



MigRom: The immigration of Romanian Roma to Western Europe: Causes, effects, and future engagement strategies

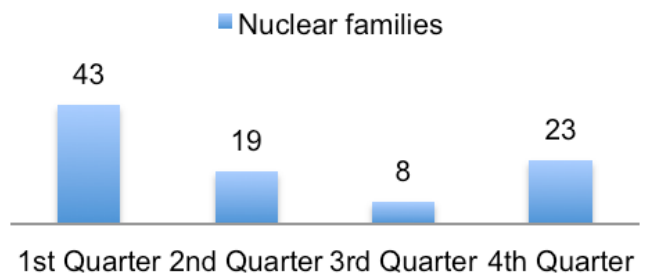
In partnership with Manchester City Council



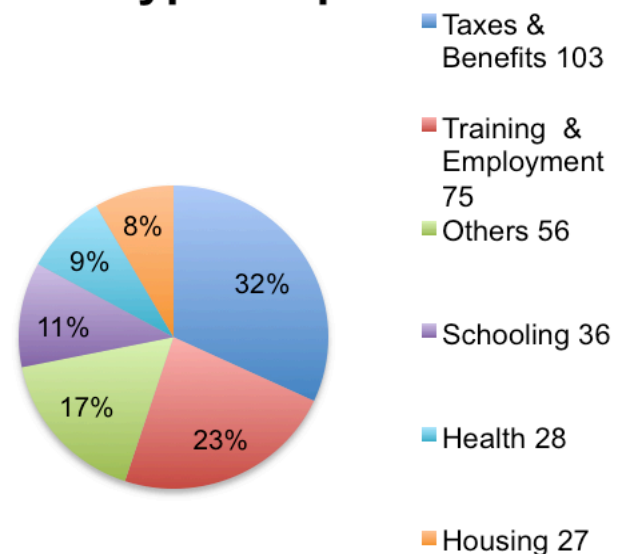
Drop in consultation for Roma in Manchester in partnership with Sure Start (Longsight) First Year Report (Sept 2013 - Aug 2014)

- MigRom is a European research consortium that investigates the experiences and ambitions of Roma migrants from Romania. It runs a pilot engagement scheme with provisions for advice and referral, and supports capacity building within the Roma community.
- The project employs three experienced outreach workers. They offer weekly drop-in sessions for Roma at the Longsight Sure Start Centre. A team of academic specialists supports the outreach work. They assess needs and draft response and engagement strategies.
- In its first year (Sept 2013-Aug 2014), altogether 93 families accessed the drop-in session for advice and support, many of them on a regular basis.
- As clients became regular users, first-time access decreased but increased again in the fourth quarter, as the project widened its engagement to Oldham, in partnership with Oldham City Council.
- Queries typically cover issues relating to adjustment into a new environment. Clients seek support to fill in self-assessment and tax returns, to search for job opportunities, to pay utility and Council Tax bills, to register their children to school, register with GPs, etc. (see Type of queries).

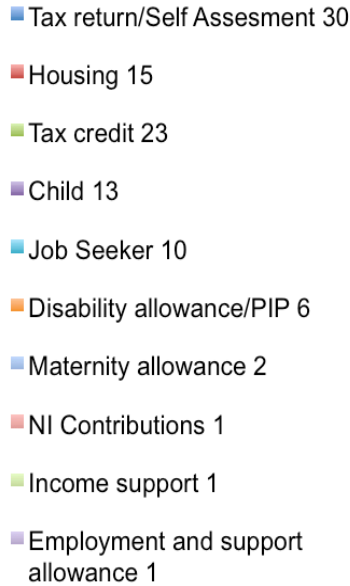
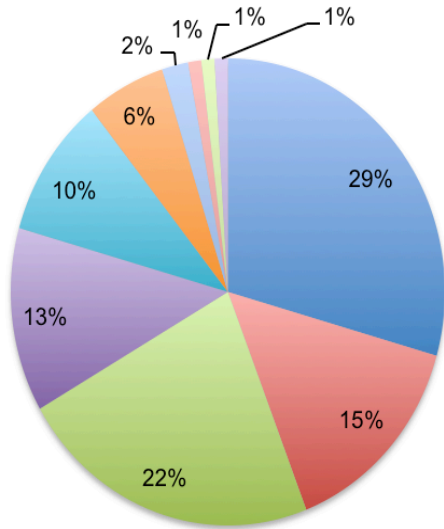
First time access to service



