



Information on seasonal & migrant workers in Herefordshire

A review of available data

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INTRODUCTION

This report aims to bring together evidence of migrant workers in Herefordshire in one place to be used for the planning of services to support them.

The first review of information that exists on seasonal and migrant workers in Herefordshire was completed in August 2006. This report updates that information and identifies additional sources, which all form part of the 'jigsaw puzzle' of estimating numbers of international migrants in an area. No single data source can give a comprehensive view of the number of migrant workers at any one time in Herefordshire, and it is important to bear in mind that there is very little information on numbers leaving the county. Several information sources are discussed and the key intelligence from each highlighted, starting with numbers and nationalities followed by sections on employment, education, health and recent research on supporting the integration of migrant and seasonal workers in Hereford.

Recommendations for further research identified in 2006 are reviewed in the final section. Discussion continue to take place with officers in partner organisations, particularly the Hereford Division of West Mercia Constabulary, Herefordshire Council, the Primary Care Trust, the Chamber of Commerce Herefordshire and Worcestershire and the church group network.

DEFINITIONS

Migrant worker

The definition of a migrant worker used in the 2006 review of information was “an individual who arrives in the host country either with a job to go to or with the intention of finding one” (Bell et al, 2004), sometimes also referred to as ‘an economic migrant’. In Herefordshire this includes people from Europe such as Portugal and the new European accession states such as Poland. It also includes workers from countries further afield such as southern Africa and the Philippines. However this did not define the duration of stay so the United Nations definition of short and medium term migrants is helpful:

- **A short-term international migrant** is someone who moves from their usual country of residence *for 3 months or more but less than 12 months*.
- **A long-term international migrant** is someone who changes their usual country of residence *for at least a year*.

Detailed definition of usual residence, long-term international migrant and short-term international migrant

Country of usual residence The country in which a person lives, that is to say, the country in which he or she has a place to live where he or she normally spends the daily period of rest. Temporary travel abroad for purposes of recreation, holiday, visits to friends and relatives, business, medical treatment or religious pilgrimage does not change a person's country of usual residence.

Long-term migrant A person who moves to a country other than that of his or her usual residence for a period of at least a year (12 months), so that the country of destination effectively becomes his or her new country of usual residence. From the perspective of the country of departure the person will be a long-term emigrant and from that of the country of arrival the person will be a long-term immigrant.

Short-term migrant A person who moves to a country other than that of his or her usual residence for a period of at least 3 months but less than a year (12 months) except in cases where the movement to that country is for purposes of recreation, holiday, visits to friends and relatives, business, medical treatment or religious pilgrimage. For purposes of international migration statistics, the country of usual residence of short-term migrants is considered to be the country of destination during the period they spend in it.

Source: United Nations, 1998

Seasonal migrant workers in Herefordshire are defined for this report as those working on farms over the growing season. They may be nationals who arrive via SAWS (Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme) or WRS (Worker Registration Scheme), which will be explained further in the next section.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Anecdotal evidence

Local service providers in the county such as the police, council, health services and voluntary organisations (such as Citizen's Advice Bureau) have noticed an influx of people from Portugal, Poland and other eastern European countries into Herefordshire since 2004, noticeable by the language barrier encountered. For example the Herefordshire Literacy Project noticed a sudden increase in the number of people wanting to learn English as a foreign language in 2005, mainly Portuguese workers based at a major food manufacturing business. Health visitors noticed an increase in numbers of Portuguese families, and a monthly drop-in clinic was started for them.

National statistics

The Office for National Statistics recognises that population and migration statistics are increasingly challenging to produce due to changes in society and are investing in improvements to their statistics¹. International migration is a particularly difficult aspect to measure and various activities are being considered such as changes to the International Passenger Survey to identify seasonal workers.

The 2001 Census provided information on ethnicity, country of birth and location one year before the Census. It provides information at a local level but is only collected every 10 years, interspersed with annual mid-year population estimates. However ONS has recently produced experimental statistics on estimates of ethnicity at a county level to 2005, which give a useful indication of the changing demographics in Herefordshire. Debate on the content of the 2011 Census is well underway about population definitions including temporary residents, national identity and language.

ONS publishes estimates of international migration at local authority level, where an international migrant is defined as someone who changes their country of residence for at least a year. These appear to under-estimate the numbers of international migrants in Herefordshire, however a comparison of these with some of the administrative sources described in the next section have shown that there is insufficient evidence to challenge the ONS estimates. It must therefore be assumed that the majority of migrant workers who come to the county are seasonal workers and other short-term migrants who would therefore not be counted as part of the *resident population*.

National surveys such as the Labour Force Survey/Annual Population Survey collect information from residents and are the only source of data on nationality of the workforce in the UK. However the relatively small sample size means that the data is not robust for small areas.

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) also does an agricultural census annually which gives numbers of people employed in agriculture, as this sector is not well-represented in other surveys about employment sectors, such as the Annual Business Inquiry datasets.

