



Migration Matters Scotland Project

Report for participating pilot local authorities



**Co-financed by the European Fund for the
Integration of Third Country Nationals**

December 2013-June 2015

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1. Introduction

The Migration Matters Scotland (MMS) project was a 19-month project co-financed by the European Fund for the Integration of Third Country Nationals.¹ MMS was undertaken by COSLA Strategic Migration Partnership (CSMP). The project had a number of elements, including the development of a searchable database of Scotland-focused resources on migration and the integration of migrant groups in Scotland, and an updated internet-based version of CSMP's Migration Policy Toolkit. The database provides a home for research deriving from policy, academic and third sector sources while the toolkit is designed to assist local authorities and their community planning partners to assess and develop their approaches to the migrant communities in their localities. Both resources are now available on the CSMP website at www.migrationscotland.org.uk.

This report is concerned with a further element of the project which sought to investigate migrant views on service provision within selected local authority areas by piloting methods of engagement with migrants in these areas. This element of the project provided the opportunity to frame the pilot research in a manner relevant to the local level and, to feed back findings to council officers who design and deliver services for migrants. This direct engagement-focused element of the MMS project was undertaken to a greater or lesser extent in 5 local authority areas in Scotland between September 2014 to February 2015.

The nature and scale of the pilot study has led us to present the findings from our engagement activities in a single report rather than separate reports for each pilot authority. In so doing, it is hoped that a more robust and intricate picture of the views of participants can be presented. Moreover, it is also hoped that areas of commonality and divergence between participating local authority areas can be seen more easily.

While this report has been produced for the pilot authorities that participated in the MMS project, it is likely that the findings will be of relevance to other local authorities in Scotland. It should be read in conjunction with the online Migration Policy Toolkit mentioned above as this contains a great deal of information and case studies beyond what is presented in this document.

¹ The fund is also known as the European Integration Fund, or EIF, and is referred to as such in the remainder of this document.

² Argyll and Bute Council joined the project in November 2014 to replace a local authority that was unable to continue as one of the pilot areas.

³ The questions and themes covered in the officer interviews are included in this document at Appendix 1.

2. About the Pilot

Aim and scope of the pilot

The objective of this element of the MMS project was to gather data which would be useful to the participating pilot authorities. Findings from the engagement provided an opportunity to gain insight into views on service provision from both local authority and migrant perspectives. To this end, CSMP hoped to feed back to participating local authorities in a manner that would encourage the development of a constructive dialogue between service providers and service users going forward. Also, by highlighting areas of success and good practice and potential future development, it was hoped that the pilot work would serve as a platform for the ongoing, positive development of cohesive and integrated communities across Scotland.

The local authority areas that were involved in this element of the MMS project were: **Perth & Kinross, Fife, Edinburgh, Argyll & Bute** and **Dundee**. Perth & Kinross, Fife and Edinburgh were involved in all phases of the project while Dundee and Argyll & Bute were involved in some phases.

The engagement model developed for the project comprised the following key phases:

- Interview with officers in participating local authorities to record and explore the approaches taken to service provision for migrants in the area, focusing on locally developed practice, successes, challenges and concerns;
- Engagement with migrants in the participating local authority areas in order to garner their views on service provision, accessibility, good practice, obstacles to access and – where possible – to identify potential solutions to issues raised; and
- A final phase to bring together officers and migrants from the participating local authority areas to further discuss and reflect upon the issues raised over the course of the pilot activities and to ensure that representatives of the migrant communities involved in the project were able to speak with council officers on a face-to-face basis. It was hoped that this would also increase the potential for positive, constructive and tangible on-going engagement.

The level of involvement of each council area in the three phases of engagement is illustrated in Tables 1 and 2, below:

Table 1 – Engagement Phases

	Officer Interview	Engagement with migrants	Officer-migrant engagement
Argyll and Bute	Yes	No ²	Yes
Fife	Yes	Yes	Yes
Edinburgh	Yes	Yes	Yes
Dundee	No – but aware of project activities	Yes	Yes
Perth & Kinross	Yes	Yes	Yes

Table 2 – Migrant Engagement

Pilot Council	TCN Respondents	EU Respondents	Total	Countries of Origin represented:
Dundee	19	0	19	Pakistan, Iraq, India, Bangladesh, Mexico, Turkey
Perth & Kinross	58	8	66	China, India, Pakistan, Algeria, Syria, Bangladesh, Poland
Edinburgh	61	6	67	Nepal, Bangladesh, Morocco, Egypt, Pakistan, Poland, America, India, Ghana, Somalia, Japan, Hong Kong, China, Iraq, Nigeria, Jordan, Laos, Sudan, Greece, France
Fife	0	23	23	Poland
Argyll and Bute	0	0	0	Joined project after late withdrawal of another local authority; no engagement completed.
Totals	138	37	175	

² Argyll and Bute Council joined the project in November 2014 to replace a local authority that was unable to continue as one of the pilot areas.

Engagement activities

At the outset of the project, CSMP sought to meet with officers in the pilot councils for whom migration is part of their remit. These meetings were requested in order to give these officers the opportunity to discuss their local authority's approach to migration and migrant integration, as well as the ways in which they hoped to benefit from participation in the project.³ The data from these meetings was also important for informing the discussions – and later the analysis of data gathered – with representatives of the migrant communities in the pilot authority areas. The interviews also allowed the CSMP team to identify best practice in the pilot councils and feed these into other outcomes across the project.

In terms of engagement with migrant communities in the pilot areas, this was conducted using a [Ketso](#) kit to mediate the discussions. Ketso has been specifically developed to assist facilitation of inclusive community engagement. Ketso kits are designed to allow facilitators / researchers to identify areas for discussion and present these to session participants. The methodology also allows respondents to develop and record additional information. Further, the method is designed to foster inclusivity, enabling all to note their thoughts on a topic and record them using the kit, and encouraging the timid as well as the bold to put forward their views.

Each local engagement event comprised a Ketso session followed by discussion during which facilitators asked respondents to prioritise the findings of their group discussions and to further elaborate on the issues that had emerged from the discussions that had evolved during the Ketso session. Sessions were facilitated by CSMP staff who were then able to process the data gathered using quantitative analysis software that is provided with the Ketso kit. The research findings outlined in this report were informed by this analysis.⁴

Facilitated discussions piloted at a Thematic Event hosted by CSMP at the COSLA Conference Centre in Edinburgh on 26th February 2015 built on this work, using the data from the Ketso sessions to guide / underpin discussions at the event. The event was designed to provide a platform for council officers working with migration as part of their remit to meet directly with migrant service users. In addition, it was hoped that information gathered and exchanged at the event, as well as contacts made, could potentially provide a useful platform for ongoing exchange and the cross fertilisation of ideas. As such, migrant representatives had the opportunity to meet and discuss issues with council officers, third sector workers, health / wellbeing and ESOL service providers, and others during the course of the day.

In addition, CSMP engaged a social research company – ODS Consulting – to work with us to deliver other elements of the MMS project. Chiefly, ODS were tasked with reviewing and revising the Migration Policy Toolkit that CSMP had authored in 2010-11, while they were also asked to assess the efficacy and appropriateness of the pilot engagement methods that CSMP utilised during the project. Separate documents are available that summarise their findings in relation to both pieces of work and both reviews informed the findings outlined below.

³ The questions and themes covered in the officer interviews are included in this document at Appendix 1.

⁴ The quantitative analysis from the Ketso sessions is summarised in the charts that are attached at Appendix 2.

Third Country Nationals

As the title of the EIF funding stream suggests, the MMS project was required to have an overt focus on Third Country Nationals (TCNs). TCN is an immigration category to describe migrants whose country of origin lies beyond the borders of the European Union. The specific focus of the EIF funding is on TCN migrants who have come to the UK in the last 10 years.

However, the CMSP team was committed to undertaking engagement in participating pilot authorities which was reflective of the realities of the current migration situation in Scotland. Thus, CSMP committed to speak to all migrants who wished to participate in the research and the engagement phases of the project gathered views from both TCN and EU migrants to Scotland.

As Table 2, above, shows, CSMP succeeded in engaging with 138 migrants who were TCNs and 37 migrants who were from other EU countries during the course of the project. Analysis of the data that was collected shows that the issues that migrants raised were broadly similar regardless of their country of origin. However, in recognition of the parameters of the funding, where issues emerged solely among TCN respondents, this is noted in the analysis.

3. Research findings

Structure

The analysis is structured around key themes that were used to underpin the engagement. CSMP identified 5 key service areas that migrant respondents were asked to consider during the workshops. The themes were:

- **Housing**
- **Employment**
- **Health and Leisure**
- **Social Connections**
- **Education**

These themes were chosen as it was felt they broadly covered the majority of council led service provision areas that have most impact on migrants. However, migrants still had the opportunity to prioritise the issues of importance to them that did not fall into these categories. While we recognise that some of the issues that they highlighted, both within and outwith the five categories, are not within local authorities' purview or, are not current priorities at a local level, they are nonetheless noted here in order that this report provides a true reflection of the content of the engagement undertaken.

