



# Migrant Workers in South Yorkshire

LSC Yorkshire and Humber

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# Migrant workers in South Yorkshire

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Approved by: Donald Rintoul  
Position: Managing Economist  
Date: 16/05/2008

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Background

In 2006 the Learning and Skills Council in Yorkshire and the Humber commissioned Experian to deliver research on migrant workers in West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber. The research, which Experian delivered in summer 2007, estimated the size and spatial distribution of the migrant worker population in these areas and investigated skills levels and support needs. In 2007, the Learning and Skills Council in Yorkshire and the Humber commissioned Experian to repeat this research for South Yorkshire.

## 1.2 Study Objectives

On 1 May 2004, eight central and eastern European (Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia – henceforth called the A8) countries joined the European Union (EU). The EU is not only a free trade area, but guarantees free movement of workers for all its citizens. Eventually, citizens of the A8 countries will be free to move anywhere within the expanded EU to look for work. However, as with previous accessions, existing Member States (EU-15) had considerable concerns about the impact of complete liberalisation on their labour markets. The Accession Treaties, therefore, gave the EU-15 countries the option of delaying the implementation of full movement of workers for up to seven years. Most of the EU-15, including France, Germany, Italy and Spain, chose to impose restrictions in one form or another, with the exceptions being Ireland, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

The UK government announced in December 2002 that it would allow immediate free movement of A8 country workers following accession. A research review commissioned by the UK Home Office, assessing all the available evidence, concluded that likely net flows to the UK might be between 5,000 and 13,000 annually. However, it became clear quite quickly after the UK labour market opened to A8 citizens that flows of migrants were going to be considerably higher than first anticipated.

In response to the large flows of economic migrants into the UK since the A8 countries joined the EU there was an identified need to quantify and understand the new migrant populations in Yorkshire and the Humber.

The main objectives of the project were to:

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

### 1.3 Research Process

The study method involves a mixture of quantitative and qualitative research:

- **Literature review;**
- **Data collection (official and administrative sources of data); and**
- **Primary research (consultations, migrant worker workshops, case studies)**

The starting point for the research was to review the existing literature and research on the flows of A8 migrant labour into the UK, Yorkshire and Humber and South Yorkshire in particular. Given that A8 migration is still a relatively recent phenomenon there is a limited volume of existing literature particularly for South Yorkshire.

The next phase of the research was to construct a solid evidence base using the best official and administrative sources of data. There is no single comprehensive data source on migrants entering the UK and South Yorkshire. Therefore a picture has to be built up using a variety of different sources: the International Passenger Survey (ONS), the Workers Registration Scheme (Home Office) and National Insurance Number Registrations (the Department for Work and Pensions).

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

### 1.4 Report Structure

The report is split into six chapters that run along the lines of the research process. Chapter one introduces the background to the research. Chapter two examines the best available data to understand flows of migrant workers into South Yorkshire and estimates the current numbers and spatial distribution across the region. The role of migrant workers in the South Yorkshire labour market is explored in chapter three. This analysis includes the types of occupations that migrant workers are employed in, skills levels and barriers facing migrant workers entering the labour market.

Chapter four and five present the primary research undertaken for this study. These consultations and case studies cover a range of themes including recruitment processes, employment experiences, language issues and support services.

## 2 Migrant Worker Population

### Summary

The accession of the eight eastern and central European countries into the European Union in May 2004 greatly increased both the scale and pace of change of immigration into the UK. The various sources of immigration data examined all indicate rapid growth in the number of A8 migrants coming to work in South Yorkshire.

Inflows of A8 migrants into South Yorkshire have been substantial: 8,730 applicants to the Workers Registration Scheme registrations between May 2004 and September 2007 and 9,490 National Insurance Number applications between 2005 and 2007. Experian estimate the stock of A8 migrants in South Yorkshire in September 2007 to be around 6,100. However the stock of migrant workers could range from 2,100 to 9,800.

The majority of A8 migrants are young (81% aged between 18 and 34), male, Polish, work full-time and have no dependants. Much of the flow of migrants into the region appears to be temporary or seasonal in nature, with 59% of WRS applicants indicating they expected to stay for less than 3 months. There appear to be some 'clusters' of migrant workers by nationality including Polish in Sheffield and Slovaks in Sheffield and Rotherham.

### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the flows of A8 migrant workers into South Yorkshire since the A8 joined the EU in May 2004. We analyse the volume of migrant worker flows into South Yorkshire and Yorkshire and the Humber as a whole and the spatial distribution to identify 'clusters' of workers. The flow estimates are then used to suggest some broad implications for the population (stock) of migrant workers in the region.

### 2.2 Flows of migrant workers

There is not a single data source that provides comprehensive coverage of migration activity. However, by analysing data from a range of official and administrative sources it is possible to build up a picture of A8 migration in Yorkshire and Humber. In the following review of the data we use a number of official data sources and administrative data sources:

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

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

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

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

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

The data sources currently available make it difficult to distinguish if a migrant is long-term or short-term. Given that short-term migrants use local services, contribute to the economy, impact on labour supply and are part of the UK consumer base it would be useful to develop reliable short-term migration statistics. The ONS is currently undertaking work to develop a definition and method for measuring short-term migration. However, in the following analysis it is not possible to accurately measure short-term migrant inflows or indeed stocks of short-term migrants from the A8 countries.

### 2.2.1 International Passenger Numbers

The International Passenger Survey (IPS) is a large multi-purpose survey that collects information from passengers as they enter or leave Great Britain. It provides a rich source of information on migration. It is based on voluntary, face-to-face interviews with a sample of passengers travelling via the principal airports, sea routes and the Channel Tunnel. The IPS interviews a quarter of a million passengers every year, of which approximately 1% are migrants. The migrant contacts are grossed up to produce national migration estimates using a complex weighting system based on total traffic flows.

Headline ONS international migration data (derived from the IPS) is available for 2005 at a UK level. These show that the estimate of A8 citizens migrating into the UK for a period of at least a year has increased year on year since 2004. In 2004, 53,000 A8 citizens entered the UK in 2004, this increased by 46% in 2005 to 76,000. This increase can be explained by 2005 being the first full calendar year following the date of accession in May 2004 for which migration by A8 citizens could be estimated. Analysis of long-term in-migration of A8 citizens since the second half of 2004 shows fairly consistent inflows of about 38,000 every six months. The rate of growth of inflow slowed somewhat between 2005 and 2006 to 21% with 92,000 migrants in 2006. However the net inflow in 2006 was 71,000, still considerably higher than the 61,000 in 2005.

Reliable regional and sub-regional migration data for A8 migrants are not available from the IPS. However, total migration flows into Yorkshire and Humber showed a substantial increase in 2004 which can most probably be attributed to A8 migration. The international migration level increased from 20,000 in 2003 to 31,000 in 2004 and 29,000 in 2005. However in 2006 the migration level fell back to 20,000.

In 2006, based on IPS estimates, A8 citizens who migrated for a period of at least a year were more likely to come to the UK for work reasons compared with other migrant groups. About 60% of A8 migrants coming to the UK for at least 12 months came for work related reasons (e.g. a definite job to go to or business reasons) compared with about 25% of all other migrants.

### 2.2.2 Annual Population Survey

The Annual Population Survey (APS) is a survey of households in Great Britain. Its purpose is to provide information on key social and socio-economic variables between the 10-yearly censuses, with particular emphasis on providing information relating to small geographical areas. The survey covers a large range of employment-related variables and non-employment-related variables, allowing cross-linking analyses to be undertaken (for example, year of arrival in the UK by nationality). Therefore it is a useful source of information for analysing migrant labour in West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the Humber.

APS data allows us to examine migrant workers who are currently working in South Yorkshire, by year of arrival to the UK. This data reveals that as of June 2007 there were 8,800 A8 nationals working in South Yorkshire. There was a significant increase of A8 migrant workers entering South Yorkshire after accession in May 2004: 3,490 of the stock of South Yorkshire A8 workers entered the UK in 2004 followed by 1,460 in 2005, 2,780 in 2006 and 1,120 in 2007. Males account for 65% of this stock and females 35%. Most of the A8 workers are young: 95% are aged between 16 and 34.

### 2.2.3 National Insurance Number Allocations

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

The DWP NINo data does not show when overseas nationals subsequently depart the UK, nor their length of stay in the UK. The DWP figures therefore give a measure of inflow of overseas nationals registering for a NINo and probably seeking work. However, they do not measure outflow or overall stock of overseas nationals in the UK. The following analysis uses NINo registrations data for South Yorkshire and the Yorkshire and Humber government office region and the UK to build up a picture of the number of A8 nationals working in the region.

The NINo data indicates that the accession of the A8 states to the European Union in 2004 greatly increased both the scale and pace of change of immigration into the UK. In 2006/07, 713,500 new national insurance numbers were issued to foreign nationals in the UK, more than twice the level issued in 2002/03. Of these 713,500 NINo allocations, 312,000 or 44% were to A8 nationals. Between May 2004 and September 2007, the total number of National Insurance Number applications from A8 nationals stood at just over 760,000.

In Yorkshire and the Humber in 2006/07, 41,640 NINo allocations were issued to foreign nationals compared to 13,620 in 2002/03, a 205% increase. Of these 41,640 applications, 22,890 or 55% were from A8 nationals, which is higher than the UK average. Between May 2004 and September 2007, 52,860 A8 migrant workers registered for National Insurance numbers in Yorkshire and Humber.

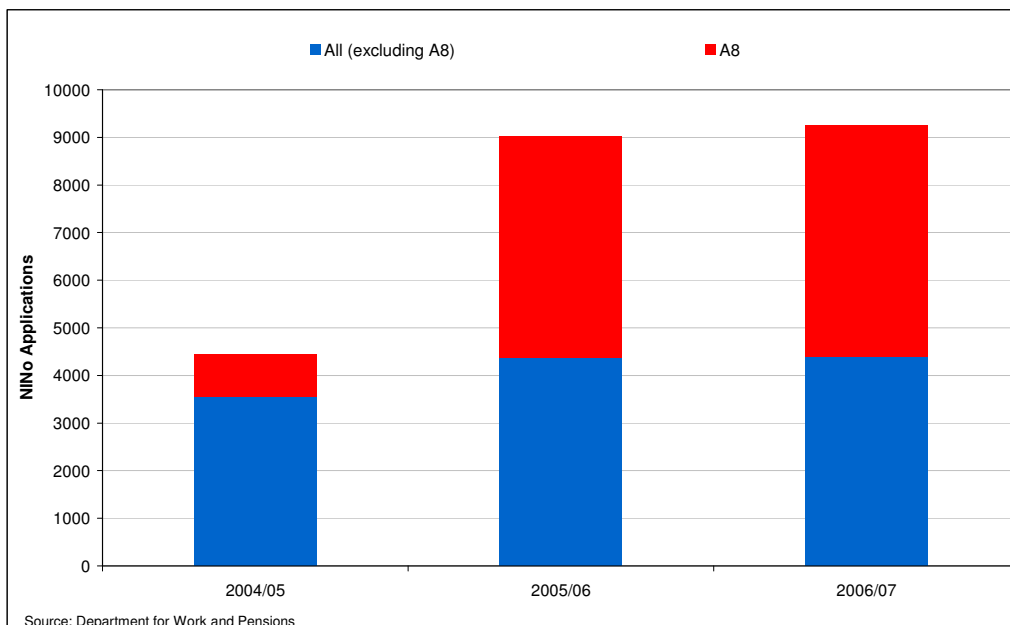
In South Yorkshire in 2006/07, 9,250 NINo allocations were issued to foreign nationals compared to 4,450 in 2004/05, a 108% increase. Of these 9,250 applications, 4,850 or 52% were from A8 nationals, which is again higher than the UK average. In 2006/07, South Yorkshire accounted for 21% of the NINo allocations for A8 workers in Yorkshire and the

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Humber. Within South Yorkshire, Doncaster accounted for the largest proportion of all NINo allocations in South Yorkshire in 2006/07, 38% compared to 33% in Sheffield, 15% in Rotherham and 13% in Barnsley.

