

CONSULTATION ON ESTABLISHING A MIGRATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

INITIAL RACE EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT SCREENING EXERCISE

Aims and Objectives

1. We are launching a public consultation on establishing a Migration Advisory Committee (MAC), which would advise Government on where in the economy migration could sensibly fill skills gaps.
2. Subject to the results of the consultation, we would establish a MAC by April 2007 and have it fully up and running by April 2008. The aims and objectives of establishing a MAC would be:
 - To provide Ministers with independent advice from experts and stakeholders to inform certain migration decisions
 - Bring much greater transparency to some key migration decisions
 - Help us better identify labour shortage gaps, and enable us to take account of the wider impact of migration.

Whom will the policy affect?

3. The decisions on which the MAC would advise would continue to be taken by Ministers. We would however expect the MAC's advice to be authoritative and command respect. The MAC would advise on questions about which sectors of the employment market should be opened up to easier access by migrants. This would affect both foreign nationals hoping to come to the UK and conceivably UK nationals of various ethnic groups in the employment market. Both of these sets of decisions would be taken by Ministers with or without a MAC.
4. The consultation paper will not have an adverse impact on particular groups or nationalities. It would also be important to ensure, in establishing the membership of any MAC, that the selection process did not disadvantage people from any ethnic group.

Is there evidence that other groups experience the policy issues in a different way? How can I remove barriers to equality of opportunity?

5. The policy proposals support the delivery of a more effective, efficient and robust immigration service that has the trust of the people in the UK and maintains our global position as a country that welcomes the contribution that legal migration can bring. Indeed the consultation document emphasises strongly the huge contribution migration makes to the UK. The policy is aimed

at ensuring that we attract and bring to the UK people with the skills the country needs.

Summary

6. The consultation paper will have no adverse impact. The development and publication of the Government's response to the consultation, including the determination of whether a MAC should be established and what its remit should be, needs to be accompanied by a full race equality impact assessment, including appropriate measures to eliminate or reduce any adverse impact.