¹ Via the Improving Migration & Population Statistics (IMPS) project.

Administrative sources

The following administrative sources have been used to give an indication of the numbers and types of people *entering* the county to work and trends over time. However as there is no requirement to 'de-register' from any of these schemes, they do not show the numbers leaving the county, either to return to their home country or to live in another part of the UK. This is one of the reasons why these sources cannot be used as a proxy for international migration, the other being that each source has a slightly different definition and requirement for who should register, both in terms of how long they plan to stay and when they should register. Therefore these sources cannot be used as a count of the number of migrant and seasonal workers in Herefordshire at any one time.

National insurance numbers for overseas nationals (NINo)

National Insurance numbers are required for employment/self-employment purposes or to claim benefits and tax credits. The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has responsibility for allocating national insurance numbers to overseas nationals, so-called 'NINos'. It should be noted that NINo registrations do not provide absolute numbers of migrants starting work, since it is permitted to take up employment prior to being allocated a NINo and it is also possible for dependents of migrant workers to reside within the country for a period of time before applying themselves. Furthermore, a number of arrivals undertake a period of study that can last for a period of a year or more, before seeking employment.

The data is released down to local authority level onto the DWP website on a regular basis.

Worker Registration Scheme (WRS)

The substantial growth in NINo registrations in Herefordshire since 2004 has largely been attributable to so-called 'Accession 8' nationals. It is therefore useful to examine the data captured by the Worker Registration Scheme (WRS) as the information applies solely to nationals of the 'A8' countries; namely Poland, Lithuania, Estonia, Latvia, Slovenia, Slovakia, Hungary and the Czech Republic; but provides more detail about the characteristics of the migrants. Since May 2004 nationals from the 'A8' countries can enter the UK but are required to apply to register with the Home Office under the WRS as soon as they find work. WRS covers nationals of the new member states who wish *to work for more than a month for a UK employer* (self-employed people are not required to register). Once a person has registered and has worked legally in the UK for 12 months without a break, they will have full rights of free movement and will no longer need to register on WRS. They will then be eligible for a residence permit confirming the right to live and work in the UK. The WRS does not require people to de-register if they subsequently leave the UK. It is also not applicable to the so-called 'A2' accession countries of Romania and Bulgaria, who are covered by different schemes.

Those registering on the WRS are also required to apply for a National Insurance number at the earliest opportunity once commencing employment, so WRS figures

should be a subset of NINo registrations. However, this is not an automatic process so there may be some discrepancies between the sources. It is also important to note that, whilst NINo allocations are published based on the residential address of the applicant, WRS figures are based on the address of the *employer*.

The data for Herefordshire was initially obtained from the Home Office Work Permits (UK), under a freedom of information request. In spring 2007, the data was made available to researchers and analysts in government via the Local Government Association but unfortunately publication is not permitted outside of Herefordshire Council, hampering efforts to share information and dispel myths in local areas.

Seasonal Agricultural Worker Scheme (SAWS)

SAWS is a quota-based scheme to allow farmers and growers in the UK to recruit overseas workers to do short-term, low-skilled agricultural work (planting and gathering crops, on-farm processing and packing, handling livestock). The workers should be paid at least the agricultural minimum wage and will be provided with accommodation by the farmer or grower who employs them. SAWS is run for the Home Office by 9 approved operators who recruit suitable people and place them on farms – S & A Davies and Haygrove Ltd are the operators based in Herefordshire. The Home Office expects the worker to leave the UK after a maximum of 6 months, when the 'permission to stay' is finished, but they may re-apply for the scheme again after three months outside the UK.

Up to 2008 this scheme allowed students (aged 18 and over in full-time education) from outside the European Economic Area to *work here for between 5 weeks and 6 months at a time*. As of January 2008, the quota is entirely for nationals of the two new accession states of Romanian and Bulgarian (so-called 'A2' countries), as they have not been afforded the same rights as nationals from the A8 countries through WRS.

Data for Herefordshire was obtained from Work Permits (UK) via a freedom of information request and is not published elsewhere.

Another scheme administered by the Home Office is called the Sector Based Scheme, which began in 2002 and was originally covered the recruitment of non-European Economic Area nationals to work in areas where the government had identified a skills gap. This program was phased out at the end of 2006 after the larger than expected numbers of migrant workers to the UK in 2004 with the exception of the A2 countries. As of January 2007, this scheme only applies to Romanians and Bulgarians and only covers the food manufacturing industry. However Home Office Work Permits (UK) have stated that information from this is not available below regional level.

NUMBERS OF MIGRANT WORKERS

ONS estimates of international migrants in Herefordshire

These revised estimates show that in no years since 2001 have more people moved into Herefordshire from overseas for a year or more than have moved out of the county to live abroad for a year or more. However these estimates show an increase in the number of immigrants to Herefordshire since the expansion of the European Union in May 2004, from 200 a year prior to mid-2004 to 600 during 2005-06. Numbers of emigrants from the county have fluctuated between 300 and 600 per year so the net effect has changed from an annual out-flow of people pre-Accession to a zero net flow post-Accession.

