

International Migration Branch  
and  
Sectoral Activities Department

*Migrant workers in the international hotel industry*

Tom Baum

Copyright © International Labour Organization 2012

Publications of the International Labour Office enjoy copyright under Protocol 2 of the Universal Copyright Convention. Nevertheless, short excerpts from them may be reproduced without authorization, on condition that the source is indicated. For rights of reproduction or translation, application should be made to the Publications Bureau (Rights and Permissions), International Labour Office, CH-1211 Geneva 22, Switzerland. The International Labour Office welcomes such applications.

Libraries, institutions and other users registered in the United Kingdom with the Copyright Licensing Agency, 90 Tottenham Court Road, London W1T 4LP [Fax: (+44) (0)20 7631 5500; email: [cla@cla.co.uk](mailto:cla@cla.co.uk)], in the United States with the Copyright Clearance Center, 222 Rosewood Drive, Danvers, MA 01923 [Fax: (+1) (978) 750 4470; email: [info@copyright.com](mailto:info@copyright.com)] or in other countries with associated Reproduction Rights Organizations, may make photocopies in accordance with the licences issued to them for this purpose.

---

*First published 2012*

*ILO Cataloguing in Publication Data*

Baum, Tom

Migrant workers in the international hotel industry / Tom Baum ; International Labour Office, International Migration Branch, Sectoral Activities Department. – Geneva: ILO, 2012

1 v. International migration paper ; ISSN 1020-2668; 1564-4839 (.pdf); No. 112

International Labour Office; International Migration Branch

Migrant worker / labour migration / international migration / employment / hotel chain / hotel industry / Canada / Egypt / Ireland / Maldives / Norway / UK / United Arab Emirates

14.09.2

---

The designations employed in ILO publications, which are in conformity with United Nations practice, and the presentation of material therein do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the International Labour Office concerning the legal status of any country, area or territory or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers.

The responsibility for opinions expressed in signed articles, studies and other contributions rests solely with their authors, and publication does not constitute an endorsement by the International Labour Office of the opinions expressed in them.

Reference to names of firms and commercial products and processes does not imply their endorsement by the International Labour Office, and any failure to mention a particular firm, commercial product or process is not a sign of disapproval.

ILO publications can be obtained through major booksellers or ILO local offices in many countries, or direct from ILO Publications, International Labour Office, CH-1211 Geneva 22, Switzerland. Catalogues or lists of new publications are available free of charge from the above address, or by email: [pubvente@ilo.org](mailto:pubvente@ilo.org)  
Visit our website: [www.ilo.org/publns](http://www.ilo.org/publns)

---

Printed by the International Labour Office, Geneva, Switzerland

---

## Foreword

The ILO discussion paper series *International Migration Papers* aims to disseminate the results of research on relevant and topical labour migration issues among policy makers, administrators, social partners, civil society, the research community and the media. Its main objective is to contribute to an informed debate on how best to address labour migration issues within the overall agenda of decent work. This paper is published jointly by the International Migration Branch of the Labour Protection Department of the ILO and by the ILO's Sectoral Activities Department.

We live in an increasingly mobile world, and it is a well-known fact that much migration today is driven by the search for employment. Indeed, most migration is linked to the world of work, in some way or other: families accompany workers to foreign countries, training and educational opportunities abroad lead into employment, changed patterns of labour force participation and social reproduction in one place set off migration flows from another, etc. However, the important links between migration and labour markets – including the quantity and quality of jobs in both origin and destination countries, and the contribution of labour market policies to growth and development – are often ignored or not well understood.

This discussion paper makes a contribution in this area of research, in focussing on a particular sector, namely Hotels, catering and tourism. Our interest here is migrant workers in the international hotel industry. Hotel work is diverse and challenging at all levels, from front-line and housekeeping staff to senior management and migrant workers are represented in all areas of work within the sector across most developing and developed countries.

This paper by Professor Tom Baum, Strathclyde Business School, University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, highlights the diversity of situations, for example by presenting nine case studies, and shows both positive and problematic aspects in the employment of migrant workers in hotels. The paper is non-judgemental in its assessment of the challenges that face all stakeholders with a direct interest in this area – workers, their representative organizations, employers, governments of both host nations and countries of origin and the wider communities within which migrant workers live and work.

Besides drawing on a wide range of secondary sources – academic papers and reports, including ILO publications, Tom Baum's paper also presents original empirical research. The core of this study is an international survey of hotel companies which was undertaken with the cooperation of the International Hotel and Restaurant Association (IHRA) and the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC). The support of these organizations was crucial for the success of this paper, and we wish to express our sincere thanks to them.

---

Clearly migrant workers will continue to play a major role in the operations of the hotel sector in many countries: As demonstrated in this paper, migrants are a vital source of skills and labour for the hotel industry, and, in turn, the hotel industry provides an important source for work for internal and international migrants seeking temporary or permanent employment opportunities away from their home communities. It is therefore hoped that the conclusions and recommendations at the end of the paper will stimulate informed discussion.

Gloria de Pascual  
Chief  
International Migration Branch

Alette van Leur  
Director  
Sectoral Activities Department

April 2012

---

## Executive Summary

This Report addresses complex themes relating to migrant work and migrant workers in the international hotel industry, recognizing that the experience of migrant workers (international and internal), their employers and the wider community varies greatly in different countries and cultures. This topic is of significance to all stakeholders involved with the industry (customers, businesses, employees, trade unions, governments and industry associations among others). Migrant workers are to be found in the hotel industries of countries throughout the world, both within developed and less developed economies and the industry, to a greater or lesser extent is dependent upon this source of skills and labour. There is little doubt that the hotel industry provides important opportunities for migrant workers seeking short-term or permanent employment away from their home communities. At the same time, the employment and status conditions of migrant workers in the hotel industry are a matter of concern to stakeholders and this report assesses the evidence from studies across the development spectrum. It also reports the findings of a research study of international hotel companies and highlights particular national/local issues through nine case studies; some originally researched and prepared for this Report.

On this basis, the study reaches the following conclusions about migrant labour in the international hotel industry:

- Migrants are a vital source of skills and labour for the hotel industry in countries, developed and less developed, across the world.
- The hotel industry, in turn, provides an important source for work for internal and international migrants seeking temporary or permanent employment opportunities away from their home communities.
- The experience of migrant workers and their employers in the hotel industry varies greatly according to country, culture and context.
- Migrant labour, at varied levels, will continue to play a significant and often major role in the workforce of the hotel industry in most countries.
- Internal migration will be of equal and, in some countries, greater significance than international migration in meeting the skills needs of the hotel industry.
- The remittance income from migrant workers in the hotel industry makes a significant contribution to the national financial inflow of many countries.
- There is a clear ‘north-south’ divide in the roles and responsibilities of migrant employees in the hotel industry, with those from poorer countries working at the lower skills end of the workforce spectrum and those from developed countries taking senior managerial and technical positions.
- There is a strong consensus in the hotel industry that migrant workers are vital to the operational viability of the sector and will remain so for the foreseeable future.
- Migrant workers are seen to benefit the industry in terms of the skills and commitment they bring to the organizational culture of hotel businesses.
- Migrant workers are recognized to bring a skills profile into the industry which is frequently unavailable in the local labour market.
- Hotel businesses benefit from the culturally diverse skills which migrant workers bring to their employment.
- Larger hotel companies operate effective cultural diversity policies which support and protect migrant workers in their employ.
- Smaller hotel companies operate on a much more personalized basis in the care and support they offer to migrant workers.

- 
- Migrant workers in some developed countries are significantly over-qualified for the working roles that they play in the hotel industry.
  - Migrant workers are disproportionately likely to remain in low skills and lower paid positions in the hotel industry.
  - Promotion and career development opportunities for migrant workers are frequently limited and inaccessible.
  - The acquisition of language skills by migrant workers in the hotel industry is seen as crucial to their progression beyond low skills and menial work.
  - Migrant workers face particular vulnerabilities in terms of health and safety in hotel work and are more likely to be involved in workplace accidents.
  - Many migrant workers do not see the hotel industry in terms of a long-term career commitment and seek to exit to other sectors of the host economy or to return home as a medium- to long-term goal.
  - Migrant workers in the hotel industry only infrequently benefit from supportive trade union representation.
  - National governments are ambivalent about the contribution of migrant workers to the hotel industry; supportive and strategic approaches to immigration which are designed to support the needs of the hotel industry are rare.
  - There is limited awareness of potential conflicts between the employment of migrant workers and the delivery of “authentic” visitor experiences in hotels.
  - Despite attempts at international and regional (EU) harmonization of education and training qualifications for the hotel sector, there is a continuing failure to recognize and understand these by private sector employers.

---

## Contents

	<i>Page</i>
Foreword .....	iii
Executive Summary .....	v
Contents.....	vii
1. Introduction .....	1
2. Migration and Migrant Workers.....	3
3. The International Hotel Industry .....	7
3.1 Characteristics.....	7
3.2. The nature of work in hotels .....	8
4. Migrant Workers in the International Hotel Industry – a review of the literature.....	11
4.1. Roles and scripts – the segmentation of migrant workers in the hotel industry.....	13
4.2. Regional Analysis .....	15
5. A Survey of International Hotel Companies .....	20
6. Illustrating national variation in the employment of migrant workers in the hotel industry: Case Studies .....	24
Case Study i: The Maldives – migrant workers in the maelstrom of economic, religious and cultural challenge .....	24
Case Study ii: The UAE – migrant workers. No industry without them .....	27
Case Study iii: Canada – a planned approach to migration in the hotel and restaurant sector	28
Case Study iv: Egypt – internal migration to new destination areas.....	30
Case Study v: The Republic of Ireland – migrant workers and the delivery of “authentic” experiences to visitors.....	32
Case Study vi: Norway – the ghettoization of migrant workers in the hotel sector.....	33
Case Study vii: London – a “migrant division of labour” in a major metropolitan centre .....	35
Case Study viii: The Yorkshire Dales, England – migrant workers in a rural location .....	36
Case Study ix: Refugees and access to work in the hotel sector.....	37
7. Conclusions and recommendations .....	38





---

## 1. Introduction

This Report addresses complex themes relating to migrant work and migrant workers in the international hotel industry. That this topic is of significance to all stakeholders involved with the industry (customers, businesses, employees, trade unions, governments and industry associations among others) cannot be disputed although the nuances of discussion and interpretation that might be applied to analysis are likely to be very place and time specific. Migrant workers are to be found in the hotel industries of countries throughout the world, both within developed and less developed economies. ILO (2010:93)<sup>1</sup> describes the characteristics of migrant workers in the hotel, catering and tourism sector to “include daily commuters, seasonal workers and permanent migrants. The majority are drawn into lower-paid informal or casual employment in the sector. Although many migrant workers stay for a number of years, they often remain at low skill levels compared to native workers”. Therefore, migrant workers operate, preponderantly, at the lower skills end of the workplace spectrum in hotels but they are also well represented, through corporate and other expatriate management programmes, at executive level as well. The ethnicity of workers at these higher levels differs significantly from their low skills colleagues. In locations where businesses are not directly affected at an industry level by migrants from other countries, as is the case in some developing countries, it is likely that such businesses will be affected by the loss of skilled workers leaving for other countries through out-migration. These are frequently their more talented and skilled employees who are lured to work elsewhere by the attraction of higher pay levels and more attractive benefits. However, the balance between the impacts of migration on origin and destination countries, widely seen to favour the latter, must also be tempered by recognition of the value of remittances<sup>2</sup> which form a major source of foreign currency income for many developing countries, in turn contributing towards poverty reduction<sup>3</sup>.

This Report, therefore, attempts to unravel some of the complexity which surrounds migrant work in the international hotel industry. At the same time, it is recognized that generalizations are difficult to make with respect to this area. There are very few, if any, ubiquitous ‘truths’ about migrant work in the hotel sector that are applicable across all countries, cultures and contexts. A number of studies<sup>4</sup> from a wide variety of contexts highlight the mixed, multidimensional experiences of culturally diverse migrant employees in the hotel sector. This Report, therefore, explores the growing volume of high quality

<sup>1</sup> ILO (2010), *International labour migration. A rights-based approach*, Geneva: ILO.

<sup>2</sup> Sander, C. and Maimbo, S.M. (2003) *Migrant Labor Remittances in Africa: Reducing Obstacles to Developmental Contributions*, Washington D.C.: World Bank, Africa Region Working Paper Series No. 64 November 2003.

<sup>3</sup> Gibson, J. and D. McKenzie (2011) ‘How Can Developing Countries Governments Facilitate International Migration for Poverty Reduction?’, in: Murrugarra, E., Larrison, J. and M. Sasin (eds.) *Migration and Poverty. Toward Better Opportunities for the Poor*, The World Bank, Washington, D.C., 125 – 143.

<sup>4</sup> See, for example:

Baum, T., Dutton, E., Karimi, S., Kokkranikal, J. Devine, F. & Hearn, N. (2007). Cultural diversity in hospitality work. *Cross Cultural Management: An International Journal*, 14(3), 229-239;

Devine, F., Baum, T., Hearn, N., & Devine, A. (2007a). Cultural diversity in hospitality work: the Northern Ireland experience. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 18(2) 333 – 349;

Devine, F., Baum, T., Hearn, N., & Devine, A. (2007b). Managing cultural diversity: opportunities and challenges for Northern Ireland hoteliers. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 19 (2), 120-132.

Jantaa, H., Ladkin, A., Brown, L. and Lugosi, P. (2011), “Employment experiences of Polish migrant workers in the UK hospitality industry” *Tourism Management*, 32(5), 1006-1019.

---

but, generally, place-specific, research that has been undertaken in this area in order to gain a better understanding of the diverse experiences of migrant workers and their employers in different countries and contexts. The Report also presents the outcomes of an international survey of hotel companies which gives some insights into the policies and practices which businesses, large and small, are adopting in support of their increasingly diverse workforces. Finally, this Report makes use of specific case studies in order to illustrate some of the themes and challenges which all stakeholders face in seeking to understand the roles that migrant workers play and the contributions that they make to the international hotel industry. These cases are in no way representative of the industry but are intended to give the reader a flavour of these themes and issues.

It is important to recognise, at the outset, that immigration and, consequently, the experience of migrant work, is very complex and the system and policies, processes and terminology that underpin it vary from country to country. This complexity is clearly articulated by the ILO (2010:210) in summarising contemporary trends in labour migration:

*Labour migration today is characterized by diversity in origin and destination situations, and in the forms, statuses, directions and durations of the migration experience. Whereas most participants in previous streams of migration were embarking on relatively long-term or permanent emigration and immigration, temporary forms of migration are now becoming more popular. Migration for seasonal work, skilled migration, student migration, women migrating on their own for employment, forced migration (as a result of armed conflict, persecution or environmental disasters), and migration in irregular situations through trafficking and other means are all becoming increasingly prominent elements of the picture.*

Therefore, it is useful to utilise Castles' (2000)<sup>5</sup> classification of migrants as follows:

- “Temporary labour migrants (also known as guest-workers or overseas contract workers): men and women who migrate for a limited period (from a few months to several years) in order to take up employment and send money home (remittances).”
- “Highly skilled and business migrants: people with qualifications as managers, executives, professionals, technicians or similar, who move within the internal labour markets of transnational corporations and international organisations, or who seek employment through international labour markets for scarce skills. Many countries welcome such migrants and have special ‘skilled and business migration’ programmes to encourage them to come.”
- Family members (also known as family reunion or family reunification migrants): migration to join people who have already entered an immigration country under one of the above categories.
- Irregular migrants (also known as “undocumented” or “illegal migrants”).
- Refugees: according to the 1951 United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, a refugee is a person residing outside his or her country of nationality, who is unable or unwilling to return because of a ‘well-founded fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion’.
- Asylum-seekers: people who move across borders in search of protection, but who may not fulfil the strict criteria laid down by the 1951 Convention.
- Forced migration: in a broader sense, this includes not only refugees and asylum-seekers but also people forced to move by environmental catastrophes or development projects (such as new factories, roads or dams.).

<sup>5</sup> Castles, S. (2000). “International migration at the beginning of the twenty-first century: global trends and issues”. *Global Trends and Issues*, UNESCO, 165/2000, 269-281.

- 
- Return migrants: people who return to their countries of origin after a period in another country (Castles, 2000).

Geographical proximity continues to be a significant determinant of international migration patterns, as evidenced by the large flows between Mexico and the United States, North Africa and Southern Europe, Eastern European countries and Western Europe and among Middle Eastern countries. Cultural, historical and colonial ties, and the networks built up over many years, also prompt large movements, for example from a number of Sub-Saharan African countries to the former colonial countries, France, the UK, Belgium and Portugal.<sup>6</sup> However, equally important are migration flows at a regional level between developing countries, frequently short-term and spurred by economic or political considerations.