A short summary of key issues from migrants' perspectives and some recommendations for councils is provided at the end of each theme. Quotations are used for illustrative purposes throughout. While respondents are anonymous, migrants' status (EU or TCN) and the local authority area in which they reside is noted in brackets after the quote; for instance (TCN, Perth & Kinross).

Theme 1: Housing

The majority of input around housing in all pilot areas was focussed on rents and Council Tax. In particular, respondents felt that both were too high for those in low paid positions broadly typical of those occupied by migrants participating in the study. That said, knowledge of who sets Council Tax and issues around Council Tax banding and the current Council Tax freeze was lacking amongst the respondents, many of whom did not have a basic understanding of this system. There may be a number of explanations for this and councils may wish to consider if or how they communicate with residents in this regard and how accessible information is to migrants. It may also be that some migrants will have relocated from countries where there is a culture of mistrust towards any kind of authority, including public sector organisations. Thus, even those who know that their local authority is responsible for collecting Council Tax may well be reticent when it comes to approaching council offices should they wish to obtain further information. Addressing this particular issue is likely to be more challenging.

Aside from rent and Council Tax issues, many respondents were concerned with their rights and entitlements as tenants and were often unsure of landlords' obligations towards them. The majority of the migrants with whom we spoke were in the private rented sector, but questions associated with rights, entitlements and, indeed, responsibilities, are likely to arise across all tenures. Thus, while information may be generally available in this regard, there may be value in presenting this specifically to a migrant audience in order to ensure that the message is reaching this group.

Availability of housing was another issue that was raised. This can be a particular challenge in more rural areas where housing stock is sparse and / or potentially expensive. This can also cause problems for councils that are seeking to utilise inward migration as a means of growing their population or filling particular skills shortages – while there may be jobs for would-be migrants there can be a lack of appropriate housing that can prevent them from relocating.

Providing access to housing for migrants can also be complicated by local views on housing priorities. For example in Argyll and Bute council officers noted:

often within the communities, there is a certain degree of resistance to incomers when we're trying to build new affordable housing in small rural areas. It's very much the perception of the communities that they want to have local lettings initiatives so that local people who are in housing need get priority and I think there's probably a bit of work to be done explaining the importance of accepting new people into the community.

Thus, it is vital that information sharing and management of expectations takes place both with the migrant and resident population.

Various solutions to housing-related issues were highlighted during our research, not only in the pilot areas but also in other parts of the country. In Perth and Kinross, for instance, the minority communities' hub MEAD hosts the council's housing staff for regular surgeries which allow for dialogue (with language support provided) between the council and migrants in the area. Aberdeen City Council, on the other hand, has developed web-based resources on housing and the cost of living in the city with an additional focus on providing information for (would-be) migrants. At the time of writing, the website is being redeveloped but once it is completed it will provide information and translations in at least five languages (Polish, Russian, Lithuanian, Latvian and Romanian).⁵ One advantage of a web-based resource is its flexibility and 'up-dateability', though ease of web access among some groups in the target audience could be an issue. Another interesting model of practice saw housing as a topic for discussion at an ESOL Learners' Conference in Edinburgh. In this "*they [learners] devised the whole content of the conference about what were the issues that were affecting them. And we arranged workshops around that, around issues to do with housing, renting in the private sector*" (City of Edinburgh, council officer interview).

Key issues for migrants

- Poor knowledge of rights and entitlements, particularly vis-à-vis private landlords;
- Poor knowledge of the various costs (including rent, Council Tax and deposits) associated with renting property. Some respondents also had difficulty in providing references if these were required.

⁵ The website in question can be accessed at <http://www.aberdeeninvestlivevisit.co.uk>.

Recommendations for councils

- Consider the information that your council currently provides to residents in relation to housing rights, responsibilities and entitlements in all tenures and whether or not additional or alternative approaches are required to 'reach' migrants in your area;
- Develop an evidence base regarding the impact that migration can have in your area as a means of addressing residents' (often negative) views regarding migrants moving into their areas.

Theme 2: Employment

A variety of views were expressed on the topic of employment. While some study participants thought that it was easy enough to get a job, they were in the minority overall. The majority of respondents found the transition to the Scottish jobs market to be more challenging. Further, the jobs that they did end up getting were often at the lower end of the pay and skills range (farm and factory work for example).

A recurring theme was that of adapting one's qualifications and skills to the UK jobs market and gaining work experience in the UK in order to be in a position to compete for jobs. Only one workshop participant mentioned contacting NARIC (the UK agency responsible for providing information and advice on vocational, academic and professional skills and qualifications from all over the world) or Skills Development Scotland to discuss the translation of her current qualifications and the appropriate next steps needed to pursue her chosen career path in Scotland. Overall, migrants who engaged with the MMS project demonstrated poor awareness of these services in particular and of how one might approach the issue of 'translating' qualifications in general.

More positively, voluntary work was raised by a number of respondents as a useful means of gaining experience that might lead to paid employment. For example, one respondent in Dundee had researched her employment prospects very extensively before coming to Scotland and had then gained voluntary experience over a three-year period prior to moving into paid employment. She was realistic about her job prospects and had accepted that it might be challenging, at least initially, for her to find work in the field in which she was employed in her country of origin.

Volunteering was also highlighted as an excellent opportunity to "give back" to Scottish communities. It is, however, notable that the notion of volunteering and volunteer work is unfamiliar to some migrants and has negative connotations for others, particularly for migrants from countries where 'volunteering' has, at times, been a compulsory element of their civic life. Such barriers need to be addressed if migrants are to have the best chance of accessing the volunteering opportunities that are potentially open to them.

A number of respondents across the pilot study areas felt that Job Centres were poorly equipped when it came to assisting migrants with their searches for work. Communicating with staff in Job Centres was often cited as being problematic in this regard. In addition, it was suggested that Job Centres do not offer sufficient practical assistance to job seekers, such as helping them to use the computers and to look up and apply for jobs directly. On the other hand, voluntary organisations such as Fife Migrants

Forum, MEAD in Perth and Kinross and Dundee International Women's Centre were seen as places to turn for support, advice and appropriate guidance. This was often provided by multi-lingual staff whose familiarity with UK / Scottish work culture, along with their ability to interpret for clients, was invaluable as migrants sought to negotiate not only the job seeking process, but also the workplace itself.

Such organisations can also afford migrants with volunteering opportunities: a number of the migrants that we interviewed had volunteered for these organisations having initially benefitted from their support when they first arrived in the country. There were also instances of this leading to gainful employment. For example, MEAD has supported the development of Language Base, a social enterprise providing interpreting and translation services in Perth and Kinross. Language Base emerged – in part – to provide opportunities for multi-lingual migrants to up skill, become qualified in the field and enter the workplace. Language Base has a contract for the provision of local services to the council.

Key issues for migrants

- Migrants often have limited knowledge of how their skills and qualifications translate into a Scottish context and better signposting of services is required in this regard.
- Third sector organisations play a crucial role in supporting migrants in negotiating the complexities of the jobs market and their services are highly valued by the migrants that utilise them.
- Volunteering can be a hugely important means of transitioning into paid employment. However, there can be negative connotations for some migrants which may need to be overcome in the first instance.

Recommendations for councils

- Local authorities are major employers in their areas and councils therefore have the opportunity to exhibit best practice in the employment of migrant workers. Mentoring and shadowing opportunities can also be of great value and may be worth exploring.
- Recognise the important role that third sector organisations play in providing support and services to migrants. While current financial constraints may make it more and more challenging for councils to provide financial support to such organisations, opportunities for developing collaborative and innovative relationships with them should still be explored.

Theme 3: Health and Leisure

Good health and active involvement in leisure activities are recognised as important platforms for the successful inclusion and integration of migrants. The migrants involved in our research clearly recognised this, with rich and detailed conversations taking place during the engagement in relation to both the services that they access and the issues that they face in seeking to do so.

In connection to health, GP and hospital service access and provision were the issues most commonly raised across all pilot local authority areas. Although these services are

outwith the responsibility of Scotland's councils, our findings are still summarised here as they serve to illuminate important aspects of migrant service use and integration at a local level.

Key concerns in terms of accessing healthcare – which recurred across all pilot areas – were:

- The length of time it takes to get an appointment;
- Difficulties associated with negotiating telephone queuing systems – which can be particularly challenging if English is not the migrant's first language – or automated phone systems which are very difficult to use for people with strongly accented English;
- Short appointments with very limited time to discuss health issues can be particularly difficult for people with limited English skills;
- An inability to access specialists in the way that they can be accessed in countries of origin; and
- Waiting lists and the length of time taken for referrals.

The way respondents discussed these issues underscored two central opinions: to a great extent, respondents believed that their medical complaints were not taken seriously and also believed that their negative experiences were as a result of their migrant status. This view is summarised in the following quote:

Sometimes it's "ok, you are from Poland so I just give you some antibiotics" but, ok I don't need antibiotics, just please check correctly if everything is fine... They don't give you any information if they do take blood or urine; you're only told that "everything's fine." In Poland you would get your read outs... and all the explanation (EU, Fife).

However, research shows that the issues experienced by migrants are also those that are often faced by the resident population.⁶ Thus, it may be that, although respondents attribute their negative experiences to their status as migrants, this is not necessarily the case. Rather, the problems encountered are indicative of those that are currently faced by a broad cross-section of service users.