The number of A8 nationals registering for NINo's in South Yorkshire has increased markedly since the accession of the A8 nations in May 2004. Figure 2.1 shows the number of NINo applications by year in South Yorkshire between 2004/05 and 2006/07. The number of NINo allocations for foreign nationals excluding the A8 has increased moderately since 2004. However the pace of change in A8 economic migration since 2004 has been dramatic, with a step-change (over 400%) in migration levels between 2004/05 and 2005/06. The change in A8 NINo allocations between 2005/06 and 2006/07 was only 5% suggesting that volumes of A8 migrants coming to South Yorkshire are close to reaching a peak.

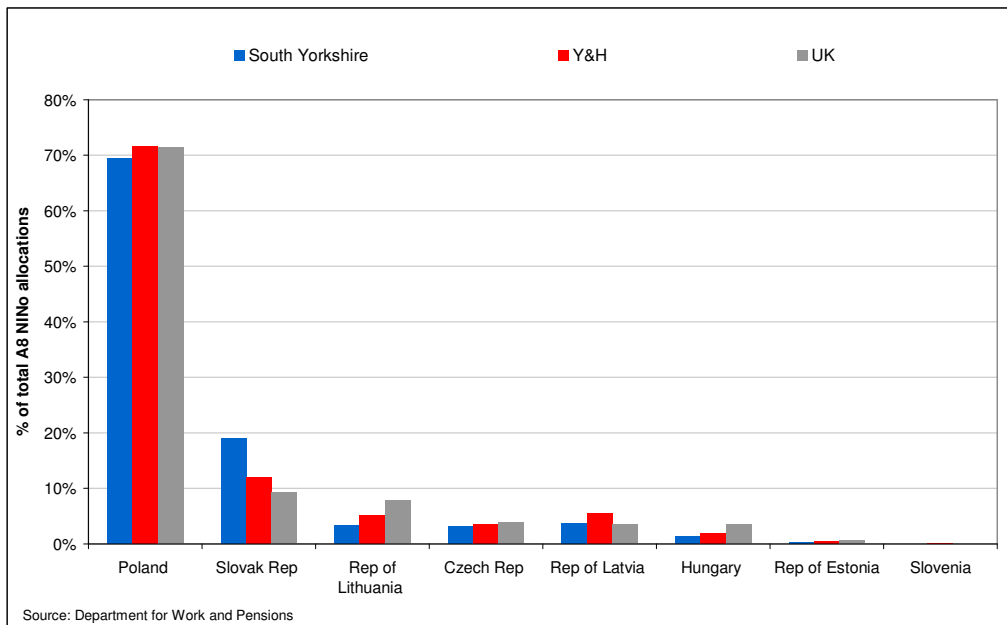
**Figure 2.1: National Insurance allocations to foreign nationals in South Yorkshire 2004/05 to 2006/07**



Amongst the A8 nationals registering the majority were Polish nationals. Figure 2.2 shows that 3,370 Polish nationals registered for a NINo in South Yorkshire in 2005/06. This accounted for 69% of all A8 nationals. The next largest group was Slovaks and Latvians accounting for 11% each.

This pattern differs slightly from the pattern observed across the UK as a whole where Polish nationals account for 71% of all A8 NINo registrations, Lithuanians 8%, Slovaks 9% and Latvians and Czech's 4% each. Therefore South Yorkshire has an over-representation of Slovaks and an under-representation of Poles and Lithuanians in NINo allocations in 2005/06 compared to the UK as a whole.

**Figure 2.2: Percentage of total A8 nationals registering for NIN0 by nationality – 2006/07**



### 2.2.4 Workers Registration Scheme

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

The WRS data can be seen as providing a count of in-migration of workers from the A8 countries. However, the data limitations - it records new registrations but not departures, and thus cannot provide an indication of out-flow, net-flow or migrant stocks. If the WRS were to include such information it would be possible to assess the extent to which workers are coming in as short-term or long-term migrants. The WRS data therefore provides a cumulative figure of the number of workers applying to the WRS since May 2004.

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

- **country of origin, gender, and age of applicant;**
- **geographical location and industrial sector of employment;** and
- **wage rate and date of arrival in the UK.**

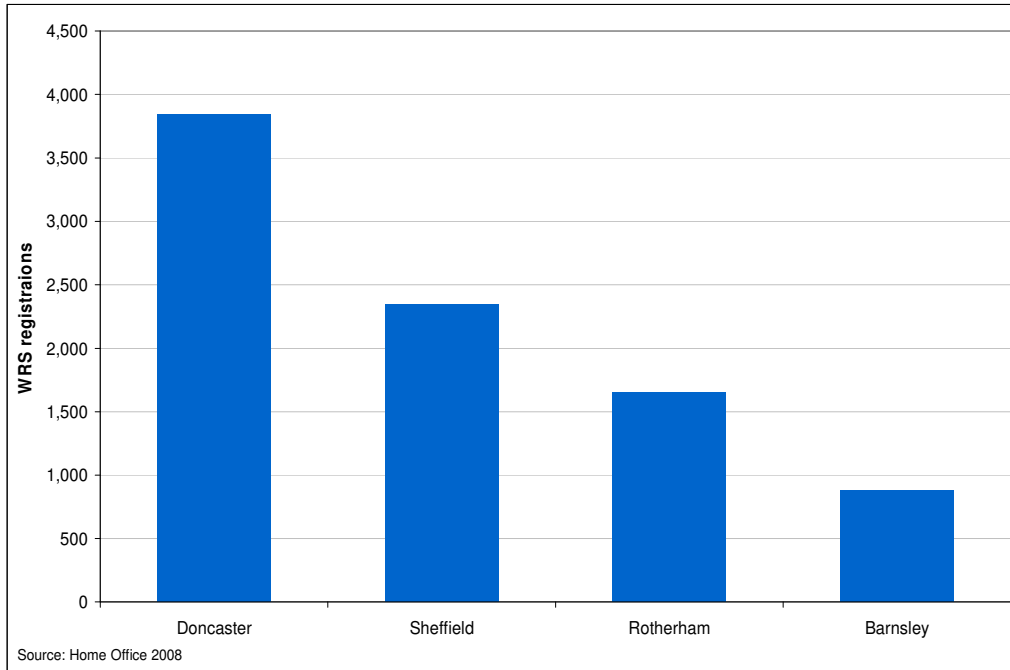
The key findings at the UK level are:

- **A cumulative total of 743,000 applicants had applied to register on the WRS between 1 May 2004 and 30 September 2007**, of which 715,000 initial applications were approved.
- **After peaking in 2006, the A8 migration flows into the UK are now slowing.** In total there were 56,000 initial applicants to the Worker Registration Scheme (WRS) in Quarter 3 (Q3) 2007, compared to 54,000 in Q2 2007, and 65,000 in Q3 2006.
- Initially the majority of WRS registrations were in London, however **overtime migrant workers have spread across the UK and sought work in other regions.** The proportion applying for work in London fell to 10% in Q3 2007 from 19% in Q3 2004. The proportions applying elsewhere have increased; Anglia and the Midlands have now overtaken London, with 15% and 14% respectively of the total registered workers in Q3 2007.
- **Migrant workers tend to be young and single.** The vast majority of workers registering since May 2004 were young: 82% aged between 18 and 34. 94% of workers stated that they had no dependants living with them in the UK when they registered and only 5% had dependants under the age of 17 with them.
- **Slightly more males come to work in the UK than females.** The male to female ratio for those who applied between May 2004 and September 2007 is 57:43.
- **The majority of migrant workers from the A8 are Polish nationals.** Between the May 2004 and September 2007, the highest proportion of approved applicants were Polish (66% of the total), followed by Lithuanian (10%) and Slovakian (10%). This is because Poland has a larger population and a relatively high unemployment rate amongst young people in Poland.

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

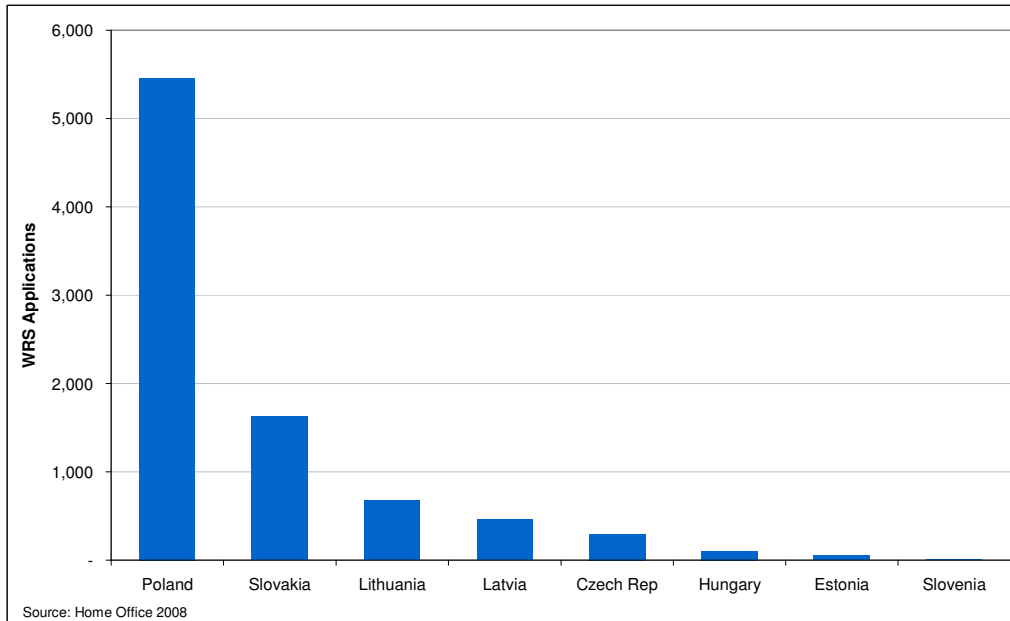
- **A significant amount of migrants have registered for work in Yorkshire and the Humber;** between May 2004 and September 2007, **52,860 A8 migrant workers** registered for the WRS in Yorkshire and Humber.
- **Flows of migrants have increased each year since 2004;** the number registering across the Yorkshire and Humber have increased year on year with 2,470 in 2004, 11,600 in 2005, 19,540 in 2006 and 19,250 to September 2007.
- **In South Yorkshire a total of 8,730 migrant workers registered for the WRS between May 2004 and September 2007;** 44% in Doncaster, 27% in Sheffield, 19% in Rotherham and 10% in Barnsley (Figure 2.3).

**Figure 2.3: WRS registrations in South Yorkshire by local authority area May 2004 – September 2007**



- The majority of migrant workers from the A8 are Polish nationals.** Between the 1<sup>st</sup> of May 2004 and the 30<sup>th</sup> of September 2007, the highest proportion of approved applicants in South Yorkshire were Polish (63% of the total), followed Slovakian (19%).

**Figure 2.4: WRS registrations in South Yorkshire by nationality May 2004 – September 2007**



- **Relatively more males registered on the WRS scheme in South Yorkshire than the UK average.** The male to female ratio for those who applied in South Yorkshire between May 2004 and September 2007 is 59:41.
- As with the trend in the UK as a whole **the majority of migrants registering in South Yorkshire are young, 81% were aged between 18 and 34.**

## 2.3 Stock estimates of migrant workers

Although the administrative and official data sources reviewed above provide a good indication of the inflow of migrants into South Yorkshire they do not measure outflows and therefore it is difficult to assess the stock of migrant workers. There is, however, evidence on the intended length of stay which provides an indication of how the inflows of migrant workers recorded by the WRS and NINo allocations may relate to the overall stock of migrants. An individual's length of stay will be influenced by a variety of factors including:

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

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

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

Information taken from details on the WRS application forms on the applicant's intended length of stay in the UK between January 2007 and December 2007 shows that:

- **59% intended to stay for "less than 3 months";**
- **2% intended to stay for "3 to 5 months";**
- **3% intended to stay for "6 to 11 months";**
- **4% intended to stay for "1 to 2 years";**
- **8% intended to stay for "more than 2 years";** and
- **24% did not know how long they would stay**

Evidence from the WRS therefore indicates that the majority of migrants registering for the WRS view their employment in the UK as very short-term. There is however, a sizeable proportion that see the move as a more permanent one, 12% of respondents intended to stay for a year or more. Care should be taken when using the above data as the applicants' situation may change significantly from the time when the application form is completed, which may affect their continued stay in the UK.