Growing BME population - national and local figures

The 'Black & Minority Ethnic' (BME) population is considered to be all ethnic groups other than 'White-British'. Experimental statistics from the Office for National Statistics published in August 2008 show the following:

- In Herefordshire the BME population has increased from 2.5% of the total population in 2001 to 4.0% in 2006 (4,400 people in 2001 to 7,200 in 2006).
- This is a growth of 63.6% of the BME population between 2001 and 2006 compared to just 1.7% for the total county population.
- The figures for England are that the BME population has grown from 13.0% to 15.8%, an increase in this population of 25.6% compared to an increase of just 3.3% in the total population.
- The BME population has increased in all regions between 2001 and 2006, with the biggest percentage increases seen outside of London, particularly in regions starting from a relatively small base in 2001.
- The West Midlands Region as a whole has seen a lower rate of growth in its BME population than all regions except London, although it has a higher proportion of its population from these groups than these others (16.4%).

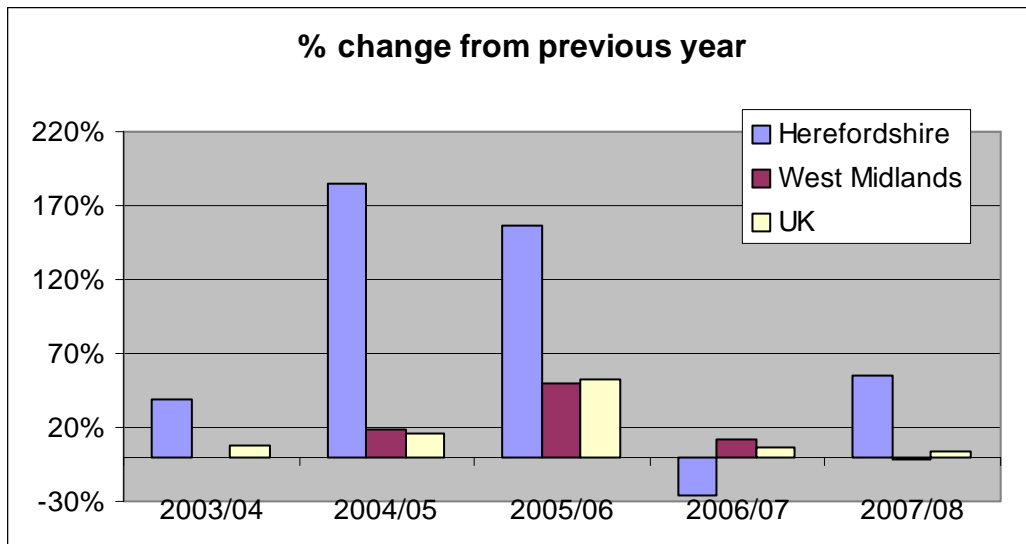
In Herefordshire the largest group within the BME population was 'White-Other' (34.7%; 2,500 people); however the BME group with the largest increase between 2001 and 2006 was the 'Asian or Asian British' group (the total estimated at 1,200 people – 900 more than in 2001).

Seasonal workers would not have been included as they do not come under the definition 'usually resident', which is used in population estimates. However, some migrant workers may have been captured in these experimental statistics.

National insurance numbers for overseas residents

There were 3,240 new national insurance number registrations for overseas nationals (NINo) in Herefordshire in 2007-08, a 55% increase compared with 2006-07. This is the 3rd highest increase in the UK, in fact only a small proportion of local authorities experienced an increase of more than 20% this year; two-thirds of local authorities experienced a decrease or no change. The chart below shows the annual percentage change in the numbers of new national insurance numbers allocated to overseas nationals since 2002-03 in Herefordshire compared with the region and the UK as a whole. It shows clearly that Herefordshire experienced a higher rate of change than regionally and nationally, with the exception of 2006-07, where the number dropped by 26%. The actual numbers for the county are shown in the table below.

Chart 1: Annual percentage change in the numbers of new NI numbers allocated to overseas nationals since 2002-03



Source: Dept Works & Pensions, August 2008 (revised figures)

Table 1: Actual numbers of new NI registrations for overseas nationals in Herefordshire since 2002-03

Numbers	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
Herefordshire	280	390	1,110	2,840	2,090	3,240

Source: Dept Works & Pensions

The pattern of nationalities of NINo registrations has changed significantly nationally and locally since 2002 when the predominant world area was Asia and the Middle East, followed by the EU. Since the expansion of the European Union in 2004 the predominant world area has been the EU Accession countries. Poland has been the source of the highest number of NINo registrations nationally and locally since 2004. However every year since then the second largest nationality represented has been

India. This is not the case in Herefordshire where other Accession countries have been main nationalities represented, namely Lithuania, Slovakia, Latvia and Hungary. The next table shows the nationalities of the highest numbers of new NINo registrations in Herefordshire since 2002. Please note these are cumulative figures – some people may have subsequently returned to their country or moved to another area of the UK.

