

## **MIGRANT WORKFORCE BOOST WELSH INDUSTRY**

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**An official study, written in conjunction with the Welsh Assembly Government, has shone a spotlight on the country's migrant workforce, highlighting the benefits of innovative recruitment solutions, from specialist recruitment businesses such as Omega Resource Group plc, in industry sectors reliant on semi-skilled and unskilled labour. The report, titled *Quantifying the Demand for Unskilled Labour in Areas of Low Economic Activity*, has concluded that there is no evidence that an increase in migrant labour has had a 'negative impact' on wage growth over the past three years or prevented the people in Wales getting jobs.**

James Strickland, Group Director of recruitment specialists Omega Resource Group plc, is not surprised by the findings: "In the UK, rising employment figures, lack of apprenticeships and the drive to increase efficiencies and lower costs in a number of industry sectors, means that there is a serious demand for alternative labor sources.

The reality is that migrant workers are filling those positions that people do not want to do - specifically within the logistics, technology and manufacturing industries, amongst others. They are happy to do this because they potentially earn as much in a week here as they might do in a month in their native countries."

While there are no accurate figures for the total number of migrant workers in Wales, it is estimated to be several times higher than the National Insurance-based figure of 17,000 – with over 40 per cent of this total being Polish nationals.

"At Omega, we recognised early the growing demand for semi-skilled and unskilled labour," continues Strickland. "We identified Eastern Europe, notably Poland, as the most suitable labour market. By establishing a polish-based recruitment centre in Warsaw and an engineering assessment, language and technical training facility in Tychy, in the south-west region on the country, we ensure that both candidate and client are fully prepared prior to the position being filled."

“This report written in conjunction with the Welsh Assembly Government has shown that migrant labour is in no way hindering Wales’ economic growth and their commitment to work in semi-skilled and unskilled positions is benefiting those industry sectors reliant on upon this form of labour,” concludes Strickland.

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