

Professor Brian Bell,
Chair of the Migration Advisory Committee (MAC)
Home Office
2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF

26 May 2023

Dear Professor Bell,

I am writing to provide our input to the Migration Advisory Committee's review of the Shortage Occupation List. For background, Scotland Food & Drink is a representative and leadership body for the food and drink industry in Scotland. We work in partnership to bring together businesses, trade bodies and the public sector to responsibly grow the value and reputation of the industry.

Thank you again for attending the Labour Shortages roundtable we organised in Scotland this month. It was a positive opportunity to bring together stakeholders from across Scotland's food and drink landscape to hear from you and allow them to provide insights into labour issues within specific sectors across a range of occupations and skill levels. We hope to maintain our engagement to explore other solutions.

Following the roundtable, we asked some of our members to fill in a survey outlining occupations where they are experiencing shortages as well as their efforts to recruit domestically and the impacts the shortages are having on their business. Although time was short, several did respond, and we have included their input in full at the foot of our submission. Their responses show just how challenging it is to recruit for many occupations and how this is hitting businesses hard, even to the point of risking their viability. We hope the information will prove sufficient to add more occupations to the list and widen the list to include occupations which are traditionally thought of as "lower skilled". We have outlined some of the findings in more detail in "The Evidence" section.

Background

The food and drink industry is one of the largest in Scotland, employing more than 250,000 people. We are also a major contributor to the Scottish economy, with a turnover of over £15 billion, which arises from a wide range of businesses including large multinational companies and small, independent producers. We produce a diverse variety of produce, including world class primary produce (beef, lamb, vegetables, grains, fish, seafood, dairy etc.) through to our value-added products including whisky, smoked salmon, cheese, and all manner of sweet and savoury products for people to enjoy.

The industry is a major asset to the Scottish economy. It is a major employer, a major contributor to exports, and, in many ways, *the* engine for economic growth in Scotland as well as the means to healthy, prosperous, and sustainable communities. We shoulder our share of responsibility for creating jobs, attracting investment, and boosting exports. We are proud to be a major contributor to Scottish tourism, with food and drink among the top reasons for visitors coming here. Our overall reach from farm to fork, and the accompanying requirement for labour, is vast. This means we cannot achieve success alone; we need the policy and regulatory environment to help us unleash our potential.

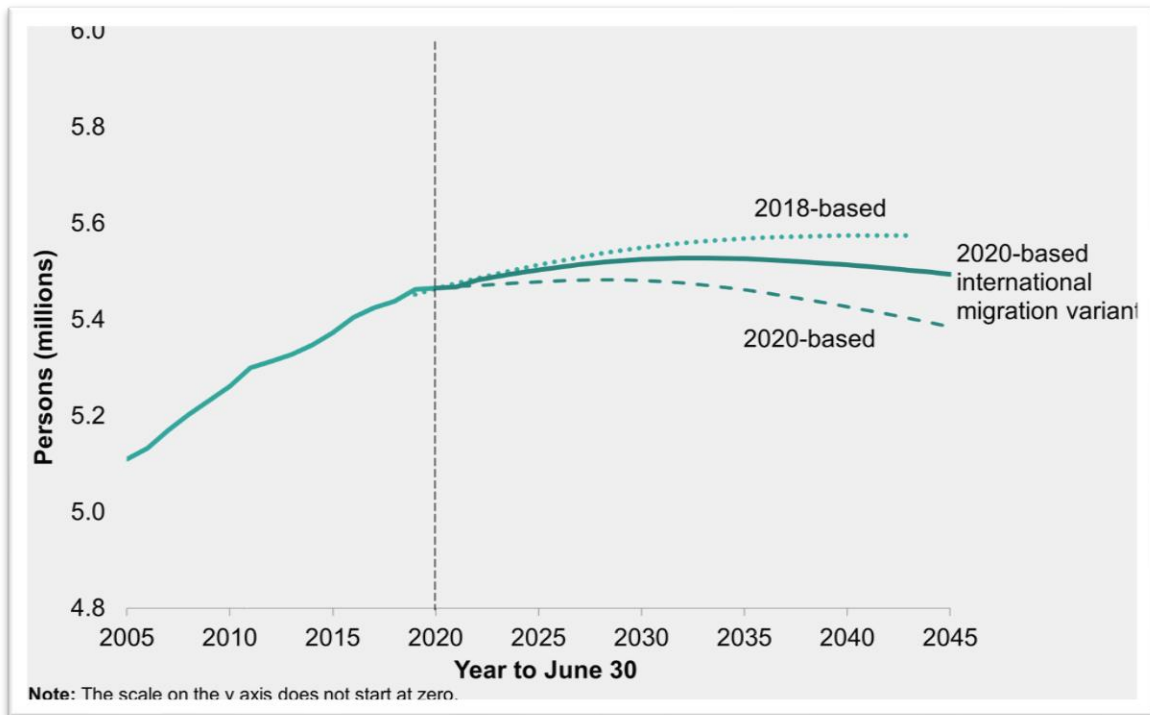
We are not ashamed to be labour intensive. It puts us front and centre when it comes to building a productive workforce, providing high quality employment opportunities in communities across the country with a central purpose - to produce and supply high quality, sustainable food and drink across Scotland, the UK, and beyond. Within that core purpose is an unparalleled range of careers, on the land and at sea, in production sites, and along the supply chain, with opportunities for all including jobs that need lower skills and those which require the highest levels of expertise across diverse fields such as engineering, marketing, supply chain management and more.