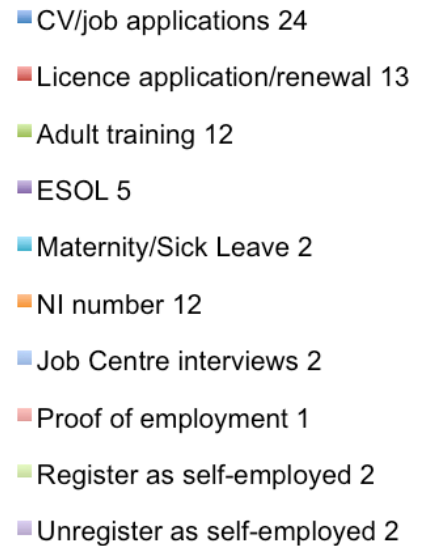
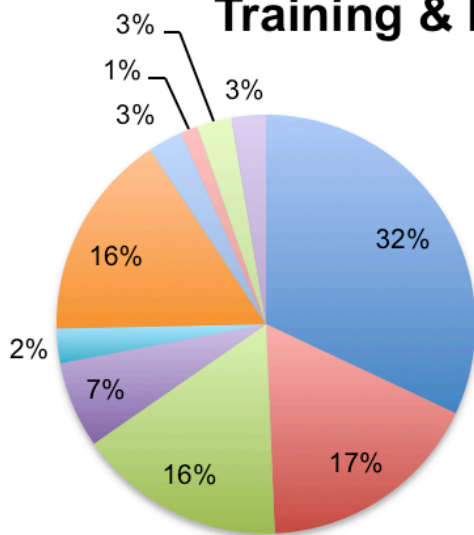
Type of queries



Taxes & Benefits



Training & Employment

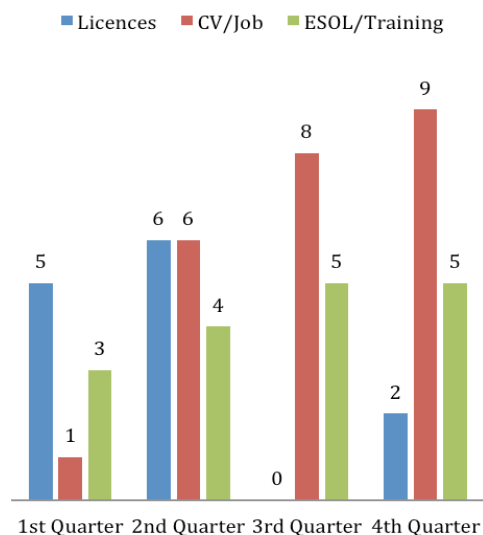


- Most Tax & Benefits enquiries concern Tax Return and related issues; only few involve job seeker allowance or income support. Most queries about benefits arose in response to the changes in legislation in January 2014 (see Tax & Benefits).

- In the first two quarters of the period under assessment, most employment queries related to licences (especially peddling and scrap metal collection) (see Employment queries).

- Changes in employment rights of A2 nationals in January 2014 gave rise to an increase in enquiries on job opportunities, CVs, ESOL classes, and professional training – showing how equal opportunities facilitate participation.

Employment queries



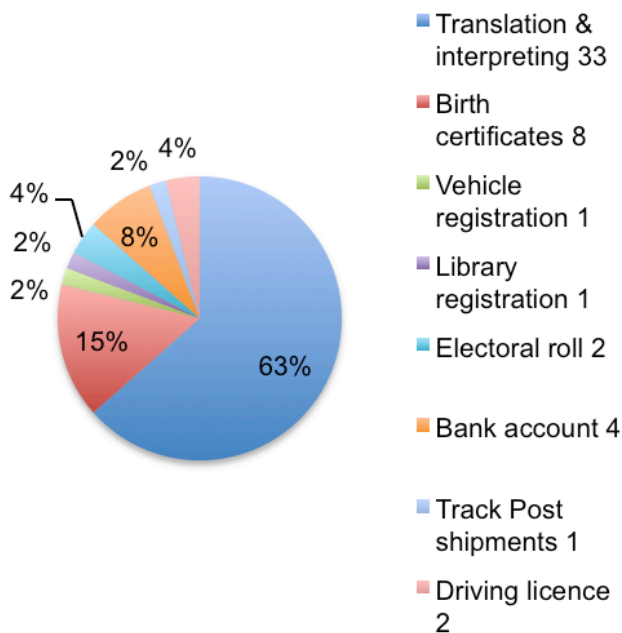
- Assistance with translation of written documents and interpreting in interaction with services is in demand mostly by the older generation in the Roma community.

- There is a notable absence of queries relating to tensions with neighbours, police, or other services, indicating good neighbourly relations. No evidence of truancy or child safeguarding issues has come to the attention of the project's outreach team during the period of assessment.

- The project promotes a strategy of Self-Reliance. It offers informal training to young members of the community to assist family members.

- Consultation notes from the period of assessment (see examples below) show an increase in confidence, self-awareness and recognition of skills, and a commitment to draw on skills and experience to support others in the community.

Other Queries



Week 28

The outreach workers received information about a course on Food Safety and Hygiene and were able to enrol 9 Roma women and 5 Roma men on the course. At the start of the course people were a bit shy but once the teacher began talking about food safety they realised that they knew quite a lot about the subject.

Week 43

F54 and F55 requested help with their self-assessment forms and F55 also wanted to register to vote. They learned how to fill in the self-assessment forms and said they could now do this for the others in the family as soon as they receive the forms.

Week 40

F69 phoned requesting a reference for a job in a care home. She had just had the interview and was told that she needed to give two references.

Week 48

F79 needed advice on how to end their self-employment registration because now they are employed. We explained and helped the mother with her forms and their daughter will do the same for the father.

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