



Making social worlds

Migrant labour

Sir Bernard Crick:

The government wants high employment and productivity to continue and productivity demands unskilled labour and semi skilled labour as well as highly skilled labour. So we all think of the nurses from the Caribbean and the doctors from India without whom the health service would collapse. Until about 2003 or 2004, employers who needed unskilled labour could go to the Home Office and they could get quite large grants, two or three hundred people at a time, sometimes even more, to import people, and they were nearly all coming from the third world.

However, with the changes in European law, with the accession states of Eastern Europe. Several states, but we talk about Poland. Let's just talk about Poland. That very much changed the name of the game because employers discovered that they could fill the vacancies with the Poles. We don't know how long they will stay. We don't know whether they want to be integrated. But anyway, they could fill all these unskilled jobs temporarily. So, as of December 2006, new regulations have been brought in. That people from outside the EU must fulfil quite high skills qualifications, before they can get permanent residence. And they have to take the same test in, not for citizenship initially, but in order to get permanent residence. They have to take the language with citizenship test, that other people had to.