Given this diversity in migrant types, circumstances and motivations, it is difficult to dispute the assertion by Lucas and Mansfield (2008:7)<sup>7</sup> that “it is impossible to generalize the experiences of migrant workers, which may vary from working illegally under exploitative terms and conditions, to working in highly paid, rewarding and skilled jobs”. What is true here in the general sense when referring to the complexity of migration and migrant work is equally applicable to the context of this report, that of migrant workers in the hotel sector. This complexity and, therefore, a reluctance to draw broad conclusions about the experience of migrants and their employers across the many countries and contexts which are involved, are themes which underpin this Report.

## 2. Migration and Migrant Workers

While human migration has been a feature of human development and the creation of civilizations since the earliest communities evolved on this planet, recent and contemporary migration, both forced and economic, have reached an unprecedented scale and look certain to remain dominant global political, economic and socio-cultural characteristics of life for the foreseeable future. ILO (2010:36) rightly note that

*Migration has occurred throughout history, and current trends certainly indicate that it will continue to increase in the future. While the forces of globalization have created opportunities for greater integration of labour markets, a complex web of national immigration laws and border controls has restricted the mobility of people across borders. Yet growing disparities in wealth, incomes, human security, human rights and demographic trends across countries are all exerting upward pressure on migration.*

As already noted, migration is a highly complex concept and reflects a wide range of global issues and challenges, including “push” factors such as

- natural and human-induced disasters such as drought, crop failure, flooding, hurricanes etc.
- regional political turbulence and conflict
- economic instability and recession
- political oppression and internal instability within countries

At the same time, “pull” factors attract migrants to move to new locations (destination countries) as a result of

<sup>6</sup> Page, J. and Plaza, S. (2008), *Migration remittances and development. A review of global evidence*, Washington D.C.: World Bank.

<sup>7</sup> Lucas, R., & Mansfield, S. (2008). *Staff shortages and immigration in the hospitality sector*. Web published by the Migration Advisory Committee. [www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/mac](http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/mac).

- economic opportunity and development
- skills and labour shortages (oftentimes created by structural changes within populations, generally reflected in aging and declining birth rates)
- perceived welcoming social and political conditions
- the attraction of cultural and national diaspora in receiving countries

Migration data gives an approximation of the numbers migrating legally on an annual basis within and between countries but largely excludes unremunerated migrants in irregular situations. The number of non-nationals (as distinct from recent migrants) who are working is generally estimated on a country-by-country basis but information on a sector basis is rather sketchier. However, non-nationals or those born outside of a country can include workers who have been in that country for a considerable length of time and are largely assimilated into the local workforce. Interpretation and location within employment statistics in these cases varies from country to country. Münz (2008)<sup>8</sup> illustrates this through the examples of Switzerland and Luxembourg where there is very little difference in the proportion of the workforce who are foreign-born and those who are non-nationals and the UK where there are over three times as many foreign-born compared to non-national workers.

Notwithstanding the different ways in which migrant workers may be counted, countries vary greatly in the role which migrants play within their societies.

Table 1: Proportion of non-nationals in total population in selected countries (projected for 2010)<sup>9</sup>

Qatar	88%
United Arab Emirates	80%
Kuwait	79%
Jordan	48%
Singapore	40%
Israel	40%
Hong Kong SAR	39%
Switzerland	22%
Australia	21%
Ireland	20%

The causes of international migration are often quite complex (Castles, 2000) and, in reality, these push and pull factors combine in different ways to influence the decision to migrate. Key among these are the increased pace of globalization, growing demographic disparities, the effects of environmental change, new global political and economic dynamics including political change, technological revolution and the emergence of new forms of social networks. Globalization is an integral part of the world economy just as international migration is an integral part of globalization. Therefore, the accelerating pace of globalization contributes to an increased pace in labour market mobility.<sup>10</sup> This is

<sup>8</sup> Münz, R. (2008), *Migration, Labor Markets, and Integration of Migrants: An Overview for Europe*, Washington D.C.: World Bank.

<sup>9</sup> From: United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs – Population Division (2009) *Trends in International Migrant Stock: The 2008 revision* New York: UN-DESA.

<sup>10</sup> Stalker, P. (2000). *Workers without Frontiers: the Impact of Globalization on International Migration*. Geneva: ILO.

---

further stressed by ILO (2010:210) in stating that “the logic and phenomena of globalization are clearly driving forces in migration today.”

Notwithstanding the complexity of motivations that underpin migration, international migration is mostly an issue of labour mobility of people moving in search of better opportunities. According to the ILO (2010), about half of all international migrants are working. Push, pull and network factors interact to create a highly volatile and mobile global community, within which both temporary and permanent mobility remains a constant, irrespective of the impact of economic and political cycles and change. Certainly, short-term trends in migration are impacted upon by specific events or in response to the economic cycle. OECD’s annual assessment of international migration for 2011<sup>11</sup> points clearly to the impact of the current global economic downturn on migration, highlighting 2009 declines in permanent and labour-induced migration over 2008 but noting that figures for 2009 still represent higher levels of migration than any year prior to 2007. This, therefore, underscores the inexorable growth trajectory which can be seen in all forms of global migration. At the same time, OECD does highlight major trend disparities in the impact of inbound migration on different countries which reflect the economic challenges facing specific countries and regions. For example, decline in the number of inward migrants between 2008 and 2009 was as high as 46 per cent in the Czech Republic and 42 per cent in the case of the Republic of Ireland. By contrast, Australia experienced a 7 per cent increase over the same timeframe; the Russian Federation’s growth was 11 per cent and that of the United Kingdom 14 per cent. Likewise patterns of out-migration varied greatly from country to country. By way of illustration, OECD (2011:49) reports that immigration from Poland was very high in the mid-2000s, although it has since declined. Romanians, who moved in large numbers to several countries in 2009, were an increasing part of flows to Italy (2008), Germany, Portugal and Luxembourg, although the flows to Spain and Hungary decreased significantly in 2009.

It is worth noting, however, what UNDP (2009)<sup>12</sup> highlight in their assessment of mobility and migration. UNDP rightly note that discussions about migration typically start from the perspective of flows from developing countries into the rich countries of Europe, North America and Australasia. Yet they further point out that, in fact, most movement in the world does not take place between developing and developed countries; it does not even take place between countries. The overwhelming majority of people who move do so inside their own country. Using a conservative definition, it is estimated that approximately 740 million people are internal migrants — almost four times as many as those who have moved internationally. Internal migration is an emerging field of concern to policy makers and researchers (see, for example,<sup>13, 14, 15, 16</sup>) and, in the context of the theme of this report, is illustrated in Case Study iv, relating to Egypt. Most migrants, internal and international, reap gains in the form of higher incomes, better access to education and health, and improved prospects for their children. Just over a third moved from a developing to a developed country – fewer than 70 million people. Most of the

<sup>11</sup> OECD (2011), *International Migration Outlook: SOPEMI 2011*, Paris: OECD Publishing .

<sup>12</sup> UNDP (2009), “*Human Development Report 2009. Overcoming barriers: Human mobility and development*” New York: UNDP.

<sup>13</sup> Overseas Development Institute (2006), *Internal migration, poverty and development in Asia*, London: ODI.

<sup>14</sup> Cerrutti, M. and Bertonecello, R. (2003), “Urbanization and Internal Migration Patterns in Latin America”, *Paper to Conference on African Migration in Comparative Perspective*, Johannesburg, South Africa, 4-7 June.

<sup>15</sup> Ping, H. and Shaohua, Z. (2005), “Internal migration in China: Linking it to development”, paper to the *Regional Conference on Migration and Development*, Lanzhou, China.

<sup>16</sup> Nagla, M. (2011), “Migrant labour and leisure: an analysis” *South Asian Journal of Tourism and Heritage*, 4(1), 56-62.

world's 214 million international migrants (estimate for 2010) moved from one developing country to another or between developed countries.

Table 2: Direction of international migration, 2010<sup>17</sup>

	No (millions)	Share (%)
South – South	73.6	34
South – North	72.7	34
North – North	55	26
North – South	12.6	6
Total	213.8	100

In economic conditions that are challenging, as under the current financial and economic crisis, experience in the workplace becomes increasingly important in the allocation of job opportunities. The rapid growth in the youth population of many developing countries coexists with declining economic opportunities for work in the home countries, therefore inducing out-migration of, often, well-educated young people.

It is evident that the global economic crisis has impacted upon young people and worsened their situation in the labour market. Of the world's estimated 211 million unemployed people in 2009, almost 40 per cent – about 81 million – were between 15 and 24 years of age, representing the highest number of youth unemployment to date. All regions of the world recorded an increase in youth unemployment in 2009 (ILO, 2010).<sup>18</sup> Under such circumstances, migration or re-migration for work is an attractive solution for a significant number of economically active youth. This is especially the case for young workers in countries where social protection is lacking or not guaranteed. Labour migration gives them the means to sustain themselves, learn valuable skills that could increase their employability, remit a portion of their wages to their families, and perhaps even accumulate savings for later investment into the growth of their home country economy. (ILO, OHCHR, UNCTAD, WHO, 2011).<sup>19</sup>

The longer-term prognosis, however, in terms of labour mobility, is predicated upon demographic rather than short-term economic considerations. Migration has the potential to offer solutions to labour market problems that will be faced by many developed countries in the future. The GFMD (2011)<sup>20</sup> noted that moving more workers from lower to higher wage countries can dramatically expand global economic output and bring gains for migrants, employers, and migrant-sending and – receiving countries.

The major challenge for tourism in the context of demographic change is the ageing workforce of most developed countries and the implications that this has for productivity but also for the image of the industry which has sought out younger workers as the core for its marketing and operational image (Baum, 2007).<sup>21</sup> An ageing workforce is not only a numerical issue in labour market terms. There are mixed arguments with respect to the quality of work that can be expected from an older workforce. The European Commission

<sup>17</sup> Source: United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs – Population Division (2011), *Trends in International Migrant Stock: The 2010 revision*, New York: UN-DESA.

<sup>18</sup> ILO. *Global Employment Trends for Youth August 2010: Special issue on the impact of the global economic crisis on youth*. International Labour Office, Geneva: ILO.

<sup>19</sup> ILO, OHCHR, UNCTAD, WHO (2011) Enhancing the well-being and human rights of young migrants in support of development. Briefing paper prepared for Global Migration Group (GMG) Symposium, New York, 17-18 May 2011.

<sup>20</sup> Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) (2011) Preparatory paper for Working Sessions on *Labour Mobility and Development*, Geneva: GFMD.

<sup>21</sup> Baum, T. (2007) “Human resources in tourism: still waiting for change” *Tourism Management*, 28, 1383-1399.

---

(2007a)<sup>22</sup> note suggestions that an individual's productivity may decline with age, and that consequently a rising share of older workers in the labour force may reduce overall labour productivity in the economy. It is also feared that older workers may be less likely to embrace innovation, be more resistant to the introduction of new technologies and that ageing societies may also be less inclined to make long-term investments, notably in education and research and development (European Commission, 2007b).<sup>23</sup>

Migration is clearly one major option for countries with both a skills and age-profile deficit in terms of meeting future employment requirements in the tourism sector. The challenge for the hospitality sector, in the future and in the light of demographic change, is to evaluate the skills and know-how that underpin its business operations, particularly with respect to an interpretation as to what talent means in this sector context, and to consider how such talent can be most effectively developed across the hospitality and tourism workforce. With this re-evaluation of talent for tourism, competitive pressures in relation to other sectors may not be as acute in the future.

Migration, which lies at the heart of competition for skills in tourism and other sectors, will constitute a significant “reserve army of labour” by which the sector will, in the future, be able to draw on additional skills to meet local and global needs. Demographic change, as we have already shown, points to the future need for economies, particularly in the developed world, to draw upon currently untapped sources of labour in order to meet skills shortages. There will be a higher proportion of under-represented sections of society drawn into externally remunerated work – women, minority communities, people with disabilities and, probably most significantly, older workers, notwithstanding the organizational and image issues that recruitment from these may present to the international hotel industry.

### 3. The International Hotel Industry

#### 3.1 Characteristics

The international hotel industry is characterized by diversity in relation to almost all facets of its organization and operations. Indeed, it is questionable whether it is valid or appropriate to use such a definitive description for an industry sector which displays variation to a far greater degree than it does homogeneity. The industry and particularly, the Hotel and Restaurant sub-sector is highly diversified in the types of businesses that operate under its auspices. The largest companies include portfolios that include more than 6,000 hotels each and employ more than 150,000 employees in up to 100 countries. Globally the industry is highly fragmented, with around 20 per cent of the workforce located within multinational enterprises compared to 80 per cent in SMEs.<sup>24</sup>

SMEs account for at least 60 per cent of the workforce in the OECD where 99 per cent of the companies employ fewer than 250 workers, amongst which the majority has less than 10. More than 2.5 million SMEs are estimated to be involved in the European

<sup>22</sup> European Commission (2007a) *Europe's demographic future: Facts and figures on challenges and opportunities* Luxembourg: European Commission Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities.

<sup>23</sup> European Commission (2007b). *The social situation in the European Union 2005-2006*, Brussels: European Commission.

<sup>24</sup> See: <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/dialogue/sector/sectors/tourism/emp-hotel.htm> (accessed 20 April 2010).

---

industry.<sup>25</sup> However, the sector in Spain is composed of 56.6 per cent of hotel chains compared to 47.39 per cent of SMEs with 1 to 9 employees.<sup>26</sup>

Unlike the more general European picture, businesses in North America, emerging Asian destinations, Australia, the United Kingdom and some Nordic countries are more strongly influenced by large chains that employ more than 250 people.<sup>27</sup> Large enterprises are active product and service innovators and frequently set trends for the sector. As a result of “branding”, which aims to build brand popularity so that consumers identify with the brand and its particular values, hotels have found that they can avoid risks of ownership while securing a constant stream of revenue by entering into long-term management agreements. They influence the activity of many SMEs through franchising or similar arrangements, businesses which remain legally independent particularly when workers’ representation is concerned (see also chapter 4). Branding within the chain sector helps achieve harmony between countries in respect to hotel grading criteria.

The fragmented situation leads to differences in performance and competence. Big hotel chains have HRD resources including in-house and on-job-training whereas SMEs lack the capacity to do so and rely more on the VCT system to meet their training requirements. However, it can be a challenge for hotel chains that have adopted broad HR management views to maintain a consistent approach to HR practice and industrial relations including dialogue across regions. This is a function of the structure and size of such organizations and the variety of legislative regimes within which they operate.

### 3.2. The nature of work in hotels

Tourism and hospitality represent highly labour-intensive sectors and, numerically, a significant source of employment. It is among the world’s top job creators and allows for quick entry into the workforce for youth, women and migrant workers. As a leading contributor to export earnings, it accounted for 6 per cent of all global exports in 2008. With regard to the supply chain in the sector, one job in the core hospitality industry indirectly generates roughly 1.5 additional jobs in the related economy.<sup>28</sup>

In 2009, the hospitality global economy accounted for more than 235 million jobs, equivalent to about 8 per cent of the overall number of jobs (direct and indirect), or one in every 12.3 jobs. The sector as a whole generated about 9.4 per cent of the global GDP. Its investment was estimated at 9.2 per cent of total investments.<sup>29</sup> The industry in the EU itself creates more than 5 per cent of EU GDP with 9.7 million jobs (5.2 per cent of the total workforce). If related services like manufacturing and agriculture that depend on travel demand are also considered, tourism indirectly generates around 10 per cent of EU GDP and employs 12 per cent of the workforce. In OECD countries, tourism GDP ranges between 1.9 per cent in Denmark and 10.7 per cent in Spain. With respect to their share in

<sup>25</sup> European commission website, enterprise and industry, “Facts and figures about European tourism”, see: [http://ec.europa.eu/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/index_en.htm) (accessed 20 April 2010).

<sup>26</sup> Federación Estatal de Hostelería, Comercio y Turismo de Comisiones Obreras: *Relaciones laborales en los establecimientos hoteleros: Los y las trabajadoras ante la crisis del modelo laboral y económico hotelero*, March 2010, pp.60, 101.

<sup>27</sup> United States, Bureau of Labor Statistics, [http://www.bls.gov/emp/ep\\_table\\_109.htm](http://www.bls.gov/emp/ep_table_109.htm), (accessed 24 March 2010); OECD: “Tourism Trends in the OECD Area and Beyond”, in *Tourism Trends and Policies 2010*, OECD 2010, p.39.

