

A8 Nationals in the Borough of Poole
Stage One Report
A Review of Existing Data and Statistics

Corporate Research Team, Borough of Poole, June 2008

Purpose of the Report.

On 1st May 2004, further expansion of the European Union gave a new wave of workers the right to live and seek employment in the UK. In the intervening period, over 2,000 migrants from Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, and Hungary (collectively known as the 'A8') have registered to work in Poole.

The purpose of this report is to summarise current knowledge about A8 migrants living and working in Poole, with the overall aim of providing evidence and direction to enable informed decision making with regard to future policy and service delivery.

Definition of Migrant Workers

What defines a migrant worker? For the purposes of this report we consider specifically foreign nationals who have come to Britain from the A8 countries in search of work since the expansion of the EU in May 2004. The particular emphasis is on choice of movement – the ability of the individual to freely decide to move from their home country to seek a wage. The study does not therefore encompass asylum seekers or refugees, for whom the decision to migrate can be seen as a result of coercion. Work is key to defining the group of interest, as access to the UK labour market was a significant new right gained through A8 Accession, however, the report also indirectly encompasses the lives of immediate dependents.

Measuring Poole's A8 Population

Traditionally, migrants from the A8 countries have been recorded as part of the black and ethnic minority population – in the ethnic category of 'White Other'. The main source of information on this population in Poole was the 2001 Census, wherein there were 5,565 people from BME groups in Poole, making up 4% of the total population. Of these 2,209 were from the 'White Other' ethnic group.

Since 2004 new initiatives, such as the Workers Registration Scheme, have been developed to record the number of workers arriving in Britain from the A8. Although these sources have a number of flaws, even the most conservative estimates suggest that the Borough's BME population has seen a highly significant increase as a result of this new migration. However, in many cases, the traditional ethnic categories of measurement are still in use, and A8 service users are simply recorded as 'White Other'. Where nationality or first language is not recorded, it is therefore most helpful to look for notable trends in the number of 'White Other' residents using local services since 2004.

Key Findings

- Around 200 A8 migrants per quarter are registering with the Workers Registration Scheme in Poole (2007 figures).
- National Insurance Allocations indicate that Poole Town, Newtown and Penhill have the highest numbers of migrant residents.
- After English, Polish is now the most widely spoken first language amongst pupils in Poole schools.
- Local employers have found migrant workers to be reliable, hard working and efficient. In some sectors their arrival is seen to have addressed a significant recruitment gap.
- Local organisations are noting a growing number of A8 nationals using their services.

The Workers Registration Scheme

The Workers Registration scheme began in May 2004. All migrants from the A8 countries who wish to work in the UK are required to register with the scheme within one month of obtaining a job. They are also required to re-register for subsequent jobs until they have worked a total of 12 out of 13 months.

On registering, applicants provide information about their employment and give a basic demographic profile including nationality, age and dependents. However, there are unfortunately a number of limitations to the scheme in terms of accurately estimating the numbers currently residing in Poole:

- As the employers postcode is used to allocate individuals to local authority areas the statistics are based on place of work rather than place of residence.
- There is no deregistration information. The data only gives inflows – there is no record of when workers leave the area.
- Self-employed individuals do not have to register.
- Dependents are only recorded at the time of registration – this data does not take into account dependent family members who migrate after registration.