The success we have enjoyed over recent years remains at risk from the unprecedented challenges we have been navigating in the aftermath of Brexit, the Covid-19 pandemic, and the war in Ukraine. These have led to significantly rising input costs across all aspects of business, and it is difficult to pass these costs on during a cost-of-living crisis, especially for smaller businesses. Being labour-intensive compounds these challenges, increasing the pressure across a wide range of recruitment and retention issues, requiring both cost and capacity to resolve.

The Evidence

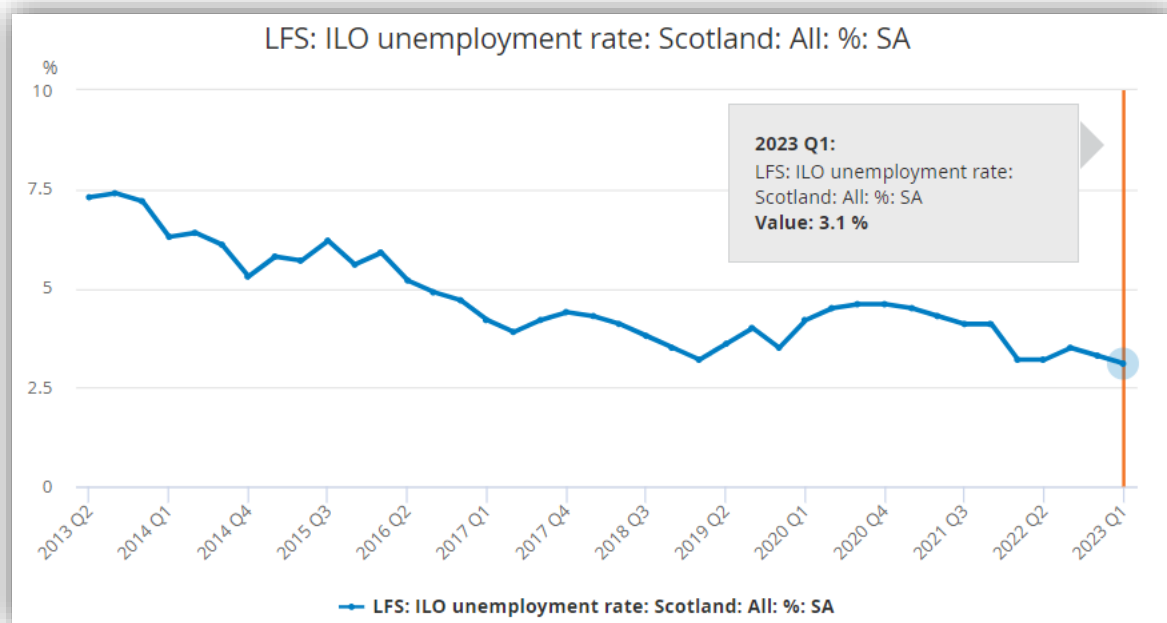
Primary food production is the starting point of the food chain, involving roles in farming, horticulture and agriculture, fishing and aquaculture. This initial stage has a ripple effect on downstream operations, such as processing and manufacturing, making its smooth functioning indispensable. We know from our engagement with the industry and the statistics produced by Government and agencies that there are shortages of personnel right along the supply chain and the upshot is an increased risk to the viability of the businesses, Scotland's food security, our export potential, and overall economic stability.