Table 2: Numbers of new NI registrations for overseas nationals in Herefordshire by nationality: cumulative figures from January 2002 to April 2008

Nationality	World area	Numbers in Herefordshire
Poland	EU-A8	4,400
Rep of Lithuania	EU-A8	980
Slovakia	EU-A8	720
Bulgaria	EU-A2	680
Latvia	EU-A8	400
Portugal	EU	330
Hungary	EU-A8	270
Romania	EU-A2	210
India	Indian subcontinent	200
South Africa	Southern Africa	170
Philippines	South east Asia	160
Czech Rep	EU-A8	150
Rep of Estonia	EU-A8	100
Ukraine	Eastern Europe	100

Work permits (WRS & SAWS)

In this report, only some key points will be given for the WRS data as publication of detailed analyses outside Herefordshire Council is not permitted by the Home Office. However it is still useful as it provides information on age, expected length of stay and dependants which is not available from the SAWS dataset.

- Home Office Work Permits (UK) data shows that over the calendar year 2007, 5,600 workers registered with the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme (SAWS) and the Worker Registration Scheme (WRS) in Herefordshire² a slight decrease from 2006 figures (5,900) and an increase from 2005 (5,400).
- Herefordshire had 19% of the national SAWS quota for 2007 compared with 15% in 2005 and 18% in 2006.
- 65% of the WRS registrations in Herefordshire in 2007 were from Poland; 17% from Slovakia; 7% from Lithuania, and smaller proportions from other countries. This is a similar pattern to the UK as a whole. Most of the SAWS workers were from Bulgaria (40%), Ukraine (27%) and Russia (16%). Other countries were Romania (8%), Moldova (4%) and Belarus (3%).
- 47% of the WRS registrations were aged 18 – 24 years, 33% aged 25 – 34 years and a further 12% aged 35 – 44 years old. No information about age is available for SAWS.
- Just under 6% of WRS workers had dependants with them which is lower than the rates for the UK as a whole. No information about age is available for SAWS.
- The number of WRS approvals peaks in the quarter April to June (around half of all annual approvals are during this quarter), probably due to arrivals of seasonal workers during the summer months to carry out agricultural work, such as fruit picking, consistent with a rural location. Evidence of similar but much less pronounced peaks in approvals during this quarter are seen regionally and nationally. The number of SAWS approvals also peaks between April - June, with over 70% just in May, which is also the month that the highest number of arrivals are expected by farmers in Herefordshire. (This is discussed in more detail in the next section).
- Over three quarters of WRS registrations indicated that they intended to stay for less than a year. Two out of five workers said they expected to stay between 6-11 months in Herefordshire with one out of three stating they would stay less than 3 months.
- The most common occupation of WRS workers was farm worker/farm hand, followed by fruit pickers, crop harvesters and factory workers. The very nature of SAWS means these workers would do low-skilled agricultural work.

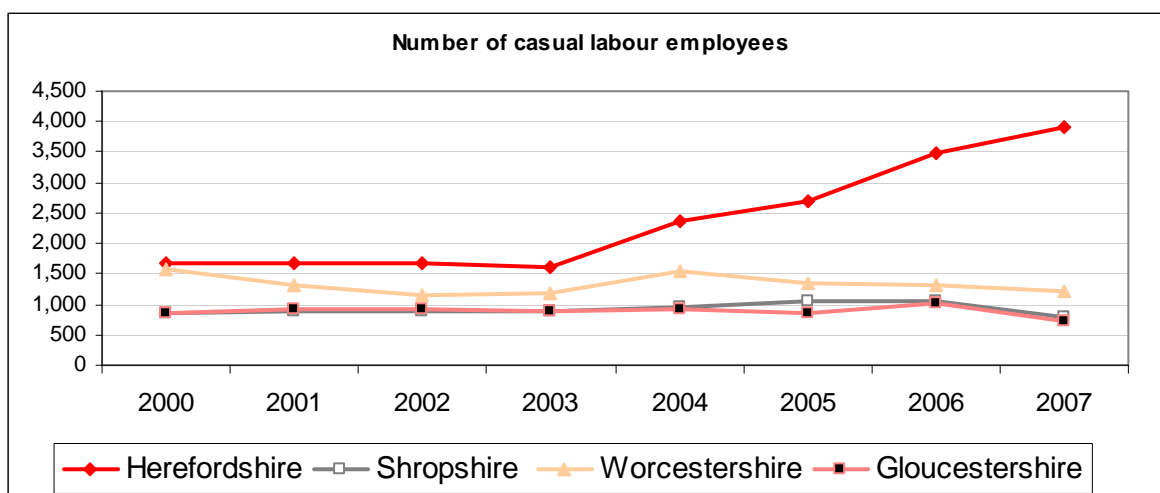
² Data for WRS was extracted by the Home Office by searching for registrations with employers within 'HR' postcode districts and for SAWS by searching for farmers/growers registered with 'Here' in the address. Figures are from Jan – Dec 2007.