<sup>28</sup> Ian Goldin “The Economic Case for Tourism” UNWTO/South Africa International Summit on Tourism, Sport and Mega-events, 25 February 2010; Dain Bolwell, Wolfgang Weinz: *Reducing poverty through tourism*, (Geneva, ILO 2008); <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/dialogue/sector/sectors/tourism/emp.htm>.

<sup>29</sup> See also: [http://www.wttc.org/eng/Tourism\\_Research/Tourism\\_Economic\\_Research/](http://www.wttc.org/eng/Tourism_Research/Tourism_Economic_Research/).



---

total employment, the variance is between 2 per cent in Denmark and 12.7 per cent in Spain.<sup>30</sup> In Egypt each million dollar invested in hotels creates 18 direct and 12 indirect jobs.<sup>31</sup> In the United States, the accommodation and food service industry employs around 12.5 million people (7.61 per cent of the total workforce).

In addition, several non-OECD member countries show strong growth in international tourism terms in both destinations and originating markets (particularly Brazil, China and India) with rapidly growing tourism economies accounting for a significant share of GDP and total employment. In the Pacific, tourism contributes greatly to GDP. In Fiji, the sector offered to over 40,000 people and contributed significantly to foreign exchange reserves. In 2005, each USD 1 created about 63 jobs in Fiji.<sup>32</sup>

Hotels are a core component of the hospitality industry and as such one of largest and most rapidly expanding industries worldwide.<sup>33</sup> The sector can rightfully be described as a vehicle of globalization, as the hotels themselves accommodate tourists and business travellers from around the world. As in most other industries, the hotel sector is increasingly dominated by multinational companies. The industry also has close links to other key agents of globalization, such as the airlines, travel agents, real estate investors and credit card companies. Hotel workplaces frequently draw workers from the most vulnerable segments of the labour market.<sup>34</sup> Hotel jobs are typically low skilled, flexible (insecure), have few language skill requirements and thus serve the multicultural labour markets in cities around the world (Gray 2004).<sup>35</sup> Although many of these features may seem more or less universal, it is also important to note that there is considerable variation between countries, between urban and rural areas, and between different segments (high-end/low-end) of the hotel labour market. The degree and impact of unionisation also varies to a great extent (Eurofound, 2004).<sup>36</sup>

A 2004 Eurofound report states that the collectively agreed pay in the hotel and restaurant sector is low when compared to average wages in almost all EU member states. In addition to the low wage level, the working hours in these sectors are longer than the national average. The report also states that there is a tendency towards consolidation of ownership in the sector, although small and medium-sized enterprises are still predominant. Meanwhile, the sector is characterized by a high degree of fluctuation and business turnover i.e. hotels go in and out of business and/or change owners. This is even truer for the restaurant sector. In the hotel sector, the above-mentioned process of ownership concentration manifests itself in both in a tendency for hotels to become larger as well as more numerous. There has also been a great proliferation of chains. This has

<sup>30</sup> See: [http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/index_en.htm) (accessed 23 April 2010); OECD: "Tourism Trends in the OECD Area and Beyond", in *Tourism Trends and Policies 2010*, OECD 2010, p.8.

<sup>31</sup> Egyptian national competitiveness council: "Towards a competitive Egypt: Where everybody wins", *The Egyptian Competitiveness Report*, Cairo, May 2008, p. 85.

<sup>32</sup> Paresh Kumar Narayan, Seema Narayan, Arti Prasad, Biman Chand Prasad: "Tourism and economic growth: a panel data analysis for Pacific Island countries", in *Tourism Economics 2010*, 16(1), 169 – 183. In 2006, the sector provided 2.1 per cent of GDP in the Salomon Islands; in 2007 it was 6 per cent in Vanuatu and in 2008 it was 3.6 per cent in Samoa and 4.4 per cent in Fiji (ILO: *Green Jobs in the South Pacific, A Preliminary Study*, ILO 2010).

<sup>33</sup> This part of the analysis draws on the following source: Jordhus-Lier, D., Bergene, A.C., Knutsen, H.M. and Underthun, A. (2010), *Hotel workplaces in Oslo and Akershus*, Oslo: Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research, Working Paper 106.

<sup>34</sup> Tufts, S. (2007) Emerging labour strategies in Toronto's hotel sector: toward a spatial circuit of union renewal. *Environment and Planning A* 39: 2383-2404.

<sup>35</sup> Gray, M. (2004) The social construction of the service sector: institutional structures and labour market outcomes. *Geoforum* 35: 23-34.

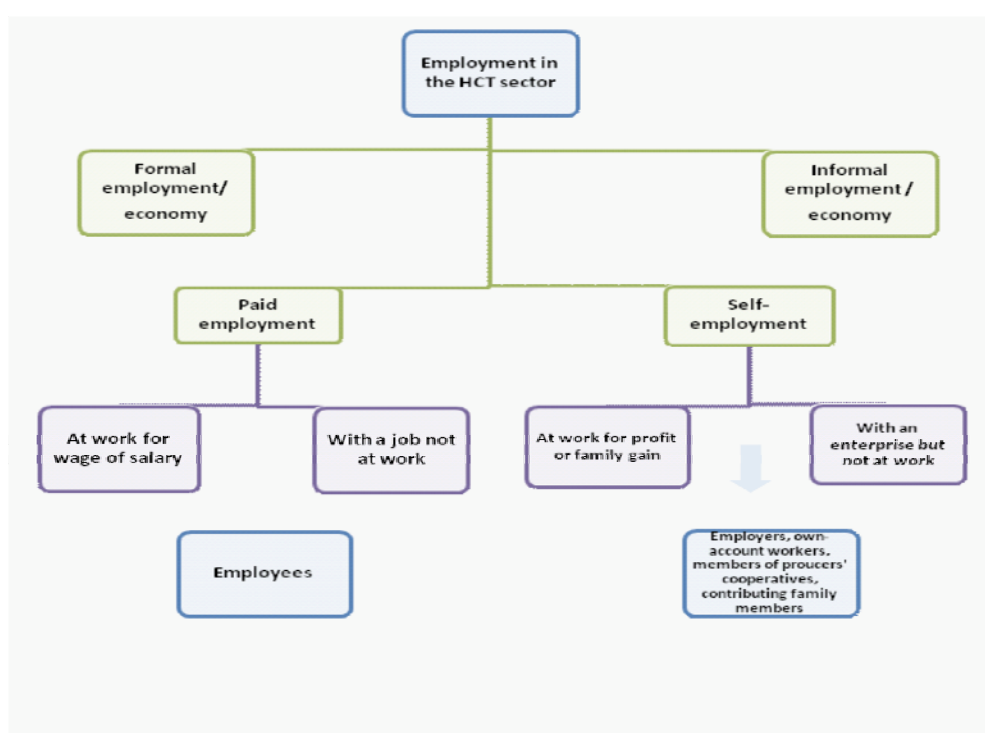
<sup>36</sup> Eurofound (2004). *EU hotel and restaurant sector: Work and employment conditions*, Dublin, European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions.

important consequences for labour, since the running of large chains necessitate professional operation and management, which often carries with it a potential for improved handling of work related questions (Eurofound 2004).

Working conditions in hotels are often challenging. According to Eurofound (2004), much of the work in hotels and restaurants is of a strenuous nature and may involve long periods of standing, a lot of walking (often on high-heeled shoes), carrying (heavy) loads, repetitive movements, working in painful positions and walking up/down stairs. There is thus a heavy workload coupled with high levels of stress resulting from time pressure and constant customer contact. Furthermore, constant contact with water and cleansing products is a key risk. To this must be added the significant risk factor of violence and harassment from customers, colleagues or management (Eurofound 2004).

The hospitality sector is, therefore, characterized by diversity, complexity, inter-linkage, and fragmentation in terms of employment relations. Hospitality occupations are not the only jobs linked to sector activities (e.g. hotels and restaurants employees), there are also many jobs that have indirect relationships with the sector as well (e.g. taxi drivers, other transports, tourist guides, gift shops). These relationships influence the many types of workplace contracts that include full-time, part-time, temporary, casual and seasonal employment and have significant implications for HRD within the sector.

Figure 1: Employment in the HCT Sector



Source: Figure prepared by the ILO, 2010.

In contrast to other industries, employment in HCT tends to be oriented towards people under 35 years of age, half of which are 25 or under. In Spain 43.4 per cent of workers in the sector are aged 25 to 34.<sup>37</sup> The United States Bureau of Labor Statistics report a higher number of workers aged between 16 and 20 than those aged 20 and over

<sup>37</sup> Federación Estatal de Hostelería, Comercio y Turismo de Comisiones Obreras: Relaciones laborales en los establecimientos hoteleros: *Los y las trabajadoras ante la crisis del modelo laboral y económico hotelero*, March 2010, p.187.

---

working in food preparation and service related occupations.<sup>38</sup> However, this traditional characteristic will face future challenges as the demographic structures of developed countries change. The presence of an ageing workforce in regions such as Europe, Japan and North America means that the HCT sector in the future will depend on an older profile of employees with potential impacts on workplace conditions, productivity and brand image.

#### **4. Migrant Workers in the International Hotel Industry – a review of the literature**

Tourism and its dominant sub-sector, hotels, is one of the economic sectors in the global economy (alongside agriculture, construction and mining) which are dominant in the opportunities offered to migrant workers, worldwide. This is substantially because they are place-specific sectors, which, unlike manufacturing, cannot be mobile in response to low labour costs elsewhere. Jantaa et al (2011)<sup>39</sup> argue that there is little dispute that tourism employment is an important component and driver of human mobility.

The challenge, in assessing the role of migrant labour in the international hotel industry, is that it is not feasible to form a one-dimensional picture of policies and practices in relation to this field that is applicable across national and cultural boundaries. Rather, the nature of migrant work in the industry is characterized by variation on the basis of

- *geography* – no two countries or regions can be said to exhibit the same characteristics with respect to the role that international and/or internal migrant workers play within their hotel industry
- *time* – the role that migrant workers plays within hotel operations changes over time. A good example is the indigenization of senior managerial and technical posts in some countries of Asia and the Caribbean after many years of expatriate monopoly of these roles
- *legal constraints* – local nationality and employment laws which may impact on the ability of migrant workers to settle and become part of the local workforce
- *education and vocational training for the hotel sector* – the extent to which local capacity can be developed within colleges, universities and in-company training in order to meet the skills requirements of the sector, influencing the type and level of migrant worker who may be employed
- *religion, culture and traditions* – whether these factors influence the work that members of a community undertake and whether these include the type of jobs available within the hotel sector
- *gender roles in the workplace and society* – whether women from the local community play an active role in the economy and, if they do not, how their absence is compensated in the hotel sector

What is certainly impossible to establish on a global basis is the scale of migrant work within the hotel sector. It is possible to obtain a sense of national numbers from, for example, the Irish Republic (see Case Study v) but even such estimates are time-bound and subject to debate. We, therefore, do not know the scale of migrant work in the sector. There is extensive anecdotal evidence of the presence of non-national workers in the hotel

<sup>38</sup> See: United States, Bureau of Labor Statistics, [http://www.bls.gov/emp/ep\\_table\\_109.htm](http://www.bls.gov/emp/ep_table_109.htm) (accessed 24 March 2010).

<sup>39</sup> Jantaa, H., Ladkin, A., Brown, L. and Lugosi, P. (2011), "Employment experiences of Polish migrant workers in the UK hospitality industry" *Tourism Management*, 32(5), 1006-1019.

industry across a wide range of countries and continents. Their presence, in proportionate terms to local employees, ranges from close to 100 per cent in some of the Gulf States to marginal presence in technical, specialist or managerial roles in the sector in many countries.

Hotel and restaurant employees figure significantly within the total migrant worker community of many countries. The OECD (2009) provides data with respect to this for selected European countries (Table 3).

Table 3: Proportion (%) of hotel and restaurant employees within total migrant worker population<sup>40</sup>

Austria	12%
Belgium	8%
Switzerland	7.4%
Germany	8.4%
Spain	14.7%
France	6.9%
Italy	8.1%
Turkey	4.8%
United Kingdom	8.6%

The transitory nature of much hospitality work in temporal and spatial terms has a myriad of impacts on the hospitality employees themselves as well as many of the key hospitality industry stakeholders (be they employers, landlords or local non-hospitality businesses). The influence of temporal factors, seasonality in particular, as an illustration of the transitory nature of hospitality work, is well documented in the literature (see for instance Baum, 2006;<sup>41</sup> Boon, 2006;<sup>42</sup> Jolliffe & Farnsworth, 2003<sup>43</sup>). Therefore, our focus becomes the dimension of employee mobility and the ways in which current discourse provides insights and problematizes the mobility of these hospitality workers and their relations to customer service, place, experience and performance.

Hospitality is a sector with a strong tradition of diversity in its workforce across many dimensions (Baum et al., 2007), notably in terms of the role that migrant staff have played within the sector since the early development of commercial hospitality. Baum (2006) traces examples of vocational mobility in the sector in Europe back to the 13<sup>th</sup> century and discusses the important role that, primarily, southern Europeans played in developing the culture and character of hospitality operations in industrialised Europe in the 19<sup>th</sup> and much of the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. More recently, economic migration to post- industrial economies of North America, Europe, Australia and the Middle East has seen the tourism and hospitality sector utilise incoming employees/migrants across the workplace spectrum as a cheap and accessible source of what is seen to be low-skilled labour (see Pantelidis & Wrobel 2008;<sup>44</sup>

<sup>40</sup> From: OECD (2009) *International migration and the financial crisis: Understanding the links and shaping policy responses* p. 56.

<sup>41</sup> Baum, T. (2006). *Human Resource Management for Tourism, Hospitality and Leisure. An International Perspective*. London: International Thomson.

<sup>42</sup> Boon, B. (2006). When leisure and work are allies: the case of skiers and tourist resort hotels. *Career Development International*, 11(7), 594-608.

<sup>43</sup> Jolliffe, L. & Farnsworth, R. (2003). Seasonality in tourism employment: human resources challenges. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 15(6), 312-316.

<sup>44</sup> Pantelidis, I. & Wrobel, S. (2008). London's hospitality workforce: Cultural diversity as a choice or necessity? *London Journal of Tourism, Sport and Creative Industries*, 1(1), 13-21.

---

Wickham et al., 2008<sup>45</sup>). This new migration has stimulated debate about its impact upon the form, quality and authenticity of interactive service delivery.

It is arguable that these hospitality workers are frequently transients who spend an extended amount of time in specific destinations in order to engage in specific lifestyle choices. Consequently, within the mobility of their travel, long periods of immobility occur. As such, the freedom of (im)mobility for this group of workers gives rise to a circulatory movement, where citizens of one nation can go and work/live/travel abroad for a period of time before returning home (see Conradson & Latham, 2005a;<sup>46</sup> Findlay, 1995<sup>47</sup>). Consequently, it is not just individuals who develop through transnational opportunities but the relations within and between wider social networks also become more mobile, complex and fluid through transnational practices and experiences. What is also necessary to recognise is that, within these same social and economic networks, informal pathways can be established that encompass the precarious routes of refugees, asylum seekers and guest workers. Multiple interacting systems and networks of mobility are appearing, and groups as diverse as backpackers and students, migrants and cosmopolitan professionals are more likely than ever to merge and intersect in various ways, shaping, changing and impacting on 'local' communities' (Allon, Anderson & Bushell, 2008, p. 73;<sup>48</sup> see also Batnitzky, McDowell & Dyer, 2008<sup>49</sup>).

The European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (2008)<sup>50</sup> highlights the particular vulnerabilities of migrant workers in the hotel sector with respect to health and safety. Many migrant workers enter the sector via seasonal or casual work. Their jobs are in general more precarious than those of local workers. Migrants also work more often in unhealthy environments, take the more dangerous jobs and work more often below the level of their qualifications. Barriers to health and safety that are often reported are poor language skills, low levels of education, lack of knowledge of employment rights, not knowing who to turn to in case of a problem, low pay, and difficulties in validating those qualifications that they may have.

#### **4.1. Roles and scripts – the segmentation of migrant workers in the hotel industry**

It is relatively unusual to find that the allocation of work and responsibilities within the hotel industry affords equity on the basis of gender, ethnicity or country of origin. There is ample evidence from many cultures and countries, for example, to show that women's participation in hotel work is frequently concentrated in specific work areas and women tend to be over-represented in low paid, low status and non-managerial positions (see, for example, Bird et al, 2002<sup>51</sup>; Adlib and Guerrier, 2003;<sup>52</sup> Kerfoot and Korczynski,

<sup>45</sup> Wickham, J., Moriarty, E., Bobek, A. & Salamonska, J. (2008). *Migrant workers and the Irish Hospitality Sector*. Preliminary Report from the Migrant Careers and Aspirations Research Project, Dublin: Trinity College.