Whatever the position, it is clear that, very often, migrants do not 'know the system' and that 'the system' often fails to meet their expectations if not their needs. As such, there is, at the very least, a need to manage expectations and to further migrants' knowledge of the healthcare context in this country. There are clear opportunities to do this. It was noted, for instance, that the GP / NHS is the one service that all migrants are likely to access at one time or another. Thus, places like GP surgeries are good locations to 'reach' migrants and distribute information to them that is both clear and accessible.

With regard to leisure, it is notable that the engagements conducted for the MMS project often took place in such a context. For instance, in Perth and Kinross, the Ketso sessions were hosted at community lunch clubs that are an important means of interaction for migrants in the area (see also our findings in relation to social connections, below). In

⁶ See, for instance, [The Health & Care Experience Survey 2013-2014](#).

terms of the key leisure activities and / or facilities that were highlighted by the migrants that we spoke to, libraries seemed to be particularly important. Some participating pilot councils have worked hard to provide language specific reading material (chosen in consultation with parents / native speakers) at local libraries. In the case of Perth and Kinross, council officers made reference to the location of libraries within community campuses as a means of migrants accessing other services such as gyms and leisure centres.

While engagement participants welcomed the availability of books in their own languages – migrants in Fife, for instance, emphasised the ‘Polish Shelf’ at the local library as an important and appreciated resource – Perth-based respondents highlighted that there is still scope for reminding community members of the services that are available to them. They also had issues with the range of languages that were available:

In the library there’s only English books, there should be Hindi and Urdu, because some people ... can’t understand English books like they can Hindi or Urdu (TCN, Perth & Kinross).

Other respondents knew of the availability of books in other languages but claimed that they were not appropriate languages for their community.

Another issue raised by TCN women in particular and highlighted during engagement in Perth and Kinross and Dundee was that of access to ‘women only’ swimming facilities. Women only swimming sessions had previously been organised by the council in Perth & Kinross in response to community request but pool access had become problematic:

We don’t have swimming facilities for women only, including my friends in Perth and Kinross, they are not able to access a swimming pool ... it’s a community specific issue: women need women’s only time for swimming (TCN, Perth & Kinross).

Interestingly, the wider research conducted during the MMS project highlighted this as a particular difficulty in other parts of the country too. As such, a case study is being developed in our online Migration Policy Toolkit which will highlight how the issue is being addressed in one particular council area.

Key issues for migrants

- Many migrants lack knowledge of the health and leisure services that are available to them and, in some cases at least, their expectations do not match the realities of service provision in this country.
- Telephone triage systems are very difficult for non-native speakers to negotiate. While this issue was raised in relation to health services, it clearly has wider application.
- Libraries were viewed as an important service by many of the migrants that we spoke to.
- TCN women place a great deal of importance on access to culturally sensitive swimming provision.

Recommendations for councils

- The example of healthcare, while not directly relevant to councils, highlights the importance of managing migrants' expectations with regard to service provision, and the need to provide services that recognise their differing contexts and language needs.
- While the migrants that we spoke to during our research appreciated the provision of bespoke services for their communities – such as library books in their own languages – some would welcome further engagement with them as to which services would be most appropriate for their communities. There also seems to be scope for publicising the services that are available more widely as a means of raising awareness within the relevant communities.
- Opportunities for 'reaching' migrants – for instance in GP surgeries, health centres and the various 'shared campuses' that are being developed in many councils areas – should be explored as means of informing them as to the services that are available to them.

Theme 4: Social Connections

Both statutory and third sector organisations play a crucial role in supporting migrants' social integration and provide important avenues into a variety of social settings. This was clearly illustrated in the MMS project as we witnessed the breadth of work carried out by the councils and migrant organisations with which we engaged, as well as the connections that migrants made with each other, and with the local population, through community groups hosted by churches, religious groups and a wide range of other services including schools, ESOL classes, libraries and other community hubs.

Of course, many migrants do not access such groups and services. While for some that may be because they do not feel the need and / or because they have found other means of integrating in their communities, for others it is because they are unable to access the services that are on offer. Geography can play a crucial role in this regard, as can issues associated with transport, language and employment, as one respondent in Fife explained:

In Fife there are lots of places, like Kirkcaldy, Dunfermline and a lot of small villages. If someone lives in small village they don't have connections with other people, for example. In Edinburgh it's easier to find other people who are your age or whatever... and because of transport you know, it's really expensive so some people stay after work at home, and they don't have access to, for example, leisure centres or the library or this kind of service. Of course it's connected with languages as well but it's place [that is the key factor] (EU, Fife).

There was also recognition from participants that integration is a two-way process that requires buy in from migrants and the local population alike:

It's both sides, because ethnic minority people are not getting involved, especially for Scottish events, and Scottish people is not so much interested for getting involved with minority groups (TCN, Edinburgh).

However, while the quote above illustrates the negative perception that one migrant had in this regard, there are numerous examples of initiatives where migrants and the local community *are* coming together in a meaningful way. To highlight just one that emerged from our engagement activities, council officers in Edinburgh discussed a successful initiative whereby the local community in one part of the city set up a playgroup, having noticed the difficulties that young migrant mothers were having in integrating:

[There is] this project and [...] these local people who started this playgroup, mother and child group ... specifically for the minority ethnic community – the non-English speaking community in the area. And it's been run by local people and they have, they're running it themselves as volunteers and what they're saying is they recognised a lot of these women and children didn't speak English and therefore weren't integrating into the community and they thought this would help them, and they'd get them to speak English (City of Edinburgh, council officer interview).

The benefits of such provisions are recognised by migrants too, albeit that the quote that follows seems to refer to an initiative that is no longer in place:

There used to be a mother and toddler group for minority women, this was useful for getting to know each other's cultures (TCN, Edinburgh).

Our research would suggest that the fostering of opportunities for developing social connections between different migrant groups – recognising that migrants themselves are far from being a homogenous group of people – and between migrants and the local population is a crucial means of supporting migrants' integration into the communities in which they reside.

Key issues for migrants

- Platforms for engagement provided through migrant organisations, churches, ESOL classes, schools and various other services have a vital role to play in providing forums in which social connections can be established.
- Access issues can cause significant issue for migrants, particularly in Scotland's more rural areas.
- Migrants to Scotland are keen to make more meaningful links with local residents but opportunities can be limited.

Recommendations for councils

- When planning future service provision, seek to involve migrants / migrant organisations in your consultation exercise in order that their particular needs can be identified and addressed.
- Consider 'hard to reach' migrants in your council area (whether due to physical isolation, language, employment or lack thereof) and means of ensuring that they have opportunities to develop social connections and integrate into the local community.
- Identify areas of council service provision that are heavily utilised by migrants (schools, nurseries and libraries for instance) and identify means of fostering greater interaction between migrants and the local population through these services.

Theme 5: Education

Issues associated with education generated a great deal of discussion during our engagement activities, with a wide variety of topics discussed in relation to both children's and adult education. Child-related education issues ranged from the specific, such as concerns raised by a number of respondents, particularly during our Dundee engagement, regarding a lack of provision of Halal school meals, to more general confusion regarding parents' expectations of how and where their children would be educated. For instance, some talked of their frustrations regarding school catchment areas – perhaps best encapsulated in one migrant's comments about “not being able to send my child to the school behind my house” (TCN, Edinburgh) – with many exhibiting a poor understanding of how such policies are determined and what parents' rights and responsibilities are.

Some parents talked about the need for more to be done to protect their children from discrimination at school and how they wished to see greater understanding being developed between migrant and non-migrant children. This led to interesting discussions during our Fife sessions in particular regarding the teaching of Polish in schools and a pilot language teaching project currently underway in St Andrews aimed at supporting the integration process at the local level.⁷ Such an approach can have wider benefits too as it can enhance cultural awareness and respect between parents as their children mix more and more with each other. More broadly, as delegates discussed during our Thematic Event, there is potential for the multi-lingualism of migrant children to be an asset to Scotland in the future. According to 2011 census figures, Polish has already become the most widely spoken minority language in Scotland and economic links between the two countries have strengthened significantly in the last decade. There are therefore opportunities which may be worthy of exploration in this regard.⁸

Issues associated with adult education were dominated by discussions in relation to ESOL provision. Overall, ESOL classes were very positively perceived and respondents recognised the opportunities afforded them through the classes to improve their English language and to build social connections and networks. However, access to ESOL can be compromised by a variety of issues. Class timetabling, for instance, can make it difficult for migrants to attend if they have work commitments. This issue can be difficult to address, particularly given the waiting lists that often exist for classes taking place outwith normal working hours. Workplace ESOL provision is one solution that has been highlighted though. It is included in the current ESOL Strategy for Scotland as an important means of responding to the needs of the migrant workforce.⁹

⁷ Further details can be found on the Fife Polish Education Trust's website at <http://polisheducation.org.uk>.

