DOOR STEP
EQUAL ACCESS

HOUSING, WORK & WELFARE EXPERIENCES
OF NEW MIGRANTS IN SCOTLAND
Michael Collins, Door Step, March 2007

Development research for the Door Step Equal Access project
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Door Step Equal Access
Housing work and welfare experiences of new migrants in Scotland

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Aims of this Report
Door Step is a Glasgow-based initiative of two not-for-profit organisations, Community InfoSource and media co-op. Together with an Advisory Group of key stakeholders, the Door Step team is developing Equal Access, an information resource and training programme to help new migrants and refugees to become specialist advisers in employment, housing and welfare rights.

As part of the development of the project, the Door Step team is carrying out ongoing research into the housing, work and welfare experiences of new migrants in Scotland.

The Door Step project is for both refugees and migrant workers from the EU Accession States. Door Step and our advisory group members already have a solid body of knowledge about refugee integration, but less is known about EU migrant workers, as more recent arrivals in Scotland. For this reason, the research in this report covers the situation of new migrants. This report details the findings of the initial stages of our research, focusing on Polish migrant workers, who comprise the largest new migrant community in Scotland.

Overcoming inequality and exploitation
This report takes a rights-based approach, examining some of the key problems faced by new migrants in Scotland; it offers an imaginative practical proposal - based on the direct participation of new migrants themselves - to contribute to challenging and overcoming inequality and exploitation.

Door Step Equal Access project
Door Step Equal Access is ambitious and innovative, it is rights-based information, advice and training project, being developed with and for new migrant communities in Scotland.

The project is being developed with the support of a broad-based Advisory Group (see Appendix 1 for a list of Door Step Advisory Group members). The underpinning methodology is based on a participatory and collaborative approach.

The key stages of the Door Step Equal Access project are:

- to recruit groups of new migrant and refugee communities to undertake Action Research within their own communities;
- to work with these groups to develop a package of interactive multi-media information resources;
- to work with these groups to develop a training programme for specialist advisers in the areas of employment, welfare and housing rights for both new migrants and refugees, including work placements with existing advice providers.
- to create and support a network of community advice workers drawn from new migrant and refugee communities – working on both a professional and a voluntary basis.

The project outcomes will be:

- Access for new migrants to high-quality advice and information services designed to meet their needs.
- New specialised services and improved mainstream services.
- Support for new migrants to be able to assert their rights and to challenge inequality and exploitation.
Executive Summary

Methodology
The development of this report has involved a review of the existing research and consultation with the Door Step Advisory Group and other stakeholders. However, the principal method has been direct community consultation with Polish migrant workers.

Summary of Key findings
For many migrants, the experience of coming to the UK has been, on the whole, a positive one. There are concerns, however, that government policy is adding to inequality, abuse of rights and exploitation of migrants in the UK.

There is growing evidence, confirmed by migrants participating in this research, of migrants living in poverty, very poor housing, and experiencing homelessness and destitution.

a. Migrant workers’ rights

■ There is an inequality of rights in relation to work, housing, and welfare support. New migrants face difficulties exercising the rights they do have compared with British workers.

■ While a number of research reports have been published recently on migrant workers in the UK and in Scotland, most have focused on the impact on local economies and the labour market, as opposed to the impact on workers’ rights.

■ There is still a lack of practical solutions for the employment, welfare and housing needs of the new migrants.

■ TUC research into migrant workers reveals that exploitation within workplaces ranges from discrimination in conditions and payment below the minimum wage to situations that amount to forced or bonded labour.

■ All those questioned in our study were aware of the obligation to register with the Workers Registration Scheme. Around 75% of workers were registered through their current employer.

■ Only 6% of participants in the study considered that they were working at the level of their educational or professional qualifications and experience.

■ Most accession state workers are living in, or have experienced, overcrowded, expensive, private rented accommodation, with limited security of tenure.

■ Less than half of those interviewed who were aware of housing associations (70%) had actually applied. Several who did apply did not receive an acknowledgement.

■ There are different entitlements to homelessness assistance in England and Scotland, with more housing rights under Scottish law, but equality of exclusion from housing benefit under UK law.

■ There is inconsistency in local authorities’ interpretation of homelessness legislation in relation to migrants, and the guidance is in dispute.

■ There is evidence of “gatekeeping” by local authority housing and homelessness services, preventing migrants from accessing services, including those who are entitled to services.
b. Access to advice and information

- There are barriers to migrant workers exercising their rights and to seeking help to do so. In general, migrant workers are less aware of their rights and are the least likely to access formal information, advice and support services.

- There is confusion amongst housing and support providers as to the entitlement of migrants to social housing.

- Information and advice is most prevalent in the form of printed or online welcome packs. There is less evidence of rights-based independent advice services meeting the needs of migrant workers.

- For help with problems, most participants in the study had sought advice and support and information from friends and colleagues rather than agencies.

- Most people interviewed had not seen the welcome packs produced by the Scottish Executive or Glasgow City Council.

- Almost half of those interviewed in our study stated they did not know where to go for help in the event of becoming homeless. “Sleep under a bridge” was a common response. Only one participant suggested approaching the Local Authority.

- Housing advice cannot be usefully given in isolation, as the housing situation of migrant workers can be linked to their residence status and employment status.

- Accommodation is often tied to employment, so losing a job can mean becoming homeless. This can be a disincentive to seeking help and must be an additional consideration for advice services.

- Although most migrant workers are aware of social rented housing, there are often misconceptions of entitlements to apply, and the nature of social housing provision. Less than half of those who are aware of housing associations actually apply.

- The right to homeless assistance is tied to right of residency, which is dependent on economic status; losing a job can mean becoming homeless and losing the right to Local Authority support at the same time.

Conclusions and recommendations

- Migrant workers are currently ‘falling through the net’ of advice provision. Many migrants do not have access to reliable, accurate, culturally-appropriate advice and support to enable them to access their housing, labour and welfare rights.

- There is confusion among housing and support providers as to the entitlement of migrants to social housing.

- Successful housing advice must be integrated with advice and information on labour and welfare rights.

- There is an unmet need for a network of advisers with specialist training in the rights of migrants and refugees.

- In the view of Door Step (the authors of this report), the people best placed to receive this training, and to develop advice resources in a participatory way, are migrants and refugees themselves. We believe that the Door Step methodology offers an innovative, effective and sustainable way to create a network of migrant and refugee advisers across Scotland.
Program Door Step Equal Access
Doświadczenia emigrantów w Szkocji w zakresie zakwaterowania, pracy i opieki społecznej

Wstęp

Cele niniejszego Opracowania
Door Step stanowi powołaną w Glasgow inicjatywę dwóch organizacji non-profit, Community InfoSource i media co-op. Zespół Programu Door Step wraz z Grupą Doradczą zajmuje się opracowaniem koncepcji Equal Access, zasobów informacyjnych i programu szkoleniowego, których celem jest pomoc nowym emigrantom i uchodźcom w wykształceniu doradców posiadających specjalistyczną wiedzę w zakresie praw związanych z pracą, zakwaterowaniem i opieką społeczną.

W ramach realizacji projektu zespół Programu Door Step prowadzi bieżące badania dotyczące doświadczeń nowych emigrantów w Szkocji w zakresie zakwaterowania, pracy i opieki społecznej.

Projekt Door Step jest przeznaczony zarówno dla uchodźców jak i pracowników sezonowych z państw przystępujących do Unii Europejskiej. Uczestnicy Projektu Door Step i członkowie grupy doradczej posiadają już sporą wiedzę na temat integracji uchodźców, natomiast ich wiedza na temat pracowników sezonowych z Unii Europejskiej, którzy ostatnio znaleźli się w Szkocji jest mniejsza. Dlatego też badania objęte niniejszym opracowaniem dotyczą sytuacji nowych emigrantów.

Niniejsze Opracowanie zawiera wyniki prac prowadzonych na wstępnych etapach naszych badań, skoncentrowanych na polskich pracownikach sezonowych, stanowiących największą społeczność nowych emigrantów na terenie Szkocji.

Zwalczanie nierównego traktowania i wyższyku.
Dla celów niniejszego opracowania przyjęto perspektywę przysługujących emigrantom praw i dokonano analizy niektórych z najistotniejszych problemów, na które natrafiają nowi emigranci na terenie Szkocji. W opracowaniu zaproponowano też praktyczne rozwiązanie – oparte na bezpośrednim udziale nowych emigrantów – mające na celu uznanie problemu i zwalczanie nierównego traktowania i wyższyku.
Krótkie streszczenie

Metodologia

W ramach przygotowania niniejszego opracowania dokonano weryfikacji dotychczasowych badań i przeprowadzono konsultacje z Grupą Doradczą programu Door Step i pozostałymi zaangażowanymi stronami. Jednakże główną metodę badawczą stanowiły bezpośrednie konsultacje w środowisku polskich pracowników sezonowych.

Podsumowanie głównych ustaleń

Dla wielu emigrantów doświadczenie związane z przyjazdem do Wielkiej Brytanii było, patrząc całościowo, pozytywne. Istnieją jednak obawy, że polityka rządu przyczynia się nierówności, naruszania praw i wyzysku emigrantów na terenie Wielkiej Brytanii.

Pojawia się wiele dowodów, potwierdzonych przez emigrantów biorących udział w niniejszym badaniu, na to, że emigranci żyją w biedzie, bardzo złych warunkach mieszkaniowych, zdarza się, że są bezdomni lub żyją w warunkach skrajnego ubóstwa.

a.) Prawa pracowników sezonowych

Istnieje nierówność praw związanych z zatrudnieniem, zakwaterowaniem i pomocą społeczną. W porównaniu z pracownikami brytyjskimi, nowi emigranci napotykają na problemy w dochodzeniu swych praw.

W ostatnim czasie ukazało się sporo opracowań dotyczących pracowników sezonowych w Wielkiej Brytanii i Szkocji, z których większość skoncentrowała się na ich wpływie na miejscową gospodarkę i rynek pracy, nie podejmując kwestii związanych z zagadnieniami dotyczącymi praw pracowników.

Ciągle brakuje praktycznych rozwiązań w zakresie potrzeb nowych emigrantów w odniesieniu do pracy, opieki społecznej i warunków mieszkaniowych.

Badania TUC dotyczące pracowników sezonowych ujawniają, że wykorzystywanie w miejscach pracy dotyczy sytuacji począwszy od dyskryminacji w zakresie warunków pracy i płocy poniżej stawek minimalnych, aż po sytuacje związane z praca przymusową lub związaną z ograniczeniem wolności.

Wszystkie osoby, z którymi przeprowadzono wywiad w trakcie naszego badania były świadome konieczności zarejestrowania się w systemie ubezpieczeń społecznych [Workers Registration Scheme]. Około 75% zostało zarejestrowanych przez aktualnego pracodawcę.

Tylko 6% uczestników badania uważa, że wykonuje pracę zgodną z poziomem swojego wykształcenia, kwalifikacji zawodowych i doświadczenia.

Większość pracowników z krajów przystępujących do Unii Europejskiej mieszka, lub zetknęło się z warunkami mieszkania w przeludnionych, drogach wynajmowanych miejscach zamieszkania bardzo ograniczonymi gwarancjami dotyczącymi okresu najmu.

Mniej niż połowa osób, z którymi przeprowadzono wywiad, które były świadome istnienia towarzystw budownictwa społecznego [housing associations] (70%) rzeczywiście złożyła stosowne wnioski. Kilka osób spośród tych, którzy zgłosił wnioski nie otrzymała potwierdzenia ich złożenia.

W Anglii i Szkocji obowiązują inne uprawnienia do pomocy dla osób bezdomnych, przy czym w Szkocji prawa związane z pomocą mieszkaniową są szersze, natomiast w prawie brytyjskim obowiązuje te same wyłączenia z objęcia systemem dodatków mieszkaniowych.

Wśród władz lokalnych istnieją sprzeczności interpretacyjne w zakresie stosowania prawa dotyczącego bezdomnych w przypadku emigrantów, a zalecenia na ten temat są przedmiotem sporów.

Istnieją dowody na istnienie strategii zamykania drzwi ["gatekeeping"] przez lokalne władze związane z pomocą w zakresie warunków mieszkaniowych i pomocy bezdomnym, co powoduje uniemożliwienie dostępu emigrantów do tych świadczeń i dotyczy również osób uprawnionych do otrzymywania takich świadczeń.
Dostęp do doradztwa i informacji

Istnieją bariery w egzekwowaniu praw przez pracowników sezonowych, i bariery w poszukiwaniu pomocy w tym zakresie. Zasadniczo pracownicy sezonowi w mniejszym stopniu są świadomy swoich praw, a prawdopodobieństwo uzyskania przez nich dostępu do oficjalnych informacji i usług związanych z doradztwem i wsparciem jest najmniejsze.

Wśród dostawców pomocy w zakresie warunków mieszkaniowych i innego [wsparcia] istnieją sprzeczne opinie co do posiadania przez emigrantów prawa do lokali socjalnych.

Informacje i doradztwo przyjmują zazwyczaj formę „zestawów powitalnych” drukowanych lub dostępnych w Internecie. Dużo mniej jest przykładów niezależnego doradztwa skoncentrowanego na prawach, które spełniałoby potrzeby pracowników sezonowych.

W przypadku problemów większość uczestników badania opierała się na pomocy, poradach i informacjach uzyskiwanych od przyjaciół i kolegów, a nie w instytucjach.

Większość badanych nie widziła „zestawów powitalnych” przygotowanych przez władze Szkocji lub rade miejską Glasgow.

Prawie połowa badanych nie wiedziała gdzie zwrócić się po pomoc w przypadku gdy ktoś został bezdomnym. „Spać pod mostem” stanowiło najczęstszą odpowiedź. Tylko jeden uczestnik sugerował skontaktowanie się z władzami lokalnymi.