One factor is population levels. As this [article](#) by the Financial Times outlines, population is predicted to fall in Scotland generally over the longer term, and will be most marked in rural areas. The article features a rural food producing business and their struggle to recruit. This is evidenced further in the chart below, from the National Records for Scotland as part of their [Projected Population of Scotland report](#) from January 2023.



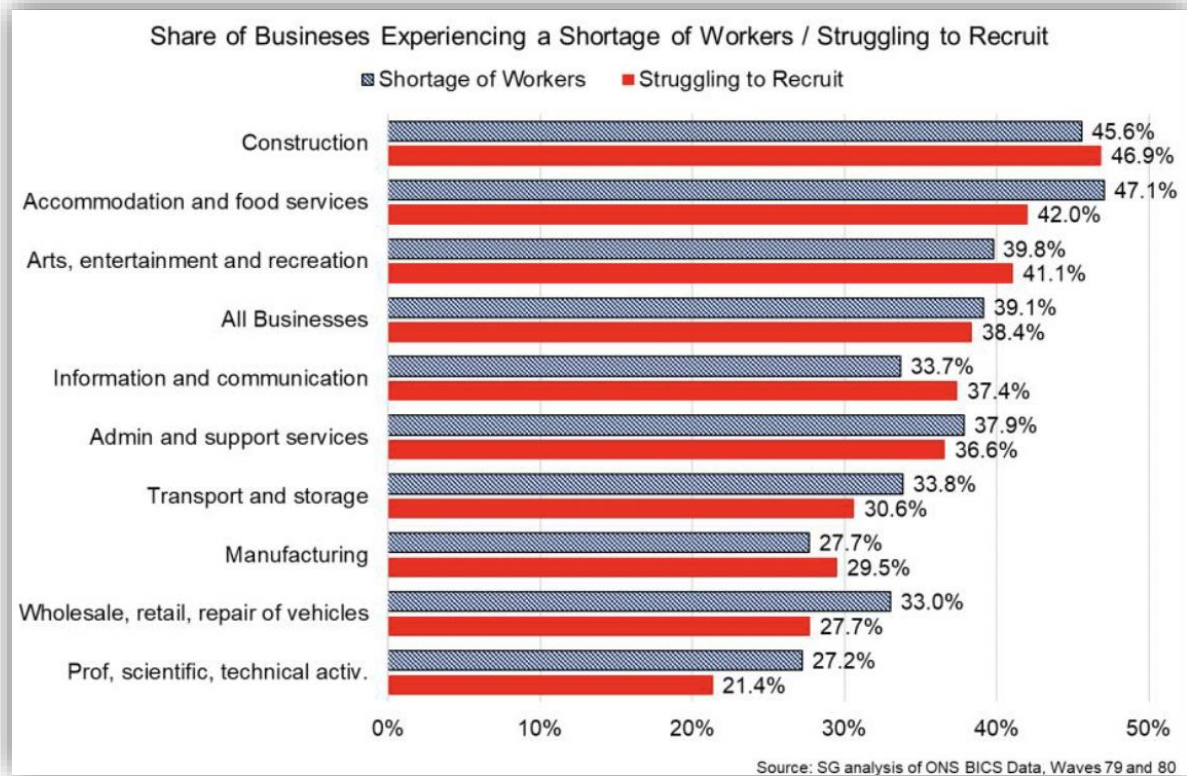
Another factor is Brexit, and the change in workforce availability, in particular from the EU. The most recent ONS report ([here](#), dated May 25 2023) shows that net EU migration is now negative. The impact of this on Scotland, which benefitted from higher workforce availability through EU migration, is significant, especially when you consider that this has been replaced by a more rigid scheme with lower limits on skill and salary levels. The clear impact, in the absence of a domestic workforce to fill the gap, is shortages.

Evidence of a lack of a domestic workforce can be found in unemployment figures, which remain historically low, as shown by this table from the Office for National Statistics (ONS):



In rural areas the rate is known to be even lower than this, around 2%, meaning the pool of available workers is smaller still.

Data from BICS, shown below, confirms that the share of businesses experiencing a shortage of workers remains extremely high:



Our own survey results (at the foot of our submission) make clear that the impacts from a lack of labour are threatening business viability and, although anonymised, these include well-known companies with an excellent track record. It’s important to note that the information we were able to gather provides just a flavour of an issue which is affecting an entire industry in many ways and, according to the Royal Society of Edinburgh’s report of September 2022 (see [here](#)) is “unprecedented” in scale and depth.