⁸ See Martowicz & Roach: <http://www.migrationscotland.org.uk/martowicz-and-roach-2014-polish-language-learning-scotland-key-facts-and-opportunities>

⁹ *Welcoming our Learners: Scotland's ESOL Strategy 2015 – 2020* can be accessed on the Education Scotland website here:

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/communitylearninganddevelopment/about/policy/esolstrategy.asp>

Another issue that was raised by TCN women in particular was the lack of women only ESOL classes:

The vast majority of ESOL classes aren't gender based so you've got mixed groups where some women won't access that anyway because it's mixed gender (TCN, Edinburgh).

Lack of crèche provision and childcare was another recurring issue. Where it was available, cost and inflexible booking systems both caused problems:

The waiting is 3 years for an ESOL course and I know every year the college crèche places must be block booked so if you then can't attend your class for whatever reason, this is an expensive waste ... It's also very expensive, you have a minimum booking of 4 hours for example (TCN, Edinburgh).

The third sector organisations with which we engaged on the project often provided both ESOL and tailored crèche facilities that provided migrants with the flexibility that they desired at either low or no cost. They also provided improved access to beginners' ESOL-type teaching in addition to volunteering opportunities for migrants who had better English and were able to lead such classes. Such an approach could potentially help to alleviate local pressures on ESOL provision in addition to encouraging a more sustainable approach to service provision, particularly in view of the financial constraints that public services now face. The view that such community-led initiatives will be necessary if services are to survive or develop in the long term was one that was articulated by a number of participants over the course of the project.

Although issues associated with the delivery of classes were discussed by many of our respondents, the biggest concern for the migrants that we engaged with was in relation to the cost of courses and inconsistencies in cost dependent upon the immigration status of the individuals concerned. TCN migrants were particularly exercised in this regard as they tended to have to pay considerably more for classes than their counterparts from within the EU:

I've been in college for English classes. For European people, they pay £100 for 10 classes and for us, because we're not European people, we have to pay four times, £400 for the same service! (TCN, Perth & Kinross).

the first thing I did when I came here to Scotland is to go to the college asking about English classes. Here in Perth I have to pay more than £180 a week part time, part time! And I have a friend in Glasgow with the same situation and his is in free college, free English classes (TCN, Perth & Kinross).

As the second quote above highlights, pricing structures for ESOL courses vary across local authority areas and providers and migrants often find this mix difficult to understand and negotiate. Some providers offer free classes to beginners regardless of status, while others link their charging structures to employment status but offer fee waivers to students in financial difficulty. This differentiated approach may well account for the variety of, often conflicting, opinions expressed by migrants regarding ESOL during the project.

Key issues for migrants

- A number of our migrant participants lacked a good understanding of how decisions were made in relation to their children's education. This was particularly apparent with regard to the determination of catchment areas and parents' right to make placing requests.
- Negotiating the complexities of ESOL charging across different providers. This was particularly challenging for TCN migrants who seemed to face higher charges and differentiation of charging between providers.
- Accessing ESOL classes around work and / or childcare commitments proved to be difficult for some migrants.
- Community-led language learning initiatives were highly valued by participants. This included instances whereby migrants taught other migrants basic English on a voluntary basis.

Recommendations for councils

- Consider whether clearer information is required in relation to policies such as the determination of school catchment areas and how parents can make placing requests.
- Through your Community Learning and Development (CLD) Partnership, ensure that ESOL provision in your council area is publicised effectively and that there is clarity as to the charges that different categories of migrants face.

Additional Observations

Migrant participants were afforded the opportunity to develop their own themes for discussion during the Ketso sessions and, as such, a variety of issues were raised that did not fit neatly into the categorisations set out above. A brief summary of these is provided here.

Travel and public transport issues were raised by various participants, but particularly those in Fife and Perth and Kinross, perhaps reflecting more significant challenges faced by migrants in smaller urban centres and more rural areas. Key issues were the cost and frequency of services and poor weekend services.

In some pilot areas – particularly Dundee and Edinburgh – overall (sub)urban cleanliness was a significant issue, with the perceived infrequency of rubbish collections and dog mess in the street often discussed. Other issues that arose regularly included:

- Difficulties in attending council offices as they are closed outwith regular office hours;
- Difficulties navigating 'the system'. For instance, a lack of knowledge about where to go to register a birth, or to register with a GP;
- Short retail opening hours which cause difficulties for those in full time employment;
- Lack of language support, in banks for example;
- Immigration-related issues such as difficulties associated with securing visas for family to visit and the 'Life in the UK' test.

Some of these issues are revealing of the fact that many of the migrant participants were unclear as to the extent / limits of local authorities' remit and powers. Thus, issues relating to visas, for example, often arose in discussions ostensibly concerned with local level provision. Others, such as issues with opening hours, perhaps reflect challenges that migrants have adapting to levels of service provision that differ from what is provided in their countries of origin. All such issues point towards the importance of councils and, indeed, other public service providers, clarifying the services that they are, and are not, able to provide.

4. Conclusion

This project has highlighted a variety of issues raised by migrants which we hope will help to inform the local authorities that were involved in the pilot – and indeed local authorities more broadly – regarding the needs and aspirations of migrants residing in their localities. While the [Migration Policy Toolkit](#) that has been developed as another part of the MMS project contains a great deal more advice and a variety of case studies which we hope will inform the approach that councils and their community planning partners take to supporting their migrant populations, there are a number of key points from our engagement activities which we would wish to highlight in concluding this report.

Engaging migrants

The migrants who engaged in the project were particularly appreciative of the opportunity that they had been given to discuss the challenges that they face and the ways in which they would wish these to be addressed. However they often lacked a good understanding of the role of councils and what they can and cannot do for them. It is therefore important that consideration is given to means of engaging with migrants in order that they are given a voice and that they have a clearer understanding of how councils are able to support them as they seek to integrate into the communities where they live. It is also in the interests of councils to gain a better understanding of the composition of their migrant communities in order that they can plan services accordingly. There is no one-size-fits-all solution in this regard – migrants are not a homogenous group of people and consideration is required as to the best means of reaching out to and supporting the diverse communities that exist.

In terms of the methods that were utilised in this project, the use of Ketso was generally well received and may be worthy of consideration for future engagement undertaken by councils. Migrants participating in the sessions were pleased that their opinions were being sought and that they were directly / tangibly involved in discussions about their day-to-day lives. Further, the kits were straightforward to use and provided opportunities for all to put forward their views. However, there is a written element to Ketso and some respondents were concerned about the level of their English. Analysis of data also made it clear that – on occasion – instructions on how to use the kit had not always been fully understood. In addition to the written notes, Ketso provides an opportunity for facilitators to “listen in” on discussions that workshop participants have while they are ordering and prioritising their opinions. In groups where all participants hailed from the same country of origin and utilised their native language, this was not possible, as facilitators did not speak the languages in question.

With regard to the Thematic Event that we held in February 2015, feedback was very positive, although fewer migrants than we had hoped were able to attend. This meant that the ratio of migrants / migrant representative to local authority representative was less balanced than we would have liked. Smaller, local events based on the same model could provide a relatively straightforward and interesting way for local authorities to engage with their migrant communities. Travel to and from a local venue would not be such an obstacle to participation and an evening / after work meeting might also be a feasible proposition.

Leadership and collaboration

The local authorities that have participated in this study have done much to reach out to and engage with migrants in their localities. While it is vital that frontline staff are appropriately trained to support migrants who seek to access services from them, of perhaps even more importance is local political leadership and senior officer involvement in supporting integration and addressing challenges that migrants can face. Similarly, partnership working is crucial, not only with community planning partners, but also with the various third sector organisations that reach out to and provide services for migrants. The migrant community organisations with which we engaged on this project played a vital role for the migrants that we spoke to, not only in terms of service provision but also in building trust and supporting their fuller integration. Closer, more collaborative working relationships with such organisations are worthy of consideration.

Appendix 1

Migration Matters Scotland: Questions for Council Officer / Community Planning Partner Interview:

Local Context

1. Can you talk about your role and how migration fits in terms of your overall policy brief?
2. Could you give us an overview of migration to your council area? [While we can get statistical information from NRS, it would be useful here to get a sense of the different migrant communities that exist and are currently emerging and on what basis e.g. are there geographical areas within the council area where migrants gravitate to, do communities develop on ethnic / nationality grounds, etc. Also useful would be a sense of how long certain migrant groups have been in the council area and whether some are more transient than others].
3. Does the council actively seek to attract migrants (or certain 'types' of migrants) to the council area? If so, could you discuss this policy / strategy and how successful it has been?
4. More broadly, could you talk about if / how the council plans for migration? Has this approach changed significantly over the years and do you envisage further change going forward? If so, why is that?
[If it's not picked up in the interviewee's answer, explore whether or not the council uses a targeted approach to dealing with migration / migrant integration or if they take more of a mainstreaming approach. If it's the latter, explore what has precipitated this e.g. have funding pressures influenced the approach or is there a belief that mainstreaming is more appropriate notwithstanding funding pressures].
5. Can you talk about the current challenges that the council is facing with regard to migration and the integration of migrants? For instance, have there been any significant community cohesion issues that the council and other service providers have had to deal with?
6. Are there particular challenges associated with migration to your council area that you see on the horizon? Is the council planning for these challenges and, if so, how is it doing so?
7. Is your approach to migration influenced by the approach taken in other local authorities? Do you work together with other (neighbouring) local authorities with regard to migration policy? To what end?