Doradztwo w zakresie warunków mieszkaniowych nie może zazwyczaj być udzielane samoistnie, w izolacji, gdyż sytuacja mieszkaniowa emigrantów może być związana z ich statusem dotyczącym miejsca zamieszkania i statusem związanym z pracą.

Zakwaterowanie jest zazwyczaj połączone z pracą, a więc utrata pracy może oznaczać utratę dachu nad głową. To może stanowić przeszkodę w poszukiwaniu pomocy i powinno być przedmiotem dodatkowego zainteresowania w kontekście usług doradczych.

Chociaż większość pracowników sezonowych wie o istnieniu wynajmowanych mieszkań socjalnych, często jednak istnieje mylny wyobrażenie odnośnie prawa do ubiegania się o nie i odnośnie charakteru udostępniania mieszkań socjalnych. Mniej niż połowa osób, które wiedzą o istnieniu towarzystw budownictwa społecznego [housing associations] rzeczywiście składa stosowne wnioski.

Prawo do pomocy dla bezdomnych jest powiązane z prawem do pobytu [prawem związanym z zamieszkiwaniem w określonym miejscu – przp. tłum], które jest uzależnione od statusu ekonomicznego. Utrata pracy może oznaczać utratę dachu nad głową i jednocześnie utratę prawa do pomocy ze strony władz lokalnych.

Wnioski i zalecenia

Pracownicy sezonowi w chwili obecnej „przelatują przez sito” w zakresie dostępu do usług doradczych. Wielu emigrantów nie posiada dostępu do rzetelnej, dokładnej, dostosowanej do ich tożsamości kulturowej informacji, wsparcia i doradztwa, które umożliwiłoby im dostęp do praw związanych z pomocą mieszkaniową, pracą i opieką społeczną.

Wśród instytucji oferujących pomoc w zakresie warunków mieszkaniowych/zakwaterowania i innego wsparcia istnieją sprzeczne opinie co do posiadania przez emigrantów prawa do lokali socjalnych.

Skuteczne doradztwo w zakresie potrzeb mieszkaniowych musi być połączone z informacjami i doradztwem na temat praw związanych z pracą i opieką społeczną.

Istnieje niezaspokojona potrzeba powołania sieci doradców objętych specjalistycznym szkoleniem w zakresie praw emigrantów i uchodźców.

Zdaniem Programu Door Step (autors niniejszego opracowania), osobami najbardziej odpowiednimi do objęcia takim szkoleniem, które mogą tworzyć zasoby doradcze poprzez własne zaangażowanie, są sami emigranci i uchodźcy. Uważamy, że metodologia programu Door Step oferuje innowacyjny i skuteczny sposób prowadzący do zbudowania trwałej sieci doradców nioskących pomoc uchodźcom i emigrantom w całej Szkocji.
1.1 The Policy Context

New Migration
Migration to the UK is being managed primarily, and apparently very successfully, for the benefit of the UK economy and the Scottish Executive has developed schemes to encourage migration to Scotland for the same reasons.

In Scotland, demographics are shifting. Emerging refugee communities and a growing population of migrants from the enlarged European Union are to a certain extent, interrupting the trend towards a declining and ageing population.

Despite the regular scare-stories and anti-immigrant campaigning of much of the press, this latest chapter in British migratory history appears, on the surface, to have been an all-round success. However, the focus on managing migration to benefit the UK economy has seen a shift away from rights and protection.

European Union migration policy
One of the “pillars” of the European Union is the freedom of movement of citizens between member states. EU citizens have the right to travel to another EU state to work or seek work, as well as to study or to visit as a self-sufficient economically inactive person.

Prior to EU enlargement in May 2004, this right applied to all nationals of the 15 EU member states. For these citizens, that right still exists, as does the right to access the health and welfare support system of the country they are living in. For nationals of the states that joined the EU in 2004 and 2007, these rights do not necessarily apply.

European Union Enlargement
The recent enlargement of the European Union had a massive impact on migration within Europe. In what was described as a “big bang” enlargement, ten new members joined the Union in 2004, and two more in 2007, mostly countries from central and eastern Europe.

Membership of the EU brings the right of citizens to travel within the EU to seek work, study or provide services, but EU rules allow national governments to impose transitional migration controls for up to 7 years after a new member joins.

In 2004, most of the existing 15 member states (EU15) decided to impose some level of controls. These were mostly in the form of work permit quotas and restricted rights to welfare support and public housing, and were particularly directed at nationals from the eight former communist bloc countries of central and eastern Europe.

In 2004, only three EU15 states – the UK, Sweden and Ireland – decided to allow more or less unrestricted access to workers and the work-seekers from the new member states. Finland, Greece, Spain and Portugal dropped their restrictions in May 2006.

United Kingdom migration policy
A utilitarian approach to managed migration
UK immigration policy has been radically overhauled since New Labour came to power in 1997, and at first glance it can appear that two opposing strategies have been developed. On the one hand, during a time of increasing global conflict, draconian powers to prevent refugees claiming asylum has drastically reduced the amount of people granted protection in the UK, leading to the lowest numbers claiming asylum and being granted leave to remain since 1993. In 2005, 47,000 people were prevented from entering the UK by air or

1. Freedom of movement for workers shall be secured within the Community.
2. Such freedom of movement shall entail the abolition of any discrimination based on nationality between workers of the Member States as regards employment, remuneration and other conditions of work and employment.

Article 39, European Community Treaty
Rome. 1957

1. The EU accession states joining in May 2004 were Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia.
2. On 1st January 07, Bulgaria and Romania joined.
3. UK and Ireland introduced registration schemes, and rules to allow only registered migrants access to state support. Sweden allowed equality with EU15 nationals.
across the English Channel⁴, detention and deportations have reached unprecedented levels.

On the other hand, a series of new procedures has opened access to the UK for increasing numbers of economic migrants. Initiatives like the Highly Skilled Migrants programme, the Fresh Talent Initiative in Scotland, and the decision not to restrict EU accession state nationals in 2004 all point towards a more open approach to economic migration than at any time since the door was closed on Commonwealth citizens in the 1960s.

These may seem like contradictory policies, one harshly repressive, the other liberal and progressive, but, as outlined by Don Flynn in a discussion paper for the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants (JCWI), this is actually a consistent, “utilitarian” approach to managed migration⁵. The paper argues that this approach is based on the precept that in a “new world of globalised reality, the concept of ‘rights’, if it is applicable at all, should be reserved for those who have made themselves useful to the needs of a growing and dynamic world economy, and who are actively contributing to its further development.”

This argument would seem to be borne out in the policy declarations and use of language of the UK government leading up to, and subsequent to, European Union enlargement in 2004, and 2007.

**The impact of EU enlargement on UK policy**

The UK Government’s initial plan for 2004 enlargement was to allow nationals of all new member states equal rights with existing EU nationals, but, following an intense media campaign, a Workers Registration Scheme was introduced to monitor numbers, and employment-related residence conditions were introduced, restricting access to most means-tested welfare benefits and to Local Authority housing.

In February 2004, Home Secretary David Blunkett ended speculation that migrants from the 10 countries about to join the EU would be limited. Announcing plans for a “light touch” registration scheme and measures to restrict access to welfare benefits and public housing, he said: “The UK has always welcomed hard working immigrants seeking to better themselves and contribute to our prosperity. Tougher benefit rules will make sure our generosity is not exploited.” ⁶

Fears of “benefit tourists” and increasing unemployment following the 2004 enlargement were not realised, with migration bringing apparently only positive economic benefits.

Since May 2004, around 380,000 A8 nationals have registered to work in the UK⁷, 40,000 of them in Scotland. However, there has been considerable debate over actual numbers arriving in and leaving the UK, as the figures do not include unregistered migrants or people who have registered and then left the UK.

The new migration has been largely hailed as an economic success, opening a wider labour market for millions of European citizens and contributing an estimated £240 million to the economy in the first eight months alone⁸. Less than 1% of new EU migrants have claimed welfare benefits and despite a slight rise in UK unemployment, this has not been in areas of new migrant settlement.

However, in January 2007, when Romania and Bulgaria joined the EU, the UK government chose to place tighter restrictions in the form of work permit quotas on potential migrants. Citizens of these two accession states (sometimes referred to as A2 nationals) have the right to travel to the UK, but only to work in seasonal agriculture and food processing sectors, to apply for around 100 places on the Highly Skilled Migrants programme, or as self-employed or self-sufficient persons. In any case, there is no right to welfare support or public housing.

The Home Secretary announced the work permit quotas in October 2006, amid accusations of backtracking on the policy of equal access of the 2004 enlargement. Former minister for Europe Keith Vaz criticised the plans as “unworkable, undesirable and unnecessary” and said it damaged the

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6. Home Office press release - 23 Feb 04
8. Worker Registration Scheme, Home Office Press release, 22 February 2005
"reputation of the UK as a champion of EU enlargement".

Romanian Ambassador to the UK, Raduta Matache, said “We understand your concerns, but we are fighting for a principle - why should Romania be discriminated against [compared with] the other central and Eastern European countries and EU members?”

**Scotland migration policy**

Immigration legislation is reserved to Westminster, but the Scottish Executive has developed a distinct strategy aimed at encouraging and supporting immigration to Scotland. The high profile Fresh Talent Initiative, launched in February 2004, aims to attract and retain new migrants to counter skills shortages arising from a declining and ageing Scottish population.

Describing the Initiative as “a bold step for a small devolved country like ours to take”, the Executive stresses that “Our message is clear: if you have ambitions and you want to live and work in a dynamic country with a good quality of life, then this is the time and Scotland is the place.”

The Relocation Advisory Service was subsequently launched by the Executive in October 2004, aiming to assist any person who would like to come to Scotland to live, work or study. A website linked to the Executive’s main site further promotes the Fresh Talent Initiative, and welcome packs targeted at European migrants have been produced in English and Polish.

**Scottish flexibility**

The Executive has also sought to negotiate separate immigration rules for Scotland to allow more migrants to work in Scotland, specifically in relation to Romania and Bulgaria, in the run up to their joining the EU on 1 January 2007.

First Minister Jack McConnell confirmed in September 2006 that he was in "discussions" with Home Office officials about Bulgaria and Romania’s entry. An Executive Spokesman quoted in the press that month said:

"There is a very different situation up here in terms of the need to get migrants into Scotland, so we want to see that reflected. Migrants will get extra points if they come to Scotland, and also if they apply for work where there is a specific skills shortage.” But when the rules for the two new accession states were announced, including work permit quotas, there was no mention of the “Scottish flexibility” sought by the Executive.

Crucially for this report, while immigration is a Westminster reserved area, the Scottish Executive has important devolved powers which impact on the lives of migrants to Scotland, particularly housing, education, social work, children’s and community care services. This allows for effective intervention and lobbying by the voluntary sector to change the experience of migrants who come to Scotland, and the development and piloting of projects such as Door Step, which could become a valuable model for other parts of the UK.

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9. UK to limit EU entrants’ working rights - The Guardian 24 October 2006
10. New Scots - Attracting fresh talent to meet the challenge of growth, Scottish Executive, February 2004
11. www.scotlandistheplace.com
12. McConnell fast-tracks new EU migrants, Scotland on Sunday, 10 September 2006
Membership of the European Union brings a range of rights and freedoms, including the fundamental right to travel across Europe to work or seek work. But in reality, migrants from the newer EU member states can have a range of conditions and restrictions placed on their rights, depending on their nationality, their economic status and which EU country they are living in.

Rights taken for granted by British citizens – the right to work, to decent housing, to welfare support and healthcare – do not apply equally to all European Union nationals living in the UK.

New migrants in general face difficulties in exercising their rights in employment, housing and welfare support. A8 Nationals are seen to be facing further inequality and exploitation. Research reveals that the cost and bureaucracy of the “light touch” Workers Registration Scheme is resulting in tens of thousands of A8 nationals working illegally, leaving them open to exploitation and removing from them the welfare safety net.

Nationals of the latest two EU accession states, Bulgaria and Romania, won the right to travel within the EU from January 2007, but the UK government has legislated to severely restrict their rights to work, housing and health and welfare.

There is evidence that UK government policy is undermining the economic benefits to the UK of migration, and keeping large numbers of the migrant population out of legal work and pushed to the margins of society, in situations of poverty and homelessness and vulnerable to exploitation.

Workers Registration Scheme
Unlike other European citizens working in the UK, A8 nationals must apply to the Home Office Workers Registration Scheme within a month of commencing employment (self-employed people are exempt). To maintain the right of residence in the UK they must remain in registered employment. Anyone who loses or leaves their job has 30 days to find alternative employment and re-register for the employment to be seen as continuous. The cost of registering is £70.00. A worker must re-register each time they change employer, but the fee is only payable the first time.

After registered working for a continuous 12 month period, an A8 national need no longer register, can apply for a UK residence permit, and is entitled to full state welfare support and public housing. In this way an A8 national earns the same rights as other European citizens.

Restricted access to welfare benefits
On February 5 2004, referring to suggestions that the UK benefits system would attract nationals of the new, poorer states to come to the UK, Prime Minister Blair stated “we will take whatever measures are necessary to make sure that the ‘pull factor’ which might draw people here is closed off”.

Entitlement to welfare benefits is dependent on a migrant’s “right to reside”. As a result of regulations enacted as part of the transitional arrangements for A8 nationals mean that they have a right to reside in the UK as a worker.

Accession Monitoring
The aim of the Workers Registration Scheme is to monitor numbers of A8 nationals coming to the UK, and their impact on the UK labour market. Should immigration be found to be having an adverse effect, the UK government has the power to re-introduce a work permit scheme to limit numbers.

To say that the numbers and impact of A8 migrants coming to the UK has been the subject of much debate would be something of understatement. The media coverage, particularly in the England-based tabloid press, is frequently inaccurate and misleading, and has at times bordered on the hysterical. Headlines included “the Great British Invasion, 2004” “Where the Gypsies are coming from” “1 million Gypsies heading for UK”.

