

## **Migrants' lives beyond the workplace**

### **The experiences of Central and East Europeans in the UK**

*Sarah Spencer, Martin Ruhs, Bridget Anderson and Ben Rogaly*

**This report explores the experiences beyond the workplace of migrants from East and Central Europe working in low wage jobs.**

Following an earlier report on these migrants' experiences at work, this study explores their access to information, advice and English classes, their accommodation, leisure time, social contact with British people and long-term intentions. The relationship between migrants and other residents has come under the spotlight in recent debates on 'integration' and 'social cohesion' but there has been little evidence on Eastern European migrants and this study helps to fill that gap.

Based on a survey of more than 600 migrants working in the UK before and after enlargement of the EU on 1 May 2004, the study provides unique insights into their experiences. Highlighting some of the challenges new migrants face, it makes a strong case for reviewing national policy towards them.



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# Preface

This is the second report from a major research project: ‘Changing status, changing lives? The socio-economic impact of EU enlargement on low-wage migrant labour in the UK’. The lead researchers on the project were Bridget Anderson, Martin Ruhs and Sarah Spencer (all at the Centre on Migration, Policy and Society, COMPAS, at the University of Oxford) and Ben Rogaly (at the Sussex Centre for Migration Research, University of Sussex).

The ‘Changing status, changing lives?’ project was motivated by the accession of ten new countries to the European Union (EU) on 1 May 2004: the ‘A8’ countries – the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia – plus Cyprus and Malta. Among the member states of the pre-enlarged EU only Sweden, Ireland and the UK granted A8 nationals free access to the labour market immediately upon enlargement.

EU enlargement thus enabled A8 workers to migrate and take up employment in the UK largely without restrictions. It meant that, overnight, A8 nationals who were in the UK before 1 May 2004 experienced a ‘change of status’, acquiring most of the rights of other EU citizens including the right to live, work and remain permanently in the UK and to be joined by dependants. For A8 nationals who had been residing in the UK illegally, 1 May was in effect an amnesty. For those in the UK legally but with restrictions on the work that they were permitted to do, acquiring EU rights gave them the freedom to change their employer and sector of employment.

The ‘Changing status, changing lives?’ project set out to study the consequences of granting most of the economic and social rights of an EU national to A8 nationals *who were already working in the UK before 1 May 2004* – with ‘legal’ or ‘illegal’ status. This report, focusing on migrants’ lives outside of work, is the second substantial report on the findings of the project. The first report, *Fair Enough? Central and East European Migrants in Low-wage Employment in the UK*, focusing on the work experiences of the migrants and the demand for their labour, was published on 1 May 2006.<sup>1</sup> A separate paper providing a detailed discussion of the methodology adopted in the project can also be found on the COMPAS website.<sup>2</sup> All papers arising from the ‘Changing status, changing lives?’ project will be made available at [www.compas.ox.ac.uk/changingstatus](http://www.compas.ox.ac.uk/changingstatus).

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An advisory committee including Professor John Salt (UCL), Danny Sriskandarajah (ippr), Don Flynn (JCWI), Nick Clark (TUC), Jeremy Kempton (Home Office) and Nicola Gilpin (DWP) was brought together by JRF and provided valuable advice during the project, and we are grateful to them for their contribution.

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A number of individuals and agencies helped us to reach migrants, employers and host families including Work Permits UK, the British Hospitality Association and British Association of Au Pair Agencies, Concordia, South Holland Borough Council and Kings Lynn Borough Council. We thank them, and the many national and local officials, trades union representatives, NGO representatives, police officers, employers, lawyers, embassy staff and others who gave their time to be interviewed

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Most of all we would like thank the hundreds of migrant workers, employers, host families and recruitment agency staff who were willing to be interviewed or to complete our lengthy questionnaires. We are grateful to them and hope that those who participated will find some reflection of their contribution in this report and the other papers emerging from the 'Changing status, changing lives?' project.

The analysis, conclusions and any errors in this report are of course the responsibility of the authors alone.



# 1 Introduction

In May 2004 ten new states joined the European Union. The decision to allow nationals from these 'accession states' to work in the UK after enlargement of the EU in 2004 proved controversial. It sparked an ongoing debate and a number of studies on the implications of migration to the UK and the work experiences of the migrants, including our own report, *Fair Enough? Central and East European Migrants in Low-wage Employment in the UK*, which was published in May 2006.<sup>1</sup>

Less attention has been given to the experiences of Central and East European migrants beyond the workplace, the subject of this second report from our project 'Changing status, changing lives?'<sup>2</sup> While the experiences of migrants and their relationships with other residents have increasingly come under the spotlight in recent policy debates on 'integration' and 'social cohesion', there has been little evidence on migrants from Eastern Europe from which to draw in those debates. This study will help to fill that knowledge gap, contributing to both academic and policy debates on immigration and integration issues.

This report explores the lives of recent migrants from East and Central Europe who were working in low-wage occupations in four sectors *before* EU enlargement in May 2004: agriculture, construction, hospitality or as au pairs. It is based on surveys and in-depth interviews with more than 600 migrants from accession and non-accession states before and after EU enlargement on 1 May 2004. It also draws on what we learnt from diaries that migrants were asked to keep over a six-month period, on interviews with policymakers and service providers, and – to a limited extent – on surveys and in-depth interviews with employers and host families.

In essence, we set out to investigate the experiences of Central and East European migrants working in low-wage jobs in the UK in relation to access to information and advice, accommodation, use of their leisure time, access to language classes and social relationships. We explored their perceptions of the way they were treated by British people<sup>3</sup> and their attitudes towards social contact with people in Britain, including towards ethnic minorities and other migrants. We asked how they felt about Britain, their countries of origin and their expectations in relation to staying in Britain or leaving. Most of all we wanted to understand the factors that influence those experiences and perceptions. How did their immigration status, including illegal residence for instance, or their proficiency in speaking English, influence their experiences? For those who became EU citizens on 1 May 2004, what impact did this have on their lives relative to those who did not experience that change of status?

We recognise that the migrants' experiences beyond the workplace are of course influenced by the sector in which they work: their pay and working hours, the nature of the work that they do and those with whom they are working. Where appropriate we refer back to our earlier report and draw attention to its relevant findings.

This introduction sets out the context of the project, the research questions and summarises the methodology. It also gives an overview of our migrant sample and of the four sectors of employment on which the project focused.

Our analysis of the experiences of Central and East European migrants needs to be set, first, within the context of recent labour migration trends and policy, in particular relating to EU enlargement; and, second, in the context of the limited but growing research evidence on the experiences of this and other groups of migrants beyond the workplace.

### **Recent labour migration to the UK**

The number of migrants coming to work in the UK from within the EU and beyond has significantly increased since the mid-1990s.<sup>4</sup> In 2003, the year before our study began, more than 80,000 work permits were issued to skilled workers from outside the EU, up from less than 30,000 per year in the early 1990s. In addition, around 30,000 non-EU workers entered the UK on permits for employment in specified low-skill occupations in agriculture, food processing and the hospitality sector. Meanwhile, a number of other entry channels did entail some permission to work for non-EU nationals including, in 2003, students (319,000), working holidaymakers (47,000 in 2003), au pairs (15,000) and dependants (87,000).<sup>5</sup> In spring 2004, just before EU enlargement, there were 2.8 million foreign nationals<sup>6</sup> living in the UK. Of these, 1.44 million were working, accounting for approximately 5.2 per cent of all people in employment, not including the unknown number who had entered and/or worked in the UK 'illegally'.<sup>7</sup>

The number of people coming to work in Britain had risen during the 1990s prior to the election of the Labour Government in 1997, driven by skill and labour shortages in sectors of the economy. A government study on the economic and social impacts of migration<sup>8</sup> contributed to a shift in policy on labour migration from an emphasis on 'control' towards 'managed migration' to maximise the economic and social benefits for the UK.<sup>9</sup> A Highly Skilled Migrants Programme, allowing entry without having a job offer, was introduced in 2002 to complement the work permit system for skilled migrants.

In addition to expanding entry channels for high-skilled workers, the Government introduced a Sector Based Scheme (SBS) in May 2003 to facilitate temporary employment of a quota of non-EU workers in low-skill occupations in the hospitality and food-processing sectors. It complemented an existing quota-based scheme, the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme (SAWS). This extension of legal entry for low-skilled employment was in recognition of the level of unfilled vacancies in these sectors and out of concern that, in the absence of legal channels, some of the jobs would be filled by irregular migrants.<sup>10</sup>

Expanding entry channels for low-skilled workers was more controversial than for the high-skilled. Concern about the long-term economic and social integration of the low-skilled ensured that these schemes allowed entry only for a limited period. Yet there remained concern about whether temporary workers would leave the country on the expiry of their visa – one reason why the SBS scheme was subsequently withdrawn from the hospitality sector.

### **Workers from EU accession states**

It was in this context that the Government took the decision to allow workers from the EU accession states free access to the UK labour market on EU enlargement on 1 May 2004. Significant shortages of labour remained in low-wage jobs and the Government remained concerned that in the absence of legal workers these shortages would encourage illegal working.<sup>11</sup> Along with Ireland and Sweden, Britain was in a minority among the member states of the pre-enlarged EU (EU15) to give accession nationals access to the labour market. Since that date accession nationals have been free to migrate and take up employment in the UK without requiring work permits. For those who were already working in the UK without permission, 1 May was, in effect, an amnesty.

Controversy surrounding this policy led to a last-minute decision, in February 2004, to require nationals of eight of the accession states ('A8') to register their employment through a 'Workers' Registration Scheme' (WRS) unless exempted, for instance because they were self-employed.<sup>12</sup> This was intended to limit A8 nationals' access to welfare benefits and services, to encourage participation in the formal economy, and to provide data to facilitate monitoring and the formulation of evidence-based policymaking.<sup>13</sup>

According to the latest registration figures (November 2006), 510,000 workers from the new EU member states registered for employment between May 2004 and September 2006. A significant number were working in the sectors covered by our

study – 21 per cent in hospitality and 12 per cent in agriculture, for instance; but also across a range of occupations such as care workers, coach drivers and classroom assistants. Data from the UK's Labour Force Survey suggest that the stock of A8 migrants aged 16+ increased from 134,000 in April–June 2004 to 222,000 in April–June 2005, and 331,000 in the corresponding period in 2006.<sup>14</sup> The estimated net migration of A8 nationals in 2005 was 64,000, rising from 49,000 in 2004.<sup>15</sup> Within a total net migration of 185,000 in 2005,<sup>16</sup> these figures are significant and support the importance of studying the experiences of this particular group of migrants.

Up to 30 per cent of A8 workers who registered between May 2004 and September 2005, the relevant period for our study, may have already been in the UK before 1 May 2004.<sup>17</sup> Some of those workers are likely to have used registration to regularise their status.<sup>18</sup> The registration figures indicate a number of A8 workers significantly larger than the annual *net* immigration that was anticipated by government and academics before EU enlargement, but do not allow direct comparison, as they do not record how many of the A8 workers have subsequently left the UK.

### Planned introduction of a 'points system'

Following EU enlargement, the Government launched a public consultation<sup>19</sup> on reforming the UK's labour migration system and in March 2006 published details of a new 'points-based system'.<sup>20</sup> The intention, *inter alia*, is to replace over 80 different entry channels for work in the UK with a simplified points system for regulating the immigration and employment of skilled non-EEA workers<sup>21</sup> and to limit severely low skilled immigration from outside the EEA (European Economic Area). This includes the termination of the SBS and the phasing out of SAWS by 2010. Any remaining low-skilled immigration programmes would be 'quota-based, operator-led and time-limited'. The restriction of low-skilled immigration by non-EEA workers is based on the Government's confidence that employers should be able to source all of the workers that they require for low-skilled jobs from within the enlarged EU. It subsequently decided that workers from the two accession countries that were to join the EU in 2007, Bulgaria and Romania, would not be allowed free access to the UK labour market.<sup>22</sup> Nevertheless, the intention is clear: that Central and East European migrants will continue to be a significant feature of low-wage migration in the UK, reinforcing the importance of this area of study.

## Debates on ‘integration’ and ‘cohesion’

The term ‘integration’ is often used in relation to the experiences of migrants and the ‘host society’ but there is no consensus among academics or policymakers on the meaning of that term. The evidence on the outcomes of the process and normative judgements on the desired outcomes are both contested. Our purpose in reviewing the terminology and research evidence in this section is not to endorse or challenge a particular definition of integration, nor to make a judgement on the optimal outcome of ‘integration’ for either migrants or the ‘host society’. Rather, our aim is to use both the research literature and policy debates to identify relevant questions to explore when investigating the experiences of migrants, and subsequently to suggest what some of the implications of those findings for debates on ‘integration’ might be.

‘Integration’, as a process, is sometimes defined as including ‘assimilation’<sup>23</sup> but is more commonly used in contrast to it. Assimilation, particularly in a cultural context, has been defined as ‘a uni-directional, one-sided process in which the immigrants and their descendants give up their culture and adapt completely to the society they have migrated to’.<sup>24</sup> Research evidence has, however, challenged the assumption that host societies are culturally homogeneous and has shown that the host society can equally be affected by the presence of migrants, and that migrants may continue to stress their cultural differences while participating fully in the economy and society<sup>25</sup> – evidence that has contributed to a more nuanced use of the concept of assimilation as a tool for understanding emerging similarities and persisting differences between migrants in the cultural and economic spheres.<sup>26</sup>

The term ‘assimilation’ nevertheless retains an association with the loss, or suppression, of migrants’ cultural differences, in contrast to ‘multiculturalism’ in which the continuing diversity of migrants’ cultures is recognised and accepted.<sup>27</sup> ‘Multiculturalism’ is itself a contested term, however, not least in policy debate where disagreement focuses on whether the recognition of separate communities emphasises differences between individuals and groups in society rather than the values and interests that are shared. Evidence that there were members of ethnic minorities in Britain’s northern cities who had little contact at school, through work or socially with other residents was one factor in a debate among academics and policymakers on whether some migrants and members of ethnic minorities were leading separate, ‘parallel lives’<sup>28</sup> There is no agreement that there is in fact a trend towards greater separation (witness the debate that followed the statement by the Chair of the Commission for Racial Equality that Britain was ‘sleepwalking into segregation’)<sup>29</sup>, nor on the extent to which ethnic clustering in housing or schools is a result of choices made by migrants or factors beyond their control.<sup>30</sup> The debate and the evidence in the UK has largely focused on sections of the Asian community

because of concerns about socio-economic outcomes and security issues, with little discussion in this context of other migrant or ethnic minorities – or indeed of other white communities – that may have little labour market and/or social contact with other residents.

When the term 'integration' is used in this context it is conceptualised as a characteristic not of individuals but of a society: the more a society is 'integrated', the more closely its constituent parts – groups and individuals – relate to each other.<sup>31</sup> Thus 'integration', when proposed as a desirable goal, is desirable not only for migrants but also for everyone. The term 'community cohesion' is often used as an alternative in this context, a term that has connotations of place and is defined by the Department of Communities and Local Government to include a sense of belonging:

A cohesive community is one in which

- there is a common vision and sense of belonging for all communities
- diversity is appreciated and valued
- people from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities; and
- strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds.<sup>32</sup>

Discourse on integration can, in contrast, focus not on social outcomes but on individuals – the frequency and intensity of migrants' interaction with non-migrants, for instance, and the extent of their participation in the labour market or civic participation.<sup>33</sup> The definition of integration that the Home Office uses in its strategy for refugees reflects this focus on individuals, emphasising empowerment and participation:

By 'integration' we mean the process that takes place when refugees are empowered to achieve their full potential as members of British society, to contribute to the community, to access public services, and to become fully able to exercise the rights and responsibilities that they share with other residents of the UK.<sup>34</sup>

From the research literature, we know that migrants are in fact engaged not in one process but in a series of separate, related processes that involve adaptation not only by the migrant but also by the institutions and public of the 'host society'. These processes are categorised differently by different scholars, but in essence take place

within institutional structures (labour market, institutions and services) and in relation to social networks, cultural norms, political participation and identity. A process may develop more quickly on one level, for instance in relation to the labour market, than another, for instance in relation to social networks or in terms of identification with the country in which the migrant is living.<sup>35</sup> The experiences of migrants and economic and social outcomes from these processes can differ significantly between migrant communities and within them (for instance, between men and women, between people with differing legal status, between people from different social class backgrounds and at different stages in the life cycle).

There is a broad range of factors that have been found to impact on the experiences of migrants, from reasons for and means of migration and the human and social capital of the migrants, through to labour market and social conditions in the areas in which they are living. Language proficiency has been found to have a significant impact on educational attainment and access to the labour market (with less evidence on its significance in other integration processes). Position in the labour market impacts (through income, hours of work and the social contacts it provides) on experiences outside of the workplace. Standards of housing can have an impact on health while housing markets or policy may situate the migrant in a neighbourhood that offers greater or lesser opportunities for economic, social and political participation.<sup>36</sup> Migrant community organisations can support migrants by providing them with access to networks and jobs, information and service benefits, and with opportunities to influence the development of local policies and services.<sup>37</sup>

The experiences of migrants can be adversely affected by restrictions attached to their immigration status, hostile public attitudes and discrimination.<sup>38</sup> While research on discrimination in the UK has tended to focus on black and Asian minorities (whether migrants or subsequent generations), there is evidence that some white migrants, including those from Ireland, have also faced sustained discrimination and disadvantage.<sup>39</sup> Migrants from other parts of the European Union are also known to face discrimination despite enjoying the legal rights of EU citizens in the UK labour market.<sup>40</sup> A range of factors mean that Portuguese migrants in the East of England, for instance, have often arrived with little English or knowledge of their rights as EU citizens and some have experienced poor accommodation and pay below the minimum wage. Their need for information before arriving in the UK has been acknowledged by government.<sup>41</sup>

Much of the relevant literature and policy debate in the UK and other parts of Europe focuses on long-term migrant residents and subsequent generations rather than on those whose stay is expected to be short term. There has been relatively little attention to either those who have newly arrived or those whose residence

is expected to be temporary, whether in months (such as seasonal agricultural workers) or years (such as au pairs). Yet most of the indices that are used to measure 'integration' – from those relating to the labour market, to those on housing and health,<sup>42</sup> as well as the issues of concern to public policy such as community relations – are also relevant to those in the UK for a shorter period.

In relation to the newly arrived, recent reports from service and advice providers have stressed the importance to both migrants and providers of access to practical information and advice, and of support for those migrants for whom adaptation to living in the host society is most challenging (such as refugees and asylum seekers).<sup>43</sup>

This short review of the evidence and debates raises questions relevant to the experience of the migrants in our study. What is the relationship, for instance, between migrants' position in the labour market (occupation and location, for example) and their experiences beyond the workplace? To what extent are those experiences – in relation to accommodation, for instance, and relationships with non-migrants – the result of choices (potentially involving trade-offs) made by the migrants themselves or factors over which they have little or no control? How significant is legal status, language proficiency or receipt of practical information in the experiences of these migrants; and what does the evidence tell us about the relevance of early experiences of newcomers for longer-term outcomes, and the experiences of those who plan a temporary stay, for the 'integration' and 'cohesion' debates? If outcomes are considered 'suboptimal' (whether for migrants, service providers and/or wider society), how significant are these findings for policy debates on the 'integration' of new migrants? Our findings, while drawing largely on evidence from migrants rather than from service providers or other members of the public, will contribute some answers to those questions.

### **Policy in relation to new migrants living in the UK**

There is currently no written or comprehensive government policy towards new migrants other than for recognised refugees. *Integration Matters: A National Strategy for Refugee Integration* was published in 2005, with a consultation paper on further developments in 2006, addressing the refugees' needs for information, accommodation, language training and services.<sup>44</sup> There is no equivalent strategy in relation to other new migrants, including those from Central and Eastern Europe. Discussion with officials suggested that the rationale for this is that the UK has obligations towards refugees who were not able to plan their migration and settlement in the UK, whereas other migrants chose to come and can return home if

they choose to do so.<sup>45</sup> The lack of any policy focus on the experiences of those on temporary labour permits, such as the SAWS workers and Sector Based Scheme permit holders in our study, suggests that the primary interest of government has been the migrants' role in the labour market (or as au pairs in private homes) and that, where there is an interest in their experiences beyond the workplace, it is only among those for whom there is an expectation that they will remain in the UK in the long term. The evidence in this report is relevant to debates on those policy priorities.

### *Discrimination*

Discrimination is widely recognised as a barrier to the full participation of many, including migrants in society<sup>46</sup> and the UK has, since the 1960s, had legislation and policy relating to discrimination against ethnic minorities and to good race relations. While race relations legislation prohibits discrimination on grounds of national origin and nationality as well as ethnic origin and colour, and is thus relevant to all migrants, the focus of discrimination and race relations policy (and its implementation) has in practice nevertheless remained largely on members of Britain's black and Asian communities, a majority of whom today were born in the UK and are British nationals. A significant group of white migrants to the UK, the Irish, have been marginal to discourse and practice on discrimination, the Commission on the Future of Multi-ethnic Britain in 2000 noting the continuing existence of anti-Irish racism but concluding that 'All too often they [the Irish] are neglected in considerations of race and cultural diversity in modern Britain'.<sup>47</sup> The conditions attached to the immigration status of many migrants can in fact significantly limit their right of equal access to employment and services, while those whose status is irregular are not always protected by the anti-discrimination employment provisions.<sup>48</sup>

The potential need for public policy to anticipate the needs beyond the workplace of A8 nationals and their potential relationships with other residents was not considered at the time the decision on free movement was taken.<sup>49</sup> At the time when the migrants in our study arrived in the UK, before EU enlargement in May 2004, their immigration status often did not provide for settlement (with the exception of those on self-employed visas and students allowed to switch to a work permit). For those who arrived after the decision on free movement was taken, however, it was known that those from A8 states would subsequently attain the right to remain.

One area of service delivery to migrants that has been developed is provision for teaching English as a Second Language (ESOL). Demand for classes has tripled since 2001, in part because of the increased demand for places following the requirements for a level of English language proficiency for those seeking

naturalisation. The expansion of provision has, however, put pressure on the wider skills budget. This has led to government proposals to tighten access to free ESOL provision requiring more migrants to contribute to the cost, arguing 'we must not let ESOL eat away at the resources available for other adult learning priorities'.<sup>50</sup> Only those given permanent leave to remain and in receipt of unemployment or income-based benefits would in future be eligible for free lessons. Waiting lists for places continue in parts of the country.

Policy interviews with service providers found frustration at a lack of guidance to local authorities and other service providers unfamiliar with migrants in their area and the lack of central co-ordination of initiatives to meet their needs. Some national and local agencies had already produced their own advice leaflets for migrants having found from experience that this was needed.<sup>51</sup> The challenge that migration was posing to some local service providers prompted a study by the Audit Commission, which may now lead to greater support and co-ordination of local authorities in areas where new migrants are living.<sup>52</sup> Meanwhile the Home Office is preparing leaflets providing practical information in a number of languages and thought is being given to how these would be distributed when ready for circulation.

