

**INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND
MIGRANT WORKERS
IN LINCOLNSHIRE AND WEST LINDSEY**

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International in-migration into Lincolnshire is nothing new, but the recent level of change in numbers of international in-migrants into the county has highlighted the issue. There has been a particular increase in numbers since the accession of a further eight countries to the European Union in 2004 which have become known as the A8 countries.

The A8 countries are:

Czech Republic	Lithuania
Estonia	Poland
Hungary	Slovakia
Latvia	Slovenia

Nationally, Boston ranks as the second highest local authority for A8 citizens registered per thousand of the total population, with South Holland having the fifth highest concentration.

Monitoring change at local level

Difficulties exist with monitoring change at local level for areas that receive large numbers of international migrants. There is a lack of information on definite numbers and movement of migrants and this in itself results in difficulties for local authorities due to the fact that their budgets are dictated by population numbers. Any population or community that is unaccounted for can place unexpected demands on resources.

There are a number of different sources for accessing information relating to international migrants but there is no one totally reliable source that provides near accuracy of numbers.

Different national datasets exist, eg National Insurance (NI) registrations and the Worker Registration Scheme but these do not paint a full picture of the situation and are thought to be inadequate for monitoring change at a local level.

- With regard to NI registrations, not every international migrant registers, eg those who come to study will not register unless they take on part time work and others come into the country to help family already here with childcare and therefore do not need to register.
- The Worker Registration Scheme (WRS) was introduced in 2004 when new countries joined the European Union. It allows the monitoring of citizens of the A8 countries as they come into our labour market. They are required to register under the WRS if they wish to work for an employer in the UK for more than one month. There are a number of exceptions to registering which include the following. Once a person has been working legally in the UK for 12 months without a break in employment that person no longer needs to register under the scheme. Anyone who is self

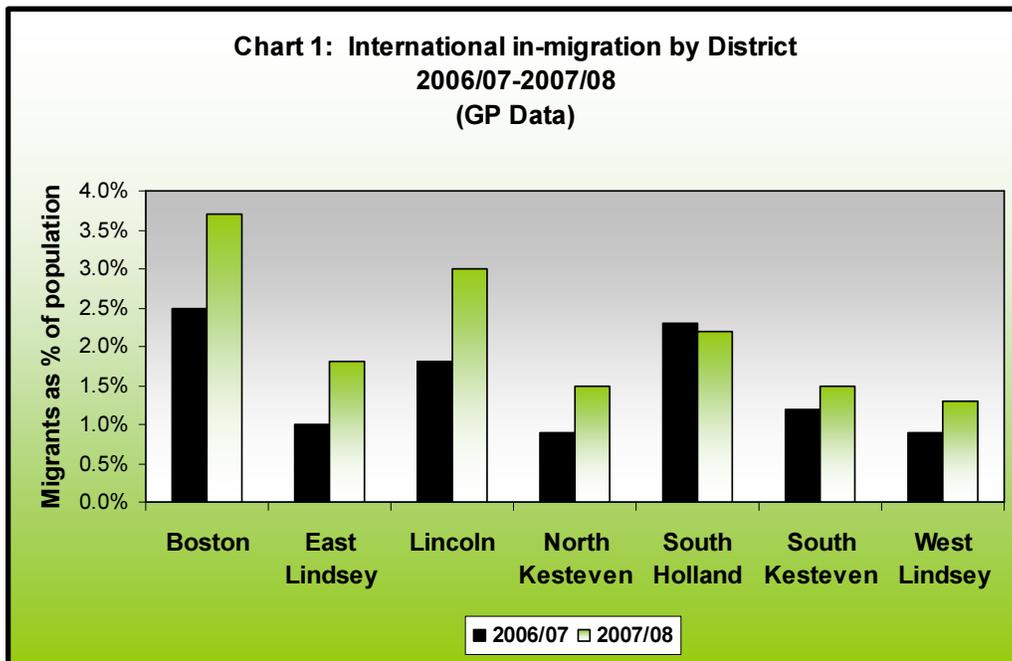
employed is not required to register. These exceptions and others skew the recorded numbers of migrant workers.

- The use of the GP Register in order to track the numbers and movement of international migrants provides information down to lower levels of geography. There are, however, difficulties even with this source of knowledge. Not all migrants register with a GP, some solely rely on Accident and Emergency services as the need arises. Naturally, this again results in a record of migrants that is significantly lower than the actual numbers.

It is also a fact that the majority of migrant workers are generally young, fit and healthy and it therefore follows that only a small proportion of international migrants use these services.