The key periods of public debate have been in the immediate lead-up to accession in early 2004, followed by the publication of the Accession Monitoring Reports by the Home Office, each of which appeared to confirm that the initial estimates of migration in the Home Office commissioned report of 2003. The report, by Dustmann et al,
estimated a figure of between 5,000 and 13,000 per annum.

The Accession Monitoring Report of August 2006 recorded that 427,095 registrations had been approved by the Workers Registration Scheme between May 2004 and June 2006.

The majority of applicants were Polish (62%), followed by Lithuanians (12%) and Slovaks (10%). During this period, 32,135 A8 nationals had registered to work in Scotland under the Home Office Workers Registration Scheme, however, actual numbers of A8 nationals living and working in Scotland are harder to estimate.

The generally accepted estimate in August 2006 was that by including self-employed and non-registered workers, up to 600,000 workers from the A8 nations had arrived in Britain over a 2 year period. This was far higher than anyone had anticipated. It was pointed out in some more responsible press reporting that this estimate did not take into account those who had been living and working in the UK prior to 2004 without permission, or of those who registered worked temporarily and then left the UK.

A recent report on National Insurance Number allocations published by the Department of Work and Pensions seems to indicate that a significant number of migrants register but leave the country again in a short period.

The Accession Monitoring Report of August 2006 came just prior to the announcement that Bulgaria and Romania had been approved for EU membership and would join on 1st January 2007. At the time, the press was reporting leaked government documents which apparently expressed fears about levels of criminality in Bulgaria and Romania.

**January 2007: Bulgaria and Romania accession**

On 1 January 2007, Bulgaria and Romania joined the EU. Nationals of these two new member states now have the right to travel throughout the EU, but with greatly restricted access to the UK labour market.

On 25 October 2006, Immigration Minister Liam Byrne announced a system of “controlled access” to the UK labour market though quotas for skilled and unskilled workers from the two countries. The press release stated:

“Workers with particularly high levels of skills and experience will continue to be admitted as they are now under the Highly Skilled Migrants Programme; and low-skilled migration from will be restricted to those sectors of the economy where the UK already has low-skilled schemes and will be subject to a strict quota. A2 workers on these schemes will have rights to work limited to six months that will not give them access to benefits and public housing.”

This announcement also followed a widespread press campaign warning of the dangers posed by unfettered immigration from Romania and Bulgaria, which focused on organised crime, corruption, Gypsies and “benefit tourists”.

The quotas will apply initially for one year from January 2007, and are intended to generate a gradual replacement of non-EU permit-holding seasonal workers in agriculture and food processing with Romanian and Bulgarian workers. Applications to the Highly Skilled Migrant scheme (about 120 per annum) will still be possible.

While the scheme is in place, Bulgarian and Romanian nationals will have no access to benefits, except in-work benefits if working with permission. The restrictions will also apply to public housing. This means that even if working with permission, if the job ends and a migrant cannot support themselves, they will be expected to return home.

There are concerns that nationals who have the right to travel to the UK but restrictions on access to legal work will lead to more, not less exploitation. General Secretary of the TUC, Brendan Barber, has voiced concern that marginalised migrants may be forced into exploitation due to inequality of rights, and this could impact on all workers rights in Britain:

“bogus self-employment and cash-in-hand jobs are two of the commonest ways that workers are exploited in the UK. Undercutting legal rights such as the minimum wage drives down wages and conditions for all workers, and leads to tax evasion by both workers and their bosses.”
Great numbers of migrant workers are living in poor standard, overcrowded, overpriced, unregulated, insecure, shared accommodation, often linked to their jobs. This has been highlighted in our research with Polish workers in Scotland.

Local Authorities across the country have seen large increases in migrants presenting as homeless. Homelessness charities are concerned that legislation barring migrants from homeless assistance is forcing migrants into exploitation and danger.

Of all minority ethnic and migrant communities, EU migrant workers are least likely to access formal or independent advice and information services, and when they do, these services are often unable to assist. Again, this has been the case with the Polish workers participating in the Door Step research.

Local Authorities, working within a complex and discriminatory legislative framework, find it difficult to provide appropriate services to support these emerging communities. Independent advice and information services also struggle to assist new migrants, and trade unions are finding their new migrant members can have a range of problems they are unable to resolve.

There are growing concerns that inequalities occur not only in employment, but also in housing and welfare support, leading to exploitation, poor or substandard housing, homelessness and destitution.

Of particular interest to this report is the fact that the research indicates widespread confusion within Local Authorities in housing and homelessness services over the entitlements of the various migrant groups. This, coupled with limited access to interpreters and translated materials, constitutes further barriers to migrants seeking to exercise their rights.

Many of the Polish participants in the research reported living in overcrowded, often expensive and sub-standard accommodation. It is interesting to note that in many cases people appeared content to accept such conditions, at least temporarily. This, combined with a lack of knowledge of rights and social housing opportunities, may explain why the demand for social housing does not appear to reflect the need identified in the research.

**Homelessness**

In August 2006 it was reported that 30% of rough sleepers in London were now from EU accession states, and in October 2006 FEANTSE, the European homelessness NGO, estimated there were 3,000 poles sleeping rough in the capital, with a "proportionality similar" number in Scotland.

One response has been a joint initiative between the Simon Community and Polish homeless charity Barka, to set up a service for homeless Poles run by Barka in London. When interviewed for this research, the organisation said it was considering establishing a similar service in Scotland.

**“With no support network, they fall into the hands of unscrupulous people who force them into slave labour: pay them a pittance and force them to live in poor-quality, overcrowded accommodation. We are seeing an increasing number of Poles who end up on the street after fleeing situations like this.”**

Tim Nicholls, Director Simon Community, London

Another response has been calls to ignore migrants in rough sleeping counts, so their numbers do not affect Local Authority targets.

In Glasgow, homeless applications from migrants are assessed by a Council lawyer, not a housing officer. Homelessness agencies including the Simon Community, Barnardos and the city’s day centres are all seeing increasing homelessness and rough sleeping.

In Edinburgh, homeless organisations have also seen a rise in homelessness and rough sleeping amongst European migrants, and most local authorities have reported increases in presentations in their areas.

Research by Scottish Council for Single Homeless appears to show that A8 nationals generally do not seek housing advice until they actually become
homeless, and that more preventative work could be done.14

The right to a home
One of the key powers devolved to Holyrood is in relation to housing. The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 has been hailed as the most progressive housing and homelessness law in Europe, and the 2003 Act provided groundbreaking legislation stating that everyone who is homeless would have the right to a home by 2012.

Following EU enlargement in 2004, the UK government amended the Housing Act 1996 – which only applies in England and Wales – to bar A8 nationals from applying for council housing and prevent Local Authorities from providing emergency homelessness accommodation.

The legislation in Scotland was not amended, which means that A8 nationals in Scotland have equal housing rights with other European nationals. Benefits legislation, however, is reserved to Westminster, and only accession state nationals in employment can qualify for Housing Benefit. This appears to be the most pressing concern of Scottish Local Authority housing and homelessness services.

This Scottish anomaly, where all EU citizens have equal rights, is a situation which the Regional Director Scotland, of the Home Office Immigration and Nationality Directorate has described as an “unfortunate error”; and one which his department is seeking to redress with further legislation15. In the course of our research, the head of homelessness at the Scottish Executive confirmed that negotiations with the Home office are continuing, and that the Executive is awaiting legislation to be laid down by Westminster.

As the situation stands at the moment, the rights of A8 nationals to homelessness assistance are outlined in the Scottish Executive Code of Guidance on Homelessness, which Local Authorities are required to use in assessing homelessness and entitlements to housing. Local Authorities, however, in the SCSH research, have reported the Code of Guidance to be insufficient to assist them to unravel the complex system of rights and restrictions that apply to A8 nationals in different situations.

These factors, combined with a array of difficulties faced by many migrants in establishing themselves, have led to a situation where a sizeable proportion of the new migrant population is living in poverty, in poor housing, and experiencing exploitation, homelessness and destitution, with very limited access to help.

Recent research by the London-based charity Homeless Link16 notes that:

| The vast majority [of A8 nationals] have found work, accommodation and a place in the community. However, for others the picture is bleaker. Through misfortune or circumstance a small but significant number of A8 migrants have found themselves destitute and homeless; some are now living on our streets. |

The Homeless Link report highlights the concerns of housing and homelessness support agencies across London, concerns echoed by Shelter Scotland, Citizens Advice Scotland and the Scottish Council for Single Homeless (SCSH) research.

Housing advice agency concerns
With regard to the experiences of migrants accessing and sustaining accommodation, our stakeholder consultation has included the following feedback to date:

Shelter Scotland, Housing Aid Centre, Glasgow: indicated that people tend to contact Shelter for advice when their housing situation reaches crisis point. The most likely reason for EU migrants, particularly those from accession states, to contact Shelter is following the loss of their accommodation due to loss of employment, either because the housing is tied or because they are unable to access Housing Benefit.

If presenting as homeless to the Local Authority, EU migrants from accession states are often unlikely to have their housing needs assessed. If they are assessed, accommodation is seldom offered,

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15. Phil Taylor, Regional Director Scotland, IND, at Home Office immigration stakeholder event, Glasgow, 8 December 2006
although there have been several cases where particularly vulnerable people have been housed, for example young women at risk of sexual exploitation.

**Shelter Scotland** is of the view that priority should be given to making sure newcomers are aware of their rights in relation to private rented housing, particularly in terms of multiple occupancies and grounds for repossession. Shelter also suggests that there is an unmet need for information about, and help with applying to, rent deposit schemes for private rented accommodation.

**Positive Action in Housing (PAiH)** (whilst having a Scottish wide remit, mostly deals with people in housing need in Glasgow): expressed concern at some alarming cases of EU migrants living in dangerously and illegally overcrowded conditions, compounded by confusion over homelessness legislation.

In particular there are fears that some vulnerable young people who are homeless are at risk of exploitation, including sexual exploitation. It was emphasised that migrant workers who have lost their employment and their tied accommodation have no access to benefits, and can become completely destitute.

The agency has seen an increase in European migrants being referred to the destitution service which was established to provide advice and basic humanitarian assistance to destitute asylum seekers. This service is funded only through public donations, and can only provide basic support to a small number of the most vulnerable clients.

**Scottish Federation of Housing Associations (SFHA)** has developed a training programme for housing association staff, and has issued revised guidance notes on allocations and immigration status.

**Concerns of other agencies in Scotland**

**Scottish Refugee Council (SRC)** stated that although it does not have a remit to provide assistance to migrant workers, there has been a significant increase in the number of migrant workers, particularly from accession states, seeking support and advice, mostly with housing problems. In addition, the SRC receives calls from advice agencies and Local Authorities from across the country on issues concerning migrant workers. This situation is regarded by the SRC as indicating an urgent need for more information for workers in frontline services on the entitlements of all migrants, whether asylum seekers, refugees or migrant workers.

Feedback from other areas in Scotland on the housing experiences of newcomers included:

In Tayside one third of migrant workers interviewed\(^{17}\) said they had received no support in finding accommodation and felt that at least some help could have been beneficial;

Aberdeen and Moray\(^ {18} \), research undertaken reported that many migrant workers knew little about housing arrangements before arriving and often experienced poor housing conditions, with little control over rent paid. Individuals lacked information on social rented housing and how it is allocated. Additionally it was reported that there was “uncertainty of the relationship between their

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**Access to Housing Lists**

There are no restrictions in the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 as amended by the 2001 Act on the grounds of nationality, residence and/or immigration status to any individual or household making an application to a housing association. All applicants on a housing list are entitled to an assessment of housing need. **Associations have no requirement to make enquiries about immigration status when accepting someone onto the housing list.**

**Allocation of Housing**

Many housing associations are unclear what classes of people may be excluded from obtaining a tenancy as a result of their immigration status. **There are no legal restrictions on an applicant being allocated housing on the basis of their immigration status.** Housing associations are not restricted in the same way that local authorities are by immigration law in the allocation of housing.

**SFHA Guidance Note**

Allocations and Immigration Status, March 2007

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18. Improving understanding of the housing circumstances for minority ethnic communities in Aberdeen and Moray, Communities Scotland, March 2005
residential and employment status and their eligibility for housing”.

Research by the University of Highlands and Islands (UHI) highlighted the problems of tied accommodation; a shortage of accommodation resulting in multiple occupancy and overcrowding; the sometimes poor condition of accommodation; and, confusion on issues related to homelessness, rights to housing and Housing Benefit eligibility, especially in the context of EU accession states, due to unclear guidance from the Scottish Executive.

The view from Poland

As part of the research for the Equal Access project, Door Step visited the Barka Foundation and the European Migrants’ Integration Network (EuroMi) in Poznan, Poland.

The Barka Foundation

The Barka Foundation is a pioneering Polish organization that has been working for 18 years the in the areas of social exclusion, unemployment, and homelessness. The organization, originally based in Poznan, has developed an inclusive, participative model, which is now being replicated across Poland and developed as a model of good practice across the EU.

Initially providing community homes for homeless people, Barka has moved to develop education and training programmes and supporting social cooperatives as routes out of unemployment and social exclusion. Now the organization has secured funding to build and manage affordable social rented housing in Poland

In 2006 the Barka was approached by the Simon Community in London for assistance with the growing numbers of homeless Polish and other migrants sleeping rough in the capital.

Barka quotes the Consul General of the Republic of Poland in London distinguished 5 groups of “work migrants”, which need assistance:

- individuals ill-prepared for migration,
- victims of illegal practices by the employers in the UK,
- individuals who shifted their homelessness from Poland to the UK.

Barka hopes that the project they are now setting up in London will be the first of many across the UK, assisting Polish and other migrant workers with shelter, support, information and advice.