The situation is stark and the conclusion unavoidable - labour requirements cannot currently be filled from the domestic labour pool alone. Despite significant efforts in local training and development initiatives, the demand for skills continues to outpace supply. This disconnect calls for an effective, multi-pronged strategy, with overseas recruitment playing a crucial role.

Specific Occupations Identified

- General/packing operative - 8111, 9134, 5433
- Hygiene Cleaner - 9132
- Storeman/Forklift Driver – 8222
- Chef 5434
- Baker - 5432
- F&B Manager 5436
- Retail Manager 1190

Waiter/waitress 9273
Retail assistant 7111
Butcher 5431
Seasonal fruit pickers 9119
Bar supervisor - 9274
manager public house -1224
Poultry Stockpersons 9111
Fishmongers and poultry dressers - 5433
Production/assembly workers - 8139
Kitchen and catering assistants – 9272

The Role of the SOL

It is important to note that we do not consider the Shortage Occupation List to be the only solution for labour shortages. It may indeed not be the most relevant solution for many businesses, as it impacts on a particular area of the workforce within the defined salary thresholds. We also recognise it has been controversial, and that some people disagree with its current ability to allow migrant workers to be employed for less than the “going rate”.

As a responsible leadership body, we have considered this carefully, as we accept that workers should be paid fairly, and it would not be right for the SOL to contribute to excessive migration by undercutting domestic workers. We do not believe it is doing so, in part because a key requirement, as assessed by the MAC, is that there must be a genuine shortage of workers prior to allowing a simpler, lower cost route for employers to fill their labour gaps.

The benefit of allowing lower salaries on the SOL is mostly about being able to recruit below the minimum threshold that would otherwise apply to recruit *any* worker from overseas, which would effectively prohibit recruitment within certain occupations and by some businesses. It is not about paying less to a worker from overseas compared to a domestic worker. It is about ensuring affordable, fair recruitment into roles where that labour is essential to allow business viability and growth and it is known to be difficult recruiting locally. To be very clear, businesses want to recruit local workers and will continue to try – operationally it is the simplest way to build a workforce, avoiding language, travel, or accommodation complexities. That said, we know they also value the contribution of our overseas workers, who bring enthusiasm and skills and contribute positively to the business, and wider society in many ways.

We agree with the conclusion reached by Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish Governments as set out in a [joint letter](#) to the UK Government in 2022:

“We believe that the SOL in its current form cannot effectively deliver for our economy, public service and communities. The system of identifying and incentivising recruitment for occupations in shortage should align with the essential labour needs of all Four Nations, recognising fundamental differences in the demographics and skill base of each nation and the way that devolved services are organised.”

We note that the MAC has previously recognised the distinct nature of the Scottish labour situation and we welcome any further efforts to encourage practical actions that will provide more comprehensive solutions that take into account regional variation.

Maintaining effective routes to employment for overseas labour helps to address shortages within geographical areas, promote economic growth, maintain essential services, and support workforce development. The threshold payment for skilled workers in occupations that are not on the SOL is a barrier to recruitment and lowering that barrier by adding more occupations to the list enables businesses to bring workers in, whilst still paying them a fair rate. If the SOL salary threshold discount were to be removed entirely the outcome would not be more domestic recruitment – it would be stagnation and lost productivity, or further food price inflation. We understand and support the intention of the SOL review to remove occupations that have a “binding going rate”.

As a result of this, and a key ask within our submission, we would like the MAC to allow occupations at lower skill levels onto the SOL. This would be a pragmatic approach to the known labour shortages within a large, labour-intensive industry such as food and drink, where a range of skills are needed. To reiterate, in the absence of a salary differential, this would not create an incentive to recruit from overseas rather than domestically, it would simply make it possible to do so at a time when such labour is desperately needed.

The addition of a wide range of food and drink related occupations to the Shortage Occupation List aligns with the UK’s commitment to fostering a robust, sustainable, and diversified food production sector. These skilled overseas professionals would not only fill the existing gaps but would also contribute fresh perspectives, innovative practices, and global insights, elevating the industry’s standards and competitiveness on an international level.