<sup>46</sup> Conradson, D. & Latham, A. (2005). "Escalator London? A case study of New Zealand tertiary educated migrants in a global city". *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*, 13(2), 159-172

<sup>47</sup> Findlay, A. M. (1995). Skilled Transients: The Invisible Phenomenon? In R. Cohen (Ed.). *The Cambridge Survey of World Migration* (pp. 515-522). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

<sup>48</sup> Allon, F., Anderson, K. & Bushell, R. (2008). "Mutant mobilities: Backpacker tourism in 'Global Sydney'". *Mobilities*, 3(1), 73-94.

<sup>49</sup> Batnitzky, A., McDowell, L. & Dyer, S. (2008). A middle-class global mobility? The working lives of Indian men in a west London hotel. *Global Networks*, 8(1), 51-70.

<sup>50</sup> European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (2008), *Protecting workers in hotels, restaurants and catering*, Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.

<sup>51</sup> Bird, E., Lynch, P. A. and Ingram, A. (2002), "Gender and employment flexibility within hotel front offices", *Service Industries Journal*, 22(3), 99-116.

---

2005;<sup>53</sup> Dyer et al, 2010<sup>54</sup>). Adler and Adler (1999)<sup>55</sup> introduce the notion of worker typologies as a means of explaining role allocation within a resort workforce that includes employees from varied cultures and with different reasons (economic, lifestyle) for ‘being there’. They refer to four groupings within the resort sector in Hawaii, a classification which, of course, may not readily transfer to other working environments in the hotel sector where migrant workers are present but does provide an approach which assists in understanding ethnicity- or culturally-based role allocation within the industry. Adler and Adler found four groupings within the resort workforce in Hawaii, viz. new immigrants, locals, seekers, and managers and each of these groups performed distinctive roles within the industry. Adler and Adler’s classification can be elaborated as follows:

Occupying the lowest rung of the occupational hierarchy was the new immigrant. These people made up a significant proportion of the line employees, those individuals who filled the lowest, most menial positions at the resorts. New immigrants to the Hawaiian Islands were primarily Samoan, Filipino, Vietnamese, Korean, Micronesian, Thai and Tongan. The second category of resort employees, distinctly different from the new immigrants, was the locals. Locals consist of “brown”-skinned people (those having racial blends of Asian, Pacific Island, Hawaiian and Portuguese descent, born and raised in Hawaii) and mainly working class. Locals were generally American citizens and with family ties to the islands. Many locals worked as line employees, in jobs not filled by new immigrants, generally the strata above them. Seekers form the third group in the Adler and Adler classification. Like new immigrants, seekers were ‘imports’ to the islands but, unlike the first group, many did not remain. Exercising high mobility, seekers sought to maximize their immediate life satisfaction. They pursued alternative lifestyles and careers, shaped by their intense focus on recreation. Seekers came overwhelmingly from the continental United States, were predominantly young, male and middle-class. In the hotel, they held two types of jobs – unskilled line jobs which they shared with locals but more strongly in specialist skilled areas such as the spa, the kitchens, water sports and specialist areas of work. The final category in the Adler and Adler classification were the resort professionals, the management workers who made their careers in the hospitality industry. New immigrants never rose into management positions and seekers did so extremely rarely. Locals were more regularly promoted to middle and, occasionally, executive management. However, the majority of the senior positions were composed entirely of the resort professionals. This group came overwhelmingly from the mainland USA and were passing through Hawaiian resorts as part of the ‘career streams’. They were also mostly male and generally white.

Adler and Adler’s classification merits reproduction in some detail here because it provides a picture which is substantially replicated within the migrant – local worker nexus in very many of the hotel industries where significant communities of non-national employees are to be found. McDowell and her colleagues as well as May et al (in papers cited elsewhere in this Report, notably in Case Study vii) illustrate similar forms of segregation within the workforce of London hotels. What is interesting in the case of London and, probably, other large cities in Western Europe, is that the influx of migrants from new accession EU states since 2004 has substantially changed the existing role allocation ‘order’ so that positions previously allocated on ethnic grounds within the hotel sector, are more widely taken by a diverse community of migrant workers, on the basis of

<sup>52</sup> Adib, A. and Guerrier, Y. (2003) The interlocking of gender with nationality, race, ethnicity and class: the narratives of women in hotel work. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 10(4), 413–32

<sup>53</sup> Kerfoot, D. and Korczynski, M. (2005) “Gender and service: new directions for the study of ‘front-line’ service work”, *Gender, Work & Organization*, 12(5), 387–99.

<sup>54</sup> Dyer, S., McDowell, L. and Batnitzky, A. (2010), “The Impact of Migration on the Gendering of Service Work: The Case of a West London Hotel”, *Gender, Work and Organization*, 17(6), 635-57.

<sup>55</sup> Adler, P.A. and Adler, P. (1999), “Resort Workers: Adaptations in the Leisure-Work Nexus”, *Sociological Perspectives*, 42(3), 369-402.

---

their initial language and communication skills. Other studies highlight the experiences of specific migrant segments which align to one or other of Adler and Adler's groups – for example, Boon (2003)<sup>56</sup> and Duncan (2007, 2008),<sup>57</sup> highlight the role of 'seekers' who form a major component of the hotel workforce in many attractive, life-style destinations. Likewise, there is extensive discussion of the lives, roles and challenges of Adler and Adler's resort professionals in different national and cultural contexts, for example, the Caribbean (Jayawardena and Haywood, 2003)<sup>58</sup> and China (Kaye and Taylor, 1997,<sup>59</sup> Leung et al, 2001,<sup>60</sup> Wang, 2009<sup>61</sup>) and well as a more general assessment of this particular role within the hotel industry (Ozdemir and Cizel, 2007).<sup>62</sup>

## 4.2. Regional Analysis

There is also merit, in the context of this Report, in taking a brief look at migrant labour in the hotel industry on a regional basis. This analysis should be considered alongside some of the more detailed national pictures painted in the eight Case Studies.

### Asia

Asia presents many facets of labour migration within the hotel industry and beyond.<sup>63</sup> Asian hotels have long been the recipients of migrant workers, primarily from Europe, North America, Australasia and Japan in the form of executive and technical expatriation, a practice that has its roots in colonial economic relationships which were perpetuated by the emergence of major international hotel chain brands in these originating regions. Expatriate managers and technicians from outside of Asia and from Japan still maintain a strong presence throughout the region, particularly in newer and emerging destinations but their presence is by no means as universal as it might have been some 20 years ago. Instead, this form of managerial labour migration, generally but not always temporary, has been complemented as the industry expanded massively, in large part by intra-Asian migration. The first major evidence of this was probably seen as the hotel industry in China expanded rapidly in the 1990s and beyond. The demand for professional management, particularly from international companies, far exceeded that available locally and hotels turned to managers from ethnically Chinese communities in Greater China (Hong Kong, Taiwan) as well as Malaysia and Singapore in order to meet these

<sup>56</sup> Boon, B. (2003). Employee Transience in the Tourist Resort of Queenstown: Subjectivity, Resistance and Place. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation. University of Otago, New Zealand.

<sup>57</sup> Duncan, T. (2007). Working Tourists: Identity Formation in a Leisure Space. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, University College London, UK. Available on-line at <http://eprints.ucl.ac.uk/4987/>.

Duncan, T. (2008). "The Internationalisation of Tourism Labour Markets: Working and Playing in a Ski Resort", In C.M. Hall & T. Coles (Eds.), *International Business and Tourism: Global issues, Contemporary Interactions* London: Routledge, 181-194.

<sup>58</sup> Jayawardena, C. and Haywood, M. (2003), "International hotel managers and key Caribbean challenges", *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 15(3), 195-198.

<sup>59</sup> Kaye, M. and Taylor, W. (1997), "Expatriate culture shock in China: a study in the Beijing hotel industry", *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 12(8), 1997, 496-510.

<sup>60</sup> Leung, L., Wang, Z. and Smith, P. (2001), "Job attitudes and organizational justice in joint venture hotels in China: the role of expatriate managers", *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 12(6), 926-945.

<sup>61</sup> Wang, G. (2009) *Organisational and cross-cultural challenges facing expatriate hotel managers in China*, unpublished MBA dissertation, Cape Peninsula University of Technology, South Africa

<sup>62</sup> Ozdemir, B., and Cizel, R. (2007), "International hotel manager as an emerging concept: A review of expatriate management literature and a model proposal", *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Management*, 14(2), 170-187.

<sup>63</sup> Wickramasekara, P. (2002), *Asian Labour Migration: Issues and Challenges in an Era of Globalization*, International Migration Papers, 57, Geneva: ILO.

---

requirements while at the same time avoiding some of the more extreme experiences of cultural dislocation which non-ethnically Chinese executives were known to have experienced.<sup>64</sup> This model is now a very significant form of intra-Asian labour migration within the hotel sector and, increasingly, involves managers from China working overseas in support of Chinese hotel investments abroad. At the same time, of possibly even greater significance is the extent of internal migration within China which is of major significance to the expanding hotel sector in the country. The challenge for the international hotel industry in major Chinese cities and destinations is to provide appropriate technical and cultural skills for internal migrant workers who largely come from agrarian, village backgrounds in less developed parts of the country.

In-migration to the hotel industries of major Asian tourism destinations at non-executive and senior technician levels has also become a significant phenomenon in recent years. Such flows are varied and include both legal and unauthorized migration, the latter reflecting the ease of employment access to the informal economies of restaurants and small hospitality businesses. Important flows in this regard include the internal but controlled migration of mainland Chinese to the Hong Kong and Macao hotel and Casino industries and the growing importance of Chinese labour to the wider Singaporean economy, notably within hotels.<sup>65</sup> Japan has also faced challenges in meeting its labour market requirements from the mid-1980s when economic growth brought about serious labour shortages. Initially, most inflows of migrant workers were unauthorized, from neighbouring Asian countries. However, since the revision of the Japanese immigration law in 1990, there has been a dramatic influx of the Latin American of Japanese origin (Nikkei) who are permitted to work across the economy at all levels of work, unlike other, more controlled migrant workers. The number of these Latin American migrants was estimated to be between 150,000 to 200,000 in the decade up to 2000.<sup>66</sup> Even with this influx, legal migration for work into Japan remains small but is of some significance in the hotel and restaurant sector. Asian Food Worker (2009), for example, reports moves to establish a trade union for Burmese workers in this sector in Japan.<sup>67</sup> Other examples of regional migration within Asia are also clearly in evidence and impact upon low skills areas of hotel work, from Indonesia to Malaysia and Singapore and within the Mekong region, primarily into Thailand.<sup>68</sup> Internal migration (from elsewhere in Indonesia) is an issue of some sensitivity in culturally distinct Bali where Javanese employees are concentrated in the hospitality industry.<sup>69</sup> Intra-Asian migration involving South Asia is somewhat more limited although the significance of internal migration cannot be underestimated in countries such as India.

Asia is also very significant as a source of migrant labour for the hotel sectors of other countries and regions, notably to Europe, North America and Australasia. However, the single largest concentration of out-migration in the hotel sector occurs through the migration of Asian workers from across the continent to the Gulf States, notable the UAE (illustrated in Case Study ii). Such labour migration represents a major source of

<sup>64</sup> le Sueur, A. (1998), *Running a Hotel on the Roof of the World: Five Years in Tibet*, London: Peering Books.

<sup>65</sup> Chan, A. (2011), *Hired on Sufferance: China's Migrant Workers in Singapore*, Hong Kong: China Labour Bulletin Research Reports.

<sup>66</sup> Goto, J. (2000) *The migrant workers in Japan from Latin America and Asia: Causes and consequences*, Indes Working Papers, Washington, DC: Inter-American Development Bank.

<sup>67</sup> Asian Food Worker (2009) "Burmese migrant workers in Japan found new hotel and restaurant union"  
<http://asianfoodworker.net/?p=484>.

<sup>68</sup> CDRI (2009) *Costs and benefits of cross-country labour migration in the GMS: Synthesis of the case studies in Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and Vietnam*, Working paper series No. 45, Phnom Penh: CDRI.

<sup>69</sup> Turker, S. (2007) 'Tourism and Migration – two windows into globalization', *Contours*, 17(2).



---

remittance income for many countries across the region and, as such, is openly sought or tacitly approved of by governments. At the same time, it is clear that the hotel sectors in the receiving countries could not function without this influx of often low-cost labour, who generally bring with them language and educational capabilities which enable them to adapt readily to the demands of work within the hotel sector.

### **Australia and New Zealand**

Australia and New Zealand are, historically, countries of immigration and also represent attractive economic and lifestyle options for migrants seeking work in the hotel sector from the Pacific region and beyond. Australia, in particular, faces the prospect of growing labour shortages across the services sector and the hotel industry, with its labour-intensive demands on the workforce. There is political debate in both countries regarding processes of legal migration into a sector which is still perceived to be low-skilled but the reality is that the local labour market cannot provide sufficient employees in either numerical or skills terms, notably in the “boom” states of Queensland and Western Australia.<sup>70</sup> At the same time, there is increasing recognition that focus needs to be on the quality of employment for migrant workers and that the industry, in part, has not always met its obligations to this group.<sup>71</sup>

Both Australia and New Zealand have, in recent years, depended on a number of sources of migrant labour for hotel employment. Pacific island communities have moved to both countries and, in line with the Adler and Adler model, have found work in low skills, routine positions in the industry. Asian employees (temporary as in the form of students as well as long-term) have accessed both routine and managerial/executive positions in both countries but particularly in desirable, lifestyle destinations. Finally, temporary migrants from Europe and North America have provided a very important source of employees for the industry in the form of ‘gap year’ or ‘backpacker’ visitors, bringing with them cultural, educational and linguistic cache which enables them to operate very successfully within the industry. This, of course, needs to be seen as a reciprocal process in that young workers of a similar profile have migrated temporarily from Australia and New Zealand to Europe and elsewhere for exactly the same motivational reasons.

### **North America**

Canada and the United States, similar to Australia and New Zealand, are traditional immigration countries and, as such, retain a very high dependence on migrant labour across their economies. The hotel sector is no exception. Case Study iii illustrates the situation with respect to Canada and highlights the planned nature of labour migration to the hotel sector, both in temporary and permanent work terms. The United States operates programmes along similar lines, seeking to attract workers from a wide variety of countries and cultures to work, temporarily, in its hotel and resort sector.<sup>72</sup> At the same time, the United States is recipient of high levels of in-migration across its southern borders from Mexico and elsewhere in Latin America.<sup>73</sup> Such migration is essential for businesses operating in the low-skills services sector, such as hotels, but is also politically sensitive.

<sup>70</sup> Western Australian Hospitality and Tourism Industry Training Council/ Tourism Western Australia (2006), *Making tourism a first resort*, Perth: WAHTIC.

<sup>71</sup> The Victorian Immigrant and Refugee Women's Coalition (VIRWC) (2010), *Heartbreak Hotels. The crisis in Melbourne's luxury hotels*, Melbourne: VIRWC.

<sup>72</sup> Taylor, M. and Finlay, D. (2010), “Acculturation, assimilation, and retention of international workers in resorts”, *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 22(5), 681-692.

<sup>73</sup> Wasem, R.E. (2009) *Cuban Migration to the United States: Policy and Trends*, Washington: Congressional Research Service.

---

Americans and migrants of Latin American origin are significantly over-represented in the hotel industry at a national level, particularly in un- or semi-skilled positions when compared to other, recent migrant groups.

Mexico, as the third country in North America, faces different challenges in that it is a net exporter of hotel/ hospitality skills, primarily to the United States. At the same time, internal migration from agricultural regions to the growing tourism destinations on both Caribbean and Pacific coasts is a growing phenomenon and creates challenges from a social and cultural perspective.<sup>74</sup>

## Europe

Migrant labour in the hotel industry of Europe, in this Report, is represented through case studies based on Ireland, Norway and the United Kingdom (London and Yorkshire). In no way can these locations be taken as representative. Each European country and region has a different experience of both in- and out-migration and these have changed and evolved over time. However, Europe-wide, characteristics of longevity and low fertility can be noted (Münz, 2008).<sup>75</sup> This is of particular relevance in the context of the hotel industry, with its requirement of labour intensity and demand for low skills, low cost employees. Even without reference to demographic considerations, Europe's hotel industry has a long record of encouraging migration, traditionally on a south-north basis within Europe and on an ex-colonial axis from further afield. Some of this migration was permanent but the guest-worker model of temporary migration, pioneered by Switzerland and Germany, was also prevalent. Castles (2006)<sup>76</sup> describes this idea as one that ensured "rotation" by recruiting workers for a limited period, restricting their rights, and minimizing family reunion. Migrants were expected to accept relatively poor wages and conditions and make little demand on social infrastructure. Initially, Germany and Switzerland, like other Western European states, were seeking to import labour but not people. This model has, subsequently, been adopted by the Gulf States in the Middle East.