EMPLOYMENT

Agricultural Census (DEFRA)

Latest figures from DEFRA's Agricultural Census show that following relatively constant numbers of casual workers on farms from 2000 to 2003, there has been a steady increase from approximately 1,600 in 2003 to 3,920 in 2007. This trend is in contrast to the neighbouring rural counties of Shropshire, Gloucestershire and Worcestershire as shown in the chart below. Casual workers are not necessarily all migrant workers but the recent increase in numbers reflects trends from other sources of increased numbers of migrant workers into the county.

Chart 2: Number of casual labour employees in agriculture, 2000 - 2007



Source: Dept for Environment & Rural Affairs

Seasonal workers expected by farmers in Herefordshire

The number of seasonal workers expected by farmers in Herefordshire has been collected by West Mercia Police since 2006. Farmers are sent forms to complete at the beginning of the growing season, which include numbers expected each month, maximum number at any time in that month, and details on nationality, gender and age. The figure in the region of 20,000 that is occasionally quoted around the county was a result of adding up the peak monthly figures from the 2006 survey, so in effect counting individual workers several times.

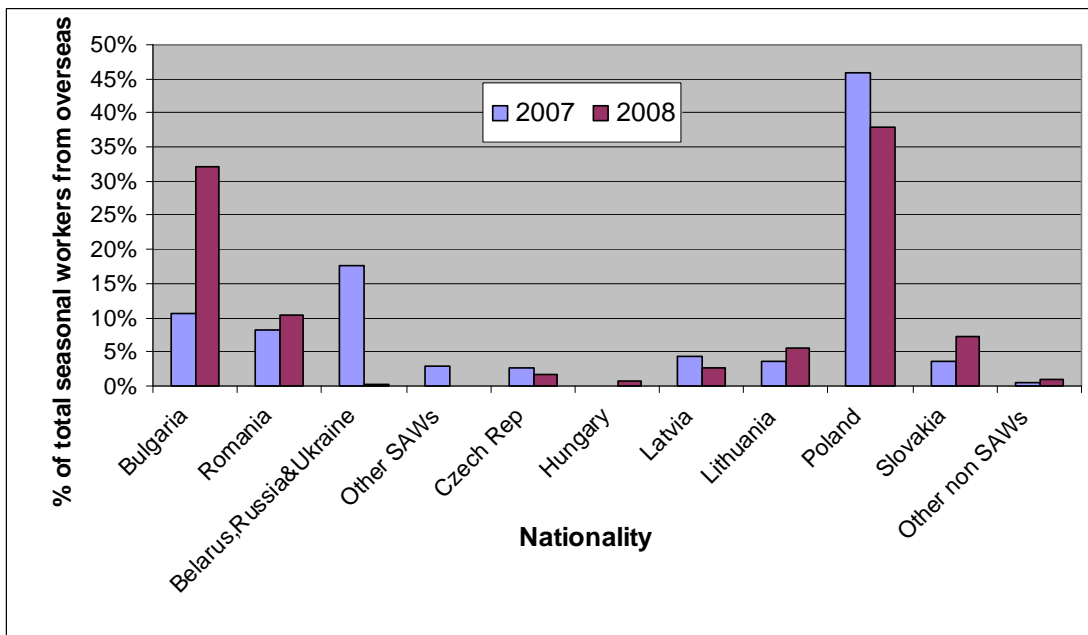
Numbers expected by farmers in 2008

The number of individual seasonal workers expected to be employed by farmers over the course of 2008 is 6,700. The numbers expected by farmers was 4,500 in 2006 followed by a large increase to an estimated 8,000 to 9,000 individual workers expected last year. The numbers expected in 2008 is less than in 2007 but the largest proportion is still Polish (38%, lower than 2007) with a much higher proportion of Bulgarians (32%) and a slightly higher proportion of Romanians (10%) compared with 2007. This reflects the new regime of SAWS; as of January 2008 only eligible to Romanians and Bulgarians. See Chart 3 for an analysis of nationality of seasonal workers expected.

The number of seasonal workers expected to be on the farms at any time is expected to peak at 5,400 individuals in June and 4,700 in July. This is a similar pattern to 2007 with estimated peak numbers at any one time in the range 6,500–7,500 over June-July. Workers are expected to be on the farms throughout the year as some work over the winter months but the highest numbers of arrivals are expected in May and June. Some of the seasonal workers from overseas are expected to stay longer than one year but the length of stay was not always specified by the respondents to the survey.

