



JUSTICE
FOR CARERS

SETTLED PLANS, UNCERTAIN FUTURES

Impact Assessment of Proposed Changes to UK Earned Settlement (ILR) Pathways for Migrant Care Workers and Their Families

Based on survey responses, testimonies and
community evidence from migrant care workers
across the UK.



**Evidence-Based
Community Impact Assessment
Report**



Evidence gathered from 2,200+
migrant care workers and families
across the UK



Prepared by:
Justice for Carers



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Prepared for policymakers, parliamentary committees, NGOs,
researchers and media organisations.





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1. Executive summary

1.1. Purpose and intended use

This report represents one of the earliest structured, evidence-based community-led impact assessments examining the potential effects of proposed ILR policy changes on migrant care workers and their families in the UK.

Migrant care workers have made significant contributions to the UK's health and social care system, particularly during the post-Brexit and COVID-19 period, when workforce shortages were acute and international recruitment was actively expanded to address record vacancy levels and sustain service delivery (UK Parliament, 2020; Migration Observatory, 2023; The King's Fund, 2025; Home Office, 2025). However, feedback from respondents indicates a perception that these contributions are not being fully recognized within current or proposed policy changes. Many participants also expressed concerns about increased uncertainty and constraints affecting their long-term settlement prospects, leading to a diminished sense of security and reduced scope for forward planning. These impacts are not limited to migrant workers alone but extend to their spouses and, critically, their children. Participants highlighted that children are particularly affected, with uncertainty influencing their educational continuity, emotional well-being, and overall stability, thereby amplifying the broader family-level consequences of prolonged or unclear settlement pathways.

Primary findings are drawn **only** from the “**Justice for Carers**” online survey conducted through google form during the period 2nd April to 12th April 2026. External sources are used only to contextualise and to indicate alignment with published evidence; they are clearly separated from the survey findings.

1.2. About us – Justice for Carers

Justice for Carers is a grassroots, community-led initiative representing migrant care workers and their families across the United Kingdom. Formed in response to growing concerns around immigration policy changes—particularly those affecting Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR). The group aims to provide an evidence-based, collective voice for a workforce that plays a critical role in the UK's health and social care system.

The initiative brings together frontline care workers to document lived experiences, highlight systemic challenges, and assess the real-world impact of policy proposals on individuals, families, and the wider care sector. Through structured surveys, data analysis, and policy-oriented reporting, Justice for Carers seeks to inform policymakers, parliamentary committees, think tanks, and the media with credible, ground-level insights.

Justice for Carers operates on principles of accuracy, neutrality, and constructive engagement, with the objective of contributing meaningfully to policy discussions and ensuring that the perspectives of care workers are adequately represented in decision-making processes.

1.3. Primary evidence base at a glance

- Total responses in dataset: **2,338**
- Consented to complete the whole survey: **2,317**
- UK resident: **2,218**
- Not UK resident: **99** (responses from non-UK residents were omitted)
- Deduplication identified and omitted: **16**
- Timestamped fieldwork window:
 - Earliest response overall: **2 April 2026, 10:52** (UK time as captured)
 - Latest response overall: **12 April 2026, 23:46**
- UK-resident analytical sample: **n = 2,202**
- Open-text responses (UK-resident): **1,388 (63.03%)**

Respondent variables including **age, gender, nationality, UK region, pay and employer type** were **not collected** as the survey was fully anonymous and are therefore **unspecified** in this assessment.

1.4. Key findings (survey dataset; UK-resident sample n=2,202)

Findings indicate that the survey respondents overwhelmingly planned their migration and life decisions around a five-year expectation for ILR settlement and report severe impacts from uncertainty about that pathway.

1.4.1. Settlement expectations and reliance

- Aware of a five-year ILR pathway before coming: **2,119/2,202 (96.2%)**
- Five-year pathway “strongly influenced” decision to come: **2,107/2,202 (95.7%)**
- Expected to settle after five years: **2,085/2,202 (94.7%)**
- Made significant commitments based on a five-year plan: **2,165/2,202 (98.3%)**
- Reported reforms change the conditions under which they came (“yes, significantly”): **1,977/2,202 (89.8%)**
- Reported ability to make long-term life decisions significantly affected: **2,125/2,202 (96.5%)**

1.4.2. Severity of reported impacts

- Mental wellbeing rated “severe” (valid n=2,220): **2,073 (94.1%)**
- Financial impact rated “severe” (valid n=2,202): **2,003 (91.0%)**
- Family stability rated “severe” (valid n=2,202): **2,096 (95.2%)**
- Trust in the system rated “severe” (valid n=2,202): **1,911 (86.8%)**

1.4.3. Financial strain linked to renewals

- Continuous renewals/delayed settlement “significantly impacted” household finances: **2,036/2,202 (92.5%)**

1.4.4. Children, Education and Family Stability

- Parents within the UK-resident sample: **1,410 / 2,202 (64.0%)**
- Among responding parents (n=1,410):
 - Educational disruption affecting children: **1,324 (93.9%)**
 - Emotional stress affecting children: **1,320 (93.6%)**
 - Financial hardship linked to uncertainty: **1,121 (79.5%)**
 - Children’s higher education opportunities considered at risk: **1,325 (94.0%)**
 - Immigration uncertainty significantly affecting children’s sense of belonging: **1,323 (93.8%)**

Specific concerns relating to children’s wellbeing and belonging (valid n=1,410)

- Lack of security regarding the future: **1,324 (93.9%)**
- Emotional or psychological impacts: **1,275 (90.4%)**
- Uncertainty regarding identity and belonging: **1,029 (73.0%)**
- Children feeling different from classmates because of immigration insecurity: **1,004 (71.2%)**

These findings suggest that immigration uncertainty and prolonged temporary status are being experienced not only by migrant workers themselves, but also at household and family level, with parents reporting substantial concerns regarding children’s education, emotional wellbeing, social integration, long-term stability, and future opportunities within the United Kingdom.



1.4.5. Employment dependency and exploitation risk

- Feel tied to one employer long-term: **1,920/2,202 (87.2%)**
- “Very concerned” about changing jobs: **1,901/2,202 (86.3%)**
- Believe reforms increase exploitation risk: **2,110/2,202 (95.8%)**
- Concerns when reporting an employer (**multi-select; n=2,202**):
 - Losing sponsorship/visa: **1,963 (89.2%)**
 - Unable to find a new sponsor in time: **1,947 (88.4%)**

1.4.6. Retention risk signal

- Considering leaving the UK: **904/2,202 (41.0%)**
- Not sure whether they will leave: **845/2,202 (38.4%)**

1.5. System-Level Workforce and Social Implications: Survey Findings in the Context of National Evidence

While the survey is not nationally representative, the findings indicate credible risks relating not only to workforce stability within adult social care, but also to broader issues concerning safeguarding, family wellbeing, labour market vulnerability, and long-term integration. The concerns expressed by respondents are consistent with wider structural challenges identified in national workforce data and independent policy analysis.

- Skills for Care reports that the adult social care vacancy rate in England was approximately 7%, equating to around 111,000 vacant posts in 2024/25.¹
- In the same period, staff turnover was estimated at 23.1%, corresponding to approximately 335,000 leavers, highlighting persistent workforce instability.²
- Analysis by The King's Fund indicates that recent reductions in vacancy rates have been significantly supported by international recruitment, demonstrating the sector's growing reliance on migrant workers and sensitivity to policy changes affecting recruitment and retention.³

¹ Skills for Care (2025) *The state of the adult social care sector and workforce in England*. Available at: <https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk> (Accessed: 6 May 2026).

² Skills for Care (2025) *Workforce estimates and turnover data*. Available at: <https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk> (Accessed: 6 May 2026).

³ The King's Fund (2025) *Overseas recruitment and the adult social care workforce*. Available at: <https://www.kingsfund.org.uk> (Accessed: 6 May 2026).



- Research and safeguarding bodies have also raised concerns regarding sponsorship dependency, labour exploitation vulnerability, and barriers to reporting workplace concerns within employer-tied migration systems.^{4 5}
- Child and family-focused organisations have further highlighted the potential impact of immigration insecurity on children's wellbeing, educational stability, and long-term integration outcomes.⁶

Taken together, these findings suggest that policy developments affecting recruitment, retention, sponsorship dependency, and ILR settlement pathways for migrant care workers may have implications extending beyond workforce supply alone. Potential effects may include impacts on continuity of care, safeguarding confidence, labour mobility, family stability, children's wellbeing, and long-term workforce retention within essential public service sectors.

The survey findings presented in this report indicate that uncertainty surrounding ILR settlement pathways is being experienced not only as an immigration matter, but as a broader source of social, economic, and psychological instability affecting workers, households, and sectors reliant on internationally recruited labour.

1.6. High-level policy recommendations

1.6.1. Non-Retrospective Implementation

ILR reforms should apply prospectively only and should not retrospectively alter the pathway of individuals already lawfully present in the UK under existing rules. Clear implementation timelines and transitional protections should be publicly communicated. Retrospective policy change may undermine principles of legitimate expectation and procedural fairness.^{7 8}

1.6.2. Human Rights and Equality Compliance

Any proposed reforms should be assessed against the UK's human rights and equality obligations, including Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights, Section 55 of the Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Act 2009, and the

⁴ Work Rights Centre (2025) *Parliamentary report acknowledges scale of exploitation on the Skilled Worker visa*. Available at: <https://www.workrightscentre.org> (Accessed: 6 May 2026).

⁵ Migration Advisory Committee (2022) *Annual Report 2022*. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/migration-advisory-committee-annual-report-2022> (Accessed: 6 May 2026).

⁶ Coram Children's Legal Centre (2023) *Children and immigration insecurity*. Available at: <https://www.childrenslegalcentre.com> (Accessed: 6 May 2026).

⁷ Craig, P. (2016) *Administrative Law*. 8th edn. London: Sweet & Maxwell.

⁸ Elliott, M. and Thomas, R. (2020) *Public Law*. 4th edn. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010.⁹ A formal Human Rights Impact Assessment should be conducted prior to implementation.¹⁰

1.6.3. Care Sector–Specific Impact Assessment

A dedicated adult social care impact assessment should be undertaken before implementing settlement reforms affecting sponsored workers, including analysis of workforce retention, safeguarding risks, continuity of care, and NHS interface impacts. This aligns with evidence highlighting persistent workforce instability and reliance on international recruitment within the care sector.^{11 12}

1.6.4. Safeguarding and Safe Reporting Mechanisms

should be able to report exploitation or unsafe practices without fear of immediate immigration consequences. Reforms should strengthen safe reporting pathways and reduce excessive dependency on individual sponsors. Evidence suggests employer-tied migration systems can increase vulnerability where worker mobility is restricted.^{13 14}

1.6.5. Children and Family Stability

A formal Child Impact Assessment should evaluate the effects of prolonged immigration uncertainty on children’s education, wellbeing, integration, and long-term stability. Research indicates that immigration insecurity may adversely affect children’s emotional wellbeing and educational outcomes.¹⁵

1.6.6. Affordability and Proportionality

The government should assess the cumulative financial burden of prolonged temporary status, including visa renewals and associated legal costs, particularly in lower-paid sectors such as adult social care.¹⁶

⁹ Council of Europe (1950) *European Convention on Human Rights*. Rome: Council of Europe. Available at: https://www.echr.coe.int/documents/d/echr/convention_ENG (Accessed: 6 May 2026).

¹⁰ Equality and Human Rights Commission (2014) *Human Rights Framework for Public Authorities*. Manchester: EHRC. Available at: <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en> (Accessed: 6 May 2026).