As the Southern European countries, traditional suppliers of migrant labour, developed economically, particularly in tourism, the rest of Europe turned elsewhere for its skills requirements, acting as a magnet for workers from a wide range of countries. One source of low cost labour for the industry has been within the informal economy. There is strong evidence that this sector continues to grow in spite of recession in Europe, and can be seen as an unintended consequence of measures to secure a "flexible labor market" in Europe (Baganha, 1998;<sup>77</sup> Reyneri, 2001;<sup>78</sup> 2003<sup>79</sup>). Morice (2003)<sup>80</sup> highlights hotels as a sector where undocumented workers across Europe are particularly prevalent while Baganha (1998:379), in reference to Portugal, noted that immigrants from Brazil

<sup>74</sup> Carte, L., McWatters, M., Daley, E. and Torres, R. (2010), "Experiencing agricultural failure: Internal migration, tourism and local perceptions of regional change in the Yucatan", *Geoforum*, 41, 700–710.

<sup>75</sup> Münz, R. (2008) *Migration, Labor Markets, and Integration of Migrants: An Overview for Europe*, SP Discussion Paper 0807, New York: World Bank.

<sup>76</sup> Castles, S. (2006), Guestworkers in Europe: A Resurrection?, *International Migration Review*, 40(4), 741-766.

<sup>77</sup> Baganha, M. (1998), Immigrant involvement in the informal economy: The Portuguese case, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 24(2), 367-385.

<sup>78</sup> Reyneri, E. (2001), *Migrants' Involvement in Irregular Employment in the Mediterranean Countries of the European Union*. Geneva: International Labour Organization.

<sup>79</sup> Reyneri, E. (2003), Immigration and the Underground Economy in New Receiving South European Countries: Manifold Negative Effects, Manifold Deep-Rooted Causes. *International Review of Sociology* 13(1), 117–143.

<sup>80</sup> Morice, A. (2003), Migratory policies and the evolution of work in the European Union: where undocumented workers fit into this system, in (eds.) LeVoy, M., Verbruggen, N. and Wets, J. *Undocumented migrant workers in Europe*, Brussels: European Parliament, 25-30.

---

predominantly found work in occupations related to commercial activities, restaurants and hotels.

Of greater significance to the countries of Western Europe has been the opening up of labour markets in the 2004 to workers from the new accession states (A8) of Central and Eastern Europe (Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia), later joined by Bulgaria and Romania. Although access to work in existing EU member states was ‘filtered’ in different ways so that only Ireland, Sweden and the United Kingdom gave immediate, unconditional working opportunities to migrants from these countries, within time free movement of labour allows employers throughout the EU to draw on labour from these new sources without major bureaucratic barriers. As a consequence, the hospitality industry of many countries has altered dramatically in terms of its workforce profile over the past decade. In the UK, for example, Simpson (2011)<sup>81</sup> estimates that a quarter of tourism workers (mainly in hotels and restaurants) are migrant workers and about 20 per cent of all A8 migrants seek work in the hotel sector, a figure exceeded in Ireland prior to the economic downturn.<sup>82</sup> Similar patterns can be observed across Western Europe (see Case Study vi relating to Norway), almost universally in low skills work areas<sup>83</sup> although there is some evidence that economic downturn has caused a reduction in the numbers employed in the industry over the past two to three years. van Houtum and Boedeltje (2009: 229)<sup>84</sup> elaborate further by stating “in European cities such as London, Stockholm or Amsterdam there exist armies of migrant workers with few options other than to wash dishes or bus tables in restaurants, clean rooms in hotels, mop floors in convention centres and theatres or build, cater, clean and nurture the houses of the working EU population”.

Migrant workers across the European economies and certainly within the hotel sector, are frequently overqualified for the actual work that they are asked to perform. Eurostat (2011) report that “in the EU27 in 2008, foreign-born persons aged 25-54 registered a significantly higher over qualification rate than native-born persons (34 per cent compared with 19 per cent)”<sup>85</sup>.

Migrant workers are important to the hospitality industries of all European countries. By way of illustration, in the UK, the workforce composition of the sector shows that

- 21 per cent of the sector’s workforce were not born in the UK
- 27 per cent of restaurants employ staff who belong to an ethnic or minority group
- 27 per cent of staff employed in restaurants were not born in the UK
- 34 per cent of restaurant and catering managers were born overseas
- 31 per cent of chefs were born overseas
- 26 per cent of waiting staff were born overseas<sup>86</sup>

<sup>81</sup> Simpson, M. (2011), Migrant is a ‘model’ hotel worker, accessed at [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk\\_news/6753411.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/6753411.stm), 8 June 2011.

<sup>82</sup> Wickham, J., Moriarty, E., Bobek, A. and Salamonska, J. (2008), *Migrant workers and the Irish hospitality sector*. A preliminary report from the Migrant Careers and Aspirations research project, Dublin: Employment Research Centre, Trinity College.

<sup>83</sup> Zampoukos, K. and Ioannides, D. (2011), The tourism labour conundrum: agenda for new research in the geography of hospitality workers, *Hospitality & Society* 1(1), 25–45.

<sup>84</sup> van Houtum, H. and Boedeltje, F. (2009), Europe’s Shame: Death at the Borders of the EU, *Antipode*, 41(2), 226–30.

<sup>85</sup> Eurostat (2011) One in three foreign-born persons aged 25 to 54 overqualified for their job, Luxembourg: Eurostat News release 180/2011.

<sup>86</sup> People 1st (2011), *State of the Nation Report 2011. An analysis of labour market trends, skills, education and training within the UK hospitality, leisure, travel and tourism industries*, Uxbridge, United Kingdom: People 1<sup>st</sup>.

At a policy level, there is relative neglect for unskilled migrant workers in Europe, which includes the majority of those working in the hotel sector. The European Commission (2010)'s<sup>87</sup> research concluded that, despite the existing need for an unskilled and low-skilled immigrant labour force, the immigration of unskilled and low-skilled workers is not addressed specifically at either EU level or at national levels in the 27 EU Member States.

## 5. A Survey of International Hotel Companies

With the support and assistance of the IHRA and WTTC, an on-line survey of hotel and restaurant companies, members of both organizations, was conducted to obtain insights into policies and organizational practice with respect to migrant workers. A total of 53 responses were posted of which 51 were useable. In addition to key core information about migrant workers within the surveyed organizations, the questionnaire allowed respondents to elaborate in an open-ended format to a number of key questions and many did so in some detail. The responding organizations were diverse in size, structure and headquarters location, as can be seen in Table 4.

Table 4: Organizations responding to the Migrant Labour Survey (number)

	Total	Up to 100 bedrooms / covers	100-1000 bedrooms / covers	Over 1000 bedrooms / covers	Countries of operation 1	Countries of operation 2-5	Countries of operation over 5	Headquartered in North America	Headquartered in Europe	Headquartered in Asia	Headquartered elsewhere
Single unit Hotel/ restaurant	3	1	2		3				2		1
Multiples, chain operation	44		7	37	3	11	30	9	21	7	7
Other agencies (public sector industry association)	4	NA	NA	NA	4			1	2	1	
<b>Total</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>

This response is not necessarily representative of a very complex global industry but is sufficient to give a good flavour of key issues faced by businesses with respect to policy and practice. All respondents reported that diverse nationalities and cultures worked within their operations or were employed by their members. Responses indicated that responding companies located in Asia and in Latin America employed the least migrant workers and that these tended to be at senior management and not operational levels. By contrast, North

<sup>87</sup> European Commission (2010), *Opening Europe's doors to unskilled and low-skilled workers: A practical handbook*, Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.

American, Japanese, European, Australian and Middle Eastern companies all reported a high proportion of migrant workers in their ranks. In the case of some European and Japanese companies, this included nationals of the parent company country located internationally within the organization.

Within multi-cultural organizations, there are clear benefits to managers and line staff in working to clear policies and codes of practice with respect to what can be a sensitive area of workplace relations. Close to 75 per cent of responding organizations reported that such documentation is in place and is used on a regular basis to support the management of multi-nationalism in their businesses. Such documentation frequently covers key areas such as recruitment, training, equal opportunities and benefits. At a local level, specific guidance is also given with respect to the application of local employment law with respect to both the criteria required to employ non-nations and the responsibilities that lie with employers once such engagement has taken place. Smaller operations are less likely to have formal documentation of this kind in place, relying, according to respondents, on informal processes and procedures in order to ensure appropriate inter-ethnic and international relationships within the workplace.

The survey asked companies whether employees have opportunities for transnational mobility within the company. Of those that operated in more than one country, Table 5 shows the responses by position.

**Table 5: Transnational mobility options by level of position**

	Yes (%)	No (%)
Senior Management	86	14
Middle Management	84	16
Management Trainees	71	29
Junior Management/Supervisors	69	31
Technical staff (chefs)	81	19
Front-line operational staff	57	43
Corporate Office personnel	63	37
Other staff	21	79

These findings suggest that hotel companies, in themselves, act as stimulants of intra-organisational migration, facilitating mobility on the basis of both corporate requirements and in support of individual career aspirations and growth. While it is clear that such migration takes place on a fairly large scale, the extent of such mobility at all the identified levels was not reported. As has already been noted, mobility at managerial and senior technical levels has a well-established tradition within the sector. Similar voluntary and developmental movement within the lower or unskilled workforce is probably relatively uncommon. This is, of course, not wholly a matter that lies within the control of employers as perceived lower skills work does not attract support in terms of work permits and similar permissions.

Information on workforce composition held by hotel companies is varied in its quality and depth. Just over half the responding organisations reported that they did have reliable information on the extent to which they employ migrant workers. The smaller, independent operators were much more likely to hold this information in comprehensive format. Larger organisations were aware of the extent to which senior posts were held by non-nationals within their property but generally reported that line positions were a matter for local decision making in terms of recruitment, selection and/ or the use of agency sources and such information was not held centrally. Some respondents, understandably, highlighted

the ambiguous nature of the term “migrant worker” which may not be problematic in some contexts but certainly is in countries such as the United States and Australia which are societies that depend at all levels on long- and short-term migrants. At what point, one respondent asked, does a migrant cease to carry that tag and becomes a local - one year, five years, or twenty years?

The survey enquired into the reasons why hotel companies employ non-national, migrant workers and the responses, predictably, were varied and, possibly, contradictory. These responses are shown in Table 6.

**Table 6: Reasons for employing migrant workers**

Stated reason	Companies responding “Yes” (%)
Absence of suitable skills in the local labour market	87
Migrant workers are cheaper to employ than local workers	59
Migrant workers are more reliable and committed to their work	17
Company policy is to employ the best workers, irrespective of nationality	76
Staff are recruited by agencies so company has limited control over who is employed	31
Company is committed to socially responsible employment practices in employment	91
Local workers are not interested in hotel work	76
Migrant workers cause fewer industrial relations problems	11
Other reasons	64

These data indicate the diverse motivational reasons why hotel companies employ migrant workers on the scale that is evident throughout the industry. There is clearly a combination of what might be described as positive and negative motivations behind such employment, reflecting economic, skills, organisational and ethical considerations in a somewhat confused and ambiguous combination.

Respondents were asked to review a series of statements about migrant workers and both their current and future role within the international hotel industry. The outcomes of this aspect of the study are reported in Table 7.

Table 7: The current and future role of migrant workers in the hotel industry<sup>88</sup>

	<i>Agree (%)</i>	<i>Disagree (%)</i>	<i>Neutral</i>
The use of migrant labour in the international hotel industry is likely to decrease over the next 10 years	22	69	9
There is political pressure to reduce the use of migrant labour in the hotel industry	43	27	30
Migrant workers improve the quality of our overall workforce	66	11	23
Migrant workers create problems for our local workforce	13	81	6
Migrant workers greatly improve the talent pool from which we can recruit internationally	85	4	11
Migrant workers are frequently better qualified than workers available in the local community	41	47	12
Demographic pressure in many countries will force an increase in the employment of migrant labour in the hotel industry	89	4	7
The hotel industry provides great employment opportunities for migrant workers	84	2	16
The employment of migrant labour in the hotel industry should be confined to senior management levels only	24	53	23
Employing migrant workers is unacceptable on social and political grounds	7	89	4
Our hotels benefit greatly from the cultural diversity provided by migrant workers	91	0	9
Migrant workers are popular with our customers	54	21	25
Migrant workers cause tensions in the workplace	34	59	7
The company has a strategy to increase the use of migrant workers in its hotels	11	34	55
Migrant workers significantly decrease payroll costs	45	22	33
Hotel companies need to plan their employment strategies for the future in the light of changing demographic structures within host communities	65	12	33
Migrant workers should be confined to unskilled positions in hotels	17	76	7

Unsurprisingly, given the diversity of respondent organizations and the geographical spread of respondents, the findings in Table 7 reflect varied views on the both the current and the future role of migrant workers in the international hotel industry. The survey does report predominantly positive perceptions regarding the role and contribution of migrant

<sup>88</sup> In analyzing responses, “Strongly agree” and “Agree” were combined as were “Strongly Disagree” and “Disagree” (figures rounded).

---

workers at all levels within hotel organizations, although some, perhaps localised, reservations are in evidence. This positivism is reflected in attitudes to migrant workers in terms of their contribution, in terms of skills, motivation and overall contribution. There is some evidence, particularly in Europe and Australia/New Zealand, that migrant workers bring a skills set to the hotel workplace which exceeds that generally available within the local labour market to the extent that the potential for under-utilisation of skills of some migrant workers is recognised. Respondents did recognize that this, in turn, creates the potential for dissatisfaction and turnover unless opportunities for promotion and greater responsibility can be found.

It is also clear that there is a fairly general acceptance that migrant workers, at all levels, represent an important dimension in terms of future employment in the international hotel industry, notwithstanding political pressures in some countries and regions (Europe, United States, Australia, Gulf States) to scale back what is perceived to be low-skilled migration. There is a clear challenge here for the hotel industry and for international agencies with an employment remit to convey to governments and the wider community the skills base that underpins much hospitality work rather than passively accepting the pervading mantra that most hotel work is low-skilled or unskilled.<sup>89</sup> There was some evidence of hotel companies thinking and planning strategically in terms of meeting their future employee requirements at all levels and, clearly, access to migrant workers pools to do so is recognized as an important source of future employees at all levels.

## **6. Illustrating national variation in the employment of migrant workers in the hotel industry: Case Studies**

### **Case Study i: The Maldives – migrant workers in the maelstrom of economic, religious and cultural challenge<sup>90</sup>**

Tourism in the Maldives began in 1972 with a mere 280 beds on 2 resort islands. Since then, the industry has grown rapidly transforming the Maldives into a quintessential island holiday destination with global reputation, winning international acclaim and awards. Sustainable tourism development has been the key to the Maldives success as a tourist destination. Today, tourism accounts for 27 per cent of GDP, about 51.5 per cent of foreign currency earnings, and for more than 22,000 jobs.

The Republic of the Maldives relies on its tourism sector for the majority of its GDP and direct foreign exchange earnings. The industry is predominantly found in the Malé Atoll where over 40 per cent of industry capacity is located although all atolls have a relevant stake in the sector.

The tourism product of the Maldives is a resort based experience on a (small) tropical island. All resorts offer highly similar facilities and services; luxury accommodation

<sup>89</sup> See: Baum, T. (1996), “Unskilled Work and the Hospitality Industry: Myth or Reality?”, *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 15/3, pp.207-209.

Baum, T. (2008) “The social construction of skills: a hospitality sector perspective”, *European Journal of Vocational Training*, 44(2), 74-88.

<sup>90</sup> The introduction to this case study is substantially drawn from Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture, *The Republic of Maldives’ (2011) Strategic Human Resources Development Plan for the Tourism Industry*, Draft 4, Male: MTAC.



divided into beach and over- water guest units, dive centre, a Spa/Health Centre and a variety of (themed) food & drink outlets as well as sports/recreational activities.

According to the most recent data on labour force participation and employment, available from the 2009/10 Household Income & Employment Survey, the total Maldivian employment was estimated to be about 144,658 of whom 57 per cent were males (81,958) and 43 per cent females (62,700). The total number unemployed was estimated at 38,602 bringing the total labour force participation to about 183,260 out of an estimated population of 319,700 aged 15 and over. Unemployment rates are in double-digit 27 per cent. Nearly 38 per cent of Maldivians in this age group do not participate in the labour market at all. The labour market in the Maldives is heavily concentrated in and around Male. Households living in the outer atoll islands rely primarily on fishing, agriculture and income generating opportunities around (informal) trade.