Recent policy development by the Government on race equality and more broadly on social cohesion has not focused on migrants,<sup>53</sup> although there are indications that migrants are slowly being brought within the agenda, for instance in the remit of the Commission on Integration and Cohesion,<sup>54</sup> in the 2006 local government White Paper<sup>55</sup> and in the focus of the Audit Commission report on the implications of the growth in the number of migrant workers for local authorities.<sup>56</sup> While issues relating to community cohesion and equality are now the responsibility of the Department of Communities and Local Government, issues relating to new migrants remain the responsibility of the Home Office. The Department's Advisory Board on Naturalisation and Immigration (ABNI), originally established in 2004 to advise on service provision in relation to applications for citizenship, has begun to consider the needs of new arrivals, including those relating to information provision and language teaching addressed in this report.<sup>57</sup>

The Government endorsed the need for a proactive approach in its support for the EU Common Basic Principles on Integration in December 2004 but, in contrast to some other member states, has not used those principles to prompt a wider policy debate.<sup>58</sup> The Home Office Minister responsible for refugee integration, Joan Ryan, MP, said publicly at a conference organised by the Centre on Migration, Policy and Society in July 2006 that the Government recognised the need for a broader strategy addressing the experiences of non-refugee migrants but suggested no time-frame in which such an approach might be developed.<sup>59</sup>

## Low-wage sectors, immigration status and entitlements

It is relevant here to give some background information on the four sectors of employment in which the migrants in our study were working: agriculture, construction, hospitality and as au pairs. Although this report is on their experiences outside of work, the location and nature of their work and the conditions attached to their immigration status are highly relevant to those experiences. We therefore briefly overview the sectors in which the migrants in our study were working and the relevant conditions attached to their immigration status. Greater detail on the sectors and relevant immigration status are provided in our first report.<sup>60</sup>

### Agriculture and SAWS

There is a high demand for workers in jobs designated 'low skill' and the sector has long relied on the labour of contingent workers, often women, students or migrants. Temporary workers are required in the sector at particular times and these seasonal fluctuations have often been managed through the use of labour-supplying intermediaries. Many agriculture-sector workers commute from urban areas or are transported to their rural workplaces by gangmasters. In our study we focused on the labour-intensive subsectors of fresh fruit, vegetable and salad production, which require temporary workers for manual harvesting and subsequent processing. Research suggests that horticultural businesses have greatly increased their use of foreign nationals over the last decade,<sup>61</sup> in part through use of the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme (SAWS) through which most of the migrants in our study had found their employment.

SAWS emerged out of post-war government-managed recruitment of foreign nationals to address the shortage of labour in British agriculture and parallel efforts of non-governmental organisations such as HOPS and Concordia.<sup>62</sup> It began operating in its current form in 1990 with an annual quota of 5,500 work cards. The original aims of SAWS emphasised cultural exchange but, following a review in 2002, this element of the scheme was given lower priority in official statements.

At the time of the fieldwork for this study, the scheme was open to full-time students aged 18–25, registered at universities in non-EEA states. It permits employment for up to six months in any one year, after which the students are expected to return home.<sup>63</sup> The maximum quota in any one year increased rapidly from the late 1990s to 25,000 in 2004. Until the enlargement of the EU on 1 May 2004, the largest numbers of workers were recruited from Poland, Lithuania, Bulgaria and Ukraine. Following

the accession of the former two countries to the EU, nationals of those states no longer had to apply for SAWS visas in order to work in agriculture. The growth in the number of A8 nationals potentially available to work in the agricultural sector post-enlargement led the Government to reduce the quota to 16,250 for 2005 and 2006. After 2007, only Bulgarians and Romanians are eligible for the scheme.

SAWS recruitment and placement is handled by ten operators, authorised and regulated by Work Permits UK. These may be 'multiple' or 'sole' operators. Most of the larger multiple operators place workers with farm businesses, which are then the employers of the SAWS workers and are required to provide them with accommodation. Sole operators are farm businesses that are authorised to recruit workers for their own requirements. They too must provide accommodation. Like the wages that workers receive, accommodation charges are regulated by the Agricultural Wages Board.

Although cultural exchange is no longer a key stated requirement of SAWS, SAWS students may be offered occasional subsidised trips to places of interest. Employers have access to a workforce without other realistic leisure options, and can adjust the start and end of the working day according to the particular needs of the crops or livestock. The location, long work hours, communal accommodation arrangements and limited opportunities to socialise in the wider community that are open to these workers necessarily have a bearing on their experiences outside working hours.

Following considerable media attention to the issue of rural migrant workers in 2006, the Rural Advocate, Stuart Burgess, identified migrant workers as one of the three key issues facing rural areas.<sup>64</sup> The Commission for Rural Communities has begun a programme of work on the issue, which will be rolled out during 2007. It is likely that action in this area will include issues relating to the housing of workers, as well as other community cohesion issues and workplace rights for all workers employed in the countryside.<sup>65</sup>

### **Au pairs**

The au pair scheme is similarly for temporary residence in the UK, in this case for up to two years. It is governed by a reciprocal agreement between certain states, under which young people live as part of an English-speaking family and are provided with their own room, food and appropriate opportunities for study – although there is no obligation to enrol on an English course. They must be offered a 'reasonable allowance', with the suggested maximum in 2004 being £55 a week. In return they must help in the home for a maximum of five hours a day with two free days a week.

Au pairs must be citizens of designated countries, aged 17–27, unmarried, with no dependants. The UK has permitted male au pairs since 1993 but most au pairs are female – in practice many host families are reluctant to take on men.<sup>66</sup> It is a fundamental tenet of the au pair scheme that it is not a category of employment – au pairs are not workers but participants in ‘cultural exchange’. Hence immigration officers are officially cautioned that payment in excess of the designated maximum may indicate that the young person is a domestic worker rather than an au pair (and hence not eligible for entry). In practice, however, many host families offer a larger allowance and typically au pairs work significantly in excess of 25 hours a week.<sup>67</sup>

Au pairs are not permitted to access formal employment. They are to be treated as ‘part of the family’, rather than labour market actors. Those who take language classes are not subject to reduced EU fees, most paying full fees as overseas students.

The au pair scheme witnessed a resurgence beginning in the 1990s. In 1991 the number of passengers given leave to remain as au pairs was 7,720; by 2003 it was 15,330. Reasons for this increase in demand from host families include the lack of alternative affordable childcare, high rates of female economic activity and continued gendered division of labour, together with an expectation of individual responsibility for care.<sup>68</sup> For those eligible for the scheme, being an au pair was for some the ‘easiest’ and ‘cheapest’ way of entering the UK to work, whether as an au pair or illegally by taking up employment in another sector.<sup>69</sup>

The majority of those entering as au pairs from 2000 were A8 nationals. More than half were Czech. It was not surprising, then, that the numbers of au pair visas fell sharply from the second quarter of 2004 to pre-1990 rates. This does not mean that the number of people taking on an au pair role actually dropped but rather that some of those doing this work no longer need a visa. In 2004 only 5,635 au pair visas were issued, 3,910 of these before 1 May to A8 nationals.

The length of stay, mode of accommodation and expectations of integration into family life, coupled with the expectation of access to language classes, are all relevant to the experiences of au pairs beyond the ‘workplace’.

### **Hospitality and the Sector Based Scheme**

In this study we focused on those working in hotels and restaurants. Difficulties of recruitment and retention have long plagued the industry, which previously relied on young and female workers to fill low-wage jobs but now increasingly looks to recruit

migrant labour.<sup>70</sup> There are a number of schemes to facilitate migration into the sector, including the Sector Based Scheme, and work permits for the more highly skilled. International students, permitted to work 20 hours a week in term time and full time during the holidays, are also frequently found in this sector, as are working holidaymakers who are allowed to work temporarily to fund their holidays in the UK. Labour force data for 2006 suggest that migrants (defined as foreign-born persons) constitute over 20 per cent of total employment in hotels and restaurants in the UK.<sup>71</sup>

A small number of the migrants in our study had entered under the Sector Based Scheme, on which 20,000 non-EEA nationals were permitted to work in the hospitality and food processing sector in 2003–04. The scheme was open to those aged between 18 and 30 and provided a permit for 12 months, after which the individuals were expected to leave the country. SBS permit holders were not allowed to bring their spouse or dependants, nor was there any expectation of cultural exchange.

### **Construction and self-employed status**

Construction work is often carried out on a project basis. Contractors bring together teams of workers, many of whom are self-employed, to work together on a project and then disperse. As of late 2003, around 37 per cent of the construction industry was self-employed, as were many of the migrants in our study. Migrants are acknowledged to be an important component of the construction labour force.

There is no specific scheme for migrants to enter to work in construction, but it is possible for certain nationalities to obtain a self-employed visa enabling them to take on work in this sector and many migrants have taken this option. Accession nationals, for instance, were eligible to apply for two-year (renewable) self-employed visas, whether before entering the UK or by switching from another status. This status, while allowing the migrant to be accompanied by a spouse and dependants, requires them to be able to provide accommodation and support without any reliance on public funds. Self-employed workers are not entitled to sick pay or holiday pay from the employer.

### **Entitlements related to immigration status**

The position on migrants' entitlement to public services and benefits is complex. Entitlements differ depending on a range of factors including channel of entry, current

immigration status (whether ‘ordinarily resident’ or ‘habitually resident’, for instance) and country of origin – the latter because some states are anticipating accession to the EU, for example, or signatories to other bilateral or multilateral agreements with the UK. Thus au pairs, students or those on a temporary labour scheme could have differing eligibility for services because they come from different countries of origin, or even because they are studying different subjects. In this study we focus on three areas of service need: accommodation, health care and English language classes.

Leaving aside the restrictions on entitlement to work, which were addressed in our earlier report, the principal condition that applies to migrants who are not from an EU or EEA state is that they are admitted to the UK on condition that they do not have ‘recourse to public funds’. This does not mean *no* access to public funds but that they have no right to social housing if they are homeless, nor to benefits such as child benefit, housing benefit, disability living allowance, working tax credit, income support or job seekers’ allowance. The prohibition does not cover NHS treatment, state education or, for instance, community care services.

When the migrant is given entry clearance, reference to the conditions attached to their immigration status is included, in abbreviated form, in the entry clearance document. Thus, next to the abbreviation ‘Obsrv’ it may say only ‘No recourse to public funds. Work (and any changes) must be authorised’.<sup>72</sup> The lack of clarity in this information is relevant when we explore, in the next chapter, the extent to which migrants are aware of the conditions attached to their immigration status.

Prior to 1 May 2004, the entitlements of the then A8 among the migrants in our study did not differ greatly from those of other non-EEA migrants, and depended largely on their immigration status (unless extended by an agreement between the UK and their country of origin). However, as nationals of states that were about to accede to the EU, the migrants benefited from Association Agreements between their states and the European Union in recognition of the fact that they would in time become EU member states. The agreements allowed nationals of those states to establish themselves in the UK as business persons, whether as self-employed, or as owners of companies, or in partnership. There was no minimum capital requirement so that a migrant could establish themselves in a low-income business such as window cleaning. The migrants (prior to becoming EU nationals) must nevertheless have sufficient funds to support and accommodate themselves without any ‘recourse to public funds’ or to employment – thus the entitlements attached to Association Agreements relate to work rather than to any access to public benefits or services.<sup>73</sup>

In relation to health care, the rules on access differ between hospital treatment and General Practitioner (GP) primary care services. At the time when the migrants in our

study entered the UK, NHS services were free to EEA nationals and to people who were 'ordinarily resident' in the UK; that is, here lawfully and for a settled purpose, including employment, self employment and to study for more than a temporary period. Certain services were exempt from any charges regardless of status, including accident and emergency treatment and treatment for a range of infectious or sexually transmitted diseases. Bulgarian nationals during the period of our study were among those who could benefit from reciprocal arrangements between their country and the UK for receipt of some but not all hospital services. GPs had some discretion whether to register patients without taking their immigration status into account and also had a duty to provide emergency and necessary treatment regardless of immigration status or whether the person was registered with their practice.<sup>74</sup>

While all migrants can in theory attend English language classes (ESOL) provided by public agencies, with the exception of refugees the classes are (and were at the time of our survey) generally free only for those who have been ordinarily resident in the UK for three years (except for those in receipt of benefits). Non-EU students attending other further and higher education courses have to pay overseas fees. EU nationals pay the same fees as UK citizens.

Some service providers have reported difficulties, which they themselves have experienced, through lack of clarity on entitlements. One in four homelessness agencies cited this as a barrier to meeting the needs of A8 nationals in a recent survey.<sup>75</sup> This problem is not exclusive to this group of migrants and Citizens Advice reported:

... a general lack of understanding amongst some migrant workers of their rights and entitlements, the rules and procedures governing their access to them, and their associated expectations.<sup>76</sup>

## Research questions and methods

Against that background, this report addresses the following research questions.

- What are the experiences of Central and East European migrants working in low-wage jobs in the UK in relation to their lives outside of work, in particular in relation to accommodation, access to information and advice, use of their leisure time, access to language classes and social relationships?

- What are their perceptions of the way they are treated by British people and their attitudes towards social contact with people in Britain, including ethnic minorities, and towards other migrants?
- What are their attitudes towards Britain, their home country and expectations in relation to staying in Britain or leaving?
- What are the factors that influence those experiences and perceptions, including their legal status, length of stay, English language proficiency, gender and any impact of acquiring the status of an EU citizen relative to those whose status did not change?
- What are the potential implications for policy towards new migrants from our findings?

The project made use of a range of research methods to obtain information from migrants, employers, host families and agencies. A detailed discussion of the methods used can be found in a separate paper on the COMPAS website.<sup>77</sup> We combined quantitative (survey) and qualitative (in-depth interviews and diaries) methods in the fieldwork and in analysis. Both survey and in-depth interviews are exploratory and contemporaneous, and we chose a flexible, issue-led model in which we selected the method appropriate for the questions we were exploring. We use the term ‘respondents’ to refer to migrants, employers and host families who answered survey questionnaires and the term ‘interviewees’ for those who participated in semi-structured in-depth interviews.

In our first report we drew heavily on the data we collected from 399 employers and agencies and 278 host families as well as on that from migrants. In this report, exploring the migrants’ lives outside work, we draw almost exclusively on the survey and in-depth interviews with migrants and their diaries, with some reference to material from host families and policy interviews.

It is necessary to include a ‘health warning’ here. The people included in our sample who provided the data analysed in this project were purposively selected to ensure a broad range of migrants in our occupational sectors rather than randomly chosen. This was because there was no database of migrants from whom a random sample could be contacted. This means that the samples are not representative of the wider population of migrants, employers and host families, and the analysis based on this data therefore cannot be generalised. Rather it serves as an indication of potential patterns and relationships.

### Survey and in-depth interviews with migrants

The project comprised two waves of quantitative and qualitative research. Wave 1 was conducted between March and May 2004, and was funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC);<sup>78</sup> Wave 2 was conducted between November 2004 and February 2005, and was funded by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF).

We first interviewed migrants who were employed in one of our four sectors of employment – agriculture, construction, hospitality and the au pair sector – in April 2004. As anticipated, when interviewed subsequently after 1 May 2004, some of them were now working in other sectors. In agriculture, we did not aim to interview migrants from across the whole sector but focused on the labour-intensive subsectors of fresh fruit, vegetable and salad production where migrant workers are employed in the fields and co-located packhouses.<sup>79</sup>

We selected four accession nationalities on the basis of their prominence in the SAWS, au pair and SBS schemes: Czech, Slovak, Lithuanian and Polish. As a comparison group of people whose immigration status would not change with EU enlargement in 2004 we selected two further nationalities – Ukrainian and Bulgarian. Both survey and in-depth interviews with workers and au pairs were conducted face to face and in the migrants' first language. Surveys were designed to be completed by an interviewer and to take approximately one hour. In-depth interviews were semi-structured and designed to be tape-recorded, with the possibility of detailed notes if interviewees did not consent to being taped.

Wave 2 comprised two sets of participants – reinterviews of those who had been interviewed in Wave 1 and new respondents and interviewees we could question *retrospectively* about their experiences before and after EU enlargement. We attempted to match the latter group on the basis of the gender, age range and nationality of the Wave 1 respondents and interviewees who could not be reinterviewed. As shown in Table 1, of the 333 survey respondents in Wave 1, 109 could be reinterviewed in Wave 2. Of the 51 in-depth interviewees in Wave 1, 20 were reinterviewed in Wave 2 (see Table 2). The numbers of retrospective survey and in-depth interviews taking place in Wave 2 were 243 and 42 respectively.

**Table 1 Survey interviews with migrants (576 respondents)**

	Czech	Lithuanian	Polish	Slovak	Bulgarian	Ukrainian	Total	A8	NA8
Wave 1	48	81	59	53	46	46	333	241	92
Wave 2: reinterviews	14	36	18	19	14	8	109	87	22
Wave 2: retrospective	29	33	35	33	42	71	243	130	113
Total respondents	77	114	94	86	88	117	576	371	205
'Panel'	43	69	53	52	56	79	352	217	135

Notes:

Wave 1 took place in March–April 2004; and Wave 2 in November 2004–February 2005.

'A8' indicates nationals of A8 states; 'NA8' indicates workers from non-A8 states, i.e. workers from Bulgaria and Ukraine.

**Table 2 In-depth interviews with migrants (93 interviewees)**

	Czech	Lithuanian	Polish	Slovak	Bulgarian	Ukrainian	Total	A8	NA8
Wave 1	2	17	22	2	6	2	51	43	8
Wave 2: reinterviews	–	7	10	1	2	–	20	18	2
Wave 2: retrospective	11	4	5	11	4	7	42	31	11
Total interviewees	13	21	27	13	10	9	93	74	19
'Panel'	11	11	15	12	6	7	62	49	13

Note: Wave 1 took place in March–April 2004; and Wave 2 in November 2004–February 2005.

## Migrant diaries

In order to capture the 'felt impacts' of immigration status we asked some migrants to keep diaries from October 2004 for six months. These were designed to give diarists space to record their thoughts and experiences in a semi-structured way in their own language every two weeks. We intended to involve an equal number of each of the six nationalities in our study and of workers/au pairs who had recent work experience in each of our four sectors. In practice, 12 diarists (six men and six women) wrote fortnightly entries, which were supplemented in May 2005 with a final essay. Table 3 shows how the diarists were distributed by nationality.

**Table 3 Migrant diaries**

Czech	Lithuanian	Polish	Slovak	Bulgarian	Ukrainian	Total
2	0	2	3	3	2	12

## Policy interviews

In order to explore the historical and policy context of the research questions, we conducted 17 interviews between June 2005 and November 2006 with representatives of organisations with responsibilities relating to migrant workers in the public, private and voluntary sectors. These were with officials at the Home Office, Department of Work and Pensions and Work Permits UK; in a local authority in whose area a significant number of migrant agricultural workers are living (involving two officers and a representative of the local diocese); with two senior police representatives in the same region; with the Trades Union Congress (TUC) and two trades unions representing workers in the sectors covered by the project; with the Confederation of British Industry (CBI), three bodies representing employers and one agency responsible for placing SAWS workers; with the head of a migrant association; and with representatives from two embassies from among the six East and Central European countries covered by the project. The interviews established the nature of the organisation's responsibilities and experiences in relation to migrant workers before exploring a range of issues relevant to our research questions.

## Characteristics of migrants surveyed and interviewed

All the data presented in this section refer to the respondents' and interviewees' situation *before EU enlargement* in May 2004, either at the time of the survey or in-depth interview (April 2004), or, where specified, at the time of respondents' last entry to the UK for employment purposes (always before 1 May 2004).

### Gender, age and dependants

The overall gender distribution of the survey sample is reasonably even – 54 per cent of all survey respondents were male. Among Czech and Slovak respondents, women outnumbered men (see Table 4).

**Table 4 Survey respondents by citizenship and gender, April 2004**

	Czech	Lithuanian	Polish	Slovak	Bulgarian	Ukrainian	Total	A8	NA8
Male	33	65	58	40	56	63	315	196	119
Female	44	49	36	46	32	54	261	175	86
<i>Total</i>	<i>77</i>	<i>114</i>	<i>94</i>	<i>86</i>	<i>88</i>	<i>117</i>	<i>576</i>	<i>371</i>	<i>205</i>

Source: survey interviews with migrant workers and au pairs.

Most respondents were young and single. Their average age – at the time of the Wave 1 interview – was 27. Ukrainians (30 years on average) and Bulgarians (28 years) were older than the respondents from the accession states, whose average age was 26.

Just over half of the respondents reported having partners. As shown in Table 5, Bulgarians and Ukrainians supported a significantly greater number of dependants (1.44 per migrant, on average) than respondents from the accession states (0.48 dependants per A8 migrant, on average). Overall, less than a fifth of our respondents' dependants were in the UK.

**Table 5 Average number of dependants financially supported, by respondent's citizenship and dependant's location, April 2004**

	Czech	Lithuanian	Polish	Slovak	Bulgarian	Ukrainian	Total	A8	NA8
Dependants	0.303	0.726	0.678	0.108	1.150	1.647	0.832	0.484	1.444
Dependants in UK	0.030	0.160	0.233	0.000	0.300	0.181	0.157	0.116	0.230
N	66	106	90	83	80	116	541	345	196

Source: survey interviews with migrant workers and au pairs.

### *In-depth interviewees*

The personal characteristics of in-depth interviewees were broadly similar to those of survey respondents. Slightly more than half of the interviewees were men (the share was two-thirds among non-accession national interviewees). The average age of interviewees was 27. Non-accession national interviewees were slightly older (30 years, on average) than accession nationals (27 years). As was the case with survey respondents (see further below), the great majority of in-depth interviewees were recent migrants – three-quarters last entered the UK for employment purposes between January 2003 and April 2004.

### **English language skills**

More than two-thirds of survey respondents described their English-speaking proficiency as 'fluent' or 'adequate'.<sup>80</sup> Overall, A8 respondents self-reported higher levels of English-speaking proficiency than Bulgarians and Ukrainians. Almost half of Bulgarian respondents (but also more than a third of Polish respondents) said that they spoke only basic English. The reported levels of proficiency in reading English are very similar to those reported for speaking English. As expected, self-assessed levels of proficiency in writing English were lower than those reported for speaking and reading (see Table 6).

**Table 6 Respondents' self-assessed proficiency in speaking, reading and writing English, April 2004**

	Czech	Lithuanian	Polish	Slovak	Bulgarian	Ukrainian	Total	A8	NA8
<i>Speaking English (%)</i>									
Fluent	31	23	18	23	16	32	24	23	25
Adequate	55	57	39	58	36	31	45	52	33
Basic only	13	19	37	19	45	29	27	22	36
None	1	1	5	–	3	9	3	2	6
<i>Reading English (%)</i>									
Fluent	38	19	19	28	18	27	25	25	24
Adequate	49	52	43	59	41	31	45	51	35
Basic only	10	24	26	13	37	28	23	19	32
None	3	5	13	–	3	14	7	5	9
<i>Writing English (%)</i>									
Fluent	29	14	12	14	9	21	16	16	16
Adequate	51	46	37	60	34	25	41	48	29
Basic only	18	27	32	26	49	33	31	26	40
None	3	13	19	–	7	21	11	9	15
N	77	114	94	86	87	117	575	371	204

Source: survey interviews with migrant workers and au pairs.

Note: percentages may not always add up because of rounding.

## Sector and location of employment

In April 2004, just over a third of survey respondents were working in hospitality, just under a third in construction and the remainder in agriculture, the au pair sector or in another sector.<sup>81</sup> Respondents in hospitality and the au pair sector were predominantly female (67 per cent and 86 per cent, respectively). In contrast, almost two-thirds of respondents working in agriculture and all of the respondents working in construction were men – which must be borne in mind whenever a difference by sector is identified in this report. In the au pair sector, Czechs and Slovaks constituted more than three-quarters of respondents. In all other sectors, we obtained a fairly good spread of nationalities.

As a consequence of the research methods adopted, almost three-quarters of all survey respondents were working in London. This share was highest for those working in construction (92 per cent) and hospitality (82 per cent). Three-quarters of the au pairs interviewed were working in London and most of the remainder in Oxfordshire or Hertfordshire. The majority of respondents employed in agriculture were working in Cambridgeshire (28 per cent), Kent (28 per cent) or Lincolnshire (17 per cent). This was a result of our purposive sampling strategy and should not be taken as indicating any general trend. The Workers' Registration Scheme (WRS) data show the regional distribution of those A8 migrants registered under the scheme.

### **Employment conditions of migrants surveyed and interviewed**

Our previous report<sup>82</sup> found that most of the migrants interviewed in April 2004 worked in jobs that offered low wages and poor working conditions. Across all sectors, migrants were working longer basic hours and longer total hours than average for their occupation. For those in hospitality and au pairs, overtime was not always paid. Less than half of those in hospitality and agriculture, and only 15 per cent of employees in construction, received paid holidays. Less than a third of all employees received paid sick leave and many migrants did not have written contracts. For au pairs surveyed in April 2004, average weekly 'pocket money' was £68. For most the regular working week was longer than the 25 hours' maximum approved by government.