European Migrant Integration Network (EuroMi)

Since EU enlargement in 2004, the Barka Foundation has also focused on the situation of migrants from the new EU member states, building partnerships across Europe, and establishing with them the European Migrants’ Integration Network (EuroMi).

The EuroMi Network is a response to the situation where EU accession rules have left accession state nationals in much the same position as “illegal” migrants – vulnerable to exploitation with very little protection.

In response to the inequalities and exploitation faced by migrant workers from the EU accession states, has issued a call to the European Commission, to urgently fund support programmes for EU work migrants.

EuroMi believes that it is essential to engage not only the public authorities but also local non-governmental organizations, communities and religious organisations. The Network currently has plans to establish Centres for Migrant Integration in London, Dublin, Paris, Madrid and Rome, as well as other centers established by partner organizations and institutions, linked through the EuroMi network.

19. Migrant Workers in the Highlands and Islands, UHI, 2005
New migrants are in many areas doing the jobs that British workers are reluctant to do, often with worse pay and conditions. Trade unions are amongst those raising concerns about employment rights abuses in both the formal and informal economy, from underpayment and health and safety issues to exploitation amounting to slavery.

A Citizens Advice Scotland briefing in May 2006 found that the three main problems facing migrant workers were low pay, long hours and substandard accommodation. Migrant workers, particularly A8 nationals, were found to be “facing exploitation by employers and employment agencies though a combination of language difficulties and lack of knowledge of their rights”.

Accommodation, mostly private rented and frequently unregulated and overcrowded, is often tied to employment, adding the threat of homelessness to unemployment should a contract end or an employee complain. It is by no means clear in which circumstances a person will be able to receive homelessness assistance from the Local Authority.

A report for the Trades Union Congress in 2005, reported that migrant workers in the UK, including those with the right to work here, are subject to such levels of exploitation and control that they meet the international legal definition of ‘forced labour’.

Exploitation is by no means restricted to migrant workers, but there are factors which can make it more common for migrant workers, and more difficult to challenge. The TUC breaks down this exploitation into three categories:

- outright illegality (pay levels below the minimum wage, unlawful deductions, withholding of passports and so on);
- immoral treatment (low wages, long hours, sub-standard accommodation, misleading promises, abusive management),
- and comparative exploitation (lower wages or worse conditions than their fellow workers).

New migrants generally have limited knowledge of rights, and lack the means and support to enforce them. These factors can be made worse by language difficulties, and a lack of knowledge of rights amongst support agencies, who report difficulties in keeping up with changes in the rights of migrants.

Being away from the support structures of home, being separated from family and being in a situation of temporary and intermittent employment can add to difficulties and leave people more vulnerable.

Government policies which restrict access to welfare benefits and social housing for certain migrant groups also contribute to make it harder to challenge or walk away from exploitative situations.

The Director of the Simon Community homelessness charity in London, Tim Nicholls, makes the connection between exploitation in work and in housing:

“With no support network, they fall into the hands of unscrupulous people who force them into slave labour: pay them a pittance and force them to live in poor-quality, overcrowded accommodation. We are seeing an increasing number of Poles who end up on the street after fleeing situations like this.”

1.4 Vulnerability and exploitation

21. Forced Labour and Migration to the UK, COMPAS in collaboration with the TUC
22. TUC General Council statement on European migration, adopted 7 September 2006
23. Interview in the Observer, September 10, 2006
Section 2
Welcome to Scotland: information and advice

The emergence of new migrant communities in Scotland, has created a patchwork of responses at national, regional and local level, with a range of initiatives from statutory, voluntary, community, and business sectors. These responses are constantly developing, and some key examples are highlighted below.

Relocation Advisory Service
The Relocation Advisory Service was established by the Scottish Executive in October 2004. The service aims to assist any person who would like to come to live, work or study, in Scotland. A team of advisors can help with enquiries on visas, work permits, becoming a student, finding a job, or setting up a business.

Scotland is the Place
The Scottish executive website www.scotlandistheplace.com provides general information in English and Polish on living and working in Scotland. The website is in both English and Polish, and a handbook - Welcome to Scotland for Migrant Workers – has been produced in English and Polish.

Local multi-agency forms
Across Scotland, local networks and forums have been set up to discuss and coordinate responses to emerging new migrant communities. An early example is the Lochaber Migrant Workers Forum, which brings together Lochaber Enterprise, Lochaber CAB, Highland Council Culture, Leisure & Sport, Highland Council Housing Department, Careers Scotland, local employer Marine Harvest, NHS and Northern Constabulary. The aim of the forum is “to address concerns of workers in the area and look at ways in which the area can benefit from better inclusion and integration of workers.”

Welcome packs
Several Local Authorities and multi-agency networks, particularly rural authorities, have produced local translated welcome packs, aimed at providing basic information on the area, employment opportunities, information on housing, and signposting to advice and information services. Early examples were in Moray, Lochaber, and Scottish Borders, aimed at getting information to predominantly agricultural and tourist industry workers.

Witamy W Glasgow
In August 2006 Glasgow City Council published a glossy Welcome to Glasgow information booklet for migrant workers from the A8 states in English, Polish and Slovakian. The pack provides basic information about migrant workers rights and responsibilities whilst living and working in Glasgow.

Online Welcome Pack
In 2006 the Highland Wellbeing Alliance (Community Planning Partnership) through Highlands and Islands Equality Forum, commissioned community consultants Housing Plus to produce a comprehensive multi-lingual online Welcome Pack. The project involved extensive consultation with service providers and new migrants in the Highlands, and is currently available in English, Polish, Lithuanian and Latvian, at www.highlandlife.net. The online Welcome Pack, produced by Michael Collins of Door Step, aims to provide information for new migrants and service providers in the Highlands.

Information events
Information events or open days for migrant workers have been held across Scotland, organised by Local Authorities, voluntary sector, housing associations, employers, Local Enterprise Companies and trade unions.

In Glasgow, the first information event was organised by the Community Inclusion Coordinator in Greater Govan, working with the four housing associations in the area. Around one thousand Polish migrants from across Glasgow attended the event which had information stalls from housing providers, voluntary sector advice and information services, educational establishments and trade unions.

The feedback from the event was extremely positive, with many Polish attendees suggesting that such events should be held regularly for new
arrivals. The busiest information stalls on the day were the housing associations, money advice and the Transport and General Workers Union. This event was also used by the Door Step group to conduct interviews with Polish migrants on their experiences of coming to live and work in Scotland.

Drop-in services

Edinburgh Swietlica (meaning 'meeting place' or 'howff') is a weekly drop-in centre situated in the Fort Community Wing in Leith. The service receives some funding from City of Edinburgh Council, is run entirely by volunteers and provides support, advice, recreation and a warm and friendly social ethos. Child-care and education is provided for young children and a number of classes in English language for foreigners and Polish language for local Edinburgh based citizens. Although mainly catering for Polish new arrivals, a few members of other East European countries as well as a number of Scottish born people attend Swietlica.

Participative and collaborative solutions

These various responses give an indication of some of the examples of good practice in information initiatives targeted at new migrants or migrant issues across Scotland.

As an emerging patchwork of responses which are still developing, there has yet to be an evaluation of the impact of responses in meeting the needs of new migrant communities. Beyond a handful of local consultation exercises, there is no evidence of the involvement of new migrant communities in developing new services. And at present, similar to the situation with emerging refugee communities, there are no examples of migrant community organisations with the capacity to directly deliver services.

The Door Step Equal Access project aims build on and take forward the research and various initiatives and to work with and support the public, voluntary and community sector development of new services with and for new migrant and refugee communities in Scotland.
Section 3
Door Step Community consultation

The purpose of the Door Step community consultation is to gain an understanding of the experiences of migrant workers in Scotland, and to lay the groundwork for the community action research project which is an integral part of developing the Door Step Equal Access information resource and community adviser training programme.

Methods – one to one interviews
The research has sought to obtain both quantitative an qualitative information on Polish workers’ experiences. 78 individual interviews were carried out At two information events for Polish workers in Glasgow, questioning Polish migrants on their housing, work and welfare and general experiences in coming to Scotland.

Methods – focus groups
The first of a series of focus groups has also taken place in January 2007, a semi-structured group discussion involving seven young (18-30 year old) Poles living in Glasgow, Edinburgh and Aberdeen. Future focus groups will target older people and seek to gain an insight into the specific experiences of women within the Polish community.

All together, participants in the study to date have been 41% female, 59% male, and split evenly into age groups 18-29 and 30-44, with just 6% over 44 years old. Half of the participants had been in Scotland for 6 months or less.

Summary of key findings

Poland and new migration
Membership brought new rights to travel for Polish citizens. Prior to EU accession in 2004, opportunities to travel to find work in Europe were limited. Before 1989, for most Polish citizens travel to Europe for any reason was impossible, a point which was seen as significant by the younger migrants of the focus group.

Poland
On May 1st 2004, the largest state to join the European Union was Poland, with a population of nearly 39 million, making it the 8th largest state in the EU.

The transition from a centrally planned economy to free market economy began in 1989. Average incomes have increased in real terms since 1993, as has the gap between the richest and poorest groups in Polish society.

Of the new EU members states in the 2004 enlargement, Poland had the highest unemployment rate at around 19%.

Since accession to the EU in 2004 the GDP per capita rate has began to increase again, but unemployment is still around 17% in most regions, the highest rate in the EU. The groups most affected by unemployment are young people, women, and people over 45 years of age.

General
The main reasons for leaving Poland were to obtain employment not available in Poland, higher wages in the UK, and, amongst the younger participants, the opportunity to leave home and live independently.

Reasons for coming to Scotland included a perception of Scottish people as being friendly, and quality of life as being better than in English cities, particularly London. Most people also came to join friends or family – “chain migration”.

“In Scotland are friendly people who will chat to you in the street, not strangers to each other like in my country”

In general, participants expressed positive feelings about their move to Scotland, although most had experienced difficulties, particularly in the first few weeks after arrival.

Most were uncertain about how long they would stay, although 44% stated they would like to settle permanently depending on their experience of life in Scotland.
English language skills and access to reliable information and advice were seen by many as the key to success.

“There everyone struggles at the beginning. I had about £300, which I thought would last me 3 weeks. But I didn’t find a job until 3 weeks, and then I had to count £1 for this day and £1 for the next day until I got paid. It was like a life-school.”

Economics
The UK economy has benefited substantially from the contribution of migrant workers from the new European Union accession states.

There has been a slight rise in overall UK unemployment but not in areas of new migrant settlement. It has been suggested that immigration is keeping down natural unemployment rates.

Numbers
There are conflicting data on numbers of registered migrant workers from the EU accession states actually living and working in the UK.

Many Polish migrants interviewed in Glasgow had not registered. Reasons given included the cost (£70), the inconvenience + cost of re-registering for every short-term job, and on the advice of employers for cash in hand pay.

“In When you come to the country you have almost no money. You have to pay a deposit for your flat, and you have to pay £100 to register (with the Home Office), and you have to do it in 4 weeks. It’s too expensive. I think the employer should pay.”

Inequality
European migrants from new EU member states have less rights to work, housing, and welfare support than other EU citizens, also, they face difficulties exercising the rights they do have.

The cost and bureaucracy of the Workers Registration Scheme has resulted in a large proportion of EU migrants working illegally, vulnerable to exploitation and with no welfare safety net.

There is growing evidence, confirmed by migrants participating in this research, of migrants living in poverty, very poor housing, experiencing homelessness and destitution.

Employment
Most accession state workers are employed in semi-skilled or unskilled work, at low wages and very often below their level of professional and educational qualifications and experience.

Only 6% of participants in the study considered that they were working at the level of their educational or professional qualifications and experience.

“My friend told me about working tax credit for people with low wages, but I think you have to pay this back?”

Most migrants interviewed for this research had worked in several short--term jobs and many were working in more than one at the same time.

Almost a quarter of those interviewed were not working at the time but none of these were claiming welfare benefits. Almost all of those unemployed had recently arrived in Scotland.

Participants interviewed to date have been working mainly in semi-skilled and unskilled work, with a high proportion working in the service industries.

Many migrants’ experience of working in the UK is positive, but a significant and growing number are experiencing employment inequality, abuse of rights and exploitation.

All participants were aware of the obligation to register with the Workers Registration Scheme. Around 75% of workers were registered through their current employer.

“I registered with my first job, and the next, but after 5 or 6, I think “what is the point”?

Excessive deductions from wages by employers are common and migrant workers in general work longer shifts and more total hours than UK citizens in similar jobs.
Exploitation at work ranges from discriminatory conditions and payment below the minimum wage to situations that amount to forced or bonded labour.

Very few migrant workers belong to a trade union. Only a handful of those interviewed were members, and only one indicated interest in joining a union, although localised recruitment initiatives appear to be attracting members.

**Housing**

Most accession state workers are living in, or have experienced, overcrowded, expensive, private rented accommodation, with limited security of tenure.

The vast majority of participants in the study (86%) were living either in private rented accommodation or staying with friends. Most were looking for alternative accommodation.

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“My sister applied for council house at beginning of 2005. She never heard anything, no response. She was probably the first Polish person to apply and they probably didn’t know what to do with her. I applied one year ago, waited 5 months and didn’t get any response, so I just signed a lease with a private landlord.”
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Most of those interviewed were living in shared accommodation, with a high number in overcrowded conditions. This occurred in both private and social rented sectors.

Although most migrant workers are aware of social rented housing, there are often misconceptions of entitlements to apply, and the nature of social housing provision.

Less than half of those interviewed who were aware of housing associations (70%) had actually applied. Several who did apply did not receive an acknowledgement.

There was a general perception amongst those interviewed that social housing was almost exclusively in undesirable or dangerous areas, and that the accommodation was sub standard.