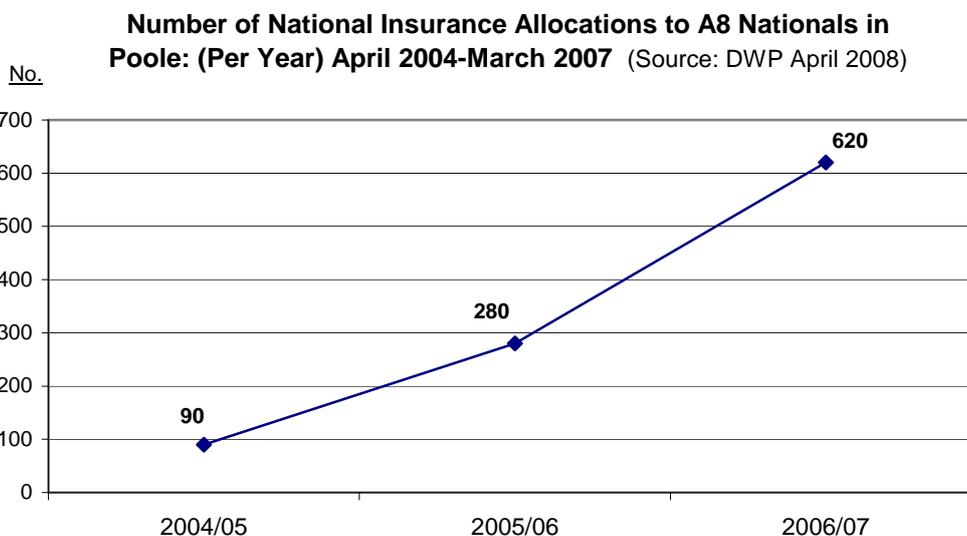
The Scheme provides a useful initial estimate of the number of migrants in Poole, the types of people migrating to the area, and the types of employment they are undertaking. However, restrictions currently imposed by the Home Office unfortunately means that this data can only be shared internally. If you require access to this section of the report, please telephone the Corporate Research Team on 01202 633367.

National Insurance Number Allocations to Overseas Nationals

National Insurance Number allocations to overseas nationals provide an alternative source of data about A8 migrants. All workers, including those who are self employed are required to apply for a national insurance number, however, again there are no requirements for de-registration and the data does not reflect any dependents travelling to the UK with the registered worker. The data is based on date of registration, not date of arrival in the country, and therefore figures may be affected by delays in processing.

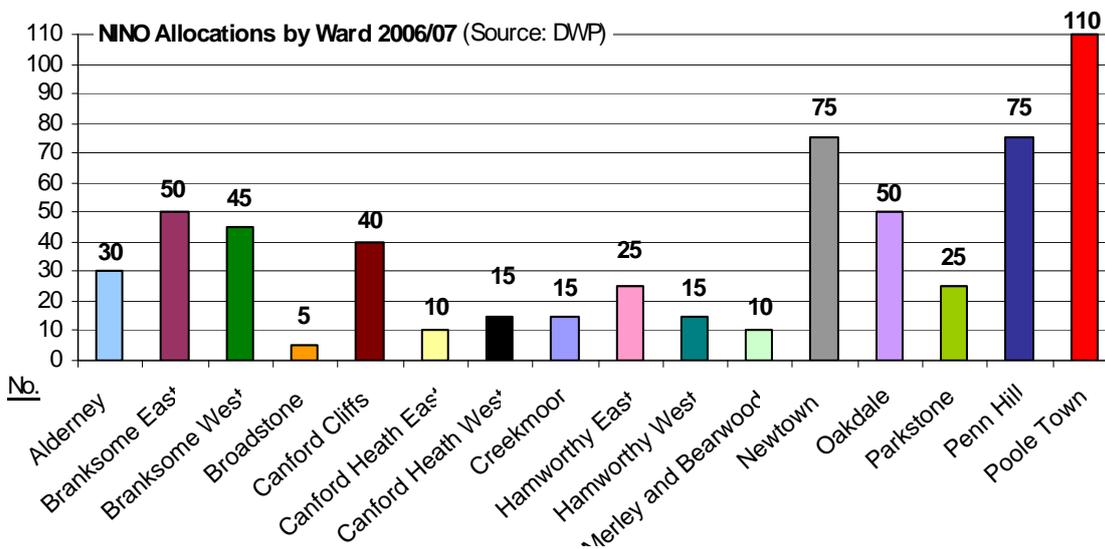
Currently only data from April 2004-end March 2007 is published at local authority level.

Within this timeframe, 990 workers from the A8 registered for a National Insurance number in Poole, as the graph below shows – an increase of 211% in the number of allocations in the first year from accession, and 121% in the following year to March 2007.



As with the Workers Registration Scheme, the majority of registrations were from Polish nationals. Three quarters of the National Insurance Number allocations in Poole were to Poles (740 out of 990 registrations). The second highest number of allocations was to Slovaks (80).

