

UHIPolicyWeb

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Policies fit for the Highlands & Islands

Rights not Numbers
*The Challenges for Integration
in Rural Communities (Scotland)*

Integration and Immigration in Rural Areas

Ísafjörður/West Fjords – Iceland

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Structure

- Context
- Population
- Employment
- 'Integration' or social Inclusion

Context

Rural areas do not exist in a vacuum

Context

- Location- Scotland /Rural
- Policy
- Immigration
- Myths or facts?

Location- Scotland /Rural



Definition of Rural Scotland

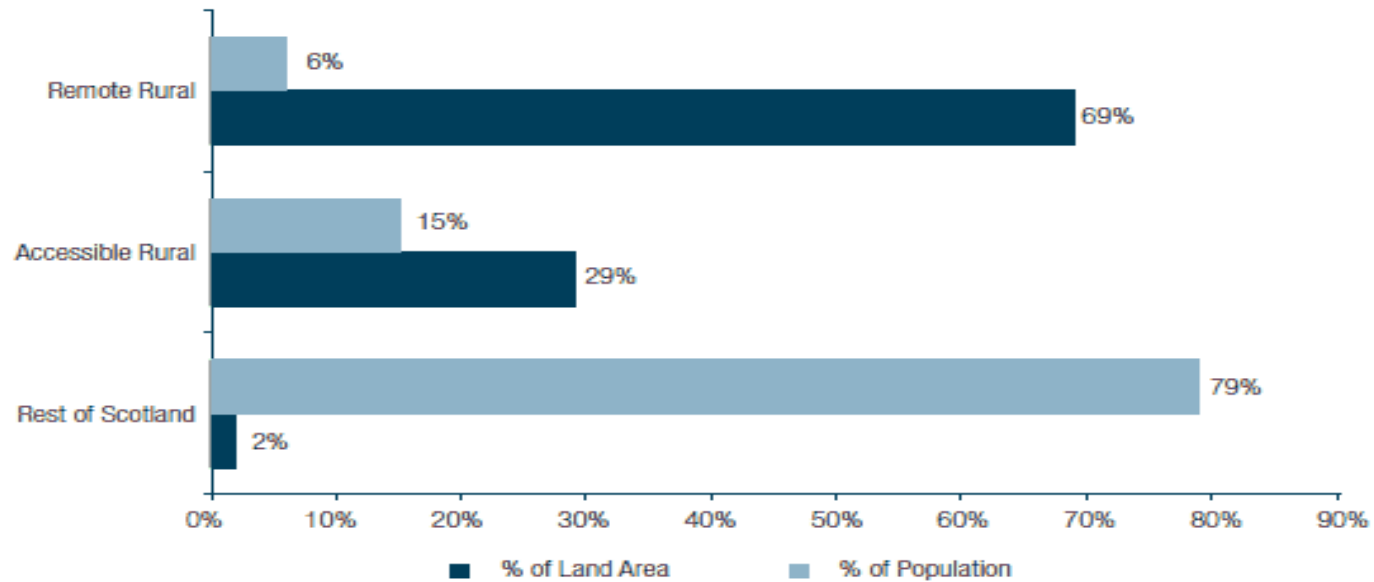
Rural Scotland is defined as **settlements with a population of less than 3,000**. Analysing drive times to larger settlements rural Scotland is divided into:

- **Accessible rural:** those with less than 30 minute drive time to the nearest settlement with a population of 10,000 or more
- **Remote rural:** those with a greater than 30 minute drive time to the nearest settlement with a population of 10,000 or more

Scottish Executive (2006)

Rural Scotland

Percentage of Population (2004) and Land (2001) by Geographic Area



Policy

- Scottish Devolution (1999)
- Immigration reserved power- UK Government
- Population strategy- Attracting migrants: 'Fresh Talent Initiative'
- Equality framework
- EU Policies

Immigration

- Fifty different ways of getting into UK from overseas
- UK government is reviewing immigration system in favour of a points system
- UK, Ireland and Sweden agreed to allow free movement of Eastern European workers following enlargement in 2004
- Immigration status is a key determinant of entitlements to rights/services
- Unlike the immigration from the Commonwealth and the arrival of asylum seekers/refugees which impacted on urban areas, the arrival of East Europeans have had a big rural component.