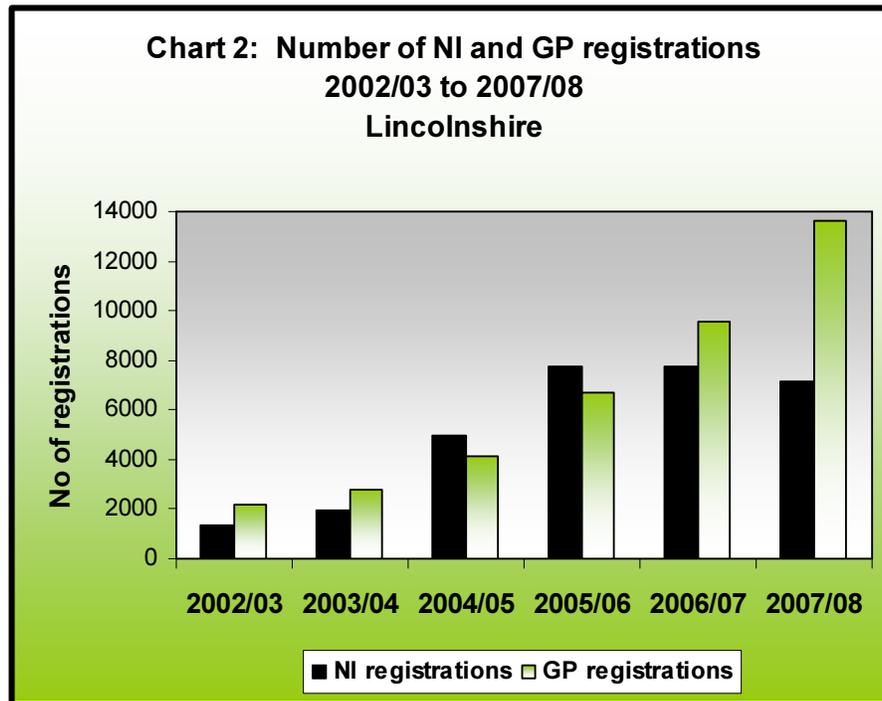
- At a lower level of geography, information from the local Electoral Register can be used to show the numbers of internationals living in an area. This, however, only includes people from the age of 18 years, so again does not tell the complete story.

The discrepancies between the information provided by the NI data and the GP register data are particularly apparent when studying international in-migration in the districts. The NI data shows a fall in numbers registering in the county but, as Chart 1 below illustrates, the GP data reveals that all the Lincolnshire districts except South Holland experienced their largest entry of international migrants during 2007/08.



When used to determine inflows of international migrants locally, the GP Register also mostly records the numbers as being higher than the NI registration records. NI registrations only capture those that are registering

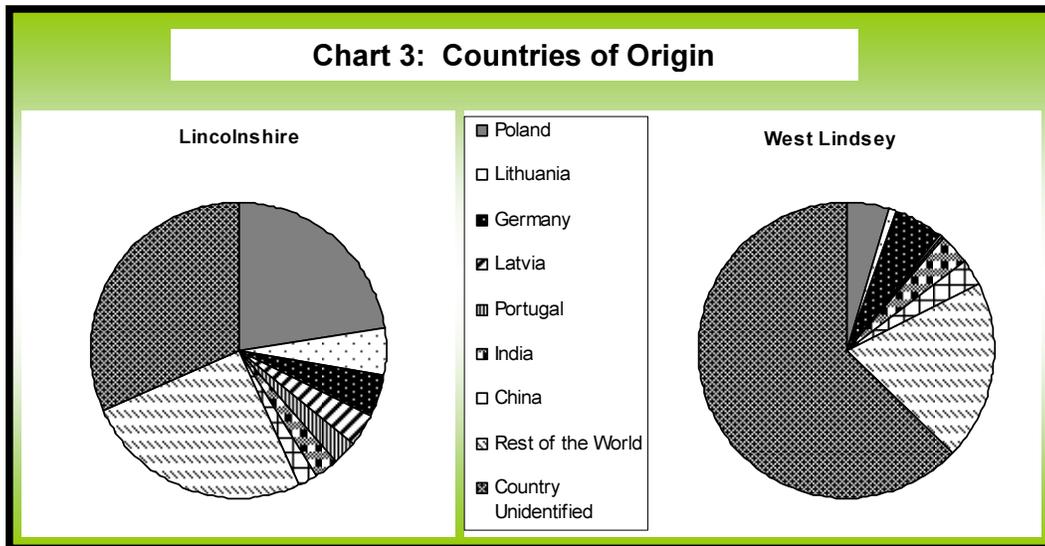
here to work while the GP register data picks up on increased numbers of family members coming to join people already working here. Chart 2 below shows that since 2002/03 the GP registrations have been higher than the NI registrations except for the two years immediately following the accession of the A8 Eastern European countries to the EU when there was a sudden influx of workers from these countries.