In 2008, a larger proportion of men are expected (56%) than women which is higher than last year (50%). The majority of the workers are expected to be in the age-range 25 – 34 years (48%) with a further 30% aged between 18 – 24 years and 16% in the age-group 35 - 44 years. In 2007 the age profile of the seasonal workers was younger as the majority of the seasonal workers were expected to be in the age-range 18-24 years (70%) with a further 24% aged between 25 – 34 years. The numbers of dependants expected to accompany the seasonal workers is 17 in 2008, all under the age of 11 years. This is higher than a total of only 5 dependants expected in 2007.

Chart 3: Nationality of all seasonal workers expected to be employed on farms in Herefordshire in 2008 (SAWS + non-SAWS)



The full reports for the numbers of seasonal workers expected in 2008 and 2007 can be found on the Research Team webpages: www.herefordshire.gov.uk/research

Regional study of the economic impact of migrant workers

A report on the “*The economic impact of migrant workers in the West Midlands*” was produced by the Institute for Employment Research (University of Warwick) in November 2007, part funded by the Herefordshire Equality Partnership. The key points are summarised below, including particular reference to Herefordshire where possible.

- Poles account for the largest single national group of labour migrants in the West Midlands, followed by Indians. A8 countries have replaced the New Commonwealth as the largest source of new labour migrants in recent years. There are local variations in the profile of labour migrants by nationality. Poles were **the largest nationality to register for national insurance numbers in Herefordshire (44%) in 2005/06** followed by Lithuanians (19%) and Slovaks (8%).
- The local impact of national insurance registrations for overseas nationals is highest in Herefordshire (where the *speed* of change was the greatest) and Coventry (where the *scale* of change was the greatest). Redditch has experienced the next highest impact in the region (where both speed and scale have increased considerably), whilst Bridgnorth has experienced very little change.
- Migrant workers are unevenly distributed by industry. Although it varies by region, A8³ migrants are most commonly found in administration, business and management services, whilst work permit⁴ holders are concentrated in health and medicine, hospitality and catering and administration, business and management services. Migrant workers play an important role in some sectors of the economy. Analysis of a range of secondary and primary sources shows that they are especially concentrated in sectors such as Agriculture; Manufacturing; Hotels & Restaurants; Transport, Storage & Communication; and Health & Social Work. In Herefordshire, Worcestershire and Shropshire, agriculture and manufacturing are the main industrial sectors, respectively accounting for 42% and 36% of migrant labour employment.
- Labour migrants are predominantly young – around 51% of labour migrants in Herefordshire, Worcestershire and Shropshire are aged 25 and under, whilst 39% are aged 25-34 years.
- It is clear that substantial numbers of migrants have previously worked in occupations demanding higher level skills, which is indicative of under-utilisation of previous experience and skills in current jobs.
- The current plans of labour migrants reveal that the largest proportion (33%) intend to stay for less than six months, whilst the second largest proportion (25%) intend to settle permanently in the UK.

The full report is available online on the council’s website:

www.herefordshire.gov.uk/research/

(see the economy section, then migrant and seasonal worker statistics)

• ³ The Accession 8 countries comprise of Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia. Employees from these countries are required to register on the Workers Registration Scheme (WRS).

• ⁴ Economic migrants from outside of the EU require Work Permits to be legally employed in the UK.

Local Chamber of Commerce survey of employers, 2006

The Chamber of Commerce Herefordshire and Worcestershire surveyed all of its members in January 2006 about employment of migrant workers, regardless of size or location of business. Out of 274 responses, 53 were from Herefordshire so these figures will only give an indication of what businesses are experiencing rather than a representative sample. Results are given below for the 53 Herefordshire businesses:

- 37% said they employed migrant workers, 80% of whom were Polish. Others included German, Portuguese, South African and Asian.
- The contract length of the migrant workers employed in these businesses was mostly permanent or longer than 12 months with less than a third employed for under 6 months.
- 65% of migrant worker employees had other family members with them.
- 30% of migrant worker employees were said to be highly skilled, 45% semi-skilled and 25% low skilled.
- Recruitment was mostly via a recruitment agency or local contact (35% each).
- 85% had been given 'on the job' training and 20% of businesses had provided training to ensure personal development.
- 30% of businesses also provided assistance with housing and 15% with language training.
- Regarding the benefits of the employment of migrant workers: 40% of businesses stated that it increased productivity, 55% said it filled a labour shortage, 10% stated lower costs and 10% stated innovation/new ideas.

The survey report also highlighted common themes and concerns of the overall impact of migrant labour on the local economy from discussions with businesses. The report detailed issues, impact and action required, some of which are summarised below:

- Language barrier: language was identified as one of the biggest barriers to integration
- Qualifications and skills: increased recognition of migrant worker skills and qualifications is needed as some workers are under-employed.
- Housing shortage: migrant workers are often in poor and temporary accommodation or forced to pay extremely high rents.
- Access to health care: migrant workers often not registered with a GP so only use health services in an emergency, putting pressure on accident and emergency services.
- Access to schooling with language support: not all migrant workers are in catchment areas of schools with facilities to cope with children who are not proficient in English.
- Access to financial services: difficult for migrant workers to open bank accounts without support from employers due to paperwork required to meet anti money laundering legislation.
- Access to information on rights and sources of advice: this was considered to be lacking hence the need for the new website www.welcometoherefordshire.gov.uk (which went live on 1st April 2006).

