



CASE STUDY: COSLA Strategic Migration Partnership supports Glasgow City Council to use Migration Policy Toolkit

BACKGROUND

Glasgow has a long history of welcoming migrants and in the last ten years has received significant numbers of asylum seekers under the Home Office's dispersal arrangements as well as migrant workers from the enlarging European Union.

While Glasgow City Council has responded actively and positively to migration over this period they have not produced a written migration strategy. The programme of work gave council staff and their community planning partners the opportunity to reflect on their response to migration and consider how they could develop this in future.

It is acknowledged that migration had brought benefits to Glasgow including providing a demographic boost. The work programme therefore focused on the factors that may affect a migrant's decision to settle in Glasgow or to move on elsewhere, and explored strategies to encourage existing migrants to settle in the city. This will ensure that the city continues to benefit from the in-migration that has happened over the past ten years. The programme also considered the potential for migrants to fill specific skills shortage roles in Glasgow's economy and to bring skills to help the city make the most of opportunities for growth.

The support provided by CSMP took place between March and June 2011 and was based around CSMP's Policy Toolkit, which aims to support local authorities to develop a strategy towards migration that fits their demographic position. As a result of the programme of work, CSMP provided Glasgow City Council with an internal report to help inform the development of their response to migration.

Glasgow Fact File

- ◆ Glasgow has a reasonably stable population – it is neither declining nor ageing.
- ◆ The population grew to 592,820 in 2010, a 0.7% increase on the previous year.
- ◆ This was higher than the average population growth of 0.5% across Scotland in the same period.
- ◆ In recent years Glasgow has experienced population growth due to natural change, i.e. births exceeding deaths by around 1,200 in 2009-10.
- ◆ However, population growth over the past ten years has primarily been driven by a net migration gain of 18,678 from 2000-2010.

WHAT WE DID

Glasgow City Council organised a workshop with key staff in December 2010 to discuss how they could use the Toolkit to gather information for strategy development and to consider what the city's approach to migration should be going forward. The workshop explored the costs and benefits of migration and concluded that the benefits of migration did outweigh the costs.

The outcomes of this initial meeting informed the development of a programme of support for Glasgow which included a workshop with council staff and their community planning partners. This workshop took place on 1 April 2010 and explored the factors which may attract migrants to Glasgow, as well as the factors which may affect migrants' decisions to either settle in the city or move elsewhere. The group then discussed how Glasgow can develop their strategy to encourage migrants to settle for the longer term and considered the role of the council and their community planning partners (including the private sector) in providing these opportunities. In light of the economic slowdown and pressures on public services the session also considered how activities can be prioritised to maximise benefits to the city.

Following the workshop, a subsequent session was organised involving CSMP staff and members of Glasgow's corporate policy team. This considered the findings from the workshop and the desired outputs and outcomes from the programme of work.

OUTCOMES

This process was undertaken during a time of change for Glasgow City Council. They were no longer providing accommodation for asylum applicants who were dispersed to the city (a position which is unlikely to change in the foreseeable future). Glasgow's Economic Commission was also undertaking a consultation into a revised economic strategy for the city, and was due to publish the new strategy. As a result it was agreed that the most useful output from the process would be an internal paper produced by CSMP that captured the learning from the process and highlighted issues that the council might wish to explore further as they consider developing a migration strategy. The paper is currently being considered by the council's corporate policy staff and CSMP will be available to provide any additional support that is required as they consider the way forward and seek political endorsement for the approach that they would wish to take.

The support programme and associated paper helped them to consider the response to migration that they had delivered over the past ten years and to start mapping how they might continue to ensure the city is welcoming to migrants in future and in the context of reduced public resources. Some of the strengths that the council identified that they can build upon include a strong infrastructure of services for migrants; established migrant communities as a result of migration from the European Union and asylum dispersal; and a vibrant university sector that attracts students from across the world. The city's Single Outcome Agreement already included a local outcome which could be linked to efforts to welcome migrants: *To improve the attractiveness of Glasgow as a place to live, invest, work and visit.*

This case study may be updated in the future to reflect further developments in the city as a result of the support programme.