



improve

food & drink sector skills council

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**Your  
International  
Workforce**



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# Objectives

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- Paint a picture as to the impact of the employment of overseas nationals within the East of England
- Highlight assistance that is available to ensure maximum benefit is gained



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# Agenda

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- About Improve
- What research has shown us
- Developing ability of the workforce
- Where to find assistance

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# What is Improve?

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- Improve is the Sector Skills Council for Food and Drink Manufacturing and Processing
- Cover +10 sub sectors:
  - Bakery
  - Meat and Poultry
  - Sea fish
  - Fresh Produce
  - Distilling and Brewing
  - Soft Drink
  - General Food and Drink

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# Our Mission

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Improve will increase productivity, performance and profit for employers through skills.



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# How do we do this?

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- Ensuring that learning providers are up to date with what the industry needs
- Ensuring that support agencies are aware of industry needs
- Developing tools to assist with up-skilling the whole of the workforce

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# Research background



Wanted to find out:

- How many overseas nationals were employed in the food and drink industry
- What was the regional split
- Nature of the roles they were employed in
- Identify and understand issues involved in employing overseas nationals

Research completed in February 2005



# Misconceptions

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- OSNs take poorly paid roles
- OSNs undertake extreme manual labour roles
- Most are part time and only stay in roles for a few months
- OSNs are resented by wider workforce



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# Headlines

- Approximately 33% of OSNs employed in the industry undertake technical/scientific/supervisory or skilled roles
- Primarily full time workers rather than part time or seasonal
- OSN's account for 13.2% of the total workforce in the East of England

# Issues

- Language and communication skills – particularly within larger organisations
- Administration required to meet legal requirements – permits etc
- Skills levels and abilities – (only mentioned by 16% of employers)

# Help from skills community **improve**

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For employees (OSNs)

- ‘English Speakers of Other Languages’ (ESOL)
- Training initiatives from organisations used to dealing with OSN issues



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# Continued.....

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## For wider workforce

- Diversity training.....

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# Conclusions:

- Large domestic labour shortages
- OSNs represent a good source of ‘well motivated’ labour...cited by 43% of survey

## Issues to overcome

- Language and communication
- Development of wider workforce
- Support is available

# What we are doing...

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- Highlighting that OSNs and issues surrounding their employment are at the forefront of skills development policy
- Development of skills academy to ensure wider range of training material which is more easily accessible
- Delivery/development of Diversity training workshops
- Continue to learn and measure impact on industry

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# How can I find out more?

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# Thank you

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