Comprehensive Workforce Strategy

We believe there is a clear need for a comprehensive workforce strategy for Scotland, and indeed across the UK. This should encompass education, training, skills development, automation, recruitment, and retention policies, *alongside* controlled migration. We agree with the Scottish Government that we should create a joint UK Government-Scottish Government forum (with representation from both the Migration Advisory Committee, the Expert Advisory Group on Migration and Population, and local delivery partners), to support the design, implementation, and oversight of our migration strategy.

One element linked to this where we would especially like to see further development is the [Scottish Rural Visa Pilot](#). However, this is also not sufficient by itself. 42% of our survey respondents are not in a rural area and are also suffering from labour shortages.

The Case for Controlled Migration in Scotland

As outlined above, and as the MAC are no doubt already aware, labour shortages exist because of several reasons including ongoing fallout from Covid-19, competition from other sectors, perception of roles in the industry, the cliff edge caused by Brexit, rural population decline, lack of the necessary skills and more. Overseas recruitment is challenging right along the supply chain, partly because of the complexity of immigration processes. The SOL has a part to play in expediting this in certain roles, creating a valuable talent pipeline that meets the industry’s needs. It can make it easier for employers to hire workers which are essential to both the businesses and our economy. It attracts workers from overseas to fill these roles, as they also pay less and have a lower barrier to entry.

From a societal perspective, evidence from many sources, including Ipsos ([here](#)) shows that the UK population is generally supportive of controlled migration, where people come to live and work to fill gaps in labour, especially in seasonal roles. People recognise that it is ultimately good for our country to be able to produce and supply the food we need within our communities and for export. Within Scotland this need is greater than other parts of the UK, due to our demographic context.

The Scottish Government's January 2020 [report](#), Migration: Helping Scotland Prosper suggests that "migration is a key lever to address depopulation of rural Scotland ... out-migration and the ageing of the population that remains, means natural change cannot contribute to recovery in these areas.

The report outlines several principles of a successful migration policy including:

- encourage and enable long-term settlement in Scotland, welcoming people with the range of skills we need to work, raise families and make a positive contribution to society
- Scotland should be able to attract talented and committed people from Europe and across the world to work and study here without excessive barriers, and our migration policy should support mobility, collaboration and innovation

We support these principles. Many, but not all, food and drink businesses are based in rural areas, where local workforce options are even more limited. Overseas recruitment would inject life into these communities, stimulate local economies, and contribute to the UK Government's 'levelling up' agenda. It is very different from uncontrolled migration, or an open doors policy. The simple truth is that a desire to lower migration "come what may" is a political decision that is not grounded in evidence of economic or social impact.

Indeed, from an economic perspective, it has been demonstrated that working age migration is a net contributor to society. This [UCL Economics Study](#) suggests this "net benefit" was true even during freedom of movement. A [briefing](#) by the Migration Observatory concluded much the same, although recognised the calculations are complex when accounting for factors such as a child's education. It still noted that "the Office for Budget Responsibility forecasts that higher net migration reduces pressure on government debt over time." It has also shown, including in [this recent report](#) that "the impacts of migration on wages and employment prospects for UK-born workers is small. The number of jobs in the UK economy is not fixed. Migrants may compete with existing workers in the UK for jobs, but they also cause the number of jobs to increase." This final factor is an important consideration. When a business, or an industry, grows, it does so dynamically, and productivity gains lead to further productivity requirements.

As a final point, whilst our interest pertains primarily to Scotland, the benefits of a successful migration strategy for Scotland extend beyond our borders. A stronger Scottish food and drink production sector contributes to a stronger UK economy. Our exports, especially in sectors like seafood, whisky, and key processed foods, are well-regarded globally. Ensuring their continued quality and availability upholds the reputation of the UK.

In conclusion, I urge you to consider the importance and urgency of adding food and drink related occupations to the Shortage Occupation List, including those of a lower skill level than is currently accepted. These crucial steps will ensure that we can continue to

maintain the highest standards in our food and drink sector, drive economic growth, ensure food security, and uphold Scotland's status as a leading food and drink producer and Scotland as a welcoming country for all.

Thank you for your attention to this critical issue, and for your efforts in continuing to advise and guide sensible immigration policies across the UK, with special regard for Scotland.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Davidson". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each word being capitalized and prominent.