Where the national insurance allocations are particularly useful, is in providing an indication of area of residence for A8 migrants in Poole, as, unlike the WRS, National Insurance numbers are recorded by most recent place of residence. The chart below shows registrations for 2006/07 by Ward, indicating that Poole Town, Newtown and Penhill had the highest numbers of A8 migrants resident.



Insight from Poole Schools.

The Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC) takes place every January and collects information on a number of indicators for school aged children residing in Poole and attending Poole schools. (*NB. School aged children residing in Poole but attending schools outside the Borough are not included.*)

Since the 2006/7 academic year, a new indicator has measured the first language of those pupils who do not have English as their mother tongue¹. During this time, there has been a notable increase in the number of pupils attending Poole schools from the A8 countries.

As the table below shows, in the 2006/07 academic year, 27 pupils spoke Polish as their first language. In addition, one pupil spoke Czech and one Slovak.

First Language	No. of Pupils 06/07	No. of Pupils 07/08
Polish	27	49
Czech	1	4
Slovak	1	0
Hungarian	0	3
Latvian	0	0
Lithuanian	0	2
Estonia	0	0
Slovenian	0	0

In 2007/08, 49 pupils spoke Polish as their first language, an increase of 81% on the previous year. Schools also noted more pupils speaking Czech, Hungarian and Lithuanian.

Overall, the 2007/08 Census identified 40 non–English languages spoken by Poole pupils. Of these, Polish was the most widely spoken (*49 pupils*), higher even than those of the more established BME communities such as Bengali (*44 pupils*) and Malayalam (*32 pupils*).

Of the 40 schools in Poole, over half (22) had at least one Polish speaking pupil. In terms of individual schools, Hillbourne (5), Branksome Heath *Middle* (5), St Joseph's (4) and Sylvan First School (4) had the highest number of Polish speaking pupils.

Discussions with the Minority Ethnic and Traveller Achievement Service (Metas) Advisor for Poole Schools revealed that there are also increasing numbers of pupils with English as a second language joining the system at pre school level.

Anecdotally, it has been noted that where a school has one or two pupils with English as a second language they can usually concentrate on their needs. Often the support required for those with English as a second language is temporary, as the language improves they are able to take part fully in lessons. Schools struggle more when there is suddenly a larger number, or more diverse group of pupils or pupils with special educational needs who are more difficult to settle (the system for these pupils is different in Poland, and they tend to struggle more to adapt.) The bigger issue is where parents need support, although signposting to translation services or language line is available.

Currently Metas undertakes more advisory work with teachers, and less direct work with families due to increasing numbers of pupils, not matched by increased funding. Instead the concentration is on training for teachers on how to help new arrivals with very little English to access the curriculum. There is one Polish teaching assistant who works through Rossmore and the Rossmore Pyramid.

¹ It is possible that the reported numbers could be higher in reality. A further 124 pupils' language was only identified as 'other than English' and data was not obtained at all for 334 pupils.

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

In April 2008, students undertaking ESOL classes with Poole Adult Learning were asked to complete a short questionnaire about their migrant experience. Due to the small numbers, the information collected provides an initial indication of the experiences and intentions of these particular A8 migrants, rather than data that can be generalised to the entire population.

About the Respondents

Eighteen students from the A8 countries completed the questionnaire, fourteen of whom were from Poland, two from the Czech Republic, one from Hungary and one from Lithuania. Three quarters were female. The youngest respondent was seventeen, and the eldest fifty-seven years of age, although most respondents were under thirty (12).

In terms of family, five of the respondents had travelled to the UK on their own, whilst a further five had bought a partner. Six had travelled with their family and two with their friends.

Their main reasons for coming to the UK were to find work, to improve their English or to improve their quality of life. They chose Poole in particular because they had secured a job or already had friends or family in the area.

All but five of the respondents had learnt some English before coming to the UK, however most were within their first year of tuition in Poole.

Working in Poole

Thirteen of the respondents were in employment at the time of the survey. Their jobs had been found through agencies, the internet or via their friends. Mostly they worked in unskilled professions in the industrial (5), or hospitality (4) sectors, although two were employed as social care workers and two had found jobs in skilled professions. Encouragingly, over half of those who had qualifications (13) felt that these were recognised.

