

## **Scottish Affairs Committee Immigration and Scotland inquiry: SSSC response (December 2017)**

The Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) is the regulator for the social service workforce in Scotland. Our work means the people of Scotland can count on social services being provided by a trusted, skilled and confident workforce. We protect the public by registering social service workers, setting standards for their practice, conduct, training and education and by supporting their professional development. Where people fall below the standards of practice and conduct we can investigate and take action.

We:

- publish the national codes of practice for people working in social services and their employers
- register people working in social services and make sure they adhere to our Codes of Practice
- promote and regulate the learning and development of the social service workforce
- are the national lead for workforce development and planning for social services in Scotland.

We also have a responsibility for workforce data and intelligence. We produce workforce data, information and intelligence for employers and other stakeholders to support the development of the sector. We develop and publish official and national statistics on the social service workforce, including on people employed as Mental Health Officers (MHOs) by local authorities.

Given our roles around regulating and developing the workforce and around workforce data, we welcome the opportunity to respond to this inquiry.

### **What level of immigration to Scotland is required to meet the needs of the Scottish economy? How do these needs vary by sector? How do these needs compare to other parts of the UK?**

As the regulator for the Scottish social service workforce, our response focuses on the percentages of migrants working in social services in Scotland. The social service sector in Scotland employs approximately 200,000 people. They hold key roles in social work, adult social care and early learning and childcare.

To inform the committee's assessment of the level of immigration required, we have included current information on the percentages of migrant workers in the Scottish social service workforce and sub-sectors within it. Our response is

informed by data on nationality from the 2011-2016 Annual Population Surveys (APS) and Labour Force Survey (LFS) and country of birth data from the 2011 Scottish Census. Data from the APS, LFS and Scottish Census were analysed using the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) and Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) codes.

Data from the 2011 Scottish census shows that EEA and non-EEA migrants together made up 7.6% of the care sector's workforce in Scotland in 2011 and 7.2% of the employment in care occupations. EEA migrants make up 2.8% of the care sector's workforce and 2.8% of the employment in care occupations.

58.0% of all EEA migrants in care occupations in the 2011 census were in SOC 6145, care workers and home carers. (The Census term 'home care' broadly refers to what the SSSC calls 'care at home'.) EEA migrants were less likely to work in care (5.9%) than UK born workers (8.0%). Non-EEA migrants, on the other hand, were more likely to work in care occupations (9.1%).

The social service occupations with the highest proportions of EEA migrants compared to non EEA migrants and UK born workers were SOC 6122, childminders and related occupations (3.8%), followed by SOC 6145 care workers and home carers (3.2%).

The APS data suggests that the proportion of workers in social services in Scotland with an EU nationality has increased from 2.7% to 4.4% between 2011 and 2016. It also suggests that the number of non-EU nationals fell during that time from 3.6% to 1.1%, meaning that the overall number of migrants has fallen. We note that due to a small sample size it is possible that the difference could be explained by survey error variability.

The possible increase in the proportion of social service workers with an EU nationality indicates that current levels of immigration to Scotland should be maintained to meet the needs of the social service sector.

The Census data indicates that EEA migrants are not equally distributed across the sector or across job roles but the majority work as care workers or home carers. This sector, along with childminders and related occupations, contains proportionally more EEA workers than other sub-sectors. These sub-sectors would be affected more than others if greater restrictions on immigration are imposed.

**Does the UK's current immigration framework adequately provide for Scotland's needs? If not, how could the UK's immigration framework be changed to better meet Scotland's needs?**

The Care Inspectorate's statistical report on staff vacancies in care services in 2016 notes that 35% of services reported having vacancies at the end of 2016. In addition to these reported vacancies, we expect demand for social service

workers to rise due to factors such as the expansion of childcare provision and Scotland's aging population.

An immigration framework that adequately provides for Scotland's needs would take into account the need to meet the demands for social service workers. There is a risk that if further restrictions are placed on immigration, the number of vacancies will continue to rise and the framework would fail to meet the needs of the Scottish social service sector.

**What is the experience of Scottish businesses in employing non-UK nationals, and how could this be improved?**

We make no comment on this question.

**What post-Brexit immigration arrangements for EU citizens would best meet Scotland's needs?**

As our role is to make sure that Scottish social services are provided by a trusted, skilled and confident workforce, our answer focuses on immigration arrangements which would meet the needs of the Scottish social service sector.

We note that the Scottish Government has commissioned research from Ipsos MORI to improve understanding of the current role and contribution of workers from non-UK EU countries in key parts of the social care sector. The research aims to provide improved estimates of the numbers of non-UK EU workers in key parts of the sector and to provide insights into the roles and contributions of those workers. The project is expected to report in spring 2018.

The Scottish Government has set out its position on EU citizens working in social services in its Programme for Government 2016-17:

"Scotland's health and care sector benefits from the contribution of staff from across the EU. [...] Our message to those EU citizens and those staff is simple – we greatly value your work and your wider contribution to our society, and we will be working to see that your rights and place in our nation are protected."

The Care Inspectorate statistical report on staff vacancies in care services in 2016 states that care homes for adults, care homes for older people, care homes for children and young people, housing support services, and care at home services all had vacancy rates significantly above the national average.

As the Census indicates that the majority of EEA migrants working in Scottish social services work as care workers or home carers, restrictions on immigration could exacerbate the number of vacancies in these sub-sectors. If EEA migrant workers are no longer able to work in social services, the understaffing which would result may lead to greater numbers of UK or non-EEA workers deciding to leave the sector. We expect demand for social service workers to rise, whether or not there is a reduction in migration, due to factors such as the expansion of childcare provision and Scotland's aging population. Any rise in replacement

demand from workers leaving the sector following tighter controls on migration could therefore be difficult to meet. This could ultimately have an impact on the standard of care received by people who use services.

Immigration arrangements will affect the social service sector's ability to attract a more diverse range of people into working in social services. These arrangements may affect workforce planning processes. Immigration arrangements may also have an impact on the sector's ability to deliver on other key workforce drivers or initiatives. These include:

- the Race Equality Framework 2016-2030, which sets out the goals that Scotland's education, health and social care workforces should better reflect the diversity of its communities
- a recruitment marketing campaign has been launched which positively promotes careers in early learning and childcare
- the Scottish Government is due to publish the national workforce plan for health and social care, which is anticipated to detail actions to address recruitment and retention of social service workers
- work being led by NHS Education for Scotland (NES) to integrate health and social services workforce data, facilitating a more integrated approach to workforce planning and giving a more informed position on any gaps and future workforce requirements for local partnerships.

Scottish Social Services Council  
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