Scoping study on Eastern and Central European migrant workers in rural Wales

July 2006
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This scoping study investigates the numbers of migrant workers from Central and Eastern Europe who are living in rural Wales, and the impact that they are having on the local economy, society and community. The report is divided into four sections.

• Section 1 provides an introduction to this study. It summarises the enlargement of the European Union in 2004 and outlines the rights of Central and European workers to work and live in the UK.

• Section 2 presents data on the number and characteristics of workers from the accession countries who live in rural Wales.

Statistics have been gathered from the Worker Registration Scheme, which quantifies accession nationals who work in the UK. This source provides data on the numbers and basic characteristics of migrant workers, including their nationality, gender, occupation and sector of work.

In total, 4934 people who live in rural Wales have registered with the Worker Registration Scheme between May 2004 and March 2006.

There are limitations of using the Worker Registration Scheme to enumerate Accession nationals. In particular, it is perceived that a high proportion of migrants do not register with the scheme and that there is no requirement to ‘de-register’.

• Section 3 considers, from the perspective of local authority officers, issues that are faced by migrant workers living and working in rural Wales.

Migrant workers’ needs and impacts are examined with reference to five sectors: economy and employment; housing; language and education; health; and rural communities.

Reference is made to examples of initiatives by local authorities and other agencies that are seeking to respond to the demands of migrant workers.

• The fourth section of this report outlines some preliminary conclusions and identifies the potential for further research. In summary, conclusions are:

  – There is significant geographical variation in the numbers of migrant workers living throughout rural Wales.

  – The action that authorities have taken to address the needs of migrants differs considerably.

  – Rural authorities appear to occupy one of three positions: those that consider there is no significant migrant workforce within their area; authorities that are conscious of the presence of an overseas workforce, but have taken little action to date; and those that are aware of a growing number of Central and Eastern European economic migrants and are taking action to support their needs.

  – It is expected that the numbers of migrant workers in rural Wales will increase over the next five years, although the extent of this growth is unclear.

  – Further research is essential to identify the numbers, characteristics and intentions of this sector of the population, in order that their demands are met and they can become fully integrated within Welsh rural communities.
SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

The enlargement of the European Union in May 2004 has extended the mobility and freedoms of European workers. This has particular consequences on employees from the eight Central and Eastern European accession countries - known as the A8 - and has the potential to impact labour markets and economies throughout Europe.

It is intended that all EU citizens will eventually be free to work throughout the territory. Such freedoms do not currently exist. Existing member states were granted the option of affording complete liberalisation of their labour markets to A8 workers. Initially, in 2004, only three countries did not impose restrictions: the United Kingdom, Ireland and Sweden. The UK did, however, stipulate that workers from these countries would not be entitled to out-of-work benefits until they had worked continuously for 12 months and that they needed to register on the Worker Registration Scheme (WRS).

Quantifying the numbers of accession nationals who have moved to live and work in the UK since 2004 is notoriously difficult. There are three main sources of statistics that provide numbers of foreign nationals who work in the UK: the Labour Force Survey, data from National Insurance registrations and the Worker Registration Scheme. This study primarily uses data from the Worker Registration Scheme to estimate the numbers and characteristics of A8 nationals who have moved to rural Wales since May 2004.

Within the last two years a significant volume of research has been produced on A8 migrant workers in the UK. Appendix 1 lists and summarises a range of key reports on this topic.

SECTION 2: QUANTIFYING CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPEAN MIGRANT WORKERS IN RURAL WALES

2.1 Migrant workers in the UK

The Worker Registration Scheme (WRS) is obligatory for A8 workers who intend to work in the UK for at least a month. Applicants need to be in work when they apply, although self-employed workers are not required to register. Information is sought on migrants’ nationality, age, gender, place of residence, whether they have dependents, the name and location of their employer, their sector of employment, occupation, the hours they work and the rate of pay. Registration costs £70; the scheme is administered by the Home Office.

