

Report to: East Sussex Strategic Partnership (ESSP)  
Date: 14 January 2010  
Title: Migrant Action Group Update  
Author: Anna Czepil, Policy and Performance Officer, East Sussex County Council  
Purpose: To provide an update on the work undertaken recently by the Migrant Action Group

## **1. Theme 1 – Information and Advocacy**

### **a) Recruit a county-wide Migrant Communities Support Officer (MCSO)**

In December 2009, in the second round of interviews, a MCSO was recruited to oversee the overall project and coordinate the Information and Advocacy work stream. Subject to reference checks, the MCSO will take up her position in January 2010.

### **b) Outreach work for Slovak Republic and Czech Republic migrants**

Sompriti, the charity who were originally awarded this money, are no longer operating. This part of the project is on hold until it is agreed where the Sompriti advocacy workers will be based.

## **2. Theme 2 – Housing**

### **Migrants in East Sussex Coastal Towns Project**

- A Migrant Communities Support Officer (Housing) has been appointed. The initial stages have involved identifying groups working with migrant workers.
- The first steering group meeting was held on the 1<sup>st</sup> December to go through the action plan and identify the best way forward.
- A survey will be carried out to capture a variety of information including nationality, types of accommodation, tenancy, awareness of services, the process of accessing accommodation and other issues faced by migrant workers in relation to accommodation. This will be circulated to committee members for suggestions and trialled before rolling out. HEMAS (Hastings Ethnic Minority Advisory Service) has agreed to help in identifying participants, and recruitment agencies have agreed to encourage clients to fill out the questionnaire. Other means of disseminating the questionnaire/ identifying participants will be investigated.
- A questionnaire has been sent to Housing Officers and Council Officers at Hastings Borough Council and Eastbourne Borough Council to identify any cases that officers are dealing with that may be relevant.
- Making contacts with other groups carrying out similar projects:
- Migrant Communities Support Officer (Housing) has been shadowing officers from the Housing Options and Renewal teams.

## **3. Theme 3 – Training and Learning**

### **a) Provision of flexible ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) provision in community settings**

Project partners had a meeting in November following three cancelled dates, and partners agreed to submit individual operational plans to supplement the action plan as discussed. The numbers of learners have been allocated across the different colleges, with a view to delivery starting in the last week in February 2010, to link in with the recruitment of the TEALS (Travellers and English as an Additional Language Service) coordinator, who should be in post by then.

**b) ESOL provision and employment**

Colleges have identified potential community partners, and negotiation of course allocation has commenced.

**c) ESOL provision and family settings**

When TEALS coordinator is in post, families will be identified and signposted toward appropriate provision. Coordinator should be in post in January 2010.

**4. Theme 4 – Health**

**Migrant Health Advocates**

Research into how best to implement the health advocacy project has been undertaken to ensure it:

- Best meets current need within East Sussex
- Is developed in a way it can be sustained beyond MIF (Migration Impact Fund) funding
- Is deliverable within the current market.

This market research took the form of meeting with local migrant populations to explore their needs in terms of health advocacy and participating in a soft market testing event of advocacy providers to understand the market and how this service could best be commissioned and delivered.

The intention is to develop community capacity to deliver advocacy into the future by training up a range of bi-lingual community members in advocacy via the WEA (Workers' Educational Association) community interpreting course. There will be a process to identify potential organisations to coordinate this service potentially following the model in place for interpretation and translation for statutory agencies in East Sussex providing the service for a sessional rate. A draft service specification has been drawn up and outcome framework developed.