

The Highland Wellbeing Alliance
Highlands and Islands Inward Migration Support Strategy
Equality Impact Assessment
20th August 2007

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1** The Highlands and Islands Inward Migration Support Strategy is an umbrella Strategy for a range of partnership activities to welcome in-migrants to the Highlands. Priorities include: extending ESOL (English for speakers of other languages) provision at all levels; increasing the number of Community Based Language Assistants; providing home fire safety checks and risk assessments in the workplace; and increasing the provision of specialist advice to migrant workers.
- 1.2** An Equalities Impact Assessment carried out by the partners involved in the Strategy made the following recommendations:
1. A question relating to relatives of in-migrants would be added to monitoring for the next Strategy to provide a clearer picture relating to age.
 2. A robust discussion about monitoring of sexual orientation to take place as part of the planning for the next Strategy
 3. Managers will ensure sensitivity to topic areas in relation to sexual orientation is exercised in ESOL classes and in general questions to service users from all elements of the Strategy.
 4. Additional monitoring of nationality is required for the next Strategy to clearly identify who is using the services.
 5. The differential impact for longer standing in-migrants will be highlighted to the WBA Inward Migration Action Group
 6. An increase in provision of Community Based Language Assistants will be explored as part of the next Strategy.
 7. Discussions will take place to identify opportunities, such as marketing, to reduce differential impacts on in-migrants who are not Polish in the new Strategy
 8. Initiatives will be more explicit in publicity materials that actions to mitigate differential impacts because of a person's disability have been or can be taken.
 9. Potential ESOL students should be made aware that consideration would be made to changing the venue if they are unable to attend because they cannot access the building.
 10. Monitoring of disability will be introduced to ESOL classes
 11. A shortened version of the definition of disability in the Disability Discrimination Act will be translated into a number of the most used languages onto one sheet. A tick box at the bottom will indicate if the service user considers him / herself to have a disability to be used as part of a first contact interview.
 12. Checks will be made to ensure that the website is fully accessible
 13. Guidance documents will be disseminated to initiatives and consistent adoption of new practices agreed
 14. Formal links will be established between the Community Based Language Assistants and Health Visitors.
- 1.3** The implementation of the recommendation of this EQIA will be reviewed at the end of February 2008.

2. Background

- 2.1** Support for migrant workers is a relatively new issue which the region has had to take on board and develop. It is also anticipated that demand for this support will continue to grow and spread out to the more rural areas as the number of migrant workers increases and the economic and social benefits of support for migrant workers is recognised. The development of an overall strategy enabled the numerous agencies with a remit to support migrant worker activity to share ideas, good practice and intelligence on the effectiveness of the support being delivered. It will also ensure that there was no duplication of provision, that resources are targeted to key issues and that there is a consistent quality of support throughout the region. A key element of the strategy is to enable the sharing of evaluation material which is common to all aspects of the support delivery to ensure that 'like for like' comparisons are made. This information will be used for the development of future activity and support mechanisms.
- 2.2** Due to the diverse range of support activity anticipated it was impossible for one agency/organisation to take on the overall delivery of the project. It was therefore agreed that the overall strategy would act as an umbrella to enable all the various organisations to submit applications covering their own area of expertise and still result in a co-coordinated approach. The initiatives within the Strategy are:
1. Extending ESOL (English for speakers of other languages) provision at all levels
 2. Increasing the number of Community Based Language Assistants
 3. Home Fire Safety checks and Risk Assessments in the workplace
 4. Increase the Provision of Specialist Advice to Migrant Workers
- 2.3** Wellbeing Alliance partners are committed to carrying out Equalities Impact Assessments on all policies, functions, procedures and practices. An initial screening exercise and impact assessment was carried out by the strategic group which oversees the Strategy. Further impact assessments of each initiative within the Strategy are also planned.
- 2.4** Following the screening exercise it was agreed that an Equality Impact Assessment was required as the Strategy had the potential to have a differential impact on people because of their race or gender or because they have a disability. Whilst some concerns were raised in terms of impact upon people because of their age, religion or belief or sexual orientation, those related to age were not seen as significant at this stage and were therefore of low priority. It was agreed that a question relating to relatives of in-migrants would be added to monitoring for the next Strategy to provide a clearer picture. Those relating to religion or belief were so closely intertwined with gender that it was decided that gender should be the major focus. A robust discussion regarding monitoring of sexual orientation will take place as part of the planning for the next Strategy. Managers will ensure sensitivity to topic areas in relation to sexual orientation is exercised in ESOL classes and in general questions to service users from all elements of the Strategy.

