is neither good nor bad and his listening ability is good.

Person 3 – A Polish woman aged 21 to 30 who has a partner and three children who are not currently living with her. She is planning to bring her children over. She arrived in the area through a recruitment agency with her son in April 2005. She plans to stay for as long as she has employment. She has HNC level qualifications as an Agricultural Technician from College. She is interested in gaining Scottish qualifications. She did not have a job before coming to Scotland and now works as a process worker. The job does not require any qualifications, skills or experience gained previously. She has a permanent contract and is satisfied with her job. She prefers living in Dumfries and Galloway because she has friends there and likes the area. She has good speaking and reading ability in English.

Person 4 – A Polish man aged 21 to 30 who is married with one child. He lives with his siblings, wife and child. He is planning to return to Poland but does not know when, and will stay in the area for as long as he likes it. He came on the recommendation of family members. He has a Bachelors degree in Management and Marketing and a Masters degree in Economics and Management. He previously worked as a Regional Sales Manager in Poland. He would like to gain Scottish qualifications in trade/ commerce. He is working as a waiter/ catering assistant but would have liked more help in finding a job. His job requires no qualifications and does not use any of his previous experience and he is neither satisfied or dissatisfied with it. He would leave his job for a higher paid one, or one that makes use of his qualifications. He prefers living in the area because he has friends here and because family members have also found work here. He has good spoken English and listening ability in English.

Person 5 – A Polish male working as a mechanic and aged over 50. He arrived alone in Dumfries and Galloway in February 2007 as a result of a recruitment agency finding him an opportunity there. He remains in the same job. He plans to bring his wife/partner to the area (they have no children). He classified his English language abilities (reading, writing and listening) as “very poor”. He has a technical school certificate in car mechanics. In Poland he did a similar job although. While his previous work involved supervision/ managerial responsibilities, his current one does not. He is satisfied with his current job but would leave it for a higher paid one,

one that gave better experience or made better use of his qualifications. He is interested in achieving a Scottish qualification.

Person 6 – A Polish male forestry worker aged 21-30. He has been doing this job since March 2007. He arrived in Dumfries and Galloway in June 2005 with a friend and a cousin of his also lives here. He has no formal qualifications although spent some time at college. In Poland he worked as a co-ordinator and has had jobs with managerial/ supervisory roles. His current job does not have any such responsibilities. He feels he is a confident listener in English but so-so at reading and speaking and poor at writing. He has no interest in achieving a Scottish qualification. While describing himself as single, he does plan to bring his partner here and to stay for at least 10 years.

Person 7 – A Polish male working as a plasterer and driver and aged 41-50. He arrived in Dumfries and Galloway in July 2006 after a recruitment agency found him a job. He is still in the same job. He came here on his own. He has a wife/partner and two children. His wife is now with him but he plans on bringing his children over (we do not know their ages). While he has a diploma in therapeutic massage, he also qualified as a lorry driver. However, his last job in Poland was as a bricklayer/plasterer. He does not have any interest in gaining Scottish qualifications. He feels his overall English ability is poor. He can see himself leaving this job for any other opportunity that was either better paid, made better use of his qualifications or in an area preferable to Dumfries and Galloway. Despite this, he can see himself in Dumfries and Galloway for five years or longer.

Summary

Those interested in setting up their own business often lack formal qualifications and most have no interest in gaining formal qualifications. They are more interested in making use of their skills and experience. Those with families and children appear more interested in setting up a business which will mean that finding adequate accommodation and opportunities for family members will also be important factors. This may be encouraging however given that this might suggest an interest in settling in the area in the medium to longer term.

Conclusions

Long term impacts of migrant worker

Migrant workers have, generally had a positive impact on the business community in Dumfries and Galloway and will continue to do so in the short to medium term. Three quarters of employers feel that migrant workers are very important to growing their business over the next three years, with one in five suggesting they are essential. Clearly given the importance of this sector of the labour supply it will be critical to improve both the way the labour market operates and the experiences and conditions of migrant workers. Without migrant workers many employers identify severe problems for their business in terms of staffing, labour costs and overall competitiveness.

Higher turnover among migrant workers

More than half of employers report that migrant workers are typically only employed for less than a year. Only four out of ten report migrant workers staying in their post for longer. This suggests a higher turnover among the migrant workforce which is perhaps to be expected given the seasonal nature of employment in many of these sectors.

Skills needs

Employers most frequently identified language skills (24%) and basic skills (16%) as being required among their migrant workers. However very few employers provided this type of training. Most training provided related to Health and Safety or job-specific skills. This is typical of the type of training that employers provide, however there may need to be a greater role for employers in addressing the Language, Literacy and Numeracy skills needs of migrants.