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1 The A8 countries are Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, Lithuania, Poland, Latvia and Estonia. Malta and Cyprus also gained full EU membership at this time, however their citizens have free access to the EU labour market.
Between May 2004 and March 2006, 392,000 applications were made to the Worker Registration Scheme. The greatest numbers of accession nationals are based in Anglia, followed by London. Of all UK regions, Wales has experienced the fewest number of registrations: 9,230, which accounts for 2% of the total number of registrations within the UK, as illustrated in Figure 1.

### 2.2 Migrant workers in rural areas

Research undertaken by the TUC (see Appendix 1) reveals that more than 40% of workers from the ‘new’ European Union states have settled in rural counties of the UK. This reflects that, unlike previous waves of migration, rural areas are hosting a significant proportion of A8 workers:

> “These new arrivals are to be found less in big cities of Britain than in smaller towns and rural areas.” (TUC, 2004)

The high number of migrant workers in rural areas (cf. Figure 1) is largely attributed to the attractions of agricultural employment, particularly seasonal harvesting. The 2005 Defra commissioned report: ‘Temporary workers in UK agriculture and horticulture’ identified that the UK food supply system makes use of between 450,000 and 611,000 temporary workers. Given the irregularity and poorly paid nature of much of this work, there is an increasing dependence on foreign nationals in this sector, often employed through gangmasters.

In the UK, 12% of all A8 nationals work in agricultural activities and 5% are employed in the food processing sector. (See Figure 2.) This implies that within the agricultural sector, 7% of all employees are migrant workers from the accession countries.
The East Anglia region has the highest proportion of A8 workers employed in farming. Over 12,000 Central and Eastern European workers are based in agricultural activities, which accounts for 21% of all accession national migrants in the region. In the South West of England, 20% of WRS workers are based in agriculture, although the numbers involved are far fewer (5,870).

The proportion of workers from accession states that are working in farming in Wales is significantly lower than the UK average, as is illustrated in Figure 2. Only 3.7% of all A8 workers who have registered in Wales between May 2004 and March 2006 are employed in this sector, which accounts for 270 individuals. These low levels are largely a factor of the composition of Welsh farming, which does not have the same dependence on temporary or seasonal workers as other areas, particularly those involved with fruit and vegetable production. According to Stats Wales data, only 6376 temporary and casual workers were employed in the agriculture and horticulture sectors in 2004.

Figure 2: Employment of A8 nationals by employment sector: in the UK, Wales and rural Wales

![Bar chart showing employment sectors for A8 nationals in the UK, Wales, and rural Wales.]

2.3 Migrant workers in rural Wales

More detailed geographical analysis of WRS data provides greater insights into the distribution of migrant workers in Wales. Figure 3 illustrates the proportion of WRS workers in different employment sectors.

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2 According to data from the Agriculture and Horticulture Census relating to June 2004, it is estimated that there were 49,500 seasonal, casual or gang labourers employed in England.
registrations in Jobcentre Plus districts, in relation to the population of working age. From this, key findings are:

- West Wales (which incorporates the unitary authority areas of Pembrokeshire, Carmarthenshire and Ceredigion) is one of eleven DWP districts in the UK which has in excess of 1.5% of its population of working age being an A8 national.

- Wrexham and the North Wales Coast has between 0.75% and 1.0% of Central and Eastern European workers within its population of working age.

- North Wales and Powys is within the lowest quartile of districts, with between 0.25% and 0.5% of WRS registered workers within its working population.

From these data it is notable that migrant workers account for a greater proportion of the working population in rural areas of Wales than urban and valley regions. It is apparent that:

- A8 migrant workers comprise less than a quarter of one percent of the working age population in Swansea Bay, Bridgend, Rhondda Cynon Taff and the Eastern Valleys.

- In Cardiff and the Vale WRS residents account for between 0.5% and 0.75% of the working population.

