1. The Scottish Migrants Network (SMN) has been meeting since 2007. The SMN has developed as a participant network of voluntary organisations, migrant community groups and statutory bodies focusing on issues around migration in Scotland. This collective submission reflects discussion during SMN meetings and conferences, as well as feedback of participants of the SMN. It does not necessarily reflect policy or opinion of individual participant organisations of this diverse Network.

2. The SMN holds information sharing discussions, regular bi-monthly meetings, attending and representing the Network at policy consultations, and support to members’ activities. Two conferences have been held in February 2009\(^1\) and 2010\(^2\) to share experience and highlight issues as well as a workers rights poster campaign in different languages. Additionally a number of focus groups have been organised with new migrants themselves by participants of the SMN for various consultations with the Scottish Government.

3. The Network has focused on vulnerable migrant workers but seeks to encompass all new migrants and migrant issues including: economic migrants (EU, A8, A2), asylum seekers/refugees, undocumented/irregular migrants, etc. Due to capacity (the SMN does not have a worker and depends on participant members to support its work) the Network has focussed on New European Migrant issues.

4. Participants in the SMN have recognised the need for networking to share information around migrant rights, policy and practice sharing. For many organisations it has been a useful fora to learn from one another and this has been demonstrated by continued participation and growth. It has grown from a handful of organisations in 2007 to more than 100 across Scotland today.

5. SMN participants have agreed to support the Inquiry by organising focus groups with migrants.

6. The SMN is happy to further engage with the Inquiry collectively and many participants of the Network will be contributing in writing and in months to come. Contact details for the SMN are at the end of the submission.

\(^1\) Scottish Migrants Network Conference Report Supporting Migrant Workers in Scotland Glasgow 2009
What are the trends in migration to Scotland?

7. Scotland has seen a sharp increase of new migrants over the past ten years mainly due to the Accession of new Eastern and Central European countries (A8 and A2), which saw a significant number of migrants from these countries come to Scotland. People seeking asylum seekers and refugees have been dispersed to Scotland from 1999 – mainly to Glasgow and Lanarkshire. Additionally Third Country Nationals are increasingly migrating to Scotland.

8. As seen above migrants constitute a diverse group. Forced and economic migrants have similar but also significantly different needs as they settle in Scotland. There are also significant differences amongst these groups even from the same country.

9. The recent increased migration from Europe in particular has demonstrated differences in terms of service support in parts of Scotland with challenges in some areas that have had little experience of migration, as well as rural and urban differences.

To what extent does reliable data on migration exist to inform public policy-making?

10. Lack of availability of reliable data on migration has been a constant challenge for planning and delivery of services. Numbers of people granted asylum and remaining in Scotland as well as Third Country Nationals working and living in Scotland are uncertain. European migration data is importantly reliant on the Workers Registration Scheme to assess how many A8 nationals are in an area but this is problematic because: only workers, not the self-employed or family members must register; not all workers register due to lack of awareness of the scheme; this scheme does not count how many people have since left the country.

11. Data on A2 nationals is even harder to use because of the many different employment schemes applied to them which all record data separately.

12. Improvements have been made in the use of migration data over time and with the inception of the GRO reports, but more work needs to be done on this. Media reports A8 and A2 nationals returning home based on reports that are not disaggregated for Scotland. The Labour Force Survey, which IPPR and EHRC reports are based on, is not representative of migrants because it only samples from private homes, not hostels or tied housing where many migrants live. It excludes people who do not consider the sampled address their permanent residence and have lived there for less than 6 months.

13. National networks like the SMN as well as local networks, voluntary/migrant community organisations and service providers in some

---

3 Website: http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk
4 Website: http://www.ippr.org.uk/migration
5 Website: http://www.equalityhumanrights.com
areas that could provide data and information, but the experience of the SMN shows that many are not consulted. More pro-active consultation locally and nationally with networks could improve some data gathering to better inform policymaking.

**What is the contribution of migration to the Scottish economy?**

14. Studies on the contribution of migrants to the UK (including Scotland, although not necessarily disaggregated for Scotland) have shown that they are net contributors to the UK economy. New migrants tend to be young and healthy, working and paying taxes and drawing less services. Migrants support the Scottish economy in sectors including health, agriculture, food processing, fisheries, hospitality and the care sector.