¹¹ Skills for Care (2025) *ASC Workforce Statistical Appendix 2025* [Excel dataset]. Leeds: Skills for Care. Available at: <https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Adult-Social-Care-Workforce-Data/workforceintelligence/resources/Our-data/ASC-Workforce-Statistical-Appendix-2025.xlsx> (Accessed: 21 May 2026).

¹² National Audit Office (2022) *The adult social care workforce in England*. London: NAO. Available at: <https://www.nao.org.uk/reports/the-adult-social-care-workforce-in-england/> (Accessed: 6 May 2026).

¹³ Migration Advisory Committee (2022) *Annual Report 2022*. London: MAC. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/migration-advisory-committee-annual-report-2022> (Accessed: 6 May 2026).

¹⁴ Home Office (2024) *Workers and Temporary Workers: guidance for sponsors*. London: UK Government. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/sponsorship-information-for-employers-and-educators> (Accessed: 6 May 2026).

¹⁵ Coram Children’s Legal Centre (2023) *The impact of immigration insecurity on children and young people*. London: Coram. Available at: <https://www.childrenslegalcentre.com/resources/> (Accessed: 6 May 2026).

¹⁶ Skills for Care (2025) *ASC Workforce Statistical Appendix 2025* [Excel dataset]. Leeds: Skills for Care. Available at: <https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Adult-Social-Care-Workforce-Data/workforceintelligence/resources/Our-data/ASC-Workforce-Statistical-Appendix-2025.xlsx> (Accessed: 21 May 2026).

1.6.7. Policy Stability and Predictability

Settlement policy should remain transparent, predictable, and aligned with long-term workforce planning to support retention, international recruitment, and confidence in the UK immigration system. Evidence suggests instability in migration systems can reduce attractiveness to skilled workers and negatively affect labour market outcomes.¹⁷

2. Organisation and policy context

2.1. Policy Context and Why Uncertainty Remains Salient

The Home Office Earned Settlement consultation, published in November 2025 and open between 20 November 2025 and 12 February 2026, proposed reforms to settlement eligibility, qualifying periods, and implementation arrangements. The consultation document framed these proposals partly in response to projected increases in settlement grants over the period 2026–2030.¹⁸

As of May 2026, uncertainty remains significant due to the absence of final policy detail, confirmed implementation timelines, and clear transitional arrangements. This uncertainty is not limited to individuals approaching settlement eligibility but extends across migrant households at different stages of the immigration pathway, including workers, spouses, and dependent children who are attempting to make long-term decisions regarding employment, education, housing, financial planning, and family stability.

Parliamentary scrutiny has also highlighted concerns regarding policy ambiguity and transitional uncertainty. The Home Affairs Committee noted that indications of implementation from April 2026, without sufficient clarity regarding transitional protections and operational detail, created avoidable distress and insecurity among affected migrant populations, while several key aspects of the proposed framework remained insufficiently developed.¹⁹

The survey findings presented in this report suggest that uncertainty itself has become a significant policy impact, affecting perceptions of security, future planning, integration, and family wellbeing among respondents regardless of how close they are to settlement eligibility.

¹⁷OECD (2021) *International Migration Outlook 2021*. Paris: OECD Publishing. Available at: <https://www.oecd.org/migration/international-migration-outlook-1999124x.htm> (Accessed: 6 May 2026).

¹⁸Home Office (2025) *Earned Settlement Consultation*. London: UK Government, published November 2025. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations> (Accessed: 6 May 2026).

¹⁹Home Affairs Committee (2026) *Immigration and Earned Settlement Reform: Parliamentary Scrutiny and Transitional Concerns*. London: UK Parliament. Available at: <https://committees.parliament.uk/committee/83/home-affairs-committee/> (Accessed: 6 May 2026).



2.2. Adult social care workforce reliance and system sensitivity

Workforce capacity is central to this impact assessment because the survey population includes large numbers working in care roles and reporting immigration-related insecurity.

- Skills for Care reported for 2024/25 in England: vacancy rate 7% and 111,000 vacancies.²⁰
- Skills for Care also estimated turnover at 23.1% (≈335,000 leavers).²¹
- Analysis by The King's Fund indicates that recent reductions in vacancy rates have been closely linked to increased overseas recruitment following policy changes that enabled large numbers of international workers to enter direct care roles. This highlights the sector's structural reliance on migrant labor and its sensitivity to migration policy, suggesting that any changes affecting retention or settlement pathways could have direct implications for workforce stability.²²

2.3. Settlement, sponsorship and worker vulnerability in policy terms

Employer-tied sponsorship is material to the survey findings on exploitation risk because losing a sponsor licence can lead to curtailment.²³ GOV.UK guidance states that when a sponsor loses their licence, a worker's certificate of sponsorship is cancelled and their visa is limited to 60 days (or less if existing leave is shorter), unless a new visa application is made in time.²⁴

Published audit and policy scrutiny have highlighted risks of exploitation,²⁵ and the importance of cross-government assessment when changes are made. The National Audit Office,²⁶ concluded that the Home Office-made changes to the Skilled Worker route without a detailed understanding of potential sector impacts and that better use

²⁰Skills for Care (2025) Latest social care sector and workforce data published. Available at: <https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/news-and-events/news/latest-social-care-sector-and-workforce-data-published> (Accessed: 29 April 2026).

²¹Skills for Care (2025) The state of the adult social care sector and workforce in England 2025 - Executive Summary. Available at: <https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Adult-Social-Care-Workforce-Data/workforceintelligence/resources/Reports/National/The-state-of-the-adult-social-care-sector-and-workforce-in-England-2025-Executive-Summary.pdf> (Accessed: 29 April 2026).

²²The King's Fund (2026) Social Care 360: Access. Available at: <https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/insight-and-analysis/long-reads/social-care-360-access> (Accessed: 29 April 2026).

²³Migration Observatory (2026) Changes to settlement: what do they mean? Available at: <https://migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/resources/commentaries/changes-to-settlement-what-do-they-mean/> (Accessed: 29 April 2026).

²⁴GOV.UK (n.d.) Employees: if your visa sponsor loses their licence. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/employee-lose-sponsor-licence> (Accessed: 29 April 2026).

²⁵The King's Fund (2025) Overseas recruitment: the 'Plan B' for the social care workforce? Available at: <https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/insight-and-analysis/blogs/overseas-recruitment-short-term-fix-end> (Accessed: 29 April 2026).

²⁶Work Rights Centre (2025) Safeguarding sponsored workers. Available at: <https://www.workrightscentre.org/media/uvrdwteg/report-published-24042025-safeguarding-sponsored-workers.pdf> (Accessed: 29 April 2026).

of data is needed to manage consequences and exploitation risks.²⁷ The Public Accounts Committee has similarly highlighted exploitation risks arising when the route was expanded quickly to include care workers.

3. Methodology, ethics and limitations

3.1. Survey design and fieldwork

This assessment uses a structured anonymous survey conducted by Justice for Carers via Google form (**Appendix B**) which includes:

- Respondent profile fields (role, years in UK, visa category, dependents, children affected)
- Structured impact questions (severity ratings; single-select questions)
- Multiple-select questions (delayed decisions, concerns, reporting fears, children impact)
- Open-text responses describing lived experience

Fieldwork window (timestamped): 2 April 2026 to 12 April 2026.

- Earliest overall response: 2 April 2026, 10:52
- Latest overall response: 12 April 2026, 23:46

3.2. Inclusion Criteria and Analytical Sample

The analytical sample for this report includes respondents who confirmed they were current UK residents and consented to participate in the survey. A total of 2,338 responses were received, of which 2,317 provided consents. Responses from non-UK residents (n=99), records without consent (n=21), and 16 duplicate submissions identified through deduplication were excluded. The final UK-resident analytical sample therefore comprised 2,202 respondents.

In addition to structured responses, 1,388 participants (63.03% of the analytical sample) provided open-text responses, offering qualitative insight into the personal, financial, occupational, and family impacts associated with immigration uncertainty and proposed settlement reforms.

3.3. Deduplication and “one response per participant”

A one-response-per-participant rule was applied using the **available response metadata**:

²⁷ National Audit Office (2025) Immigration: Skilled Worker visas. Available at: <https://www.nao.org.uk/reports/immigration-skilled-worker-visas/> (Accessed: 29 April 2026).



- Each row contains a unique timestamp; no duplicate timestamps were found in the dataset. The analysis therefore treats each unique timestamped submission as one respondent record.
- For the qualitative analysis, 16 open text responses appeared to be identical; these were excluded from case study selection and from total responses to protect data integrity.

3.4. Ethical Considerations, Data Protection, and Participant Wellbeing

The survey data does not include personal identifiers (age, gender, nationality, names, addresses) as structured fields; open-text responses may contain sensitive personal circumstances. This report:

- Uses anonymised quotes and removes identifying details in summaries
- Avoids including explicit descriptions of extreme mental distress or graphic contents.

A small number of open-text responses indicated experiences of severe mental distress associated with uncertainty and perceived loss of stability. As the survey was fully anonymous, individual respondents could not be identified or contacted directly for follow-up support. However, a general communication was issued within **Justice for Carers** community groups encouraging members to seek appropriate support where needed, including through NHS services and independent support organisations such as **Samaritans** and **Shout**.

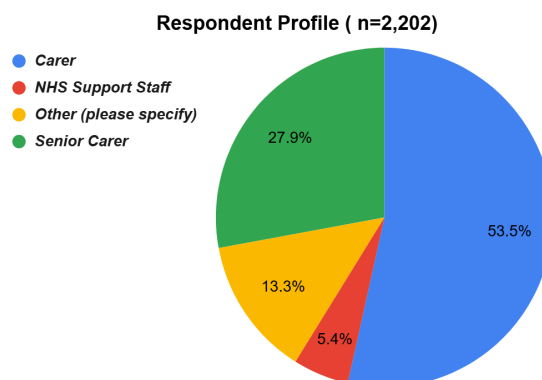
3.5. Limitations

- Self-selection bias: respondents are not a random sample of all migrant care workers.
- Self-reported responses: no administrative verification.
- Missing demographic and structural variables: Key variables such as age, gender, nationality, UK region, pay, and employer type were not collected. This approach was intentionally adopted to ensure full anonymity, minimise the collection of personal identifiers, and encourage open and honest participation from respondents.
- Causality: the dataset supports statements about reported experience and perceived impact, not causal effects.

4. Survey findings

4.1. Respondent profile (UK-resident sample n=2,202)

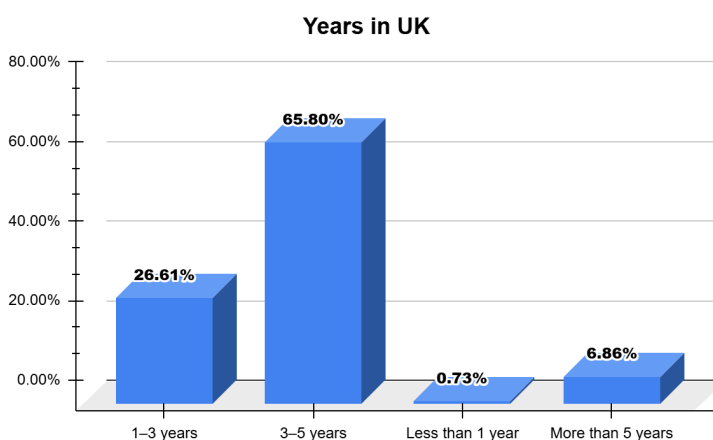
Current role	Nos	%
Carer	1178	53.5%
NHS Support Staff	118	5.4%
Other (please specify)	292	13.3%
Senior Carer	614	27.9%
Grand Total	2202	



The respondent profile indicates that the survey was predominantly completed by individuals working within the adult social care sector. More than half of respondents identified as carers (53.5%), while a further 27.9% identified as senior carers, reflecting strong representation from frontline care roles.