Importantly, many migrants had far more skills than required to do their low-skilled jobs in the UK. In that context, most migrants saw themselves as making tough choices and trade-offs. They tolerated low-skilled work and poor conditions because the pay was significantly better than at home, and they could also learn or improve their English. Most important, migrants were prepared to put up with poor employment conditions because the job was perceived as temporary, with most expecting to eventually move into better jobs in the UK or return to their country of origin.

### **Time spent in the UK since last entry for employment**

The length of time that a migrant has been in the UK is a factor in integration processes. The great majority of respondents in our study were recent migrants (see Table 7). As of 1 May 2004, respondents reported an average of 19 months since their last entry for employment to the UK. This figure was lowest for Slovaks (13 months) and highest for Ukrainians (26 months). Just under a third of all respondents had last entered the UK in the first four months of 2004. On average, Bulgarian and Ukrainian respondents had been in the UK three months longer than A8 workers.

**Table 7 Respondents' time spent in the UK since last entry for employment, as of 1 May 2004**

	Czech	Lithuanian	Polish	Slovak	Bulgarian	Ukrainian	Total	A8	NA8
<0.5 years	24	39	32	29	25	22	171	124	47
%	31.6	34.8	34.0	33.7	31.6	20.6	30.9	33.7	25.3
0.5–1 year	21	15	19	27	18	13	113	82	31
%	27.6	13.4	20.2	31.4	22.8	12.1	20.4	22.3	16.7
1–2 years	15	20	14	15	18	32	114	64	50
%	19.7	17.9	14.9	17.4	22.8	29.9	20.6	17.4	26.9
2–3 years	10	15	7	10	13	14	69	42	27
%	13.2	13.4	7.4	11.6	16.5	13.1	12.5	11.4	14.5
>3 years	6	23	22	5	5	26	87	56	31
%	7.9	20.5	23.4	5.8	6.3	24.3	15.7	15.2	16.7
<i>Total</i>	<i>76</i>	<i>112</i>	<i>94</i>	<i>86</i>	<i>79</i>	<i>107</i>	<i>554</i>	<i>368</i>	<i>186</i>

Source: survey interviews with migrant workers and au pairs.

### Immigration status

There was great diversity in the self-reported immigration statuses of respondents in April 2004, prior to EU enlargement (see Table 8). The four major statuses reported by respondents were self-employed (22 per cent of all respondents), au pair (17 per cent), student (16 per cent) and 'visa expired' (16 per cent). There was, however, significant variation across nationalities. For example, over 60 per cent of Bulgarian respondents reported their immigration status as self-employed. About half of Czechs and Slovaks said that they were on au pair visas. Almost a third of Ukrainians reported they had student visas. This variation in immigration status across nationalities reflects, in part, the distribution of respondents from different countries across different sectors of employment.

**Table 8 Respondents' self-reported immigration status by citizenship, April 2004**

	Czech	Lithuanian	Polish	Slovak	Bulgarian	Ukrainian	Total	A8	NA8
Self-employed	6	38	25	2	53	5	129	71	58
Au pair	37	12	4	44	3	0	100	97	3
Student	13	13	11	11	5	38	91	48	43
Visa expired	11	20	18	23	0	17	89	72	17
SAWS permit	0	17	13	0	8	11	49	30	19
Don't know	2	4	9	4	2	25	46	19	27
Other	6	3	11	2	4	11	37	22	15
Dependant	1	4	1	0	7	4	17	6	11
SBS permit	1	1	0	0	5	2	9	2	7
Asylum seeker	0	1	0	0	1	3	5	1	4
Illegal	0	1	0	0	0	1	2	1	1
<i>Total</i>	<i>77</i>	<i>114</i>	<i>92</i>	<i>86</i>	<i>88</i>	<i>117</i>	<i>574</i>	<i>369</i>	<i>205</i>

Source: survey interviews with migrants.

We have used the survey data – which include the information on *self-reported* immigration status above and answers to various other questions pertaining to respondents' immigration status – to construct an indicator of whether a respondent is 'illegally resident' (i.e. without valid leave to remain) in the UK or not. Of the 574 respondents who provided information about their immigration status in April 2004, at least 127 were illegally resident. This includes 90 respondents who described their immigration status as either 'visa expired' or 'illegal'; and another 37 respondents whom we classified as 'illegally resident'. This was because the interview data clearly suggested that they had either overstayed their visas or that their reported immigration status was simply impossible (e.g. respondents suggesting that they had entered on SBS permits before May 2003, when the SBS was introduced).

It should be noted that we deliberately set out *not* to interview 'illegally resident' au pairs. This was because of the complex methodological issues that would arise in attempting to differentiate between 'au pairs' and 'domestic workers', when those entering on au pair visas fall out of status. Nevertheless, we did come across 11 migrants on au pair visas who were working in other sectors.

### *Working outside the rules*

More than two-thirds of au pairs and students, and one-third of respondents who described their immigration status as self-employed, were not complying fully with the rules attached to their immigration status. While these migrants were living in the UK lawfully, they were working in breach of the employment restrictions attached to the migrant's immigration status (a situation that may be described as 'semi-compliance').<sup>83</sup> As we set out in our first report, almost half of those illegally resident or working in breach of their immigration conditions were paying national insurance while some working in full compliance with immigration law were not.<sup>84</sup> While our focus in this report is not on the migrants' work experiences, the fact that they were vulnerable to enforcement action for breaching their conditions of stay may be relevant to their experiences outside of work and to their attitudes towards Britain and their future here.

The 'semi-compliance' of students and au pairs that we uncovered in our survey and in-depth interviews was primarily due to working for more than the legally allowed number of hours. Most respondents in this position worked *significantly* more hours than allowed. Almost three-quarters of the 91 students interviewed reported they were working for more than 30 hours a week, often in multiple jobs. More than half of the 100 au pairs interviewed said that they worked for more than the legally allowed 30 hours a week. Fifteen au pairs said that they were also working outside the sector;

that is, outside a private household. One-third of the respondents with a self-reported immigration status of 'self-employed' were also apparently breaching the conditions of their visa because they described their employment status/relation as 'employee' rather than as 'self-employed'.

It is worth repeating at this point that our data are not representative and thus cannot be used to assess the incidence of a certain immigration status – such as 'visa expired' – among migrant workers with a particular nationality or in a particular sector.

### **Structure of this report**

Having set out the background to this study, our research questions and methodology, we report in the subsequent chapters our research findings.

In Chapter 2, we look first at the access that the migrants had to information and advice, drawing on survey and in-depth interviews to examine their knowledge on arrival of the conditions attached to their immigration status, their rights at work, their knowledge of how to access health care and of where they could get further advice.

In Chapter 3, we turn to the migrants' experiences in relation to their accommodation and neighbourhood, reporting on the conditions in which they were living, their level of satisfaction with their accommodation since arrival, reasons for moving and the impact of EU enlargement on their experiences.

In Chapter 4, we report on the migrants' use of their leisure time, on whether they took English classes, on whom they spent their social time with and on experiences of prejudice and discrimination.

In Chapter 5, we explore the migrants' future intentions – whether to stay only temporarily in Britain or in the long term – and how their intentions compared to actual duration of stay. We look at the factors that may influence that decision, including their feelings about Britain and their home country, and any impact for the A8 nationals of joining the EU.

We conclude, in the final chapter, by drawing together our key findings and suggesting some areas where these may have relevance for future policy debates.

## 2 Information and advice on arrival

This chapter explores whether, when the migrants in our study had arrived in the UK before 1 May 2004, they had received information relevant to their stay in the UK, who had provided it and whether they had known where to go to get further advice. The areas we were particularly interested in were information on the conditions attached to their immigration status, rights at work, how to access health care and where to get further advice. In the in-depth interviews, we explored difficulties that the migrants had experienced as a result of a lack of information and their suggestions on the information that future migrants ought to have.

A series of recent reports by service providers, as well as academic research, have identified lack of access to practical information and advice, and lack of knowledge of UK systems and rights and entitlements as creating some difficulties for new migrants. The Health and Safety Executive, for instance, reported in October 2006 that migrant workers may be experiencing higher levels of workplace accidents in part because of limited understanding of health and safety procedures because of communication difficulties and working in occupational sectors in which they have had no previous experience. They recommended provision of targeted health and safety advice.<sup>1</sup> A recent report from public and voluntary sector service providers in Bradford found a lack of understanding about how the health service operates and how to register with a GP. More information is urgently needed, it argued, advocating a central information point at which information on jobs and services could be provided in accessible form.<sup>2</sup> The Wales Rural Observatory identified the same problem, noting '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 proportion of migrant workers are not registered with a GP'.<sup>3</sup> Meanwhile a survey of 43 homelessness agencies in London in 2006 found that, among the 15 per cent of their service users who were from A8 states, the problem was a shortage not just of accommodation but also of information and knowledge of how the UK system works.<sup>4</sup>

The information does not necessarily need to be provided by government. Earlier studies have emphasised the importance of personal networks, for instance, in accessing information and the role played by the voluntary and community sector. Au pair agencies, SAWS operators and employment agencies provide some information to those migrants whom they are placing in families or employment, and there are employers that provide information on local facilities and on access to English language provision. Some public bodies, including local authorities and the police, have as we mentioned in Chapter 1 started to provide information, having found from experience that it is needed.

No information is currently routinely provided by the Government to all new arrivals, nor was it provided when the migrants in our study arrived prior to 1 May 2004. An individual's visa or entry clearance document, as we have seen, includes 'a brief statement/summary of conditions which attach' to the category under which the individual is entering, for instance that the person may have 'no recourse to public funds'. SBS permit holders, when interviewed for entry clearance or a national insurance number, were issued with a leaflet 'outlining their rights and responsibilities whilst in the UK' and containing useful contacts including the TUC helpline. This is sometimes provided in the permit holder's own language.<sup>5</sup>

Since 1 May 2004, a TUC leaflet, *Know Your Rights*, has been given to those who register on the Workers Registration Scheme and a government leaflet, *Living and Working in the UK: Rights and Responsibilities of Nationals from the New Member States from 1 May 2004*, is now available online.<sup>6</sup>

Before summarising our findings below, we should emphasise that the migrants' entry to the UK was, on average, 18 months before they were interviewed in April 2004 and our questions related to whether they had the information they needed when they arrived. Our findings cannot therefore be linked to their actual use of services, for instance, as they may subsequently have acquired further information.

We also need to acknowledge that the migrants may have interpreted our question about 'information' differently. While some may have thought that this referred to written information only, others included the information that they had received through word of mouth. It is also possible that some had been given information but had either forgotten receiving it or, through lack of English, not understood its significance. Notwithstanding these constraints, our findings are striking. As Table 9 shows, in almost all cases, only a minority of the migrants had received the information concerned.

**Table 9 Information received on arrival in the UK and whether the information received was adequate**

	Received information			Information adequate		
	Yes %	No %	Total n	Yes %	No %	Total n
Rights at work	47	53	574	84	16	256
Conditions attached to immigration status	54	46	572	86	14	292
How to register with a local doctor	33	67	572	90	10	178
How UK health system works	19	81	572	87	13	99
Agencies providing information and advice	17	83	573	83	17	90

Source: survey interviews with migrants.

## Conditions attached to immigration status

The migrant respondents in our study had entered the UK through many different channels of entry. As we saw in Chapter 1, each immigration status provides access to a complex array of differing responsibilities and entitlements in relation to work and access to services. We thus asked whether, when the migrants arrived, they had information on the conditions attached to their immigration status, who had provided the information and whether it had been adequate.

Only 54 per cent of the migrants (total  $n = 572$ )<sup>7</sup> said that they had received this information, of whom those who entered as dependants, au pairs and students were most likely to have done so (around two-thirds), followed by those on work permits and the self-employed (over half). Those who had entered as tourists or asylum seekers were least likely to have this information, despite the fact that they were subject to the most extensive restrictions.

Just one in five of the migrants said that the information came from a government source. A third had received it from a friend or relative and a little over a quarter reported that it came from an employment or au pair agency. Two-thirds of au pairs received it from their agency whereas, for work permit holders, both agencies and employers were important sources. In contrast, students were most likely to be informed by friends and relatives.

Significantly, those whose English reading and speaking skills were fluent or adequate when interviewed were much more likely to say that they had received this information on arrival than those with only basic or no English (though those with good English may not have spoken or read it so well on arrival). Those with little English were much more likely to say that they had received information from friends and relatives while saying they had received little from government, agency or employer sources.

We could not establish if there was any connection between a lack of information on conditions attached to immigration status and the significant level of breaches of those conditions at the time of their interview, as the information migrants provided on their knowledge of the rules referred only to their knowledge on arrival. Nevertheless, the extent to which many migrants (and employers and host families) were ignorant of the rules cannot be disregarded when considering how to address the lack of compliance in this area.

Of those who had received this information, the vast majority felt that it was adequate, including more than four out of five who had received it from their

employer or host family: 'Being an au pair I had an easier start', one Polish diarist recorded later, 'because the family is responsible for passing on all the important and necessary information, how to travel around London, where to go to see a doctor, etc'.<sup>8</sup>

### Rights at work

Knowledge of employment rights is important for individuals' experiences at work and for the employment relationship. We found that slightly less than half of our respondents had received information on their rights at work (47 per cent), with friends and relatives being the most cited source followed by agencies and employers. Not surprisingly, those whose channel of immigration did not provide the right to work (asylum seekers and tourists) were least likely to say that they had this information when they arrived; and those on work permits were most likely to do so (68 per cent). Significant proportions of those who were allowed to work – the self-employed (41 per cent), au pairs (53 per cent, albeit not strictly 'employment') and students (44 per cent) – nevertheless reported that they did not have this information when they first arrived.

As in relation to conditions attached to immigration status, those whose migration was organised through a private recruitment agency were more likely to have information on rights at work, as were those with good English. Similarly, au pairs were most likely to have received the information from their agency; those on work permits from agencies and employers; and students from their friends and family.

Those who subsequently applied for registration under the WRS were also more likely to say that they had information about rights at work on arrival. There must therefore be a possibility that some of those who responded positively to this question were thinking of that information that they had in fact received after 1 May 2004. Although we do not know what information on rights at work the migrants did subsequently receive, it is worth noting that those who did not receive the information on arrival were more likely to say that they had subsequently had 'problems at work'. Our data do not identify what those problems were, nor whether there was a connection with the lack of information on arrival.

## Access to health care

We asked our respondents whether they had known how to register with a local doctor when they arrived and if they had had information on how the UK health system works, such as the difference between a GP and a hospital. The latter is significant because the UK primary care system differs from that in the six countries whose nationals were included in our study, and the failure to use a GP service can lead to inappropriate use of hospital and accident and emergency facilities.

We found that only 33 per cent knew how to register with a GP, the majority having received that information from friends and family, but one in five had been given this information by their employer or host family. Fewer, 19 per cent, said they knew how the UK health system worked. Even among au pairs, who we might expect to have received this information on arrival from their host family, only 40 per cent knew how to register with a GP, little higher than those on work permits or self-employed. Those who entered as au pairs were as likely to have received the information from friends and relatives as from their host family; those on work permits most likely to have received it from their employer; and those who entered as students or self-employed most likely to have received it from friends and family. Once again, those with fluent reading or spoken English were more likely to know how to register with a GP than those with little or no English (see Table 10).

Even when it proved possible to find other practical information on the internet, information about the NHS, as one migrant recorded in his diary, proved difficult to find (Slovakian male au pair aged 27).<sup>9</sup>

We cannot assess whether this lack of knowledge had an impact on subsequent access to health care. The vast majority (91 per cent) of those who had not subsequently accessed any health services throughout their stay said that this was because they did not need to do so. Only eight respondents said that it was because they did not know how. However, it was also the case that those who had received the information were subsequently much more likely to have registered with a GP

**Table 10 Whether received information, on arrival in the UK, about how to register with GP, by English reading skills**

Self-reported English reading proficiency	Yes %	No %	Total <i>n</i>
Fluent	41	59	140
Adequate	35	65	257
Basic only	26	74	135
None	23	77	39

Source: survey interviews with migrants.

(54 per cent of them had done so) and to have used that service (51 per cent) than those who had not received the information (26 per cent and 24 per cent, respectively). Less than 10 per cent of the migrants had used an accident and emergency service when interviewed both before and after 1 May 2004, 3 per cent had been a hospital in-patient, while 12 per cent had accessed dental treatment.<sup>10</sup>

### **Access to information and advice**

Citizens Advice has reported that some of its bureaux face challenges in meeting the needs of migrants, now forming more than 25 per cent of their clients in some rural areas. They are reported to need advice on immigration procedures, employment rights, housing and benefits, though some migrants are deterred from seeking advice in case it results in the loss of their job or accommodation. Some bureaux have produced information in East European languages, indicating that these migrants are significant among their clientele.<sup>11</sup>

Although some East European migrants are thus using advice agencies, recent reports have emphasised the need for advice and the difficulties that migrants can face in accessing it.<sup>12</sup> We asked our respondents whether, when they first arrived, they did have information about agencies they could access that could provide information and advice.

Only 17 per cent said that they did know where to go for advice, half of them having been informed by friends and relatives and a third by their employment agency. Almost none had been informed by their employer or host family and none by government sources. Those who did get advice were grateful for it, as with this diarist, a Czech au pair who had found help at her college in creating her CV and finding a job:

What I really like about the UK is the agencies (under any college) which help migrants to look for a job ... I went through this and I was very grateful for such help.

(Female Czech au pair)

### **Implications of lack of information**

We have stressed that our survey did not enable us to correlate the lack of information on arrival with the migrants' subsequent experiences, as they may have

received the information at a later date. We cannot know, as we have said, if the fact that almost half of the migrants did not receive any information on conditions attached to their immigration status is connected to the high incidence we found of individuals legally resident in the UK but working in breach of their conditions of stay. Nor do we know whether the lack of information about rights at work affected the workers' pay and conditions on which we also reported in our first report<sup>13</sup> other than to note that those without the information were more likely to say that they had had problems at work. Finally, in relation to health care, we noted that those who did not receive information on how to access a local doctor were in fact much less likely to have done so.

There is some evidence from our in-depth interviews with migrants, however, and from our policy interviews, that a lack of information before and on arrival has created difficulties for the migrants that could have been avoided. A Ukrainian woman who arrived on a student visa speaking no English, for instance, told us:

When I first came here I was looking for people at school, on the streets. As soon as I heard the Russian language I went to talk to people because they could help me somehow. But still many people turned me away, they said if you wanted to work you had to pay money for it. But there were people who gave me addresses of agencies. I was very lucky because without any English I started to work as a waitress straight away. When I came here I had only £200 in my pocket.

(Ukrainian female hospitality worker aged 25 [W2ret])<sup>14</sup>

A Polish association, which has itself produced information for Polish migrants on how to get a national insurance number, for instance, and how to register with the WRS, told us that, while many migrants 'find their feet quickly', they are unfamiliar with British customs and this can make them vulnerable at work and cause problems with the authorities:

We ask people 'have you got a payslip?' They don't know what that is and then they have no evidence of having paid tax.<sup>15</sup>

There was some resentment of embassies for failing to provide information or support when it was needed:

I would never ask the embassy for help again because I think they are useless and help you only with matters between [her country] and UK. That's all. Not how to cope here by myself.

(Female au pair)

Embassy staff we interviewed, however, insisted that they did provide some help to those who got into difficulties, for instance if they had been promised a job by an agency which did not materialise when they arrived or had disputes with a landlord or employer.<sup>16</sup>

For those unlawfully resident in the UK, information needs could differ – they might need ‘unwritten information and contacts’ as one Lithuanian former teacher put it (Lithuanian female au pair aged 25 [W2reint]); and there were also constraints on who they could approach for help. A Polish man working in construction, interviewed before becoming an EU citizen, commented on the difficulty for people who could not turn to the authorities for help if, for instance, an employer refused to pay:

If a person is here legal he can go to the police. Otherwise you have to threaten the one who didn't pay the salary.

(Polish male construction worker aged 38 [W1])

The migrants' lack of information about the conditions attached to their immigration status reportedly creates problems for advice agencies which can themselves lack the specialist knowledge necessary and find the additional cost of acquiring that information difficult, particularly in rural areas – the small number of specialists tending to operate from urban areas.<sup>17</sup>

### Information and advice for future migrants

The Polish association and embassy representatives suggested that some of those who arrive in the UK have false expectations as they had insufficient information before leaving home. This was a theme strongly reflected in our in-depth interviews when the migrants were asked what information they thought future migrants should be given. They expressed frustration that some of those coming were unrealistic, not anticipating how difficult life could be for them. One Polish man working as a painter said future migrants should be told ‘that pounds don't grow on trees – honestly, because everybody goes with this attitude’ (male construction worker aged 26 [W1]). Another Pole, who had been employed for the previous five years in the construction industry and who was working long hours to support a family in Poland, to whom he spoke each day, said simply:

There should be a big banner at Victoria Station saying ‘Go back!’. They come having no idea what it is like here.

(Polish male construction worker aged 37 [W1])

A consistent theme in these interviews was the importance of migrants knowing that they should speak at least some English before coming to the UK. This was important for work and, for instance, to be able to talk to health workers. Life without English was not only considered very hard but could make them more vulnerable. As one Bulgarian man working in construction put it:

If you do not speak the language you are nothing. When the foreman comes and tells you what to do and you do not understand, he just throws you out.

(Bulgarian male construction worker aged 40 [W2ret])

A Lithuanian woman, who had found herself working from 6.15 a.m. to 7 p.m. six days a week as an au pair and having to share a room with one of the children, said lack of English had prevented her getting help when she first arrived and she was unhappy with her working conditions:

It is important for everybody to know their rights and where to go for help if anything goes wrong. When I came here and saw my working conditions my English was so bad that I couldn't ask my agency for help.

(Lithuanian female au pair aged 27 [W2reint])

Similarly, a Czech au pair, now working in hotel administration, said:

If you don't speak English, don't come. And it's silly to say it like this, but if you are not able to work from dawn till dusk, don't come here either.

(Czech female au pair aged 30 [W2ret])

Beyond language skills, the migrants had a long list of information they thought new migrants should have, from how to open a bank account, what they could realistically earn and the need to bring a deposit for accommodation, to the cost of food, where to access legal advice and how to find a doctor if they fell ill. With a sense of the vulnerability that some clearly felt, they wanted to advise future migrants, as one Czech woman working in hospitality put it, 'to be careful. Not to trust everybody' (Czech female hospitality worker aged 21 [W2ret]).

Asked what would have made the most difference to his time in the UK, a Slovakian diarist said:

Of course, the information, that is the most valuable thing – if the Government can somehow improve with distributing all relevant information to people, for example about bank accounts, NI numbers, life

expenses, travelling, NHS, education, etc., it would make a big difference to people's lives.

(Slovakian male au pair aged 27)<sup>18</sup>

## Conclusion

In line with other recent reports, we found that many of the migrants we surveyed and interviewed – a majority in most cases – had not received practical information they needed when they first arrived. Nor did they know where to go to get information and advice. The lack of any systematic provision of information is apparent in the different sources from which information was received by migrants who arrived through different channels of entry – some receiving it from agencies, employers and host families; many from friends and relatives; and few receiving it from government sources.

Migrants from long-standing immigrant and refugee communities often access information from migrant community groups. This option is less likely to be available for new arrivals where there is no existing community from their country of origin, or not in the part of the country in which they are living. This is likely to have been the case for many of the migrants in our study, with the exception of Poles living in an area with an existing Polish community. Migrant community organisations are one potential means of ensuring that new arrivals do have access to information, if – as with other agencies – they are resourced to be able to provide information that is accurate and up to date.

The vast majority of those who had received information said that they had found it adequate, suggesting that this is an area in which it is not difficult to meet migrants' needs (although we cannot know if the information they received was indeed always accurate). However, the fact that brief information on conditions of stay is included on all visas and entry-clearance documents but that nearly half of our respondents said that they had not received or were not aware of this information suggests that this is not an effective means to provide that essential guidance.