The focus group agreed that there was a worry of becoming more isolated by an allocation of social housing in a Glasgow scheme.

Within Glasgow, participants were staying across the city, but there is evidence that clustering is occurring in some areas, for example in Govan and the Gorbals. In the case of Govan, settlement appeared to be due to housing associations actively targeting information at Polish workers.

Many participants were unsure of their security of tenure and housing rights. Often only one person in shared accommodation had signed the tenancy agreement, sometimes on the advice of the landlord to avoid Council Tax.

Despite available guidance (e.g. from Scottish Federation of Housing Associations) there is confusion amongst housing associations, with some believing migrants cannot be allocated housing.

**Homelessness**

For accession state workers, accommodation is often tied to employment, so losing a job can mean becoming homeless.

The right to homeless assistance is tied to right of residency, which is dependent on economic status: losing a job can mean becoming homeless and losing the right to Local Authority support at the same time.

Significant numbers of A8 nationals are experiencing homelessness and rough sleeping. Where advice and assistance is sought, it tends to be at crisis point.

There is inconsistency in the interpretation by local authorities of homelessness legislation in relation to migrants, and the guidance is in dispute.

There are different entitlements to support in England and Scotland, with more rights under Scottish law. The Scottish Executive is working with the Home Office to bring Scotland in line with the rest of the UK.

Almost half of those interviewed stated they did not know where to go for help in the event of becoming homeless. “Sleep under a bridge” was a common response. Only one participant suggested approaching the Local Authority.
Advice and information services

There are barriers to migrant workers exercising their rights, and to seeking help to do so. In general, migrant workers are less aware of their rights, and the least likely to access information, advice and support services.

Migrants are more likely to seek informal advice from friends and family, or non-independent advice from local authorities as opposed to independent services such as CAB or Shelter.

For help with problems, most participants in the study had sought advice and support and information from friends and colleagues rather than agencies.

Most people interviewed had not seen the welcome packs produced by the Scottish Executive or Glasgow City Council.

The internet was a prime source of information before and after leaving Poland. Websites included Local Authority, scotlandistheplace.com and Polish websites such as www.glasgow24.pl.

Identified barriers to advice include:
- Lack of knowledge of rights
- Lack of awareness of services
- Lack of interpreting and translation provision
- Access issues such as restrictive opening hours
- Cost implications, due to lack of awareness of free services

Local authority and voluntary sector agencies are experiencing difficulties interpreting legislation and guidance in relation to migrant’s rights and in meeting the information and advice needs of migrant workers.

Polish migrants with experience, good English and “inside knowledge”, for instance working as interpreters for councils or voluntary sector, can find themselves acting as informal voluntary advisers.

New, independent and unregulated advice centres are being established, in some cases charging fees for advice which could be provided free by local authorities or the voluntary sector.

There is evidence of a need for coordinated service provision for migrant workers. Services developed for asylum seekers and refugees could in many cases serve as models.

Case study:
Ewa, a 27 year old woman from Warsaw.

After finishing her masters degree in law, Ewa couldn’t find a job in Poland, so she decided to come to the UK to work and to improve her English. She arrived in Scotland in October 2005, and one year later talked to the Door Step team about her experiences.

Ewa paid a fee of around £300 - most of her savings - to a Polish agency who were to arrange work and accommodation in Glasgow. On arrival at the coach station in Glasgow, however, there was no agent to meet her, and the contact in Poland could not be reached. There were three others in the coach in the same situation. They realised they had all been conned. They all slept in the coach station that night.

The following day Ewa found a backpackers’ hostel, registered with an employment agency, and started work at a factory making cardboard boxes. Ewa describes her first job in the UK as terrible. She got on well with her fellow workers, but felt discriminated against by her boss, with the migrant workers being given harder work than the Scottish workers. However Ewa stressed subsequently she has had mostly positive work experiences.

The backpackers’ hostel was expensive, emergency accommodation, so Ewa found a room to rent in a shared house. It was in a town just outside Glasgow, a two-bedroom ex-council house shared by 6 Polish people, which Ewa describes as filthy, disgusting. Ewa's had to share her bedroom with a man she did not know. There was only one bed. Ewa lived there for three months, until Scottish friends lent her money for a deposit and advance rent for a bedsit of her own.

Ewa says that she has met many Polish people in Glasgow who have been through similar experiences. Some have given up and returned to Poland within the first few weeks, but some have not been able to do so.

*not real name
Appendix 1.
Door Step Equal Access project outline

WHAT IS DOOR STEP EQUAL ACCESS?
Door Step Equal Access is a new project, currently in development, to empower Scotland’s refugees and migrant workers to access their rights.

Refugees and migrant workers are entitled to housing, employment and welfare rights. The lack of reliable and accessible information and advice leaves them vulnerable to poor housing, poverty and exploitation at work.

Through an innovative mix of research, training, and the production of participatory multi-media resources, Door Step will create a network of specialist advisors who are themselves from refugee and migrant communities.

WHO IS INVOLVED?
Door Step Equal Access is a Glasgow-based initiative of two not-for-profit organisations, Community InfoSource and mediaco-op.

Door Step’s training programme for specialist rights advisors will be mainly for refugees and new migrants.

Backing the Door Step project is an active Advisory Group including Shelter, Scottish Refugee Council, Citizen’s Advice Bureau, Oxfam Scotland, Positive Action in Housing, PATH Scotland, Scottish Federation of Housing Associations, a number of local housing associations and refugee community organisations, LintelTrust and the Barka Foundation (Poland).

Development funding for the project has come from Oxfam Scotland UK Poverty Programme, Big Lottery Fund Investing in Ideas and LintelTrust.

WHY IS DOOR STEP EQUAL ACCESS NEEDED?
Refugees and migrant workers contribute hugely to Scotland but too many are falling through the net of existing advice provision, ending up in overcrowded sub-standard housing, exploited in their jobs, or even becoming destitute and sleeping rough.

Fast-changing government policies on migration and asylum lead to widespread confusion about exactly what refugees and migrants are entitled to. They are often unaware of their rights here, and have nowhere to turn to for specialist information, in appropriate languages, from advisors who understand their situation.

WHAT WILL DOOR STEP EQUAL ACCESS OFFER?
Door Step is developing an imaginative training and research programme: migrants and refugees will carry out Action Research in their communities and take an active part in producing accessible updateable information, including a multi-language DVD and a website.

The newly-created resources will be available to mainstream providers of information and advice. The newly-trained specialist advisors will work with mainstream providers on placements and eventually as employees and sessional workers. They will also help train the next group of advisors.

Door Step will be a practical contribution to overcoming inequality and exploitation.
HOW WILL DOOR STEP EQUAL ACCESS WORK?

The Door Step project will unfold in stages:

- Initial research, development and consultation.
- Action Research by a group of refugee and migrant trainees.
- Training participants to Communities Scotland HomePoint National Standards for Type 1 advice and information.
- Participatory production and piloting of an interactive multi-language DVD, with realistic case-studies.
- Supported placements for Door Step trainees with advice services and housing providers.
- Development of Door Step website, providing up-to-date information on migrants and refugees rights.
- Distribution of the DVD and web resources to mainstream advice providers - as a training and information tool, equally accessible to advisors and their clients.
- Training a new group of refugee and migrant advisors.
- Setting up a new network of advisors to share information, promote the use of Door Step resources, organise community-based advice sessions and collectively improve the quality of advice and information available to Scotland's newcomers.
- Evaluation, monitoring and documenting throughout the process.
- Production of a 'how-to' guide for reproducing the Door Step method elsewhere.

If you want to know more, please contact us.

We are particularly interested in hearing from:

Refugees and migrant workers who are interested in participating in the Door Step training. We are compiling a waiting list of potential participants.
Professionals in rights information/advice or housing, who are interested in joining the Door Step Advisory Group, taking trainees on placement, or using our information resources when they are produced.
CZYM JEST PROGRAM DOOR STEP?

Program Door Step Equal Access jest nowym projektem, znajdującym się obecnie na etapie opracowywania, którego celem jest zapewnienie uchodźcom i pracownikom sezonowym w Szkocji umocowania umożliwiającego egzekwowanie należnych im praw.

Uchodźcy i pracownicy sezonowi posiadają prawa w zakresie zakwaterowania, pracy i świadczeń społecznych. Brak rzetelnych i dostępnych informacji i doradztwa powoduje, że muszą oni godzić się na złe warunki mieszkaniowe, biedę i wykorzystywanie w pracy.

Program Door Step ma na celu stworzenie sieci wyspecjalizowanych doradców, pochodzących ze społeczności uchodźców i emigrantów poprzez innowacyjne połączenie badań, szkoleń i wytworzenie materiałów multimedialnych.

KTO JEST ZAANGAŻOWANY?

Door Step stanowi powołaną w Glasgow inicjatywę dwóch organizacji non-profit, Community InfoSource i media co-op.

Program szkoleniowy Door Step kształcący doradców specjalizujących się w dziedzinie praw przysługujących emigrantom i uchodźcom adresowany jest głównie do uchodźców i nowych emigrantów.

Projekt Door Step jest wspierany przez aktywną Grupę Doradczą, obejmującą takie podmioty i organizacje jak Shelter, Scottish Refugee Council, Citizen’s Advice Bureau, Oxfam Scotland, Positive Action in Housing, PATH Scotland, Scottish Federation of Housing Associations [Szkocką Federację Towarzystw Budownictwa Społecznego], liczne lokalne towarzystwa budownictwa społecznego, a także organizacje społeczności uchodźców, LintefTrust i Fundację Barka z Polski.

Fundusze na rozwój projektu pochodzą z programu Oxfam Scotland UK Poverty Programme, funduszu Big Lottery Fund Investing in Ideas oraz z organizacji LintefTrust.

DLACZEGO PROGRAM DOOR STEP JEST POTRZEBNY?

Uchodźcy i pracownicy sezonowi w znacznym stopniu przyczyniają się do rozwoju Szkocji, ale zbyt wielu z nich przelatuje przez sito istniejących systemów poradnictwa i trafia do przeludnionych mieszkań nie spełniających normalnych standardów, jest wykorzystywana w pracy, a nawet kończy w sytuacji skrajnego ubóstwa i spania pod gołym niebem.

Rządowe przepisy dotyczące emigracji i udzielania azylu zmieniają się bardzo szybko, powodując wiele nieporozumień związanych z dokładnym określeniem praw uchodźców i emigrantów. Bardzo często nie są oni świadomi praw przysługujących im w Szkocji i nie dysponują miejscem, do którego mogliby się zwrócić po specjalistyczną informację, udzieloną w odpowiednim języku przez doradców rozumujących ich sytuację.

CO OFERUJE PROGRAM DOOR STEP?

Program Door Step ma na celu utworzenie kreatywnego programu szkoleniowo-badałowego dla emigrantów i uchodźców, którzy będą prowadzić bieżące badania [Action Research] w swoich społecznościach i wezmą aktywny udział w stworzeniu łatwo dostępnych i umożliwiających bieżące aktualizowanie informacji, w tym wielojęzycznego DVD i strony internetowej.

Nowotworzone zasoby będą dostępne dla głównych dostawców informacji i usług doradczych. Świeżo wyszkoleni doradcy pozostający wiedzę specjalistyczną podejmą współpracę z głównymi dostawcami informacji w ramach zleceń / praktyk a ostatecznie w charakterze pracowników etatowych bądź pracowników zaangażowanych w konkretne etapy działania. Będą również pomagać w szkoleniu kolejnych grup doradców.

Program Door Step będzie stanowił praktyczny wkład w przewyższenie nierównego traktowania i wyzysku.
W JAKI SPOSÓB BĘDZIE FUNKCJONOWAŁ PROGRAM DOOR STEP WORK?

Projekt Door Step będzie przebiegał etapami:

■ Wstępne badania, opracowanie [programu] i konsultacje.

■ Bieżące badania [Action Research] prowadzone przez grupę praktykantów rekrutującą się spośród uchodźców i emigrantów.

■ Szkolenie uczestników w celu poznania standardów [Communities Scotland HomePoint National Standards] odnośnie informacji i doradztwa pierwszego szczebla [Type 1].

■ Udział w tworzeniu i pilotowanie interaktywnego wielojęzycznego DVD, zawierającego studia przypadków oparte na realiach życia.

■ Pomoc w uzyskiwaniu praktyk / zleceń dla praktykantów rekrutujących się z programu Door Step u dostawców usług doradczych i pomocy w zakresie zakwaterowania.

■ Opracowanie strony internetowej Programu Door Step, zawierającej aktualne informacje na temat praw uchodźców i emigrantów.

■ Przekazanie DVD i zasobów internetowych głównym dostawcom informacji i usług doradczych - w charakterze narzędzia służącego celom informacyjnym i szkoleniowym, które będzie dostępne w równym stopniu dla doradców i ich klientów.

■ Szkolenie nowej grupy doradców rekrutujących się spośród uchodźców i emigrantów.

■ Ustanowienie nowej sieci doradców w celu wymiany informacji, promocji wykorzystania zasobów Programu Door Step, organizowania sesji doradczych dla konkretnej grupy społeczności i wspólnego doskonalenia jakości doradztwa i informacji dla nowych osób przybywających do Szkocji.

■ Ocena, monitoring i prowadzenie dokumentacji w trakcie całego procesu.

■ Stworzenie przewodnika zawierającego proste instrukcje w celu powołania metody Programu Door Step w innych miejscach.

W celu uzyskania dodatkowych informacji prosimy o kontakt z nami.