In their free time, the respondents enjoyed spending time with their families and friends, keeping fit, or spending time at home watching TV, using the internet and reading.

Living in Poole

Eight of the ESOL migrants had lived in Poole for less than a year, six for 1-2 years and four for more than two years. Six of the migrants had resided elsewhere in the UK before coming to Poole – two of whom had moved across from Bournemouth. All but three felt welcomed by local people in the Borough.

Most respondents lived in Poole Town centre or in the east of the Borough in the Parkstone, Branksome and Rossmore areas. Although some had used an agency or the Internet to find their home, most relied on friend or family networks and lived within those networks too. Only two respondents lived with strangers.

The factors that were important to them in choosing a home included its size, its price, its convenience, and a nice local neighbourhood. Some just simply wanted something clean.

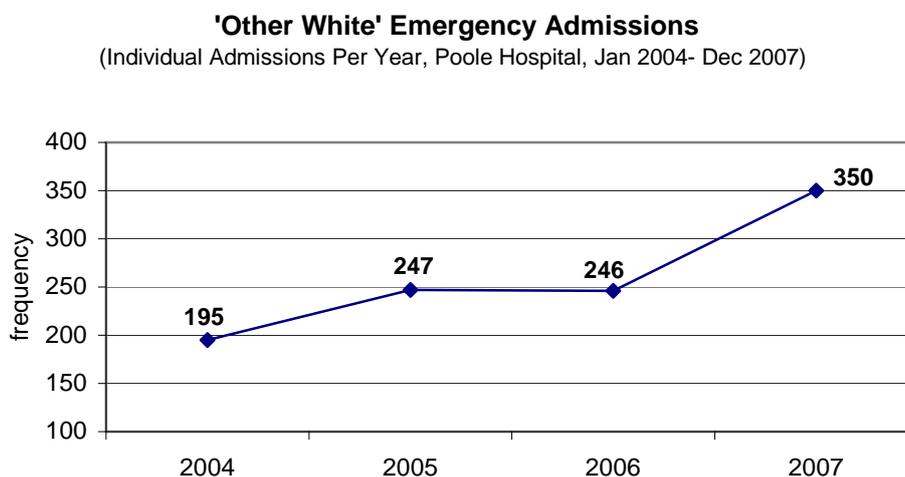
Most of the eighteen felt that they would remain in the UK for the medium to long term, with eight hoping to stay forever, and eight for two or more years. However, only two respondents hoped that their family would come over to live with them.

In terms of helping other migrants coming to Poole, the respondents felt that having booklets about Poole in their language would be useful in helping them learn about the area. They would also appreciate further advice and guidance about finding a job and a home in the area, using transport and finding a school.

Information from Local Services

Poole Hospital

Poole Hospital NHS Foundation Trust has looked at non-elective emergency hospital admissions between 2004 and 2007 to see if any recognisable changes in the number of overseas nationals can be observed. Unfortunately, the Hospital does not collect data by nationality, but has instead used the 'Other White'² ethnic code to give an initial insight into changes within this group.



As the graph above shows, there appears to have been a notable increase in the number of Poole residents from an 'Other White European' ethnic background attending Poole A&E since 2004. Almost 400 of the 1,038 patients gave their marital status as 'married'.

Dorset Police

Dorset Police have recently conducted a piece of research on the impact of Polish migration with the aim of raising awareness of police support for the community, and to impact on the problems of crime affecting Polish people. (NB. The research concentrated specifically on Polish victims of crime as over 70% of the migrant workers in the area are Polish.)

As the table below shows, specific to the Borough of Poole there were 67 Polish victims of crime, representing 0.58% of the total of all crimes in Poole during 2007.