Smaller proportions included NHS support staff (5.4%) and respondents working in other related occupations (13.3%). Overall, the respondent distribution suggests that the findings primarily reflect the perspectives and experiences of migrant workers directly engaged in health and social care services in the UK.

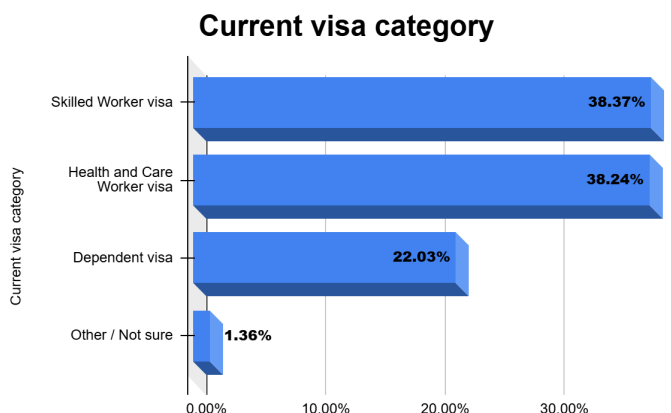
Years in the UK	Nos	%
1–3 years	586	26.6%
3–5 years	1449	65.8%
Less than 1 year	16	0.7%
More than 5 years	151	6.9%
Grand Total	2202	



The respondent profile indicates that most participants were relatively recent arrivals to the UK workforce. Nearly two-thirds of respondents (65.8%) reported living in the UK for between three and five years, while a further 26.6% had been in the UK for between one and three years. Only a small proportion reported residence exceeding five years (6.9%) or less than one year (0.7%). This distribution reflects a population that is still in the process of establishing long-term stability, integration, and progression toward settlement.

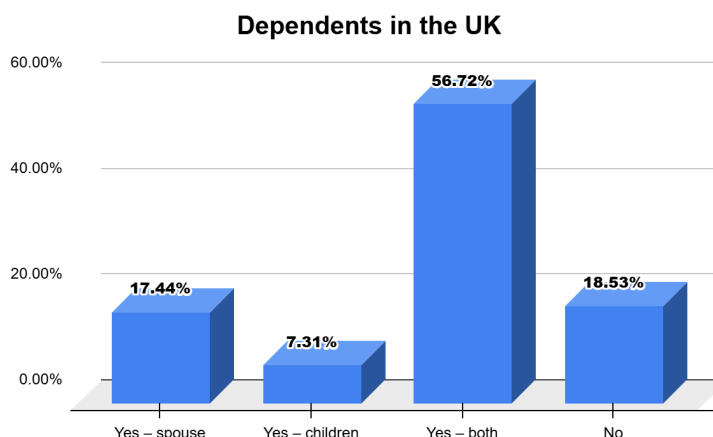


Current visa category	Nos	%
Skilled Worker visa	845	38.4%
Health and Care Worker visa	842	38.2%
Dependent visa	485	22.0%
Other / Not sure	30	1.4%
Grand Total	2202	



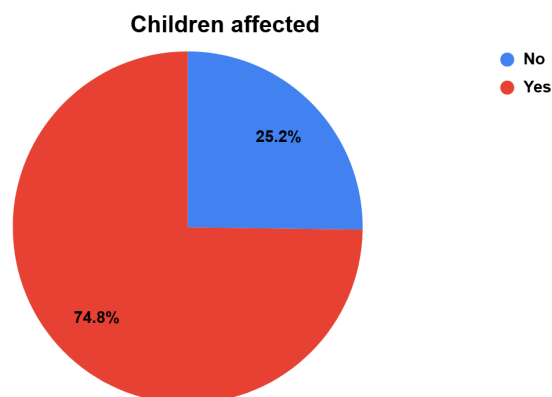
The respondent profile indicates that the majority of participants were residing in the UK under work-related immigration routes linked to the health and social care sector. Similar proportions identified as holding either a Skilled Worker visa (38.4%) or a Health and Care Worker visa (38.2%), while 22.0% were dependents of primary visa holders. A small proportion of respondents reported other visa categories or were unsure of their immigration classification (1.4%). This distribution reflects the strong representation of migrant workers and family members directly affected by settlement and immigration policy changes.

Dependents in the UK	Nos	%
Yes – spouse	384	17.4%
Yes – children	161	7.3%
Yes – both	1249	56.7%
No	408	18.5%
Grand Total	2202	



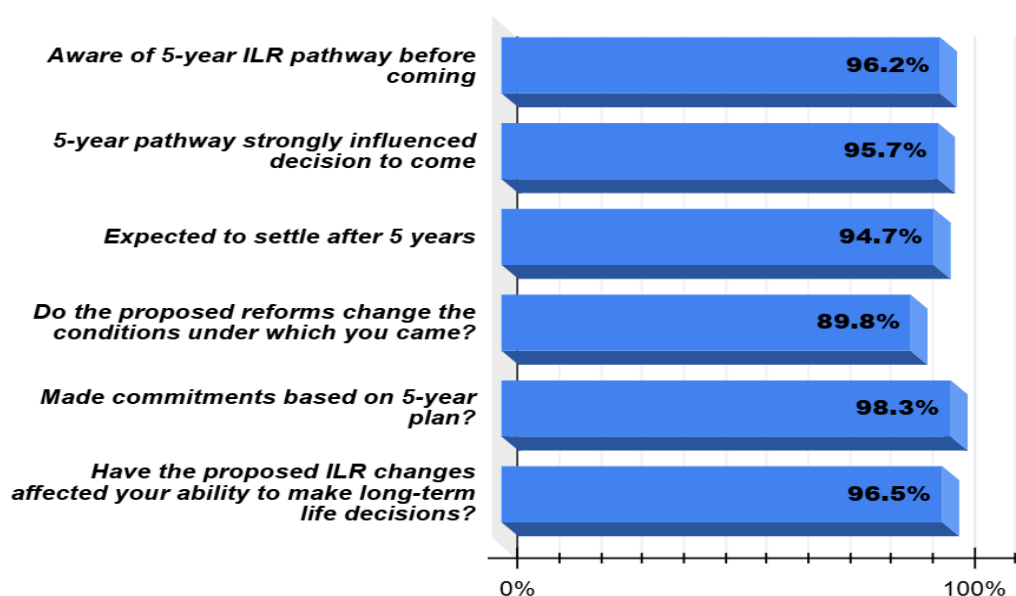
The survey findings indicate that a substantial majority of respondents had family dependents residing with them in the UK. More than half of participants (56.7%) reported living with both a spouse and children, while additional respondents reported having either a spouse only (17.4%) or children only (7.3%) in the UK. Only 18.5% indicated that they had no dependents. This distribution highlights that the potential effects of immigration and settlement policy changes extend beyond individual workers to family units, including partners and children.

Children affected	Nos	%
No	555	25.2%
Yes	1647	74.8%
Grand Total	2202	



A significant majority of respondents (74.8%) reported that children within their household or family were affected by immigration uncertainty and proposed settlement reforms, while 25.2% indicated no direct impact on children. These findings suggest that the perceived effects of settlement uncertainty extend beyond individual visa holders and are widely experienced at family level, particularly in relation to children's stability, wellbeing, education, and future planning.

4.2. Settlement expectations and long-term planning



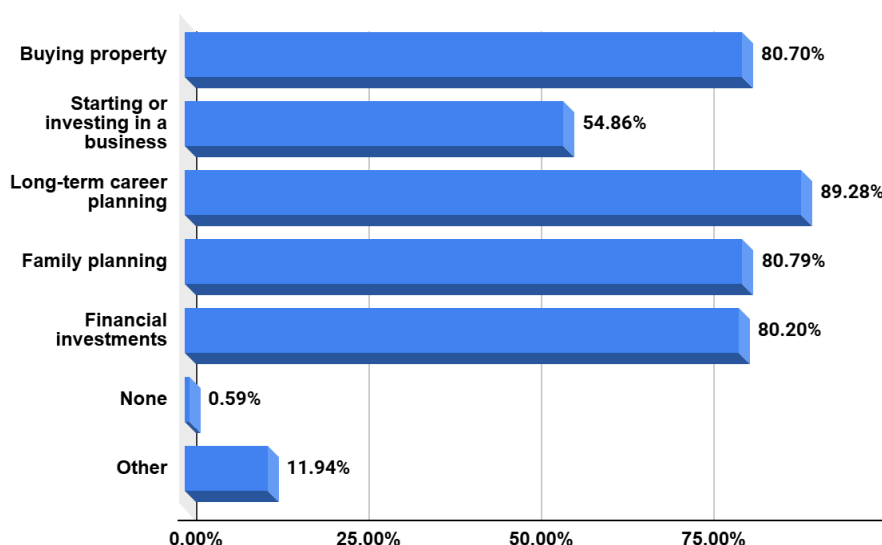
Survey findings indicate that the five-year settlement pathway formed a significant part of respondents' expectations, long-term planning, and migration decision-making prior to relocating to the UK. An overwhelming majority of respondents (96.2%) reported that they were aware of the five-year ILR pathway before coming to the UK, while 95.7% stated that the existence of a five-year route to settlement strongly influenced their decision to migrate. In addition, 94.7% reported that they had expected to obtain settlement after five years under the conditions that existed at the time they entered the UK immigration system.

The findings also demonstrate that respondents made substantial long-term commitments based on these expectations. Almost all participants (98.3%) stated

that they had made important personal, financial, family, educational, or career-related decisions on the assumption of a five-year settlement pathway. These commitments included relocation decisions, children's education planning, financial borrowing, career progression, housing arrangements, and long-term family integration in the UK.

A large majority of respondents (89.8%) reported that proposed reforms significantly changed the conditions under which they originally came to the UK, while 96.5% stated that immigration uncertainty had significantly affected their ability to make long-term life decisions and future plans. Collectively, these findings suggest that settlement expectations are closely linked not only to immigration status, but also to broader issues of family stability, financial planning, workforce retention, and long-term integration into UK society.

4.3. Decisions being delayed (*multi-select; valid n=2,202*)



The survey findings indicate that uncertainty surrounding immigration status and proposed settlement reforms is having a substantial impact on respondents' ability to make long-term personal, financial, and family decisions. A significant majority reported delaying or reconsidering major life plans, including long-term career planning (89.28%), family planning (80.79%), property purchase (80.70%), and financial investments (80.20%). More than half of respondents (54.86%) also reported postponing plans to start or invest in businesses. Only a very small proportion of respondents (0.59%) indicated that uncertainty had not affected their decision-making.