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

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


**Overall, this evidence suggests that much of the recent inflows are temporary in nature, thus the stock of A8 migrants in South Yorkshire will be significantly lower than the cumulative inflow.** A high proportion of migrants view their employment in the UK as seasonal or for a short period (less than 3 months). It also appears a relatively high proportion of recent migrants are adopting a 'wait and see' approach to the duration of their stay – 25% did not know how long they would stay. A multitude of factors may determine if migrants decide to stay in the UK longer-term, for example, career progression, integration into the community and economic conditions in the migrants' home countries.

Based on this information it is possible to use the data we have on inflows from the WRS and estimate the current population or stock of migrant workers in South Yorkshire. Although the WRS provides a good estimate to the inflow of A8 migrants into South Yorkshire there are numerous factors that may make inflow higher or lower than the data indicate:

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

Therefore we should try and account for these factors when deriving an estimate of migrant worker populations in South Yorkshire. Figure 2.5 presents an approximate method for estimating the stock of migrant workers as of September 2007. This method uses the cumulative flow of registrations on the WRS as the base, and makes adjustment for under-count and outflows. The WRS was chosen as the base as it is the data source that provides us with the best fit in relation to the definition of migrant workers most frequently used in this research study. **The central estimate is that there were around 6,100 migrant workers living in South Yorkshire in September 2007. The stock of migrant workers could range from 2,100 to 9,800.**

Figure 2.5: Estimating A8 migrant stock in South Yorkshire (2007).

				
<b>1. Stage</b>	<b>Cumulative WRS registrations</b>	<b>Adjustment for under-count</b>	<b>Adjustment for migrant workers who have since left</b>	<b>Final rounded estimate</b>
<b>2. Rationale</b>	This source provides the most appropriate fit with the definition of migrant workers	Other research source suggest that a significant proportion of migrant workers do not register	Our research suggests that the duration of stay for migrant workers is often very short (3 to 12 months)	
<b>3. Notes</b>	This is the total number of people who have registered on the WRS between May 2004 and September 2007. It includes people who were resident in the UK prior to accession and registered as well as migrants who arrived from May 2004 onwards.	For each scenario we used the following estimates of under-count: *Central – 40% *Low – 20% *High – 60%	For each scenario we used the following estimates of out-flow: *Central – 50% *Low – 80% *High – 30%	
<b>4. Central estimate</b>	8,720	12,200	6,104	<b>6,100</b>
<b>4a. Low estimate</b>	8,720	10,460	2,093	<b>2,100</b>
<b>4b. High estimate</b>	8,720	13,960	9,766	<b>9,800</b>

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

However, the flow estimate is also important because there are far more migrant workers living in the region for some duration over, say, a two year period that there is at any one point in time. Each new migrant arriving in the region may have a requirement for translation services, employment support or a language course. So whilst migrant workers may only require 6,100 units of accommodation at any one time, over a two year period there is a total potential demand for 9,800 language courses or translation services.

## 2.4 Spatial distribution and local evidence

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

Doncaster accounted for the largest share of NINo registrations in South Yorkshire at 38% or 3,630. Sheffield accounted for 33% or 3,160, Rotherham 15% or 1,430 and Barnsley 13% or 1,270. Examining NINo registrations relative to working age population gives an indication of the potential impact on the labour market of the inflow of migrant workers at the local level. Doncaster has had the largest in-flow of migrant workers relative to working-age population between 2005 and 2007 at 2.1%. This is over twice the level of the other local authority areas where NINo allocations relative to working-age population were all around 1%.

**Figure 2.6: A8 NINo allocations by local authority area, 2005 - 2007**

	A8 NINo Allocations	% of total	A8 NINo Allocations as a % of working age population
<b>Barnsley</b>	1,270	13%	1.0%
<b>Doncaster</b>	3,630	38%	2.1%
<b>Rotherham</b>	1,430	15%	1.0%
<b>Sheffield</b>	3,160	33%	1.0%
<b>South Yorkshire</b>	<b>9,490</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1.2%</b>

Source: Department for Work and Pensions

The NINo registration data highlights significant clustering of nationalities in local authority areas which may indicate the existence of networking amongst citizens of the same nationality. These clusters have been identified by examining the dispersion of NINo allocations of each nationality in specific council areas relative to the dispersion of all nationalities and are shown in figure 2.7.

The largest 'cluster' of nationals was the 2,890 Polish nationals who were allocated a NINo in Doncaster, this accounted for 47% of all Polish NINo allocations in South Yorkshire. Sheffield and Rotherham appeared to have a cluster of Slovaks, accounting for 32% and 49% of all Slovakian NINo allocations in South Yorkshire. Other clusters identified included Czechs and Hungarians in Sheffield and Estonians in Barnsley.

**Figure 2.7: Clusters of NINo registrations by nationality and council area, 2005 – 2007**

Nationality	Local Authority	Number of NINo Allocations	LA % share of total A8 NINo Allocations in South Yorkshire	LA % share of specific nationality NINo Allocations in South Yorkshire
<b>Polish</b>	Doncaster	2,890	40%	47%
<b>Slovakian</b>	Sheffield	910	28%	49%
<b>Slovakian</b>	Rotherham	600	15%	32%
<b>Czech</b>	Sheffield	170	28%	53%
<b>Hungarian</b>	Sheffield	90	28%	75%
<b>Estonian</b>	Barnsley	40	13%	80%

Source: Department for Work and Pensions

## Migrant Workers in South Yorkshire

Figure 2.8 shows that WRS data corresponds broadly with the NINo data in terms of the spatial distribution of migrant workers in South Yorkshire; 44% in Doncaster, 27% in Sheffield, 19% in Rotherham and 10% in Barnsley (Figure 2.8).

**Figure 2.8: WRS Registrations May 2004 to September 2007**

	<b>WRS Registrations</b>	<b>% of South Yorkshire total</b>
Doncaster	3,845	44%
Sheffield	2,345	27%
Rotherham	1,655	19%
Barnsley	885	10%
<b>South Yorkshire</b>	<b>8,730</b>	<b>100%</b>

## 3 Migrant Workers and the labour market

### Summary

The majority of migrant workers in South Yorkshire are employed in low-skilled manual jobs such as factory workers, packers and warehouse operatives. The evidence also indicates that migrant workers work long-hours for low wages. However, migrant workers also support the provision of public services in the region being employed as care assistants, community support workers, nurses and teachers.

Language barriers are the largest barrier facing migrant workers both in the labour market and settling successfully in communities. Although improvements have been made in the type of training and qualifications available to migrant workers there are still issues relating to cost, provision and accessibility of language training.

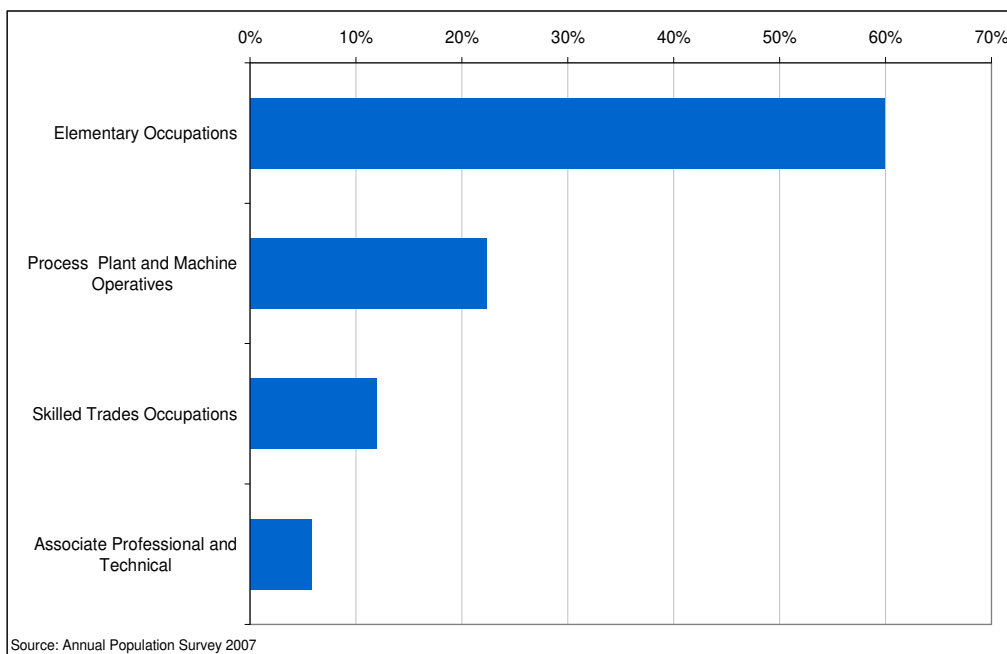
### 3.1 Introduction

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

### 3.2 Industry Sectors and Occupations

The Annual Population Survey provides information on the occupations of A8 nationals this is shown in figure 3.1.

**Figure 3.1: Occupational profile of migrant workers - % of total A8 workers in South Yorkshire 2007**



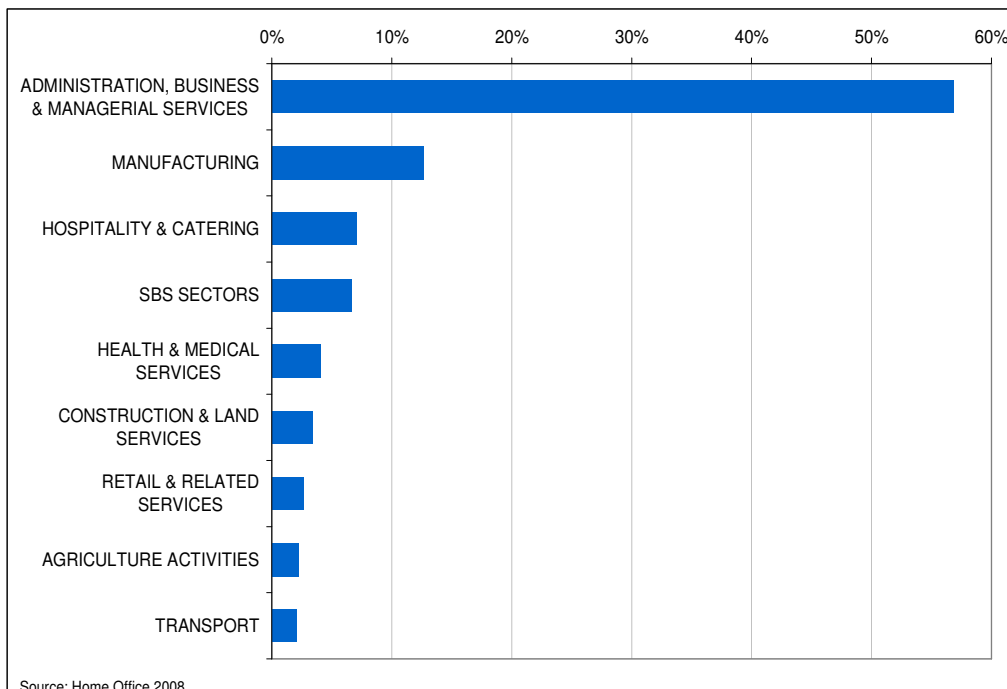
## Migrant Workers in South Yorkshire

This shows that the majority are employed in low skilled occupations in South Yorkshire: 60% in elementary occupations and 22% as process, plant and machine operatives, skilled trade occupations account for 12% of A8 workers in South Yorkshire and associate professional and technical occupations for 6%. There are no A8 workers employed in sales and customer service occupations, managers and senior officials, personal service occupations, professional occupations or as administrative and secretarial occupations. The occupational profile in South Yorkshire is very similar to Yorkshire and Humber as a whole.