Support from employers

Employers tend to expect migrant workers to have engaged with the administrative and bureaucratic systems of Scotland although they are prepared to help further with work-related measures such as registration for National Insurance. Further support or encouragement to employers to ensure that such basic help is universal where needed would be useful and would also protect migrant workers.

In terms of support that employers need, the most commonly cited issue was more information on the availability of migrant workers and their skills.

Aspirations of migrant workers

Around a quarter of migrant workers have no plans for how long they intend to stay in the region. For almost half, their length of stay will depend on their having a job and continuing to enjoy their experience. However one in ten of the migrants surveyed planned to stay for at least five years or to settle in the area. And it appears that those with University level education and those using their qualifications are more likely to be planning to stay in the medium to longer term. One in six migrants who are making use of their qualifications plan to stay for at least five years or indefinitely (16%).

Those with experience in the Skilled Trades are most likely to be using their qualifications or experience (40%). However only three out of ten former managers or senior officials are making use of skills and experience (29%). This suggests that there is considerable untapped potential among the migrant labour force in occupations that are known to be in demand.

Those with University level education are more likely to be dissatisfied with their current job. This perhaps suggests that there is greater resentment among higher qualified individuals at not being able to make use of their skills and qualifications in their job.

Demand for qualifications

Nearly two thirds of migrant workers would like to gain a Scottish qualification. The demand is highest among those who already have higher level qualifications (75%). Many of these individuals however are likely to want to gain Scottish accreditation for their existing qualifications rather than start a completely new qualification. However this reflects the high level of ambition among the migrant workforce as well as underlining their significant current skill level.

Short-term aspirations

In 12 to 18 months time four in ten migrant workers see themselves getting a job that makes better use of their skills and a further 14% see themselves in a different job. This supports the findings of employers that migrants are highly mobile in terms of employment. Most would leave their current job for a better paid one or for one that made better use of their skills.

Our survey also found a significant interest in enterprise among migrant workers with 8% seeing themselves starting a business and a further 3% predicting self-employment. This compares to the Scottish Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) figure of 5.5% people involved in or considering starting a business. Those with partners and children were more likely to identify an interest in starting up a business which may suggest an interest in settling in the area in the longer term. However this will mean that supporting housing and other infrastructure to help migrant families to settle will also help to support business start-ups and self-employment.

The way forward

This section draws together the key findings from the research to identify the most beneficial role for the migrant workforce in helping SEDG and its partners to grow the local economy and work towards more sustainable communities. Much of these issues have emerged from discussions with support staff and a workshop held with key stakeholders. It identifies the key priorities in the short to medium term, identifies current activity and looks at key action points, roles and responsibilities.

Current activity

There is currently a multi-agency working group which aims to develop strategy and specific initiatives around the issue of migrant workers in Dumfries and Galloway. This involves a wide range of statutory and voluntary sector organisations and includes Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary; Scottish Enterprise Dumfries and Galloway, Housing agencies, Dumfries and Galloway Council and the Citizens Advice Bureau.

Migrant support and advice: background issues

The arrival of this new group of workers was not anticipated by the population of Dumfries and Galloway. And the region has no historical experience of large-scale migration from overseas. Estimates of the numbers of migrants from the EU Accession States based in Dumfries and Galloway are some 2,500 to 3,000 people including dependents. Estimates of numbers are proving difficult because some migrants do not formally register their presence. Reports from health visitors and other service providers indicate that migrants are not registering their dependents in particular.

Locations of migrant support

Citizens' Advice Bureau

Support to both employers and migrants is provided by Dumfries and Galloway Citizens' Advice Bureau (CAB). Information and help is provided on a variety of topics including translation of contracts into Polish and issues around discriminatory behaviour. Problems with abuse of migrant workers in the private sector have been reported including long working hours and poor living conditions. The Polish community in Dumfries and Galloway benefit from an accredited volunteer working with the CAB; a Polish migrant himself and an employee at a local firm.

The CAB have recorded an increase in the uptake of their services and are seeking to increase the number of advisors as a result.

A further problem which the CAB is helping to resolve is the interaction between migrants and the host community in isolated areas where small clusters of migrants live, work and socialise. The CAB is trying to reduce tensions by holding local information clinics for these communities. Both the CAB and SEDG benefit from close working practices in terms of migrant workers.

Benefits

It has been reported by support workers that migrants particularly benefit from, and are appreciative of the Working Tax Credit. However, there are problems with the degree to which discretionary powers are given to local gatekeepers to benefits such as Job Seekers Allowance and this is reported as causing some problems for migrant workers.

Statutory agencies and the banking sector

Statutory agencies are providing help and support to the migrant community. This includes housing providers. Migrant workers are assessed on housing need in exactly the same way as the local population.