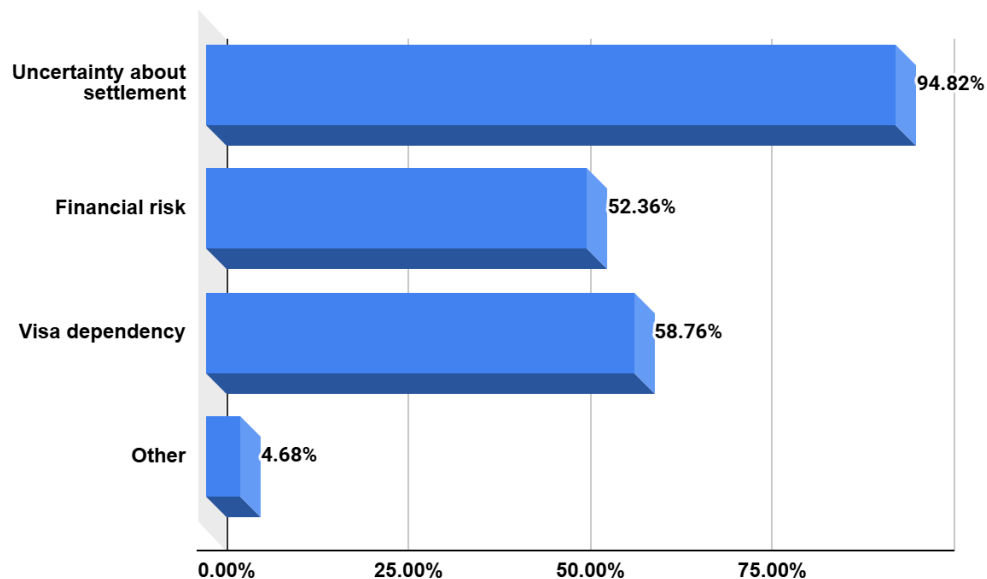
These findings suggest that settlement insecurity is influencing far more than immigration outcomes alone. Many respondents described feeling unable to confidently commit to long-term goals due to concerns regarding future residency status, repeated visa renewals, financial pressures, and uncertainty about whether they and their families would ultimately be able to remain in the UK permanently. As

a result, respondents reported hesitation in making decisions that would normally be associated with long-term integration and economic participation.

The findings also indicate wider implications for economic stability and social integration. Delayed property purchases and reduced financial investment may affect wealth accumulation and local economic participation, while uncertainty around family planning and children's futures may contribute to emotional stress and reduced long-term stability within households. Similarly, hesitation regarding career progression or business investment may affect workforce retention, skills development, and long-term participation in the UK labour market.

Overall, the data suggests that prolonged uncertainty surrounding settlement pathways may create a "temporary mindset" among affected households, limiting their ability or willingness to make stable long-term commitments despite already contributing to the UK workforce and wider society.

4.4. Main reasons for delaying (multi-select; valid n=2,202)



Respondents were asked a multiple-selection question regarding the main factors contributing to delays in their long-term personal, financial, and family decisions (total respondents: n=2,202). The findings indicate that settlement uncertainty was the most significant concern, with 94.82% of respondents identifying uncertainty regarding future settlement eligibility and long-term immigration status as a key reason for postponing major life decisions. This suggests that concerns surrounding the predictability and stability of settlement pathways are having a widespread impact across migrant households.

More than half of respondents also identified visa dependency (58.76%) as a major contributing factor. Participants highlighted concerns regarding reliance on employer sponsorship, restricted flexibility within the immigration system, and fears that

changes in employment circumstances could affect their lawful status and long-term future in the UK.

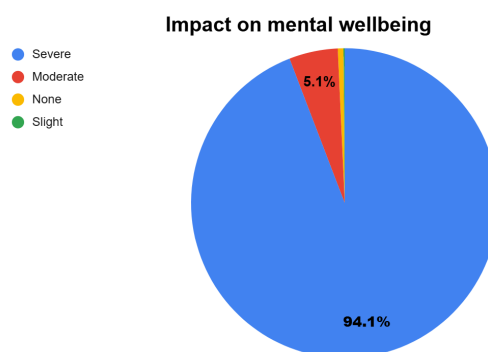
Financial risk was identified by 52.36% of respondents, reflecting concerns about committing to significant financial decisions such as purchasing property, investing in businesses, pursuing further education, or making long-term family commitments while future residency arrangements remain uncertain. Respondents frequently linked these concerns to the cumulative financial burden of visa renewals, immigration-related expenses, and uncertainty regarding future settlement prospects.

Overall, the findings suggest that immigration uncertainty is influencing broader economic and social behaviour, limiting confidence in long-term planning and reducing respondents' willingness to make stable long-term commitments despite their continued contribution to the UK workforce and wider society.

4.5. Mental wellbeing, finances, family stability and trust

The survey findings indicate that respondents perceived the effects of immigration uncertainty and proposed settlement reforms as severe across multiple areas of personal and family life. Among the UK-resident analytical sample (n=2,202), 94.1% of respondents reported severe impacts on their mental wellbeing, while only a very small proportion reported slight or no impact. Participants frequently described ongoing stress, anxiety, uncertainty about the future, and difficulty maintaining emotional stability while attempting to plan long-term lives in the UK.

Impact on mental wellbeing	Nos	%
Severe	2073	94.14%
Moderate	113	5.13%
None	13	0.59%
Slight	3	0.14%
Grand Total	2202	



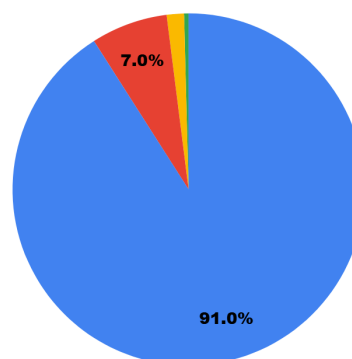
Financial impact was also reported at notably high levels. More than nine in ten respondents (90.9%) described the financial impact as severe, reflecting concerns relating to repeated visa renewals, legal expenses, and broader financial insecurity linked to uncertain long-term residency prospects. Respondents commonly reported hesitation in making financial commitments or investments due to concerns about future immigration outcomes.



Financial impact	Nos	%
Severe	2003	90.96%
Moderate	155	7.04%
Minimal	35	1.59%
None	9	0.41%
Grand Total	2202	

- Severe
- Moderate
- Minimal
- None

Financial impact

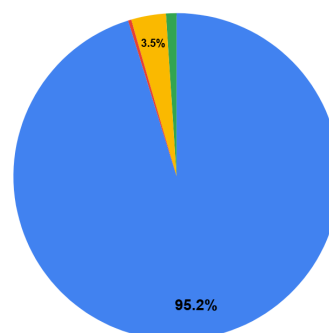


The findings regarding family stability were similarly pronounced. A substantial majority of respondents (95.2%) reported severe impacts on family stability, suggesting that uncertainty surrounding settlement pathways is affecting not only individual workers but also spouses, children, and wider household planning. Many respondents indicated concerns relating to children's education, long-term family security, emotional wellbeing within households, and the ability to confidently establish stable family lives in the UK.

Impact on family stability	Nos	%
Severe	2096	95.19%
None	7	0.32%
Moderate	76	3.45%
Minimal	23	1.04%
Grand Total	2202	

- Severe
- None
- Moderate
- Minimal

Impact on family stability

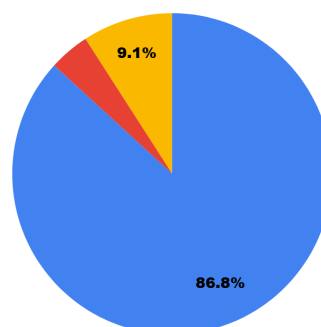


The survey also identified significant effects on trust and confidence in the immigration system itself. More than four-fifths of respondents (86.78%) reported severe impacts on their trust in the system, indicating that uncertainty surrounding settlement pathways and potential policy changes may be affecting perceptions of predictability, fairness, and long-term security within the immigration framework.

Impact on trust in the system	Nos	%
Severe	1911	86.78%
None	90	4.09%
Moderate	201	9.13%
Grand Total	2202	

- Severe
- None
- Moderate

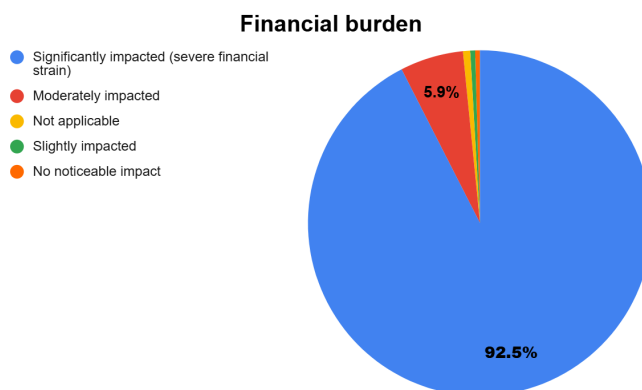
Impact on trust in the system



In addition, respondents reported substantial financial strain associated with repeated visa renewals and ongoing temporary immigration status. When asked specifically about the financial burden of continuous renewals (valid n=2,202),

92.46% reported significant financial impact, while only a very small minority reported little or no noticeable effect. These findings suggest that the cumulative costs associated with maintaining temporary immigration status are perceived as a major source of economic pressure for affected households, particularly within lower to middle-income sectors, such as adult social care.

Financial burden	Nos	%
Significantly impacted (severe financial strain)	2036	92.46%
Moderately impacted	131	5.95%
Not applicable	15	0.68%
Slightly impacted	10	0.45%
No noticeable impact	10	0.45%
Grand Total	2202	

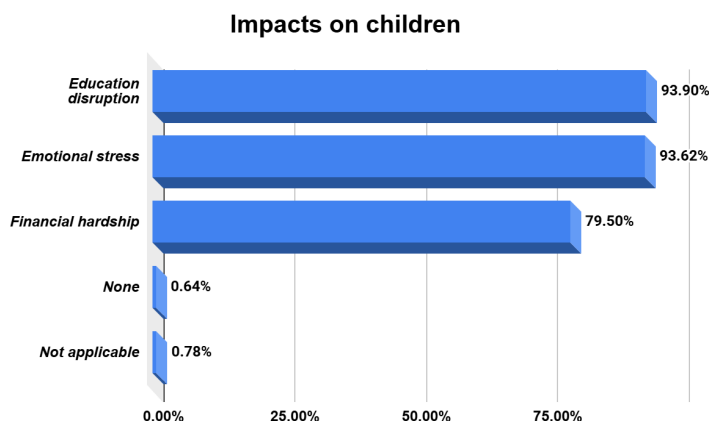


Overall, the findings indicate that immigration uncertainty is being experienced not merely as an administrative or procedural issue, but as a broader source of psychological, financial, and family-related instability affecting long-term wellbeing, integration, and confidence in the future.

4.6. Children, Education, Belonging and Long-Term Stability

Findings from parents within the UK-resident sample (n=1,410) indicate widespread concern regarding the impact of immigration uncertainty and prolonged temporary status on children's wellbeing, education, and sense of security. Reported impacts extended beyond financial concerns and reflected broader anxieties relating to emotional wellbeing, identity, belonging, and future educational opportunities.