The Workers Registration Scheme (WRS) data provides information on the industry sectors that A8 migrant workers are employed in. At the UK level the top five sectors for registered workers, who applied between May 2004 and September 2007, were administration, business and management (38%), hospitality and catering (19%), agriculture (10%), manufacturing (7%) and food, fish and meat processing (5%).

In South Yorkshire the three top industry sectors that migrant workers are employed in are administration, business and management<sup>1</sup> (57%), manufacturing (13%) and hospitality and catering sector (7%). The WRS industry profile in South Yorkshire differs from the UK in that there is a higher proportion of workers employed in the administration, business and managerial services: 57% compared to 38%. There is also a higher proportion employed in the manufacturing sector: 13% in South Yorkshire compared to 7% in the UK.

**Figure 3.2: WRS registrations by industrial sector in South Yorkshire, May 2004 – Sep 2007**



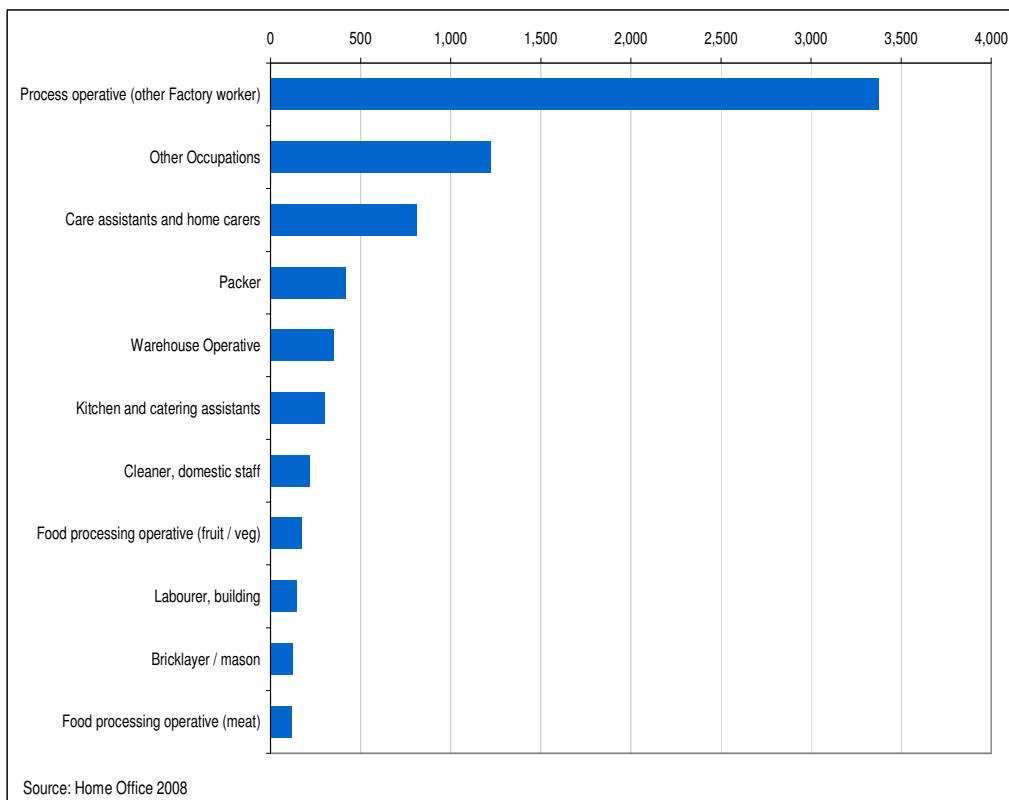
<sup>1</sup> The majority of workers in the administration, business & management sector work for recruitment agencies and could be employed in a variety of industries.

## Migrant Workers in South Yorkshire

The WRS also collects data on the occupations in which registered workers are employed. At the UK level the top twenty occupations have remained largely consistent over the period, July 2004 to September 2007. The biggest group of workers registered with the WRS is in general occupations (27%) classified as “process operatives (other factory worker)”. This is followed by warehouse operatives (8%) and packers (6%).

Figure 3.3 shows the occupations that WRS registered migrant workers are employed as in South Yorkshire. The occupational profile in South Yorkshire differs slightly from the average for the UK. A higher proportion of workers in South Yorkshire registered as process operative (other factory workers) compared with the UK. Other occupations and care assistants and home carers were also more common in South Yorkshire than the UK average. The three largest groups were process operatives (other factory workers) accounting for 46% of the total or 3,380 registrations, other occupations accounting for 17% of the registrations (1,225) and care assistants and home carers which accounted for 11% or 815 registrations. The occupational profile demonstrates that most migrant workers are employed in lower skilled manual occupations.

**Figure 3.3: WRS registrations by occupation in South Yorkshire, May 2004 – Sep 2007**



Evidence from the WRS indicates that migrant workers tend to work long hours for low wages; 86% stated they worked 35 hours a week or more and 72% of workers who applied between October 2006 and September 2007 stated that their hourly rate of earnings was £4.50 - £5.99 per hour, while 21% stated an hourly rate of £6.00 - £7.99. To set these wage levels in context, the current minimum wage is £5.52 for workers aged 22 years and over and a development rate of £4.60 per hour exists for workers aged between 18 and 21. Therefore, the majority of

migrant workers are earning close to the minimum wage level. Only 7% of migrant workers earn over £8 per hour.

Overall A8 migrant workers have tended to go to where the work is, helping to fill the gaps in the labour market. Despite the majority of migrant workers being employed in low-skilled manual occupations, migrant workers also support the provision of public services in the UK. A8 nationals are employed as care workers, teachers, researchers and classroom assistants, dental practitioners, and GPs, hospital doctors, nurses and medical specialists.

### 3.3 Skills

The official and administrative data sources on migrant workers provide very little information on the skills and qualification levels of A8 migrant workers. The APS provides limited data on qualification levels. When asked about levels of qualifications 3% had a degree qualification in Yorkshire and the Humber compared to 0% in South Yorkshire, 73% said they had another type of qualification in Yorkshire and the Humber and 89% in South Yorkshire (either professional, vocational or foreign) and 20% and 11% for Yorkshire and Humber and South Yorkshire respectively did not answer the question.

### 3.4 Barriers

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

#### 3.4.1 Administrative Barriers

There are a number of administrative barriers that A8 nationals have to overcome when entering the UK labour market:

- **WRS Registration**
- **National Insurance Number**
- **UK Bank account**

Nationals originating from the A8 countries who wish to work for more than one month are required to register with the Workers Registration Scheme (WRS), and will need a new card if they change jobs<sup>2</sup>. The charge for the first application for a WRS card is £70. Once applicants have been working legally in the UK for 12 months without a break they will have full rights of free movement and will no longer need to register on the Worker Registration scheme. They can then get a residence permit confirming their right to live and work in the UK. The registration process may appear complex to some individuals, particularly for workers whose native language is not English, and who have recently arrived in the country.

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<sup>2</sup> IPPR (2006) *Irregular migration in the UK*.

Foreign nationals working in the UK are also required to register for a national insurance number. They will also need to open a UK bank account which will require them to prove their identity and provide current proof of address. These administrative procedures may prove confusing to new migrants entering the UK to seek employment especially if they have limited language skills. Evidence from some research in Bradford<sup>3</sup> indicates that migrants had problems in understanding the UK benefit, council tax and National Insurance system, as well as other official documentation. The research found that migrant workers experienced difficulties in completing application forms and communicating with government staff (although this is closely linked to language barriers, which are covered separately in this chapter).

### 3.4.2 Informational Barriers

Information barriers have the potential to prevent many migrant workers who have come to the UK accessing the labour market. The Institute for Employment Research suggests that the barriers faced by migrants include a lack of understanding of the labour market and the job-search process.<sup>4</sup> Many migrants do not understand what labour market and vacancy information is available, and from where.<sup>5</sup>

According to research undertaken by Chiswick (1982), the majority of migrants are unlikely to have arranged employment before migrating and are therefore less likely to be employed initially. The resulting job search activity of migrants is likely to be less effective than that of recent home born labour market entrants, due to a lack of knowledge of where the most appropriate labour market opportunities lie. In the UK context, some migrants, entering through the work permit system are required to have jobs arranged as a requirement of the various scheme.<sup>6</sup> It is not known how applicable this finding will be to the more recent experience in the UK, especially as there is now an active base of agents recruiting direct from A8 countries. However, the majority of migrants from the A8 are likely to search for jobs on arrival in the UK.

McKay and Winkleman-Gleed (2005) describe how in the East of England, word of mouth and family connections are the most likely route into employment. In addition to work opportunities, these methods provide a basis for community formation and adaptation and it is becoming increasingly recognised that the migration 'industry', including travel agents and lawyers, develop from these networks.<sup>7</sup>

Data from the APS shows the main method of looking for work in Yorkshire and Humber (the sample size is too small to produce robust figures for South Yorkshire). Figure 3.4 shows that almost a quarter of A8 migrant workers in Yorkshire and the Humber used a private employment agency as their main method of job search. This was closely followed by visiting a job centre and searching for work using job adverts in newspapers.

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<sup>3</sup> Bradford Central & Eastern European Working Group (January 2006) *A8 Migration in Bradford: A Template for Action*.

<sup>4</sup> Green, A., Owen, D. and Wilson, R. (2006) *Changing Pattern of Employment by Ethnic Group and for Migrant Workers*, Warwick: Institute for Employment Research.

<sup>5</sup> Learning and Skills Council (2007) *Migrant Workers and the Labour Market*.

<sup>6</sup> Chiswick (1982) cited in *The labour market outcomes and psychological well-being of ethnic minority migrants in Britain*, Shields, M and Wheatly Price, P (2003). Home Office online Report

<sup>7</sup> McKay and Winkleman-Gleed (2005) cited in IPPR, (2006) *Irregular Migration*.

**Figure 3.4: Main Method of looking for work by A8 nationals in Yorkshire and Humber 2007**

Main Method of Job Search	% of Total
On books of private employment agency	24%
Visit a Jobcentre	22%
Study situations vacant in newspapers or journals	22%
Answer ads in newspapers and journals	9%
Ask friends, relatives, colleagues	8%
Advertise in newspapers or journals	7%
Do anything else to find work	7%
Source: APS 2007	

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

### 3.4.3 Language Barriers

The 'language barrier' is the most consistently cited problem facing migrant workers and service providers. It is a major barrier to accessing services generally. This is particularly acute amongst those working in low skill occupations, prevalent in the South Yorkshire area, where only basic English language skills are required.

Research has identified language proficiency as one of the major determinants of labour market success both in terms of participation rates and wages commanded.<sup>8</sup> Employers are keen that employees attain the language skills they need to be as effective as possible; and employers also want to ensure they are not left open to litigation as a consequence of workers not understanding instructions (Health and Safety Training for example). This barrier has been overcome in a variety of ways, including using fellow workers as translators, running language training classes and placing migrant workers among English-speaking workers so they can acquire language skills.<sup>9</sup>

In the hospitality and tourism sector, 59% of economic migrants do not speak English at home, and almost 25% have experienced difficulties keeping a job due to language difficulties. Research has also indicated that migrants with good language skills can earn 20% more than those with poor skills. The chances of finding work are better for migrants with English-speaking backgrounds, a statistic that is consistent across all skill and qualification levels.<sup>10</sup>

ESOL (English for speakers of other languages) is the main Government training provision for foreigners coming to the UK with little English language skills. In response to a significant change in the type of learner accessing ESOL provision, a far greater take-up from newly

<sup>8</sup> Dustmann, C., Fabbri, F., Preston, I. and Wadsworth, J. (2003) *Labour market performance of immigrants in the UK labour market*. Home Office 05/03

<sup>9</sup> Dench, S., Hurstfield, J., Hill, D., and Akroyd, K. (2006) *Employers' use of migrant labour: main report*. Home Office online report.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

arrived migrant workers, the Government reviewed the course in 2006. It concluded that neither ESOL International nor ESOL Skills for Life were meeting the needs of migrant workers and therefore the Government requested the development of a new suite of English language qualifications. The new ESOL qualification, ESOL for work (EfW), supports a shorter, more job-focused, practical approach to English-language skills that is particularly attractive to migrant workers.

