Economic migrants in the EU from Poland to the UK

There are 600,000 Polish people living in the UK

Push factors (from Poland)

·         Average unemployment 18.5%

·         Youth unemployment 40%

·         Wages 1/3 of EU average

·         Housing shortages 300 dwellings to 1,000 people

Pull factors (to UK)

·         Unemployment only 5.1%

·         High demand for semi-skilled labour (e.g plumbers)

·         600,000 job vacancies

·         Good exchange rate (sending a few pounds home would have a big impact)

Positive impacts on the host country (UK)

·         £2.5 billion contributed to the economy

·         Between 0.5% and 1% of UK growth in 2006 was due to immigrant labour

·         80% of immigrants are under 35- their national insurance payments help to cater for ageing population’s pensions

·         They fill a skills gap (e.g plumbers) but this was largely low paid work

Negative impacts on the host country (UK)

·         Tensions in areas that haven’t previously experienced large scale immigration

·         Possible stress on NHS

·         High proportion of the wages are being sent back to family in Poland rather than spent in UK economy

·         Higher demand for housing = higher prices

Positive impacts for source country (Poland)

·         Injection of foreign cash (about £3 billion in 2006)

·         Less pressure on resources (e.g schools, hospitals)

·         Incentivised improvements to living standards

Negative impacts for source country (Poland)

·         Brain drain of skilled workers emigrating

·         Shortage of workers

·         Ageing population