Szczególnie zależy na na opiniach:

Uchodźców i pracowników sezonowych, którzy są zainteresowani udziałem w szkoleniach programu Door Step. Tworzymy listę rezerwową potencjalnych uczestników. Specjalistów w zakresie informacji/doradztwa dotyczącego prawa i pomocy związanej z zakwaterowaniem, którzy są zainteresowani przystąpieniem do Grupy Doradczej Programu Door Step, przyjęciem praktykantów, oraz korzystaniem z zasobów informacyjnych, gdy będą już dostępne.
# Door Step Advisory Group members
## March 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Designation or skill</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Access Apna Ghar Housing Assoc.</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>Dave le sage</td>
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<td>Barka Foundation</td>
<td>Coordinator, Polish-British Mission</td>
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<td>Linthouse Housing Association</td>
<td>Director</td>
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<td>Head of Policy</td>
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<td>Roma Consultant</td>
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<td>Keri McCormick</td>
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Appendix 2. Research Review

This Appendix summarises the relevant key findings and recommendations of the following documents:

### Migrant workers research and reports, Scotland

1. **HOMELESS A8 NATIONALS - THE SCOTTISH EXPERIENCE**  
Scottish Council For Single Homeless, 2006

2. **THE IMPACT OF A8 MIGRATION ON SCOTLAND**  

3. **MIGRANT WORKERS IN THE HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS**  
UHI PolicyWeb and the National Centre for Migration Studies on behalf of Highlands and Islands Enterprise, October 2005

4. **"TAYSIDE MIGRANT LABOUR POPULATION STUDY"**  
Scottish Economic Research  
February 2006.

### UK research and reports

5. **THE ADVICE GAP: A STUDY OF BARRIERS TO HOUSING ADVICE FOR BLACK AND MINORITY ETHNIC COMMUNITIES.**  
Shelter, January 2007

6. **THE IMPACT OF THE RECENT MIGRATION FROM EASTERN EUROPE ON THE UK ECONOMY**  

7. **ACCESSION MONITORING REPORT MAY 2004 - JUNE 2006**  
Home Office, August 2006

8. **REFUGEES AND OTHER NEW MIGRANTS: A REVIEW OF THE EVIDENCE ON SUCCESSFUL APPROACHES TO INTEGRATION**  
Centre on Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS, Home Office-commissioned, 2004

9. **'THE INTEGRATION OF MIGRANTS: ENGAGING EMPLOYERS, UNIONS AND THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR'**  
Background Briefing for conference, July 2006

10. **THE IMPACT OF FREE MOVEMENT OF WORKERS FROM CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE ON THE UK LABOUR MARKET**  

11. **FORCED LABOUR AND MIGRATION TO THE UK**  
Centre on Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS), in collaboration with the Trades Union Congress
Migrant workers: some local research outwith Scotland

12. FAIR ENOUGH? CENTRAL & EAST EUROPEAN MIGRANTS IN LOW WAGE EMPLOYMENT IN THE UK
Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2006

13. A8 NATIONALS IN LONDON HOMELESSNESS SERVICES
Homeless Link, 2006

14. ECONOMIC AND EMPLOYMENT ISSUES RELEVANT TO MIGRANT WORKERS IN THE HAVEN GATEWAY sub-region
The Akenham Partnership, 2006

15. DESTINATION NORTH EAST? HARNESSING THE REGIONAL POTENTIAL OF MIGRATION
Institute for Public Policy Research, July 2006

16. SUPPORTING MIGRANT WORKERS IN THE NORTH WEST OF ENGLAND
MSIO Merseyside Social Inclusion Observatory Policy Report, October 2006

17. A STRONGER VOICE
Report of the workshops carried out by the Anti-Poverty Group of the Migrants Resource Centre, for the Get Heard Project, London, June 2006

18. POLISH MIGRANT WORKERS IN IRELAND
Katarzyna Kropiwiec With Dr Rebecca Chiyoko King-O’Riain, 2006

Refugee and BME research and reports

19. MINORITY ETHNIC HOMELESSNESS IN GLASGOW: EXPERIENCES OF SERVICE USERS
Lemos&Crane, Commissioned by Communities Scotland, July 2004

20. BLACK AND MINORITY ETHNIC COMMUNITIES AND HOMELESSNESS IN SCOTLAND
Scottish Ethnic Minorities Monitoring Unit. Heriot Watt University, July 2004

21. HOUSING AND SUPPORT SERVICES FOR ASYLUM SEEKERS AND REFUGEES - A GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE
Chartered Institute of Housing in association with Joseph Rowntree Foundation, September 2005

22. HOUSING SUPPORT SERVICES TO REFUGEES: A SERVICE SPECIFICATION
Michael Bell Associates, (commissioned by Scottish Refugee Integration Forum) June 2006

23. SCOTTISH REFUGEE INTEGRATION FORUM (SRIF): ACTION PLAN
SRIF, February 2003

NOTE: The "Relevant key findings" and "Relevant recommendations" are all direct quotes from the original documents.
1. HOMELESS A8 NATIONALS - THE SCOTTISH EXPERIENCE
Daniel Coote, for Scottish Council For Single Homeless, 2006

Relevant key findings
LAs have seen a significant rise in the number of homeless applications from A8 migrant workers.

A8 migrant workers predominantly approach the LA or other advice agencies for assistance from private rented and tied accommodation. Evidence suggests that A8 migrant workers' living conditions may be worse than other homeless applicants due to overcrowding.

There is considerable evidence to suggest LAs do not fully understand their duties towards housing and providing assistance to homeless A8 migrant workers. Many LAs believe the duty to provide homelessness assistance to this group is linked to housing benefit regulations.

Benefit related issues are at the centre of LA problems in providing services to homeless A8 migrant workers. Confusion exists in how migrant workers acquire entitlement to benefits.

LAs feel their inability to access translation/interpretation services (or the process to accessing these services) is a further barrier to overall service provision.

LAs believe that the Scottish Executive Code of Guidance on Homelessness does not provide sufficient guidance for LAs on the complex requirements surrounding housing of homeless A8 migrant workers.

Relevant recommendations
LAs need to be aware of A8 migrant workers approaching independent advice agencies for housing and other information while ensuring that independent advice agencies are equipped to provide, and allow access to, high quality consistent advice and information.

The needs of A8 migrant workers need to be incorporated into LAs housing information and advice strategies, and other relevant policies, which in turn would feed into their homelessness prevention strategies.

LA homeless services should be fully aware of the actions of their House in Multiple Occupancy (HMO) teams, or equivalent, particularly where overcrowded or poor housing conditions are thought to be present, or closure orders are being considered.

The Scottish Executive should, as a matter of course, issue LAs clarification on their duty to house and provide housing advice to homeless A8 migrant workers.

The Scottish Executive should ensure, through guidance, that LAs are fully aware of local and national translation and interpretation services.

LAs should ensure their staff are fully aware of local and national translation and interpretation services.

LAs should assess the housing demands of homeless migrant workers on their housing and homelessness services. The analysis should also be incorporated into any future revision of homelessness strategies and local housing strategies (LHS) - in addition to revisions of allocation policies.
2. THE IMPACT OF A8 MIGRATION ON SCOTLAND

Relevant key findings
The literature suggests that migrant labour has generally had a positive impact on Scottish businesses.

It is vital that consideration is given to the implications and ramifications of the Government's policy of managed migration in relation to local authority service provision, legislative conflict and community cohesion.

There are a number of questions that remain unanswered in relation to:

Uncertainties around the rights and entitlements of A8 nationals living in Scotland;

The impact on local authority services (especially housing and education) as a result of the intake of A8 nationals who have come to Scotland looking for work; (pg 20)

Housing:
Recent migration trends have generated an increased demand for housing. Problems around multiple occupancies and overcrowding are highlighted as being of particular concern. This is a result of the limited supply of affordable housing allied to the incentive of migrants to minimise financial outgoings.

There are also concerns about the quality of accommodation being accessed and of the rents charged by landlords. In some instances, migrants have been exploited as a result of their linguistic or cultural disadvantage.

In addition, there appears to be a lack of clarity around access to housing. While some recruitment agencies ensure the availability of good quality accommodation before migrant workers are placed with an employer, in other cases, migrant workers are left to find accommodation themselves. (pg 17)

3. MIGRANT WORKERS IN THE HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS
UHI PolicyWeb and the National Centre for Migration Studies on behalf of Highlands and Islands Enterprise, October 2005

Relevant key findings:
The number of National Insurance Number (NINo) registrations of overseas nationals for the HIE area has more than doubled over the tax years 2003/04 and 2004/05.

Migrant workers who participated in the study were mainly employed in semi-skilled and unskilled work, and often in jobs that were significantly below their qualification levels and experience.

Although, most migrant workers were pleased to be in work, their employment conditions were characterised by short term contracts, low pay, irregular patterns of working / long hours and lack of training opportunities.
The main challenges experienced by migrant workers were poor English language and communications skills, lack of interpretation and translation facilities, lack of appropriate accommodation, difficulties in banking and lack of information and advice.

The majority were unaware of their employment rights or where to seek such information. (pg 53)

the short term nature of contracts created a great deal of uncertainty, made planning difficult, and mitigated against individuals accruing employment rights. (pg 74)

**Views and experiences at work**

views and experiences of migrant workers with regard to their employment were complex and often contradictory; consequently, three contextual factors need to be taken into account:

Most participants were often reluctant to appear openly critical of their employers.

In addition, for those in semi-skilled and unskilled jobs, conditions of work were seen in relative terms - i.e. implicitly and explicitly they were constantly comparing conditions and pay in the UK with what it would be like in their home countries.

Putting up with poor conditions was seen by migrants as a temporary measure until they improved their English and communications skills and was seen as a ‘foot in the door’ from which they might move on. (pg 50)

for most participants in the food processing and construction sectors, long hours and working six days a week were a feature of their working lives: "You know we start work 7 or 8 o’clock in the morning and finish at 5 or 6 or sometimes 7 o’clock, when not busy we work 6 days and sometimes 7 days, in the summer we work 6 to 6 ..." (Female, EU accession state national, Fish Processing) (pg 51)

Individuals were aware that making what might seem to employers as excessive demands may result in them being out of work, as well as homeless, especially if living in tied accommodation. They were very conscious of their vulnerability.

Accommodation and banking were the two issues highlighted as problematic across the board.

**Accommodation**

the three key issues that were consistently raised across all areas in the Highlands and Islands were:

- difficulties in finding appropriate accommodation;
- the high cost for the quality of accommodation available; and,
- issues around multiple occupancies, and consequently, overcrowding.

**Issues for service providers**

The four main issues that were mentioned by most service providers were

- language difficulties,
- accommodation,
- difficulties with banking services
- and lack of information about employment rights. (pg 66)
[service providers reported that] migrant workers were unable to access local authority accommodation, and were also discriminated against in the private market. Examples were given of instances where the prices of flats suddenly went up when migrant workers wanted to rent them, or of owners of accommodation simply increasing the number of beds in the accommodation. (pg 68)

**Relevant recommendations**
Mechanisms need to be in place to ensure that migrant workers do not suffer from exploitative wages and other poor working conditions. This is linked to the provision of clear information and advice.

**Information and advice**
There is a need to develop a comprehensive information pack for migrant workers … The possibility of publishing information in a variety of formats (e.g. video, audio, and internet) should also be investigated.

There is a need for an independent source of advice and information that migrant workers can access, whether in person, by telephone, or electronically.

**Services**
There is a need to clarify the rights of migrant workers to housing and to provide them with information on accessing affordable and good quality housing.

In the medium and long term, the mainstreaming of migrant workers' requirements is desirable.

There are three main issues that require to be addressed with regard to all services (e.g. education, careers advice, health, police employment and housing):

- Enhanced information and awareness about services available which should be addressed through the various mechanisms discussed above.
- A multi-agency approach to interpretation and translation services which explores and uses a variety of media (e.g. telephone, face to face and video-conferencing), to provide a consistent level of service.
- An emphasis on delivering 'culturally competent' services tailored to a wide range of cultures.

**4. TAYSIDE MIGRANT LABOUR POPULATION STUDY**

**Relevant key findings**
The migrant labour population in Tayside during the summer of 2005 was between 2,700 and 4,500.

There is no evidence to indicate that the increase in the migrant worker population has led to reduced employment opportunities among the local population. It is likely that the overall impact on the Tayside economy and demographic profile is positive.

Employers and recruitment agencies often assist migrant workers in accessing accommodation and other services.
relevant recommendations
Many of the existing information, advice and sign-posting services available to residents will be relevant to migrant workers. In some cases they may need to be adapted in light of language requirements and specific issues affecting migrant workers.

In cases whereby migrant workers wish to access specific services or obtain further information the appropriate agencies need to be aware of the potential scale and nature of demand.


Relevant key findings
Housing advice services are failing to reach people from minority ethnic backgrounds and new migrants, leading to increasing experiences of poor housing, overcrowding and homelessness.

The main barriers to people seeking independent advice are:
- lack of knowledge of housing rights
- lack of awareness of advice services and how these services;
- practical issues including language and cultural barriers.

Cost implications of seeking advice also act as a deterrent because of a lack of awareness, particularly among EU migrants, that many services are provided free

Many seek informal advice from friends, family and neighbours, and most formal advice is sought from non-independent or non-expert sources such as their local authority or a community organisation

EU Accession State nationals, despite experiencing similar housing problems to other communities, in most cases seek no formal advice at all.

Relevant recommendations
Local authorities, community organisations and social housing providers should clearly signpost individuals to independent housing advice services, making clear the limitations of their own advice, the right to challenge decisions and the free assistance that independent advice services can provide in enforcing rights.

Community legal education about rights and services must involve a diverse range of formal and informal organisations.

As a matter of priority, social housing providers should develop and promote customer-friendly materials, in all the necessary languages, that clearly explain their policies.

Induction materials in appropriate languages for migrants from EU Accession States should be made available at points of entry into the UK, covering their legal rights in relation to housing and other areas and the sources of support and advice available.

Housing providers need to engage in regular consultation and dialogue with BME communities to ensure their housing and advice needs are taken into account in planning and the allocation of resources.

appendix 2 - p7
Existing specialist housing advice providers and local community organisations need to work together more closely to build the capacity of community organisations to provide early advice and support.