John Davidson

Deputy Chief Executive and Strategy Director

Size	Rural	Experiencing Shortage?	Occupations	Efforts to recruit local or UK workers, and why you think these have not been successful.	Impacts on business?	Other comments
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Large	Yes	Yes	<p>General operative - would come under the following codes - 8111, 9134, 5433 Hygiene Cleaner - 9132 Storeman/Forklift Driver - 8222</p>	<p>Attended all local career fairs and engaged with local schools. Tried several different employment schemes such as: Career Ready, Aberdeen Foyer. Worked with the Prison Service Community Integration Team to provide employment opportunities to those who are allowed out on day release or are about to be released.</p> <p>We advertising vacancies on the Company website, job boards such as Indeed, social media such as Facebook and LinkedIn, in the local job centres, we've advertised on the local radio, in the local newspapers and on the back of buses, we've put up banners</p>	<p>Due to the shortage of staff we have to run more overtime. This puts more pressure onto existing staff and there is a risk the burn out. We do limit the amount of overtime any employee works (their total working time must be under 60 hours per week), however, they are getting frustrated at always being asked. It also costs us a lot more as a business as we are paying 1.5x the hourly rate for overtime, rather than paying the flat rate if we had enough staff. This does not include the additional gas, electricity and other costs associated with running the factory when we shouldn't need to.</p> <p>We keep staff who under different circumstances we would not retain i.e., those with poor attendance levels, bad</p>	<p>We took an engineer through the Visa Sponsorship Scheme and this is the time it took and the cost to the company. This is ridiculous. There is no way any company can sustain this cost coupled with such a time consuming process. The candidate was from South Africa but still had to sit an English test.</p> <p>The candidate applied for a Shift Maintenance Electrical Engineer position. This position is on the Shortage Occupation List. Occupation Code: 2123 Occupation Title: Electrical Engineer</p> <p>Timeline 28/08/2022 Candidates CV was received 09/09/2022 Candidate was interviewed 09/09/2022 Candidate was sent an Offer of Employment letter 10/09/2022 Candidate accepted the offer. 15/09/2022 Company applied for a Certificate of Sponsorship to assign to candidate.</p>
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			<p>next to main commuter roads and outside our factories. We also work with recruitment agencies and labour agency providers.</p> <p>We have introduced a Refer a Friend Scheme, so if a current member of staff recommends someone they get £200 after the individual has stayed for more than one week and they get a further £200 once they have stayed for more than 6 months.</p> <p>There has been no success working with the job centres, advertising with them or using any of their employment schemes. The individuals they put forward do not want to</p>	<p>attitudes, poor work ethic, not working to the standard required, etc. We have to limit what we can do as a business. We have several existing and new customers wanting us to provide them with additional goods and we are at the point that we cannot commit to this.</p>	<p>16/09/2022 Certificate of Sponsorship approved</p> <p>19/09/2022 Certificate of Sponsorship assigned</p> <p>20/09/2022 Certificate of Sponsorship paid</p> <p>20/09/2022 Candidate started application process which included booking English exam</p> <p>12/10/2022 Candidate sat English Test</p> <p>26/10/2022 English Test results received</p> <p>04/11/2022 Candidate had TB test</p> <p>24/11/2022 Submitted Visa Application</p> <p>01/12/2022 Paid Visa Application. Informed decision would be made within 15 days.</p> <p>20/12/2022 Candidate received feedback that he had completed the form incorrectly.</p> <p>23/12/2022 Application resubmitted</p> <p>09/01/2023 Informed Certificate of Sponsorship is expired and invalid. CoS ran out on the 20th December and the application was made on the 23rd December 2022.</p> <p>12/01/2023 Applied for another</p>
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				<p>work and are only going through the motions to retain their benefits. We keep a list of those previously employed/inducted and it is the same people they keep trying to put forward. We are not willing to take people on that walk off the factory floor after an hour. It is a waste of everyone's time. We have also had feedback from candidates and from job centre staff that they inform potential employees not to work for more than 20 hours per week as this affects their benefits. Therefore none of them want to work full-time. I have provided this information to job centres and there has been no change.</p>		<p>CoS 17/01/2023 CoS was rejected for not having the number of hours the candidate would work each week, although the descriptor did not specify this. 17/01/2023 Applied again for a CoS 18/01/2023 CoS approved 03/02/2023 CoS paid 06/02/2023 Candidates visa approved 20/02/2023 Candidate flew to the UK 22/02/2023 Candidate commenced work</p> <p>Costs Incurred Not specific to this candidate but required in order to sponsor a candidate.</p> <p>Sponsored Licence Application £1,476.00</p> <p>Specific to this candidate 5 Year Certificate of Sponsorship £5,199.00 (£1000 per year plus £199 certificate cost) Help candidate to pay for tests, etc \$350 USD (£283 approx.)</p>
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				<p>Our most successful route is working with labour agency providers, however, they are struggling to find new staff and during busy seasons it is near impossible to get anyone.</p>		<p>1st Visa Application £523.14 (£509.43 has been refunded) 2nd Visa Application £1,041.25 Health Surcharge (5 years) £3,445.12 2nd 5 Year Certificate of Sponsorship £5,199 Flights £538.12</p> <p>Total outlay £17,704.63 Total refunded £5,509.43*</p> <p>*Please note that the 90 days after the first CoS expired a refund of £5,000 was received.</p>
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Size	Rural	Experienci ng Shortage?	Occupatio ns	Efforts to recruit local or UK workers, and why you think these have not been successful.	Impacts on business?	Other comments
Small (<50 FTE staff and <£10 million turnov er)	No	Yes	4 x Chef 5434 1 x F&B Manager 5436 1 x Retail Manager 1190 2 x Waiter/wai tress 9273 4 x retail assistant 7111 1 x butcher 5431 4 x seasonal fruit pickers 9119	recruitment agency, web (Indeed etc), facebook, job centre	Profit fallen by £500k	Things are so bad we are looking at how we can wind the business up, cant see any light at the end of the tunnel.