We cannot draw any conclusions from our survey on the implications of the lack of information on arrival for the migrants' subsequent experiences, as they may have accessed the information they needed at a later date. The in-depth interviews, however, suggested that a lack of information had both created practical difficulties for the migrants and left them vulnerable. Those migrants with good or adequate English were more likely to say that they had had the information they needed and

the emphasis interviewees placed themselves on the importance of having some English on arrival was striking.

The consistency with which interviewees also emphasised a list of practical information that future migrants should have suggests both an awareness of the difficulties caused by that lack of information, whether for themselves or for those they knew, and that it would not be difficult to identify the range of practical information that could usefully be provided.

### 3 Accommodation

Accommodation is important not only for the shelter and security it provides. It may impact on health and provide or limit opportunities for work, study and leisure, as well as influence opportunities for social interaction with others living within the house and with neighbours. In this chapter, we draw on our survey and in-depth interviews to explore migrants' experiences in relation to accommodation – the standard and cost of accommodation, whether they were satisfied with their living conditions, how often they moved home and their reasons for moving. In contrast to the previous chapter, in which we drew only on the first survey because we were looking at the information the migrants had when they first arrived, here we also draw on the second survey after 1 May 2004 so that we can explore the experiences of 352 migrants over time.<sup>1</sup>

Academic studies and reports by service and advice providers have reported a lack of suitable accommodation for migrants including those from Eastern Europe and that some experience very poor housing conditions.<sup>2</sup> While migrants can face difficulties beyond those experienced by other residents, they experience many of the same challenges such as lack of affordable accommodation, insecurity of tenancies and the need for a deposit and rent in advance.

We should note here that our entire sample of migrants were working or were au pairs. Our own findings do not therefore provide any information on the living conditions of those who were not working. A recent survey of 43 London homelessness agencies has however drawn attention to the 'small but significant number' of A8 nationals who now comprise 15 per cent of the clients of London agencies such as night shelters and day centres.<sup>3</sup> Rather than having the problems usually associated with rough sleeping, such as alcohol abuse and mental health problems, these migrants faced accommodation, employment and language difficulties as well as – reflecting our findings in the last chapter – lack of knowledge of the UK system (over 50 per cent). Because they are unable to access public funds until they have been registered with the WRS for 12 months, agencies were limited in what they could do for them. This put their own resources under strain and, it was argued, 'risks creating an increase in rough sleeping'. It was suggested that more than a third of the services said that the needs of A8 clients had impacted negatively on their usual client group, leading to some tension. The expansion of the EU to include Romania and Bulgaria could, the report suggested, exacerbate this situation.<sup>4</sup> Among the A8 nationals using the homelessness services, the report stated that 40 per cent had been in the UK for more than a year but 22 per cent had been in the country for less than a month.

One Slovak interviewee in our own study suggested that some migrants do arrive in the UK without arranging any accommodation in advance:

When I was travelling here recently there were people on the bus – some 30–40 year olds – with no knowledge of English. They had few pounds on them and they didn't know where they would be living – that is bold. They didn't even know where they were going, not even where they were going to sleep that first night, which is terrible.

(Slovak female au pair aged 23 [W2ret])

Migrants in SAWS and the au pair scheme are, as we have seen, provided with accommodation as part of the arrangement offered by agencies and employers (as are a minority of other migrants). For au pairs, the expectation (but not legal requirement) is that the au pair will be provided with a room of her or his own. There is not usually any inspection by au pair agencies and none by the Home Office of the standard of accommodation provided.

In contrast, to ensure that the accommodation and other requirements of SAWS are being met, officials from Work Permits UK (part of the Home Office) visit the nine SAWS operators as well as growers. The regulations stipulate that the accommodation must be clean and sanitary and suitable for the number of workers being employed. The workers are usually housed in shared bedrooms or in some cases dormitories. The number of workers staying on site varies with the size of the business and the particular needs of the company. SAWS workers are often accommodated in large groups in separate buildings with self-catering arrangements.

The migrants in our study were, as we have seen in Chapter 1, largely ineligible for social housing. Those who were not housed by their employer or host family were therefore reliant on the private rented sector.<sup>5</sup> As we will show, some lived with a significant number of other people in the same property in what would be categorised as Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs). Recent reports on East European migrants have identified overcrowding as a potentially significant issue and one which is difficult for the authorities to address.<sup>6</sup> Since April 2006, the regulation and inspection of such properties has been strengthened, landlords with HMOs being required to obtain a licence from the local authority. There is however a backlog, with many properties as yet unlicensed; and overcrowding and the poor state of repairs in some HMOs housing East European migrants has given rise to complaints.<sup>7</sup> The licensing system was not in place at the time of our study.

## Standard and cost of accommodation

The migrants in our study were largely in low-wage jobs. For that reason, and as they are relative newcomers to the UK, we might expect to find them in accommodation that is not generous in terms of space or standard of repair. While we could not explore standard of repair in the survey, we did ask if the migrants were sharing a room and found that, when they were interviewed after 1 May 2004 (total  $n = 216$ ), 44 per cent of the migrants were sharing a room with at least one person (other than a partner). What our survey data did not reveal was the extent to which houses were overcrowded because of people sleeping in living rooms, attics and corridors.

Evidence of the unsatisfactory conditions that some migrants had experienced in the accommodation and the neighbourhood emerged in the in-depth interviews and diary entries. Part of the problem was poor upkeep of the property but poor conditions compounded by overcrowding were a common theme. While in some cases landlords were responsible for overcrowding, in others the migrants themselves chose a small apartment (one-bedroom flat, with one adult sleeping and working, and both adults eating, in the sitting room, as one Ukrainian diarist recorded) or more often sub-let rooms in order to reduce the rent – a space and privacy trade-off they 'chose' to make in order to reduce their living costs. A Ukrainian interviewee expressed this well. Arriving as a student, she lived for a short time in very poor conditions in inner London:

It was a very awful house; there was almost no roof at all. If it was raining then it was dripping on the floor from the roof. There was no heating. There was this huge room with a very dirty carpet. There was a kebab house downstairs. We paid £30 per week per person. Then I got a very small single room in a nice house. It even had a garden. At the beginning I paid £240 a month and bills. But there was a space under the roof and they rented it to two Lithuanians. So it was then very cheap for us. I paid £170 a month plus bills.

(Ukrainian female hospitality worker aged 25 [W2ret])

It was not always the accommodation itself that concerned the interviewees but its situation. A Polish graduate working in the hospitality sector told us:

I live in a block of flats in North West London, which could be called slums. The building is dirty, smells of urine and you can hear constant shouting and quarrels. We get an unpleasant smell from the building site. Our flat though is very nice. There are five of us, all Poles, with two bedrooms and one bathroom.

(Polish female hospitality worker aged 31 [W2reint])

Among those workers (not au pairs) surveyed six to eight months after enlargement who were paying rent, the average weekly rent was £80. Those working in construction paid the highest average weekly rent (£91) and those in agriculture the lowest (£51). Those with higher earnings may of course have chosen to pay more for better accommodation, for instance not having to share a room. The data suggest that weekly rent did correlate with the number of people sharing a room, those not sharing having an average weekly rent of £94 while those sharing with one person paid £76, falling to £46 for those sharing with three or more people (but here the sample was very small). In our sample of migrants, the rents paid by those living in London were only marginally higher than for those living elsewhere.

In our sample of respondents who were paying rent, those who were resident illegally paid less rent, on average, than other migrants (for example, before EU enlargement, illegally resident respondents paid £53 per week in rent, well below the average of £73 for all respondents). Those who we found to be illegally resident, however, were not among those most likely to be sharing a room. It was not possible to establish from our data whether their lower rents did in other respects reflect poorer living conditions.

SAWS workers' accommodation charges are regulated by the Agricultural Wages Board. Under the 2006 Agricultural Wages Order, employers can legally deduct rent for accommodation from the minimum wage applying to the worker concerned, up to a maximum of £29.05 per week (£26.25 in 2004). Accommodation charges may, however, exceed these levels if they are not deducted from the minimum wage. Each SAWS operator has, moreover, a different fee structure for workers, which may include a contribution to the £12 work card, medical or travel insurance, a refundable deposit and, in some cases, a service fee or pastoral charge. Examples of accommodation charges at sole operators' farms are £35 per week (without breakfast), £57.75 per week (with breakfast) and £60 per week for accommodation, food and laundry.

When the migrants in our study were interviewed before 1 May 2004, 23 per cent said that they had found their current accommodation through their employer or host family, 37 per cent through friends. While almost all the SAWS workers and au pairs, as expected, had accommodation provided by employers, this was also the case for 4 per cent of migrants in the hospitality sector and 3 per cent of those in construction. When migrants first arrive, the fact that an agency can guarantee accommodation can be an incentive to accept the employment offered:

The advantage is the agency provides us with accommodation and so we don't have to worry about it, we don't have to look around, rent, etc.<sup>8</sup>

After 1 May, employers and host families were responsible for providing only 16 per cent of accommodation (reflecting the movement of the A8 nationals in our sample away from au pair and agriculture jobs). The proportion finding their home through friends changed little, while more had found their accommodation for themselves.

## How migrants rated their accommodation

Two-thirds of those interviewed after 1 May (total  $n = 287$ ) rated their current living conditions to be good or very good, a further 26 per cent rating them satisfactory or at least adequate. Only 6 per cent said that their conditions were poor or very poor.

As could be expected, satisfaction with housing appears to be correlated to an extent with how many people the migrants were sharing a room with (other than a partner). Satisfaction falls from more than 60 per cent of those sharing a room with one (or no) other person rating their accommodation good or very good (when interviewed before 1 May) to less than 35 per cent of those sharing with two or more people (Table 11).

Satisfaction is of course relative and reflects in part the migrants' expectations. Those who knew that they would be in a dormitory in farm accommodation or anticipated the loss of privacy living as an au pair in a family home may not have expressed dissatisfaction with accommodation where others would have done so. A Czech interviewee working on a farm near Chelmsford, for instance, said:

It is a room with six beds. We have television, fridge, radio. I think I have very good accommodation. I pay £30 per week.  
(Czech male agricultural worker aged 22 [W2ret])

**Table 11 Rating of accommodation by number of people with whom sharing room, excluding those with partner in the UK, April 2004 (total  $n = 433$ )**

	(Very) good %	Satisfactory/adequate %	(Very) poor %	Total <i>n</i>
0	69	26	5	205
1	62	33	5	150
2	29	41	29	41
3 and more	35	43	22	37

Source: survey interviews with migrants.

An embassy official from one accession state confirmed that expectations of accommodation were not always high:

For some of the people who come here their social situation in [our country] is not very good. There is no social welfare there! So they don't mind if their accommodation in the UK is poor. They are looking for good luck to change their lives. If it doesn't work out the damage is not so big for them.<sup>9</sup>

Some of those interviewed did say that they were unhappy with the poor state of their accommodation and with the impact on them of overcrowding. For instance, one Lithuanian interviewee, who was living in a two-bedroom house in East Ham with his wife and two children, had sub-let one room to another family:

We are not entirely happy with our accommodation. We intend to look for a better one. One of the problems here are cockroaches and mice. The landlord is not very helpful with this – he only wants to take money, putting in as little effort as possible. Besides, bathroom and toilet are not separate so nobody can use the toilet when somebody is taking a bath. (Lithuanian male construction worker aged 39 [W1])

### **Accommodation provided by employers and host families**

While the vast majority of people provided with accommodation rated it good or at least satisfactory, 11 per cent of respondents rated it poor or very poor, as did a minority of interviewees. A Slovak woman working as a cleaner in hospitality in London, for instance, told us:

When I first came and started to work for the hotel the employer insisted that I live there, in a room with six others. The room was free but the employer paid us just £70 a week taking it into account. Now I live with my boyfriend and we pay £100 per week. The house is not good. There are 11 people in the house with one bathroom and two toilets. It's hard to find decent cheap accommodation anywhere. (Slovak female hospitality worker aged 34 [W2ret])

The survey revealed differences among agricultural workers regarding the quality of accommodation. Of the 82 agricultural workers interviewed before 1 May 2004, 17 per cent said that their accommodation was poor or very poor. This contrasts with between 4 and 7 per cent of workers in other sectors. However, if we separate out

the 49 agricultural workers on SAWS interviewed around 1 May 2004, we find that 71 per cent rated the accommodation as very good, a higher proportion than workers in any other sector with the exception of au pairs. It is evident that it is the workers whose accommodation is entirely unregulated who are particularly dissatisfied with it, suggesting some success in the regulation of accommodation provided to SAWS workers.

### *Au pairs*

As provision of accommodation is also a condition of the au pair–host family relationship and there are clearly specific issues that arise when an individual is sharing accommodation with a family, it is interesting to examine their particular experiences as revealed in both the survey and in-depth interviews. Some young people use the au pair route specifically because it ensures the provision of accommodation. All of the au pairs we interviewed and surveyed were living in the same house as their host family – or, when families were split, in the same two houses as the parents of the children they were caring for.

The quality of their rooms varied significantly. Au pair survey respondents were more likely than those in other sectors to describe their accommodation as ‘good’ or ‘very good’ (78 per cent). However, from the in-depth interviews, it was apparent that some had experienced very poor conditions and not always because the family themselves were poor. One Czech au pair had, for instance, found that the room she had been given did not reflect the accommodation enjoyed by the rest of the family:

My first family had a huge palace and in that palace I was living in the attic, in the smallest room, almost a kind of wardrobe where I couldn't even stand straight as the ceiling was too low for me. There was a bed, small table and TV set and a small built-in shelf. The room looked very dirty. It wasn't really but the walls ... I was about the fifteenth au pair living there and it showed. In my present family I have a huge room with en suite facilities.

(Czech female au pair aged 25 [W2ret])

Some of our interviewees described conditions as highly unsatisfactory, not because they were treated less favourably but because the families they were au pairing for were hard up. One woman, for instance, described how she ate with food on her lap as there were no tables or chairs in the house, and others complained of not having enough to eat as their host families could not afford proper food. A Czech woman

who had since left her family to take up employment said her family was similarly unable to provide her with proper accommodation:

The first family I had had problems with money. I remember it was the shock when I entered the room, I was utterly unprepared. I hadn't been expecting much but it was dusty, there were no curtains, it was as if I had come into a storehouse. I didn't even have a wardrobe there, only a kind of rack you hang your hangers on. I caught fleas there from the cat. After a month we moved to a different place where for a while I had my own room until I had to share it with the little boy. I only had a light bulb, no shade. The family couldn't afford much. So that was it.  
(Czech female au pair aged 30 [W2ret])

Some au pairs expressed a real difficulty in negotiating access to shared space, for example of not feeling comfortable eating with the family, suggesting that satisfaction with accommodation should not be equated with feeling at home. Accommodation is not just sleeping space but also includes access to (communal) living areas and to cooking and washing facilities. One diarist recorded how this changed when she finally moved after two years as an au pair:

I moved into my boyfriend's place. Finally I have the feeling of being home. That's what I missed when I lived at the place where I also worked.  
(Czech female au pair)

Despite being 'part of the family', au pairs are, inevitably, living in other people's space, space that they may not affect other than to clean and service it. Those who felt accepted into the family nevertheless spoke of the challenges of having to follow rules that they had no say in. This seems to be particularly often expressed with reference to not being allowed to bring boyfriends into their room:

I feel like a child here – I was never under such control back home. I came here being 26 years old and somebody started regulating my life.  
(Lithuanian female au pair aged 26 [W1])

Survey data confirm that au pairs are the sector where workers are least likely to share a room (93 per cent). Nearly all of our au pair interviewees nevertheless complained of lack of privacy, often about children coming into their room when they were not supposed to be working. A minority of interviewees were required to share a room, and one interviewee even a bed, with children. One au pair who moved into a different sector post-May 2004 and consequently had to change accommodation pointed out that, while she had complained of lack of privacy when an au pair

because of intrusion by children, this had not been solved by moving out. In practice she found that she could not afford to live in her own room because of her low salary. She was sharing her bedroom with another woman and, while not having privacy, felt that in this situation at least 'you do have more of your own life' (Czech female au pair aged 25 [W2ret]).

Lack of privacy then is at one level an expression of the lack of boundaries between 'work' and 'life' experienced by au pairs who live in their workplace. As several au pairs put it, it is difficult to feel at home when your home is your workplace, particularly when one consequence of this is that you are constantly available. Having your accommodation linked to your work may also make it difficult to leave host families and limit power in negotiating conditions. The issues raised by accommodation for au pairs, then, go beyond the physical environment within which they live. As one au pair – who expressed herself as very happy, with a delightful family who treated her as one of their own children and with a lovely room in a pleasant area – put it:

Being an au pair means little freedom – I have to stay with the family almost 24 hours, to live with them. Sometimes it feels like living in a 'golden cage'.

(Lithuanian female au pair aged 25 [W1])

Understandably, if one could choose between being 'part of the family' of wealthy or less wealthy people, it would be more advantageous to be part of a wealthy family. This certainly seems to be true of the area in which au pairs lived. Indeed neighbourhood was often spoken of enthusiastically – feeling safe when coming home at night, being somewhere interesting, 'rich' or 'posh', with easy access to services were very much appreciated.

Living in was often presented by our interviewees as part of a trade-off – they recognised that they saved rent and expenditure on food. However, it is clear that the trade-off in fact goes beyond what can be measured in purely economic terms because of the issues raised above. The disadvantages of living in were frequently conveyed quite philosophically. Saving rent and living in a nice room are advantages for new arrivals, but become less and less tolerable in the longer term.

## Reasons for moving

When interviewed around eight months after 1 May 2004, almost a third of respondents had moved at least once (total  $n = 350$ ), a few moving three or more times in that period.

Of those who had moved, 38 per cent cited housing cost and conditions or the area, while 30 per cent related it to a job. The migrants who had been in the UK less than a year when first interviewed were most likely to have moved – 47 per cent of those who had been here less than six months had done so and 38 per cent of those who had been in the UK for six months to a year (total  $n = 304$ ). Students were more likely to have moved than those with other immigration status – the self-employed least likely to have done so.

The experience of moving more than once in order to improve conditions and reduce overcrowding was illustrated by a Ukrainian woman who was studying part time and working as a hospital canteen supervisor:

At the beginning I lived in a flat and then in a house. But there were always not less than ten people. Twelve people in four rooms. And then we also had a hall. We put there a sofa and somebody was sleeping there as well. But it was when we have just come here and all were students. Now I am in a house in East London with only four people, myself, my boyfriend and two guys. Two bedrooms. We have a huge hall, dining room and a huge kitchen. We are paying a lot but we have kind of grown up a bit, we have more things.

(Ukrainian female hospitality worker aged 21 [W2ret])

In addition to those who moved to improve their conditions or because of their job, a quarter of those cited 'other reasons' for doing so. One reason that emerged during the in-depth interviews was the need for those without legal residence status to move in order to avoid detection.<sup>10</sup> A Ukrainian woman, for instance, who had given up her university studies to work as a waitress and study part time, said:

We left our flat because two Russian guys living there were caught by police. Police came to the house when we weren't there and left a message. We were frightened that Home Office would come and start asking questions. These guys were then deported. We were very much afraid and after one day left that place.

(Ukrainian female hospitality worker aged 25 [W2ret])

Having later found somewhere nice to live, she again had to leave:

I would live there even now but again one of the Lithuanian guys got caught by Home Office. He was working at a construction site and started to argue, maybe he was drunk. The police came and checked his fake documents, as always. Everyone then had these fake documents. Home Office arrested him. They came to our place. I was not at home as always, because I had two jobs then. We had seven people in our house at that moment. After that we only had two left. Four were taken away. Therefore I had to look for other accommodation.

Notwithstanding the real difficulties that some of the interviewees thus recounted, the survey had found high rates of satisfaction with accommodation in both the first and subsequent survey. Although the interviews supported the finding that many had moved to improve their conditions, of the 251 people whose satisfaction we were able to track against the period of time they had been in the UK, we found that satisfaction rates changed little over the first four years, although this may again reflect expectations that may have risen during that period.

### **Impact of EU enlargement**

Sixty-eight per cent of A8 nationals had reported high rates of satisfaction with their accommodation compared to 58 per cent of non-A8 nationals ('good' or 'very good' when interviewed before 1 May). The gap had widened considerably when they were interviewed after enlargement. Seventy-three per cent of the new EU citizens now reported that their accommodation was good or very good but only 59 per cent of the Ukrainians and Bulgarians. In one interview, a Bulgarian man working in the construction industry, who had been in the UK for some years, said that accession had had a negative impact on their housing situation, as landlords were unwilling to do improvements because there was such a demand for housing. 'There are ten to 11 people in flats with one bathroom'. This is not normal but people have no choice' (Bulgarian male construction worker aged 40 [W2ret]).

The A8 nationals were more likely to have changed accommodation after 1 May 2004, more than a third having done so compared to only a quarter of the non-A8 nationals (total  $n = 350$ ). Significantly, while 39 per cent of the A8 nationals said they had moved because of their job, only 7 per cent of non-A8 nationals had moved for that reason (62 per cent citing better living conditions as their motivation, compared to 28 per cent of A8 nationals). The improved job prospects of the A8 nationals

post-enlargement, on which we reported in *Fair Enough?*,<sup>11</sup> would appear, as one would expect, to have enabled some of them to improve their living conditions at the same time.

## **Conclusion**

The standard and location of housing is important to the well-being of migrants and to broader 'integration' processes. The study explored migrants' experiences in relation to accommodation, their satisfaction, reasons for moving and the impact of becoming EU citizens. It did so in the context of growing evidence that some East European migrants are experiencing severely overcrowded conditions with potential implications for them and for community relations.

All of our sample were working and earning, and we would therefore not expect to find the extreme living conditions or homelessness reported elsewhere. We did indeed find high rates of satisfaction among survey respondents, constant over time. Satisfaction is relative to expectations, however, and there was some evidence that the migrants were satisfied with conditions that might not be acceptable to other workers, for instance among the 44 per cent who were sharing a room with one or more adults (other than a partner). Poor housing conditions and overcrowding were frequent themes emerging from the in-depth interviews, in part because migrants were 'choosing' to sub-let in order to reduce the rent they were paying. The migrants may also have seen the situation as acceptable because it was temporary – a trade-off that emerged as a theme in our earlier report in relation to pay and conditions at work.

The implications of overcrowding (fire risk, for instance) for those living in such conditions, as well as for their neighbours, suggest that serious thought needs to be given to the kinds of accommodation that could be available to migrants which would provide satisfactory living conditions at affordable rents, while ensuring enforcement of regulations regarding houses in multiple occupation.

Many had changed accommodation in order to improve their accommodation or because of their work. Moving was most common in the early months. Post-enlargement, A8 nationals were more likely to have moved, particularly for job reasons, and more likely to report satisfaction with their accommodation than those who had not become EU citizens.

Among agricultural workers, the higher rate of satisfaction among those on SAWS suggests a positive impact of regulation on housing conditions. Among au pairs, despite some instances of poor accommodation reported by interviewees, survey respondents reported high rates of satisfaction and they were least likely to have to share a room. Yet sharing their accommodation with a family brought its own tensions, including lack of privacy and personal space in non-work time. Lack of privacy is thus a question not only of intrusion into personal physical space but also of a lack of boundaries between work – and the responsibilities and interactions it entails – and leisure time.

## 4 Leisure activity and social relationships

In this chapter, we provide evidence from our surveys, in-depth interviews and migrants' diaries on how migrants spent their time when they were not working, including accessing leisure facilities and English language courses. We then go on to explore what they told us about their social relationships – who they spent time with, how they felt treated by British people<sup>1</sup> and their own attitudes, in turn, towards them. As the schemes on which both au pairs and SAWS workers come to the UK are expected to provide them with some cultural exchange, and because their living circumstances differ from those of other migrants, we highlight our findings for those two groups in particular.