HOUSING

Seasonal workers who are only in the county for a couple of months for the growing season are mostly accommodated on the farms, in temporary accommodation. Migrant workers who stay in the county longer than this (who may still do some work on the farms in addition to work in manufacturing or food-processing) tend to be housed in houses of multiple occupancy (HMOs). Landlords leasing such properties in Herefordshire are required to license these with the local authority and adhere to standards, particularly around precautions against fires. This register was begun in 1999 in Herefordshire although the statutory obligation to do so began in 2006. Anecdotal evidence from the Private Sector Housing section of the council is that some landlords then took advantage of the influx of migrant workers into the county (from 2004 onwards), leasing properties without having a licence to do so. This is only discovered when concerns are raised about the condition of the housing by migrant workers themselves or concerned neighbours with Private Sector Housing (about 2 to 3 calls a week), or by concerned neighbours, or when officers from the fire service or police are called to a property in the course of their business. An emergency prohibition order may then be issued which has a knock-on effect to the occupants (usually migrant workers) who may then present as homeless, for whom the council has a statutory obligation towards some groups including families with children, but can also provide information on alternative housing to others.

Anecdotal evidence based on the experience of staff in the Homelessness Team at the council is that when migrant workers arrive in the county, they make their own arrangements for accommodation. After about 6 to 8 months these arrangements may no longer be tenable, resulting in a housing need and possible homelessness. However several criteria still need to be met before the council has a statutory obligation to find housing for people who are classified as homeless. These are as follows:

- Nationals of A8 countries are eligible for benefits and housing and homelessness assistance if they are working via the Workers Registration Scheme.
- To establish full EU rights A8 nationals need to have completed 12 months continuous employment on the WRS (not necessarily with the same employer). If there is a break in employment during the initial 12 months registration period, there is a requirement to find further work as soon as possible to maintain eligibility.
- Genuinely self-employed A8 nationals are not required to register on the WRS and are eligible for assistance, as long as they remain self-employed.
- A8 workers who have accommodation available for occupation abroad will not be deemed homeless
- When a homelessness duty is owed to an A8 national, members of the applicant's family normally residing with them must also be accommodated, regardless of their nationality.

Home Point (the choice-based lettings agency in Herefordshire) data show an increase in the numbers of migrant workers registering for properties to rent, however this is still a low proportion of all those awaiting housing. Analysis by nationality show that 96% of the 'active clients' (in need of housing) are British and 2% are Polish with the next biggest group being Portuguese (less than 1%), with an overall 4% of the people

awaiting housing falling into the BME category. Some of the other nationalities recorded with more than 5 clients (but less than 20) were Lithuanian, Slovakian, Hungarian and Irish.

Analysis of the nationality of clients who have been *successfully housed* over 2007 - 08 shows that 97% of the housed applicants list are British, 1.4% Polish and 0.5% Portuguese. Analysis by ethnicity show very small numbers of BME groups, under 5 for any one group with the exception of 'other white' (about 20), which includes nationals from EU and EU Accession states. In summary, migrant workers are not unduly disproportionately represented on the housing waiting list or those who are successfully housed.

EDUCATION

Provisional figures from the annual school census in January 2008 show that 2.1% of school children in Herefordshire (attending local authority maintained schools) do not speak English as a first language. In primary schools it is 2.5% of pupils (264 children); in secondary schools it is 1.6% (163 children). The BME population (all those not classified as White-British) of school children is 5.1% a total of 1,037 school children.

HEALTH

There have been several initiatives to support migrant workers wanting to access health services (e.g. language support, health 'bus' at large farms). However evidence of the numbers of migrant workers using and requiring health services in Herefordshire has not yet been brought together and analysed as a whole. A survey of the health needs of seasonal and migrant workers in the county is currently underway (August 2008).

INTEGRATION

In July 2007 a report was published called "*In a strange land – supporting integration of migrant and seasonal workers in the Diocese of Hereford*" by Leila Dawney who did the research for the Hereford Diocesan Council for Social Responsibility. It included unstructured interviews with migrant and seasonal workers in Herefordshire and one of the key findings was that all of those interviewed had experienced some hostility from UK residents which usually took the form of verbal abuse, pretending not to understand, rudeness and patronising behaviour. It highlighted the use of informal communication networks used by migrant workers which means there may be gaps in knowledge about local opportunities and amenities. Existing support networks are described and recommendations were made to improve integration, a two-way process between migrant and seasonal workers and residents who have been living in the county for longer.