The Wales Rural Observatory has compiled further statistics on the numbers and characteristics of migrant workers who have registered with the WRS in rural Wales. The methodology used to identify rural areas to compile these data is outlined in Box 1.

**Box 1: Methodology used to quantify A8 migrant workers living in rural Wales**

Rural areas of Wales were selected according to the ONS Urban - Rural Classification for England and Wales (2004). This categorises wards as either sparse or non-sparse and distinguishes between three settlement types: urban; town and fringe; and dispersed areas. Rural wards were selected using less sparsely populated areas that contained urban, town and fringe, and dispersed settlements and sparsely populated areas with dispersed settlements.

Data from the Worker Registration Scheme is only available according to postcode districts, which do not coincide with ward boundaries. Postcode districts were considered to be ‘rural’ if their centroid was within one of the rural wards, as described above. This resulted in 118 postcode districts being classified as rural (see Appendix 2 for a map of these areas).
Figure 3 Concentrations of residents registered on the WRS according to Jobcentre Plus Districts (from DWP, 2005)
Results indicate that 4934 people who live in rural Wales have registered on the WRS between May 2004 and March 2006. Of these:

- 63% are men and 37% women.
- The majority (97%) have no dependents.
- Over two thirds are from Poland, 14% are Slovakian and 5% from Lithuania (see Figure 4).

Figure 4 Nationality of A8 migrant workers in rural Wales (source: WRS)

In rural Wales, the majority of accession country migrant workers are employed in administration, business and management (see Figures 2 and 5). This sector accounts for 44% of all those who have registered\(^3\). One in five workers is employed in manufacturing, 15% in hospital and catering, 4% work in agriculture and 4% are based in food processing sectors. The jobs that migrant workers are doing are predominantly low skilled manual positions. Almost half of all migrants (49%) classify their occupation as a ‘process operative’.

\(^3\) The high numbers of A8 migrant workers within the “Admin, Business and Man. Services” category has potentially resulted from the data being flawed. It is probable that “Man. Services” has been misinterpreted as manufacturing services, rather than the intended management services, given that many respondents within this group categorise their position as factory workers or manual workers.
Figure 5 Sectors of A8 workers in rural Wales (WRS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>% of A8 workers</th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Admin, business and management</td>
<td>44.4</td>
<td>2181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>1068</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitality and catering</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>716</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural activities</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and medical</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meat processing</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment and leisure</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other food processing</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction and land</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.4 Limitations of using the Worker Registration Scheme to enumerate A8 workers

There are several limitations of using the WRS as a means to quantify A8 workers in the UK. Specifically, these include:

1. There is no requirement for de-registration when workers leave the UK. These figures only provide data on the gross inflows of A8 workers to the country. They do not reveal net flows or stocks of Eastern and Central European workers.

2. It is assumed that a significant proportion of migrant workers do not register with the scheme. Potential reasons for non-registration include:
   - the prohibitive cost of the scheme
   - a reluctance to provide personal details
   - the need to send away forms of identification with the application
   - lack of apparent benefits to migrant workers in registering

According to a survey of 500 Polish migrants in London undertaken by the Centre for Research on Nationalism, Ethnicity and Multiculturalism, only 64% of workers had registered on the WRS. Thirty percent said they had not registered and 6% were not aware of the scheme.

Assuming that these figures are applicable to the population of accession nations elsewhere, as many as 8092 Central and Eastern Europeans could have been living in rural Wales since 2004.

3. Statistics relate to the characteristics of the first job for which workers register. Data does not tend to reflect shifts in employment and location that are likely given the occupational and geographical mobility of many migrant workers. Urban settlements with good transport networks may be seen as more attractive to migrants first moving to the UK, although they may subsequently move according to employment opportunities and social networks.
SECTION 3: LIVING AND WORKING IN RURAL WALES

The second phase of this research involved a survey of officers working in local authorities in rural Wales. In this instance, rural Wales was defined as incorporating the nine wholly rural counties (Ynys Môn, Denbighshire, Conwy, Gwynedd, Powys, Ceredigion, Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire and Monmouthshire) and three authorities that contain rural areas (Wrexham, Flintshire and the Vale of Glamorgan). Contact was attempted with three departments within each authority: economic development, social services and housing.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted on the telephone. Questions related to the numbers and characteristics of migrant workers within each authority; what impacts (positive and negative) they had had on the area; and whether any action had been taken as a result of an influx of residents from Central and Eastern Europe. An interview schedule is included in Appendix 3.