15. In Scotland the need to increase the population should be proactively linked to the contribution of migrants to support community relations and understanding. It is also important for Scotland to support new migrants settlement and measures implemented to retain and support them to settle and integrate.

**What is the contribution of migrant communities to Scottish culture, society and civic society?**

16. Migrant communities historically have contributed in numerous and significant ways culturally to Scotland.

17. New Migrant Community Organisations (MCOs) are developing across Scotland and also in areas with little experience of migration. Many of these organisations established initially for social support, to meet with other migrants, discuss problems and provide support. In some areas local authorities and voluntary sector organisations have assisted with the establishment of these groups.

18. Many MCOs are involved in local networks and a number in the national SMN sharing and learning with other organisations as well as advocating for migrant rights in various fora. New migrants are gradually becoming more involved in Scotland’s political structures. The Scottish Parliament recently established a Cross Party Group on Poland with the support of representatives of MCOs.

---


How does the media portray the contribution of migrant communities in Scotland?

19. The SMN’s participants across Scotland have not seen significant media coverage of the contribution of migrant communities in Scotland. Most coverage tends to cover local challenges and/or UK wide reports without much specific Scottish content. Political leadership that publicly acknowledges need for migrants and to ‘Grow’ the Scottish population is helpful in getting positive coverage.

20. The SMN has noted local press in many areas being empathetic to new migrant communities covering human-interest stories and some challenges faced by migrants. However, the SMN is concerned over some negative local coverage around service provision without proper context and UK national coverage, mainly by tabloids, that focus on statistics and often also not the full context. There is also a danger of the media confusing the public by not explaining differences between different groups of migrants and conflating all into one group.

21. It is acknowledged that in most of Scotland the media is being reduced and there is less capacity. In areas like Glasgow the Oxfam Asylum Positive Images Project and Network was a good model of practice to help influence the media by working with refugees, communities and journalists.

22. The danger of negative and or poor media coverage without context that focuses on numbers without contexts and fails to report on real people is that it may exacerbate community tensions and reinforce myths about migration.

How can positive messages regarding the contribution of migrant populations to Scottish society be effectively disseminated?

23. Work done by Oxfam with the Asylum Positive Images Network demonstrated that by coming together organisations could have stronger impact through networking as well as to influence journalists. The SMN initiated a workers rights poster as well as conferences on new migrants issues despite very limited capacity and resources that have to some extent supported new communities and positive messages. The SMN developed to advocate for new migrants rights as well as a concern over negative attitudes towards them.

24. Experience of these initiatives has helped inform learning but this could be done more effectively with more targeted resources or linked into local authority or Scottish Government activities. Learning has also demonstrated the need to be careful in disseminating information about migrants in areas like myth busting which, if done badly, may actually reinforce negative myths.

25. Political leadership in discussing these issues and especially migrants’ contributions to Scotland supports positive media coverage that is likely to have wider impact. The Scottish Government has also managed to
disseminate information related to migration through the One Scotland and Fresh Talent initiatives, but working together more could be accomplished.

26. Working with host and migrant communities and the voluntary sector to bring people together through activities and events help build understanding as well as being of interest to the media. Targeted initiatives by the Scottish Government and local authorities as well as supporting work by the voluntary sector and MCOs at the local level could, as with asylum, help to influence the media as well as local communities to reflect stories of migrants lives and their contributions.

What is the degree of alignment of Scottish public services with migrant populations?

27. The SMN acknowledges in some areas through targeted project support and or partnership working there has been reasonable alignment of public services that is improving. However, in many areas services have been slow to respond to the needs of new migrants such as limited advice, service, translation and interpretation, and ESOL provision in many areas. It is also noted that many migrants are unaware of their rights and or frustrated when trying to claim them mainly due to a lack of proper advice. This issue was raised at both SMN conferences and especially this year as new migrants have struggled to claim support they are entitled to when they lose employment for example.\(^8\)

28. At the SMN Conference in February 2010 migrants raised the issue of interpretation generally and legal aid specifically at a Roundtable discussion with policy makers. Of particular urgency was the issue of the Scottish Legal Aid Board (SLAB) with regard to improving the procedures for provision of interpreters for defense solicitors. Solicitors are often unable to access interpreters immediately because they must wait until the legal aid position is clarified – this has led to a serious situation ie. defense lawyers are reluctant to involve interpreters. This problem has serious implications for migrants who are accused of a crime and are not able to communicate their version of events to their solicitors because they are not sufficiently fluent in English.