This EfW qualifications are different to any of the previous ESOL qualifications in that they will, to allow a greater focus on the skills needed for employment and employability (particularly those in relatively low-skilled work), have a greater emphasis on reading, speaking & listening rather than writing, although they are 'all mode' qualifications. They have the capacity to cover topics such as health and safety, customer care, food hygiene, common work practices, equality and diversity with some sector focused induction into jobs or other job specific elements. The cost of the new EfW (£880) will continue to be part-funded by government but learners or employers will have to pay £330 towards the course.

Research by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation<sup>11</sup> found that despite the importance of acquiring good English, only one-third of the migrants were taking or had taken English classes, with considerable variation between sectors. Those with poor English were least likely to have accessed a class. There is some evidence that long working hours, the accessibility and the cost of classes were factors in this decision.

The Regional Language Network (RLN) in Yorkshire and Humber were consulted for this research project. Although set up to improve UK business' awareness and understanding of languages and cultures other than English, the Network has increasingly become involved in issues relating to migrant workers in the UK. The Network has been approached by employers whose needs are for interpretation and translation services, as well as for English language training for migrant workers. In relation to communication, the needs that employers and migrant workers have are quite broad ranging, covering reading, writing, speaking and listening skills in the English language. Specific needs depend on the actual requirements of the job. For example, in jobs where the worker needs to be able to read labelling or understand health and safety requirements, accurate reading skills are needed. On the other hand, speaking and listening skills are more relevant to the hospitality and catering sector.

In summary, language issues are central to policy considerations in relation to migrant workers. They are also a key dimension to many of the challenges that migrant workers face. The needs that workers and employers have are varied. Although improvements have been made in the type of training and qualifications available to migrant workers there are still issues relating to cost, provision and accessibility of language training.

#### 3.4.4 Skills/Qualifications Barriers

Prospects of high pay and training are one reason that migrants seek employment in the UK. However, they are often faced with the realisation that their foreign qualifications are not recognised in the UK, and they end up working in lower skilled jobs than they would in their home countries. This mismatch between recognised and international qualifications means that

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<sup>11</sup> The Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 'Migrants' lives beyond the Workplace – The experience of Central and Eastern Europeans in the UK' May 2007.

many migrant workers are working below their skill level, even when the skills they possess are in short-supply within the region.

An employer survey conducted by the East of England Development Agency indicated that one in four employers felt that the migrant workers they employed were over skilled for the job they were doing.<sup>12</sup> A third of migrants have 'unrecognised' qualifications, compared to less than 10% of UK born individuals.<sup>13</sup> The Trades Union Congress undertook research into the qualifications of migrant workers in the UK labour market and found a substantial gap between the present contribution migrant workers make to the UK economy, and the contribution they could make if their skills and qualifications were recognised by employers.<sup>14</sup> Better official co-ordination and mechanisms are required if the recognition of skills and qualifications of migrant workers is to be improved and in turn enhance their labour mobility and contribution to the economy.

### 3.5 Integration

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

Integrating minority ethnic groups is important in creating a society that ensures everyone has equal opportunities.<sup>15</sup> For sometime there have been widespread regional and national differences in whether people thought immigration was 'under control' in the UK, but by 2000 attitudes towards migrant groups in general had changed for the better. Despite this, there has been an increase in concerns about unemployment, loss of social welfare and a drop in educational standards, and those who, at the same time, blame minorities and migrants into the UK for these changes.<sup>16</sup>

However, community tensions are not an inevitable consequence of immigration. The impact of immigration on neighbourhoods varies depending upon many factors including the local socio-economic context, the history of previous settlement and ethnic profile, and the actual and perceived ethnicity and identity of new immigrants. The success of local agencies in mediating between established and incoming populations is also critical. Evidence suggests that, regardless of status and origin, new immigrants often live in poor quality housing in deprived areas and face harassment and hostility.<sup>17</sup> Unfortunately there has been little research in the past five years on social exclusion experiences amongst recent immigrant groups.

The social needs of migrant workers are not met through the formal economy and formal institutions alone. The social networks by which new migrants follow initial migration of family or

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<sup>12</sup> People1st (2005) *Impact of migrant workers on the People 1<sup>st</sup> Footprint*.

<sup>13</sup> Dustmann, C., Fabbri, F., Preston, I., Wadsworth, J., Shields, M., Wheatley Price, S. and Kempton, J. (2002) *Migrants in the UK: their characteristics and labour market outcomes and impacts*. The Research Development and Statistics Directorate.

<sup>14</sup> 'Migrant workers in the labour market – the role of unions in recognition of skills and qualifications' Research Paper 7, December 2007, TUC.

<sup>15</sup> Delorenzi, S. Introduction in *Going Places*. IPPR.

<sup>16</sup> Crawley, H. (2005) *Evidence on attitudes to asylum and immigration: what we know, don't know and need to know*. Centre on Migration, Policy and Society: working paper: number 23.

<sup>17</sup> Joseph Rowntree Foundation, (2006) *Experiences of new immigration at the neighbourhood level*

community members are of vital importance in transferring resources and information.<sup>18</sup> For instance, migrants are able to speed-up their access to the job market through the assistance of fellow migrants around administrative requirements, accommodation, job searching, and language barriers. A social network refers to the links made through personal relationships including kinship, friendship and community ties. These networks include immigration networks concerned with the actual movement of people, family units and chain migrations. The NINo registration data highlighted in chapter two indicates clusters of nationalities in specific areas within South Yorkshire which suggests the existence of networking amongst citizens of the same nationality. A lack of networks and familiarity with the 'host' community can be expected to depress the occupational achievement of migrants, relative to their skills and education.

A report by The Joseph Rowntree<sup>19</sup> found that the majority of migrants – men and women alike – were spending most of their leisure time with recent and settled immigrants from their own country of origin, and with migrants from other countries, but were rarely spending much time with British people. Socialising with British people increased with the length of stay of migrants. However, after two years, one in four still say that they spent no leisure time at all with British people and less than one in five that most of their time was spent with them. As one would expect, the level of proficiency in English was a key determinant of the degree to which relationships were established with British citizens.

### 3.6 Housing Needs

Migrants can face many problems relating to accommodation including finding vacant premises, its quality, high cost relative to wages and problems arising from multiple occupancy. A key issue for strategic housing bodies is that data is limited on the volume, distribution, future intentions and families of migrant workers. This makes accurate housing planning and strategy formation difficult.

In addition to inadequacies in the available data, migrant workers are further off the housing strategy radar because of their propensity to be housed in the private rented sector. The private rented sector tends to be a diverse and diffuse collection of, usually small, landlords. As such, there is often no overarching body that monitors the sector or is able to provide information, leadership or guidance on trends in the sector. Migrant workers are relatively poorly paid and often their housing is arranged through agencies, or provided by employers. This tends to increase the likelihood of workers living in overcrowded conditions. Correspondingly, health and safety issues may exist, for example, fire hazard due to standard occupancy level being exceeded. These factors will be exacerbated if private landlords do not apply for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) licenses.

As in other areas of social and cultural integration, it is likely that migrant workers find it difficult to access and understand information on their housing options. Additionally, they may be unaware of their rights as private tenants and options they have as citizens to enforce their rights. Housing and wider community integration issues are closely related: where migrant workers live determines the social opportunities available to them and the potential problems or challenges they may experience.

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<sup>18</sup> Von Weizsacker and J. Brugel (2006) *Welcome to Europe*, Issue Three

<sup>19</sup> The Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 'Migrants' lives beyond the Workplace – The experience of Central and Eastern Europeans in the UK' May 2007.



## 4 Consultations

### Summary

The consultations undertaken with migrant workers, community representatives, employers and recruitment agencies provide a valuable source of information by helping to confirm the findings from the official data sources and provide a more complete picture of the nature and experience of migrant workers in South Yorkshire.

Generally it was economic considerations that brought the migrant workers consulted to the UK and South Yorkshire. Although other considerations such as life experience or learning English also played a role. The importance of social networks in finding employment and housing as well as helping to integrate and settle in the local community was highlighted. Recruitment agencies also played an important role in finding employment across a range of industries for migrant workers. In general the migrant workers socialised with other migrant workers rather than British people. In terms of the long-term aspirations of migrant workers, most expected to stay working in the region for the next couple of years but had adopted a wait and see approach over the longer-term. There was a general perception that career development and progression would be difficult.

### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results from the consultation phase of the research programme. Given that, other than what the official and administrative tells us, there is very limited information on the migrant worker populations in South Yorkshire this primary research phase is vital. The objectives of this primary research were to:

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

### 4.2 Description of primary research

The primary research involved a series of telephone consultations, workshops and face-to-face interviews with key groups in South Yorkshire. The following key groups were involved in this part of the research:

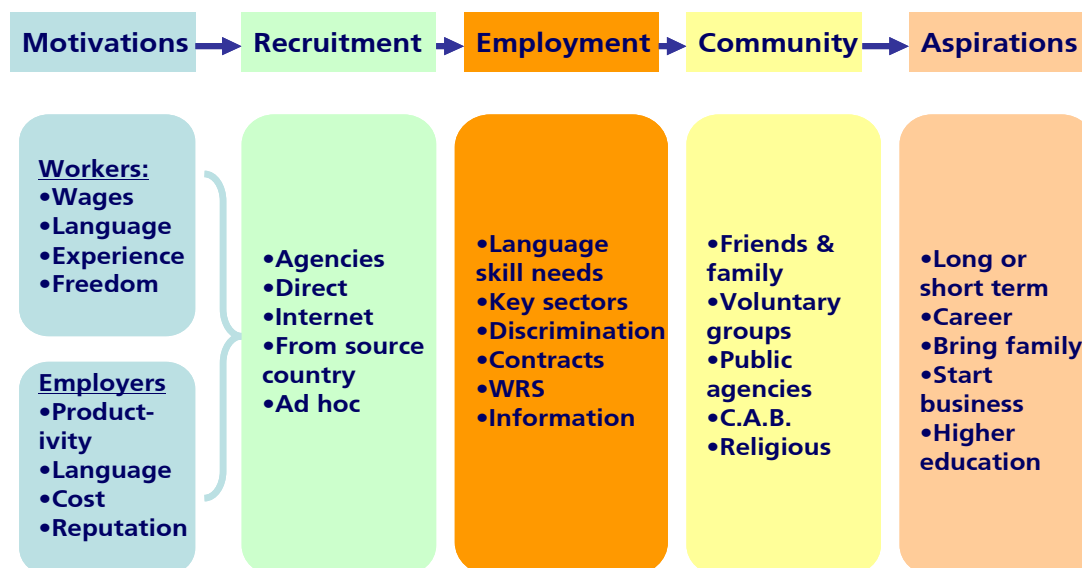
- **Migrant workers** – two focus groups (in Sheffield and Barnsley) and four face-to-face interviews were undertaken with Polish migrant workers.
- **Community representatives** – provided an insight into the experiences of A8 migrant workers settling in South Yorkshire.

- **Employers** – six employers from a range of industries including hotels and catering, food processing and retail were consulted across South Yorkshire.
- **Recruitment agents** – six recruitment agencies which provide services to a range of industries including construction were consulted across South Yorkshire (Sheffield, Barnsley and Rotherham).
- **Job Centre Plus offices** – employees of job centre plus provided an insight into the experience of migrant workers in South Yorkshire.

The Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion undertook the field-work with migrant workers and community representatives. They facilitated the migrant worker workshops (one in Barnsley and Sheffield) and undertook the face-to-face interviews with migrant workers. Experian undertook the consultations with employers, recruitment agencies and job centre plus offices.

The field work for the project revolved around a number of key themes. Within each theme there were key research questions that were addressed consistently through all aspects of the field work. Figure 4.1 presents the themes and some of the key research topics. The following sections of the report are structured around this framework presenting findings under each of the key themes.

**Figure 4.1: Framework for field work**



In general terms, the findings from the primary research in South Yorkshire reflect those of the previous research undertaken for the LSC in the rest of Yorkshire and the Humber; language skills were the most important issue facing migrant workers, affecting their ability to access employment opportunities, be employed below their skills level and integrate effectively into communities, informal networks of friends and family remained an important method of seeking employment and motivations for coming to the UK were the same. One notable difference between the two research projects in South Yorkshire and the rest of Yorkshire and Humber is the slight change in intentions towards returning home. Economic conditions in Poland have

improved since the first primary research was undertaken and the pound has weakened against the Polish Zloty. This makes the return of migrants back to their home country more likely if they are unable to find suitable and well paid employment in the UK.

## 4.3 Motivations

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

### 4.3.1 Migrant Workers

Participants at the workshops listed the following reasons for leaving their country:

- **seeking employment;**
- **experiencing something new;**
- **learning the language;**
- **gaining new skills and building a career;** and
- **earn and save some money.**

The main reasons why migrant workers interviewed chose to move to South Yorkshire were:

- **employment opportunities;**
- **recruitment agency got them a job there;** and
- **because of friends living in the region.**

Most of the respondents came to South Yorkshire, either Barnsley or Sheffield, because of work set-up through a recruitment agency. One respondent in Barnsley explained that a group of sixty migrant workers signed a contract through an agency which relocated them to the area. He said friends had told him that it would be a '*cheap and easy life*'.

It was also evident from the focus groups that experiences of living in South Yorkshire were generally positive and many migrant workers have intentions of remaining in the area. Two of the respondents of the focus group in Barnsley had previously been living in Dinnington, near Sheffield and had only recently moved nearer to the city. They said that they had originally moved to Dinnington because their friend had helped them to get a flat.

All of the participants in Sheffield said they would be reluctant to move to another area now because they said they were, '*too scared to move, in Sheffield they were safe, they have accommodation and a job*'. They also said that they had friends in their locality and they would not like to have to start again.

A point of general agreement among all respondents was that they really missed their families and this was a reason to return to Poland, although one respondent in Barnsley had come with her children, most of the group had not come with their families.

Overall the research highlights the important role of social networks in bringing migrant workers to live and work in South Yorkshire and the key role that recruitment agencies play in finding migrant workers suitable employment.

### 4.3.2 Employers

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

### 4.3.3 Recruitment Agencies

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

Some of the recruitment agencies highlighted the transitory nature of some flows of A8 migrant workers who come to the UK for 3 to 6 months to generate wealth before returning home, and then come back to the UK some time later where the process starts again. However, they also indicated that some migrants seek low skilled jobs initially, to build up an employment history in the UK after which they move onto employment more suited to their skills set and qualifications.

## 4.4 Recruitment

It is important to understand the recruitment process for a number of reasons. Firstly, understanding the most significant recruitment methods indicates how efficiently the labour market is operating. Secondly, the relative preferences for recruitment method has implications for how well labour market information flows and the ease with which workers can find the work they want. Thirdly, recruitment methods have implications for matters concerning employee rights and, for example, ensuring that contracting is legitimate.

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

### 4.4.1 Recruitment Agencies

The research has highlighted the important role that recruitment agencies play in finding suitable employment for migrant workers from the A8 countries. Migrant workers tend to find out

about the services offered by recruitment agencies through a number of sources namely: shop frontage, advertising, website and word of mouth. Job brokers highlighted the importance of promotion of their services through word of mouth in local migrant community networks. Word of mouth is particularly important to one agency in Barnsley who stated that:

*‘where a migrant worker has had a positive experience finding employment with us, this will often result in 5 or 6 of their friends or relative coming to the agency to find work’*

Employers are actively made aware of the recruitment agencies through cold calling and mail canvassing, from which a sound client base is established.

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

In terms of qualifications recruitment agencies report some mismatch. It is often the case that although migrant workers may be qualified, in some instances to degree level, these qualifications are not required for the types of jobs they are seeking. Migrant workers are frequently looking for low skilled jobs where they can accumulate some wealth before returning to their home country. An example of this is migrant workers who are qualified to degree level, seeking bar work. In the hospitality industry migrant workers seeking work are frequently students studying in the UK. This type of work suits studying migrant workers because it is part-time and flexible around their study time.

The construction sector was one industry where migrant workers’ skill set, qualifications and experience can be relatively closely matched. Although, some professional qualifications migrant workers hold are still not recognised by the construction industry in the UK. One construction and property recruitment agency in Sheffield send such migrant workers on training courses in the UK to obtain the necessary professional qualification (for example assistance to obtain the Construction Industry Scheme certificate required by the Inland Revenue to legally operate as a sub-contractor).

#### 4.4.2 Employers

The vast majority of the employers spoken to stated that they did not specifically target migrant workers. Employers typically said that they employ “whoever is right for the job”, with employers from retail sector being particularly keen to emphasise an attitude of non-discrimination. However, all of the employers we consulted employ migrant workers.

The majority of employers consulted with did not use recruitment agencies to find staff. This may be specific to the industry/occupations class we have focused on i.e. low-skilled, manual labour. Only one employer (a food manufacturer in Sheffield) said that they use a specialised agency to recruit migrant workers both from the UK and directly from Eastern Europe. They said it is essential for them to do this as there is not a sufficient supply of local labour available.

A hotel in Sheffield also highlighted the importance of migrant workers as there is no other labour available. They stressed the impact of word of mouth on their recruitment process:

*“We took on a couple of Polish people and it has spread through word of mouth more than anything. Applicants pick up a form in the hotel then apply directly.”*

Many of the larger firms consulted have begun posting job adverts on the internet, resulting in a substantial rise in applications from workers still living in the A8 countries. Employers were divided as to how they dealt with such applications.

#### 4.4.3 Migrant Workers

The focus groups with migrant workers confirmed the importance of specialist recruitment agencies to the employment of migrant labour in South Yorkshire. This was particularly the case for participants from countries such as Poland and Hungary. These specialist agencies have bases in central and eastern European countries and specialise in finding UK employment for people from these countries. This practice was mentioned in relation to certain sectors of the economy such as traditional manufacturing (e.g. food production) and social care. However, finding work through agencies was not considered to be an ideal method of finding work, and the following reasons were quoted by respondents:

- **Agencies tend to fill vacancies only within specific sectors and often call centres;**
- **Some agencies charged unfair fees for the services provided;** and
- **Agency workers could be treated differently from other employees**

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Job progression and finding a job which fits in with their aspirations and experience were key issues raised by migrant workers during the workshops in Sheffield and Barnsley. One migrant worker indicated that they had struggled to find work at the lower-end of the job market due to being overqualified stating that when she arrived in the UK she found she could only get work in a call-centre whilst she was told she was too qualified for other jobs.

There was a shared agreement among the migrant workers interviewed in South Yorkshire that Jobcentre Plus was not helpful in their search for employment. The deficiencies cited by migrant workers when trying to access Jobcentre Plus were:

- **No provision for migrants with poor language skills;**
- **A perceived lack of personal support;**
- **No provision/understanding for migrants with a lack of UK work experience;**
- **Support and advice for lack of National Insurance number;** and
- **Perceived poor customer service skills.**

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The main barrier preventing migrant workers from using Jobcentre Plus was, according to one respondent, the fact that using the service requires fairly good language skills whilst personal support is not provided. One participant who had gone to Jobcentre Plus said she found the experience ‘very difficult’ because the adviser told her to use the phone to apply for jobs, which she found very hard because she lacked confidence with her English skills:

*‘I was very scared to do this; it was the first time I had used English’.*

She reported that when she tried, she was not very successful because her English was not good enough. Finally, one respondent specified that the service could be more useful, whilst

another respondent commented that advisors had very poor customer skills and were not supportive enough, particularly when speaking with strong accents.

## 4.5 Employment

One of the most important areas of interest in this research is the employment experiences that migrant workers are having in the UK and in particular South Yorkshire. The official and administrative data source reviewed in chapter two and three provide a reasonable amount of detail about the industries and occupations that migrant workers are employed in. However, the consultations are vital in confirming the official data sources and providing a fuller picture on issues such as skills matching, discrimination and career development opportunities.

### 4.5.1 Migrant Workers

Participants of the migrant workshops were employed in a wide range of occupations. Most of those in Barnsley started their work experience in call centres. Others were employed in factories, many in food processing factories. There were also some professionals such as a dentist, one teacher assistant and one participant was employed by the council to provide support to refugees.

Although there were stories of people struggling to find work, most of the respondents were now employed in a job they were satisfied with. However, when investigating the reasons why they '*felt satisfied with their job*', it emerged that it was mainly because of their improved economic situation compared to their situation in Poland, rather than career development and an expectation to progress and gain valuable experience.

Overall, participants found that the working conditions in UK were better than in Poland as they were allowed frequent breaks and greater flexibility. They also experienced better health and safety conditions, received bonuses and were under less pressure from management compared to their previous positions in Poland. Respondents generally agreed that work was harder and much more stressful in Poland. One respondent explained that her manager had to teach her how to relax. She added that she liked working in the UK because, '*you can do it your own way.*' Another respondent said that in comparison to Poland, employers in the UK pay more attention to health and safety issues.

The most quoted employment related barriers experienced by participants in the discussion groups was a lack of UK work experience, and difficulties in getting qualifications recognised and their previous work experience valued by employers. This prevented progression in employment as well as access to more professional positions. Participants pointed out that although it was relatively easy to find a first job, this was usually in a factory, catering or call centres. Progression into higher positions was considered to be difficult by respondents, as was moving into more professional occupations for which they had Polish qualifications. For instance, respondents felt:

*"Once you start working in one sector you will be stuck there"*

*"Qualifications don't count once you move to the UK you need to think you will start from the beginning. They often don't even check CVs."*

*“Moving on is very difficult. It you get a job in a factory and then you want to move into an office it will be almost impossible”*

Nationality was not perceived as a direct barrier to employment by the majority of respondents. However, some respondents agreed that employers were nervous of employing foreigners. Some general findings from the migrant workshops were:

- **Migrant workers were in lower level jobs taking into account their qualifications and previous work experience;**
- **The previous work experience of migrant workers was not valued when they applied and their CV were often not even checked;** and
- **Migrant workers qualifications were not recognised and they were often asked for UK qualifications.**

The literature review and research has identified language skills as a key issue for migrant workers seeking employment and the primary research confirmed this. Poor English language skills was the most quoted barrier by participants in the two discussion groups. Language barriers prevented migrant workers from:

- **Accessing certain types of jobs;**
- **Progressing up the career ladder;** and
- **Fully integrating into the community.**

The connection between poor language skills and lack of confidence emerged strongly during the two focus groups. In fact, language barriers undermined self-confidence and made it more difficult to socialise and interact with the people in the local community.

One respondent who had problems with English found poor English skills to be a big barrier to employment especially when first arriving in the UK. Although this respondent had a good career in Poland, with 20 years office experience, she could only get, with the help of her husband, a job in a shop. However she was determined *‘to do better in this new country’* and to get to know people, socialise and improve her language skills. Therefore, she got involved in volunteering activities with the aim of integrating into the new community while practicing her English. The respondent finally got a data entry job in a factory, which was much closer to her previous position.