Crimes With Polish Victims 2007							
Division	1st Q	2nd Q	3rd Q	4th Q	Total	Total All Crimes	% All Crimes
Bournemouth	35	47	78	65	225	21572	1.04
Poole	12	10	26	19	67	11603	0.58
East Dorset	4	4	11	7	26	11079	0.23
West Dorset	7	2	10	7	26	13443	0.19
Dorset Force					344	57697	0.6

Anecdotally the police believe that there is severe under reporting of crime amongst this population since the estimates of the proportion of migrant workers in the County would make up to 5% of the working age population (rising to 10% within Bournemouth). Under reporting can either be as migrants are not becoming victims, or to not reporting due to lack of knowledge or mistrust of the police. Dorset Police are currently looking to address this issue with a number of initiatives including publication of foreign language leaflets, and Safer Neighbourhood Team meetings out in the community.

² This category does not include those of a 'White British' or 'White Irish' ethnic background.

Poole Citizens Advice Bureau

In 2007/08, Poole Citizens Advice Bureau provided assistance to 3,500 enquirers from over 40 different countries.

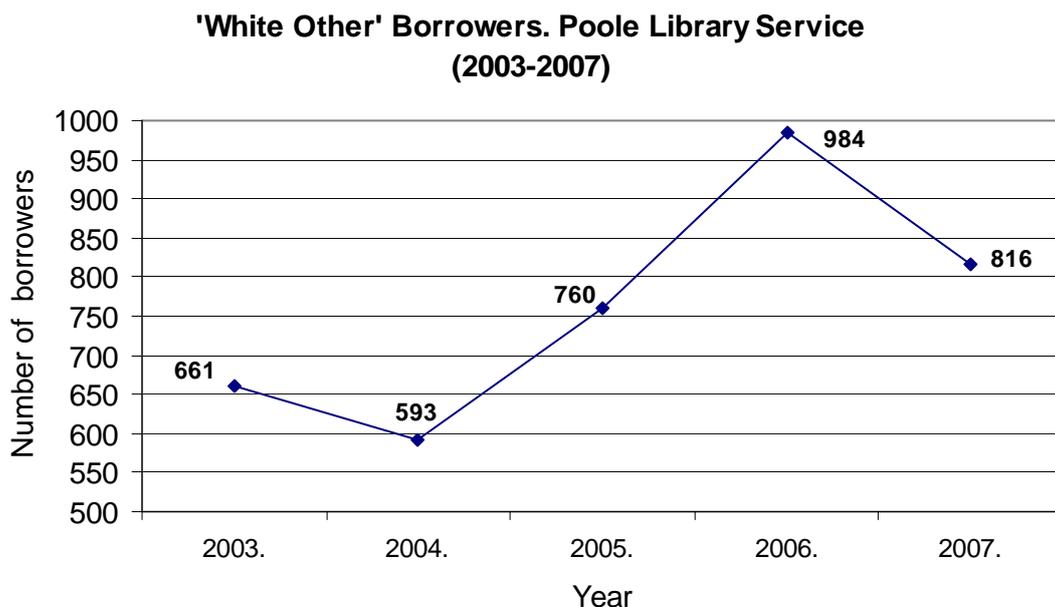
The majority of enquirers visiting the CAB are of British origin, however, the Bureau has observed a growing number of A8 nationals using their service. The number of Polish enquirers in particular has risen from 32 in 2006/07, to 47 people in 2007/08 - a 47% increase. Polish nationals are now the second highest users of the service.

Anecdotally, the Bureau has reported that migrant workers are most commonly presenting with the following issues:

- 1) Employment and problems at work.
This is more often about failing to be paid on time that about the level of pay received.
- 2) Housing Issues.
These are usually relating to landlord issues wherein the quality of housing is poor, and landlords are failing to respond to concerns or make adequate repairs.
- 3) Single parents
Whereby a relationship has broken down and enquirers are concerned about their benefit entitlements if they are unable to seek work because they need to look after young children.

Borough of Poole Library Service

The Borough of Poole library service holds a selection of Polish books and provides free access to the Internet. Although they currently only collect registered borrower data by ethnic group, they have been able to provide data on the number of 'White Other' borrowers from 2003-2008.



As the graph above shows, the number of 'White Other' borrowers registered with the library service has increased significantly since 2004. The cumulative total now stands at 3,814 'White Other' borrowers.

Insight from Local Employers

The following section provides an initial anecdotal insight from discussions in Spring 2008 with three local agencies supplying over 400 A8 staff to employers or clients in the conurbation.