In addition, data collection included:

- A face-to-face interview with employees from the North Wales Race Equality Network (NWREN), who are involved in a project that is seeking to improve the inclusion of migrant workers in North Wales.

- Attendance at an ‘information gathering day’ on migrant workers in Powys.

- An examination of articles in the media that related to migrant workers in rural Wales.

3.1 Economy and employment

The contribution of migrant workers to the economy in Wales is seen to be largely positive. The dominant view is that, given the relatively low rates of unemployment in the area and that migrants were doing ‘hard-to-fill’ jobs, overseas workers are crucial to the viability of certain businesses and sectors in rural Wales and beneficial to the economy as a whole.

Some anecdotal reference has been made to migrants ‘taking indigenous jobs’. A respondent from Flintshire noted that this had the greatest impact on unskilled, early entry workers, aged 16-19. In Pembrokeshire it was mentioned that seasonal agricultural jobs that were usually available to students were now occupied by foreign workers. This reflects that migrant workers are predominantly involved with unskilled positions.

It was widely reported that migrant workers are industrious and are willing to work long hours. Migrants’ high rates of productivity appear, in some cases, to have discouraged employers from employing local people. One respondent from North Wales remarks that employers have ceased recruiting locals because they are not as good ‘value for money’ and are ‘lazy’, compared to those from Eastern Europe. According to a Powys councillor, non-migrant employees at a local factory had noticed that their pay and conditions had worsened since their employer had started
recruiting Polish workers. This year, for example, it was decided that there would be no pay rise.

A common feature amongst migrant workers was their apparent willingness to work long hours, tolerate poor conditions and work for low rates of pay in order to maximise their earnings. This potentially results in them being exploited. Those who have little knowledge of English, who are working through employment agents or gangmasters and are unaware of their employment rights are particularly vulnerable.

The main reason that these jobs are being taken up by migrant workers is because no one else wants to do them: they are too low paid, the hours are dreadful, the conditions are dreadful. People from here won’t do those jobs. (NWREN)

3.2 Housing

The influx of migrant workers is considered to have had consequences on the housing market in rural Wales, which in many areas is already under significant pressure. Housing officers are unanimous in recognising that migrant workers contributed to localised housing difficulties, however, the extent to which it is judged to be a serious issue, and the mechanisms that are being established to overcome some of the problems vary significantly across rural authorities. Particular issues are:

1. Poor housing conditions

Overcrowding is considered to be widespread in properties that house migrant workers. This was commonly reported by respondents from housing and social services departments. Evidence was usually based on anecdotal stories that told of several people living within a single room / people sleeping on floors / beds being shared according to shift patterns.

There are cases of 12 people in one house…they’re sleeping in sleeping bags… apparently many people sleep in each room. (Local authority officer)

Environmental Health departments have responsibility for ensuring that rented accommodation is safe and conditions are not overcrowded. However, the policing of this is considered to be largely ineffective. One housing officer notes that unless there is evidence of overcrowding, no action can be taken and that “it is very easy for them to disguise the number of people living in each house.” Whilst an Environmental Health officer recognises that even if they do find such evidence and take action, the problem is likely to be displaced elsewhere, rather than overcome.