3. Data

- 3.1** The initiatives within the Strategy are all required to provide extensive information to the funder, ESF. This includes monitoring on race, age and gender. Initiatives 2 – 4 monitor for disability, but this is not currently done for ESOL classes. It was agreed that this

should be included in the next Strategy. In addition to ESF reporting, a wider evaluation of the Strategy is aimed at identifying the benefits of working in partnership on this issue, and case studies with in-migrants based around workplaces and a school will provide information on views about general issues and services in the area.

- 3.2** Other relevant data that is available to inform the Strategy is the information contained in local Public Sector Gender Equality Schemes, the Workers Registration Scheme (National Insurance), Citizen's Advice Scotland Social Policy documents, demographic analysis, and collated data on education levels and employment here and in home countries.

4. Findings

4.1 *Race:*

The Strategy is intended to increase equality of opportunity in relation to race as it is directly targeting in-migrants to the Highlands. It was noted however that within this target group there may be a perception of a differential impact on in-migrants who are not Polish, particularly South East Asians and migrants who have been in the Highlands for some time are not directly targeted by the Strategy. It was agreed that this may lead to a greater use of services by Polish people who are currently the predominant service user group. It was noted that monitoring is difficult as at present "white other" represents a multitude of nationalities. Additional monitoring is required for the next Strategy to clearly identify who is using the services. Other mechanisms to address this will be incorporated into the new Strategy which is to be finalised by October 2007. Discussions will also need to be taken to the Inward Migration Action Group to highlight the differential impact upon settled in-migrants, develop other initiatives to address this and/or change the scope of the ESF funded project.

- 4.1.2** Gaps were identified in resources for translation and interpretation. This had been a proposed initiative as part of the Strategy but had not gone ahead for a variety of reasons. It was noted that the advice agency network had just secured funding for this from the Council which will directly impact upon the in-migrant project. It was agreed that the Community Based Language Assistants were regularly used for translation and interpretation which sometimes prevented them from direct work with families. It was agreed that an increase in this resource, together with greater clarity of their role should be explored as part of the next Strategy.

4.2 *Disability:*

The Strategy is not directly intended to increase equality of opportunity in relation to gender or disability. It was agreed that there was the potential for a differential impact on the grounds of a person's disability due to access to buildings and lack of provision of materials in appropriate formats. It was noted that there should be a standard for all materials provided with the provision of specific requirements on request wherever possible. It was noted that access to buildings was an issue that the whole advice network had identified and were addressing where possible. If a person presents with a disability, arrangements can be made to meet in an accessible setting. To date there is no record of a person being unable to access ESOL classes despite recognition that inaccessible buildings are used for classes. It was agreed that potential students should be made aware that consideration would be made to changing the venue if they are unable to attend because they cannot access the building.

- 4.2.1** It was highlighted that people who not have English as their first language may not fully

understand the range of impairments covered by the term disability. To address this it was agreed that a shortened version of the definition of disability in the Disability Discrimination Act should be translated into a number of the most used languages onto one sheet with a tick box at the bottom to indicate if they consider themselves to have a disability as part of a first contact interview.