The banking sector is beginning to respond to the differing demands of migrant workers. Lloyds TSB has developed a package of support and as a result it is believed that the majority of migrants have opened accounts with this bank.

Libraries

There are 24 static and two mobile libraries in Dumfries and Galloway who have responded well, within their means, to patterns of demands from migrants workers. They were amongst the first to experience the impacts of migrant workers when local libraries reported a huge increase in demand for the free internet services offered by the libraries. Libraries would like to offer further, more tailored services such as the provision of dual language literature.

Police

The police have been involved in pro-active outreach to the migrant communities and were the driving force behind a Polish Day in November at which agencies and businesses were represented. Many more migrants attended the day than anticipated and the police considered the day a great success.

English Language teaching

Dumfries and Galloway Adult Literacy and Numeracy Partnership providers and especially the Council's Community Learning and Development Service and Dumfries and Galloway College, responded swiftly and positively to a rapid increase in demand for ESOL classes. All 44 classes provided by the Partnership and the Community Learning Development Service throughout Dumfries and Galloway are provided for free. The majority of funding for ESOL in Dumfries and Galloway comes through Adult Literacy and Numeracy funds. The significant rise in demand for these services following EU expansion was not anticipated and planned for, so the use of the ALN budget has been opportunistic in the absence of funding specifically tailored for addressing the language needs of migrant workers.

However service providers experienced difficulties with the definition of an adult ESOL literacy learner, which the Scottish Executive defines as "a person who has little or no literacy in his/ her own mother tongue and who has little or no literacy in English, and whose spoken English may range from basic to fluent." If Adult Literacy and Numeracy (ALN) funding was used only to provide for this group, large numbers of migrants literate in their native language, but with few or no English skills, would obviously be excluded. Those planning the services hope that the Adult ESOL Strategy for Scotland, which is

expected to be launched by the Scottish Executive in the very near future, will give some more guidance here.

Despite growing numbers of migrant families coming to Dumfries and Galloway, and the increasing presence of migrant children, non-adults cannot be catered for by ALN funded provision. Linked with this were concerns about clear and adequate funding streams to meet current and future ESOL demands. The experiences of stakeholders were that instead of an increase in resources to match the rising demand for classes, funding had been curtailed. It was added that information needed to be disseminated more effectively on financial support learners themselves could apply for (for example Individual Learning Accounts).

In terms of wider support of learning and progression, it was argued that closer links should be forged between employers and ESOL providers. Employers should be encouraged to allow their employees time off for their English classes, and/or to financially support classes.

Because the rapid rise in demand for ESOL classes had required quick responses to meet the need, there is not yet a clear strategic direction to the provision of these services.

A strategy for matching skills with opportunities

Towards the end of the research project we brought together several service providers and stakeholders in a workshop to discuss the future needs and priorities in supporting migrant workers. From a long list of issues that partners need to address, the participants highlighted four key issues relating to migrant workers role in developing the local economy, these were:

- Developing ESOL and translation services;
- Mapping migrant workers' skills against particular job opportunities;
- Involving employers in developing services for migrants; and
- Developing guidance and sign-posting information for migrant workers.

One key issue that was highlighted was the need to focus economic development resources on more highly skilled opportunities, and particularly those within the key sectors. This would clearly add most value for both migrants and the local economy, as the labour market for lower skilled jobs has been identified as functioning effectively⁴.

ESOL and translation services

There is clearly a need for a Language Support strategy with a dedicated budget attached to it. This is a priority that the Scottish Executive needs to address at the national level to support its positive policies towards migrants. While some of the constraints outlined in this report might be addressed through the forthcoming ESOL Strategy for Scotland, there are fundamental additional issues which need to be considered. These include a lack of suitably qualified tutors, insufficient funding, the co-ordination of provisions, more progression routes, employers' contributions, and the link between ESOL and other services.

⁴ Scottish Enterprise (2006)

It is clear from our research that limited language ability is a key barrier preventing migrant workers from making use of their skills and qualifications more effectively. This is therefore slowing down the progression of migrants into some of the skilled jobs that employers find hard to fill.

This strategy should be coordinated by a sub-group within the Lifelong Learning Partnership with key inputs from Dumfries and Galloway Council Community Learning and Development and Dumfries and Galloway College.

Stakeholders identified several key issues that need to be covered in the strategy for ESOL provision, including:

- Marketing and awareness-raising of existing provision and on the availability of funding through Individual Learning Accounts;
- Identifying and supporting an appropriate range of provision that meets migrant workers needs in terms of the level of course and the timing of the sessions;
- Targeting ESOL services towards spouses, partners and children as well as at workers;
- Developing (or linking with) outreach services or networks to contact the different cultures and languages that are present in Dumfries and Galloway;
- Making better use of IT and the Internet to make learning materials and information available to migrant workers more flexibly; and
- Providing flexible access to computers at suitable times.