2. Tied housing

For some overseas workers accommodation is provided by employers, employment agencies or gangmasters. Migrants whose housing is tied to their job in this way are particularly vulnerable. Rent is subtracted from their wages and, given that accommodation is rarely close to the place of employment (workers based in Cross Hands are often housed in Llanelli), transport is also provided by agents – at a further deduction. In situations when workers lose their job they become homeless too, often with very little notice. Many housing authorities cite examples of migrant workers seeking emergency accommodation in such circumstances.
3. Provision of affordable rented housing

In addition to the poor housing conditions that migrant workers face, an influx of migrant workers in some areas of rural Wales has contributed to pressures on the housing market. This is most notable in the private rented sector, particularly for families seeking such accommodation, who are being ‘outbidded’ by migrant workers who ‘squeeze’ more people into each house. Evidence from Pembrokeshire suggests that there is a direct correlation between the increase in migrant workers (associated with the construction of the gas terminal) and a greater demand for social housing and homelessness from ‘locals’, who have been issued with Notices to Quit from their landlords. In Pembrokeshire the local authority has been working in partnership with the local housing association to try and ameliorate such issues. A hostel is currently being built and they are investigating new forms of social housing to meet the additional demand for rented accommodation in the area.

One Housing Officer proposes that many of the problems of accommodation could be avoided if overseas workers entered the labour market in the same way as local people, which would consequently mean that they entered the “housing market in the regular way”. He is optimistic that as migrant workers become accustomed to the labour and housing systems in the UK this will happen, especially in areas like rural Wales where the majority of the jobs are not seasonal. However, in order that they can attain such independence, it is essential that migrants are provided with appropriate information and advice.

3.3 Language and education

Migrants who are unable to speak English or Welsh face significant barriers in relation to employment, accessing services and integration within the community. Many respondents considered that improving language skills is fundamental for migrant workers and are currently seeking to address their needs.

Improving the language is key to everything. Those who can speak good English know how to get advice, they know the conditions of their work and they know what to tell to the unemployment agency. (NEWREN)

The general impression gathered is that there is a need for a greater number of courses that provide language ‘survival skills’. The North Wales Race Equality Network are currently involved in an EQUAL funded project that seeks to address the provision of ESOL courses (English to Speakers of Other Languages) in North Wales and identify the language needs of migrants. It was mentioned that the Welsh Assembly Government had been conducting a similar project in North Wales and are looking at developing courses that are specifically related to workers’ needs, referred to as English for Specific Purposes (ESP).

Some respondents had the impression that employers and employment agencies were reluctant to co-operate in improving workers’ language skills. Employers were unwilling for them to talk to their overseas workers to assess their level of English, or even to advertise courses: “they don’t seem to want them to learn English.” However, there are examples to the contrary. Around forty Polish workers living in Llanybydder who work at the local meat processing plant were encouraged to attend a ten week
course on ‘Everyday English’ which was provided after work, and organised by the Carmarthenshire Learning Network.

Throughout rural Wales there is evidence of language courses, many of which have been designed specifically for migrant workers. Coleg Powys estimate that they have around 60 overseas students who have registered and 30 regular learners of English. There are, however, common challenges in the provision of courses to migrant workers. These include:

- Many migrants work a shift pattern and return home for visits regularly, therefore regular attendance at courses is difficult.

- Delivering these courses is relatively expensive and providers are unable to find funding to support appropriate courses that are short and non-accredited.

- For some courses students require a National Insurance number, which prevents new residents from attending classes.

The lack of language skills was cited as a particular problem for a wide range of service providers who have a contract with migrants. It was noted that frequently migrants used a compatriot with a good level of English to act as an interpreter, although this is not appropriate in some circumstances e.g. in emergencies. In Carmarthenshire, the Fire Brigade has translated certain key phrases in order to communicate with Poles in emergency situations. Some local authorities and Job Centre Plus offices make use of the Language Line which provides a telephone translation service.