We have seen (in Chapter 1) that the migrants in our study were predominantly young single people, with a minority living with partners and fewer with children. For some, as we noted in our first report,<sup>2</sup> the experience in the UK was seen as a trade-off – an opportunity to save, to learn English or to study. Although some had included 'having a good time' among their motivations for coming to the UK, many were on low incomes, which limited their capacity to spend on leisure,<sup>3</sup> and working long hours, which limited their leisure time: 'I am putting everything into my work at the moment and I don't have time for social life', as one Bulgarian diarist recorded (male construction worker). It is also worth noting that many said that they were working in jobs where there were few British people; and many were working in jobs that were below their education and skill level. Where they did have UK-born colleagues, an education gap could have affected any mutual interest in social contact outside of work. All of these factors may have a bearing on the way in which the migrants spent their leisure time, with whom they spent it and their attitudes to the people they met.

### Leisure time

We asked migrants whether they used leisure services such as sports facilities and museums and went to pubs and clubs. When interviewed after 1 May 2004, around one-third (including those who were students) had visited a library – whether for access to books or, as also seems likely, for access to the internet; while 39 per cent had used sports facilities. Towards half had attended a concert, museums and galleries while 81 per cent said that they went to pubs or clubs (total  $n = 349$ ). There was a difference in the extent to which the migrants in different occupations had accessed these services. Au pairs were most likely to have used a library, for

instance, and to have been to a museum and those in construction least likely to have done so.

The proportion of agricultural workers accessing pubs, clubs, concerts and other music events, on the other hand, was notably lower than in other sectors both before and after 1 May, suggesting that, whether residence was in an isolated rural area or in a small town, access to such places and events was less feasible than for workers who lived in urban areas. Although the cultural element of the scheme was downgraded in the SAWS review of October 2002, it is considered good practice for employers to facilitate sight-seeing day trips and other events during the workers' stay. A Lithuanian and a Polish SAWS worker interviewed on different farms in April 2004 reported having free use of their employers' van or bus to go sightseeing. Similarly, a Slovakian au pair diarist recorded with appreciation that the family had lent him their car to visit 'beautiful places' across southern England and allowed him regular free time for sport and social activities (Slovakian male au pair aged 27).<sup>4</sup>

Patterns of service use did not change significantly or consistently over time until migrants had been in the UK for more than four years, when they were considerably more likely to be using sports facilities and to go to concerts and museums (however, sample size for this group was small). The over-30s were least likely to use any facilities. The age differences may in part reflect family responsibilities. Those with dependants in the UK were less likely than those whose dependants were abroad to engage in most of the leisure activities (except sport), although the sample size here again was not large.

Women were considerably more likely to have used a library and gone to a concert or museum than the men in our sample – though this might well be due in part to an 'au pair' effect and related to sector rather than gender *per se*. They were equally likely to have used sports facilities and gone to the pub. Among the small numbers who had joined an association or attended a place of worship, men were slightly more likely to have done so.

There was no clear relation between use of leisure services and working hours, however. While those working 20 hours or less (which would include many students) were more likely to have used a library, those working over 40 hours a week were equally likely to have used sports facilities and more likely to go to the pub. Our data do not, however, reveal how often the individuals used these facilities and some of the in-depth interviews did suggest that long working hours interfered with both leisure activities and capacity to take English classes.

We noted in our earlier report on the migrants' experiences at work that none had joined a trade union. Very few had indeed joined any kind of association or taken part in their activities. Twelve per cent (after 1 May 2004) did say that they attended a place of worship – a proportion that changed little with length of stay in the UK (total  $n = 271$ ). Although this did not emerge in the in-depth interviews, attendance may have provided opportunities for social interaction beyond migrant circles. Those over 30 were somewhat more likely to attend a place of worship than younger people, and Poles and Ukrainians considerably more likely to do so than those from other countries.

### **Au pairs**

The leisure activities of au pairs seem to be largely unstructured – going to the pub, church, gym or museum – often with other migrants. This might be in part a reflection of the lack of control that au pairs typically have over their time, which can make it difficult to set aside time for a regular activity. Several au pairs commented on the lifestyle in the UK as being hectic and very hardworking.

Au pairs in their in-depth interviews did not describe spending much leisure time with their host families. This may be because they did not count time spent with the family in leisure activities as equivalent to their leisure time – again as a consequence of the blurred boundaries between public and private. Several of our interviewees were quite explicit that they did not want to spend their leisure time with host families, but would prefer to be by themselves or with friends. When they were, it was not always a comfortable experience. One Czech au pair recorded in her diary what happened when she accompanied the host mother and children to a London museum:

We were at the museum and she [the host mother] was queuing for a lunch. I found a free table and waited for her together with the children. The queue was very long. She came back after 20 minutes bringing lunch only for her and the children. She told me now I can go and buy something as well. Quite shocking.  
(Female Czech au pair)

In the same week, however, neighbours provided a different experience at a village Halloween party, where she had felt very welcome: 'The village I live in has got great inhabitants and they always like to see me'.

## English language classes

The importance of English language skills in employment is well evidenced in the literature.<sup>5</sup> The difficulties that migrants whose spoken English is poor can experience in relation to services and 'integration in the community' is a growing theme in recent reports on new migrants.<sup>6</sup> The difficulties they can face accessing a language course or a course suitable to their needs at a time and place they can attend is also a recurrent finding in recent studies. The Wales Rural Observatory noted that migrants can face particular difficulties accessing or regularly attending classes because of working shifts, the cost of courses and regular visits back to their country of origin.<sup>7</sup>

We have seen from our own findings that those with good spoken and written English were more likely to have received the information they needed on arrival in the UK and the importance of language will re-emerge in the context of migrants' social relationships below. We reported in our previous report that learning English was one motivation for coming to the UK and, for au pairs, there is an expectation that host families will allow their au pair time during the week to study. We therefore explored whether the migrants were studying English and found that around one-third of our sample had at some time or were currently attending English classes.<sup>8</sup> Take-up differed between sectors, with au pairs, as we might expect, being most likely to do so: 71 per cent of those interviewed before 1 May; 61 per cent after 1st May (by which time some had ceased to be au pairs and taken a job).

Prior to 1 May, 44 per cent of those in hospitality had taken or were taking English classes, 20 per cent of those in construction and only 18 per cent of those working in agriculture (see Table 12).

As of April 2004, those migrants who said they had fluent or adequate English were *more* likely to have taken or be taking English classes, only 25 per cent of those who described their English as basic (and 5 per cent who said 'none') having done so (see Table 13). We cannot, however, know whether they were taking classes despite their existing ability or whether their ability reflected the fact that they were taking

**Table 12 Whether accessed education language courses by sector before 1 May 2004 (total *n* = 569)**

	Yes %	No %	Total <i>n</i>
Hospitality	44	56	201
Construction	20	80	178
Au pairs	71	29	83
Agriculture	18	82	82
Other	36	64	25

Source: survey interviews with migrants.

**Table 13 Accessed language classes by English-speaking proficiency, April 2004**

	Yes %	No %	Total <i>n</i>
Fluent	46	54	137
Adequate	40	60	257
Basic only	25	75	154
None	5	95	20

Source: survey interviews with migrants.

classes. This finding does, however, show that those who accessed English classes did not include the majority of those who most needed to do so.

Our survey data show that those who were working long hours were less likely to access English classes. While 53 per cent of those working 20 hours or less did do so (before 1 May 2004), the figures for those working 20–40 hours and more than 40 hours per week were 41 per cent and 28 per cent respectively (total *n* = 569).

In the in-depth interviews, some suggested that long working hours were indeed a factor in whether they were able to study English. A Bulgarian man, self-employed in the construction industry, told us:

My wife does English. I would not mind doing it but I cannot because of my long hours.

(Bulgarian male construction worker aged 48 [W2ret])

None of those who accessed English language classes before 1 May 2004 were eligible for the reduced fees paid in publicly funded colleges that are enjoyed by those who are EU citizens. Of those accessing English classes before 1 May who told us whether or not they had to pay for the classes (total *n* = 148), we found that 29 per cent of those in hospitality had access to free classes but fewer than one in five of those in construction or au pairs had that benefit.

In some cases the classes for English or other courses were free because they were provided, or were paid for, by the employer or host family. A Ukrainian woman, studying English and computers part time while working as a hospital canteen supervisor, was one of those who benefited from having an employer sympathetic to her wish to study:

This hospital has a special programme for staff development. They let me finish an hour early to go to college. And they pay around 20 per cent of my course. My parents paid the rest. It was a huge sum of money, £5,000 a year, because I am from outside the EU.

(Ukrainian female hospitality worker aged 21 [W2ret])

When those who had not accessed any education service were asked why, two-thirds or more said that it was because they had not needed or wanted to do so. A small proportion said that it was because their immigration status did not entitle them to do so, or that they did not know how to do so, but others (9 per cent before and after 1 May, but a small sample) said that it was because of the cost (a factor of less concern to those working over 40 hours a week). In the in-depth interviews some suggested that cost was indeed a factor and reduced fees one definite benefit of becoming an EU citizen. A qualified teacher from Slovakia who had come to the UK as an au pair and was now working as a nanny in London told us that, for her:

Slovakia joining the EU was very positive. Maybe not for accommodation but definitely for studying here. More convenient financial requirements as well as enrolment is much easier. Before we joined the EU the fees were also more expensive. I know from personal experience.  
(Slovak female former au pair aged 28 [W2ret])

A Czech au pair found she could now take a university course and recorded how she felt in her diary:

I am about to start my study with the Open University in February. I pay notably less money that I would have to pay a year ago. To be able to study and to afford this is a pleasing feeling.  
(Czech female au pair)

Another Ukrainian woman, who had left her university studies in Ukraine in order to get a visa to come to the UK, had arrived in 2000 speaking no English. Interviewed in December 2004 she was making progress in her studies while working as a waitress, but finding the cost of studying significant:

I started to study at college in September and will get a diploma. It will take around two years. I want to be a business administrator. It is expensive. I have paid for two years but I am still in debt. I have already passed first certificate English and studied for the advanced.  
(Ukrainian female hospitality worker aged 25 [W2ret])

The reduced cost of studying was not the only benefit for some of those who became EU citizens. Attending college had been one means through which non-EU nationals could stay in the UK, whether to study or primarily to work during the 20 hours a week permitted in term time (or more in practice). Becoming an EU citizen removed the necessity of having a college place, enabling the migrant to leave college if they chose to do so, or to study from choice rather than necessity. A Lithuanian man

working as a waiter, who was interviewed six months after becoming an EU citizen, was in this position:

I don't have to buy college in order to stay. Now I can study because I want to ... No fear that you become a criminal if you work more than 20 hours. I feel human. Here's the whole difference. They have to treat you as any other person. You can study and pay home fees.

(Lithuanian male hospitality worker aged 25 [W2reint])

For au pairs, barriers to attending English classes were a source of some resentment and conflict. Twenty-eight per cent of respondents did not attend English classes for even two hours a week. While some host families pay for English classes, this is by no means the norm. Several of our interviewees clearly thought their host families should pay and the cost of classes was an issue, as was the time available to attend them.

## **Social relationships**

In Chapter 1, we noted that recent academic and policy debates on social contact between members of ethnic minorities and other residents had not focused on European migrants. The presence of a significant number of newcomers nevertheless makes it relevant to ask what level of social contact the migrants have with people who are not from the same country of origin, whether we can identify factors that influence the level and nature of that contact, and what implications it may have for the migrants and for the rest of society. In our surveys we therefore first asked the migrants about the people with whom they lived and, outside work, with whom they usually spent their time. The in-depth interviews and migrants' diaries shed further light on these questions.

The pattern that emerges from the surveys is that the vast majority of the migrants were engaged in activities in which British people also engage: going to pubs, visiting museums and using sports facilities, for instance. Nevertheless, it was also the case that a majority of the migrants – men and women alike – were spending most of their leisure time with recent and settled immigrants from their own country of origin, and with migrants from other countries, but were rarely spending much time with British people.

As we might expect, the migrants' social networks did expand over time. Our survey of those in the UK before 1 May 2004 for instance (total  $n = 305$ ) did indeed show

that, in the first two years after arrival, two-thirds or more of the migrants spent most of their leisure time with recent migrants from their own country, declining to one-third who did so after they had been in the country for more than four years. Around half said that they also spent some time with settled migrants from their country of origin in the first four years (though almost a third spent no time with this group at all). Meanwhile, half to two-thirds said that they spent some time with recent migrants from other countries, though somewhat less likely to do so with settled migrants from elsewhere.

During their first six months in the UK, half of the migrants say they spent no leisure time with British people, with 42 per cent saying that they had some leisure contact and just 6 per cent that most of their leisure time was already spent with British people. After the migrants had been in the UK for more than six months, as Table 14 shows, the proportion who spent no time with British people had fallen to a third and continues to decline, with a rise in the number who say that some of their leisure time now involved time with British people. Nevertheless, after two years, one in four still say that they spent no leisure time at all with British people and less than one in five that most of their time was spent with them. The migrants' perception was that British people do not, as one Ukrainian waitress put it, 'let you into their circles' (Ukrainian woman aged 25 [W2ret]); 'Brits', a Lithuanian woman said 'are not very keen to be friends' (female au pair [W1reint]). For many of the migrants, as we discuss below, this was disappointing.

Length of stay is not the only factor influencing the extent of contact with British people. We explore the impact of contact through work, accommodation and study below. The data also suggest, as one might expect, that spoken English ability was also a factor. For example, as of April 2004, 79 per cent of those with fluent English said that they spent some or most of their time with British people, falling to 61 per cent for those whose English was adequate and 29 per cent of those with no English. Nevertheless, one in five of those who were fluent still said that they spent no time with British people, as did 39 per cent of those who described their English as adequate (see Table 15). As with language classes, however, there is a question here of cause or effect – whether the lack of English is a cause of the lack of contact with British people or the result.

When the migrants said that they spent time with settled migrants from their country of origin, this could have referred to those who had lived in the UK for many years or to those who had arrived, say, in the last decade. The in-depth interviews found some limited evidence of contact with long-established migrant communities, as in the case of one Polish woman whose work and social life was closely connected with a Polish school. A representative of a Polish association told us, however, that their contact with recent arrivals was limited, except with those who were in need of help.<sup>9</sup>

**Table 14 Leisure time spent with British-born people by length of stay in the UK, April 2004 (*n* = 304)**

	No time %	Some time %	Most time %	Total %	Total <i>n</i>
0–6 months	52	42	6	100	95
6 months–1 year	35	56	9	100	57
1–2 years	39	44	17	100	66
2–3 years	28	69	3	100	36
3–4 years	26	57	17	100	23
More than 4 years	37	48	15	100	27

Source: survey interviews with migrants, April 2004.

**Table 15 Leisure time spent with British-born people by English-speaking proficiency, April 2004 (*n* = 319)**

	No time %	Some time %	Most time %	Total %	Total <i>n</i>
Fluent	21	67	12	100	73
Adequate	39	50	11	100	144
Basic only	50	43	7	100	88
None	71	29	0	100	14

Source: survey interviews with migrants, April 2004.

### Contact through work, study and accommodation

It was evident from the in-depth interviews that those who did mix with people of many different nationalities often knew them through their work or lived with them. A Lithuanian waiter, for instance, employed through an agency said:

The agent is English, the supervisors Italian and Scottish. I work with Irish, English, Italian, Jamaican, Slovak and Scottish people. I live with Hungarians and a Ukrainian and relax with Italians, Lithuanians, Ukrainians and Irish people. London is very rich culturally. It contains the whole world. You only have to find the right circle of people.  
(Lithuanian male hospitality worker aged 25 [W1])

Those working in the hospitality sector or as au pairs were most likely to say that they spent some of their leisure time with British people (58 per cent and 61 per cent respectively), with a further 10 per cent of these workers saying that most of their time was spent in this way. In contrast, only 40 per cent of those in construction spent some time with British people, a further 12 per cent spending most time with them; while in agriculture 42 per cent spent some time and only 4 per cent most of their leisure time with British people (*n* = 319). All of the migrants spent some or most of their leisure time with recent migrants from their own country, with au pairs

and agricultural workers more likely to say that this was how they spent most of their time. In contrast, a considerably higher proportion of those in construction and hospitality, around one in four, said that they spent most of their leisure time with settled migrants from their country. More than half of the migrants said that they also spent some time with recent migrants from elsewhere, with au pairs and agricultural workers again more likely to say so. For these two groups of workers, most social contact is thus with newcomers, despite at least some intention in those schemes that the migrants' experience includes British cultural exchange.

One explanation for the high levels of social contact with other migrants may in fact be the high proportion whose work colleagues were migrants rather than British people. Around two-thirds of respondents said that their jobs were similar to those of other recent migrants from their country and half that they were similar to jobs done by recent migrants from other countries. Only a third thought their jobs similar to those of British people (when interviewed after 1 May, total  $n = 222$ ).

Even where the migrants did work with British people, however, this did not always lead to social contact. One factor may be the difference in education level where many of the migrants were working below their education and skill level and may therefore have little in common with others doing the same job. As a representative of an A8 consulate put it, 'how can we expect to integrate someone with a diploma in astrophysics with a bricklayer?'<sup>10</sup> In some instances migrants did themselves voice that concern – for example, a Polish philosophy graduate who complained about the lack of intellectualism among British construction workers. Others, however, suggested a problem in the attitude of British workers towards migrant labour. A Bulgarian construction worker told us:

It is OK working with them but after that you are nobody and nobody wants to deal with you. It will not change. They simply have us as a different category of people. The English do not have a great respect for us. We are just labour and we are no longer needed if the market is oversupplied.  
(Bulgarian male construction worker aged 48 [W2ret])

The migrants also met people of many different backgrounds when they were studying, including British people. A Slovakian qualified teacher, working as a nanny in London, said:

I meet people from many different countries not only from Slovakia and neighbouring countries but of course I know many British, Italians, French. In my spare time I study French and Spanish so I meet Spanish and French people there. So this is a big advantage of London that so many nationalities meet here I think.  
(Slovak female au pair aged 28 [W2ret])

Accommodation and neighbourhood also had an influence on who the migrants socialised with. Asked about their neighbourhood (after 1 May), two-thirds said that they lived in a neighbourhood with other recent and settled migrants from their country and around half that there were recent immigrants from elsewhere. Only 46 per cent said that there were British people living in their area, 54 per cent saying that there were not. (It is possible that by 'British born' the migrants here were in practice thinking of white people, not aware that neighbours from ethnic minorities may also have been born in the UK).

For SAWS workers, living on farms in rural areas, accommodation and its location has a particularly significant impact on their leisure and social relations, providing them with limited opportunities to socialise with British people compared to those living in cities. It is worth noting that other migrant workers in the agricultural and food-processing sectors, including A8 nationals, were often not accommodated on site. Indeed, urban–rural commuting by private car or agency van is common practice.<sup>11</sup>

Relatively isolated accommodation without access to the leisure facilities available in towns means that SAWS workers are reliant on the company of other SAWS workers, or in some instances that of their employers or their families.

Our interviews with employers suggested that in the smallest, mostly family-owned, businesses, the handful of SAWS workers hired for the season were likely to develop personal relations with members of the family, which might include joint outings with grown-up children and/or invitations to dinner. Staff were employed by larger grower businesses specifically to manage SAWS workers' accommodation and any outings that were offered. For many of the SAWS workers living in dormitory or other shared accommodation, however, the main social life outside work consists of interactions with other SAWS workers. For some, this meant being with other workers of the same nationality, which was not always welcome.<sup>12</sup>

Whether or not their accommodation and neighbourhood included British people, many of the migrants clearly had a highly multicultural living experience. A Lithuanian woman in her second year in the UK, for instance, who was working as a live-in housekeeper at a hotel, said 'I am the only Lithuanian. My neighbours in other rooms are French, Spanish, Portuguese and Slovaks' (Lithuanian female former au pair aged 25 [W2reint]); while a Polish man who had worked in London for four years renovating properties said: 'I live with people from England, Korea, New Zealand and Slovakia. I have English and Polish friends' (Polish male construction worker aged 27 [W1]). Not everyone felt so comfortable living with people from other backgrounds, however. One Bulgarian man, said that he would only live with people from his own country:

I only live with Bulgarians because people cook differently in different nations. I find it difficult to live with other nations because people value different things and there is no agreement.

(Bulgarian male construction worker aged 23 [W2ret])

There were also instances where landladies had become friends, as for one Ukrainian diarist whose landlady helped with her English, cutting out newspaper articles for her to read (Ukrainian female former au pair).

For some, social contact had developed into strong friendship. Thus a Lithuanian man with a wife and two children in the UK, who planned to stay here in the long term, told us:

My supervisor is Scottish. He is very pleasant and treats everybody well, not only me. I have friends among Lithuanians and British. Some of the British friends are older than me by 20–25 years but we get along very well. Sometimes we have joint barbecues and visit each other at home.

(Lithuanian male construction worker aged 39 [W2reint])

Nor did the migrant's status in the UK appear to be a barrier to such friendships forming. A self-employed Ukrainian man working in construction, whose passport and work permit were, he told us, in someone else's name, said:

If I need to get somewhere I call my English friend. He comes. I met him accidentally. I am a mechanic by profession. This man tried to start up his car. He could not do it. I came towards him and asked if he needed some help. I said let me do it. So, we are friends from that day for the past one-and-a-half years.

(Ukrainian male construction worker aged 39 [W2ret])

### **Social distance**

When the migrants in our survey were asked whether they thought British people whom they met outside work 'want to make friends with me', however, only 33 per cent were confident that they did. Twenty-five per cent disagreed and 42 per cent gave no view (total  $n = 350$ ), suggesting that migrants' experiences of British people in this respect were by no means uniform. Twenty-four per cent agreed that 'British people will not invite me to their home' but more than a third disagreed; while a small majority were confident that 'they will help me if I need help' (survey after 1 May 2004, total  $n = 350$ ).

Women were considerably more likely to agree that British people were interested in friendship (58 per cent) than were men (24 per cent) (total  $n = 315$ )<sup>13</sup> and more likely to agree that 'British people make me feel welcome'. They were, however, less likely to say that British people would invite them to their homes.

It was evident that, for many of those whose social mix included no British people or who had not developed those contacts into friendship, this was not from choice. Many were in work situations where they had few British colleagues and, while they usually found British people to be polite and sometimes friendly, it was difficult to get beyond an acquaintance to a friendship. The migrants explained this as, in part, due to their lack of English, particularly in the early months. A Ukrainian woman working in hospitality had arrived as a student speaking no English:

After two months I called my sister and she asked me what English people were like. I said to her that I had not met any English people then. She asked me where I was and I said London. I had not met them then. It was true. I lived, worked as a waitress. Yes I saw them at the table, but to talk to them was a very different thing.

(Ukrainian female hospitality worker aged 25 [W2ret])

A Lithuanian waiter anticipated that he would have more contact over time as his English improved:

I will have more contact with the British ... because my English improves and I understand more about British culture.

(Lithuanian male hospitality worker aged 25 [W1])

Others said that their paths simply did not meet. A Polish woman, working as a waitress, living here with her husband said:

I am a member of the Polish community. I go to the Polish church and work [voluntarily] at the Polish school. I spend free time with friends I met in Poland. I have little contact with local people as our paths don't cross. It is difficult to get into contact with British people if you don't work with them. The only chance for example is at the gym. Joining the EU won't change this as the ways of Poles and Brits don't meet.

(Polish female hospitality worker aged 30 [W1])

Similarly, a Lithuanian woman cleaning rooms in a hotel, who was interviewed seven months after becoming an EU citizen in January 2005, said:

No, I don't have British friends. I don't know where to meet them. I am not the kind of person who goes to pubs and talks to strangers.

(Lithuanian female hospitality worker aged 39 [W2ret])

Even for those who did meet a lot of English people, as for a Slovak former au pair working in a London school: 'it never developed into friendship. I don't know why' (Slovak female former au pair aged 23 [W2ret]).

Those with fluent spoken English were more likely to think that British people were interested in friendship, 38 per cent taking that view compared to only 20 per cent of those with only basic English (total  $n = 339$ ). Significantly, we found no clear relation between the migrants' confidence on this issue and their length of stay, with only a minority of those in the country more than three years saying that they now thought that British people did want to make friends.