The rapid growth in the number of expatriate workers – estimated to be around 80,839 (2008) representing more than 25 per cent of the Maldivian population and just less than 80 per cent of total Maldivian employment is becoming an area of concern. There are economic and social implications of such a large contingent of expatriate workers. These relate to labour substitution between locals and expatriates, the outflow of resources through foreign remittances, and socio-cultural differences that are at odds with local customs. Expatriate workers are heavily concentrated in construction, tourism, health, education and other social services, and increasingly in wholesale and retail trade.

Table 8: Tourism workforce in the Maldives

	%
Maldivian male	47
Maldivian female	2
Foreign male	46
Foreign female	5
	%
Maldivian supervisory/ management	49
Foreign supervisory/ management	51
	%
Maldivian functional	57
Foreign functional	43

Only 15 per cent of employed Maldivian men and 4 per cent of employed Maldivian women work in this sector (Census 2006)<sup>91, 92</sup>; there is no coherent strategy for human resource management and the absorption of Maldivian workers into tourism. Job security, a well-defined career path and benefits, non- discrimination and proximity to home-island

<sup>91</sup> Bauer, T. and Salih, A. (2007) "Tourism employment and gender bias – the Maldivian experience" Proceedings, *CAUTHE International Conference*, Sydney - this paper addresses the issues that underpin low levels of female participation in the sector.

<sup>92</sup> Also see Shakeela, A., Ruhanen, L. and Breakey, N. (2010) "Women's participation in tourism. A case study from the Maldives" in (eds.) Scott, N. and Jafari, J., *Tourism in the Muslim World*, Bingley: Emerald Publishing, 61-71.

---

or Male are the primary motivating factors for Maldivian job seekers in tourism and the lack of opportunities at the managerial level deters many Maldivians from participating in this critical sector.

Currently, each resort has its own island and supporting infrastructure and imports the bulk of its labour as well as consumption goods from abroad. This limits the dispersion of the fruits of growth to other areas and sectors. Furthermore, an industry perspective on issues associated with local employment is not available for consideration and with an anticipated 76 new resorts shortly to become operational, there is an urgent need for a strategy targeting the human resources' challenges in the tourism industry.

The concept of a single resort on an inhabited island has so far always meant that staff needs to be accommodated on the island as well. Physical space is limited; sharing up to 10 staff members (sometimes more) in a room is common and privacy an exception. The appointment of staff from nearby islands has initiated commuting to/from the work place but numbers are (still) limited. This initiative by individual resorts is further restricted by working hours (shifts) and the lack of sufficient staff numbers to make economic sense. Transfers to and from Malé are most frequently available by (supply) vessel or sea plane but transport to resident islands is perceived as time consuming.

The other side of this is that (male) staff is willing to accept resort work with a clear objective to earn enough for a small house or shop; tourism employment is thereby a time restricted economic effort towards the establishment of an independent livelihood and not a career. This is the case for both Maldivians as well as expatriate staff from regional countries (Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Indonesia and the Philippines). The international managed resorts are guided primarily by corporate directions from head office which is not always in line with local characteristics and expectations. The refusal of some international brands to employ women wearing the burka is an example of this.

Shakeela and Cooper (2009)<sup>93</sup> highlight the role segregation of Maldivian and foreign workers in tourism. They report (p. 71-72) that “Labour categories such as island cleaners and labourers and the top-level technical categories such as chefs, dive instructors, and general managers, are mainly dominated by expatriates in the tourism industry. On the other hand, there are very few Maldivians trained as chefs, dive instructors, and general managers or for many other technical jobs, hence the expatriate domination in these employment categories. Almost 100 per cent of room boys and waiters are local, whilst almost 100 per cent of cleaners and labourers are expatriates. This may be because of the low income and the physical nature of the work. The job of a room boy and a waiter is appealing to Maldivians because in many situations tips exceed their salaries”.

Overall, a major strategic objective within Maldivian tourism at a national level is a reduction in dependence on migrant workers within the sector. This is clearly articulated in the 2006 “Maldives Third Tourism Master Plan, 2007-2011”<sup>94</sup> and reinforced by the 2011 Human Resource plan for the sector. Achieving this will present a real challenge to cultural tradition and will require collaborative effort from government and the international hotel industry.

<sup>93</sup> Shakeela, A. and Cooper, C. (2009) “Human resource issues in a small island setting. The case of the Maldivian tourism industry”, *Tourism Recreation Research*, 34(1), 67-78.

<sup>94</sup> Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation (2006), *Maldives Third Tourism Master Plan, 2007-2011*, Male: MTCA.

---

## Case Study ii: The UAE – migrant workers. No industry without them

The UAE is a federation of seven emirates located in the southeast of the Arabian Peninsula on the Persian Gulf. With a population of 4.6 million and land area of approximately 30,000 square miles, UAE's seven states (called emirates) include: Abu Dhabi (the capital emirate), Ajman, Dubai, Fujairah, Ras al-Khaimah, Sharjah and Umm al-Quwain. The nation borders Oman and Saudi Arabia and shares sea borders with Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Bahrain, and Qatar. Compared to its neighbours, UAE is small in land mass and population. The wealth of the UAE owes its origins to the discovery of oil but has been further stimulated by investment in a wide range of trade and service industries, notably tourism. Dubai took the lead in developing tourism on an international scale but has been followed by neighbouring emirates, notably Abu Dhabi so that, today, the UAE as a whole attracts in the region of 12 million tourists a year, of which over 80 per cent visit Dubai. The phenomenal growth of the Gulf airlines, notably Emirates, has been a major contributor to this success.

In tourism, employment in the UAE is almost exclusively confined to migrant workers. Chartouni (2011)<sup>95</sup> notes that the UAE labour market consists largely of expatriates rather than nationals, the vast majority of whom are employed in the private sector. On the other hand, those nationals in the workforce are mostly employed in the public sector and face growing unemployment pressures. In 2005, the unemployment rate among UAE nationals was 13.4 per cent compared 6.3 per cent in 1995. According to Al-Ali (2008),<sup>96</sup> 98 per cent of the private sector workforce and 91 per cent of those working in the public sector are migrants.

By way of contradiction, Chartouni (2011) further notes that the very pace of the UAE's development has necessitated an enormous influx of foreign workers and families. Despite the massive investment in local development programmes and infrastructure, the UAE is becoming increasingly dependent on the expatriate work force to drive economic growth. This presents a dilemma for UAE government policy makers as it seeks to expand the role of UAE nationals in the workforce through 'emiratisation'. Private sector firms have not generally supported this policy in practice because of their preference to employ expatriates, whom they regard as cheaper, and more productive (Fasano and Goyal, 2004).<sup>97</sup>

Although originally employed in the wealth-creating oil and gas sectors, most expatriates in the UAE are now engaged in domestic work, retailing and the leisure industries (primarily hotels and restaurants) and other service industries rather than employed as producers linked to the natural resources of the region.<sup>98</sup> Expatriates generally work longer hours, accept lower wages, and tolerate poorer working conditions and more physically demanding jobs as opposed to UAE nationals (McMurray 1999).<sup>99</sup> Therefore, the hotel and restaurant sector, in the UAE, is staffed almost exclusively by migrant workers from a wide variety of countries predominantly in Asia, Africa and Europe. There is clear evidence of segregation of workers in roles according to nationality and ethnicity.

<sup>95</sup> Chatouni, C. (2011), *Essays on the Labor Market of the United Arab Emirates*, Unpublished PhD dissertation, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Georgetown University, Washington, DC.

<sup>96</sup> Al-Ali, J. (2008), *Structural Barriers to Emiratisation: Analysis and Policy Recommendations*, Unpublished PhD dissertation, Faculty of Business and Law, Victoria University, Melbourne.

<sup>97</sup> Fasano, G. and Goyal, R. (2004). "Emerging Strains in GCC Labor Markets", IMF Working Paper No. 04/71, Washington, DC: International Monetary Fund.

<sup>98</sup> Harry, W. (2007), "Employment creation and localization: the crucial human resource issues for the GCC", *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 18(1), 132-146.

<sup>99</sup> McMurray, D. (1999), "Recent trends in Middle Eastern migration, trafficking and transiting: New perspectives on labor migration", *Middle East Report*, 21(1), 16-19.

---

The lowest skills positions, which do not have a front-line component with customer-facing responsibilities are taken by workers with limited technical or language capabilities. Front-line positions are predominantly held by workers from South Asia and the Philippines, although, as a reflection of changing visitor markets, an increasing number are recruited from Eastern Europe and Southern Africa. Supervisory and management roles are generally held by European, North American, Australasian and South African workers.

The consequences of the employment structure in hotels and restaurants in the UAE are that service and product delivery in most situations are far removed from the sense of place that visitors may expect when on vacation elsewhere. With the exception of limited “desert experience” tours, virtually all hotels and restaurant offer international experiences from all over the world, utilising the diverse staff at their disposal on occasions but not as a matter of course.

### **Case Study iii: Canada – a planned approach to migration in the hotel and restaurant sector<sup>100</sup>**

In common with Australia, New Zealand, and the USA, Canada is a nation building country and immigration has played a key role over the decades and centuries in shaping the country that is Canada today. In the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century the primary focus was growth and the country took in large numbers of immigrants to support its economic and social development. Skills and labour were in high demand and supply was readily available so the focus tended to be more on numbers and less on specific skills. During this time, country of origin was a consideration in eligibility to immigrate (Watt, et al., 2008).<sup>101</sup> Canada’s approach to planned migration has long been based on a two tier approach through both permanent, points-based migration and short-term mobility in support of specific industries.

In the 1970s Canada introduced its first general foreign migrant worker programme, a precursor to today’s *Temporary Foreign Worker Program (TFWP)*. This programme was a significant change from past practice in that it clearly separated temporary migration from permanent immigration. Permanent immigration operates with a points-based system that assesses potential immigrants’ occupational, linguistic and other skills and characteristics. It also shifted from previous practice in that earlier programmes targeted specific sectors such as live in domestic and agricultural workers and the new version allowed Canada to respond to a ‘wide array of occupational labour shortages’ (Fudge & MacPhail, 2009).<sup>102</sup> The goal of the early TFWP was to alleviate labour shortages in identified sectors and workers accepted under the programme were restricted to working for a specific employer for a pre-determined period of time. Applications for extensions or for permanent immigration could no longer be made from within the country. Since the early 1990s Canadian immigration policy and the TFWP in particular has been targeted at selected sectors, including the hotel industry, in order to allow industries to remain internationally competitive through access to skilled and committed labour.

The tourism sector employs 10 per cent of all workers in Canada and offers many employment opportunities for immigrants — especially with the 400 unregulated

<sup>100</sup> This case study owes a considerable debt to the on-going work of Deborah Forsyth, a PhD student at the University of Strathclyde, Glasgow.

<sup>101</sup> Watt, D., Krywulak, T., & Kitagawa, K. (2008). *Renewing Immigration - Towards a Convergence and Consolidation of Canada's Immigration Policies and Systems*. Ottawa: Conference Board of Canada.

<sup>102</sup> Fudge, J., & MacPhail, F. (2009), “The Temporary Foreign Worker Program in Canada: Low-Skilled Workers as an Extreme Form of Flexible Labour”, *Comparative Labor Law and Policy Journal*, Vol. 31, p. 101-139, 2009.

---

occupations in the sector's five industry groups (consisting of accommodations, food and beverage services, recreation and entertainment, transportation, and travel services). A considerable percentage (87 per cent) of tourism businesses are SMEs (small and medium-sized enterprises), and close to one-half (47 per cent) of total tourism employment is in the food and beverage services industry alone.<sup>103</sup>

The tourism sector in Canada has traditionally drawn its workforce from youth aged 15 to 24 years; however, most immigrants come to Canada in the prime working age group of 25 to 54 years (this age group accounted for 57.3 per cent of all immigrants between 2001 and 2006). In addition, immigrant youth aged 15 to 24 years, unlike their Canadian cohorts, tend to have higher school attendance and lower labour force attachment. Tourism employers tapping into permanent migrant labour sources are finding workers who are 10 to 20 years older than the sector's traditionally youthful workforce — a substantially different employee demographic.

Canada's tourism sector is facing a potentially severe shortage of labour over the next 15 years.<sup>104</sup> The latest update of the Tourism Labour Supply and Demand study shows that as demand for labour grows, the pool of available workers will have an increasingly difficult time keeping up. Canada's population is aging, causing a significant deceleration in labour force growth over the long term. The consequences of labour shortages — such as missed opportunities for investment in the sector and the inability to meet potential demand — could cost Canadian tourism businesses billions of dollars.

The Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council (CTHRC) notes that labour shortages in the tourism sector are projected to ramp up substantially within the next several years. Baby boomers — those born between 1947 and 1966 — make up almost 30 per cent of the Canadian population. The oldest members of the baby boom generation are already over 60, which mean that this large labour pool is nearing retirement age. The exodus of this demographic cohort from the Canadian workforce will have a dramatic effect on labour supply. Rising immigration and a higher degree of labour market participation by women will partially offset their departure, but these two factors will not be enough to sustain sufficient growth in the Canadian labour force over the long term. Moreover, declining birth rates are expected to curb the growth of young entrants to the labour force, and these young workers are a critical source of labour for the tourism sector.

CTHRC (2009) highlight a number of challenges facing employers and migrant workers in tourism in Canada. These include:

- Many immigrants, especially newcomers, lack a network in Canada that can help them find employment.
- Immigrants need to consider how their skills could be transferred to tourism employment.
- A supportive community is needed to help immigrants stay in a job and in the community.
- Tourism employers may not consider the immigrant talent pool as a potential source of labour.
- Tourism businesses may need to adapt and be flexible when matching their labour requirements with immigrants' needs and skills.
- Workplace culture, policies and practices may not support immigrant employees.

<sup>103</sup> Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council (2009) *Integrating Immigrant Skills into the Tourism Workplace*, Ottawa: CTHRC.

<sup>104</sup> Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council (2010), *The future of Canada's tourism sector: Economic recession only a temporary reprieve from labour shortages*, Ottawa: CTHRC.

- Tourism employers often require immigrant applicants to have Canadian experience and Canadian references.

### Case Study iv: Egypt – internal migration to new destination areas<sup>105</sup>

Many economies in the developing world, particularly those which have experienced rapid growth in recent years, have seen increases in the rate of internal migration over the past two decades, because of declining job opportunities in rural areas and increased opportunities in urban areas. Internal migration represents the movement of peoples within national boundaries and, in many circumstances, can be as significant as international migration in economic, cultural and organizational terms. Of these internal movements, circular migration – where trips vary from daily commutes to those lasting several months and where migrants retain strong links with their rural family – appears to be emerging as the dominant trend for poorer groups. Sheng (2003),<sup>106</sup> classifies internal migration into four main types:

- a) Permanent or long-term migration of the entire family.
- b) Temporary or permanent migration of an unmarried family member.
- c) Temporary migration of a married family member leaving the family back home.
- d) Seasonal migration of the entire family during the low agricultural season.

This case study relates to internal migration within the specific context of the tourism sector, an industry which is relatively uncommon as a driver of such mobilities. The more common experience is that migration is driven by either the pull of industrialization or the push of agricultural reform. However, the example of Egypt provides an interesting case where the geographical location of new tourism development, away from the main centres of population, have stimulated internal migration on a large scale, generally on the basis of the second and third forms of internal migration identified by Sheng.

According to Zohry (2005),<sup>107</sup> internal migration in Egypt has generally been: a) from South to North, b) from South and North to the Canal Zone, c) from Egypt's hinterland to Cairo and Alexandria, and d) from Egypt's centre to its peripheries. The causes of internal migration are primarily demographic pressure in both urban and rural communities which migrants leave, declining economic opportunity and the opening up of new opportunities within receiving areas. This is certainly the case with tourism-induced migration. The pressures on the workforce in Egypt which exacerbate conditions for internal migration have undoubtedly increased as a consequence of both global and local economic turbulence, both on the economy in general<sup>108</sup> and, specifically, within tourism.<sup>109</sup> In a

<sup>105</sup> This case study is based on an e-mail survey of hotel general managers and HR directors. Thirty-one responses were received from properties based in Sharm el Sheikh (14), Hurghada (8), Luxor (3), Aswan (1), Marsa Alam (1), Nile riverboats (2) and organizational headquarters (2).

<sup>106</sup> Sheng, Y.K. (2003) "Urbanisation and internal migration" in *Fifth Asian and Pacific Population Conference: Selected Papers*, Bangkok: UNESCAP, 137-155.