Engagement Experiences

8. How does the council seek to engage directly with migrants? Do you have a strategy for reaching groups that are hard to engage / reach? Do you have specific feedback channels / structures in place which allow for review or measurement of the 'migrant view' regarding service provision?

9. Do you have any examples of ways in which you have sought to empower migrants or work together / co-produce with them? What has worked well and why? What has worked less well and why?

Expectations re MMS

10. What attracted you to getting involved in this pilot?
11. Is there anything you particularly want to gain from this pilot work, whether in terms of particular outputs or outcomes? One of our outputs will be a resource that will build on the Policy Toolkit that we developed in 2010 [provide brief background re the Toolkit here if the interviewee is unfamiliar with it]. Is there anything in particular that you would find useful in such a resource?
12. Is there anything in particular you want to understand from / learn about migrants in your council area?

Next Steps re MMS

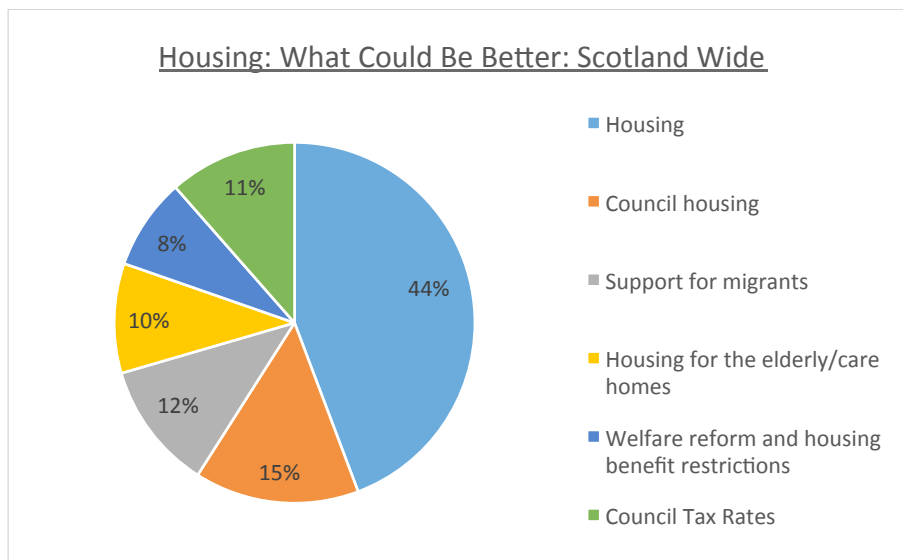
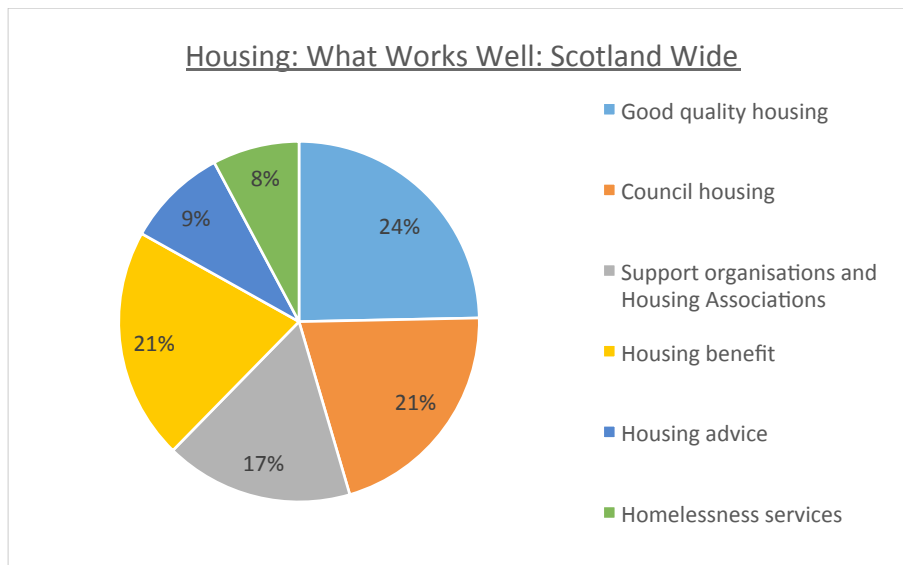
13. Discuss our plans in the council area and how the interviewee feels about them. Specifically, discuss:
 - the individuals / groups that we're engaging and if any omissions on our part;
 - the timeframes we're working to;
 - our plans for joint migrant / officer engagement and if any issues / concerns regarding our proposed approach; and
 - anything else the interviewee thinks is missing from the process or that we need to consider.

Appendix 2

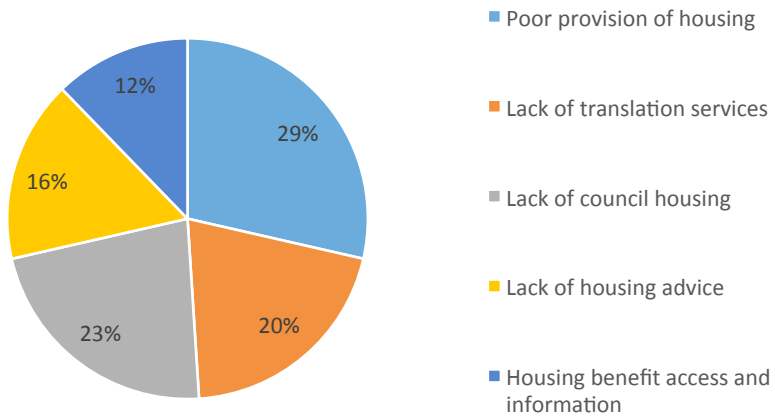
Quantitative Research: Summary of Findings from Ketso Analysis

The data from the Ketso sessions was fed into a bespoke spreadsheet that comes with the Ketso kit. This then generated statistics, graphs and charts on the key issues that were raised during discussions. The charts summarising key points under each of the themes that were discussed are reproduced below. Please note that these are colour coded and need to be viewed on screen or in a colour print out if they are to be meaningful.