Myths or Facts?

- Rural idyll or being swamped?
- Drain on resources or keeping rural services going?
- Cause of inflation or keeping inflation in check?
- Boost to the economy or negligible contribution?
- Filling skills gaps/labour shortages or taking jobs away from locals?
- Host communities welcoming or racist?

Population

Driver for Immigration Policies

Population

- Population 'Time Bomb'
- Population Trends
- East European migrants – features

Population 'time bomb'

UK Population

- Grew by 8.2% between 1971 and 2006, from 55.9 million to 60.5 million (Office of National Statistics)
- Increase in population at the turn of century mainly due to net migration

'Population Time Bomb' : Declining and ageing population; Youth migration

Scottish population:

- Around 5 million, approximately 1 million live in rural areas
- Slight increase in population in rural Scotland between 2001-4 compared to other areas in Scotland
- Net migration higher in rural areas

Population Trends

Scottish minority ethnic population :

- 2% of Scottish population, with a younger age profile
- Just over 70 % made up of people with roots in South and East Asia
- Discrimination prevalent in employment and access to services
- Reports of being victims of racist abuse, verbal or physical, because of their nationality, skin colour, racial, ethnic or cultural background

Population Trends

- **2001 Census rural minority ethnic households:**
 - present in every local authority area
 - small but growing population
 - dispersed and diverse (ethnicity, economic status, etc)
- **2004-EU enlargement**
 - Increased presence of East Europeans -approximately 500,000 between 2004-6
 - Noticeable increase in rural areas noticeable
 - Likely to be young, single and male

Employment / Labour Market Issues

Filling skills gaps shortages or
displacing local workers?

Employment / Labour Market Issues

- Employers
- East European Migrants
- ‘Fresh Talent Initiative’ in February 2004 :to promote Scotland amongst people applying for work permits in the UK and encouraging students at Scottish universities to stay in Scotland for two years after they have graduated

Employers

- Difficulties in recruitment
- High quality workers for low skilled jobs
- Work ethics

East European Migrants

- Concentrated in semi-skilled and unskilled work despite qualifications levels
- Prepared to trade qualifications for low skilled work
- Employed in agriculture, food processing, tourism but also construction and transport
- Poorly paid with poor conditions of service

Fresh Talent or use underutilised existing talent?

- Existing shortages mainly in semi and unskilled work
- Ignores those who have talent and are currently not fulfilling their potential due various barriers and prevalence of discrimination- e.g. disabled, ethnic minorities , etc
- Not enough to attract workers , what happens to them when they arrive and on retention ?
- Concerns about the ethics of poaching labour from countries who are in need of specific workers themselves

Integration or Social Inclusion?

Integration is a two way process

Integration or Social Inclusion?

- External factors impacting on integration
- Internal factors impacting on integration
- Social Integration- Host Communities
- Social Integration- Newcomers

External Factors

- **Economic**
 - Under-utilisation of skills and qualifications
- **Entitlements**
 - Lack of /weak infrastructures in rural areas
 - Poor accommodation
 - Complexities in relation to entitlements and immigration
- **Social**
 - Attitudes, discrimination, lifestyles and perceptions of 'settled' communities

Internal Factors-- Migrant Workers

- Reasons for migration – short term /long term?
- Language and Communication
- Cultural and social norms

Social integration- Host Communities

It is a **two way process** involving adaptation and accommodation on the part of 'newcomers' and 'host' communities .

How well are 'host ' communities being prepared for living in increasingly diverse communities?

- Who is working with them to address their fears and insecurities? And, how are these being addressed ?
- How is misinformation about 'newcomers' being counteracted?

Social integration- Newcomers

Multi-level and why not social inclusion rather than 'integration'?

- Economic
- Inclusion in services
- Inclusion into civic life
- Help with developing 'bridging capital'

In Conclusion.....

'Rural' poses challenges : distances, dispersion, lack of economies of scale....

However, there are growing examples of positive initiatives in rural communities

However, if we want sustainable and thriving rural communities we need newcomers to stay and contribute....

But we also need to prepare rural communities for welcoming diversity...

*Integration or inclusion has to be a joint endeavour between people, communities and institutions at local / regional (and national) levels and newcomers in order that **all people irrespective of who they are** can achieve their full potential*

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