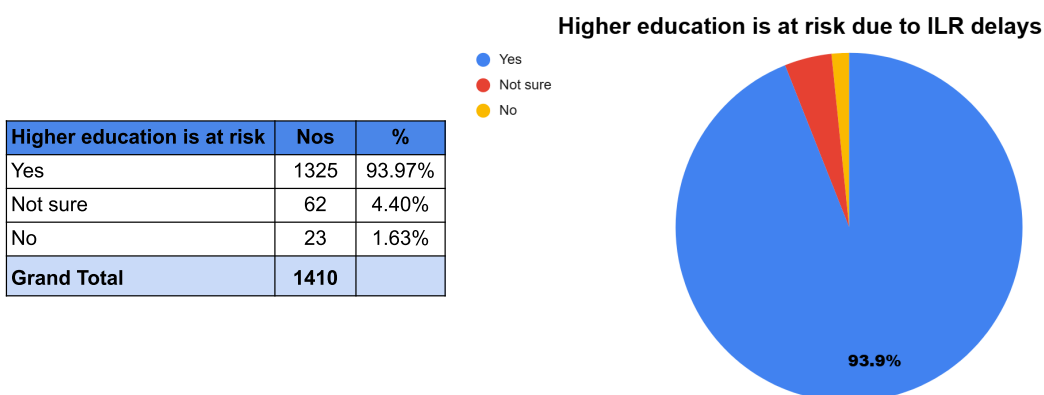
Impacts on children	Nos	%
Education disruption	1324	93.90%
Emotional stress	1320	93.62%
Financial hardship	1121	79.50%
None	9	0.64%
Not applicable	11	0.78%



A substantial majority of parents reported that their children had experienced:

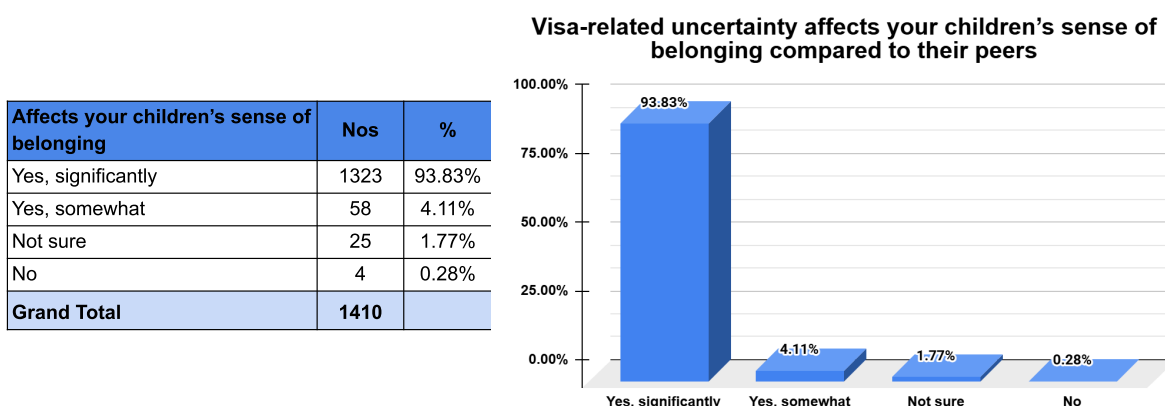
- Educational disruption (93.9%)
- Emotional stress (93.6%)

- And financial hardship linked to ongoing uncertainty (79.5%)



Only a very small proportion reported no impact or stated that the issue was not applicable.

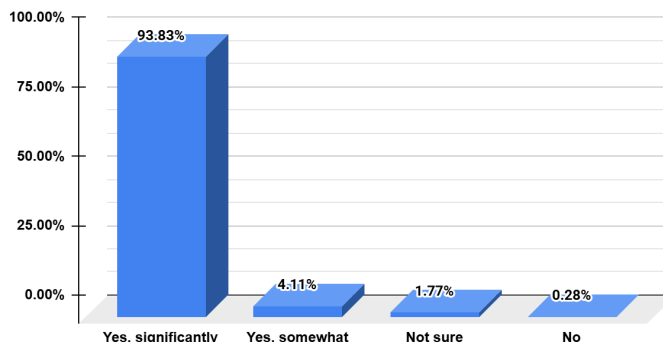
Concerns regarding higher education were particularly pronounced. Nearly all responding parents (94.0%) believed that uncertainty surrounding settlement pathways placed their children's future higher education opportunities at risk. This reflects wider concerns relating to eligibility uncertainty, long-term financial planning, and the ability of families to make stable educational decisions over time.



The findings also indicate a significant perceived impact on children's sense of belonging and long-term integration within the United Kingdom. More than 93% of parents reported that uncertainty significantly affected their children's sense of belonging, while additional respondents reported some degree of impact. Parents frequently described concerns that children felt insecure about their future despite growing up, studying, and socially integrating within UK communities.

Visa-related uncertainty affects your children's sense of belonging compared to their peers

Affects your children's sense of belonging	Nos	%
Yes, significantly	1323	93.83%
Yes, somewhat	58	4.11%
Not sure	25	1.77%
No	4	0.28%
Grand Total	1410	

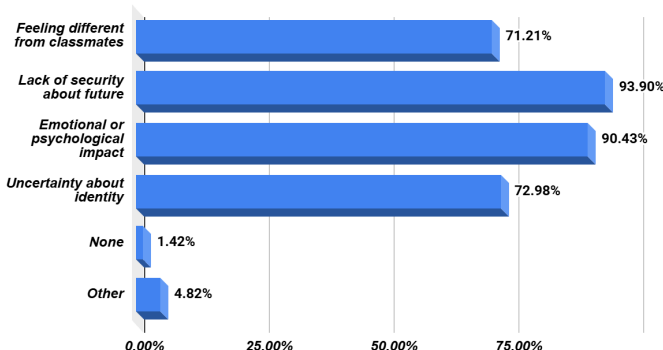


Specific concerns identified by parents included:

- Lack of security regarding the future (93.9%)
- Emotional or psychological impacts (90.4%)
- Uncertainty regarding identity and long-term belonging (73.0%)
- Children feeling different from classmates because of immigration uncertainty (71.2%)

Specific concerns about children's belonging

Specific concerns about children's belonging	Nos	%
Feeling different from classmates	1004	71.21%
Lack of security about future	1324	93.90%
Emotional or psychological impact	1275	90.43%
Uncertainty about identity	1029	72.98%
None	20	1.42%
Other	68	4.82%



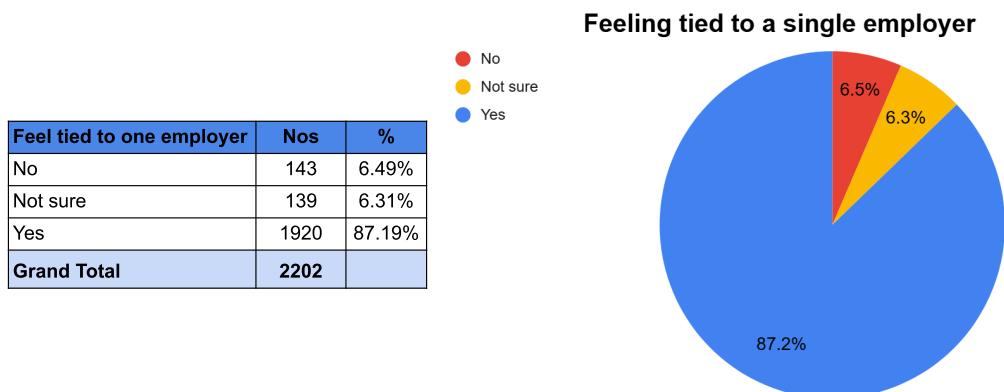
Taken together, these findings suggest that prolonged uncertainty relating to settlement pathways may have implications extending beyond immigration administration alone, affecting children's emotional wellbeing, educational continuity, social integration, and long-term sense of stability within the communities in which they are being raised.

The consistency and scale of these responses indicate that immigration uncertainty is being experienced not only by sponsored workers themselves, but also by children and wider households, with potential implications for long-term family stability and integration outcomes.

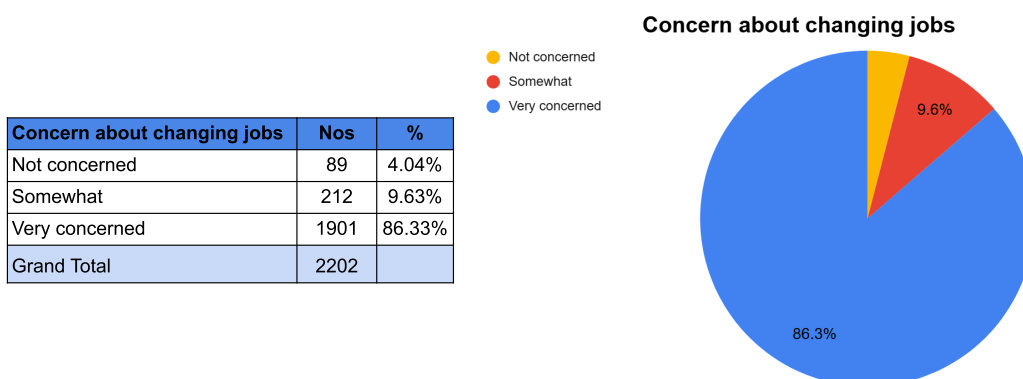
4.7. Employment dependency and exploitation risk

The survey findings indicate high levels of perceived dependency on employer sponsorship and concern regarding vulnerability within the immigration system among respondents (valid n=2,202). A substantial majority of participants (87.2%)

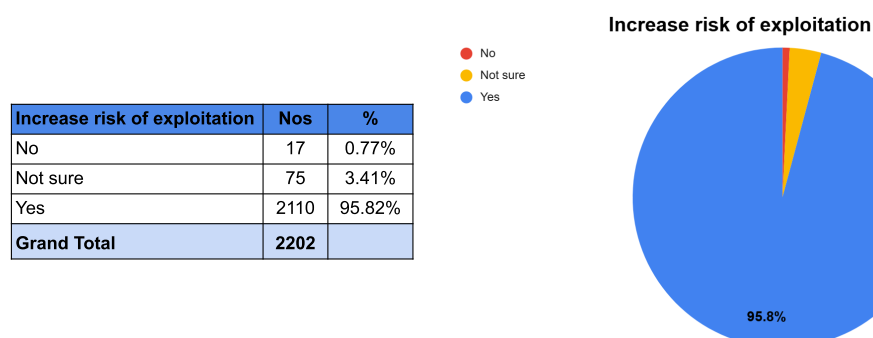
reported feeling tied to a single employer for the long term due to their immigration status, while only a small minority stated that they did not feel similarly constrained.



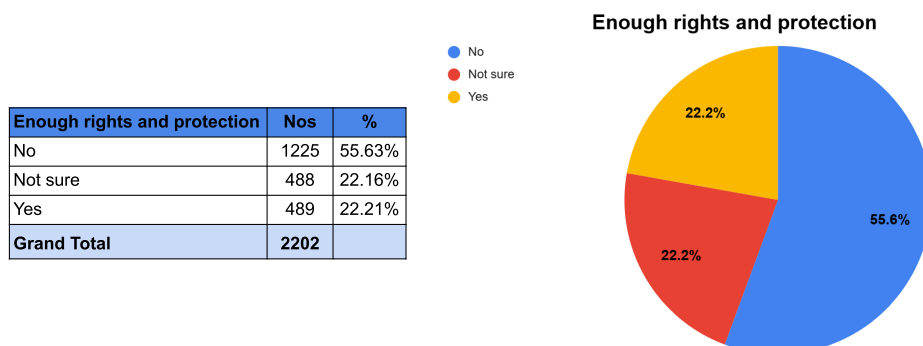
Concerns regarding job mobility were also pronounced. More than four-fifths of respondents (86.3%) reported being very concerned about changing jobs, with many participants indicating fears that employment changes could negatively affect visa status, sponsorship continuity, or long-term settlement prospects. These findings suggest that immigration-related dependency may limit confidence in employment mobility and reduce perceived bargaining power within the labour market.



The overwhelming majority of respondents (95.8%) also believed that proposed settlement reforms and prolonged temporary status could increase the risk of exploitation for migrant workers. Participants frequently linked this concern to dependence on employer sponsorship, fear of losing lawful status, and reluctance to challenge poor working conditions or report concerns due to perceived immigration consequences.

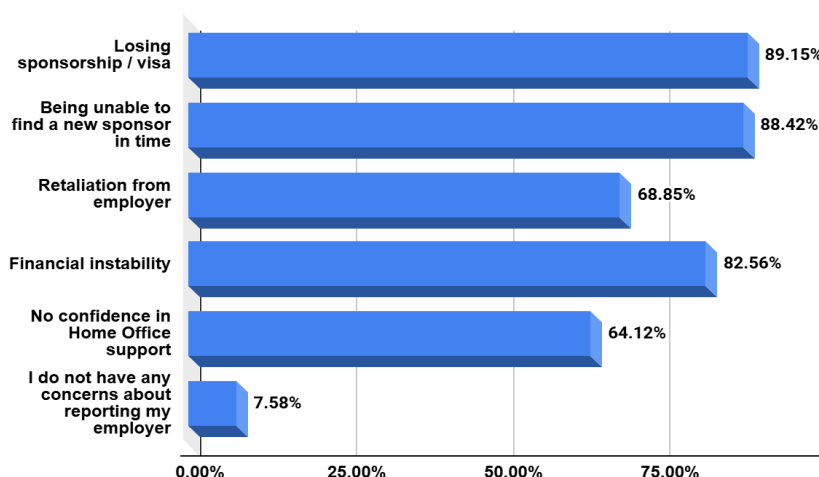


In addition, more than half of respondents (55.6%) stated that they did not believe they had sufficient rights or protection in relation to employer dependency and sponsorship arrangements, while only 22.2% believed adequate protections existed. A further 22.1% reported uncertainty regarding their rights and protections.