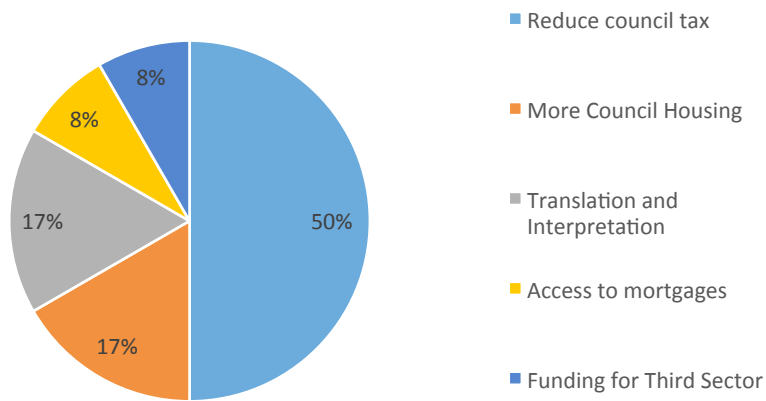
Theme 1: Housing



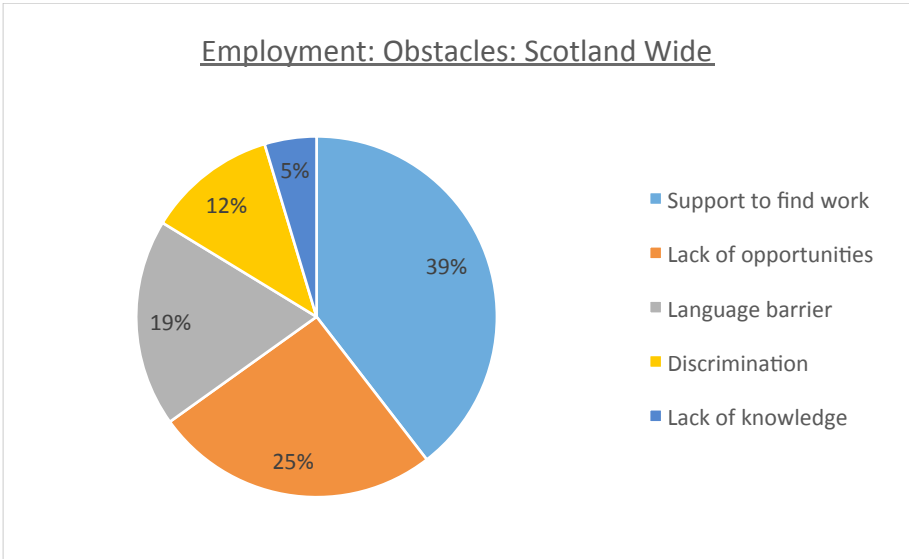
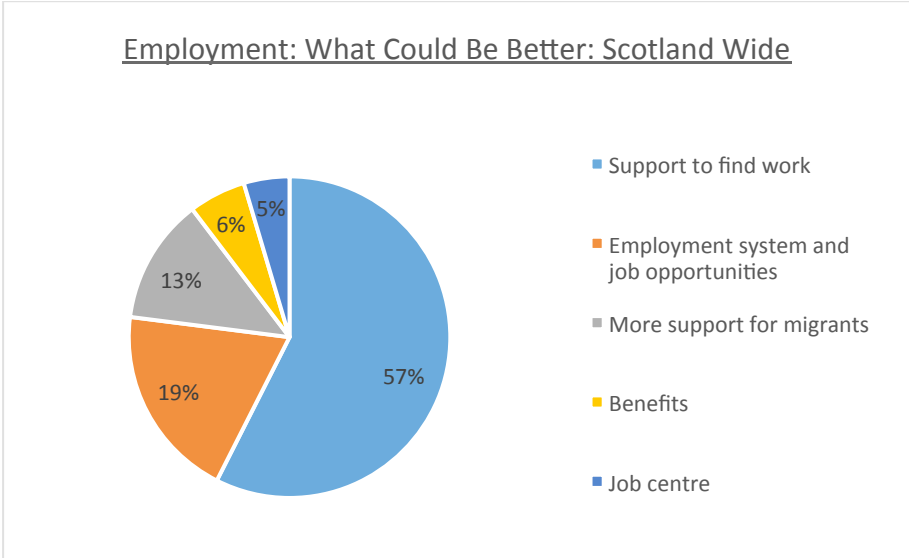
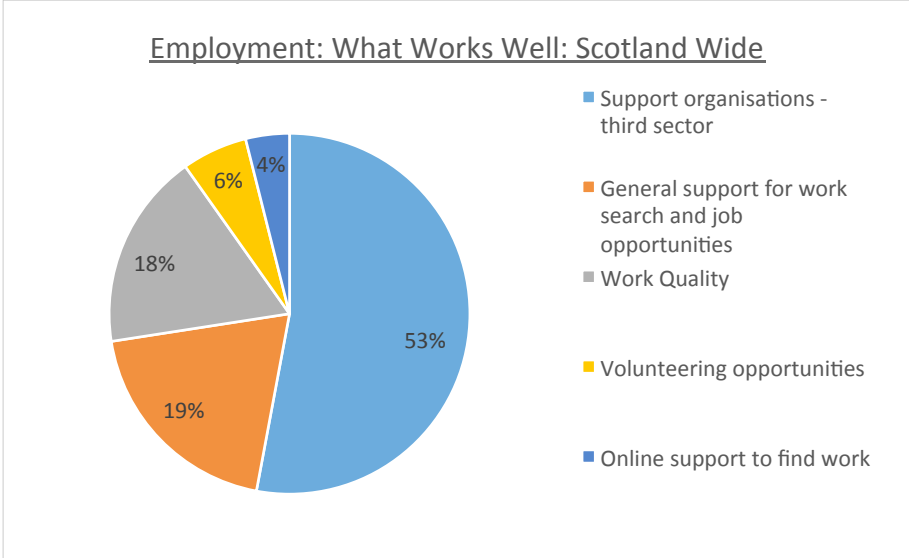
Housing: Obstacles: Scotland Wide



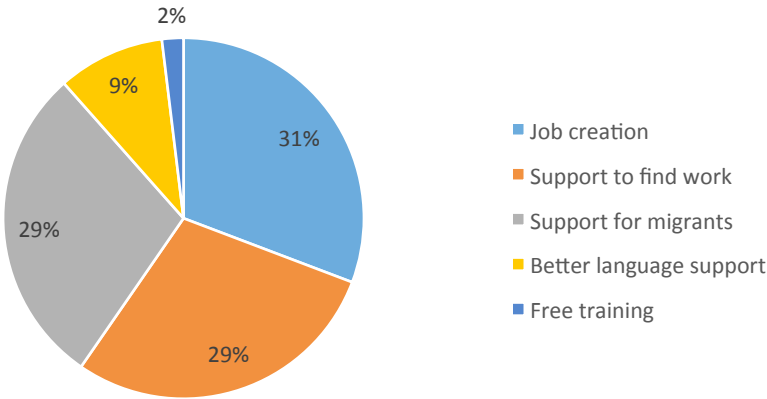
Housing: Solutions: Scotland Wide



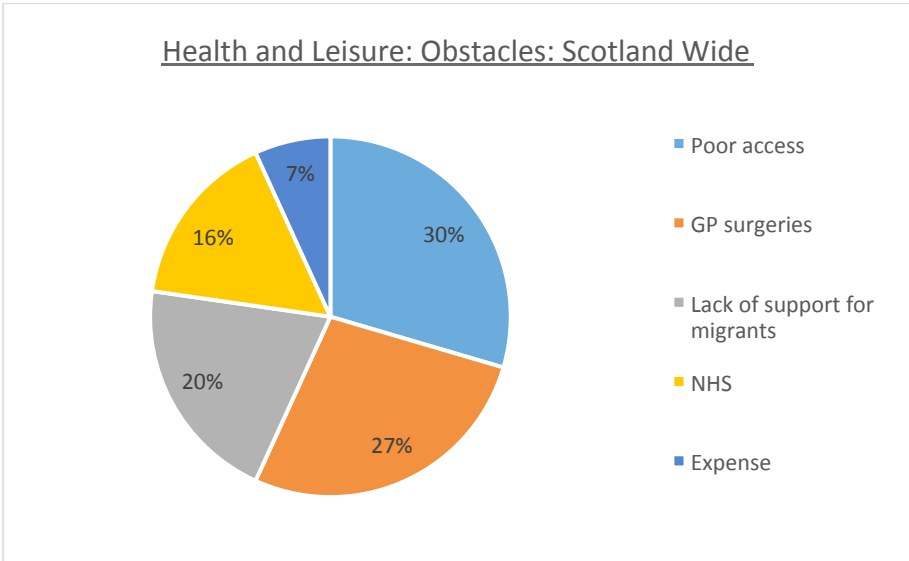
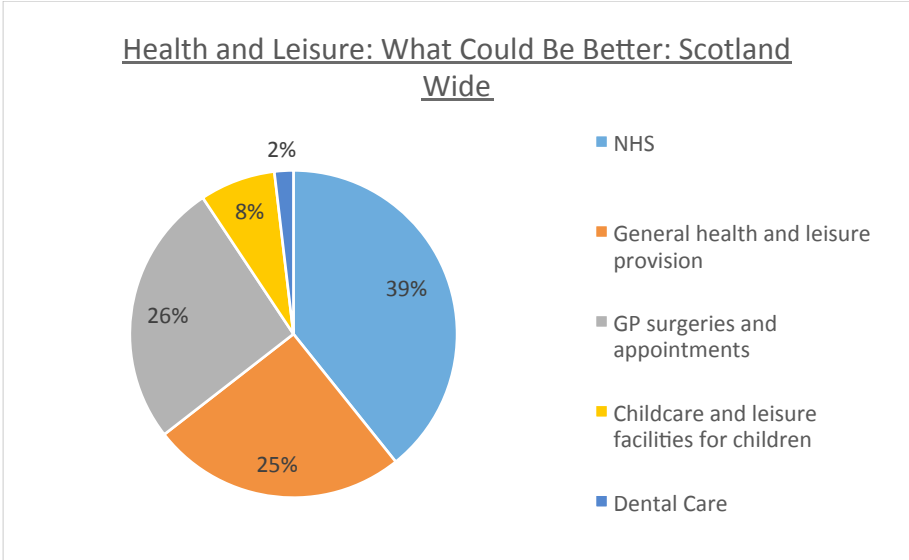
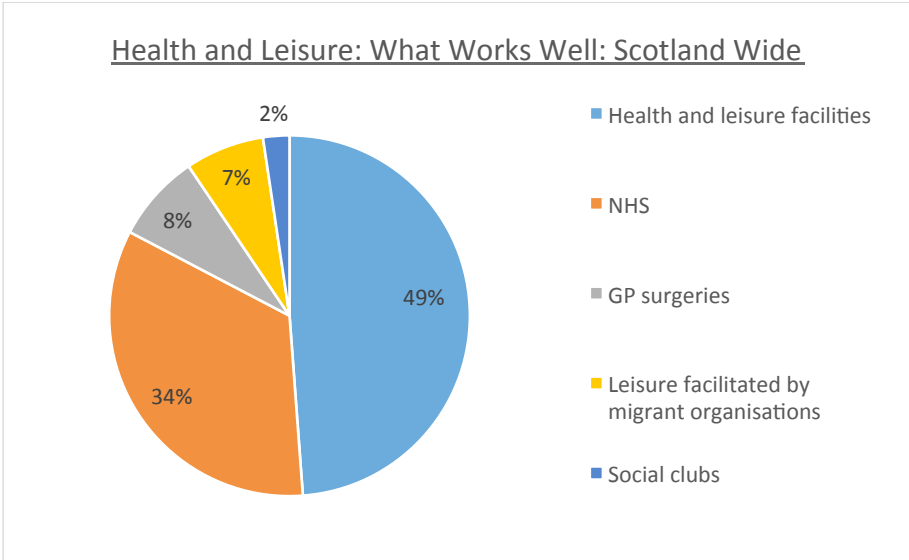
Theme 2: Employment



