

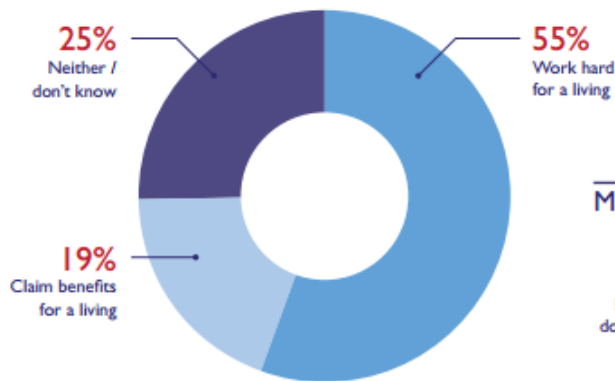
# Attitudes to Polish migrants in the UK

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In 2004, EU citizens from Poland became entitled to live and work in the UK. Which of these statements best matches your opinion of them?

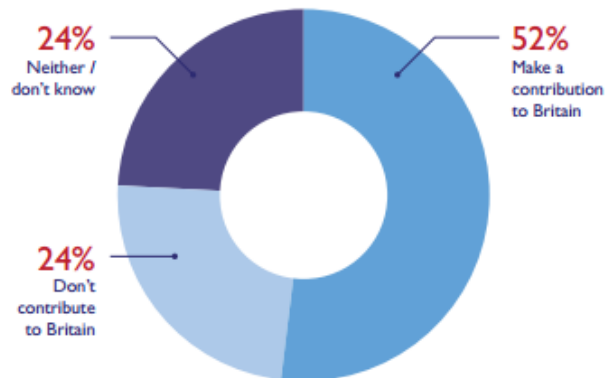
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## Work hard for a living



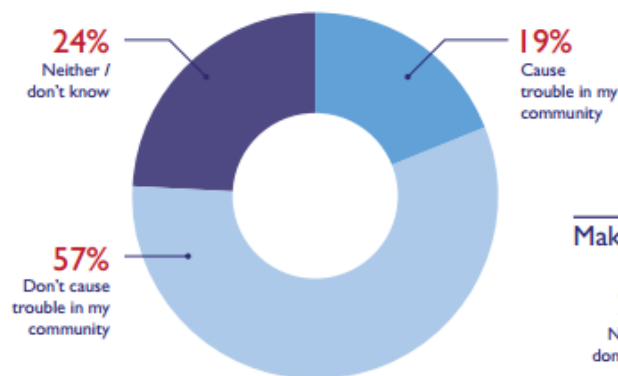
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## Make a contribution to Britain



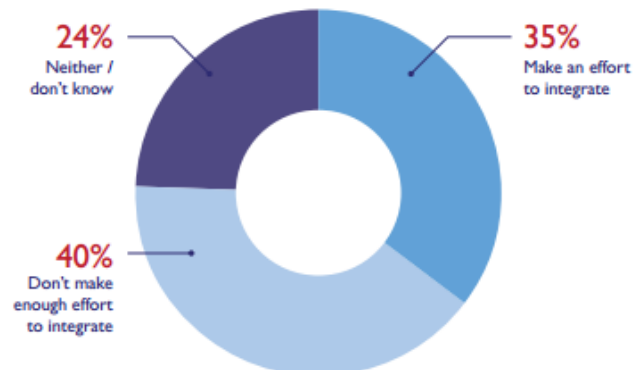
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## Don't cause trouble in my community



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## Make an effort to integrate



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Q10. In 2004, EU citizens from Poland became entitled to live and work in the UK.  
Which of these statements best matches your opinion of them?

i.

	%
Work hard for a living	55
Claim benefits for a living	19
Neither/don't know	25

ii.

	%
Make an effort to integrate	35
Don't make enough effort to integrate	40
Neither/don't know	24

iii.

	%
Make a contribution to Britain	52
Don't make a contribution to Britain	24
Neither/don't know	24

iv.

	%
Mainly rent or buy their own home	29
Mainly live in council housing	32
Neither/don't know	39

v.

	%
Cause trouble in my community	19
Don't cause trouble in my community	57
Neither/don't know	24

Polling was conducted on behalf of British Future by ICM Research from 29 November to 1 December 2013, and surveyed a representative sample of 2,027 adults aged 18+ in GB online. Surveys were conducted across the country and the results were weighted to the profile of all adults.

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## Poles apart – what do people think about the last wave of migration from Europe?

“Hard working” was the sentiment that came across most strongly when we talked to research groups about people from Poland who have come to live in the UK. This view was reflected in further nationwide research. People are generally positive about the hardworking Poles, though they would like them to integrate a bit more.

It may be that public anxiety about migrants from particular countries fades as people become more familiar with them. Talking with a group in Reading about immigrants in the town, one woman said: “I don’t mean Asian people – they’ve always been here”. While many British Asians in the town are likely to have been born in the UK, it is interesting that public anxiety tends to focus on the most recent arrivals or those who have yet to arrive. One Southampton participant said: “We don’t know if this next lot will be like the Poles” – implying that if they were, that would be a good thing.

Our groups knew almost nothing about Bulgaria and were more focused on Romanians. There was some conflation of Romanians and people from the Roma ethnic group, towards whom we encountered some strongly prejudiced views, though only from one or two participants. Some members of the Southampton and Bolton groups felt that Roma had a propensity towards claiming benefits, poor hygiene and criminality.

In contrast, our national poll shows that attitudes towards Poles are relatively accepting. People think Polish immigrants work hard, don’t cause trouble and make a contribution to Britain. 55 per cent of people said that Poles “work hard for a living” versus just 19 per cent who think they claim benefits; 52 per cent say that Polish migrants make a contribution to Britain, against 24 per cent who say they don’t; and 57 per cent say they “don’t cause trouble in my community” compared to 19 per cent who say they do.

They could, however, do more to integrate. 40 per cent say that Polish migrants “Don’t make enough effort to integrate”, though 35 per cent feel that they do (the remainder saying ‘neither’ or ‘don’t know’). People in Southampton and Reading talked about areas of the city that are now predominantly Polish. And while the presence of their shops and small businesses may be a sign of how Poles are ready to work hard for a living, people expressed concern that these are clearly *Polish* shops, with signage in the Polish language.