As part of the development of referral networks and capacity building, community organisations should work with specialist advice providers on service redesign to ensure that the services of these providers meet the needs of their community.

6. THE IMPACT OF THE RECENT MIGRATION FROM EASTERN EUROPE ON THE UK ECONOMY
David Blanchflower, Monetary Policy Committee Bank of England, January 2007

Relevant key findings
The empirical literature from around the world suggests little or no evidence that immigrants have had a major impact on native labour market outcomes such as wages and unemployment. Recent work by a number of other authors for the UK is also consistent with this view.

There seems to be broad agreement that immigration is likely to have reduced the natural rate of unemployment in the UK over the past few years.

7. ACCESSION MONITORING REPORT  MAY 2004 - JUNE 2006
Home Office, Department for Work and Pensions, HM Revenue & Customs and Department for Communities and Local Government. August 2006

Relevant key findings
Nationals from the Accession 8 countries continue to come to the UK to work, contributing to the success of the UK economy, whilst making few demands of our welfare system.

In many cases, Accession nationals are supporting the provision of public services in communities across the UK.

The numbers applying for tax-funded income-related benefits and housing support remain low. For example, only 5,943 applications for Income Support and Jobseeker's Allowance were processed between May 2004 and June 2006, and of these applications only 768 were allowed to proceed for further consideration.

Local Authority Lettings in England: The May 2004 to March 2006 total of 110 lettings to A8 nationals represents just 0.04% of the average number of lettings to all new tenants over a typical 23 month period.

Homelessness assistance in England: The May 2004 to March 2006 total of 1,277 decisions on A8 applications for homelessness assistance represents just 0.3% of the average number of homelessness decisions over a typical 23 month period.
8. REFUGEES AND OTHER NEW MIGRANTS: A REVIEW OF THE EVIDENCE ON SUCCESSFUL APPROACHES TO INTEGRATION
Edited by Sarah Spencer, Associate Director, Centre on Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS) University of Oxford 2004

Relevant key findings
New migrants have less favourable outcomes on measures of integration than the UK population as a whole but the experience of new migrants is not homogenous.

A number of factors contribute to those outcomes, including:

- lack of language skills and recognition of qualifications;
- mobility;
- migrants’ lack of knowledge of how to access services;
- generic systems that are insufficient to meet migrants’ needs;
- hostile public attitudes;
- and legal barriers associated with immigration status.

There is some evidence of success from a range of initiatives focusing on migrants and migrant groups, on employers, agencies and the public, and which build bridges between individuals, groups and institutions.

Community relations are not affected by economic determinants alone. Evidence points to factors ranging from national policies (such as the dispersal policy and the withdrawal of asylnm seekers’ permission to work) to …lack of information and consultation about the reception of newcomers, no prior experience of receiving migrants, little experience with diversity and inadequate public services.

Indicators of success in housing and integration strategies point to the importance of accessing decent permanent accommodation and creating an environment in which new migrants and refugees feel safe and secure and have a sense of belonging.

All low-income migrants and refugees are vulnerable to homelessness (pg 30)

Good practice in devising housing support packages encompasses an effective orientation of newcomers to the new environment, the development of links with statutory providers and primary referral agencies, effective community development work, and move-on advice and support. …there is a clear indication that positive outcomes are dependent upon:

- an holistic approach;
- cultural sensitivity;
- expertise in new migrant and refugees issues;
- integrated services, including legal advice. (pg 31)

Employment and migrants in the voluntary sector:
The voluntary sector plays a key role in addressing the needs of migrants. (p 45)

Work experience, employment placements and volunteering more generally are relatively important as a way of building refugees’ confidence in their employability (p 49)

A number of interventions of different types are being undertaken in the field of employment. … there needs to be a close connection between the key ‘domains’ of health, education, employment and accommodation. Good practice will need to ‘join up’ the delivery of services to the individual at the point of need (pg 68 -labelled as pg 51)
Relevant recommendations
Three messages to inform the policy and research agendas emerge particularly strongly:

- the power of providing information for migrants, host communities, the media and service providers;
- the importance of investing in language tuition; and
- the need to consider how major data gaps could be addressed.

9. THE INTEGRATION OF MIGRANTS: ENGAGING EMPLOYERS, UNIONS AND THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR
Background Briefing for conference London, 4 July 2006
Sarah Cooke, consultant and former Director of the British Institute of Human Rights
Sarah Spencer, Associate Director, Centre on Migration, Policy and Society at the University of Oxford

Relevant key findings
The economic and social contribution which these migrants make to the UK is now widely recognised.

Central and local government and other public agencies have a key role to play in facilitating integration: in providing the legal and policy framework (including antidiscrimination legislation... and in the provision and coordination of mainstream and targeted public services.

The Global Commission on International Migration recently advised the UN that "The integration process should be actively supported by local and national authorities, employers and members of civil society and should be based on a commitment to non discrimination and gender equality" while at the EU the Common Basic Principles on Integration agreed in 2004 asserted the importance of non-governmental actors alongside the state sector.

Employment:
Once in employment, they [migrants] may continue to need a level of support, whether directly related to their work or to a broader range of needs. These include advice or assistance relating to:-

- Recruitment
- conditions of employment, including levels of pay, hours of work and health and safety issues
- language and communication
- training
- discrimination
- induction, orientation and access to services
- accommodation
- financial issues

Accommodation:
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. (pg 10)

There is evidence that the existing provision of advice and information is unable to meet demand. (pg18)

Relevant recommendations
Whether addressing the employment needs of migrants or more broadly issues relating to accommodation, education, health and welfare, could it be helpful for all concerned if there were greater clarity on the rights to which different categories of migrants are entitled (and their responsibilities), and clarity on whose responsibility it is to ensure that those rights are respected?
10. THE IMPACT OF FREE MOVEMENT OF WORKERS FROM CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE ON THE UK LABOUR MARKET

Relevant key findings
Between January and December 2005 claimant unemployment in the UK has risen by over 90,000 and it has been suggested that part of the explanation for this rise is the inflow of migrants from the new EU Member States.

We have found no discernible statistical evidence to suggest that A8 migration has been a contributor to the rise in claimant unemployment in the UK.

Overall, the economic impact of migration from the new EU Member States has been modest, but broadly positive, reflecting the flexibility and speed of adjustment of the UK labour market. (pg 9)

11. FORCED LABOUR AND MIGRATION TO THE UK
Study prepared by COMPAS in collaboration with the Trades Union Congress
Bridget Anderson, Centre on Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS), Oxford University
Ben Rogaly Centre for Migration Research, University of Sussex

Relevant key findings
practices used by a minority of employers fall under the internationally agreed definitions of forced labour, which most people would assume had been banished from Britain long ago.

Far from being restricted to the extreme fringes of the economy, forced labour can be found at the base of key industries, and goes far beyond the agricultural and sex work with which it is normally associated. … the conditions for forced labour are created by employer demand for ultra-flexible labour. From the TUC’s point of view, this is made worse both by the low level of protection that exists in British law … and difficulties in enforcing those rights that do exist. (pg 4)

though much has been done, there are still possibilities for better protection of migrant workers. … there is a lack of data on migrant workers and their situation in the UK (pg 59)

Vulnerability to forced labour.
The research identified three factors that individually or in a combined fashion create vulnerabilities:
■ dependency on recruiters for information and access to migration channels;
■ immigration status
■ and physical as well as psychological isolation. (pg 43)

In one of the case studies, Eastern Europeans working in a factory were told that their debt amounted to one year's worth of work. In conclusion, repayment of accrued debts for migration costs can mean that migrants are effectively working for no payment at all. (pg 46)

In agriculture, there have been reports of appalling working and living conditions of migrant workers in some instances, in the growing, packing and processing of fresh fruit, vegetables and cut flowers.

One couple, who were in accommodation provided by the agency, fell sick and were told that, since they were no longer working, they had to leave the house. ‘We were in the living room watching TV, felt someone putting key in latch. There were three men, two went into the back door and started changing locks.'
Another had a very aggressive attitude, you have two hours to leave'. Portuguese agricultural worker (pg 39)

**Relevant recommendations**
Measures should be taken to permit trade unions and other assistance organisations (including, but not only, the CABx) to play a stronger role.

Indeed, it appears that they are the ones approached by migrant workers in forced labour but are unable to take these cases much further. (pg 61)

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**12. FAIR ENOUGH? CENTRAL & EAST EUROPEAN MIGRANTS IN LOW WAGE EMPLOYMENT IN THE UK**
Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2006
Dr Bridget Anderson, Dr Martin Ruhs and Sarah Spencer of the ESRC Centre on Migration, Policy and Society at the University of Oxford and Dr Ben Rogaly of the Sussex Centre for Migration Research at the University of Sussex.

**relevant key findings**
interviewees worked for relatively low earnings and longer basic hours than the occupational average.

Many had no paid holiday, sick leave, or written contract.

Many had qualifications and skills significantly above those required by their job. None belonged to a trade union.

Respondents earnings were relatively low compared with the national average for their occupation, often close to the National Minimum Wage.

Across all sectors, migrants were working longer basic hours and longer total hours than average for their occupation.

For those in hospitality and au pairs, overtime was not always paid. Less than half of those in hospitality and agriculture, and only 15 per cent of employees in construction, received paid holidays

Three-quarters of employers felt EU enlargement had been good for business, bringing a larger labour pool

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**13. A8 NATIONALS IN LONDON HOMELESSNESS SERVICES**
Homeless Link, 2006, Linda Briheim-Crookall

**Relevant key findings**
Since May 2004 almost 400,000 accession state (A8) nationals have come to the UK, contributing an estimated £240 million to the economy in the first eight months alone

a small but significant number of A8 migrants have found themselves destitute and homeless; some are now living on our streets.

most people had problems limited to a lack of work and accommodation, possibly combined with a

appendix 2 - p12
language barrier. They need straightforward advice and short-term help to get a job and a place to live.

15% of people who used the [frontline London homeless] services surveyed were A8 nationals.

Homelessness agencies … tell us they are hindered by a lack of clear information about entitlements for migrants. With no government department with overall responsibility to coordinate help, people do not know where to turn.

**relevant recommendations**
Better information: The government should publish and promote clear information on entitlement to statutory services for A8 nationals. Orientation packs in community languages - with information on issues such as entitlements, accommodation options, finding work, medical care - should be available.

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**14. ECONOMIC AND EMPLOYMENT ISSUES RELEVANT TO MIGRANT WORKERS IN THE HAVEN GATEWAY SUB-REGION**
Will Sambrook and David Larmour, The Akenham Partnership, 2006

**Relevant key findings**
Migrant workers are not aware of a number the local support organisations and agencies. They find it difficult to get support and often do not know where to start.

There are issues of migrant workers not understanding their employment rights and employers either not following procedures due to lack of knowledge or taking advantage of the situation. (pg 4)

Employers are not universally meeting acceptable standards. Evidence from ISCRE and anecdotal evidence from some employers suggests a degree of exploitation is taking place. (pg 44)

Migrant workers make a significant contribution to the local economy and are beginning to be sought after primarily for their "work ethic"

many businesses in the East of England would be forced to operate below full capacity if migrant workers were not available. (pg 4)

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**15. DESTINATION NORTH EAST? HARNESSING THE REGIONAL POTENTIAL OF MIGRATION**
Institute for Public Policy Research, Rachel Pillai, July 2006

**Relevant key findings**
EU-born migrants have an employment rate that matches that of the British Isles-born population (69%) migrants also stand to make a considerable contribution to raising productivity in the region. Migrants in the North East are also relatively well educated.

**Relevant recommendations**
more concerted attempts to address social exclusion and discrimination will help to promote better economic outcomes and social inclusion.

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appendix 2 - p13
16. SUPPORTING MIGRANT WORKERS IN THE NORTH WEST OF ENGLAND
MSIO Merseyside Social Inclusion Observatory Policy Report: 3. Dr Simon Pemberton, Claire Stevens
October 2006

Relevant recommendations
Migrant workers generally lived in private rented flats or shared houses, usually in multiple-occupation, which had frequently been provided via employment agencies. Most of the employers interviewed identified that housing was a particular area of concern in that available accommodation of a decent standard was very often not available to migrant workers. Indeed, most migrant interviewees aspired to move out of shared accommodation as soon as possible.

the lack of information about sources of housing, hostels and emergency support had led to them, or people they knew, sleeping rough or in tents when they first arrived in the UK.

None of those who were agency workers were satisfied with their situation and most were looking for 'ways out' of agency work and into direct employment.

Migrants interviewed reported that it was unusual to be paid more than the minimum wage. A number of migrants highlighted that deductions from their wages often left them with very little disposable income - one interviewee argued that they were left with £1.72 per hour after deductions for tax, National Insurance (NI) contributions, transport costs, rent and agency fees.

There was limited evidence that those migrants who sought to work independently were liable to experience discrimination in the job market and there were problems in getting some migrant workers as far as job interviews because their names appeared to work against them.(pg 13)

In overall terms, there remains a dearth of services specific to migrant workers - as opposed to refugees and asylum seekers - and a lack of a central co-ordinating / signposting body for issues relating to this group of workers. (pg 16)

17. A STRONGER VOICE
Report of the workshops carried out by the Anti-Poverty Group of the Migrants Resource Centre, for the Get Heard Project Nazek Ramadan Migrant and Refugee Empowerment Worker Migrants Resource Centre June 2006

Relevant key findings
Participants were very clear about the reasons why so many migrants and refugees in Britain today are poor. They listed a range of barriers that they felt prevented integration and led to exclusion, including external ones like injustice and racism, and practical ones such as lack of money, poor access to amenities and information and difficulties in finding work.

Many participants had stories to tell about trying to find work and facing discrimination: 'I have applied for a hundred jobs. I got only one reply. Is it discrimination? I strongly believe it is'.