The key issues about language provision identified by the participants were:

- **Lack of affordable language courses;**
- **Lack of higher level provision;** and
- **Difficulties with combining learning and work due to shift work which made regular attendance at English language classes difficult.**

Most of the migrant workers interviewed paid for their language courses. They felt that affordable courses were available only at a very basic level whilst higher level courses tended to be much more expensive and not provided locally. This prevented those with some language skills attending higher level classes and thus improving their skills.

Workshop participants felt that having to pay for ESOL restricts access to courses, making learning English more difficult especially for the newer arrivals to the UK. For instance, the

younger participants in the Barnsley focus group, who were still in education, said they did not receive any English lessons when they came here and they had '*learnt by themselves*'. Work and social networks were considered the key channels to improve language skills. As one respondent pointed out '*work was the best language school*' because '*it forces you to speak in English all of the time*'.

#### 4.5.2 Community Representatives

A more negative picture of employment in South Yorkshire was painted by the community representative who works with Slovak Roma. Their view was that if Slovak Roma migrant workers do not find employment through recruitment agencies, contacts and members of the family, they then have to rely on Gangmasters to get them a job. These jobs usually are:

- **low-paid;**
- **low-skilled;**
- **shift work;**
- **long distances from their home;** and
- **agency work, thus insecure and irregular.**

The community representative also explained that sometimes migrants can only get work for a few days per week and because they are reliant on such short-term temporary jobs they cannot plan financially for the future.

The role of language skills for social cohesion and employment was defined as crucial by one community representative who worked mainly with Slovak Roma migrants in South Yorkshire. Poor language skills meant that Slovak Roma migrants were concentrated in poor employment. The community representative commented:

*'It is absolutely vital that migrant workers get English classes because their poor language skills limit the work they can take on, which invariably was poorly paid employment.'*

The community representative pointed out that language training provision was lacking.

#### 4.5.3 Employers

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

The skills level amongst migrant workers varies, according to employers. Most migrants have some form of qualification (often a university degree) and are in most cases over qualified for the role they undertake. Good customer interaction is the most common skill required by employers. However employers stress that the roles the migrant workers tend to be applying for are low skilled and only require elementary skills to qualify.

Where employers have over qualified workers, the effect on the business varies. For example two employers say that there are instances of high turnover of staff where migrant workers are over qualified and move into employment which better suits their skills and qualifications. Others say there is no impact on the business. Many employers recognised that the qualification frameworks from many A8 countries are not directly transferable to those in the UK, making it hard to assess the skills and qualifications of potential workers. Whilst a university degree level qualification is relatively recognisable, the same can not be said of vocational qualifications.

Employers agree that the migrant workers they employ do not lack any skills in particular. However, some highlight that the migrant workers' English language skills could be improved. A hotel and a food manufacturer said that they provide training to those migrants who wish to improve their English skills. All but one employer that we consulted with said that English deficiencies do not create any problems within the business. A hotel, which doesn't provide any training/support for English deficiencies, said that it can cause tension between staff, "*Some English workers can find it frustrating if the migrants do not understand instructions.*"

Most employers feel that there are no barriers faced by migrant workers employed by them. However, some highlight that working below their skill level and language ability can sometimes pose a problem.

#### 4.5.4 Recruitment Agencies

The consultations with recruitment agencies in South Yorkshire highlighted the main barriers that prevent migrant workers from gaining suitable employment. Agencies indicated that lack of English language skills is one of the main barriers faced by migrant workers. However, most migrants have at least a basic understanding of English. None of the agencies we consulted with offered any form of training migrants could complete to improve their English language skills. This is most likely due to the fact that there will often be another migrant or UK national that could fill the vacant position instead.

Another common barrier to employment described by the agencies was the difficulty in obtaining employment references for migrant workers. This is over come by some agencies by asking for a character reference from a tutor or landlord. However, one agency insists on a two year employment history. Where migrants can not provide this history the agency will help by contacting their previous employer in the migrant's home country, otherwise they would not be employed.

Overall, the consultations with recruitment agencies in South Yorkshire indicate that migrant workers have built a good reputation for themselves. Agencies describe migrant workers as productive, hard working, reliable, honest, positive attitude to work, keen and flexible. All of these attributes aid their success in finding employment in South Yorkshire.

## 4.6 Community Integration

Successful integration into the community in which migrant workers live and work is an important aspect of quality of life and to the long-term aspirations of migrant workers to stay in

the UK. This section reviews the experiences of migrant workers in integrating into local communities in South Yorkshire.

#### 4.6.1 Migrant Workers

Participants reported very different experiences of integrating into the community. Most of the participants said that they felt that they were living in a migrant community, although some of them had tried to integrate with the English community.

A fairly high proportion of the respondents recalled some negative experience of living in Barnsley which they felt was because of their nationality and status as foreign workers in the UK. Some younger migrants, who were still in education, said they were treated badly in school, especially when they spoke Polish. They said that the English children did not mix with the foreigners at all. However, one young respondent, particularly fluent in English, said she *'was forced to integrate'* because she did not have any other choice as there were no other Poles of her age in the area. She said she mainly socialised with British people and she felt part of the town and the community.

One participant said that she has made an effort to integrate with English people to improve her English which she felt was poor. She joined the Samaritans, stating that she helps them and they help her with her English.

Other issues negatively impacting integration were:

- **Fragmentation within the Polish community - Polish people stick together in groups within the Polish population of Barnsley;**
- **Lack of effort from Polish people in socialising with British people;** and
- **Lack of confidence due to language barriers which prevent them from socialising with British people.**

When asked whether they felt they have been victims of discrimination respondents expressed a variety of opinions. Many of them said they did not feel they experienced discrimination because of their nationality rather because of their poor language skills. Although two of the respondents had experienced some discrimination when living in a locality outside Sheffield, they felt that living in a larger city such as Sheffield, was easier because people were used to different nationalities and it had a more open environment.

#### 4.6.2 Community Representatives

One community representative explained that the migrant workers community is the main source of information and support for many of its members. Relying on social networks and word of mouth is also often the quickest and easiest way to get employment.

Members of the Polish community also provide information in their native language, functioning as translators for newcomers and meeting the needs that local services have been unable to provide. The community representative also reported that in order to provide support to migrant workers coming to the region, a handbook for new arrivals in Barnsley was recently published.

One community representative explained that discrimination against the Polish population was mainly due to stereotyping and British people seeing the Polish as *'arrogant and potentially*

*violent*. She explained that many Polish people lack self confidence because of language barriers and this has led to particular reactions in some situations when people were unable to express themselves properly. The community representative recounted her experience as a new migrant in the UK stating that people tended to laugh at her when she was not able to understand something. Finally, the community representative pointed out that the Polish community itself was internally fragmented which made integration an even more complicated process.

### 4.6.3 Employers

Employers highlighted some issues relating to integration in the UK labour market and wider community including access to decent standard of housing and a lack of an understanding of UK systems and their rights (e.g. getting a national insurance number or bank account). None of the employers offer formal support to overcome the barriers mentioned. However some employers offer informal support, or would point them in the direction of an advisory service or an organisation that could help the migrant worker. Alternative support that employers are aware of is from migrant workers' social networks.

## 4.7 Aspirations

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

### 4.7.1 Migrant Workers

Migrant workers were asked whether they intended to stay in the UK or move back to their native country and whether they thought they have a professional future in the UK. Respondents expressed mixed feelings about living and staying in the UK in the long term. Most of them felt their career was not going to progress much further but they were aware that their standard of living would be higher in UK rather than back in Poland.

The entire group in Barnsley agreed that they would stay in the UK for a while in order to develop their career further but they were less certain whether they would stay long term in Barnsley or even in the UK. The group agreed that they did not have any particular ties to Barnsley stating that they would go where the work was.

The participants were not certain about how long they would stay in the UK. Missing their families was the most quoted reason as to why respondents said they wanted to go back to Poland whilst *earning money* and *work* were the main reasons for staying in the UK. Interestingly, having a career and job progression were not cited as reasons to stay in the UK. Respondents expressed low expectations about their professional future in the UK.

A better chance of career development was also cited as a reason for returning to Poland amongst a few of the respondents. One participant said she felt it was always hard to move upwards in work because she was from Poland. A respondent recounted that a lot of her friends had gone back as they had found a good job in Poland because of their language and work experience in the UK. One participant backed this view up, saying she had noticed that the

economic circumstances had improved in Poland and that many were returning for this reason and fewer were coming to the UK. The falling value of the pound has also played a role in migrant workers returning home. The same respondent said that the situation will be better for most in the group because they all have a high level of education and even if they have experience of a low level job in the UK this will count for a lot when they return to Poland.

### 4.7.2 Recruitment Agencies

Evidence from the recruitment agency consultations indicates that while a significant proportion of A8 migrant workers view their in employment in South Yorkshire as transitory in nature (working for short periods to save money and return home); there are migrant workers who view their migration to work in the UK with a longer term horizon. They wish to gain low skilled jobs initially, to build up an employment history in the UK and then move onto employment more suited to their skills set and qualifications.

## 5 Case Studies

### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings from in depth interviews with migrant workers and employers. The following sections present four migrant worker case studies and four employer case studies. This personal experience adds to the evidence base and helps to form a more complete picture of the experience of migrant workers in South Yorkshire.

### 5.2 Migrant Workers

### Migrant Worker Case Study 1 – Polish migrant worker (male)

#### ***Background***

Case study one is a 24 year old male Polish migrant worker called Antoni who came to the UK three years ago. Antoni currently lives in Sheffield with his wife.

#### ***Motivations and recruitment***

Antoni explained that he moved to the UK because he could not afford to live with his wife in Poland and he knew he would be able to earn more in the UK. He also added that he knew he would have a better standard of living in the UK, which he has found to be the case. He recounted that originally he chose to live in Dinnington because a friend of his wife's helped them both to find accommodation and a job in the area. He has since then moved to Sheffield because he found people in Dinnington singled him and his wife out for being Polish and he also added that *'there was more to do in Sheffield'*. He is now happy with his accommodation in Sheffield and feels he is fairly treated by his landlord.

Antoni is a trained electrician in Poland, he has not tried to find related work in the UK because, he said, he did not have the level of English necessary: *'I would not know the specialist language'*. He said that his job in Poland was higher skilled but much less paid than in the UK. When searching for a job on his arrival in the UK, Antoni tried to use Jobcentre Plus to find employment but he said: *'I was directed to a wall which had numbers of jobs I was supposed to call – I was not happy to do this because I find it difficult to explain my situation over the phone'*. After a month Antoni got a job through an agency in a factory through the same friend who had got him his initial accommodation. He believed that without the help of his friend he would have found it difficult to get a job.

#### ***Employment***

Antoni works in a food processing factory and is generally quite happy. However he was quite certain that he could and would progress within his current employment. He has had one interview to get a higher position in the factory but he was not successful. He said he was told this was because he did not have enough experience compared with the other applicants. He admitted he believed a small part of the reason might have been because he was Polish. He thought the working hours were fine and was happy to work overtime because he is paid more for this. He compared this job as being easier than the work he did in Poland.

#### ***Community Integration***

Antoni mainly socialise with Polish people although he has some contact with English people mainly through his job. He said he would like to integrate more with English people – especially at work so he could improve his English and get to know how people really are in the UK. However, he felt that some English people think that Polish people are only here short-term and thus do not want to integrate.

#### ***Aspirations***

Antoni was not sure whether he would go back to Poland because conditions have still not improved there. He felt he might go back in Poland in the next ten years but he wanted to stay for time being.

### Migrant Worker Case Study 2 – Polish Migrant Worker (male)

#### ***Background***

Case study two is a 29 year old male Polish migrant worker called John who came to the UK two years ago with his wife.