<sup>107</sup> Zohry, A. (2005) *Interrelationships between Internal and International Migration in Egypt: A Pilot Study*, Brighton: University of Sussex, Development Research Centre on Migration, Globalisation and Poverty.

<sup>108</sup> Klau, A. (2010) *Impact of the Economic Crisis on Trade, Foreign Investment, and Employment in Egypt*, Cairo: ILO.

<sup>109</sup> Zaytoun, M., Heiba, A. and Hakim, M.A. (2010), *Implications of the Global Financial and Economic Crisis on the Tourism Sector in Egypt*, Cairo: ILO.

---

general sense, evidence suggests that internal migration can play an important role in poverty reduction and economic development.<sup>110</sup>

Grunwald et al (2009)<sup>111</sup> report that internal migration is almost completely a phenomenon of young men rather than women or older men although Deshingkar and Grimm (2004) report an increasing feminization of internal migration worldwide which, to some degree, is echoed in the experience within Egyptian tourism. These migrants have a relatively higher education compared to the non-migrants from their environment, but lower than the population at the destination towards which they are heading. Newer migration phenomena can be interpreted as “survival migration” from rural agricultural areas. These are circular or pendulum-like movements that can be independent of agricultural seasons. In this instance, migrants are attracted by wages that can be three times higher, the prospect of a more regular work to support family members back home, and the possibility of a more exciting lifestyle in Cairo or Alexandria. These migrants do not change their place of legal residence and usually end up in informality of the urban economy.

Tourism is one of the main contributors to the Egyptian economy. The sector is a major generator of income and foreign exchange earnings, as well as a main provider of job opportunities. Tourism also exerts indirect economic impacts on other sectors supplying goods and services for tourist entities and activities, such as agriculture, fisheries, manufacturing and construction. The travel and tourism sector employs 13.7 per cent of the Egyptian workforce, i.e. it accounts for one in every 7.3 jobs. Direct employment alone was estimated to account for 2.8 million jobs in 2007. Tourism employment in Egypt is male-dominated so that, in 2006, the proportion of female personnel in hotel and restaurant employment as a whole was 4.1 per cent. According to Alquézar, Panzica and Popova (2009),<sup>112</sup> the degree of occupational segregation by gender is quite apparent in the tourism labour market. Most women are confined to low-level jobs, and are often dedicated to traditional professions or support functions.

Early tourism development in Egypt was, primarily, concentrated on cultural and archaeological attractions in the Nile valley, notably in Cairo and Luxor. Some development along the Mediterranean coast was also evident, primarily designed for the domestic market. The Red Sea has developed as a diving and, later, a general tourism destination over the past 25 years, focusing on the south Sinai (shared with Israel and Jordan) and the western shores of the Red Sea. The best known resorts include Sharm el Sheikh and Hurghada, both offering direct air connections to Europe and elsewhere. Both these locations are between 500 and 800 kilometres distance from the main cities of Cairo and Alexandria. The South Sinai peninsula, in particular, has a very low population density and no tradition of delivering hospitality and tourism services to international standards.

The survey of 31 hotel general managers and human resource directors, particularly those located in Red Sea resorts, highlighted a very high dependence on internal migrant workers. Respondents in Sharm el Sheikh reported that close to 100 per cent of their workforce were migrants, the vast majority Egyptians from elsewhere in the country with a small proportion of international migrants in senior management and technical posts. While the proportion elsewhere on the Red Sea was slightly less, internal migrants still accounted for close to 85 per cent of all employees. By contrast, respondents from elsewhere in the country reported much lower dependence on internal migrants.

<sup>110</sup> Deshingkar, P. and Grimm, S. (2004) *Voluntary internal migration. An update*, London: Overseas Development Institute.

<sup>111</sup> Grunwald, E., Lotz, G., Nitschke, K. and Sakr, N. (2009) *Vocational education and training in the context of labour mobility – country report “Egypt”*, Cairo, GTZ.

<sup>112</sup> Alquézar, J., Panzica, F. and Popova, N. (2009), *Women and work in Egypt. Case Study of Tourism and ICT sectors*, Turin: European Training Foundation.

---

Migration to the resorts is generally temporary in nature. Although a small number of respondents reported attempts to encourage permanent relocation to the Red Sea, this was generally seen as a failure because of the impact of movement on family ties, education and access to core services and facilities. This was in spite of employers providing good quality housing and generous leave allocations as inducement to relocate. As a consequence, most migrant workers in the Red sea resorts engage in long-distance commuting, returning home every few weeks for extended leave periods and travelling on coaches provided by their employers. While at work, they are housed in dormitory-style accommodation, provided by the hotel and resort companies. Respondents recognise that such arrangements are, generally, unsatisfactory and that their staff will seek to relocate back to their home regions should the employment opportunities arise. However, they see few alternatives to such measures until such time as the resort cities develop greater social and cultural maturity as locations where their employees can settle on a permanent basis.

### **Case Study v: The Republic of Ireland – migrant workers and the delivery of “authentic” experiences to visitors<sup>113</sup>**

The focus of this case study is on the role of people in the image of place in tourism and the potential for contradiction in imagery as the people who inhabit and work within a place change over time, primarily through migration. At the same time, both those who promote a destination and those consuming the place as visitors may well have expectations that are fixed in imagery that does not accord with that contemporary reality. The case study is based on the Republic of Ireland and research into the use of people-induced imagery (visual, textual and verbal), frequently within the workplace, as a cornerstone in the tourism marketing of the country. In this case of Ireland, the specific character of destination has long been built upon a relatively simple message, one of a rural idyll reinforced through images of “people, place and pace” (O’Leary and Deegan, 2003:213).<sup>114</sup>

Within this romanticised picture, O’Connor (1993)<sup>115</sup> notes that one of the most striking aspects of Irish tourist imagery is the way in which Irish people are represented. Irish people, especially those to be found within a rural context, are regarded as an “essential ingredient in the publicity package”, with much more emphasis in Irish tourism promotion literature on the qualities of Irish people than is the case in the marketing of other European countries. This analysis is further reinforced by Foley and Fahy (2004:211)<sup>116</sup> who argue that “the ease of interaction with Ireland’s friendly people and the delight of a colourful and cultural landscape have been the twin pillars of the Irish tourism

<sup>113</sup> This case is based on research by Tom Baum, University of Strathclyde, Scotland; Frances Devine, University of Ulster, Northern Ireland; and Niamh Hearn, Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology, Republic of Ireland and published as two papers: (i) Baum, T., Hearn, N. and Devine, F. (2007) “Place, people and interpretation: issues of migrant labour and tourism imagery in Ireland”, *Tourism and Recreation Research*, 32(3), 39-48 and (ii) Baum, T., Hearn, N. and Devine, F. (2008) “Place branding and the representation of people at work: Exploring issues of tourism imagery and migrant labour in the Republic of Ireland”, *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, 4(1), 45-60.

<sup>114</sup> O’Leary, S. and Deegan, J. (2003) People, pace, place: Qualitative and quantitative images of Ireland as a tourism destination in France, *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, Vol. 9, No. 3, pp.213-225.

<sup>115</sup> O’Connor, B. (1993) Myths and mirrors: Tourist images and national identity, in O’Connor, B. and Cronin, M. (eds). *Tourism in Ireland: A Critical Analysis*, Cork: Cork University Press.

<sup>116</sup> Foley, A. and Fahy, J. (2004), Incongruity between expression and experience: The role of imagery in supporting the positioning of a tourism destination brand, *Journal of Brand Management*, Vol.11, No.3, pp.209-217.



---

product offering, forming the 'core values' of Irish tourism as perceived by overseas visitors to Ireland.”

Tourism in Ireland, and therefore the hospitality services which are a major component within the sector, grew rapidly during the “Celtic Tiger” years up to 2008, mirroring and, at times, out-stripping growth within the wider economy. It is estimated that there were over 250,000 non-Irish nationals employed in the economy of the Irish Republic or some 13 per cent of the entire workforce. This figure reached 17 per cent in the Irish tourism industry and, within specific sub-sectors such as hotels restaurants, figures between 25 per cent and 28 per cent of total employees were estimated.<sup>117</sup> Recent economic turmoil has led to some reduction in the absolute numbers of migrant workers employed in the Irish industry but, proportionately, they remain a sizeable section of the workforce in both rural and urban businesses.

Migrant labour within Ireland’s tourism workforce, therefore, may be seen to create a dilemma in terms of Ireland's traditional emphasis on Irish people as part of the tourism product. An intangible conflict may, therefore, exist between the image engendered by the new multicultural workforce and the traditional emphasis Ireland has placed on its welcome or ‘*Cead Mile Fáilte*’, a value which is central to Tourism Brand Ireland (Foley and Fahy, 2004, McManus, 2005).<sup>118</sup> By contrast, other destinations that are also highly dependent on migrant labour for the delivery of their tourism product, Switzerland for example, have not placed the same emphasis on people in their branding, marketing or imagery.

As a practical response to this dilemma, it is notable that Fáilte Ireland, the Irish Tourism Development Authority, has facilitated widespread access to its formal training programmes for tourism workers to migrant workers seeking to enhance their skills and opportunities in the industry. This training includes induction into Irish culture and heritage. At the same time, in recognition of the challenges faced by both employers and migrant workers, Fáilte Ireland has also developed a strategic response to the growing importance of cultural diversity within the industry, designed to provide guidelines for all stakeholders with an interest and commitment to this area.<sup>119</sup>

### **Case Study vi: Norway – the ghettoization of migrant workers in the hotel sector<sup>120</sup>**

Over the last 40 years Norway has become a country of immigration.<sup>121</sup> Since the 1970s, the Norwegian economy has grown greatly due to the development of oil and gas and, as a consequence, the national standard of living has largely improved. Significant numbers of immigrants were attracted to the country, some as asylum seekers and some as economic migrants. Today, there are around 460,000 first generation migrants in Norway

<sup>117</sup> Melia, D. and Kennedy, E. (2005) *Cultural Diversity. A Management Perspective*, Dublin: Tourism Research Centre, Dublin Institute of Technology.

<sup>118</sup> McManus, R. (2005) Identity crisis? Heritage construction, tourism and place marketing in Ireland, in McCarthy, M. (ed.) *Ireland’s Heritages. Critical Perspectives on Memory and Identity*. Aldershot: Ashgate, pp. 235-250.

<sup>119</sup> Fáilte Ireland. 2005e. *Cultural Diversity. Strategy and Implementation Plan*. Dublin: Fáilte Ireland.

<sup>120</sup> This case draws substantially on Jordhus-Lier, D., Bergene, A.C., Knutsen, H.M. and Underthun, A. (2010), *Hotel workplaces in Oslo and Akershus*, Oslo: Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research, Working Paper 106.

<sup>121</sup> Cieleń, P.L. (2011), *Integration of Polish workers in Norway –the Role of Labour Unions*, Unpublished Master’s thesis submitted to the Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education, University of Tromsø, Norway.

---

with additional 93,000 people that were born in Norway from immigrant parents. Their country of origin is global. However, in recent years the vast majority has come from Central and Eastern Europe.

Friberg (2012 forthcoming)<sup>122</sup> reports research into the characteristics of the main migrant population from Eastern Europe in Norway, namely those from Poland. Unlike the younger Polish migrants to the UK and Ireland who are relatively well educated, single and with language skills, described as urban adventure seekers,<sup>123</sup> those working in Norway conform to the classic low-skilled labour migrant model whose motivation is more purely economic. Poles migrating to Norway work in a narrow set of industries and occupations completely dominated by low-skilled work in construction and industrial manufacturing, agriculture and cleaning, including in hotels. Torvatn (2011)<sup>124</sup> describes this cleaning sector as marginalized and operating, through agencies, on the boundaries between the legal and grey economy. Skills levels are low and do not require the increasingly sophisticated language and aesthetic skills demanded of other areas of work within the hotel sector of an affluent country such as Norway. At the same time, language is recognized as the key to progression in the workplace and wider Norwegian society. Sollund's (2001)<sup>125</sup> study of immigrant room-attendants reports that they acknowledge that proficiency in the Norwegian language as well as a Norwegian educational background is required if they are to make a career in the industry, but their work environment stops them from learning Norwegian.

The Norwegian hotel industry is a sector of predominantly small operators, particularly outside of the capital city, Oslo. It is estimated that some 23,000 employees were employed in the hotel sector in Norway in 2003-2004, down 12 per cent from the previous year (NAV 2006).<sup>126</sup> As is the case in a wider European context, the hotel sector in the capital region of Oslo is also a "typical female workplace" with 60 per cent female staff, compared to 43 per cent in the Norwegian labour market. Furthermore, work outside regular working hours is particularly prominent in the hotel sector, with 41 per cent working shifts outside the regular hours, 66 per cent on Saturdays, 46 per cent on Sundays, 20 per cent at night and 43 per cent in the evening. Temporary staff is overrepresented in all these figures. There is a low education level and widespread language barriers, particularly among cleaning staff. High staff turnover challenge the sense of solidarity at work (NAV 2006). Bråten *et al.* (2008)<sup>127</sup> identifies the hotel/restaurant sectors as areas of the labour market with high levels of non-permanent employment (26 per cent). Moreover, repetitive and monotonous work (physical strain) and the pressure from guests' and employers' needs (mental strain) are emphasised as major threats to good occupational health and safety. The report states that the work tempo is high in the sector and that a large share of the employees experience threats and violence. Labour migration is an important factor shaping the labour market in the hotel sector in Norway. Dølvik *et al.*

<sup>122</sup> Friberg, J.H. (2012 forthcoming), "The stages of migration: from going abroad to settling down. The experiences of post-accession Polish migrant workers in Norway", accepted for publication in *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*.

<sup>123</sup> Fihel, A., Kaczmarczyk, P., and Okólski, M. (2006) *Labour Mobility in the Enlarged European Union: International Migration from the EU8 countries*, CMR Working Paper No. 14.72, Warsaw: Centre of Migration Research.

<sup>124</sup> Torvatn, H. (2011), *Cleaning in Norway. Between professionalism and junk enterprises*, Trondheim: SINTEF.

<sup>125</sup> Sollund, R. (2001), You must learn Norwegian first, before you make a dream, *Søkelys på arbeidsmarkedet*, 2, 233–241.

<sup>126</sup> NAV (2006). *Kunnskap og erfaringer fra IA-arbeid i Hotell og restaurant*, Oslo: Rikstrygdeverket.

<sup>127</sup> Bråten, M., R. K. Andersen and J. Svalund (2008). "HMS-tilstanden i Norge 2007." Fafo-rapport 2008(20): 1-233.

---

(2006)<sup>128</sup> found that 10 per cent of the hotel and cleaning businesses report that they used Eastern European labour in 2005-06. This was the sector that prioritised employment of Norwegian labour the least. However, only 47 per cent of the migrants were permanently employed, while 43 per cent had temporary work contracts only. A main challenge for the Norwegian trade union movement in general is the low level of representation of immigrants (Lund and Friberg 2004).<sup>129</sup> Trade unionism in the hotel sector represents an exception in this regard, as the main hotel union has taken a more proactive line compared to the strategies of unions in other sectors with a high level of worker migrants.

The experience of Norway is interesting in that, although migrant workers are an important contributor to the employment pool within the hotel sector, proportionally, their representation is considerably lower than is the case in many other Western European countries. This appears to reflect a differing profile of migrants to the country, particularly from the main generating country since 2004, Poland whereby migrants are older, less-well educated and ill-prepared to adapt to the demands of front-line service work. Therefore, their role in the hotel sector is substantially ghettoized within the cleaning function, an experience which is paralleled in construction.<sup>130</sup>

### **Case Study vii: London – a “migrant division of labour” in a major metropolitan centre**

London is a major player in the global leisure and hospitality industries.<sup>131</sup> The sector has a very high demand for workers and a high turnover rate due to low pay and long hours. In particular, there is a high concentration of migrants employed in the hotel and restaurant sector. Some 10 per cent of all employed migrants are working in hotels and restaurants compared with only 3 per cent of UK-born Londoners; and an astonishing 60 per cent of all workers in London’s hotels and restaurants are migrants.

May et al (2007)<sup>132</sup> highlight a growing polarization in the labour force in London. On the one hand, they refer to a growing body of professional and managerial jobs in London alongside which there has also been a small but significant rise in the proportion of low-paid jobs. Parallel to this increase, rising levels of immigration have resulted in a dramatic increase in the size of London’s foreign-born population, with a disproportionate number of London’s low-paid jobs being taken by new migrants. May et al argue that London exhibit what they describe as a marked ‘migrant division of labour’.