### **Au pairs' social relationships**

Unusually for those on temporary migration schemes, au pairs are encouraged to 'integrate', albeit integration in the private sphere. Nevertheless one might expect them to develop friendships with young British nationals and it is surprising how few au pairs said they had British friends, reporting: 'very little contact' (Slovak female au pair aged 25 [W1]); 'no contact with other Brits outside the family' (Lithuanian female au pair aged 23 [W1]); and 'very little contact with the local population' (Lithuanian female au pair aged 27 [W1]), for instance. Some au pair interviewees, echoing what other migrants had said, remarked on the difficulty of developing friendships, saying that the problem for them was not so much meeting British people but developing relationships with them. This difference seems to be more marked than with other migrants. One male au pair recorded in his diary:

At first sight the people here seemed to be really friendly but later I found out that they only wanted to be polite and didn't care about my feelings.

(Slovak male au pair aged 28)

Au pairs, like workers in other sectors, were often spending time not just with co-nationals but also with migrants of many different nationalities. While their experiences of British people were not always positive, the migrants did not, as we shall see in the next section, usually describe their experience in terms of discrimination. They more often complained about British ignorance of their countries of origin and assumptions that they were from 'Third World' countries without modern facilities. Interestingly, host families were not exempt from such complaints:

British people really don't care about politics. The only thing they care about is gossip, maybe as actresses, actors, singers, as they start going out with someone, how they divorce and all that ... so only few people know that the Czech Republic at all, or that the Czech and Slovak Republic actually exist ... some people think that we are doing worse than some Africans, so I really did not expect more contacts because of that. I think that people who have had or still have au pair from these countries, they might have been a bit interested, but Britons, no.  
(Czech female au pair aged 30 [W2ret])

One social relation in which au pairs clearly do differ from other migrants is being hosted by a family. It was surprising to find nearly one-third of au pairs spending little or no leisure time with British people and it was similarly a surprise to find here that 20 per cent of au pairs disagreed with the statement 'British people make me feel welcome'. Au pairs are supposed to be treated as 'part of the family', but what does this mean? While there are some tangible factors here – most notably the provision of accommodation and food – the texture of the social relations is extremely unclear.<sup>14</sup> What is clear is that there are considerable variations between au pairs and between host families about the nature of the relations encompassed by the 'part of the family' rhetoric. What is important in terms of the satisfaction derived from the au pair experience on both sides is whether or not expectations between au pair and host family coincide. Some young people seem to prefer more distant relations more akin to entering into a bargain with their hosts:

Well I am part of the family, but they are not my blood. We are on friendly terms but it's not overly close ... I do my work, but they don't interfere much with it.  
(Czech female au pair aged 25 [W2ret])

Others feel more like a family member:

They treat me like I was another family member, as if I was their eldest child ... The family I am staying with is just great.  
(Polish female au pair)<sup>15</sup>

I get everything I want from them. Almost like from parents ... Sometimes I even feel uncomfortable taking this money because the family are spending a lot on me.  
(Lithuanian female au pair aged 25 [W1])

As the last interviewee demonstrates, being a 'part of the family' may have unintended consequences, and make managing the financial aspect of the au pair relationship quite awkward. One young woman had moved to become a live-out nanny, having become very close to the single mother she au paired for. The mother lived in very impoverished circumstances and, when the au pair left, she was owed over £3,000 in unpaid 'pocket money' that her friend was simply unable to pay.

While being treated as part of the family sounds highly desirable, it has many downsides including, as we saw in Chapter 3 on accommodation, lack of privacy, as well as dependence and unspoken power relations. It is worth noting that this disadvantage can apply equally to host families. A third of female respondents to our host family survey cited having to deal with the au pair's personal problems as a negative aspect of hosting an au pair. Fifty-nine per cent of survey respondents said that they had problems with au pairs, of which most were to do with the relationship between them and family members.

## Prejudice and discrimination

Few recent surveys have explored the existence and nature of any prejudice against East European migrants or their perceptions of it. Nor is there evidence on the attitudes of East Europeans towards other migrants or ethnic minorities. The Home Office Citizenship Survey did, however, include a question on prejudice against East Europeans in 2005 for the first time. While the public thought that 'Asian' people and 'Muslims' were those most likely to experience more prejudice than five years ago, 14 per cent said that there was now more prejudice against 'new immigrants' and 12 per cent that there was more against Eastern Europeans in particular.<sup>16</sup>

The paucity of research interest in these issues may reflect the fact that East European migrants are white. Although race relations legislation covers discrimination on grounds of nationality and national origin,<sup>17</sup> and cases have been taken on those grounds (e.g. regarding discrimination against people on grounds of their Welsh or Scottish background), racial discrimination is usually associated with people of colour.

In our surveys, we asked our respondents whether or not they agreed with the statement that British-born people whom they meet outside work 'treat me as an equal'. We explored whether their perceptions of how they were treated differed between men and women, for those who had better English, and if it changed for those who became EU citizens on 1 May. We did not ask survey respondents about their attitudes towards others but this did emerge in the in-depth interviews.

When they were asked after 1 May, just 39 per cent of the migrants thought that British people treated them as an equal, 30 per cent disagreed and the rest expressed no view (total  $n = 350$ ). Table 16 shows how their perceptions correlated with length of stay in the UK. Those who had been in the country for more than three years were more likely to share that view (48 per cent agreeing or strongly agreeing), but one in four still did not agree.

As shown in Table 17, those who had fluent spoken English were more likely to feel treated as an equal (45 per cent) than those with only adequate (33 per cent) or basic English (25 per cent), but gender was not a factor.

We were interested to know whether acquiring the status of EU citizen with more equal rights with British citizens affected the accession nationals' perception of how they were treated. We found that, both before and after 1 May, the accession nationals were more likely to say they were treated as an equal than the Ukrainians and Bulgarians, the gap widening to 43 per cent of the new EU nationals after 1 May compared to only 31 per cent of their non-EU counterparts. There was little difference in the proportion who disagreed (29 per cent and 31 per cent, respectively).

**Table 16 British-born people treat me as an equal, by length of stay in UK, after 1 May 2004 ( $n = 305$ )**

	Strongly agree %	Agree %	Neither agree/disagree %	Disagree %	Strongly disagree %	Total $n$
0–6 months	0	0	100	0	0	1
6 months–1 year	9	28	32	30	2	47
1–2 years	4	33	27	32	4	120
2–3 years	2	29	42	19	8	48
3–4 years	13	35	28	18	8	40
More than 4 years	6	43	27	22	2	49

Source: survey interviews with migrants.

**Table 17 British-born people treat me as an equal, by spoken English, after 1 May ( $n = 339$ )**

	Agree %	Neither %	Disagree agree/disagree %	Total $n$
Fluent	45	32	23	184
Adequate	33	31	36	110
Basic only	25	32	43	44
None	0	100	0	1

Source: survey interviews with migrants.

Some A8 interviewees did think that attitudes towards them would change now that their country was part of the EU:

It's hard for them to accept us but they have no choice. When we were not in the EU they took it as being better than me but now they can't do it any more because I have the right to be here too.

(Slovak female au pair aged 25 [W1])

Even if they don't know where Slovakia is they know it's in the EU so they take it more seriously. They have more respect for us because we are in the EU now.

(Slovak male hospitality worker aged 23 [W2ret])

Others did not share this confidence. 'Nothing has changed since we joined the EU', one Polish graduate told us. 'It gave us only the right to work otherwise we are not treated equally with other EU members' (Polish female hospitality worker aged 31 [W2reint]).

When asked about any experience of discrimination, interviewees referred to situations at work – being paid less than other workers or being the first to be laid off – but did not suggest less favourable treatment in relation to services. A Lithuanian man working in the construction industry, for instance, said:

I have never experienced discrimination, except at work where we are paid less than local people would be. In other places, banks, shops, etc., everybody is very polite.

(Lithuanian male construction worker aged 43 [W2reint])

Some commented favourably on the way they had been treated by the police when they had been a victim of a crime and, while they were less complimentary about the health service, they did not suggest that their experience was more negative than that of the rest of the population. Others expressed frustration at ignorance about their own country, negative stereotypes and some hostility. A Lithuanian former au pair working as a housekeeper in a hotel, for instance, said:

I have never experienced discrimination. But sometimes people ask me whether we have electricity in Lithuania.

(Lithuanian female former au pair aged 28 [W2reint])

A Lithuanian former marketing manager with an MA, now working as an au pair, said that there was a certain opinion about people from Eastern Europe, especially girls: 'Local men regard them as "cheap girls from Eastern Europe". I was told that

I am different but I got offended for all our girls' (Lithuanian female au pair aged 26 [W1]). Some felt that such attitudes were one of the barriers to friendships forming. As one Slovak man put it 'I think they don't really want to mix with us because they don't see us as equal. They are OK with us working here but they still feel like they are something more' (Slovak male construction worker aged 29 [W2ret]). A Polish diarist recorded 'British people want to have a cheap labour force but in reality they don't really want us here' (Polish female au pair).<sup>18</sup> Not surprisingly, it mattered to the migrants how they were treated. As the same diarist recorded:

... for me the most important thing is to be treated with respect by other people. Sometimes a nice word or gesture is enough to influence how I am feeling.<sup>19</sup>

### **Migrants' own prejudices**

Migrants are not, however, necessarily only on the receiving end of prejudice. One Ukrainian woman acknowledged this when describing the experience of being asked constantly when she would be going home: 'Even foreigners ask it', she said. 'Those who came here a long time ago see you as a competitor. Maybe I also see new people as competitors. I see myself already as an inhabitant of London' (Ukrainian female hospitality worker aged 25 [W2ret]). There was recognition too that it was not only in the UK that such prejudices are found as a diarist recorded:

I know there are people here who would like to send us home but there are people like that who don't like foreigners in Slovakia as well.  
(Slovak female au pair)

The interviews did indeed reveal some strong expressions of prejudice against other migrants and against some British ethnic minorities. The broad reach of the topics covered in the interviews did not allow the basis of these views to be explored in depth. We can say only that the views expressed suggested differing grounds for hostility, or that people justified their hostility by reference to those grounds. Thus, for instance, some hostile views reflected historical tensions relating to a migrant's home country, attitudes that could extend to their own nationals, as in the case of a Lithuanian man working as a carpenter in East Ham:

I wouldn't work for a Lithuanian, I don't trust them. And there would be no point in asking them if you needed help. They are post-Soviets – I don't like their mentality. I have British friends and feel welcome here.  
(Lithuanian male construction worker aged 39 [W1])

For others who expressed negative views about their own nationals, the basis may have been class difference, as in the views of a Bulgarian man working for an electricity company who described the Bulgarians he met in the UK as 'filthy villagers' (Bulgarian male construction worker aged 35 [W1]) and a Pole renovating properties who was concerned that Poles could now enter the UK too easily. They are, he said, 'the worst scum of Poland and they don't represent Poland in a good way – they sleep at railway stations, steal. This has been a disadvantage of accession' (Polish male construction worker aged 28 [W2reint]).

In some cases, resentment of other migrants reflected a perception of unfair competition for jobs. A Slovak woman working as a cleaner in the hospitality sector was not alone in suggesting that there was resentment of other East European migrants, 'especially Poles', who come 'with illusions and no knowledge of English so they end up working illegally being paid £2–3 per hour. That lowers the work rates in low-paid jobs and creates the tension' (Slovak female hospitality worker aged 34 [W2ret]). The resentment was apparent in one Czech woman who claimed to have lost two cleaning jobs because Polish applicants were willing to work for less:

I applied for one job and the lady said 'You want £6 per hour? There is a Polish candidate who would clean my house, take my dog for a walk and even make a coffee for me for £20'. So I have told her that I won't do that as I am neither a dog walker nor a coffee lady and I left.

(Czech female au pair aged 25 [W2ret])

A Ukrainian man (with a Lithuanian passport) who had come on a SAWS permit and was looking for a job in London similarly said that the alleged willingness of Polish people to work for only £2.50 an hour was lowering salaries: 'That is why they are hated by all people. Especially by Lithuanians. There is such dislike between them' (Ukrainian male agricultural worker aged 21 [W2ret]). A Ukrainian woman, also working with false papers to support a two-year-old daughter cared for in Ukraine by her mother, claimed that A8 nationals would 'sell' her people to the Home Office in order to get their jobs or accommodation. 'While in Ukraine we had 'normal relations' with Polish people, as a result here in UK 'we are on very bad terms' (Ukrainian female hospitality worker aged 25 [W2ret]). The A8 nationals were aware that those who had not been able to benefit from becoming EU citizens could feel resentful: 'Some with whom we work at the site have told us that openly', a Slovak construction worker said. 'They think it's unfair that we have roughly equal rights as the British and they don't. But I can't do anything about that' (Slovak male construction worker aged 29 [W2ret]).

It was also apparent, however, that some of the migrants had come to the UK with little understanding that it was a multicultural country in which they would be living and working not only with migrants but also with people from Britain's minority ethnic communities. The sense of being wholly unprepared was most clearly illustrated by a woman who had been at university in Ukraine and was now working in the hospitality sector:

Because of all these British movies, I thought that everything here would be like in the nineteenth century, people wearing that kind of clothes. I had not thought that this place was so multicultural, such a mixture. When I was coming here I did not know that there were black people. For me it was a disaster because I had seen them only for some two to three times in my life as I was from Kiev. But to live with them, to speak with them for me was of course a nightmare. I was also warned that I should not use this word 'negro', but just to say 'black'.

(Ukrainian female hospitality worker aged 25 [W2ret])

She was not alone in having arrived with, or subsequently acquired, strongly negative views towards Asian people in particular, verbalising stereotypes such as that 'they never keep their promises and are a bit false' (Polish male construction worker aged 28 [W1]), 'are dirty people' (Czech female former au pair aged 26 [W2ret]), 'don't want to pay for work that is already done' (Polish male construction worker aged 27 [W1]) and 'they cheated on me many times ... when you buy something every time you end up paying more than it costs' (Lithuanian male construction worker aged 39 [W2reint]). For an au pair, arriving with negative feelings about ethnic minorities could add to the anxiety of arriving in a new country:

Just after crossing the border I started feeling anxious because I did not know whether I will be working for a white or a black family; because I never received any photos.

(Polish female au pair)<sup>20</sup>

On the other hand, it was clear that the attitudes of some who had come to the UK with negative views were evolving as a result of personal contact. A Polish woman working as a dining room assistant described having to move in with 'a Gypsy family' when she had had nowhere else to live and found they 'were quite civilised for Gypsies. We didn't have any problems with them' (Polish female hospitality worker aged 28 [W2ret]). While a Czech man working in construction in London said 'I worked with people from Jamaica and I have been very surprised because they were very polite like English people' (Czech male construction worker aged 28 [W2ret]).

These views were expressed in the in-depth interviews, not in the larger survey, and we therefore cannot say how widely they were held. Nor do we suggest that these views are exceptional in Britain where negative views about ethnic minorities (including Gypsies and Travellers, for instance) are widely held.<sup>21</sup> Nevertheless, it is government policy to counter the prejudices that can lead to discrimination and poor community relations. Our evidence would suggest that the potential ignorance and prejudices of new migrants need to be considered in that context.

It is relevant to note here that, when we asked the migrants whether they had received the practical information they needed when they were newly arrived in the UK (Chapter 1), we also asked them whether they received information on 'acceptable behaviour and social norms' (a concept that may have been interpreted differently by different respondents). We did not specify what these might be, and recognise that there is of course no uniform set of social norms to which all UK residents adhere. Nevertheless, some countries of immigration do now routinely provide information to newcomers on prevailing social practices and we thought it relevant to ask whether the migrants thought that they had received information of that kind. Only a little over one-third of the migrants (38 per cent) said that they had done so, two-thirds saying that this information came from friends and relatives, ten per cent from employers or their host family, 17 per cent from an agency and none (out of 199) saying that they had received any information of this kind from government sources. Of those who had received it, the vast majority felt that it was adequate.

As before, those with fluent or adequate English were more likely to report receiving such information. Those from Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovakia were more likely to say they had received it than those from Lithuania, Ukraine and, in particular, Bulgaria. This may reflect the lower English language skills among the Ukrainian and Bulgarian sample, and the higher proportion who arrived on student visas (see Chapter 1). Agriculture was the only sector in which a majority of migrant workers reported receiving information about behavioural norms. This may reflect the work of the SAWS operators rather than the experiences of migrant workers across the agricultural sector as a whole.

As in relation to conditions attached to immigration status or access to health care, we cannot draw any conclusions from these findings on access to information about the migrants' subsequent behaviour. However, the fact that two-thirds of the migrants said that they received no information about social norms in the UK may be of interest in the context of the ignorance some expressed about Britain as a multicultural country and the views that some expressed about people from a minority ethnic background.<sup>22</sup>

## Conclusion

In this chapter, we have provided evidence on the ways in which the migrants we surveyed and interviewed spent their leisure time, including access to English courses, and on their social relationships with British people and other migrants. We considered the impact that their accommodation and neighbourhood could have had, as well as their language proficiency, occupational sector and immigration status. Finally, we explored whether they felt treated as an equal and their attitudes, in turn, towards Britain's ethnic minorities and other migrants.

We found that many, albeit a minority, were using services such as libraries, museums and sports facilities, and the vast majority were going to pubs or clubs, with some significant occupational differences in patterns of use as well as some correlation with age and length of working hours. Few had joined any kind of association, with the exception of 12 per cent attending a place of worship. The opportunities for SAWS workers were significantly influenced by their rural isolation. The lack of leisure time spent by au pairs with their host family stands out in contrast to the expectation of the au pair scheme that they would live as part of the family.

Despite the importance of acquiring good English, only one-third of the migrants were taking or had taken English classes, with considerable variation between sectors. Those with poor English were least likely to have accessed a class. There is some evidence that long working hours, the accessibility and the cost of classes were factors in this decision – findings relevant to the current debate on the extent to which free or low-cost classes should be provided. The reduced cost of accessing education was one clear and much appreciated benefit for those who became EU citizens in 2004.

The majority of the migrants spent most of their time with recent and settled migrants from their own country of origin and with migrants from other countries. Of those spending time with settled migrants, the in-depth interviews suggest that this is more likely to be people who have recently settled than those from East European communities who settled in the UK after the Second World War. The migrants' social networks were influenced by those with whom they worked, lived and studied – in many cases, other migrants. For some it was, nevertheless, an intensely multicultural experience, albeit that it often did not involve many British people.

While half to two thirds of the migrants spent some of their leisure time with British people one in four, after living in the UK for more than two years, still spent no leisure time at all with British people. In-depth interviews suggested that this was not from choice but either because their paths did not cross or because migrants perceived

British people as polite but distant and not interested in forming friendships. Only a minority, and here more women than men, were confident that British people were interested in making friends. Contact with British people did increase over time and was more extensive, as one would expect, among those with good English. As in relation to social activities, the lack of social contact between au pairs and British people, and their lack of confidence that British people wanted to befriend them, stand out as in contrast to the expectations of the au pair scheme.

There is emerging evidence of public awareness of prejudice against East European migrants. Less than half of the migrants we surveyed felt that British people treated them as an equal – once again, length of stay in the UK and proficiency in English having a positive correlation with perceptions of equal treatment, whereas gender was not a factor. After EU enlargement, those migrants who became EU nationals were more likely to feel treated as an equal than those who did not – but it was still a minority who felt that way. The migrants did not interpret their treatment as discrimination but described frustration at ignorance about their countries and the negative stereotypes some British people expressed.

Some of the migrants in turn expressed negative attitudes towards Britain's ethnic minorities, some suggesting that it was a surprise to find that Britain was a multicultural country. Occasional tensions with other migrants reflected historical tensions in their countries of origin or perceived competition with new arrivals from their own country of origin as well as elsewhere for jobs in the UK. We tentatively suggested a connection here between our finding that only a minority reported having access to any information on arrival about social norms in the UK, in which issues about multicultural Britain and rights and responsibilities in relation to equal treatment could have been discussed.

## 5 Long-term plans

When the migrants in our study arrived in the UK they were almost without exception given temporary leave to remain in the UK without a direct route to settlement. For those from accession states, however, those arriving in and after 2002 had the expectation that they would acquire the right to live and work indefinitely in the UK once their country joined the EU. Those from Bulgaria may equally have hoped that this would one day apply to them. In this chapter, we therefore discuss the intentions of the respondents and interviewees with regard to settlement or their duration of stay in the UK, and the way in which those intentions changed over time, before drawing on the in-depth interviews to show how some of them felt about Britain, their home country and the factors that were influencing their choice of where they intended to live in the long term.

Data about individuals' intentions are always extremely subjective and should therefore be interpreted with care. Moreover our research methodology was limited in this regard. The main problem stems from the fact that we do not know whether the migrants whom we managed to interview only once in April 2004 were still in the UK six to eight months after EU enlargement and, if so, whether and how their intended period of stay has changed since enlargement. It is certainly possible that one important reason why we did not manage to reinterview some migrants was that they had left the UK. Thus we might well have missed a proportion of those among our Wave 1 respondents who cut their stay short, and conversely were more likely to sample those who prolonged their stay.

The primary purpose of our analysis of the survey data below is to point out that there is often a discrepancy between the time migrants *think* they will spend in the UK when they arrive and the time they *actually* spend working and living in the UK in practice. The discrepancy may in theory be either to spend a longer or shorter period in the UK.

### **Migrants' intentions: to settle or return?**

Just under a quarter of the 307 respondents who provided information about their long-term plans as of April 2004 said that they intended to settle permanently in the UK. Migrants intending a temporary stay had spent, on average, nine months less in the UK since their last entry for employment than those planning to stay permanently.

As shown in Table 18, there was very little difference, overall, between the intentions expressed, as of April 2004, by A8 workers and other respondents, although the A8 nationals would then have known that they would soon have a long-term right to remain. In terms of immigration status in April 2004, the share of respondents with intentions to settle in the UK was highest among those reporting to be on student visas (38 per cent intended to settle in the UK) and lowest for respondents on SAWS permits (10 per cent).

Just under a quarter of respondents describing their immigration status as 'visa expired' in April 2004 said that they planned to settle in the UK. Although our figures are not representative, it is interesting to note that none of the nine illegally resident non-A8 migrants in this sample said that they planned to settle in the UK, compared to 28 per cent of then illegally resident A8 respondents.

At the same time, among those describing their immigration status as self-employed, more than half of Bulgarian and Ukrainian respondents expressed an intention to settle in the UK, compared to a quarter of A8 respondents.

As of April 2004, respondents intending a temporary stay in the UK had more dependants in total – and more dependants in their home countries – than respondents who expressed the intention to settle in the UK. In interview, some suggested that their children in the UK were indeed one reason to stay:

Our main motivation is the future of our children so that they get a good education and better opportunities. Besides, we will earn a decent pension in this country. It is impossible to survive on the Lithuanian one.  
(Lithuanian male construction worker aged 38 [W2reint])

**Table 18 Respondents' plans to settle in the UK, by accession status and most frequently reported immigration status, April 2004**

	Au pair	Self-employed	Visa expired	SAWS	Student	Total*
All respondents ( <i>N</i> )	65	63	49	41	29	307
% share planning to settle	22	32	22	10	38	24
A8 respondents ( <i>N</i> )	62	44	40	24	24	228
% share planning to settle	23	23	28	12	37	24
Non-A8 respondents ( <i>N</i> )	3	19	9	17	5	79
% share planning to settle	0	53	0	6	40	23

\* Total includes all respondents interviewed in April 2004, including those whose immigration status is not listed in this table.

On the other hand, some who anticipated parenthood thought they might want their children to grow up in their own country. A 30-year-old Czech woman working as a cashier, for instance, who had been in the UK since 2002, said that she would definitely like to go back at some point: 'I have my roots there, my friends, I even have my heritage there. And when I have a family I would like to have it there.' Nevertheless she added: 'But I think I have got used to life here a lot. Who knows what life brings' (Czech female former au pair aged 30 [W2ret]).