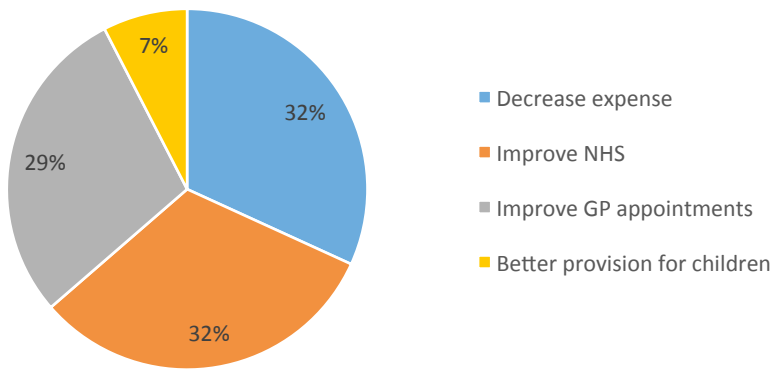
Employment: Solutions: Scotland Wide



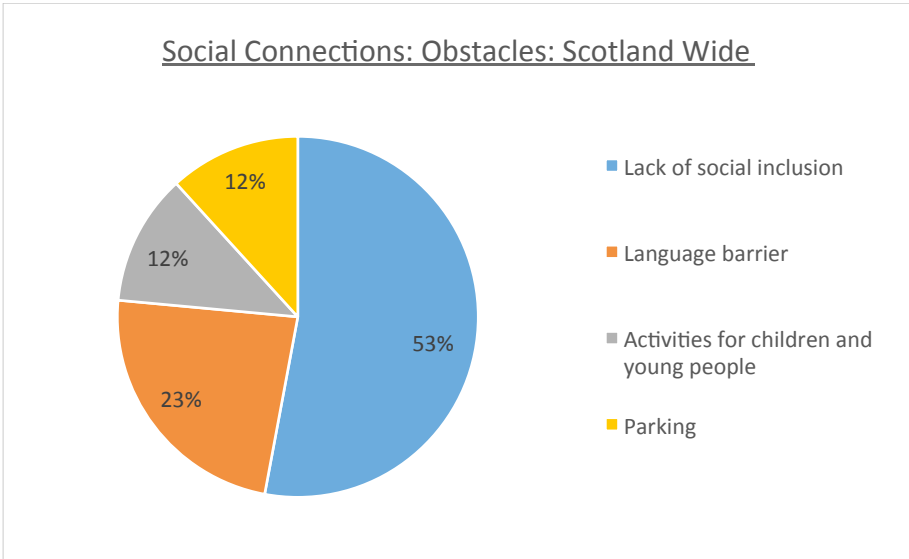
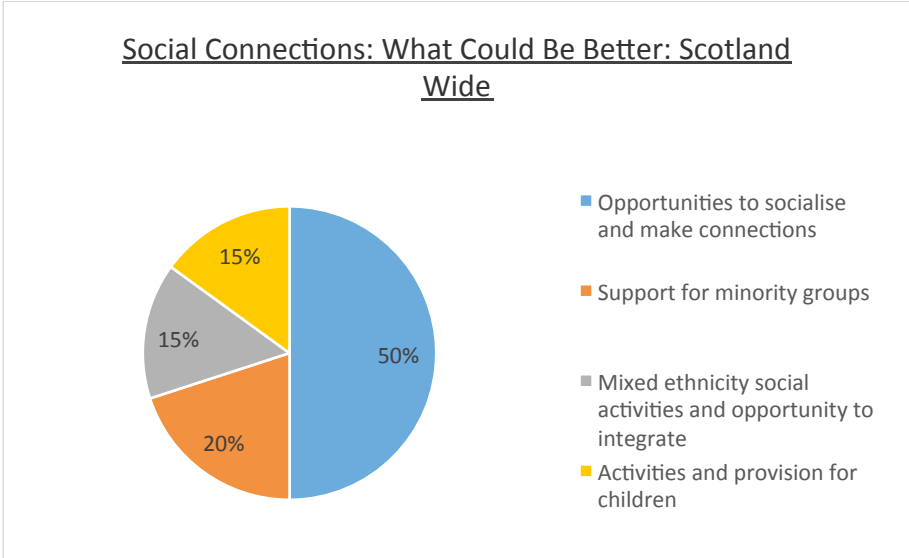
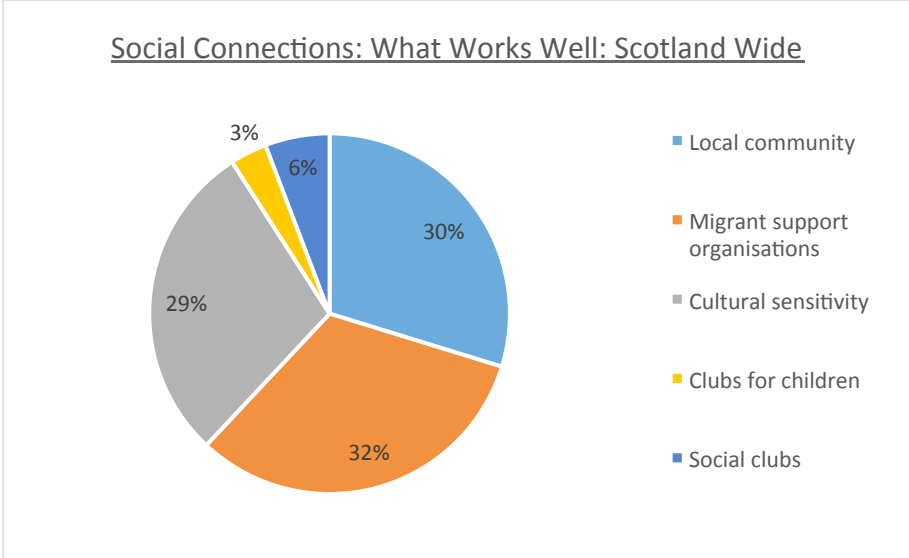
Theme 3: Health & Leisure



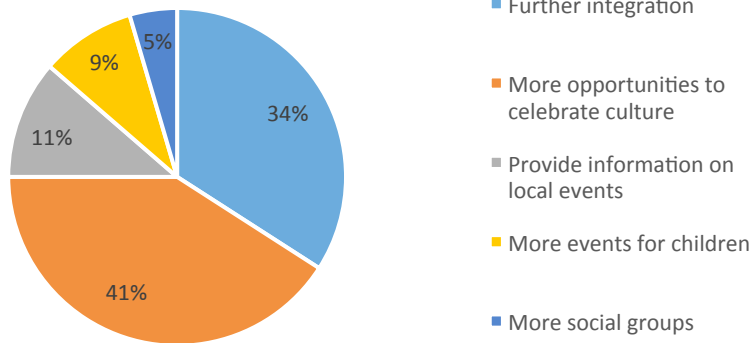
Health and Leisure: Solutions: Scotland Wide