Job Types, Wages and Qualifications

The agencies reported that typically migrant workers in the area are working in unskilled positions such as production line staff, warehouse packers, and as front line hotel and catering assistants. In the care industry most are employed as care assistants.

Most earn a minimum wage of between £5.52-£6 per hour - the same wage that an English person would get for doing the same job. However, the issue for these sectors is that English people tend not to want to do the types of jobs the migrants are doing and therefore without the migrants there would be a significant shortage of staff. Workers arriving from the A8 are well qualified, and highly skilled workers, but the British minimum wage is higher than at home and therefore still attractive.

Over the past two years there have been more opportunities for migrant workers to move into skilled positions, particularly for those with a trade such as carpenters, electricians, welders, and laminators. Qualifications are more recognised now as trust has grown and people are able to use their education to get office jobs, for example, but there is still more potential for this. Many need to improve their language skills first. Skilled staff with training and experience can earn between £8.50-£10 per hour.

Agency staff are generally paid the same as permanent staff working at the same level. There was no awareness amongst the employers of workers earning less than the minimum wage as there is in London, however, staff can opt out of the working time regulations if they wish to work longer hours – which many tend to prefer.

Although there is generally a constant flow of migrants coming to the area, some seasonal effects have been noted – a knock on effect from the demands of each sector. Summer tends to be busier with migrants seeking hotel and catering work. From September – December there are more opportunities in food manufacturing.

Religion can be a key factor affecting availability of migrant workers. Less workers are available at Easter – a key time for people going back home to visit due to religious festivals.

Employers Perceptions of Migrant Workers

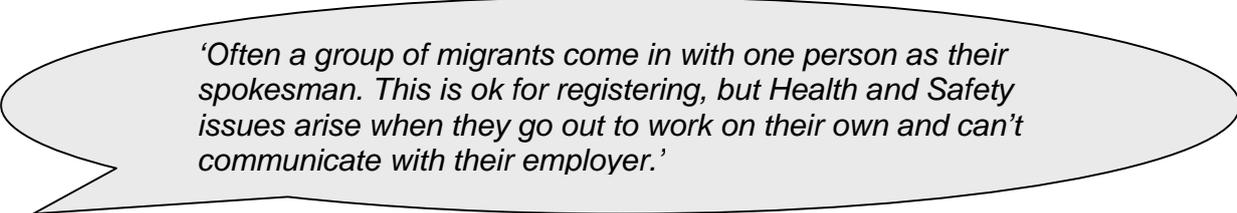
The agencies report that their clients are generally very pleased with the quality of work and reliability of migrant workers. Many employers are now happy to give training to European workers as they can see their potential.

'They come to the UK to work, so they want to work and so do their best so that they can secure their job. They don't know the system well enough to play it. They don't have families with them so will work longer hours. They need to both send money home and afford to live here. So they have more incentive and goals to achieve. If you visit their home countries you will find workers who don't have the same ethic, because the incentives are less.'

'We have a worker of the month scheme. Of the top ten workers five or six would be Polish. They work hard, are diligent, empathetic, they inspire clients and they ask for more work'

Language Skills

The agencies have observed that until a recently most migrants had little English. They used to come to the UK and learn the language as they worked, however there is now an increasing expectation amongst employers that their workers have at least a basic grasp of English, particularly for health and safety reasons.



'Often a group of migrants come in with one person as their spokesman. This is ok for registering, but Health and Safety issues arise when they go out to work on their own and can't communicate with their employer.'

Most workers are highly skilled and are qualified in their own country, but lack confidence in their English and are doing less skilled jobs until their language improves.

Some employers have adopted a proactive approach to this issue, sending their staff on basic English courses or facilitating one off group sessions in conjunction with local providers for employers with many A8 staff. Others signpost to courses at the College or Adult Learning, but these are no longer free of charge.

Accent can also be an issue for front facing staff, especially with Latvians, Estonians and Lithuanian workers as their accent is so strong.

Housing

The agencies have observed that migrant workers tend to live within houses of multiple occupation – sharing the rent with friends, relatives or colleagues – to address the dual aspects of affordability and a desire to minimise cost.