Mapping skills against employment opportunities

One key area that stakeholders felt needed to be addressed was a central skills register that allows employers to identify the skills that migrant workers have, and conversely enables migrant workers to identify appropriate opportunities that match their skills. This is because the labour market for more skilled jobs and workers works less well for migrants, and SMEs find it more difficult to identify suitably skilled candidates than larger employers who have more resources to spend on recruitment.

It was thought that this register could be coordinated by Careers Scotland but would also involve Job Centre Plus; Scottish Enterprise; the Chamber of Commerce and larger employers such as the Council and NHS Board. Gathering accurate information on available jobs was considered to be vital to improving the match between skills and opportunities. At present Jobcentre Plus only holds information on around a third of jobs. And these tend to be lower skilled jobs and jobs with larger employers.

We would recommend that the local partners develop a resource that meets this objective and which also has:

- A web-based presence to allow quick and remote access to update information;
- A brokering service to help workers with specific or specialist skills to find suitable opportunities; and
- Links to translation, language and confidence-building services.

Involving Employers

Stakeholders considered that involving employers was a key priority in developing a strategy to support migrant workers and to maximise their economic potential. However they identified a culture among SMEs that was not used to sharing information.

Stakeholders thought that it would be easier to get employers involved if someone went to visit them, rather than inviting them to a meeting or event. Other suggestions were to engage employers through representative or support organisations such as the Small Business Gateway or the Chamber of Commerce.

Other suggestions were to target employers through places where they are likely to go such as professional advisors, cash and carries or the Farmers Union.

Stakeholders thought that Scottish Enterprise should take the lead in promoting employer involvement and encourage employers that they work with as account managers.

Guidance and Signposting

Stakeholders considered that providing good quality guidance material and signposting of services at the right time was a key aspect in helping migrant workers to integrate effectively into the local economy.

Information should be provided as early as possible, ideally when migrant workers arrive in the area. This could be done through:

- Providing information and signposting when migrant workers register through the WRS;
- Providing information that employers can pass on to their workers at induction;
- Making information available at the places where many migrants go such as libraries, churches and GPs; and
- Engaging the local newspapers and other media to help to promote and signpost services.

The information pack should provide migrants with basic information on key services such as housing and health and provide contact details for support agencies. This should be provided in Polish, Slovakian and other languages migrants use. It should also provide important information on legal and cultural differences between the UK and other countries.

A strategy for sustaining and supporting migrants

Workshop participants also identified four priority issues relating to sustaining and balancing local communities. This was with a view to retaining migrants in the region to help address anticipated population decline. These priorities were:

- Addressing discrimination;
- Providing support for migrant workers' families;
- Addressing housing needs; and

- Involving the migrant community in decision-making.

Addressing discrimination

Participants thought that more education and outreach work was needed to promote inclusion and educate the wider population about the positive impact that migrant workers have on the economy and local communities. It was felt that this would help to minimise any discrimination which tends to arise when people feel threatened by people coming to take jobs in their community.

Ignorance among employers was also identified as a key barrier that in some instances had resulted in 'unintended' exploitation. Education for employers on their responsibilities towards workers was seen as essential.

Support for Families

Wider social support for families may be needed to ensure that all migrants are aware of services. Our research suggests that women, in particular, may have more difficulty in fitting into the local community, and are more likely to miss aspects of life in their native country.

There is a need for a community support worker to establish and develop outreach networks with minority communities. There are currently some informal networks and various professionals such as health visitors and housing officers do provide some support to migrant families. However there should be more formal links through a community support worker who can liaise with these networks and respond to any issues or language and support needs.

Addressing housing needs

Stakeholders felt that housing needs of migrant workers needed to be addressed as part of the overall Local Housing Strategy. In particular there was a need for the Strategy to:

- Respond to the needs of single people;
- Accurately reflect local housing need in communities such as Annan where there has been a significant influx of migrant workers; and
- Address the issue of multi-occupancy housing.

Housing issues for migrant workers should be reflected within the Local Housing Strategy through representations from the multi-agency working group.

Involving migrants in decision-making

Participants in the workshop considered that there needed to be much greater involvement from migrant communities themselves in developing services aimed at meeting their needs. The Citizens Advice Bureau is currently training several people from local migrant communities. And there are some people who take on a voluntary informal role of supporting their wider communities.

We would recommend identifying and training community leaders who can gather views from the wider community and help to disseminate information. These community leaders can also help to develop links with the indigenous community and help to organise community events that will promote integration and engagement.

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