#### ***Motivations and recruitment***

John decided to move to the UK because, although the level of work in Poland was generally good, it was mostly in temporary jobs; he could not put any money aside for a pension or any extra benefits he wanted; and there was little room for development. He first moved to Manchester to work in a warehouse. John then found another job through an agency from England which has an office in Poland. Through this, he started working in a call-centre where he felt he could develop his skills. He moved to Barnsley because the same agency found him another job which he felt was even better because now he '*could now use his brain*'.

John recounted that it was relatively easy to find a job. He said the agency gave him a trial interview before he had an interview with the actual employer to prepare him for what he might have been asked. In the interview John had to prove that he had a good enough understanding of English. John found the Worker Registration Scheme fairly simple to use. He added that he found it easy to get a National Insurance Number – he just went to the Jobcentre Plus and they helped him to do this.

#### ***Employment***

*John is employed in a call-centre in* explained he felt his position was challenging and he could develop within the job. The interviewee said he found working conditions to be much better than in Poland where he was, '*stressed out at work, working longer hours with no break*'. He expressed no problems with his current employer, citing the fact that here employers are much more concerned with health and safety; he is paid more; the hours are better and he enjoys the fact that there is a multi-cultural workforce. John thinks his employer should mix up the group of Polish people at his work so they could integrate with workers of other nationalities.

John was aware that Barnsley College offered ESOL provision but when he went to enquire about courses it was told there was nothing available for his level and was advised to go to the University. John felt his job gave him plenty of language training.

#### ***Community Integration***

John commented that knowing the language and understanding a bit about the culture had helped him to integrate as far as he had. He explained that, although he felt it would be beneficial to have some leaflets created in Polish, it was generally up to Polish people to learn the language and to be able to integrate. John felt he only lived in a Polish Community because his friends were mainly from Poland, although he had a couple of English colleagues who he saw socially.

#### ***Aspirations***

Overall John was happy in Barnsley and intended to stay for the next two or three years because his job was giving him the challenges he needed and he saw his long-term future as possibly being in the UK. He only envisaged problems bringing up children here and that was why he would eventually return to his country one day.

### **Migrant Worker Case Study 3 –Polish Migrant Worker (Female)**

#### ***Background***

Anastasia (20) moved to the UK in 2005, jobless and unqualified, with little work experience since leaving secondary school other than temping for a catering firm and working as a shop assistant. She came over to the UK on her own but received help integrating and finding work from a friend in Dinnington.

#### ***Motivations and recruitment***

Anastasia's main reasons for migrating to the UK were "life experience" and "money".

Anastasia initially looked for work via the Jobcentre Plus. Anastasia described her experience with Jobcentre Plus as "negative" and "very confusing". She felt that staff were unhelpful and the obvious language barrier only fuelled problems. Anastasia was instructed to use the machines to find jobs and contact employers (via telephone) if she wanted to apply. She did not feel confident doing this and felt "very worried and desperate". Anastasia eventually found employment via a recruitment agency that had been recommended by a Polish friend. The staff at the agency were more personable and had experience and patience working with people with poor English language skills. She did not feel intimidated and received support in applying for jobs.

#### ***Employment***

Anastasia currently works at a food factory which she found through the employment agency. Employment at the factory has allowed Anastasia to improve her English language skills, although she still does not feel confident speaking. She did attempt a course to improve her skills but dropped out because she felt the teaching was of a poor standard and was de-motivated.

#### ***Community Integration***

Finding accommodation proved difficult for Anastasia. She stayed with a friend when she first came to the UK, after which she found accommodation through an estate agent who charged her a fee for the service. Other than finding employment, the main problem Anastasia faced integrating into the community was the language barrier. Anastasia described how finding health care and a GP had been hassle free. She also said that the social networks she found via her job at the factory were the "*best thing about the job*". She said that moving from Dinnington to Sheffield help with her social integration because Sheffield is a large city and are "*more open minded and used to migrants*".

#### ***Aspirations***

Anastasia intends on staying in her current employment. She is happy with the working conditions, salary and working hours. She is reluctant to find an alternative occupation because of her initial negative experience finding employment. Job security was cited as Anastasia's first priority.

#### **Migrant Worker Case Study 4 – Polish Migrant Worker (Female)**

##### ***Background***

Magda (25) had several jobs in Poland before coming to the UK. When she finished secondary school, Magda attended a “technical school”, after which she was employed as a shop assistant, waitress and office worker.

##### ***Motivations and recruitment***

Magda’s main motivations for migrating to the UK were “money” and “a better future”. She found it easy to come to the UK and arranged her arrival via an agency in Poland who sent her to Doncaster.

##### ***Employment***

Magda found it difficult working in Doncaster because of early starts and high transport costs so she moved to Sheffield where she sought work in a factory, via an employment agency. She believes her work experience from Poland helped in her application for the post. Her lack of English language skills does not affect Magda’s ability to work. Lack of confidence discourages Magda from talking in English; she also admitted it is sometimes difficult to understand the “strong Sheffield accent”.

The employment agency helped Magda obtain a bank account and arranged transport to work, and charge weekly for these services. She is happy with her salary and has the prospect of being promoted. She described the working conditions as “good” and “better than Poland”. Magda is happy in her current employment and does not intend in changing jobs because she has a good social network of friends there and can socialise whilst she works. She enjoys working with people from a wide range of countries.

##### ***Community Integration***

Magda has not used any support services in the UK other than the employment agency. She lives in a shared house with other Polish migrants, which she found via a friend. She described the house as in good condition, close to local amenities and secure. Magda also feels her landlord is fair and is aware of her rights as a tenant.

Magda does not feel part of an English community; however she likes living in Sheffield. Community integrating was easier in Sheffield compared to Doncaster; she explained that she had a lot of friends in Sheffield. She said that she is happy living in the UK however she does miss her family and friends. Magda has not experienced any discrimination since living in England.

##### ***Aspirations***

Magda intends to live and work in the UK for another two years, after which she will return to Poland to study. She would eventually like to have her own business in Poland but admits that could prove difficult. Magda thinks it would be easier to set up her business in England; however she is very uncertain about doing so.

Improving her English language skills is a priority for Magda. She has taken classes in the past but had to quit when she took on a second job. She thinks having more English speaking friends would help. When asked about housing, Magda is not saving to buy a house and could not see her buying one in the future.

## 5.3 Employers

### Employer Case Study 1 – Multi-national hotel chain, Sheffield

#### *Background*

We carried out a consultation of a multi-national operated hotel in the centre of Sheffield.

#### *Motivations and recruitment*

Although the hotel does not have a policy of actively recruiting migrant workers, they nonetheless regard these workers as essential to their business. This is illustrated by the fact that approximately 50 per cent of the hotel's staff are of non-UK origin, with this figure rising to 75 per cent for housekeeping roles.

The hotel fills many of its posts through speculative applications from individuals who visit the hotel to collect an application form. As a consequence, word of mouth plays an important role in their recruitment, and a number of their staff based their decision to apply due to the recommendations of friends or relatives already employed at the hotel.

This has been particularly the case amongst their Polish staff, many of whom applied as a result of a colleague recommendation.

#### *Skill and Experience*

Many of the jobs offered by the hotel are low skilled, with basic customer interaction skills considered the most important attribute for jobs applicants. It is partly for this reason that many non-migrants consider the jobs 'beneath them' and do not apply.

While the qualifications of the migrant workers whom they employ varies significantly, many of their migrant workers are over qualified, with some possessing degrees. This has caused many employees to regard their position as a 'stop gap', leading to a high degree of turnover.

For many of the migrant workers at the hotel, the opportunity to improve their English language skills was a key motivating factor behind their decision to move to the UK.

Although the hotel only employ staff with English language skills that are appropriate for their job role, some members of staff with limited English skills have had their confidence dented as a result of their communication difficulties, while some of the non-migrant staff have experienced frustration at the difficulties they have experienced in communicating instructions to migrant colleagues.

#### *Barriers and Enablers*

The main difficulties that migrant workers have experienced have been frustrations at working below their skills levels, difficulties accessing housing, and difficulties getting NI numbers and setting up bank accounts.

## Employer Case Study 2 – National supermarket, Rotherham

### *Background*

We carried out a consultation with a national supermarket in Rotherham

### *Motivations and recruitment*

The supermarket does not have a policy in place where they actively recruit migrant workers as they do not discriminate between applicants. All applicants complete an application form which has been handed out by the store, from which skills and experience are used to determine who best suits the vacant role.

The store does not regard migrant workers important to their business in terms of filling vacancies. The required skill set for the roles in the supermarket is held by most people. The nature and flexibility of shift patterns means the store can use and attract any type of labour, in particular students who work part time.

### *Skill and Experience*

Customer interaction plays a crucial role in all departments of the supermarket, particularly those jobs which are located on the shop floor. Employees therefore require the necessary inter-personal skills to assist and talk to customers in the store. It is felt that migrant workers do not lack any of the skills required to work in the supermarket. Indeed the crucial language skills are thought to be of a high standard of migrant workers employed by the supermarket. However if language difficulties do exist among migrant workers no support or help is given to overcome this barrier.

The supermarket is aware of the qualifications each employee holds. Although employees can often be students, being over qualified is not regarded as an operational issue for the supermarket.

### *Barriers and Enablers*

The supermarket is not currently aware of any difficulties faced by migrant workers within the business or other personal difficulties workers might face (e.g. access to housing). Although as part of a large company, the supermarket is likely to offer assistance and support to migrant workers when faced with such issues.

### Employer Case Study 3 – Catering company, Doncaster

#### *Background*

A consultation was carried out with a large catering company in Doncaster.

#### *Motivations and recruitment*

The catering company does not specifically choose to employ migrant workers, but what experience they have had has been very positive. They do not undertake any specific methods to recruit migrant workers because migrant workers are not regarded as crucial to the needs of the business – they can use any labour.

#### *Skill and Experience*

The migrant workers that are employed by the company are qualified to a professional level however the skills required for the job are described as basic. Therefore the company recognises that their migrant workers are over qualified for the positions they hold and do not lack any of the skills required.

An example was given where one employee who previously worked in a laboratory in Poland, qualified to degree level now works as a catering assistant. Having over qualifies staff means that the company has a high turnover of staff as employees move to more suitable professions.

#### *Barriers and Enablers*

The main difficulty migrant workers face in employment at the company is working below their skills level. Wider difficulties include access to a decent standard of housing. In some cases migrant workers are over charged by landlords. However the company does not offer any assistance to workers to help overcome such barriers.

Migrant workers employed by the company are fluent in English and therefore no support is currently demanded by workers to improve their language skills. However the company would consider funding such training if there was a need for it in the future.

The company believes that their migrant workers intend on staying in the UK for over 12 months to accumulate wealth.

#### Case study 4 – Food Manufacturer, Sheffield

##### *Background*

A consultation was carried out with a branch of a large food manufacturers based in Sheffield

##### *Motivations and recruitment*

The company actively seeks to employ migrant workers as there is no other labour to use, and they use a specialist agency to recruit migrant workers which recruits European workers both from the UK and directly from Eastern Europe.

Workers are initially employed on a temporary basis and after a 13 week period they can then apply for a permanent post, most of which do.

##### *Skill and Experience*

The skills level amongst migrant worker varies, however the skills required to work in the food manufacturers are fairly elementary. It is often the case that migrant workers at the food manufacturers are over qualified and some even to degree level; however this does not present any operational issues for the business. The migrant workers do not lack any skills required to work at the food manufacturers.

Language skills are adequate for the type of work. Migrants seeking work with less than adequate English language skills are filtered out by the agency that test each worker before they are allocated to a specific job.

##### *Barriers and Enablers*

Where it is identified that English language skills could be improved the food manufacturer does provide funds for training. In particular there is funding for workers to undertake ESOL and NVQs, however the language deficiencies do not have any negative impacts on the business or migrant workers themselves.

The food manufacturer is not aware of any difficulties faced by migrant workers within and out with their employment at the factory. The employment agency used by the firm assists migrant workers with housing problems, etc. The firm has an occupational health assistant to help with any health issues. Employees are also encouraged to approach management if they have further problems.

## Appendix A

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