29. Public service alignment is improving and the new toolkit of the COSLA Strategic Migration partnership will help. There is still a need for stronger guidance on issues such as Housing/Homelessness and No Recourse to Public Funds from the Scottish Government. This type of information needs to be informed by MCOs and voluntary sector organisations working with migrants to better inform such initiatives as well as to support their dissemination.

30. Public services need to better recognise and act on the equalities duties that they are responsible for and apply to these new communities as well as informing these communities. There also needs to be recognition of local

---

information such as MCOs and Networks to determine numbers and qualitative needs of new communities without an over-reliance on research and statistics in order to better support new migrant populations.

31. More pro-active guidance and targeted funding for services and projects aimed at migrants as well as to share practice should be provided to support the above, often in a more cost-effective manner, and ensure Scotland is able align services and to attract and retain migrants.

**What is the effectiveness of public sector responses to changing migration patterns?**

32. Public services are responding, but are often too dependent on data and statistics before acting. Multi-agency/cross-sectoral partnerships in some areas have led to more progressive and effective change by working collectively and managed to respond more quickly. The SMN has also seen that these types of partnerships have helped support public sector responses in some areas but challenging in others.

33. Experience of the SMN shows that new migrants continue to come to Scotland with different contributions, needs and challenges indicative of their diversity but also their future plans. Unfortunately recently many services, often already limited in some areas, are being cut and migrants are becoming more vulnerable without support especially in a period of recession.

34. The public sector needs to ensure that people that have access to rights and support to which they are entitled such as social welfare support and homelessness. The recession has affected other countries’ economies and some migrants are choosing to remain here if they lose employment whereas in the past they may have returned home.

35. In 2011 A8 nationals will no longer need to register for work in the UK and will have the same rights as other Europeans, and services need to account for this. Additionally, they will gain full rights in all EU countries so may choose other locations to work and live in rather than the UK. This process will occur for A2 nationals in 2014. Scotland will need to consider this in terms of the provision of services as well as additional initiatives to attract and retain migrants to grow the population.

**What is the degree of awareness of the rights of migrants?**

36. New migrants to Scotland are often not fully aware of their rights as are the service providers and public authorities responsible to support them mainly due to various categories of migrants.

37. Many local authorities have produced welcome packs for new migrants that provide useful local information on rights and services. These are often not disseminated effectively and need to include migrants themselves in order to ensure they are developed and used effectively. The SMN produced a workers rights poster campaign in different languages in 2009 with support
from the Scottish Government to help raise awareness of migrant workers' rights aimed at migrants as this information was not readily available.

38. Migrants from A8 and A2 countries have had restrictions imposed on them by the UK Government and are often unaware of the restrictions due to a lack of publicity around them. Awareness levels will also differ between and among communities. Some service providers are unaware of the rights of different groups within the migrant population and there needs to be training and understanding of the implications that they have on migrants’ access to employment, social welfare and to local authority services such as housing and homelessness assistance. Many SMN participants acknowledge that migrants are often given the wrong advice and end up exploited and sometimes destitute.

39. Public bodies should be proactively recruiting new migrants to deliver and support services to the new communities that they serve. Employing bilingual staff reduces spending on interpreting and translation, makes migrants more comfortable and confident about accessing services, raises awareness of migrant issues, and shows that the public body reflects the community it serves.

40. Networks like the SMN can help to share information and learning relatively cheaply and prevent duplication as well as raise awareness about and amongst new migrant communities.

What is the scale of the trafficking issue, in terms of the number of people involved and the geographical areas which people trafficked tend to be sourced from?

What is the nature of the problem? Are people trafficked primarily for reasons related to sexual exploitation or with regard to false labour?

Given the degree of criminality that tends to be involved in human trafficking what problems does this present for public sector agencies seeking to assist the victims of this activity?

41. The SMN acknowledges the scale of trafficking into Scotland is unclear, but there is evidence of trafficking for both sexual and labour exploitation\(^9\). The SMN participants have seen labour exploitation and or those at risk of it and trafficking. The SMN does not have much experience of this issue but acknowledges there needs to be: enforcement to prevent and prosecute, awareness raising for organisations, as well as services for victims of trafficking.

---