Although 29 per cent of Greater London’s population was born outside the United Kingdom, migrants — who are more likely to be of working age than the population as a whole — constituted 35 per cent of London’s working-age population in 2001. Almost half (42 per cent) of all people who were born outside of and live in the United Kingdom live in

<sup>128</sup> Dølvik, J. E., L. Eldring, J. H. Friberg, T. Kvinge, S. Aslesen and A. M. Ødegård (2006). *Grenseløst arbeidsliv? Endringer i norske bedrifters arbeidskraftstrategier etter EU-utvidelsen*. Fafo-rapport 548: 1-154.

<sup>129</sup> Lund, M. and J. H. Friberg (2004). *En inkluderende fagbevegelse? Innvandrere, arbeidsmiljø og fagorganisering i renhold og hotell og restaurant*. Fafo report 446. Oslo, Fafo: 1-106.

<sup>130</sup> Friberg, J.H. (2011) Culture at work: Polish migrants in the ethnic division of labour on Norwegian construction sites”, *Ethnic and Racial Studies* available online from September 2011.

<sup>131</sup> Batnitzky, A., McDowell, L. and Dyer, S. (2008), “A middle-class global mobility? The working lives of Indian men in a west London hotel”, *Global Networks* 8(1), 51–70.

<sup>132</sup> May, J., Wills, J., Datta, K., Evans, Y., Herbert, J. and McIlwaine, C. (2007), “Keeping London working: global cities, the British state and London’s new migrant division of labour”, *Trans Inst Br Geogr* NS 32 151–167.

---

London (Spence 2005).<sup>133</sup> Anderson, Ruhs, and Spencer (2006)<sup>134</sup> argue that this new supply of labour is beginning to have a significant impact on the hotel sector in Greater London. As employers in a global city, hotel chains in London are now able to recruit from an increasingly diverse population of workers, and the most recent addition to this diverse workforce is the growing number of A8 migrants, whose major differences from earlier immigrants, who were forced to seek work at the bottom of the service sector, lie in their lack of colonial connections to the United Kingdom and in their skin colour.<sup>135</sup> These new European migrants are white: a significant advantage in seeking interactive service work in a city where racism remains troublingly obvious. Of the more than 50,000 A8 nationals who entered the London labour market, 29 per cent found jobs in the hospitality sector. Dyer et al (2010)<sup>136</sup> argue that gender segregation has emerged clearly within the London hotel workforce in a way that intersects with ethnic/ migrant status so that role allocations are increasingly taking place on the basis of both migrant status (preferred) and gender (dependent on the work area).

Earlier in this report, reference was made to vocational segregation on grounds of ethnicity among competing migrant groups. The London experience points to the emergence of additional and, perhaps, more complex forms of segregation within the workforce of a major international city.

### **Case Study viii: The Yorkshire Dales, England<sup>137</sup> – migrant workers in a rural location**

The Yorkshire Dales national park in the North of England attracts over 9 million tourists annually. The rural location of the accommodation providers exacerbates recruitment difficulties and research indicates significant reliance on migrant labour to fill the gap. Research was carried out in 2006, two years after the accession of Eastern European states to the EU, with a follow up study 4 years later and focussed on four small tourism businesses covering a total of 10 individual organisations. A lack of suitable public transport in the Yorkshire Dales, a tendency nationally for young workers to move out of rural areas due to a lack of education and training provision, combined with a perception amongst UK nationals of hospitality and tourism work as low paid and low status are key factors leading to dependency on migrant labour. On average, the migrant workforce, primarily drawn from Eastern Europe, forms 40 – 60 per cent of the core full-time workforce across all of the establishments. When demand for tourism in the Yorkshire Dales peaks between Easter and October employers supplement their labour force by taking on temporary local school and returning university students together with a small number of local women with children. Conventional recruitment methods used by urban employers, such as the web or national and local advertising, elicits either too few or no responses. Therefore reliance has shifted onto migrant workers whose disposition to service work is seen by employers as being far superior to UK nationals. This flow is precariously maintained through the knowledge and social networks that each employee brings with them. Migrant workers interviewed were often partners, family members or

<sup>133</sup> Spence, L. (2005), *Country of birth and labour market outcomes in London: An analysis of labour force and census data*. London: Greater London Authority.

<sup>134</sup> Anderson, B., Ruhs, M., and Spencer, S. (2006), *A fair deal? Migrant workers in low-wage occupations in the UK*. Oxford: COMPAS, University of Oxford.

<sup>135</sup> McDowell, L., Batnitzky, A. and Dyer, S. (2007), "Division, Segmentation, and Interpellation: The Embodied Labors of Migrant Workers in a Greater London Hotel", *Economic Geography* 83(1): 1–25.

<sup>136</sup> Dyer, S., McDowell, L. and Batnitzky, A. (2010), "The Impact of Migration on the Gendering of Service Work: The Case of a West London Hotel", *Gender, Work and Organization*, 17(6), 635–657.

<sup>137</sup> Case study prepared by Annemarie Piso of Leeds Metropolitan University, England.

---

friends of existing workers and had in turn recommended others from their home country. In each of the establishments this has shifted the burden of recruitment from employer onto employee and informalized the process. Only one of the businesses carries out telephone interviews, the rest trusting the employee to refer and recruit. The follow up study has indicated problems associated with this approach. Recruitment through social networks has inevitably created larger clusters of one particular nationality, whose common language, shared culture and social ties predates their employment and is transferred into different workplace norms. In addition rural isolation has meant employers providing live-in accommodation for many of its young migrant workforce, thus extending the social bonds beyond the workplace as they mix and socialise in the bars where they work. This has been perceived by employers as leading to a slip in control over their workforce and they have reacted in various ways. Informal word of mouth knowledge passed between local accommodation providers and workers of different nationalities switching employers in the Dales has led to employers either extending their mix of nationalities or formalising their recruitment through an East European agency, who vets potential applicants. The £600 cost per candidate is borne by the individual migrant worker.<sup>138</sup> Continually switching, adapting and mixing different sources of both migrant and local labour appears to provide solutions to recruitment that for small rural accommodation providers appears characteristically haphazard.

### **Case Study ix: Refugees and access to work in the hotel sector<sup>139</sup>**

Refugees as migrants and potential migrant workers present particular challenges as a result of the traumatic experiences they may have experienced as part of the migration and because of their frequently uncertain status on arrival in a host country. They may find themselves in situations where the regularization of status, if achieved at all, takes months and years and can lead to an undermining of both personal and vocational confidence in the workplace. The hotel and wider hospitality sector, as already noted, has the capacity to accommodate employees from a wide diversity of backgrounds and cultures and can act as a “port of first call” for those seeking to transition from refugee status to regular employment. The hotel sector is able to utilise or exploit, depending on the perspective adopted, the frequently high level of skills and qualifications which refugees bring to the labour market and which, for a variety of reasons, are not always formally valued within the host economy. The skills they frequently do bring to the hospitality workplace, however, fall into a bundle of attributes which are relatively intangible and are rarely formally credited. These include a range of “soft” or “generic” attributes, including communications, emotional and aesthetic skills which may be absent in more traditional recruitment pools for low skills work in the industry.

Hall (2008)<sup>140</sup> addresses the issue of the skills set which new migrants and former refugees bring to the tourism workplace and stresses the training and development implications of recruitment from such sources. Hall raises questions of how tourism quality is affected by such employee diversity and what mechanisms are in place to assist the necessary adaptation and socialization processes to accompany or precede training and education. He argues that new entrants to the sector may bring experiences that are different from their hospitality employment requirements.

<sup>138</sup> It should be noted here that such practice whereby migrants bear recruitment costs is at variance with ILO standards.

<sup>139</sup> This case is drawn from the work of Tom Baum and Geri Smyth of the University of Strathclyde, Glasgow and their forthcoming publication (2012), *Charting a Journey: From Refugee to Tourism Employee and Tourism Entrepreneur?*

<sup>140</sup> Hall, D. (2008) “From ‘Bricklaying’ to ‘Bricolage’: Transition and Tourism Development in Central and Eastern Europe” *Tourism Geographies*, 10(4), 410–428.

---

There is some evidence that tourism employment can act as a transitory phase within refugee and wider migrant integration. In terms of more general migrant aspirations, Devine et al (2007)<sup>141</sup> note that a significant proportion of such employees in the hotel sector aspire to employment commensurate with their previous working lives, both in relation to skills and to their employment status. This can be within the sector (through promotion etc.) but also may be elsewhere in the economy. Given the wealth of skills and experience across other sectors of the economy which many refugees bring to the tourism workplace, such ambition is hardly surprising. Opportunity, however, may be determined by their ability to assimilate into the workplace culture of the industry in their “host” country, their capacity to take aboard key skills requirements such as language but, equally, the extent to which employers are willing and able to recognise what may be unorthodox talent within their workforce and support its development and enhancement.

Entrepreneurial outcomes are also high on recent migrant lists of aspirational goals, both within tourism and beyond. The sector, particular in terms of food or retail-related businesses, demands a relatively low capital entry threshold and is therefore attractive as a business entry point for intending entrepreneurs. Refugees have a higher than average propensity to self-employment and entrepreneurial activity. Kirk (2004),<sup>142</sup> in the UK context, reports that 32 per cent of refugees were engaged in self-employment prior to their arrival in the country. This correlation between wider forms of migration and high levels of self-employment and entrepreneurial activities is widely recognised (Light, 1984,<sup>143</sup> Bonacich and Modell,1980).<sup>144</sup> Altinay and Altinay (2006)<sup>145</sup> illustrate the propensity of Turkish migrants to develop entrepreneurial businesses in the catering sector and note increasing formalization of business structures as the operations mature.

Refugees as migrants in the hospitality sector, therefore, perhaps exhibit characteristics and aspire to opportunities which may not always be evident within the wider migrant community where the main motivations for mobility are somewhat different. There are opportunities for employers to recognize the potential of such groups in supporting their workplace development.

## 7. Conclusions and recommendations

The phenomenon of migrant labour in the international hotel industry is characterized by variety, according to the country of origin of the workers, the recipient industry and the roles that migrants play within the workforce. This Report highlights both positive and problematic aspects in the employment of migrant workers in hotels but is non-judgemental in its assessment of the challenges that face all stakeholders with a direct interest in this area – employees, their representative organizations, employers, governments of both host nations and countries of origin and the wider communities within which migrant workers live and work. What is clearly evident from the primary research in this report and from the wider review of an extensive literature is that migrant workers will continue to play a major role in the operations of the hotel sector in many countries and

<sup>141</sup> Devine, F., Baum, T., Hearn, N. and Devine, A. (2007), “Cultural Diversity in Hospitality Work: the Northern Ireland Experience” *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 18(2), 333-349.

<sup>142</sup> Kirk, R. (2004) *Skills audit of refugees*, London: Home Office Online Report 37/04.

<sup>143</sup> Light, I. (1984), ‘Immigrant and ethnic enterprise in North America’, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 7, 195-216.

<sup>144</sup> Bonacich E and Modell J (1980), *The Economic Basis of Ethnic Solidarity*, Berkeley, California, University of California Press.

<sup>145</sup> Altinay, L. and Altinay, E. (2006) 'Determinants of ethnic minority entrepreneurial growth in the catering sector', *The Service Industries Journal*, 26(2), 203-221.

---

that this role is set to increase in importance in developed countries as a direct response to economic, technological and demographic change.

Conclusions here are also presented in the context of the ILO's (2010) wide-ranging analysis of international labour migration and the underpinning conclusions that emanate from this report, notably that

- there is a lack of adequate information and research into the relationship between migration and growth and development;
- there is a need for a greater level of international cooperation to facilitate legal migration and, as a corollary, reduce illegal mobility and exploitation;
- the consequences of out-migration from developing countries ('brain-drain') present a significant challenge to development and poverty alleviation.

ILO (2010:218) proposes measures which can contribute towards an improved labour migration regime which include:

- recognition of mutual benefits to both origin and destination countries;
- adoption of a broad agenda of development and decent work for all;
- transparent migration policies in line with labour market needs;
- protection of migrant workers' rights in line with international instruments;
- adoption of circulation- and mobility-friendly labour migration policies;
- promotion of bilateral, regional and international cooperation; and
- formulation of policy on the basis of reliable information and data.

Against this backdrop, this Report seeks to offer a sector-specific contribution to addressing these conclusions and, on this basis, can put forward the following outcomes in the context of the international hotel industry:

- Migrants are a vital source of skills and labour for the hotel industry in countries, developed and less developed, across the world.
- The hotel industry, in turn, provides an important source for work for internal and international migrants seeking temporary or permanent employment opportunities away from their home communities.
- The experience of migrant workers and their employers in the hotel industry varies greatly according to country, culture and context.
- Migrant labour, at varied levels, will continue to play a significant and often major role in the workforce of the hotel industry in most countries.
- Internal migration will be of equal and, in some countries, greater significance than international migration in meeting the skills needs of the hotel industry.
- The remittance income from migrant workers in the hotel industry makes a significant contribution to the national financial inflow of many countries.
- There is a clear 'north-south' divide in the roles and responsibilities of migrant employees in the hotel industry, with those from poorer countries working at the lower skills end of the workforce spectrum and those from developed countries taking senior managerial and technical positions.
- There is a strong consensus in the hotel industry that migrant workers are vital to the operational viability of the sector and will remain so for the foreseeable future.
- Migrant workers are seen to benefit the industry in terms of the skills and commitment they bring to the organizational culture of hotel businesses.

- 
- Migrant workers are recognized to bring a skills profile into the industry which is frequently unavailable in the local labour market.
  - Hotel businesses benefit from the culturally diverse skills which migrant workers bring to their employment.
  - Larger hotel companies operate effective cultural diversity policies which support and protect migrant workers in their employ.
  - Smaller hotel companies operate on a much more personalized basis in the care and support they offer to migrant workers.
  - Migrant workers in some developed countries are significantly over-qualified for the working roles that they play in the hotel industry.
  - Migrant workers are disproportionately likely to remain in low skills and lower paid positions in the hotel industry.
  - Promotion and career development opportunities for migrant workers are frequently limited and inaccessible.
  - The acquisition of language skills by migrant workers in the hotel industry is seen as crucial to their progression beyond low skills and menial work.
  - Migrant workers face particular vulnerabilities in terms of health and safety in hotel work and are more likely to be involved in workplace accidents.
  - Many migrant workers do not see the hotel industry in terms of a long-term career commitment and seek to exit to other sectors of the host economy or to return home as a medium- to long-term goal.
  - Migrant workers in the hotel industry only infrequently benefit from supportive trade union representation.
  - National governments are ambivalent about the contribution of migrant workers to the hotel industry; supportive and strategic approaches to immigration which are designed to support the needs of the hotel industry are rare.
  - There is limited awareness of potential conflicts between the employment of migrant workers and the delivery of “authentic” visitor experiences in hotels.
  - Despite attempts at international and regional (EU) harmonization of education and training qualifications for the hotel sector, there is a continuing failure to recognize and understand these by private sector employers.

On the basis of these conclusions, certain recommendations to tripartite social partners can be drawn from this report.

### **To employers and their organizations**

- Plan skills and labour market needs in the hotel sector in a long-term and strategic manner, recognizing demographic and economic change, in a way that incorporates migrant workers as part of this long-term strategy.
- Ensure that policies and practices of equal opportunity are in place to safeguard the rights and opportunities of migrant workers alongside their local colleagues.
- Recognize the long-term potential of migrant workers as well as their short-term expediency.
- Recognize the challenges faced by internal migrants as well as those from abroad.
- Support the skills and career development of migrant workers on the same basis as local workers.
- In particular, support the language and cultural training of international (and, in some cases, internal) migrant workers to enable them to work effectively with customers and colleagues.



---

### **To workers' organizations**

- Seek engagement of migrant workers in the hotel industry in trade union membership and activity.
- Support the equal treatment of migrant workers in terms of pay and conditions alongside the local workforce.
- Support the educational and cultural assimilation needs of migrant workers through trade union organizations and affiliates.
- Oppose xenophobic tendencies within local workforces, particularly during times of economic downturn.

### **To governments**

- Recognize that the long-term and strategic labour market needs of the hotel sector in many countries will depend on sustained access to the best possible flow of both international and internal migrant labour to fill positions at all levels.
- Recognize the variety of skills needs of the hotel sector and the challenges the sector faces in meeting these.
- Support moves to ensure better understanding of national qualifications in the hotel area by international employers and agencies.
- Continue to implement measures which reduce and eliminate exploitative informal work within the hotel sector.
- Engage in bilateral 'conversations', if not negotiations, between the governments of migrant origin and destination countries in hotel work areas about the respective benefits and problems associated with such migration.
- Support on-going national and transnational research into all aspects of migrant work and the migrant workers experience in the hotel sector.