Respondents planning to settle also reported a smaller number of monthly contacts to their home countries when compared to migrants who were planning a temporary stay (25 compared to 32 monthly contacts<sup>1</sup> home, respectively). Furthermore, as shown in Table 19, migrants intending to leave eventually reported significantly higher remittances both in absolute terms and relative to their savings. On average, respondents intending a temporary stay remitted almost a quarter of their monthly savings. In contrast, migrants planning to settle remitted less than 8 per cent.

### Changing intentions over time

That picture of migrants' intentions whether to settle or return is only a snapshot from the survey in April 2004. We also asked the migrants what their intentions had been when they last entered the UK and their intentions when they were interviewed six to eight months after EU enlargement. As noted above, the high rates of attrition between our surveys before and after 1 May 2004 mean that one has to be careful with interpreting the data as, clearly, those who had left the UK were no longer in the sample. However, we can still use the information to discuss in broad terms, with the caveat about potential bias, whether and how respondents' intentions changed over time.

**Table 19 Monthly pay, savings and remittances, by intended duration of stay, April 2004**

	Monthly take-home pay primary job (£) <sup>a</sup>	Monthly savings (£) <sup>b</sup>	Monthly remittances (£)	Share of remittances in savings (%)
Intends temporary stay ( <i>n</i> = 148)	1,015	465	134	24.2
Intends to settle ( <i>n</i> = 43)	1,022	373	18	7.8
<i>Total</i> ( <i>n</i> = 191)	1,017	444	108	20.5

Source: COMPAS survey of migrants and au pairs, April 2004.

a On average, respondents with the intention to settle had 1.17 jobs, and those planning a temporary stay had 1.20 jobs in the UK.

b Monthly savings include money saved for the purpose of remittances

Although not representative or necessarily reflective of the true scale of change involved, the survey data clearly suggest that migrants adjusted their intentions over time. As of April 2004, 21 per cent of migrants who were interviewed and who provided information about their intended stay in both April 2004 and six to eight months later (total  $n = 62$ ) planned to settle in the UK. Only 6 per cent of them had intended to stay permanently at the time of their last entry for employment. Moreover, by the time of the second interview after EU enlargement, 29 per cent of the same group said that they now intended to stay in the UK on a permanent basis.

A similar picture emerges if retrospective interviews are included (raising the number of observations to a total of 187). Of all those interviewed six to eight months after EU enlargement, 25 per cent said that they intended to settle, compared to 6 per cent who had thought so at the time of their last entry to the UK (before EU enlargement). As explained above, these data are biased in the sense that they include only migrants who were still in the UK six to eight months after EU enlargement. Nevertheless, the data do make it clear that some migrants change their intentions over time, deciding to plan for settlement rather than for a temporary stay as initially intended.

The nature of the data and relatively small sample size make it difficult to make robust statements about the impact of EU enlargement – and in particular of the change in legal status that A8 workers experienced on 1 May 2004 – on intentions to settle in the UK. The change in intentions to settle between the time of last entry and April 2004 appears more pronounced among A8 workers (+15 per cent; total  $n = 152$ ) than among Bulgarian and Ukrainian respondents (+5 per cent; total  $n = 36$ ). However, looking at the period between last entry and six to eight months after EU enlargement, the survey data suggest that the share of respondents planning to stay in the UK permanently increased by more than 15 per cent for both A8 respondents and Bulgarians and Ukrainians. The high proportion of self-employed among Bulgarians and Ukrainians may be a factor here, as could be the awareness among Bulgarians that they could at some stage acquire the right as an EU citizen to remain in the UK.

Our survey in April 2004 found little difference between the intentions of men and women with regard to intentions to settle or return, 26 per cent of women saying that they intended to settle in the UK compared to 22 per cent of men. However, more than two-thirds of the survey respondents who changed their intentions from temporary (at the last time of entry) to settlement (when interviewed six to eight months after EU enlargement) were female. At that stage 35 per cent of the women now wanted to settle compared to only 26 per cent of the men. We explore below the evidence from the in-depth interviews on the factors that appear to influence that

decision, without at this stage being able to suggest why some of those factors may influence more women than men.

It is worth noting that, when the migrants were first interviewed, there was only a very small difference between the gross hourly pay of those wanting to settle (£6.27) and those who intended a temporary stay (£6.12). However, when they were interviewed later, those intending to settle had considerably higher average earnings (£9.81) than those still intending a temporary stay (£8.14).

At this stage of the analysis, it appears as if migrants' decisions to change their intentions to settle are not based on a single factor but on a variety of factors, of which time spent in the UK, the location of partner and family members, and the acquisition of the right to legally settle in the UK appear to be important. A Lithuanian waiter who visited Lithuania rarely, whose wife is in the UK and mother in the USA, reflected this combination of factors in his shift in attachment to the UK:

I was in Lithuania recently and felt estranged, felt like here is my real home. I'm married so my home is where my wife is.

(Lithuanian male hospitality worker aged 25 [W2reint])

Nevertheless, he had not encouraged others to come to the UK: 'It's difficult to adapt here. Things you have to go through.'

## **Intended duration of stay**

The survey data suggest that, among respondents who say that they *always* planned a temporary stay in the UK, the average intended period of stay increased over time. This is true for respondents from both A8 states and from Bulgaria and Ukraine. We look here at how this compared to the actual period of stay and future intentions.

Table 21 focuses on changes in the intended duration of stay between April 2004 and respondents' last time of entry to the UK. On average, respondents intended to stay for 17 months at the time of their last entry to the UK. In April 2004, an average of 14 months had already elapsed leaving a theoretical three months of further stay if respondents' plans were still those they had at the time of their last entry. Instead, respondents said, in April 2004, that they intended to stay for a further 18 months. In other words, respondents' intended period of stay in the UK almost doubled from 17 months at the time of last entry to a total of 32 months by April 2004.

The figures in Table 20 suggest that A8 respondents prolonged their period of stay by more than Bulgarian and Ukrainian respondents. Roughly speaking, A8 respondents doubled their initial intended period of stay, while Bulgarian and Ukrainian respondents prolonged their intended stay by just under half of what they had initially planned at the time of their last entry.

Table 21 presents data on the changes in respondents' intended duration of stay between the interview conducted six to eight months after EU enlargement and respondents' time of last entry to the UK (before EU enlargement). Although the sample of respondents differs from that underlying Table 20, it is again evident that both accession nationals and other respondents increased their planned duration of stay over time. The data in Table 21 do not suggest a clear distinction between accession nationals and other workers in this regard.

Given the small sample size, non-random selection of the sample and the bias arising from the high rate of attrition among the respondents interviewed before enlargement, one has to be very careful in interpreting this. Still, the data can be used to make the general point that, as one might expect, there is often a discrepancy between the initially intended duration of stay and the actual time

**Table 20 Changes in intended period of stay between April 2004 and time of last entry (excluding retrospective interviews)\***

	Intended period of stay at time of last entry	Actual period of stay since last entry, as of April 2004	Intended further period of stay, as of April 2004
A8 respondents ( <i>n</i> = 107)	17.2	15.1	19.4
Non-A8 respondents ( <i>n</i> = 27)	14.9	9.1	12.6
Total ( <i>n</i> = 134)	16.7	13.9	18.1

Source: COMPAS survey of migrants and au pairs, April 2004.

\* Retrospective interviews are excluded. Sample includes only those respondents who said that they intended a limited stay at both the time of their last entry and in April 2004.

**Table 21 Changes in intended period of stay between Wave 2 interview (six to eight months after EU enlargement) and time of last entry (excluding Wave1-only interviews)\***

	Intended period of stay at time of last entry	Actual period of stay since last entry, as the time of Wave 2 interview	Intended further period of stay, as the time of Wave 2 interview
A8 respondents ( <i>n</i> = 86)	20.8	21.8	26.7
Non-A8 respondents ( <i>n</i> = 31)	20.6	31.4	20.5
Total ( <i>n</i> = 117)	20.8	24.3	25.0

Source: COMPAS survey of migrants and au pairs, April 2004.

\* Data about migrants who were surveyed in Wave 1 only are excluded. Sample includes only those respondents who said that they intended a limited stay at both the time of the Wave 2 interview and the time of respondents' last entry to the UK.

migrants spend in the UK. For a number of reasons, migrants frequently readjust their plans, deciding to stay for longer periods than previously thought. Some of our data (those pertaining to the period between April 2004 and the time of last entry) suggest that the increase in respondents' intended duration of stay is more pronounced for A8 workers than for other workers. However, it is also clear from the survey data that a significant number of Bulgarian and Ukrainian respondents – whose legal status was unaffected by EU enlargement – also changed their plans. This suggests that changing intentions with regard to the anticipated period of stay in the UK may be a feature that is, at least to some degree, inherent in the migration experiences of most migrants.

## **Later return to the UK**

We also asked the migrants who intended a temporary stay whether they anticipated coming back to the UK for another spell of employment in the future. The great majority of respondents (almost 90 per cent in both April 2004 and six to eight months later) said that they might return in the future, including 17 per cent pre-enlargement and 7 per cent post-enlargement who said that they would want to return 'as soon as possible'.

One Bulgarian man recorded in his diary his long-term intention to return when he too would have the benefit of EU citizenship:

I have reached a decision to go to Bulgaria at the end of the summer and to graduate from the university where I started a film and media course before I came. I will probably come back here when we enter the EU and find a relevant job!

(Bulgarian male construction worker)

Very few respondents (13 per cent) suggested that they would never want to come back to the UK for more employment. In interview, there were nevertheless some who seemed unlikely to stay or return, as with this Polish man who had been in the UK for ten months, working as a barman when interviewed early in 2005. Reflecting the 'trade-off' approach that we found in a number of interviews, he said:

I will never feel at home in this country. I hope to squeeze as much as possible out of this country and then dump it like an unloved mistress.

(Polish male hospitality worker aged 25 [W2reint])

The survey data suggest that he might in time, nevertheless, change his mind.

## Changing intentions: contributory factors

The survey data have shown how migrants' intentions change over time and that legal status, location of dependants, income, gender and strength of transnational connections may be among the contributory factors. The in-depth interviews supported that analysis, revealing migrants weighing up the pros and cons of staying or returning to their home country, a balance they recognised could shift decisively over time.

A long-term desire or expectation of returning home was expressed in terms of a sense of belonging: attachment to family and friends or a broader attachment to the country. A construction worker living with his wife in the UK said simply:

For me, in Lithuania, the grass is greener, the sky is bluer and the people are nicer. As to my future plans I am not sure. I will probably work here as long as I can and then will go to retire in Lithuania.

(Lithuanian male construction worker aged 42 [W2reint])

Where a migrant's partner wanted to live was clearly a factor. A Polish diarist recorded debating with his fiancée whether to buy a house in London or return to Poland where they would like their future children to grow up. Two months later, after a visit to Poland, they had decided to buy land and build a house there: 'Time spent there confirmed my belief that my place after all is in Poland and not in London' (Polish male construction worker).<sup>2</sup> For others, a relationship separated by migration imposed a pressure to return or end the relationship. A diarist wrote of an argument with his girlfriend:

[She] is afraid that I don't intend to come back and if I do that it would be in a few years' time and I'm afraid she is right.

(Slovak male au pair aged 28)<sup>3</sup>

## Impact of EU citizenship

While some migrants said that becoming an EU citizen had not changed how they felt about Britain, others did feel more positive. As one Czech diarist wrote:

When I travel to France and I come back to the UK I say to myself 'finally home'. I think I feel more welcome in the UK after joining the EU.

(Czech female au pair)

The survey data showed, however, that it was only a minority for whom becoming an EU citizen had made that difference – 18 per cent of A8 nationals saying they felt a stronger sense of attachment to the UK after enlargement and 25 per cent a stronger attachment to the EU. Not surprisingly, even fewer non-accession nationals felt stronger attachment to either (see Table 22).

The impact of acquiring legal rights as an EU citizen for those whose status had been irregular before 1 May 2004 was understandably most pronounced, albeit unclear what impact this would have on their long-term intentions. A Lithuanian woman working as a hotel cleaner, for instance, was one of many who expressed a great sense of relief:

I feel much better now. Before, when we saw the police, it made us anxious whereas now we feel confident. Having legal status made all the difference.

(Lithuanian female hospitality worker aged 39 [W2ret])

Her confidence contrasted with those who remained irregular and whose future was therefore much less certain. A Ukrainian woman in that position was nevertheless determined to stay:

I always liked it here. I will do everything in order to stay here. But it is hard for me now because I do not have any rights. I cannot live as a human being. I even cannot buy as all normal people, video, TV ... I cannot afford them. I do not know what I will do tomorrow. I am here already four years. I have work, studies, but I do not have time even for a boyfriend. I am very lonely.

(Ukrainian female hospitality worker aged 25 [W2ret])

**Table 22 Sense of attachment to UK and EU since 1 May, by EU membership**

	Yes %	No %	Total n
<i>Stronger sense of attachment to UK</i>			
A8	18	82	212
Non-A8	10	90	125
<i>Stronger sense of attachment to EU</i>			
A8	25	75	212
Non-A8	6	94	124

Source: survey interviews with migrants, Wave 2 only.

### Impact of the way in which migrants felt treated

The way in which people perceived they were treated in Britain appears to be a factor influencing how the migrants felt about remaining in the long term. While some said that they felt more accepted over time, others disagreed. For instance, a Slovak teacher working as a nanny in London said that she would not recommend anyone to stay in the UK for their whole life: 'A foreigner here, regardless of how skilful he is, be it doctor or a builder, would always remain a foreigner' (Slovak female former au pair aged 27 [W2ret]). A Slovak diarist, despite being very happy in Britain, thought the same: 'I am feeling in Britain very good and welcome but I think I will never feel at home. I will always be a foreigner for people living here' (Slovak male au pair aged 27).<sup>4</sup> A strong theme emerging from the diary entries, however, was how significantly better the migrants felt if they had been praised by the employers or host families, which provided some compensation for the effect on them of doing jobs for which in many cases they felt overqualified but that their ability was not recognised: 'A nice surprise – I have been appreciated for what I am doing' (Polish female au pair); 'the other thing that made me happy was that, after some time, someone acknowledged my work and praised me for it. I know it's not much ... but at least I personally felt good about myself' (Slovak male au pair aged 28).

Some suggested, however, that how they felt about Britain was in part an attitude of mind – whether they were inclined to feel positive about the experience: 'I feel at home here because of my approach to life. I want to like it here' (Polish male construction worker aged 27 [W2reint]). That they could retain a positive attitude despite difficult working or living conditions reflected the trade-offs they were willing to make. A Lithuanian au pair, for instance, working from 6.15 a.m. until evening, with one of the children then sleeping in her room so that she had little privacy, nevertheless said how positive she felt about Britain, having done so since the day she arrived:

I remember coming from the airport by coach in the evening and I immediately liked everything I saw ... I wrote back home that I felt like Alice in Wonderland, everything was so beautiful around me: blooming flowers, people going for a walk with dogs, nobody gets angry, everybody smiles. I still feel that now.

(Lithuanian female au pair aged 27 [W2reint])

A Slovakian recorded in her diary, 'Knowing that I am here only temporarily gives me self-content even in the hardest situations' (Slovak female au pair).<sup>5</sup>

Others emphasised that making friends in Britain had made or would make a difference to their feelings about Britain and whether to stay: 'If my friends were here I would feel more at home' (Polish male construction worker aged 25 [W2rint]). Or having a partner here: 'I have friends here. I have a close male friend and this probably makes me want to be here, holds me here', as one Polish woman put it (Polish female au pair aged 29 [W2ret]). Having come as an au pair, she was planning to get a qualification as a dietitian, suggesting that the opportunities available in the UK were also a factor.

Those with a partner or family to support were understandably among those for whom their earning potential in the UK was one key factor. A Polish technician working in agriculture and living in a hostel, for instance, said:

I wouldn't bring my family over while I am doing this job because it brings in very little money. If I found a job with a normal income then I could decide to bring my family.

(Polish male agricultural worker aged 30 [W2ret])

The lack of job opportunities in their home country likewise meant they might stay longer than they would otherwise have chosen to do:

If Bulgaria gets better I wouldn't stay here even for half an hour more.

(Bulgarian male construction worker aged 25 [W2reint])

Only now I realise how beautiful Lithuania is. We have everything – winter, summer, sea and woods. If only we had more jobs. My real home is there.

(Lithuanian female former au pair, hospitality worker aged 28 [W2reint])

## **Conclusion**

When the migrants in our study arrived, the immigration status of many of them did not permit a direct and legal route to settlement in the UK. A8 nationals subsequently acquired the right to stay in the UK. We know from past research that migrants' intentions often change over time. In this chapter, we explored the intentions of the migrants in our study in relation to settlement or length of stay, and the factors that may have influenced their choices and future plans.

The vast majority of those interviewed just before enlargement in 2004 intended to return home, less than a quarter planning a permanent stay. Those intending to stay

at that stage were not, as we might expect, more likely to be accession nationals but those, for instance, who had been in the UK longer, those who were self-employed and those whose dependants were already here. Dependants in the country of origin or an intention to have children both appear to be an incentive to return.

We then found that the migrants adjusted their intentions on settlement over time, with more of those interviewed after enlargement now planning a permanent stay. It is worth reiterating here that some of those we were unable to reinterview after enlargement would have left the UK, so our findings must be treated with caution. Nevertheless, there would seem to be a clear pattern of a minority changing their plans towards settlement in the long term – with women more likely to do so and those now earning a better rate of pay. The change in intention to settle once again does not appear to be more pronounced among the A8 workers who had now acquired the right to stay than among the Ukrainians and Bulgarians who had not (although the Bulgarians at least may have been hoping that, when their country joined the EU, they might acquire the right to do so).

Of those planning only a temporary stay we again find that their intentions change, the intended length of stay increasing over time – almost doubling from an intended stay of 17 months when they arrived in the UK to 32 months when interviewed in 2004. Here there is some, but by no means conclusive, evidence that A8 nationals were planning a longer stay than their non-accession counterparts.

It is clear that migrants frequently adjust and readjust their plans, deciding to stay for longer periods than they originally intended. While this may have been more pronounced among the A8 nationals – our data are inconclusive – it is clear that a significant number of Bulgarian and Ukrainian nationals whose status was unaffected by enlargement also changed their plans. Moreover, of those planning to leave, many intended at some stage to return. Staying or leaving was not a once and for all decision but simply one step in an ongoing pattern of migration – until their plans changed once again.

It is evident that there are many factors that influence those decisions and that their weight changes. Legal status, income, location of dependants, gender and strength of transnational connections were among the factors that the migrants were weighing up as they assessed the pros and cons of staying or going over time. Whether the migrants felt well treated by British people, not least their employer or host family, was a consistent theme when they talked about their intentions to stay or go, though many factors influence their feelings about Britain including their working conditions, friendships and presence of a partner or family in the UK. Those who appeared most unhappy were those who wanted to return – through attachment to their own country

and dislike of their life in Britain – but felt that they had to stay because only here could they earn the income they needed.

For those who had been in the UK unlawfully and, post-enlargement, were now legally resident, the impact on their lives and feelings about Britain was significant, although it was less clear what effect this would have on their long term intentions. For those still in the UK unlawfully, it was not evident that the insecurity and disadvantages of that status would drive them to go. Of all the factors that the migrants had to consider in deciding whether and how long to stay, their immigration status and the rights it did or did not confer was clearly only one factor among many that they had to consider.

## 6 Conclusion

In this study we have explored the lives beyond the workplace of Central and East European migrants working in low-wage occupations: in agriculture, construction, hospitality or as au pairs. Our aim has been to add to the limited evidence base on the experiences of recent arrivals to the UK: migrants who are white, working in low-wage jobs, and whose immigration status and intentions when they arrived were largely for temporary stay. On 1 May 2004, those from the then accession states acquired the right to live and work in the UK indefinitely. For those who had been living or working in the UK unlawfully, this was in effect an amnesty and, for us, a unique opportunity to study the impact of that change of status.

At the end of each chapter we have summarised our findings and in the separate *Findings* have drawn those together within the contextual background set out in Chapter 1. In this chapter we do not repeat that but draw out the key themes that emerge from those findings and their potential implications for future policy debate.

### Impact of employment

The distinction we made between the migrants' working lives and their experiences beyond the workplace was necessary to produce two separate reports, but we found as we anticipated that the migrants' experiences at work and as au pairs in host families had a significant impact on their broader experiences: through the impact of pay and long working hours on the amount of time for leisure and to study, for example; in the relation between accommodation and employment; through the limited opportunities for leisure activities and social interaction with British people (for instance among SAWS workers living on farms in rural areas); and through the limited contact that many migrants in other sectors had with British people because so many of their fellow workers were also migrants. It could indeed be argued that it is in part their mode of participation in the labour market – working unsocial hours or in remote rural areas for instance, their willingness to move with seasonal employment and to work in jobs below their education and skill level – that limits their opportunities for social participation. Economic and social participation are thus related processes that cannot be studied – or addressed – in isolation from each other.

## **Temporary–permanent stay**

It is evident from our findings that it is not safe to assume that a migrant's stay in the UK will be either temporary or permanent on the basis of their expectations when they arrive. Migrants' intentions change over time, influenced by a complex range of factors, the outcome of which cannot be predicted. Some of those who plan to stay a short period stay much longer and may settle permanently, while some who intended to stay for a long period may decide not to do so, possibly returning at a later date. Their intentions and actual duration of stay are influenced, but not determined by, their immigration status. It follows that any choices in relation to policy intervention cannot be premised solely on the migrants' permanent or temporary immigration status on arrival. The probability that some temporary migrants will in practice remain in the UK for a number of years or settle permanently is the reality that must be taken into account.

The interrelationship between migrants, institutions in the UK and the public is a process (or series of processes) that in some respects – the acquisition of language skills, access to essential services and migrants' reception by existing residents, for instance – begin on the day of arrival. We still know too little about migrants' experiences in the immediate period after arrival, but there is sufficient evidence here to suggest that this is when they face some of the greatest challenges: lack of essential information; lack of sufficient English to talk to employers or service providers; and least satisfactory housing conditions.

Facilitating the social and civic participation of those whose stay is expected to be temporary, and doing so from the point of arrival, does not imply a long-term commitment on behalf either of the migrants or of the UK. Rather, it would help to ensure that migrants are able to contribute fully during the period in which they are living in the country.

## **Practical information**

The evidence suggests that there are a series of barriers that migrants face, beginning in those early days after arrival. This includes a lack of practical information and advice for new migrants, leaving many ignorant of the conditions attached to their immigration status, their rights at work, how to access health care or where to obtain advice.

There is some evidence from our study and elsewhere that this lack of information creates unnecessary difficulties not only for the migrants but also for service providers. The lack of clear information from the Home Office for migrants and service providers on restrictions and entitlements attached to the migrant's particular immigration status is especially problematic given the complexity of the rules. The other information that the migrants need does not necessarily have to come from government or local public bodies. Some employers, trades unions and voluntary and community organisations are already contributing to these information and advice needs, but provision is patchy and, to the frustration of service providers, unco-ordinated. There have also been a limited number of migrant associations serving the needs of recent East European migrants relative to the number of associations relating to migrant groups of longer standing in the UK.

Migrants who are well informed on arrival about employment, housing and health systems, as well as on their rights and responsibilities in the UK, will be better equipped to meet any early difficulties they face and to participate fully in the labour market as well as socially at an early stage. We suggest thought needs to be given to the most practical and cost-efficient means of ensuring that all new migrants, including those living in rural areas, have access to the information and advice that they need – taking advantage of the opportunities provided by the internet and interactive technology<sup>1</sup> for those with limited English, as well as the front-line role that employers, unions and migrant community associations could fulfil in this respect if adequately resourced to do so.<sup>2</sup> We note that the Government's Advisory Board on Naturalisation and Immigration has recently recommended provision of information and advice for new arrivals, and has suggested that large employers of migrants could be encouraged to provide this as well as support in accessing language classes.<sup>3</sup>

### **Accommodation**

In relation to housing, the majority of the migrants in our study expressed satisfaction at the conditions in which they were living – a positive finding. Nevertheless, it was evident that some were living in poor and overcrowded accommodation, albeit in some cases from 'choice' in order to reduce their rent.