In addition to adult education, a few authority officers made reference to the impact of children of migrant workers moving into the area. The Equalities Officer from Flintshire stressed the need to inform families of the need to register children at schools, since many parents were unaware of this legal requirement. In Wrexham it was noted that difficulties are compounded as teachers have very little knowledge of many students’ educational background. An Education Officer from Powys noted the growth in children in the county who did not have English or Welsh as their first language: from 80 students 18 months ago to 143 today. It is not evident whether all of these are children of migrant workers from Eastern and Central Europe, however it is likely that many are, and the number of children accompanying parents will increase.

3.4 Health

Issues relating to the delivery of health services to migrant workers are similar to those faced by other sectors. Problems have arisen as a result of:

1. A lack of knowledge of the UK health system

Many migrants are not accessing long-term health treatment. In part this has been caused by a lack of knowledge about the UK health system. In Powys it is reported that a significant portion of migrant workers do not register with a GP.
2. No access to patients’ previous health records

Health professionals in Flintshire have reported difficulties in treating patients because they are not aware of their previous ailments, treatment records or immunisation history.

3. Language

Communicating with patients with little knowledge of English causes problems. Some people do come with a friend to act as a translator, although this is not ideal if the problem is of a personal nature. In Powys a translation file is being developed by the Local Health Board, which contains certain key phrases. Use is also being made of the NHS Direct website, some of which is translated into Polish

3.5 Social networks

Overall, it appears that there is little interaction between migrant workers and local residents within rural communities. In some cases it was noted that a divide within the community has emerged in towns that contain a sizeable migrant population. In the majority of cases, respondents stressed that divisions were not antagonistic.

They keep to themselves, we keep to ourselves...They never bother you...There’s no problem... The only problem is that we’re getting a divide between two communities...I hope that we can live together...There is a divide, not a nasty one. (Councillor)

There have been flash points of hostility between locals and migrants in rural Wales. Ill-feeling towards migrant workers in Llanybydder have been reported, whilst in other areas respondents reported isolated incidents of crime or violence. One officer considered it potentially problematic that incomers were not being vetted and “we don’t know the background of these people”.

Despite a lack of evidence of higher rates of crime as a result of an increased presence of foreign workers, there is a strong assumption that migrants are causing problems. This is noted by a Police representative:

There is a sense that if there is ever any trouble in the area it must be them [Polish workers], but it isn’t... usually it is local lads...every issue the Poles are blamed. (Police representative)

Improving the knowledge of residents about overseas workers is of paramount importance, particularly from those who do not have any contact with them.

You get more prejudice from people who have never met any migrant workers because they listen to the BNP and they read the Daily Mail that says that people are coming and taking away our jobs. These are people who coming and doing jobs that no one else wants to do and they don’t really see that...If you ask people who are working with migrant workers, you get some really positive feedback from them. (NWREN)
Box 2: Community tension in Welshpool

As a result of an increased number of Eastern and Central European workers in Welshpool, a partnership has been established to monitor tensions and, where possible, mitigate them. This partnership, known as the ‘Gold Group’, consists of representatives from the County Council, Powys Police Divisions, PAVO, Community Safety Partnership, Powys Housing Department and the Fire and Rescue Service.

In June 2006, an information gathering day was held to assess the needs of migrant workers in the area, identify action that has been taken to support them and consider further support that is necessary. This was attended by around 40 people, including councillors, service providers and council officers.

Subsequent action involves improving dialogue with migrant workers and ‘indigenous’ community members, and the production of an action plan and vision statement to ensure the community is cohesive, despite these demographic changes. If the programme is successful, it is intended that similar action will be taken in other areas of Powys that have high numbers of migrant workers.

Several authorities have produced, or are in the process of producing, ‘myth buster’ documents that seek to provide answers to commonly asked questions about economic migrants (e.g. Wrexham, Flintshire). Others are working with equality officers and community cohesion officers (e.g. Flintshire, Carmarthenshire), to overcome tensions. In terms of support, there appears to be a strong feeling that the focus of attention and action should be towards achieving better and safer communities for everyone, rather than treating migrant workers who live in rural Wales as a problem that needs to be addressed.