Overall, the findings suggest that immigration uncertainty and sponsorship dependency may contribute to a heightened sense of vulnerability among migrant workers, potentially affecting confidence in job mobility, willingness to report workplace concerns, and perceptions of personal and employment security within the UK labour market.

4.7.1. Concerns when reporting an employer (multi-select; valid n=2,202):



Respondents were asked a multiple-selection question regarding concerns they may face when reporting employers or raising workplace issues. The findings indicate high levels of perceived vulnerability linked to sponsorship dependency and immigration insecurity. The most commonly reported concern was the risk of losing sponsorship or visa status, identified by 89.15% of respondents. Similarly, 88.42% expressed concern about being unable to secure a new sponsor within the required timeframe if their employment ended or sponsorship was withdrawn.

A substantial proportion of respondents also reported fears of financial instability (82.56%) and potential retaliation from employers (68.85%) if workplace concerns were raised. In addition, 64.12% stated that they lacked confidence in receiving sufficient support or protection from the Home Office in situations involving

employment disputes or sponsorship-related difficulties. Only a small minority of respondents (7.58%) indicated that they had no concerns about reporting an employer.

The findings raise significant safeguarding and labour protection concerns. The combination of prolonged dependency on employer sponsorship, fear of losing lawful immigration status, financial insecurity, and limited confidence in reporting mechanisms may create conditions in which workers feel unable to safely challenge poor treatment, leave unsuitable employment situations, or report workplace concerns.

Respondents frequently described feeling compelled to remain in employment situations despite distress or dissatisfaction due to fears regarding visa consequences, family stability, and financial survival.

These findings are particularly important because prolonged sponsorship dependency combined with restricted mobility may increase vulnerability to exploitative employment practices. Where workers feel insecure, unable to change employers freely, or fearful that reporting concerns could jeopardise their lawful status, there is a risk that exploitative conditions may remain unreported or unaddressed. Recent evidence from labour rights organisations, safeguarding bodies, and parliamentary scrutiny has similarly raised concerns that restrictive sponsorship arrangements within the care sector may contribute to heightened vulnerability to labour exploitation and modern slavery-related harms, particularly where workers experience debt, intimidation, coercion, or fear of reporting abuse.^{28 29}

³⁰

Overall, the findings suggest that sponsorship-related insecurity should be considered not only as an immigration or workforce issue, but also as a significant safeguarding and worker protection concern requiring careful policy consideration, stronger reporting protections, and effective safeguards against exploitation and abuse.

4.8. Retention and intention to leave

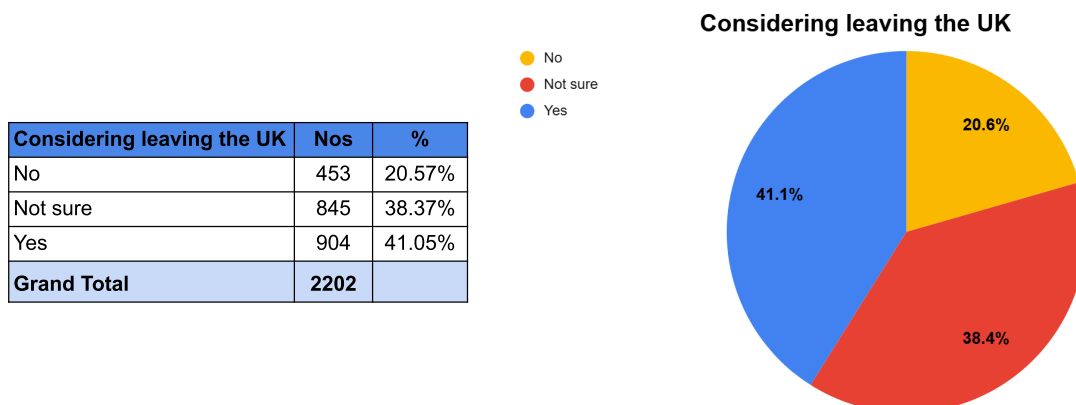
Survey findings indicate substantial uncertainty regarding long-term retention within the UK among respondents (valid n=2,202). While 20.6% of respondents stated that

²⁸ Work Rights Centre (22 July 2025) *Parliamentary report acknowledges scale of exploitation on the Skilled Worker visa*. Available at: <https://www.workrightscentre.org/publications/2025/parliamentary-report-acknowledges-scale-of-exploitation-on-the-skilled-worker-visa/> (Accessed: 6 May 2026).

²⁹ Unseen UK (27 April 2026) *Modern slavery cases in the UK reach new high amid concerns over migrant worker exploitation*. Available at: <https://www.unseenuk.org/modern-slavery-cases-in-the-uk-reach-new-high-amid-concerns-over-migrant-worker-exploitation/> (Accessed: 6 May 2026).

³⁰ The Guardian (16 March 2025) *Flawed UK visa scheme led to 'horrific' care worker abuse, says watchdog*. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/mar/16/flawed-uk-visa-scheme-led-to-horrific-care-worker-abuse-says-watchdog> (Accessed: 6 May 2026).

they were not considering leaving the UK, a significantly larger proportion reported either actively considering departure (41.0%) or remaining uncertain about their future in the UK (38.4%). Combined, these findings indicate substantial uncertainty regarding long-term retention within the UK workforce.



These findings are particularly significant when considered alongside wider survey evidence relating to children, family stability, mental wellbeing, and long-term insecurity. Earlier findings showed that 75.0% of respondents reported having children affected by immigration uncertainty. Among those respondents, 94.9% believed that their children's future higher education opportunities were at risk, while 95.0% reported significant impacts on their children's sense of belonging within the United Kingdom. Parents also reported widespread concerns relating to educational disruption, emotional stress, and long-term insecurity affecting children and family life.

The findings also indicate broader effects on long-term planning and emotional wellbeing. Earlier sections of the survey showed that 96.5% of respondents reported significant impacts on long-term life planning, 94.1% reported severe effects on mental wellbeing, and 95.2% reported severe impacts on family stability. In addition, 89.7% stated that proposed reforms significantly changed the conditions under which they originally came to the UK, while 98.3% reported having made major life commitments based on expectations of a five-year settlement pathway.

The findings further align with concerns regarding sponsorship dependency, workforce insecurity, financial instability, and limited labour mobility identified elsewhere in the survey. High levels of concern regarding visa dependency, inability to safely change employers, and uncertainty surrounding long-term residency security appear closely associated with reduced confidence regarding long-term retention within the UK workforce.

These findings may have broader implications for workforce sustainability within adult social care and the wider health sector, particularly given that the respondent profile was heavily composed of carers and senior carers working in frontline roles. The data suggests that prolonged uncertainty surrounding settlement pathways may affect not only personal wellbeing and family stability, but also children's long-term educational stability, wellbeing, and sense of belonging, alongside continuity of care,

workforce retention, and the long-term attractiveness of the United Kingdom as a destination for internationally recruited health and care workers.

5. System and economic impacts, legal considerations, evidence alignment, and international comparison

5.1. Economic model

This model explains plausible cost pathways without asserting a nationally representative attrition rate from the survey.

Published unit costs (adult social care recruitment/turnover) The Joseph Rowntree Foundation reports published in February 2026, based on care sector evidence, median costs per care worker including:

- median recruitment cost per care worker: **£800**
- median training cost per care worker: **£884**
- median agency cost per departing care worker: **£3,683.86**.³¹

These figures suggest a median per-leaver cost order of approximately £5,368 when recruitment + training + agency costs are combined (illustrative, not a definitive average; medians and ranges vary by organisation and local market).³²

System baseline Skills for Care estimates 335,000 leavers in adult social care in England in 2024/25 (turnover 23.1%).³²

Illustrative cost mechanism (not a forecast) If policy-induced uncertainty increases turnover or reduces tenure among internationally recruited care workers, cost pathways could include:

- Higher replacement costs (recruitment, training, agency cover)
- Reduced continuity of care (relationship-based care and quality implications)
- Increased management time and compliance costs associated with sponsor changes or license actions

The survey provides an **impact signal** relevant to these pathways: 41.0% considering leaving and 38.4% unsure, with severe reported financial and wellbeing impacts and high perceived exploitation risk. This cannot be scaled to national estimates, but it indicates potential sensitivity.

³¹ Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2026) The hidden cost of low pay in the social care sector. Available at: <https://www.jrf.org.uk/care/the-hidden-cost-of-low-pay-in-the-social-care-sector> (Accessed: 29 April 2026, 11:37 BST).

³² Skills for Care (2025) The state of the adult social care sector and workforce in England 2025 - Executive Summary. Available at: <https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Adult-Social-Care-Workforce-Data/workforceintelligence/resources/Reports/National/The-state-of-the-adult-social-care-sector-and-workforce-in-England-2025-Executive-Summary.pdf> (Accessed: 29 April 2026, 11:37 BST).

NHS interface costs Operational pressures from discharge delays are routinely linked to out-of-hospital capacity, including social care capacity. NHS England has started publishing discharge-related cost information, and an official written parliamentary answer confirms publication of cost data from September 2025 onwards and provides a table of costs for September and October 2025.³³ Independent analysis notes that delays and bottlenecks are intertwined with social care capacity constraints.³⁴

5.2. Qualitative Risk Assessment Framework

The following qualitative risk assessment framework has been developed based on the survey findings presented in this report, together with relevant published evidence relating to workforce sustainability, sponsorship dependency, safeguarding vulnerability, family stability, and migrant integration within the UK health and social care sector.^{35 36 37 38}

The framework is not intended to provide predictive modelling or quantitative forecasting. Rather, it is designed as an analytical tool to assist policymakers, parliamentary committees, researchers, and stakeholders in considering the potential implications associated with differing approaches to settlement reform implementation and transitional arrangements.

³³ UK Parliament Written Questions (2025) Hospitals - written questions, answers and statements. Available at: <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-11-17/91783> (Accessed: 29 April 2026, 11:37 BST).

³⁴ The King's Fund (2025) Delayed discharges: why it is hard to say how many are attributable to social care capacity. Available at: <https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/insight-and-analysis/blogs/delayed-discharges-social-care-capacity> (Accessed: 29 April 2026, 11:37 BST).

³⁵ Migration Advisory Committee (2022) *Annual Report 2022*. London: UK Government. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/migration-advisory-committee-annual-report-2022> (Accessed: 6 May 2026).

³⁶ National Audit Office (2022) *The adult social care workforce in England*. London: NAO. Available at: <https://www.nao.org.uk/reports/the-adult-social-care-workforce-in-england/> (Accessed: 6 May 2026).

³⁷ Skills for Care (2025) *ASC Workforce Statistical Appendix 2025* [Excel dataset]. Leeds: Skills for Care. Available at: <https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Adult-Social-Care-Workforce-Data/workforceintelligence/resources/Our-data/ASC-Workforce-Statistical-Appendix-2025.xlsx> (Accessed: 21 May 2026).