Size	Rural	Experiencing Shortage?	Occupations	Efforts to recruit local or UK workers, and why you think these have not been successful.	Impacts on business?	Other comments
Micro (<10 FTE staff and <£2 million turnover)	No	Yes	5434 chef 9274 supervisor bar 1224 manager public house	We advertise extensively on indeed.co.uk and via our own websites and social media platforms. We see very few applications from UK workers, and since Brexit, the number of foreign applicants has dropped off a cliff (for obvious reasons) leaving a real problem for us to hire appropriate staff with the qualifications or experience to do the job and also the work ethic needed.	We have to operate on restricted hours as we struggle to find enough staff to fill rotas. This means we lose revenue.	The hospitality industry needs a larger pool of eligible workers from abroad to fill vacancies. This has been acutely difficult since Brexit.

Size	Rural	Experiencing Shortage?	Occupations	Efforts to recruit local or UK workers, and why you think these have not been successful.	Impacts on business?	Other comments
Small (<50 FTE staff and <£10 million turnover)	Yes	Yes	5433	Advertised locally and on Indeed. On fb The Isle of Barra is very remote and with a small population therefore more difficult to recruit from the uk	Not able to process normal amounts of raw material due to lack of labour. Our boats having to sell their catch to another processor that impacts dramatically on profits and turnover	We need affordable accommodation on Barra to provide for migrants or UK workers
Medium (<250 staff and <£50 million turnover)	No	Yes	5434 - Chef 5432 - Baker	We use a recruitment site called indeed or we reach out on our social media channels for staff members. We offer only daytime hours so this is a big incentive to our business for anyone applying.	We cannot open some of our kitchens properly as no experienced chefs, this is losing us income. We cannot expand the bakery as not enough staff to do this. Current staff are having to work longer hours as a result sometimes of staffing struggles.	This is a major issue for the hospitality sector for recruiting and retaining good staff. It makes it more and more difficult having Brexit to hire anyone and especially anyone with any experience.

Size	Rural	Experiencing Shortage?	Occupations	Efforts to recruit local or UK workers, and why you think these have not been successful.	Impacts on business?	Other comments
Medium (<250 staff and <£50 million turnover)	Yes	Yes	Packing Operatives 9134, Poultry Stockpensions 9111	Placed adverts on our facebook page and shared with local job noticeboards online, posted on Indeed, Offered staff referral scheme within company to try and encourage current employees to suggest friends/family to apply, spoken to local SRUC	Difficulties in managing staff cover, managers having to cover at periods, other staff having to work additional hours to standards hours to cover work, relying on untrained staff to cover periods where not other cover is possible. Have had to offer increased wages, enhanced weekend working pay, leaving less of a margin in returns for the company.	The problem is evident across all sectors of work, more people looking to work from home or reduce their working hours for more recreation time. Money is not the only factor people consider when applying for a job.