SECTION 4: CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

4.1 Conclusions

In rural Wales, the presence of migrant workers and support mechanisms that are in operation vary significantly across the region. Local authorities can be classified as being in one of three situations. These scenarios reflect the extent to which a migrant workforce is identified as being present within each area and the degree to which support structures have been developed to meet their needs:

1. **Absent** – There is not considered to be a significant migrant workforce within the local authority area.

2. **Invisible** - There is a presence of foreign workers, but there is little knowledge of their numbers and characteristics and no action has been taken to meet the needs of this group of residents. For example, an economic development officer from Denbighshire reported: “I am not aware of any specific services
that the local authority provides to them... I don’t think that they really have any specific requirements.”

3. Visible - Authorities that are aware of a significant and growing presence of migrants within their territory and are taking action to meet their needs.

Section Two of this report noted that obtaining information on the migrant workforce is complex and, in many cases, not robust. The ‘visible’ local authorities, in particular, are seeking more detailed data on the migrant workforce within their territory. It is necessary to collect and disseminate additional data on migrant workers throughout Wales, for rural Wales and at the local level. This includes both statistical information and exemplars of ‘best-practice’ in terms of meeting the needs of migrants and integrating them into communities. To a large extent, obtaining information is dependent on open communication with migrant workers, their employers and employment agencies.

As well as looking at the situation within Wales, there is a need to look outside of Wales and learn from experiences in other regions of the UK, many of which are experiencing a far greater influx of A8 nationals and have been addressing these issues for a longer period. This is noted by NWREN, who are anxious to adopt a proactive approach, rather than being reactive when problems occur:

“Instead of avoiding the mistakes that were made in England, we will commit them as well...They are further along the road because they have been forced to take steps because things have happened...Organisations such as us and BEN [Black Environment Network] are trying to get the process in place without the riots happening.”

Meeting the needs of migrant workers involves fostering an approach which transects sectors, organisations and departmental remits. It is vital that support to this group of residents adopts an integrated strategy that addresses issues and objectives through a range of stakeholders. Furthermore, the scales at which policies and programmes operate are multi-level, thus there is a need to co-ordinate different levels of governance.

4.2 Growth in the number of overseas workers in rural Wales

The extent to which the migrant workforce will continue to grow in rural Wales is uncertain; however, the consensus from the scoping interviews was that more overseas workers are expected. According to previous waves of migration, it is probable that the characteristics of migrants from Eastern and Central Europe will change as they become established in communities, become more proficient in speaking the language and settle as family units.

Political decisions made by other EU members are likely to have a bearing on the volume of future migrants to Wales. It is not yet evident whether the numbers of economic migrants entering the UK has decreased since May 2006, when a further four countries (Spain, Greece, Portugal and Finland) fully opened their labour market to A8 nationals. At present, states neighbouring the Accession countries, such as Germany and Austria, have not yet opened their borders, but when they do so, flows
of Central and Eastern European workers to the UK and to rural Wales may be significantly reduced.

The proposed entry of Romania and Bulgaria to the EU in January 2007 may result in another influx of migrant workers to the UK. Once the Commission has finalised the date of accession, EU member states will stipulate whether residents from these countries face any employment restrictions. In the UK, it is unclear whether Romanians and Bulgarians will have similar rights to employment as those from the A8. If they do have freedoms to work in the UK, it is predicted that a further wave of migration from Eastern and Central Europe will occur, which is likely to impact on rural Wales.