Country of Origin

Another problem with the GP register data is that the country of origin is recorded as unidentifiable for a large proportion of international migrants. This is a weakness of the GP registration process where insufficient country of origin information is being recorded as part of the process.

The extent to which this exists, particularly in relation to West Lindsey, is illustrated on the following pie charts which show the proportion of GP registrations by overseas nationals from the most popular countries coming into Lincolnshire and West Lindsey.



New house builds

Another issue affecting the reliability of in-migration information, especially in the context of its relationship with other social factors, is the influence of new housing builds in an area, particularly when they are reasonably priced in comparison with other regions of the country. This could be the main reason for migrants settling in an area but other social factors may result in out-migration from an area. More information on the number of new housing builds would help towards more accurate analysis of the full influence of migration.

Migrant workers from the A2 countries

Romania and Bulgaria joined the European Union in January 2007 but registrations from these countries do not seem to have had an impact on Lincolnshire. National studies predict that numbers from these two countries will be lower than those from the A8 countries possibly due to both a lack of established migratory links and also as countries such as Italy, Spain and France are a more attractive prospect due to them having similar languages to that of Romania.

De-registration of migrants

Doubts as to the accuracy of the GP de-registration data have been raised from a number of sources leading to the belief that the information provided is unreliable against any tracking of migrants returning to their country of origin. In addition, the comparison of this data against NI de-registration data has not been possible due the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) claiming that the information is unavailable.

The impact of international migrant workers in the labour market

Although unemployment levels have increased since the A8 countries joined the EU, it does not follow that it is as a result of their accession. The unemployment rate in Lincolnshire has actually remained below that of the regional and national rates.

At county level in 2007/08, using NI registrations data, the rate of international migrant workers as a proportion of those in employment was similar to the national rate. It can be seen from the following table that West Lindsey has the lowest rate in Lincolnshire, being almost 2% lower than the county rate.

2007/08	No in employment	NI registrations	% of those in employment
Boston	26,700	2,160	8.1%
East Lindsey	58,100	640	1.1%
Lincoln	42,300	1,190	2.8%
North Kesteven	48,000	440	0.9%
South Holland	37,500	1,610	4.3%
South Kesteven	62,800	920	1.5%
West Lindsey	40,300	180	0.4%
Lincolnshire	308,600	7,140	2.3%

Worker Registration Scheme data analysis shows that between May 2004 and April 2006, workers arriving in Lincolnshire from the A8 countries were most likely to register for work in the agricultural and manufacturing industries (48%). Since then, however positions within administration, business and managerial services have become more common and now make up over half of all WRS applicants on a regular basis.

Ways to improve how international migration change can be monitored

▪ Accurate recording of country of origin information

Within the GP register, the accuracy of the country of origin information of international migrants leaves a lot to be desired, particularly due to the large proportion of those whose country of origin was unidentifiable from the records.

A better picture of the true situation would be possible if more accurate information was recorded in the GP data. This would be particularly useful in West Lindsey district where the numbers of unidentified migrants were high in 2007/08 (63%).

- **Up to date and easily accessible information on new house builds**

If information on new house builds was more readily available it would result in a better understanding of the effects of population movement in the county down to low geographical levels.

- **A count of registered international migrants**

The provision of a count of GP registered international migrants at a specific point in time at geographies useful to service providers would be helpful. It is understood that work with a view to providing this is in progress within the PCT and will form part of the Director of Public Health Annual Report.

- **More detailed international migrant de-registration data**

In addition to developing detailed international in-migration data it would follow that, with additional resources, it would be possible for the PCT to produce de-registration data. It would also be useful to have access to the NI de-registration data through the DWP. With a lack of information relating to out-migrants it makes it impossible to have a complete picture of the movement of migrants. De-registration information would also provide an understanding of the reasons for people moving from the area. Although this would still not give a full picture it would at least add to other data sources and knowledge.

KEY FACTS - WEST LINDSEY

International migrants

According to GP data:

- Registered international migrants in West Lindsey in 2006/07 represented 0.9% of the population, increasing to 1.3% in 2007/08.
- Of the Lincolnshire districts, West Lindsey has the lowest percentage of migrants.

International migrant workers

According to NI registrations:

- In 2007/08, international migrant workers in West Lindsey represented 0.4% of those in employment, compared with the rate for Lincolnshire as a whole of 2.3% which is similar to the national rate. In 2006/07 the rate was 0.5%.
- Of the Lincolnshire districts, West Lindsey has the lowest percentage of migrant workers.

Acknowledgements

Lincolnshire Research Observatory
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