4.2.2 In general it was agreed that more was required to be done to mitigate differential impacts for people who have a disability and be more explicit in publicity materials that actions have been or can be taken. Monitoring of disability will be introduced to ESOL classes, checks would be made to ensure that the website is fully accessible and it was agreed that the following documents would be disseminated to Strategy initiatives and discussions to take place regarding standardised adoption:

- DRC – Running An Event and Access to Buildings
- Scottish Consumer Council - Accessible Information
- Scottish Access to Information Forum

4.3 *Gender:*

There is no clear evidence at this stage about differential impacts because of gender. It was noted that there may be gaps in the provision of information to partners of in-migrant workers who are not working, predominantly young mothers, as some of the initiatives target in-migrant workers. Conversely it was noted that the Community Based Language Assistants are based around schools, they are likely to target more women. It was felt that this provided some balance to the methods of engaging with men and women. It was agreed that to enhance the likelihood of reaching the harder to reach women that formal links should be established between the Community Based Language Assistants and Health Visitors.

4.3.1 A discussion took place regarding the potential for conflict between gender laws and religion and belief as many of the issues are intertwined, for example: a Muslim man could withdraw himself from an ESOL class because of his views of the dress code of non Muslim women in attendance. It was clarified that as this would be based on the potential for discrimination, gender equality legislation would take precedence in this case.

5. Consultation

5.1 A questionnaire has been developed for service users to seek their views of the initiatives which will add to the findings of the impact assessment. Client views of the service are routinely sought by CAS. Employers will be contacted, although it was noted that some employers view these contacts as a waste of time.

5.2 The findings of this impact assessment will be discussed with project staff at the next review day.

6. Monitoring Implementation

6.1 The implementation of the recommendation of this EQIA will be reviewed at the end of February 2008.

	<u>Summary of Actions</u>	<u>When</u>	<u>By Whom</u>
1.	A question relating to relatives of in-migrants would be added to monitoring for the next Strategy to provide a clearer picture relating to age.	End Mar 2008	Dev Manager HIE/Policy Mgr HC
2.	A robust discussion about monitoring of sexual orientation to take place as part of the planning for the next Strategy	End Mar 2008	Dev Manager HIE/Policy Mgr HC
3.	Managers will ensure sensitivity to topic areas in relation to sexual orientation is exercised in ESOL classes and in general questions to service users from all elements of the Strategy.		English at Work Co-ordinator WEA
4.	Additional monitoring of nationality is required for the next Strategy to clearly identify who is using the services.	End Mar 2008	Dev Manager HIE/Policy Mgr HC
5.	The differential impact for longer standing in-migrants will be highlighted to the WBA Inward Migration Action Group	End Nov 2007	Dev Manager HIE
6.	An increase in provision of Community Based Language Assistants will be explored as part of the next Strategy.	End Mar 2008	Dev Manager HIE/Policy Mgr HC
7.	Discussions will take place to identify opportunities, such as marketing, to reduce differential impacts on in-migrants who are not Polish in the new Strategy	End Mar 2008	Dev Manager HIE/Policy Mgr HC
8.	Initiatives will be more explicit in publicity materials that actions to mitigate differential impacts because of a person's disability have been or can be taken.	End Dec 2007	All project leads
9.	Potential ESOL students should be made aware that consideration would be made to changing the venue if they are unable to attend because they cannot access the building.	From End Aug 2007	English at Work Co-ordinator WEA
10.	Monitoring of disability will be introduced to ESOL classes	From End Aug 2007	English at Work Co-ordinator WEA
11.	A shortened version of the definition of disability in the Disability Discrimination Act will be translated into a number of the most used languages onto one sheet with a tick box at the bottom to indicate if the service user considers themselves to have a disability to be used as part of a first contact interview.	From End Aug 2007	All project leads
12.	checks will be made to ensure that the website is fully accessible	End Sept 2007	Dev Manager

			HIE/Policy Mgr HC
13.	Guidance documents will be disseminated to initiatives and consistent adoption of new practices agreed	End Mar 2008	Dev Manager HIE/Policy Mgr HC
14.	Formal links will be established between the Community Based Language Assistants and Health Visitors.	End Dec 2007	ASL Manager, HC