This presents a dichotomy that public policy may need to address. Existing licensing arrangements for landlords, which are designed to prevent overcrowding, should be more effectively enforced so that living conditions that present an unacceptable fire or health risk could be avoided. On the other hand, some migrants would like

the option of renting a limited space in return for a lower rent in the short term until they are established with a secure income, and may in practice sub-let in unsuitable accommodation unless that option becomes available. If it is the Government's intention to rely on migrants from East Europe to meet labour shortages in low-wage occupations, thought needs to be given to (and migrants consulted on) ways of meeting the needs of these workers for acceptable low-cost housing in the context of wider strategies for increasing the availability of affordable housing for the population as a whole.<sup>4</sup>

## **English language**

The importance of English language proficiency in migrants' employment prospects is well reported. Throughout this study the importance of speaking and sometimes reading English has been a central theme – a positive factor in whether the migrants had received the information they needed, in their likelihood of having British friends and in how well they felt treated by the British people they met. While a quarter of the migrants in our study described their spoken English as 'fluent', half of those from A8 states and a third of those from the non-accession countries described it as only 'adequate'. For the rest it was 'basic' or 'none'. It must therefore be of concern that only a third had previously attended or were currently attending English classes and that those with the poorest English were among those least likely to have done or to be doing so.

We do not have definitive answers on why that might be. The evidence did suggest, however, that cost and long working hours were factors in not taking classes, while the availability of classes associated with employment made it more likely that they would attend. We note the current pressure on the budget for English language classes; and the suggestion from the Advisory Board on Naturalisation and Integration that employers have a potentially greater role to play within the context of sponsorship of migrant workers under the new points system. Our evidence suggests that investment in language tuition does need to be seen as part of a managed migration policy, given the implications for service providers, employers and the public with whom migrants are in contact, as well as the importance to the migrants themselves.

### **Social contact with British people**

Many of the migrants, particularly those in London, were living and socialising with other migrants – a diverse social mix, except for the frequent absence of British people from their circles. They wanted British friends but either found their paths did not cross because they were working in occupations staffed largely by other migrants or perceived the British people they met to be polite but distant – that many were not interested in making friends. Up to two-thirds of the migrants do spend at least some time with British people and some spend a lot of time. Yet the unavoidable fact is that, after two years, a quarter of those in our study still spent no leisure time at all with British people, leading us to ask 'Does this matter?' The migrants themselves felt that it did. They regretted not having British friends and were evidently pleased when they did – a finding that casts doubt on a common perception that it is migrants who choose 'to keep themselves to themselves'.

### **Prejudice**

Social contact may also be important, however, because of what the migrants' experiences revealed about the attitudes of some British people towards them: ignorance about their countries of origin ('do you have electricity in Lithuania?'); some negative stereotypes; and a perception on the part of many migrants that they are not treated as equals. Limited social contact between migrants and British people may be one factor in the attitudes that the migrants have experienced. The negative press coverage of the decision to allow free movement for A8 nationals and subsequent debate on accession of Bulgaria and Romania may also have contributed to public perceptions of East European migrants. Thought should be given to how – in the context of ongoing migration from Eastern Europe – negative public perceptions could be addressed.

The lack of contact that some of the migrants themselves had had with black and Asian people, and the lack of information they had received about multicultural Britain, may in part account for the negative attitudes that some expressed about Britain's ethnic minorities as well as about migrants from other parts of the world (albeit that we do not know how widely these views were held). It would be inaccurate for Britain to be portrayed to new migrants as a country in which there is universal acceptance of diversity. Nevertheless, it would be appropriate to inform all new arrivals of a legitimate expectation that they will be treated with equal dignity and respect, and that they should treat others in the same way.

## Au pairs

The experiences of au pairs need to be highlighted in the context of social relations with British people, including their host family. Although their stay is intended to be temporary, up to two years, the conditions of the au pair scheme require that they are treated as ‘a member of the family’ – integration at least in the private sphere. Yet we found that au pairs and host families alike were not comfortable with the concept of ‘member of the family’. Its meaning was ambiguous, blurring the line between work and ‘family’ obligations, and in practice few au pairs spent any leisure time with their family. Nor were they much more likely to socialise with British people than migrants working in other sectors – with the exception of the seasonal agricultural workers whose rural location and farm accommodation meant that they were relatively isolated from both leisure facilities and non-migrant social contact.

## Legal rights

The experiences of those living in the UK unlawfully also need to be considered in the light of the evidence from this study. It was most telling from the in-depth interviews in relation to accommodation – having to move at short notice to avoid detection – and in the tangible relief of the A8 nationals when, on 1 May 2004, they acquired the right to stay in the UK. Yet it was also telling that the insecurity and anxiety of their status was not sufficient to make many of them leave – the advantages of continuing to work in the UK outweighing the opportunities they perceived that they would have if they lived elsewhere.

For the migrants who became EU citizens in 2004, acquiring the right to live and work in the UK brought advantages, particularly for those who had been resident unlawfully prior to enlargement. Nevertheless we found that acquiring legal rights was not enough. Rights did not alleviate their housing conditions, provide the practical information they needed, have a notable influence on the attitudes of British people towards them, nor significantly affect the migrants’ own attitudes towards Britain or Europe. The experiences of those living in the UK unlawfully demonstrate that legal residence rights are certainly significant for the individual’s sense of well-being and their ability to plan for the future, but lack of those rights was clearly not preventing a significant level of economic and social inclusion. Legal rights are evidently a necessary but insufficient foundation for promoting the *full* economic and social participation of migrant workers.

### National policy

We suggest that the evidence we have presented here makes a strong case for a review of national policy towards these and other new migrants, taking into account their experiences – at work and beyond the workplace – and those of the institutions and public with whom they interact. The evidence challenges the assumption in current policy that it is largely only in relation to refugees that there is any need for central government to facilitate migrants' economic and social participation. The Government has stated its intention to rely on migrants from Europe to fill vacancies in low-skilled occupations and those who follow the migrants in our study will face many of the same challenges as those described here. The rationale that they could choose to leave arguably undervalues the contribution that they make, disregards the responsibility that employers and the host society itself has for dismantling some of the barriers that they face, and ignores the implications for service providers and the public if those barriers are not addressed.

A national policy – addressing the situation of recently arrived and temporary migrants as well as those intending to remain in the long term – could focus on co-ordination and mobilisation of local organisations, public, private and voluntary (employers, unions and service providers) rather than on a dominant role for central government; and, in provision of information, advice and services, could engage migrants themselves in meeting the needs of other migrants. The migrants in our study demonstrated that they were keenly aware of the needs of those who might follow, replete with ideas on the information and advice they might need, and their voices should be heard in drafting any plan that is devised to address the full range of issues raised by the presence of migrant workers in the UK.

# Notes

## Preface

- 1 Anderson *et al.* (2006).
- 2 Ruhs *et al.* (2006)

## Chapter 1

- 1 Anderson *et al.* (2006).
- 2 See <http://www.compas.ox.ac.uk/changingstatus>.
- 3 In the questionnaire we used the term 'British born' but will use the term 'British people' throughout the text, except where we specifically refer to British nationals.
- 4 For overviews, see Horsfield (2005).
- 5 Home Office (2005b).
- 6 The number of foreign *born*, including those who have UK citizenship, is significantly higher. According to the Labour Force Survey 2004, 10 per cent of the working-age population was foreign born (see Dustmann and Fabbri, 2005).
- 7 Woodbridge (2005) discusses issues to do with estimating the number of 'unauthorised' migrants in the UK. For an overview of 'irregular' migration see ippr (2006).
- 8 Glover *et al.* (2001).
- 9 Home Office (2002).
- 10 On 3 October 2001, the then Home Secretary, David Blunkett, announcing his intention to start discussions with employers and trades unions on expansion of skilled and low-skilled migration, said: 'Where there are shortages I want to ensure that our economy can benefit from both skilled and lower skilled workers on a sensible and managed basis for those who wish to be employed legally in

this country ... A properly managed system of legal migration would be a body blow to the gangmasters and people traffickers who bring people to the country illegally. I want to move forward with urgency.'

11 Policy interview, Home Office, February 2005.

12 See Home Office (2004).

13 Compliance with and perspectives on the WRS are discussed in Chapter 4 of Anderson *et al.* (2006).

14 See Ruhs (2006).

15 [http://www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk/aboutus/reports/accession\\_monitoring\\_report](http://www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk/aboutus/reports/accession_monitoring_report).

16 Office of National Statistics news release, 2 November 2006, <http://www.statistics.gov.uk>.

17 Home Office and DWP *et al.* (2006), providing registration data for that earlier period.

18 Gilpin *et al.* (2006).

19 Home Office (2005a).

20 Home Office (2006b).

21 EEA includes the EU member states and Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland.

22 <http://www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk/aboutus/newsarchive/controlledaccesstouklabourmarket>.

23 Otto Schilly, German Minister for Interior Affairs, saying, for instance, that 'the best form of integration is assimilation', *Die Welt*, 7 July 2004, p. 3, quoted in Heckman (2005, p. 11).

24 Heckmann (2005, p. 11). In relation to the labour market, 'assimilation' often denotes participation on the same basis as other residents and does not necessarily have the controversial connotations associated with the term in a cultural context.

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- 25 Nee and Sanders (2001).
- 26 Brubaker (2001).
- 27 Parekh (2000).
- 28 Independent Review Team (2001); Cattle (2005).
- 29 See Trevor Phillips, 22 September 2005: <http://www.cre.gov.uk/Default.aspx.LocID-0hgnew07r.RefLocID-0hg00900c001001.Lang-EN.htm>; and Ludi Simpson (2003); Also Simpson responding to Phillips: [http://www.bbc.co.uk/manchester/content/articles/2006/09/27/270906\\_segregation\\_feature.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/manchester/content/articles/2006/09/27/270906_segregation_feature.shtml); for an overview of debate: [http://www.esrc.ac.uk/ESRCInfoCentre/about/CI/CP/Our\\_Society\\_Today/News\\_Articles\\_2005/segregation.aspx?ComponentId=12677&SourcePageId=11456](http://www.esrc.ac.uk/ESRCInfoCentre/about/CI/CP/Our_Society_Today/News_Articles_2005/segregation.aspx?ComponentId=12677&SourcePageId=11456).
- 30 Spencer and Cooper (2006).
- 31 Entzinger and Biezeveld (2003).
- 32 Department of Communities and Local Government (2006a).
- 33 Entzinger and Biezeveld (2003).
- 34 Home Office (2006a).
- 35 Kofman and Phizacklea (2000); Vermeulen and Penninx (2000); Castles *et al.* (2002); Heckmann and Schnapper (2003); for an overview of the literature on social integration of migrants in Europe see Spencer and Cooper (2006).
- 36 Castles (2001); Phillips (2006a).
- 37 Zetter *et al.* (2003); Ambrosini and Abbatecola (2004).
- 38 A review of the evidence on public attitudes towards migrants in the UK can be found in Crawley (2005).
- 39 Hickman and Walter (1997).
- 40 TUC (2003, 2004).

- 41 The DTI, FCO, TUC and Citizens Advice together produced a leaflet for Portuguese workers in 2003 to inform them of their rights, Employment Minister Gerry Sutcliffe suggested that some workers had been deliberately misled into thinking that they were working illegally in the UK. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/England/Cambridgeshire/3280131.stm>.
- 42 For example, Citron and Gowan (2005).
- 43 References for recent UK reports by service and advice providers are given in the next chapter on information provision.
- 44 IND (2005); Home Office (2006a). The strategy covers the minority of asylum seekers who are granted refugee status, often after a period of years in the asylum determination process.
- 45 Policy interview, Home Office, November 2006.
- 46 Recent evidence in EU states is identified in Spencer and Cooper (2006, p. 21).
- 47 Commission on the Future of Multi-ethnic Britain (2000, p. 31).
- 48 S19 Race Relations Act 1976 also exempts some immigration decisions from protection from race discrimination.
- 49 Policy interview, Home Office, February 2005.
- 50 Education Minister Bill Brammel, 'False claims make me snap, crackle and pop' (*Education Guardian*, 16 January 2007), discussing the proposals first announced in October 2006; 'Anger mounts as door closes on learners' (*Education Guardian*, 19 January 2007). See NIACE (2006) for a review of the importance of ESOL and current provision.
- 51 West Mercia Constabulary, for instance, has produced a leaflet providing basic information on the law in the UK including the need for car insurance and MOT, and on the law on carrying knives in public places – *Information, Welcome to the Vale of Evesham*. The TUC has a leaflet, which is provided by the Home Office to some migrant workers, on their rights at work – <http://www.tuc.org.uk/tuc/workingintheuk.pdf>.
- 52 Audit Commission (2007).

- 53 Home Office (2005c).
- 54 For terms of reference for the Commission, set up in June 2006, see <http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1501522>.
- 55 <http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1501522> and, for *Strong and Prosperous Communities– the Local Government White Paper*, <http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1137789>.
- 56 Audit Commission (2007).
- 57 ABNI (2006).
- 58 See [http://ue.eu.int/ueDocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressData/en/jha/82745.pdf](http://ue.eu.int/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/jha/82745.pdf); the Irish Government did so, for instance, at a conference, 'Integration policy – strategies for a cohesive society', on 1 February 2007.
- 59 [http://www.compas.ox.ac.uk/events/presentations\\_integration06/Ryan-presentation.pdf](http://www.compas.ox.ac.uk/events/presentations_integration06/Ryan-presentation.pdf).
- 60 Anderson *et al.* (2006) <http://www.compas.ox.ac.uk/changingstatus/Downloads/Fair%20enough%20paper%20-%201%20May%202006.pdf>.
- 61 Frances *et al.* (2005).
- 62 Kay and Miles (1992).
- 63 In theory, SAWS workers may stay longer than six months if they overstay their visas. They may also seek work outside the parameters of the scheme, for example with a grower who is not registered with an operator, or in another sector. They would then be regarded by the Home Office as working illegally. However, the number of people with SAWS work cards working outside the terms of their immigration status is not known. It is not likely to be high given that workers are in the process of completing university degrees, and the practice of returning as a SAWS worker for two or more consecutive years was commonly reported by workers.
- 64 <http://www.ruralcommunities.gov.uk/files/CRC33-Rural-Advocate-Report.pdf>.
- 65 The Commission published a report on the distribution of A8 nationals in rural areas in January 2007 – <http://www.ruralcommunities.gov.uk/files/A8%20migrant%20workers%20in%20rural%20areas.pdf>.

66 Anderson (2007, forthcoming).

67 Anderson *et al.* (2006).

68 Cox (2006).

69 Anderson *et al.* (2006).

70 See Matthews and Ruhs (2007).

71 See Matthews and Ruhs (2007).

72 JCWI and Seddon (2006, p. 193).

73 JCWI and Seddon (2006).

74 JCWI and Seddon (2006, pp. 1328–35).

75 Homeless Link (2006).

76 Citizens Advice (2005b).

77 <http://www.compas.ox.ac.uk/changingstatus/Downloads/Methodology%20paper%20-%201%20May%202006.pdf>.

78 Funding from the ESRC was partly derived from COMPAS core funds and partly through a special grant. ESRC also funded the employer and host family postal survey conducted in early 2005.

79 Frances *et al.* (2005).

80 Of course, these are self-assessments and we have no 'objective' measurement.

81 Although we specifically set out to interview migrants employed in April 2004 in four sectors only (hospitality, construction, agriculture and the au pair sector), a small number of our interviews were with people working in other sectors.

82 Anderson *et al.* (2006).

83 See Ruhs and Anderson (2006).

84 Anderson *et al.* (2006).

## Chapter 2

- 1 Working Lives Research Institute and Health and Safety Executive (2006).
- 2 Bradford Central and Eastern European Working Group (2006).
- 3 Wales Rural Observatory (2006, p. 12).
- 4 Citizens Advice (2005b); McKay and Winkelmann-Gleed (2005); Homeless Link (2006); Sachdev and Harries (2006).
- 5 Correspondence with IND, 5 December 2005.
- 6 [http://www.workingintheuk.gov.uk/working\\_in\\_the\\_uk/en/homepage/schemes\\_and\\_programmes/worker\\_registration.Maincontent.0003.file.tmp/info\\_leaflet\\_english.pdf](http://www.workingintheuk.gov.uk/working_in_the_uk/en/homepage/schemes_and_programmes/worker_registration.Maincontent.0003.file.tmp/info_leaflet_english.pdf). Available in the eight Accession state languages.
- 7 'Total *n*' refers to the total sample size answering that question, rather than the number of respondents corresponding to the percentage reported.
- 8 Diary, May 2005.
- 9 Diary, May 2005.
- 10 Data on use of hospital as an in-patient ( $n = 575$ ) and dental treatment ( $n = 569$ ) when interviewed before 1 May 2004. The figures were 2 and 11 per cent respectively, when interviewed in the latter half of 2004. Nine per cent reported accessing advice on contraception, in both surveys.
- 11 Citizens Advice (2005a, 2005b). The former report states that 'In some cases employers and agencies have prohibited migrant employees from contacting a CAB, with dismissal being the price of disregarding that sanction' (Citizens Advice, 2005a, p. 7).
- 12 Bradford Central and Eastern European Working Group (2006).
- 13 Anderson *et al.* (2006).
- 14 'W2ret' indicates the interview was obtained in Wave 2 of the research and was *retrospective*. 'W1' indicates that the interview was obtained in Wave 1 of the research. 'W2reint' indicates the interview was obtained in Wave 2 of the research and that it was a *reinterview*.

- 15 Interview, 14 June 2005, with the head of a Polish association that had also produced information for Polish migrants on how to get a National Insurance number, register on the WRS and open a bank account, etc.
- 16 Interview at an embassy of an A8 state on 27 May 2005 and at a non-A8 embassy, 14 June 2005.
- 17 Citizens Advice (2005b), which reports that 58 per cent of bureaux cited immigration as one of the key issues on which migrants sought advice.
- 18 Diary, May 2005.

### Chapter 3

- 1 This sample consists of 109 migrants who were interviewed before and after 1 May 2004, and 243 who had been in the UK before 1 May and, when interviewed after 1 May, were asked retrospective questions about their earlier experiences.
- 2 Phillips (2006b) provides an overview of the evidence in relation to asylum seekers and refugees on which most studies have focused. See also Citizens Advice (2005b); McKay and Winkelmann-Gleed (2005).
- 3 Homeless Link (2006).
- 4 Homeless Link (2006). The majority was unemployed (63 per cent) or working irregularly (32 per cent), and 50 per cent were sleeping rough or in squats (27 per cent). They tended to be male and older than the average migrants registered on WRS.
- 5 Workers Registration Data (November 2006) confirm that only 0.04 per cent of local authority lettings in the period May 2004 to June 2006 were to A8 nationals (128 lettings) and 524 successful applications for assistance as homeless (0.2 per cent of successful applications over that period) – [http://www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk/aboutus/reports/accession\\_monitoring\\_report](http://www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk/aboutus/reports/accession_monitoring_report).
- 6 Wales Rural Observatory (2006); Audit Commission (2007). Evidence is also emerging in press reports. Fire officers in Slough have reported regularly entering houses with migrants sleeping in corridors and kitchens. Slough Council reports Polish workers living with up to 20 people in three bedroom houses – [http://www.cieh.org/ehn/news/2006/december/articles/migrants\\_at\\_risk\\_in\\_death-trap\\_hmos.htm](http://www.cieh.org/ehn/news/2006/december/articles/migrants_at_risk_in_death-trap_hmos.htm); <http://society.guardian.co.uk/offdiary/story/0,,1981338,00.html>.

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- 7 *The Observer*, special report on homelessness, 19 November 2006.
  - 8 Polish former agricultural worker, Ely, interviewed 9 December 2004.
  - 9 Interviewed 27 May 2005.
  - 10 Sample size in relation to this question meant that it was not possible to determine from the survey evidence whether those who were resident in the UK unlawfully were more likely to have moved than others.
  - 11 Anderson *et al.* (2006).

## Chapter 4

- 1 In the questionnaire, we used the term 'British born', a term that includes a significant proportion of people from ethnic minorities, but, as we discuss in the text, the in-depth interviews suggested that the interviewees understood the term to mean white British people.
- 2 Anderson *et al.* (2006).
- 3 As with one of our Bulgarian diarists who became unemployed: 'from work I go straight home and this has been going on for quite a while because the money is not enough' (Bulgarian male painter and decorator, February 2005). Two weeks later he was considering returning home to finish his education.
- 4 Diary, May 2005.
- 5 See, for example, Dustmann and Soest (2001).
- 6 For example, Audit Commission (2007).
- 7 For example, see McKay and Winkelmann-Gleed (2005); Wales Rural Observatory (2006).
- 8 Thirty-six per cent of all those we interviewed before 1 May ( $n = 573$ ). Of those for whom we had data before and after 1 May, 33 per cent accessed English classes before 1 May ( $n = 349$ ) falling to 27 per cent after 1 May ( $n = 348$ ).
- 9 Interviewed 14 June 2005.

- 10 Speaking at a Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) Race Convention session on migration, 27 November 2007.
- 11 See Frances *et al.* (2005).
- 12 One worker in agriculture and another in food processing spoke disparagingly of other migrant workers from the same country. One Bulgarian man preferred to work with 'anybody but Bulgarians ... because they are cheeky ... I can only work with a handful of them because everybody pretends to be something more than the other' (Bulgarian male in food manufacturing aged 25 [W1]). A Lithuanian woman said it was easier to communicate with other Lithuanians (than with Polish or British people) but that they were 'envious' (Lithuanian female agricultural worker aged 21 [W1]).
- 13 Excluding au pairs.
- 14 Cox (2006).
- 15 Polish au pair, diary, May 2005.
- 16 [http://www.communities.gov.uk/pub/34/CitizenshipSurveyTopicreportraceandfaith\\_id1501034.pdf](http://www.communities.gov.uk/pub/34/CitizenshipSurveyTopicreportraceandfaith_id1501034.pdf). Where prejudice against East Europeans had been mentioned by respondents in previous surveys, it would have been recorded within another category.
- 17 This does not generally apply to private households, however, so au pairs cannot make a complaint of racial discrimination, unless the treatment takes the form of harassment (Somerville, 2006, p. 438).
- 18 Diary, May 2005.
- 19 Diary, November 2004.
- 20 Polish au pair, diary, May 2005, writing of her arrival in September 2003.
- 21 See, for instance, MORI poll commissioned by Stonewall in 2001 (<http://www.mori.com/polls/2001/stonewall-b2.shtml>) and a review of the evidence on public attitudes towards migrants published by COMPAS (Crawley, 2005).

22 There are of course other examples of misunderstandings that have led to tensions between migrants and other residents. Anglers' concern at East European migrants fishing without a licence and taking coarse fish to eat rather than returning them to the water was, for instance, reported in <http://www.polishexpress.co.uk/en/newspaper.aspx?more=18>. Signs in five languages have now been put up at lakes in Southampton.

## Chapter 5

- 1 'Contacts' mainly include letters, phone calls, text messages and emails.
- 2 Diary, January to March 2005.
- 3 Diary, January 2005.
- 4 Diary, May 2005.
- 5 Diary, 18 November 2004.

## Chapter 6

- 1 There are examples of use of IT in this respect identified in Spencer and Di Mattia (2005).
- 2 Information on the growing number of migrant organisations has been researched by the Barrow Cadbury Trust and has led to the development of the Migrants Rights Network, launched in 2006. There are also regional networks such as the Migrant and Refugees Communities Forum (MRCF) (see <http://www.mrcf.org.uk/>).
- 3 ABNI (2006).
- 4 It is reported that, in Pembrokeshire for instance, a local authority is working in partnership with its local housing association to investigate new forms of social housing that could meet the additional demand for social housing from migrants in the area (Wales Rural Observatory, 2006).

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