Some employers do provide accommodation on this basis, supplying flats or houses for individual migrants to share with colleagues with rent taken from the migrants' wages. However, many simply provide details of Bed and Breakfast accommodation or estate agents in the area.

In terms of area key concentrations of A8 migrants have been observed in Poole around Parkstone (Ashley Road area) in Bournemouth there are particularly large numbers of A8 migrants living in Boscombe and Charminster.

What they have observed to happen is that clusters of migrants occur on certain streets – one set moves in, and then spots another property that is up for rent in their street, and tells their friends/colleagues. They can then share lifts to work, which reduces costs. Each house tends to be home to one nationality, so Poles rent with Poles, Latvians with Latvians etc.

Awareness / usage of local services

Anecdotally the agencies reported that there doesn't seem to be a great deal of awareness amongst migrants about services and benefit entitlements. Having children seems to be the catalyst, as younger people have less need to use the system.

Awareness of doctors and healthcare services is enhanced where employers require the name of their workers GP. However, many return home to their own doctors or dentists for non-emergency procedures / check up's.

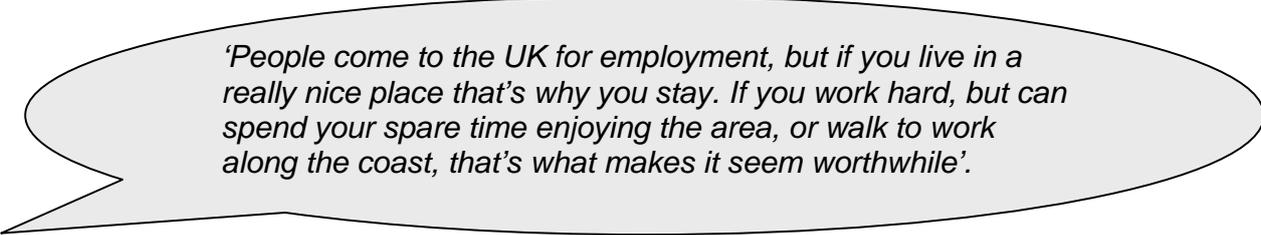
Reasons for coming to the UK

The agencies' insight is that work is the primary reason. However, the economic situation in Poland is changing. The pound used to be much stronger against the zloty. Now it is much weaker there is less benefit in coming over for basic jobs to save or send money back home.

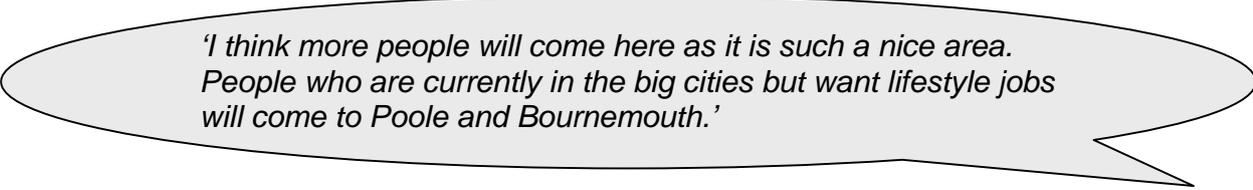
People also come looking for a better quality of life, both with regards to their time in England and the opportunities their migration will give them on return to their own country. Language is also a key driver – the opportunity to learn English - a key language for many. Others, particularly the younger migrants, are simply looking for life experience.

Reasons for coming to Poole

The general trend observed by the agencies is that people started by going to London at first, but later waves of migrants spread further and the environment in Poole is very attractive – next to the coast. Later migrants have heard about the area from friends and relatives.



'People come to the UK for employment, but if you live in a really nice place that's why you stay. If you work hard, but can spend your spare time enjoying the area, or walk to work along the coast, that's what makes it seem worthwhile'.



'I think more people will come here as it is such a nice area. People who are currently in the big cities but want lifestyle jobs will come to Poole and Bournemouth.'

More recently wives and grandmothers have come to support their family here – for example looking after the children while the husband or both parents go to work. Some come to work themselves too!