There were also ideas for improving social housing

Social housing is very important and the Government should always provide affordable housing for people who are unable to own their own accommodation or rent from the private sector. Many families would have been homeless if there were no social housing. (pg 14)

appendix 2 - p14
Families who are working long hours but still struggling to pay the bills feel let down by the Government. They do not have clear information on how to get help. (pg 19)

"The downward spiral 'I am a pilot with full licence and with 1800 flying hours but I am working as a minicab driver, because I cannot afford to pay for the conversion course that allows me to practice my profession. I am unable to get a loan to pay for the course as I am on low income and do not own my own property. Even if I managed to get a loan, I am unable to support myself financially while studying for the course, as I will not be entitled for any benefit. There are no government or any support schemes for professionals like myself.'

'I am a civil engineer working as a carpenter. No one would recognise my qualification or my work experience abroad.'

'I am a fully qualified solicitor, but I am working as a cashier at a supermarket.'

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18. POLISH MIGRANT WORKERS IN IRELAND
Katarzyna Kropiwiec With Dr Rebecca Chiyoko King-O'Riain, 2006

Relevant key findings
Information on Rights …. Providing the official information on rights and entitlements, in Polish (as SIPTU have done) is recommended and helpful in raising awareness and self-confidence among migrants.

There is a particular need for information on employment rights (taxes, working conditions, anti-discrimination legislation, etc.), and on how to seek redress when employers do not meet their obligations. (pg 48)

Dense social networks exist to support the large number of Polish workers, they could do so much more with more financial support, and should receive adequate Government funding.

Relevant recommendations
It is recommended that there be more provisions for support and linkages to Irish organisations with common interests (like trade unions), with a view to supporting the Polish community whilst building strong links with other groups in Irish society with the same interests (other workers for example).

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19. HOUSING SUPPORT SERVICES TO REFUGEES: A SERVICE SPECIFICATION
Michael Bell Associates (commissioned by Scottish Refugee Integration Forum) June 2006

Relevant key findings
The main priorities of refugees with regard to their housing is that they should be accommodated in decent and appropriate homes where they are unlikely to suffer fear of racial harassment or intimidation. The focus group participants had experienced high levels of racial harassment. Most of this was unreported and indicates the need for local police forces to be engaged in integration initiatives…

The overarching need identified in the research was for advice and information, which was accessible and culturally appropriate, and which was available at stages throughout the process from accessing housing and housing support services to ongoing integration efforts post allocation…

appendix 2 - p15
Asylum seekers and refugees in areas where communities are more established often seek advice and information from refugee-led community organisations. Many refugees' first port of call in the UK is a community-run organisation.

General needs identified by the literature often relate to being unfamiliar with official systems, being unable to speak English and the need for orientation into new surroundings. Key identified needs include:

- A need to understand how the housing and welfare systems work in Scotland
- A need for advice and assistance in seeking and securing employment …
- A need to receive fair treatment without discrimination in attempts to access services…

In terms of priority, a survey of the refugee community conducted by MORI on behalf of the Home Office revealed that 64% of respondents felt that their housing was the area of their lives most in need of improvement (Peckham et al, 2004). Similarly, "feeling satisfied with various aspects of housing was the factor most strongly associated with a good quality of life" (ibid). This demonstrates the central importance placed on housing by refugees.

Some of the needs identified in the literature relate specifically to refugees' previous experiences or their status as refugees:

- A need for understanding of their possible lack of trust of people in "authority"
- A need for assistance in arranging for family members to join them in Scotland once they have obtained refugee status (Nys, 1996)

Perceptions of housing support issues
Participants [in focus groups of refugees] had varying degrees of success with completing forms in relation to their housing application and benefits. All participants in one focus group (newly recognised refugees) reported that they knew very little or nothing about housing and the 'systems' in Scotland, their rights and entitlements and where to complain and get good advice.

Advice to their local authority
"Treat me as a person, not like rubbish"!

Relevant recommendations
Local authorities should look at building in the needs of refugees and their families into needs assessment strategies so that the current level and extent of refugee needs can be identified and future trends forecast...

All applicants who may be entitled to re-housing should be:

- aware of their rights, and
- be able to access the application process

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20. HOUSING AND SUPPORT SERVICES FOR ASYLUM SEEKERS AND REFUGEES - A GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE
John Perry, Chartered Institute of Housing, in association with Joseph Rowntree Foundation, September 2005

Relevant key findings
Support services: Even in some larger cities where there are well-developed support services for accepted refugees, practitioners acknowledge that they are often far from meeting all needs. Also, many support services are voluntary projects which survive on short-term funding.
**Partnerships:** Refugee community organisations (RCOs) are keen to be involved in influencing and in some cases providing support services. Stronger partnership working between housing organisations and RCOs could lead to more culturally-sensitive services, related more closely to people's needs.

**Accommodation:** Despite some difficulties presented by the policy context (such as the short period allowed for people to find housing once an asylum decision comes through), a few housing organisations are developing innovative solutions.

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**21. BLACK AND MINORITY ETHNIC COMMUNITIES AND HOMELESSNESS IN SCOTLAND**

SCOTTISH ETHNIC MINORITIES RESEARCH UNIT, HERIOT WATT UNIVERSITY

Gina Netto, Cathie Fancy, Hal Pawson, Delia Lomax, Satnam Singh and Sinead Power, July 2004

Commissioned by the Scottish Executive Development Department

**Relevant key findings**

**Vulnerability to homelessness in BME communities**

Analysis of local authority homelessness monitoring data found that the incidence of recorded homelessness affecting households from BME communities was 75% higher than across the population as a whole, though the degree of BME over-representation varied substantially between individual BME groups. Additionally, hidden homelessness on an appreciable scale is suggested by evidence of overcrowding and over-representation in poor quality housing. . . .

Although homeless peoples' experiences differ greatly, there are some common housing problems:

- Lack of information about housing options, rights and homelessness procedures…
- Difficulties in getting information due to language differences, literacy issues, lack of familiarity with the system and institutional discrimination…
- Measures which can be taken to reduce homelessness in BME communities
- Measures which can be taken to reduce homelessness in BME communities include the provision of high quality advice and information…

**Refugees**

Measures which can be taken to reduce homelessness among refugees include:

- Providing continuity of information and support at all stages of the asylum-seeking processes and when asylum-seekers gain refugee status or exceptional leave to remain.

**IDENTIFICATION OF GOOD PRACTICE**

7.35 Many examples of good practice were observed in the course of this study. Some common characteristics included:

- Services attuned to the specific needs of BME communities, based either on extensive experience of working with these communities, effective consultation or sound research.
- The adoption of a holistic approach which considered housing needs, alongside other needs such as welfare benefits, employment and access to health services.
- A pro-active approach towards communicating with BME communities, with the use of outreach work where appropriate.
- Active engagement with BME communities by engaging them in decision-making processes

**relevant recommendations**

The provision of high quality advice and information which takes into account varying perceptions of homelessness in BME communities.
Relevant key findings

Refugees and asylum seekers

Service providers believe the housing situation for refugees and asylum seekers in Glasgow is currently reaching challenging levels.

Amongst people who have been granted leave to remain, a difficult situation also appears to be developing.

The organisations involved in providing accommodation for asylum seekers are the council, which has subcontracted to Glasgow Housing Association (the city’s stock transfer organisation) and a private contractor.

A lack of co-ordination between these organisations may mean that despite the fact that housing in Glasgow is relatively plentiful, asylum seekers granted leave to remain may spend long periods of time in temporary accommodation after the NASS support ends, or may be forced to present themselves to the council as homeless and be referred to a hostel.

In particular, the numbers of asylum seekers in temporary accommodation is reaching high levels, and many have been in temporary accommodation for a long time.

Asylum seekers who have been granted leave to remain and have been offered permanent accommodation tend to require help with basic issues to enable them to settle in successfully to their new accommodation. (p 10)

Experiences of homelessness

Many of the respondents… had little knowledge of the system or the services available, making the situation more difficult… are also likely to be wary or mistrustful of official agencies purporting to help. These agencies may also be offering help not thought to be appropriate… So there may be barriers or lack of knowledge, but lack of trust is also highly significant. Hence there was a strong reliance on BME specific services with sensitive staff that could help with appropriate accommodation and other services, including accessing benefits, and people often relied on informal networking and advice from friends and family to find out about and access these services in the first place. … Two people were in such an acute crisis, with no idea of where to go for help, that they could think of no alternative but to approach the police for help, who then referred them on to other homelessness services… (p 11)

Most of those interviewed had had some contact with mainstream local authority housing and homelessness services. Perceptions and experiences of these services were often not good…. (p 12)

The typical pathway for a black or minority ethnic person at risk of homelessness is different from the traditional service delivery paradigm, according to the experiences of the research respondents. A BME person would be more likely to approach friends, family, their GP or other informal community networks to seek support and advice on what to do, rather than approach mainstream homelessness services directly…. (p 13)

Relevant recommendations

Promote and support culturally specific services …

Make mainstream services more accessible and sensitive The evidence from this research is that black and minority ethnic people at risk of homelessness often do not know about mainstream services… (p 13)
23. SCOTTISH REFUGEE INTEGRATION FORUM (SRIF): ACTION PLAN
Scottish Refugee Integration Forum, February 2003
SRIF has the following remit:
In partnership with the Scottish Executive and in consultation with the wider public and voluntary sector interests to develop action plans to enable the successful integration of refugees in Scotland and the provision of more accessible, coordinated and good quality services.

Over the course of around nine months SRIF and its satellite groups took evidence from a number of stakeholders and identified a wide range of issues affecting refugees and asylum seekers. These issues were developed into a draft action plan which was issued for consultation in October 2002. this Action Plan sets out the key actions agreed by the Forum.

**Key Actions:** (with original numbering and emphasis)

**Information and Advice**
(10) A team should be created within a specific organisation or specific posts and budgets identified within a number of organisations charged with:
- Delivering appropriate training on legal, rights and support issues to organisations delivering advice, information and signposting services.
- Developing networking activity between such organisations.
- Facilitating the dissemination of information on current legal, support and rights issues, and changes to relevant legislation, as well as the sharing of best practice.
- Supporting the development of sufficiently funded local, city-wide and council-wide strategies to meet advice, information and signposting needs, ensuring the provision of seamless services, with access to expert services where required.
- Supporting the development of resources which assist asylum seekers and refugees to self refer to services.
- Developing the capacity of organisations outwith major dispersal and settlement areas to meet the advice and information needs of asylum seekers and refugees.

**Housing**
(21) A pathfinder project should be designed and developed in Glasgow to ensure that all people have access to independent support, advice and advocacy, to enable them to access appropriate housing. The project should provide "floating" support in the form of a proactive outreach service to people who receive positive decisions. This should be funded through "Supporting People" and should be evaluated.

(22) All housing legislation and guidance should be proofed to take account of the barriers which refugees face, and housing services should ensure that issues relating to refugees are mainstreamed. To facilitate this, a checklist of potential evidence of mainstreaming and proofing should be prepared, which might include examples such as:
- The new Code of Guidance [on homelessness] should refer specifically to refugees and should identify them as a vulnerable group in priority need.
- The Code of Guidance should reflect that refugees should not be deemed to have a local connection with their dispersal area.
- Homelessness and housing strategies should include reference to refugees and should be assessed by the Scottish Executive on the degree to which they do so.

(25) All local authorities and housing associations should ensure that their housing advice, information and allocation policies, procedures and practices take account fully of the rights and needs of refugees. These services must be fully accessible to refugees, and staff should be provided with appropriate training and guidance to ensure that provision is based on a thorough understanding of the issues.
Every refugee, on being granted refugee status, should have sufficient information provided to them to enable them to understand the housing and welfare benefits systems. Such information should be an integral part of provision within any "Welcome Pack". Information should be made available in appropriate languages and in a range of formats (including verbal, written and internet-based information)…

**PROGRESS REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SCOTTISH REFUGEE INTEGRATION FORUM ACTION PLAN,** Scottish Refugee Integration Forum, April 2005

This progress report sought to portray a snapshot of progress, two years after the 57 Actions were drawn up.

**Housing**

The Forum recommended a number of changes to housing legislation and guidance to ensure the needs of refugees are being met…. In practice this should mean that when local authorities are developing their housing and homelessness strategies the needs of refugees are taken into account routinely, along with the needs of other sections of the community; and that when a person with refugee status in Scotland looks for a home, or considers moving home, he or she knows they have the same choices and opportunities as everyone else.

In Action 26 the Forum recognised that the need for the right information at the right time and in the right format was crucial to allowing people who received a positive decision on asylum claims to act quickly and effectively to find a suitable home for themselves and their families. …

Information often needs to be supplemented by advice and support, as reflected in Action 21. The Scottish Refugee Council are funded by the Scottish Executive Housing Department to:

- provide high quality direct services to refugees on housing rights and options;
- develop an information service for partner agencies and service users;
- develop external capacity through partnership working;
- deliver training to external organisations enabling good quality services to be delivered to refugees; and
- assist Refugee Community Organisations to develop housing advice, advocacy and information services of their own.

Communities Scotland Regulation and Inspection processes look at whether information is accessible to all, i.e. whether it is in different formats, languages (reflecting local communities) and venues.

**Relevant recommendations**

**Conclusion**

Refugee integration is by no means complete in Scotland.

In a fast changing environment it is important that service providers are flexible and responsive to the changing needs of the refugee community.

The Scottish Executive is committed to promoting and implementing the Action Plan under the Partnership Agreement … and will continue to support the integration of refugees.
DOOR STEP EQUAL ACCESS IS A NEW PROJECT, CURRENTLY IN DEVELOPMENT, TO EMPOWER SCOTLAND’S REFUGEES AND MIGRANT WORKERS TO ACCESS THEIR RIGHTS.

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