4.3 Further research

Amongst local authority officers, it was widely commented that further research on the migrant workers is necessary. In several cases, local authority officers are aware that the data they hold is incomplete and inaccurate, which is preventing them from addressing issues at a policy level. Further research should include:

- Collecting data from the Labour Force Survey and National Insurance registrations on A8 nationals working in rural Wales
- Developing local level data on migrant workers to identify ‘hot spots’ that contain particularly high proportions of overseas residents
- Contacting migrant workers and residents in places in which they live or work to determine the key issues that they face
- Identifying the process through which migrant workers find work in rural Wales and what factors influence their decision to come to this area
- Investigating whether migrant workers intend to remain in rural Wales and, if so, whether they plan to be joined by family members
APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Research on migrant workers

This scoping study has examined a number of reports that address Central and Eastern European migrants in the UK. Key publications include:

- *The impact of free movement of workers from Central and Eastern Europe* (2006) is a working paper produced on behalf of the Department of Work and Pensions. The paper describes key features of A8 migration to the UK since accession and makes an assessment of the impact of migrant flows on the UK labour market.

- The *Accession Monitoring Report* (2006) is a joint publication from the Home Office, Department for Work and Pensions, HM Revenue and Customs and Department for Communities and Local Government. It provides data on A8 nationals who have registered in the UK between May 2004 and March 2006.

- The Citizens Advice Bureau has produced a report that outlines challenges that some rural bureaux have faced when supporting migrant workers. *Supporting migrant workers in rural areas* (2005) provides case studies of initiatives that have been instigated to provide services to migrant workers.

- The Learning and Skills Network has produced an exploratory study on *Learning and skills planning and provision for migrants from the accession states* (2006). This report presents information about learning and skills planning and provision for migrants from EU accession states.

- The TUC has produced a series of articles and reports on migrant workers. These include:
  - *Propping up rural and small town Britain – Migrant workers from the new Europe* (2004)

- *Changing Status, Changing Lives? The socio-economic impact of EU Enlargement on low wage migrant labour in the UK* is a research project funded by the ESRC and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation. The lead researchers are based at The Centre on Migration Policy and Society, University of Oxford and the Sussex Centre for Migration Research at the University of Sussex. To date, the following papers have been published:

A large number of area-based studies that examine the influx of economic migrants on particular regions have been produced. These include:

- *The dynamics of migrant labour in South Lincolnshire* (2006). This report provides a comprehensive picture of the migrant workforce in this rural area. It
addresses the experiences and perceptions of labour users, gangmasters, migrant workers and members of the communities in which migrant workers live.


- A report by the University of Exeter entitled *Migrant workers in the South West* (2006) looked at the contribution of migrant workers to this region and the challenges that they face. In particular, the report identifies evidence of good practice from organisations that have provided support to migrant workers.

- In 2004 the Institute for Conflict Research published *Migrant workers in Northern Ireland*. The study aimed to establish an overview of the scale, background and location of the migrant worker population in Northern Ireland.
Appendix 2: Map of postcode districts that are classified as being in rural Wales
Appendix 3: Interview schedule

Name of authority…………………………………………………………………………………..

Name of respondent……………………………………………………………………………….

The Wales Rural Observatory is scoping the possibility of undertaking some future research on migrant workers in rural Wales.

We’re particularly interested in workers from accession countries to the EU in 2004: Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, Poland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

We’re currently speaking to every local authority in rural Wales to see firstly if there is any evidence of migrant workers in ……… and, if so, what impact this is having on

   i. The economy
   ii. Society / community
   iii. Housing

1. Which sectors are they working in?

2. What jobs they are doing?

3. Where is their place of work?

4. Are you aware of the process through which they arrive here …? (i.e. gangmasters, do most of them come with jobs?)

5. Who are they?
   – Gender / Nationality / Age / Single / Skilled?

6. How long do they stay for?

7. Where do they live?
   – Is housing provided by their employers?
8. What impacts do they have on the area?
   - Positive / negative

9. Would you say there is / are communities of migrant worker(s)

10. Is there any antagonism / ill feeling towards them?

11. Has the local authority been involved in any action as a result of the increased number of migrant workers within the authority?

12. Do you know of any other agencies that have responded to the needs of migrant workers?

13. Do you think there will be more migrant workers coming to ...(given the forthcoming entry of Romania and Bulgaria to the EU)?

14. What about migrant workers from other countries?

15. Can you suggest anyone else who I could to speak to about this topic?