Size	Rural	Experiencing Shortage?	Occupations	Efforts to recruit local or UK workers, and why you think these have not been successful.	Impacts on business?	Other comments
Small (<50 FTE staff and <£10 million turnover)	No	No	not applicable	We keep in close contact with our local Employment Agency offices who are very proactive in helping us fill positions and advising on any assistance or schemes there are	overtime can become an issue at peak times if we do not have enough staff	We do not have this issue but we are aware that housing can be an issue if you do manage to find staff
Large	Yes	Yes	5433 Fishmongers and poultry dressers	Higher Wages / Change to Terms & Conditions - paying daily OT. / Referral schemes / increased benefits / intensive and extensive advertising / community engagement	new orders being declined / employees working excessive OT	Unfulfilled vacancies in processing has been an ongoing and increasing challenge over the last 7 years.

Size	Rural	Experiencing Shortage?	Occupations	Efforts to recruit local or UK workers, and why you think these have not been successful.	Impacts on business?	Other comments
Small (<50 FTE staff and <£10 million turnover)	Yes	Yes	8139 - all production/assembly workers	We have increased our rate of pay, advertise locally, advertised via https://hijobs.net/jobs/highlands-and-islands , brought some staff over from Ukraine, offered housing with the job (rent payable)	We are often shorting customers which is having an impact on our brand/reputation. Our staff are feeling more stressed and overworked. We are asking people to do overtime more than we would like. We are having to place staff in areas where they have little to no training and are often learning on the job.	Our ultimate goal would be to extend the factory further to build a 2nd production line but we have no idea where we would get the staff for this. Brexit had a terrible impact on our business.

Size	Rural	Experiencing Shortage?	Occupations	Efforts to recruit local or UK workers, and why you think these have not been successful.	Impacts on business?	Other comments
Small (<50 FTE staff and <£10 million turnover)	Yes	Yes	5434, 9272, 9274, 9273	We advertise locally. The biggest challenge for us is availability of affordable accommodation for workers. We do have 2 rooms available in a staff cottage but we save that for more senior staff i.e. Senior Sous Chef or Head Chef.	We can only open 5 not 7 days a week - lost income. Existing staff cannot work over 50 hours every week or they burn out and leave.	There should be additional keyworker points for tourism areas for the allocation of affordable/social housing. There are limited properties available for longer term let and if they are, they are too expensive i.e. £1,500 per month plus council tax and bills.

Size	Rural	Experiencing Shortage?	Occupations	Efforts to recruit local or UK workers, and why you think these have not been successful.	Impacts on business?	Other comments
Small	No	Yes	Nearly all areas of the business but these two areas in particular: Baker: 5432 Packer: 9134	We have tried a number of things to attract people into these roles including some of the following: - offering increased wages - offering training and development to train people into being suitable for skilled roles - moving our shifts so they only between 6am and 6pm which is the most popular time to work We feel that there is a general feeling amongst the local work force that they do not want to work in a bakery/factory	We have had to give customers significantly increased lead times for orders over the past 18 months. We have had to turn down most new business as we risk not being able to fulfil orders for existing customers. We have had to run overtime wherever possible constantly for over a year which is very tiring for those who volunteer to do it. It is also extremely expensive for the business as it is paid at time and a half. The workload is putting significant strain on the team as a whole and is making the matter worse by meaning people want	Above even inflationary pressures and supply chain issues we very much see this as being the number one threat to our business. It is causing significant damage to us as a business every day. We have been battling the issue for over 18 months and can't continue in this way.

Size	Rural	Experiencing Shortage?	Occupations	Efforts to recruit local or UK workers, and why you think these have not been successful.	Impacts on business?	Other comments
				<p>environment regardless of the type of role, wage or perks. Aspirations for those in Edinburgh are now very much that they are successful if working in an office. A lot of the local people who apply fail to respond to offers of interviews, do not turn up for interviews or are just looking for 1-2 months of work through school or university holidays.</p>	<p>to work less hours or retire earlier.</p> <p>We are having to now rationalise our customer base and the products we produce by telling customers we can no longer produce certain products for them. We have invested in machinery to reduce labour demands however we cannot go much further as we cannot compromise our USP of being a traditionally handmade product.</p> <p>This is all significantly reducing our capacity and business development. It is making the business less profitable and therefore restricting our investment for the future.</p>	

Size	Rural	Experiencing Shortage?	Occupations	Efforts to recruit local or UK workers, and why you think these have not been successful.	Impacts on business?	Other comments
					<p>In addition, it means that we are not able to focus on key projects to set the business up for the future such as making the business more environmentally friendly. We are still working on these things but it is moving forward at a much slower rate.</p>	