Direct flights to Bournemouth airport have also made a difference.

Local reaction

From an employers perspective, in the early days some were anti-migrant workers, however, once they see them doing the job there is a vastly different reaction.

However, although the media stories have lessened, some racist incidents continue. One agency reported that the boards placed outside their offices in dual language get vandalised by graffiti and their Polish language phone lines get abusive messages.

On the other hand, there are English people who help migrants to assimilate, some even learn a few words of their language.

The agencies felt that the effort should come from both sides. There needs to be a greater understanding of the culture and needs of both sides, or a PR initiative to counteract the media spin. Many employers rely on migrant workers to fill positions where demand significantly outstrips supply.

Future aspirations

In the agencies' view, migrants can essentially be divided into three groups:

- 1) Settlers who have been here for more than 3 years, have integrated into society and begun to buy flats/houses and bring their families over
- 2) Short-term migrants who come for one to two years and earn money to send back home or finance a house in Poland. This used to be the largest group, but more have begun to stay at the end of the two years.
- 3) Seasonal migrants – coming for 2-3 months in the summer. Mostly students and younger people aged 19-21.

Age and family are key catalysts. Some migrants will settle, improve their English and get better jobs - mostly those who are younger and without a family in Poland.

Those who have a family in Poland are more likely to go back home. Most are sending money home or saving to improve their quality of life in Poland, rather than bringing their family here.

The Catholic Church in Poole

With the majority of the population in Poland, Lithuania, Hungary, Slovakia and Slovenia identifying themselves as part of the Catholic faith, the Catholic Church is an obvious source of spiritual and pastoral support for A8 migrants. The observations below were made by four local Catholic priests during a meeting held in December 2007.

Churches

- Changes to the congregation, have been observed since May 2004, but not hugely. Although some attend churches, there are many more who do not do so.
- The Polish community have a weekly mass at Sacred Heart church in Bournemouth which is well attended, but it doesn't really help them to integrate into the community.
- However, the Polish impression can be that the liturgy is very different, and the approach is less stringent in the UK. Some like it, some don't. Often people will return home for key rites of passage.

Schools

- There is an awareness that the local authority deals with Catholic schools, but migrants are not so aware that the schools are free and accessible to them. There needs to be more effort to highlight that denominational schools are part of the common offer.
- There appears to be a lack of understanding of the school appeals system and support in using it. For example, the Polish school year runs differently. Often Polish 16 year olds apply for work too early as they don't understand the system.
- Access to in school services and schools information should be improved and available in a number of languages.

Trends

- More and more migrants are coming to the area.
- Old Town has the highest proportion of migrants – around 22%-25%.
- Over the years the Church has observed migrants from Ireland, Italy, Portugal, Kerala (India) arriving and forming communities in the area, now the dominant population is Polish.

Services

- Younger migrants pick up services quicker than older migrants.
- Housing is accessed through employment agencies or via word of mouth.
- Many come from a system without state handouts, so there is less understanding of entitlements, or the concept of benefits. Awareness needs to be raised.
- Dates and months are written the other way around in some countries, can be confusing.
- It would be useful to have information sheets on how to access key services that could be distributed via churches or parish priests to their congregations.
- The faith community is willing to offer help and support if needed, and may be able, for example, to provide support or translations.

Employment

- There is lots of initiative amongst migrants. They are hard workers. Local people may feel that jobs are being taken, but are they jobs that would have been empty anyway?
- Long working days as families are not here but 10-12 hour days raise issues of isolation.

Next Steps

This report is the first in a series of three papers looking at the migrant worker population in Poole.

The second paper, available in August 2008, will provide further insight into the lives of Polish migrant workers. In particular it will consider barriers and opportunities to integration within the Borough.

The third paper, available in September 2008, will develop further understanding of the practicalities of Polish migration to the Borough – considering aspects such as finding work, housing, childcare and contact with local services.

These further papers will be based on the analysis of fifteen in-depth interviews conducted in Spring 2008 with Polish migrant workers who live and work in Poole.

For further information on the Migrant Workers project please contact Corporate Research on (01202) 633367 or visit our website at www.boroughofpoole.com/research