³⁸ Work Rights Centre (2025) *Parliamentary report acknowledges scale of exploitation on the Skilled Worker visa*. Available at: <https://www.workrightscentre.org/publications/2025/parliamentary-report-acknowledges-scale-of-exploitation-on-the-skilled-worker-visa/> (Accessed: 6 May 2026).



Risk Domain	Retrospective implementation	Prospective implementation	No material policy change
Workforce retention within adult social care	<i>High</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Lower</i>
Safeguarding and exploitation vulnerability linked to sponsorship dependency	<i>High</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Medium</i>
Children's educational stability, wellbeing, and integration outcomes	<i>High</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Lower</i>
Household financial resilience and long-term economic stability	<i>High</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Lower</i>
Trust in institutions, social integration, and long-term planning confidence	<i>High</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Lower</i>
Administrative complexity and uncertainty-related implementation risks	<i>High</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Lower</i>
NHS interface pressures, including discharge and continuity-of-care sensitivity	<i>Medium–High</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Lower</i>

The survey findings indicate that uncertainty surrounding settlement pathways is closely associated with concerns relating to workforce retention, financial insecurity, sponsorship dependency, family stability, and reduced confidence in long-term planning. The data also suggests that prolonged uncertainty may have wider secondary impacts extending beyond immigration status alone, including effects on safeguarding confidence, labour mobility, children's wellbeing, and integration outcomes.

In particular, the findings relating to sponsorship dependency and fear of losing lawful status may be relevant when considering safeguarding and exploitation risk within sectors characterised by workforce shortages and employer-linked migration pathways.^{39 40} Similarly, the high proportion of respondents reporting significant impacts on family stability, children's wellbeing, mental health, and financial resilience suggests that implementation approaches and transitional arrangements may materially influence broader social and economic outcomes.

5.3. Legal and policy considerations

5.3.1. Children's Welfare Duty (Section 55) and Policy Implications

Section 55 of the Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Act 2009 places a statutory duty on the Secretary of State to have regard to the need to safeguard and promote

³⁹ Migration Advisory Committee (2022) *Annual Report 2022*. London: UK Government. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/migration-advisory-committee-annual-report-2022> (Accessed: 6 May 2026).

⁴⁰ Work Rights Centre (2025) *Parliamentary report acknowledges scale of exploitation on the Skilled Worker visa*. Available at: <https://www.workrightscentre.org/publications/2025/parliamentary-report-acknowledges-scale-of-exploitation-on-the-skilled-worker-visa/> (Accessed: 6 May 2026).

the welfare of children when exercising immigration functions.⁴¹ Statutory guidance further requires that children's best interests are treated as a primary consideration in relevant decision-making.

Survey findings indicate substantial reported impacts on children, particularly in relation to **educational progression, continuity, and sense of belonging**. Respondents frequently referenced uncertainty affecting decisions around schooling, transitions to further and higher education, and long-term planning for their children's futures.

While this survey is not nationally representative, the consistency and nature of these reported impacts suggest that **children may be indirectly affected by policy uncertainty relating to immigration status and settlement pathways**. This raises a material consideration as to how Section 55 duties are being operationalised in the context of proposed or evolving policy changes.

In particular, areas of potential relevance include:

- Educational continuity risks, especially at key transition points (e.g., further and higher education), where immigration status may affect eligibility, fee status, or access to support
- Psychosocial impacts, including uncertainty affecting children's sense of stability, belonging, and long-term security
- Family-level decision-making constraints, where immigration uncertainty influences housing, education, and employment planning.

In this context, transparency regarding how child welfare considerations have been assessed and incorporated into policy development may be of particular relevance. This includes consideration of whether formal child impact assessments have been undertaken and how potential indirect effects on children within migrant care worker households have been evaluated in line with existing statutory guidance relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in immigration functions.⁴²

5.3.2. Sponsorship Curtailment, Reporting Incentives, and Worker Vulnerability

Current Home Office guidance confirms that where a sponsor loses its licence, a worker's Certificate of Sponsorship may be cancelled and their permission may typically be curtailed to 60 days (or less), unless a new valid application is made

⁴¹ Legislation.gov.uk (2009) Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Act 2009, section 55. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2009/11/section/55> (Accessed: 29 April 2026, 11:37 BST).

⁴² UK Government (2023) *Every Child Matters: statutory guidance on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in relation to immigration, asylum, nationality and customs functions*. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/every-child-matters-statutory-guidance> (Accessed: 21 May 2026).



within that period.⁴³ This regulatory framework is directly relevant to survey findings indicating widespread reluctance to raise concerns about employers, alongside uncertainty regarding the feasibility of securing alternative sponsorship within a limited timeframe.

The structure of employer-tied sponsorship may create constrained reporting incentives, whereby workers weigh the potential immigration consequences of reporting workplace concerns against the risk of losing lawful status.⁴⁴ ⁴⁵ In this context, several interconnected risk pathways are relevant:

- reduced likelihood of reporting workplace concerns or non-compliance due to perceived immigration consequences
- dependence on a single employer, limiting labour mobility and bargaining power
- operational difficulties associated with securing alternative sponsorship within compressed transition periods
- heightened vulnerability to poor working conditions where exit options are uncertain or limited

These dynamics are recognised within wider policy and labour exploitation research as factors capable of increasing vulnerability within employer-tied migration systems, particularly where immigration status remains contingent on continued sponsorship.⁴⁶

⁴⁷ ⁴⁸ ⁴⁹

Survey responses indicating fear of reporting, concerns regarding sponsorship loss, and uncertainty surrounding re-employment suggest that these structural features may materially influence worker behaviour and decision-making. While the survey does not directly measure exploitation or modern slavery outcomes, the findings are consistent with risk conditions associated with constrained worker voice, reduced labour market mobility, and heightened dependency on sponsors.⁴⁷ ⁵⁰

⁴³ Home Office (9 April 2025) *Workers and Temporary Workers: guidance for sponsors — part 3: sponsor duties and compliance*. Available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/workers-and-temporary-workers-guidance-for-sponsors-part-3-sponsor-duties-and-compliance> (Accessed: 6 May 2026).

⁴⁴ Migration Advisory Committee (2022) *Annual Report 2022*. London: UK Government. Available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/migration-advisory-committee-annual-report-2022> (Accessed: 6 May 2026).

⁴⁵ Work Rights Centre (22 July 2025) *Parliamentary report acknowledges scale of exploitation on the Skilled Worker visa*. Available at:

<https://www.workrightscentre.org/publications/2025/parliamentary-report-acknowledges-scale-of-exploitation-on-the-skilled-worker-visa/> (Accessed: 6 May 2026).

⁴⁶ Migration Advisory Committee (2022) *Annual Report 2022*. London: UK Government. Available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/migration-advisory-committee-annual-report-2022> (Accessed: 6 May 2026).

⁴⁷ National Audit Office (2022) *The adult social care workforce in England*. London: NAO. Available at:

<https://www.nao.org.uk/reports/the-adult-social-care-workforce-in-england/> (Accessed: 6 May 2026).

⁴⁸ Skills for Care (2025) *ASC Workforce Statistical Appendix 2025* [Excel dataset]. Leeds: Skills for Care. Available at:

<https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Adult-Social-Care-Workforce-Data/workforceintelligence/resources/Our-data/ASC-Workforce-Statistical-Appendix-2025.xlsx> (Accessed: 21 May 2026).

⁴⁹ Work Rights Centre (22 July 2025) *Parliamentary report acknowledges scale of exploitation on the Skilled Worker visa*. Available at:

<https://www.workrightscentre.org/publications/2025/parliamentary-report-acknowledges-scale-of-exploitation-on-the-skilled-worker-visa/> (Accessed: 6 May 2026).



In this context, consideration of how sponsorship rules interact with worker protection mechanisms, safeguarding systems, reporting pathways, and labour market flexibility may be relevant to future policy design, particularly within sectors heavily reliant on internationally recruited labour such as adult social care.^{48 49}

5.4. Alignment with existing published evidence

The survey findings are consistent with several evidence themes in UK policy literature:

- Settlement reform design and transitional uncertainty: The Home Affairs Committee warns that unclear timelines and under-developed elements have caused unnecessary distress and that careful implementation is required.⁵⁰
- Care workforce fragility and reliance on international recruitment: Skills for Care vacancy and turnover rates provide baseline fragility; the King's Fund links improved vacancy rates to overseas recruitment, indicating system sensitivity.⁵¹
- Sponsorship vulnerability and exploitation risks: Work Rights Centre research argues that employer sponsorship can pose serious exploitation risks and proposes safeguards, including improved time and routes for workers to change employers.⁵² UNISON similarly argues that dependency on a single employer creates vulnerability and calls for reforms such as removing sponsorship from individual employers.⁵³
- Need for improved cross-government impact assessment: NAO and Public Accounts Committee reports emphasize that changes have been made without full understanding of sector impacts and that exploitation risks require stronger management and evaluation.⁵⁴
- Children and long-route impacts: Coram Children's Legal Centre's submission and briefing on earned settlement highlights the importance of considering children, young people and vulnerabilities in settlement design.⁵⁵

⁵⁰ UK Parliament, Home Affairs Committee (2026) Earned Settlement: Examining the Government's proposed reforms (HC 1409). Available at: <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm5901/cmselect/cmhaff/1409/report.html> (Accessed: 29 April 2026, 11:37 BST).

⁵¹ Skills for Care (2025) Latest social care sector and workforce data published. Available at: <https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/news-and-events/news/latest-social-care-sector-and-workforce-data-published> (Accessed: 29 April 2026, 11:37 BST).

⁵² Work Rights Centre (2025) Safeguarding sponsored workers. Available at: <https://www.workrightscentre.org/media/uwrwtteg/report-published-24042025-safeguarding-sponsored-workers.pdf> (Accessed: 29 April 2026, 11:37 BST).

⁵³ UNISON (2025) Migrant care worker report 2025. Available at: <https://www.unison.org.uk/content/uploads/2025/02/Migrant-care-worker-report-2025.pdf> (Accessed: 29 April 2026, 11:37 BST).

⁵⁴ National Audit Office (2025) Immigration: Skilled Worker visas. Available at: <https://www.nao.org.uk/reports/immigration-skilled-worker-visas/> (Accessed: 29 April 2026, 11:37 BST).

⁵⁵ Coram Children's Legal Centre (2026) Earned settlement and children. Available at: <https://childrenslegalcentre.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/Coram-Childrens-Legal-Centre-earned-settlement-February-2026.pdf> (Accessed: 29 April 2026, 11:37 BST).



- Cost drivers and retention incentives: Resolution Foundation analysis highlights job quality, pay and training as relevant to turnover and retention in adult social care.⁵⁶

Taken together, this convergence between survey findings and established evidence suggests that the issues identified are not isolated perceptions but reflect broader, structurally recognised challenges that are directly relevant to the design and potential impacts of proposed ILR reforms.

5.5. International Comparison

International comparisons are included to illustrate how comparable developed economies address labour shortages in essential sectors, particularly adult social care, while maintaining immigration control. These examples are not presented as direct policy equivalents, but as evidence of alternative approaches to workforce planning, migration pathways, and programme management.

5.5.1. Canada – programme management and capacity constraints

Canada provides a relevant example of demand-led pressure on care-worker migration routes. The Home Care Worker Immigration pilots were designed to provide eligible care workers with pathways to permanent residence. However,

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada announced on 19 December 2025 that intake would be paused until further notice because demand continued to exceed available spaces, contributing to longer wait times. This highlights the importance of capacity planning, transparent intake management, and timely processing in maintaining programme credibility and reducing prolonged uncertainty for applicants and their families.⁵⁷

5.5.2. Australia – sector-specific labour agreement for aged care

Australia demonstrates a targeted sector-based approach through the Aged Care Industry Labour Agreement, established by the Australian Government in May 2023. This agreement enables employers in the aged care sector to sponsor overseas direct care workers in specified occupations where workforce shortages persist. It illustrates how adult social care can be managed as a distinct workforce category

⁵⁶ Resolution Foundation (2025) Care to negotiate? Available at: <https://www.resolutionfoundation.org/publications/care-to-negotiate/> (Accessed: 29 April 2026, 11:37 BST).