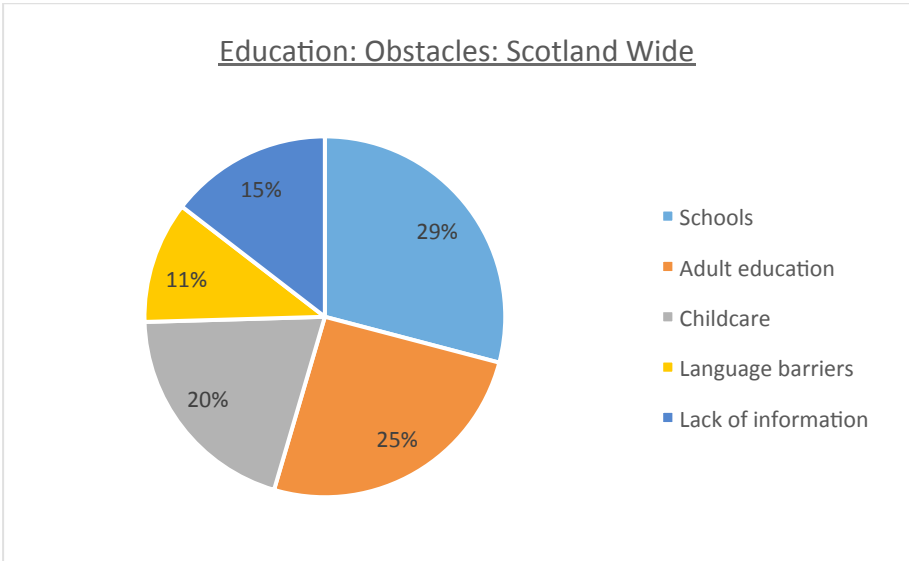
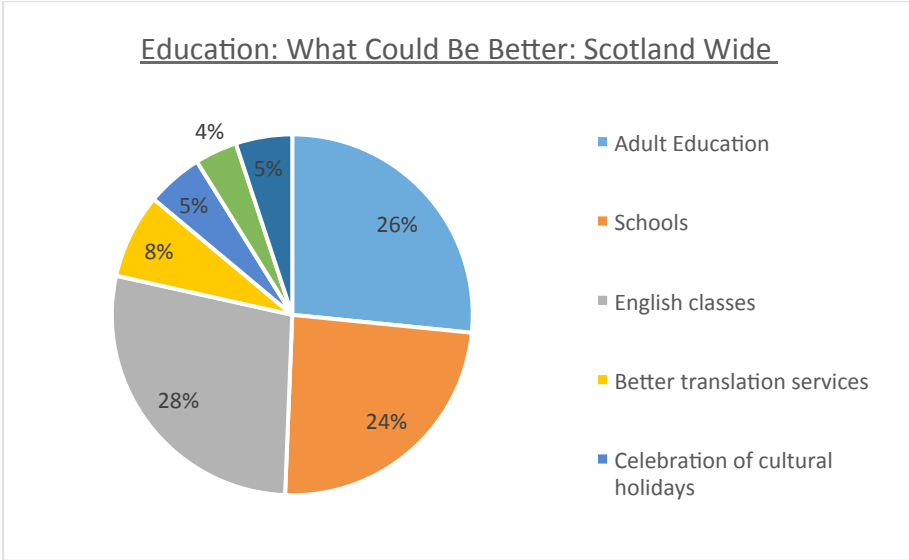
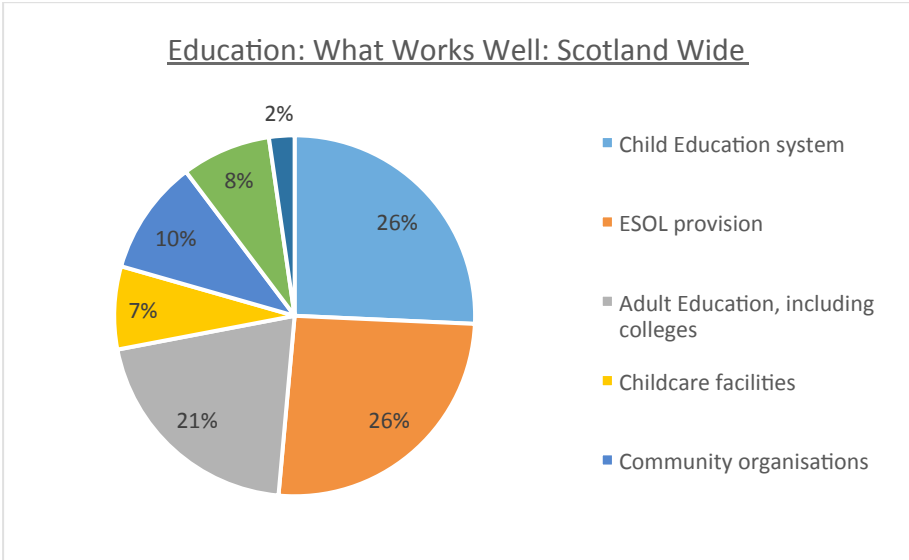
Theme 4: Social Connections



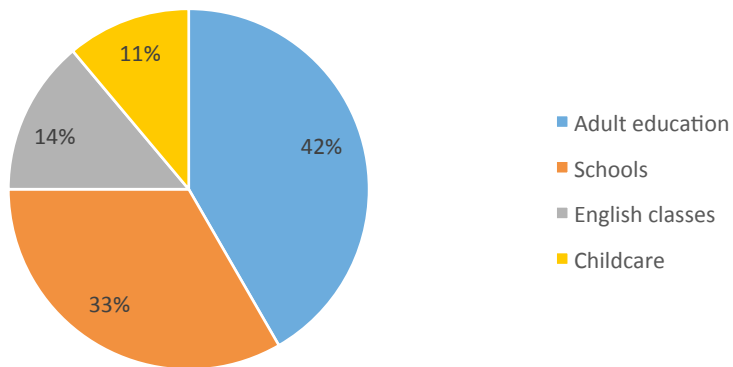
Social Connections: Solutions: Scotland Wide



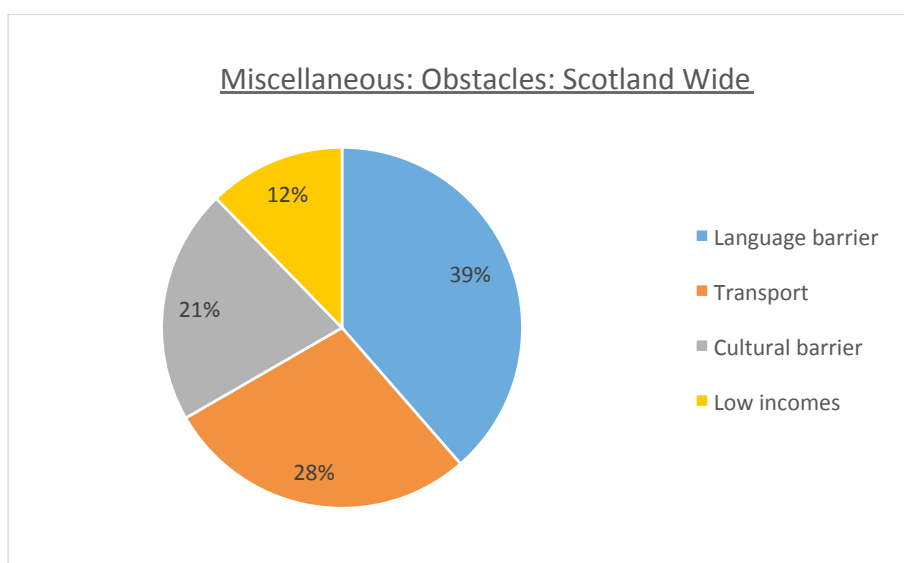
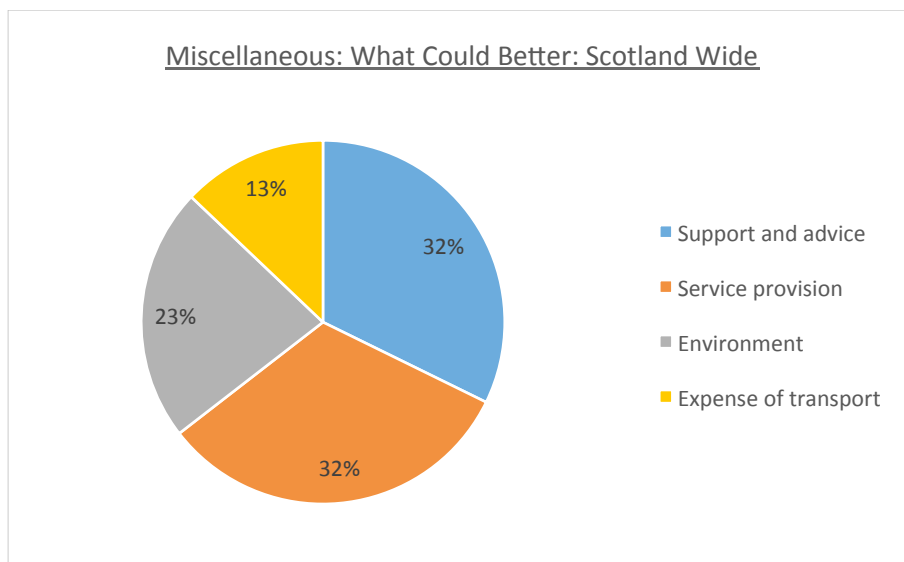
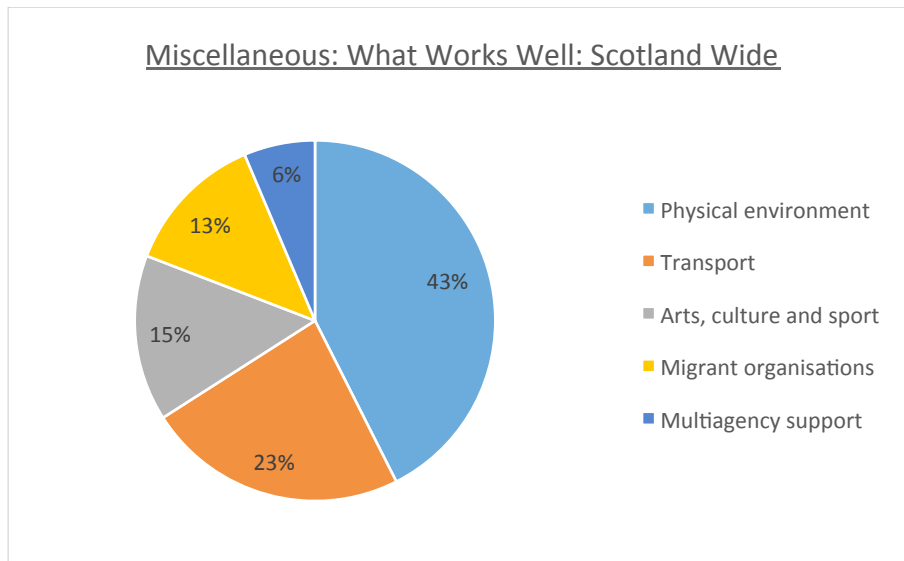
Theme 5: Education



Education: Solutions: Scotland Wide



Additional Observations



Miscellaneous: Solutions: Scotland Wide