The full report is available online on the council's website:

www.herefordshire.gov.uk/social_issues/diversity

CONCLUSIONS

Estimates of numbers vary depending on the definitions used when collecting data on migrant and seasonal workers, particularly short-term migrants with no one definitive source and very little on numbers leaving the county. National statistics and administrative information are therefore used to build a picture of the nature and extent of the migrant worker population in Herefordshire.

In terms of long-term international migrants, national statistics from ONS estimate that in no year since 2001 have more people moved into Herefordshire from overseas for a year or more than have moved out of the county to live abroad for a year or more.

National insurance number registrations for overseas nationals (NINo) give an indication of workers coming *into* Herefordshire across all nationalities outside the UK. The registrations increased steeply in 2004-05 (following the accession of new countries to the European Union), continued to the following year, dropped slightly in 2006-07 but increased again to a high of 3,200 new registrations in 2007-08. Herefordshire has experienced one of the largest increases in new registrations in the country. The majority of these have been from the new European Union accession countries since 2004 (A8 and A2) and Portugal, with the predominant nationality being Polish.

WRS and SAWS give further information on short term international migrants. The SAWS scheme is limited to work for a maximum of 6 months and three-quarters of WRS workers in Herefordshire indicate they expect to stay for less than a year. In 2007 there were 5,600 people registered with SAWS and WRS, a slight decrease from 2006 figures but an increase from 2005 (5,400). Polish nationals are the largest group coming in via WRS and Bulgarians the largest group of the SAWS workers.

The numbers of seasonal workers expected by farmers in Herefordshire in 2007 was estimated to be between 8,000 – 9,000 individuals with a peak of 6,500 – 7,500 at any one time (June – July). This dropped to 6,500 individuals expected in 2008 with a peak of 5,400 in June and 4,700 in July. The predominant nationality is still expected to be Polish but the proportion of Bulgarians and Romanians has increased this year, reflecting the new rules for SAWS.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations made in the 2006 report reviewing information on migrant workers in Herefordshire are reviewed here.

- **Continue and improve the survey of farmers in 2007:** *Herefordshire Council Research Team have provided support to local police who administer the survey, to improve the quality and timeliness of information from farmers on numbers of workers expected each year.*
- **Employers survey:** To complement the survey of farmers to further assess numbers of migrant workers, particularly nationalities not covered by WRS and SAWS

e.g. Portuguese. Potentially using interviews of larger employers and postal surveys of smaller employers, led by the Herefordshire Council Research Team. Pilot with one of the employers known to employ large numbers of migrant workers. The Chamber of Commerce survey did not give numbers of workers and was a relatively small sample of employers. However asking similar questions should be avoided if possible. *This has been discussed but not actioned any further.*

- **Central log/tracking of issues:** To document and track incidents or issues that have arisen in Herefordshire in relation to seasonal and migrant workers. This could be done by Herefordshire Council's Corporate Diversity Team for all partner organisations and could include the nature of the situation, the date, how it was resolved and lessons learnt. This would provide useful evidence to evaluate how services are responding to increasing numbers of such workers. This could include information collected at the Council's customer service points, including the forthcoming contact centre. *This has been discussed but not actioned any further.*
- **Qualitative research of workers' experiences:** To further investigate any barriers to services or inclusion into life in Herefordshire. *Research for the Diocese of Hereford was done in 2007 which explored support for the integration of migrant workers.*
- **Health services data:** To further investigate whether any information collected by the NHS locally could provide additional information e.g. tracking the numbers of patients who register as temporary residents when they visit a GP. *This has been discussed as part of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, 2008 and an action plan outlined.*
- **Housing data:** Potential analysis of the Homepoint database (choice-based lettings) to give information on housing need from migrant workers. In March 2006 Homepoint started to collate data on the nationality of their service users. *This was done and is reflected in this report.*
- **Electoral registration data:** Investigate whether this data could give an indication of numbers of people from EU and Commonwealth countries who have registered to vote in the last few years. This was not done but is probably no longer necessary as the national insurance registrations for overseas nationals is sufficient.
- **National Insurance allocations:** Request the numbers and nationality of people allocated with national insurance numbers in Herefordshire over the last few years from the Inland Revenue. However this may occur at the point of entry into the UK e.g. London and workers may have moved to Herefordshire some time after requiring an NI number elsewhere. Evaluate this method from work done by the Lothian Labour Market Unit. *This has been done since 2006 with Department of Works and Pension making such data available on a regular basis on their website.*
- **Herefordshire 100:** A new proposal to set up a new mechanism to consult with key groups in the county is due to be implemented by the end of 2008-09. This will complement the existing citizen's panel (Herefordshire Voice) but will use a different method where people from some of the so-called 'hard to reach' communities will be trained to do research on key topics, in a systematic, coordinated way. Herefordshire Council's Diversity Team are leading on this supported by the Research Team.

Discussions about new data sources and improvements to existing ones will continue via the Herefordshire Information and Research Network (HIRN), the Herefordshire Equality Partnership and the Diocesan Church Network group for migrant workers.

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