⁵⁷ Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (19 December 2025) *Pausing Home Care Worker Immigration pilots application intake*. Available at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/news/notices/pausing-home-care-worker-immigration-pilots-application-intake.html> (Accessed: 6 May 2026).

within migration policy, rather than solely through general skilled migration routes.⁵⁸
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5.5.3. Germany – flexible skilled migration framework

Germany's Skilled Immigration Act reflects a broader strategy to attract skilled workers through more flexible eligibility criteria. The framework supports immigration routes for skilled workers with vocational training and individuals with practical professional experience, alongside academically qualified workers. This approach recognises the

importance of non-degree skills in addressing labour shortages and demonstrates a shift toward more adaptable migration systems.⁶⁰

5.5.4. New Zealand – defined care workforce pathway to residence

New Zealand provides a strong comparator through its Care Workforce Work to Residence Visa. This route allows eligible care workers to apply for residence after working in New Zealand for 24 months in specified care workforce roles, subject to meeting relevant criteria. This model is directly relevant to the UK context because it recognises care work as a potential pathway to permanent residence rather than relying only on prolonged temporary status.^{61 62}

5.5.5. Relevance to the United Kingdom

These international examples demonstrate that countries facing care-sector labour shortages often adopt structured, sector-sensitive migration pathways rather than relying solely on extended temporary sponsorship. Common features include defined or time-bound pathways to settlement, sector-specific recruitment mechanisms, recognition of vocational and practical skills, integration of workforce planning with immigration policy, and programme safeguards to support sustainability and retention.

For the United Kingdom, these comparisons suggest that immigration control and workforce stability are not mutually exclusive. In sectors such as adult social care, where continuity, retention, and long-term workforce investment are critical, policy predictability and clear progression pathways may support both service delivery and wider economic outcomes.

⁵⁸ Australian Department of Home Affairs (17 November 2025) *Industry labour agreements*. Available at: <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/employing-and-sponsoring-someone/labour-agreements/types-of-labour-agreements/industry-labour-agreements> (Accessed: 6 May 2026).

⁵⁹ Australian Department of Home Affairs (20 October 2023) *Aged Care Industry Labour Agreement update*. Available at: <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/news-media/archive/article?itemId=1130> (Accessed: 6 May 2026).

⁶⁰ Federal Government of Germany (2026) *The new Skilled Immigration Act*. Available at: <https://www.make-it-in-germany.com/en/visa-residence/skilled-immigration-act> (Accessed: 6 May 2026).

⁶¹ Immigration New Zealand (2026) *Care Workforce Work to Residence Visa*. Available at: <https://immigration.govt.nz/visas/care-workforce-work-to-residence-visa> (Accessed: 6 May 2026).

⁶² Immigration New Zealand (2026) *Care workforce and transport sector pathway to residence*. Available at: <https://www.immigration.govt.nz/live/resident-visas-to-live-in-new-zealand/skilled-residence-pathways-in-new-zealand/care-workforce-and-transport-sector-pathway-to-residence/> (Accessed: 6 May 2026).



6. Recommendations, parliamentary relevance, engagement, distribution and disclaimers

6.1. Practical Recommendations

These recommendations are derived from survey findings and aligned with external evidence on labour markets, safeguarding, and migration governance. They are framed to ensure compliance with principles of legal certainty, proportionality, and the rule of law.

6.1.1. Non-Retrospective Implementation and Legal Certainty

- Any changes to ILR settlement policy must not be applied retrospectively to individuals already lawfully present and progressing under an established route.
- Retrospective extension of qualifying periods risks undermining legitimate expectation, a recognised principle in UK public law.⁶³
- Government should ensure that:
 - existing cohorts continue under the **terms in place at the point of entry or grant**
 - any policy changes apply **prospectively only to new entrants**
 - implementation timelines are clearly defined and publicly communicated
- Failure to maintain non-retrospectivity may expose policy to legal challenge on grounds of fairness, proportionality, and procedural legitimacy.⁶⁴

6.1.2. Compliance with Human Rights and Equality Obligations

- Any reform affecting ILR settlement pathways should be assessed against:
 - Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights (right to private and family life).⁶⁵
 - Section 55 of the Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Act 2009 (best interests of the child).⁶⁶
 - Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010.⁶⁷
- Prolonged uncertainty and extended temporary status may:
 - interfere with established family life
 - disproportionately impact lower-paid migrant households

⁶³ Craig, P. (2016) *Administrative Law*. 8th edn. London: Sweet & Maxwell. Available at: https://books.google.com/books/about/Administrative_Law.html?id=WBBCjgEACAAJ (Accessed: 15 May 2026).

⁶⁴ Elliott, M. and Thomas, R. (2020) *Public Law*. 4th edn. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Available at: <https://global.oup.com/academic/product/public-law-9780198836994> (Accessed: 15 May 2026).

⁶⁵ Council of Europe (1950) *European Convention on Human Rights*. Available at: https://www.echr.coe.int/documents/d/echr/convention_ENG (Accessed: 15 May 2026).

⁶⁶ UK Government (2009) *Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Act 2009*. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2009/11/contents> (Accessed: 15 May 2026).

⁶⁷ UK Government (2010) *Equality Act 2010*. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents> (Accessed: 15 May 2026).



- create indirect discrimination risks
- A formal **Human Rights Impact Assessment** should be published prior to implementation.⁶⁸

6.1.3. Care Sector–Specific Impact Assessment

- A dedicated **adult social care impact assessment** should be undertaken before any settlement reform affecting sponsored workers.
- This should assess:
 - workforce retention sensitivity in a high-turnover sector
 - safeguarding and exploitation risk under sponsorship
 - continuity-of-care risk and NHS interface effects
- This aligns with evidence from Skills for Care highlighting persistent workforce instability and reliance on international recruitment.⁶⁹
- Public sector audit scrutiny has also emphasised the need for **sector-specific impact understanding** in workforce planning.⁷⁰

6.1.4. Sponsorship Dependency, Safeguarding and Safe Reporting

- Workers must be able to **report exploitation without risking immediate loss of lawful status**.
-
- Current sponsorship structures—combined with curtailment rules (e.g. 60-day period following license loss)—may create **disincentives to reporting**.⁷¹
- Evidence indicates that employer-tied migration systems can increase vulnerability to exploitation where mobility is restricted.⁷²
- Reforms should therefore:
 - strengthen **safe reporting mechanisms**
 - reduce excessive employer dependency
 - ensure enforcement systems do not inadvertently increase harm

⁶⁸ Equality and Human Rights Commission (2014) *Human rights impact assessment guidance*. Available at: <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/human-rights-impact-assessment-guidance> (Accessed: 15 May 2026).

⁶⁹ Skills for Care (2023) *The state of the adult social care sector and workforce in England*. Available at: <https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/adult-social-care-workforce-data/Workforce-intelligence/publications/national-information/The-state-of-the-adult-social-care-sector-and-workforce-in-England.aspx> (Accessed: 15 May 2026).

⁷⁰ National Audit Office (2022) *The adult social care workforce in England*. Available at: <https://www.nao.org.uk/reports/the-adult-social-care-workforce-in-england/> (Accessed: 15 May 2026).

⁷¹ Home Office (2024) *Workers and Temporary Workers: guidance for sponsors*. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/workers-and-temporary-workers-guidance-for-sponsors-part-1-apply-for-a-licence> (Accessed: 15 May 2026).

⁷² Migration Advisory Committee (2022) *Annual Report 2022*. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/migration-advisory-committee-annual-report-2022> (Accessed: 15 May 2026).



6.1.5. Children, Education and Long-Term Integration

- A formal Child Impact Assessment should be undertaken in line with statutory duties under Section 55.⁷³
- Particular focus should include:
 - education-stage transitions
 - access to “home fee” status and student finance
 - psychological impacts of prolonged uncertainty
- Research indicates that immigration insecurity can adversely affect children’s wellbeing, educational outcomes, and integration.⁷⁴
- Policy communications must explicitly address dependents to reduce uncertainty-driven harm.

6.1.6. Affordability, Proportionality and Cumulative Burden

- Government should undertake a **cumulative cost analysis** of prolonged temporary status, including:
 - visa renewals
 - associated legal costs
- These costs should be assessed against **median earnings in the care sector**, which remain comparatively low.⁷⁵
- Where burdens are disproportionate, mitigation should be introduced to ensure policy remains economically sustainable.

6.1.7. Policy Stability, Predictability and System Credibility

- Migration policy must maintain **predictability and internal consistency** to support:
 - workforce retention
 - international recruitment in shortage occupations
 - public confidence
- Evidence shows that instability in migration systems can reduce attractiveness to skilled workers and undermine labour market outcomes.⁷⁶
- Policy changes should therefore include:
 - clear forward guidance
 - transparent impact assessments
 - alignment with long-term workforce planning

⁷³ UK Government (2009) *Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Act 2009*. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2009/11/contents> (Accessed: 15 May 2026).

⁷⁴ Coram Children’s Legal Centre (2023) *The impact of immigration status on children in the UK*. Available at: <https://www.coram.org.uk/what-we-do/our-work-and-impact/coram-childrens-legal-centre/> (Accessed: 15 May 2026).

⁷⁵ Skills for Care (2023) *The state of the adult social care sector and workforce in England*. Available at: <https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/adult-social-care-workforce-data/Workforce-intelligence/publications/national-information/The-state-of-the-adult-social-care-sector-and-workforce-in-England.aspx> (Accessed: 15 May 2026).

⁷⁶ OECD (2021) *International Migration Outlook 2021*. Available at: <https://www.oecd.org/migration/international-migration-outlook-1999124x.htm> (Accessed: 15 May 2026).

6.2. Policy and Parliamentary Relevance

The findings presented in this report are relevant to wider policy and parliamentary discussions concerning migration policy, workforce sustainability, safeguarding, and family impact within the United Kingdom.

The evidence may be relevant to ongoing scrutiny relating to ILR settlement pathways, sponsorship dependency, transitional arrangements, and the operation of employer-linked migration systems, particularly within sectors experiencing workforce shortages such as adult social care.

The findings also have relevance to broader policy considerations concerning:

- long-term integration and settlement outcomes
- impacts on children and family stability
- workforce retention and continuity of care
- labour market vulnerability and safeguarding considerations
- financial resilience among migrant households

Given the intersection between immigration policy, workforce planning, safeguarding obligations, and statutory duties relating to children and families, the issues identified in this report extend beyond immigration administration alone and may be relevant across multiple areas of public policy and parliamentary oversight.

The report is intended to contribute evidence to informed policy discussion by providing insight into how uncertainty surrounding settlement pathways may affect migrant workers, their families, and sectors reliant on internationally recruited staff.

6.3. Call for Independent Review and Further Research

Justice for Carers recognises the importance of continued independent research and evidence development in informing migration and workforce policy. Given the scale and consistency of the findings presented in this report, further analysis may be beneficial in several areas.

These include:

- expanded and representative sampling across regions, visa categories, occupational groups, and employer types to assess the consistency and distribution of impacts across the workforce
- linkage, where appropriate and feasible, with relevant administrative and workforce datasets to better understand system-level outcomes such as workforce retention, sponsorship transitions, attrition, and labour mobility
- independent evaluation of policy approaches that seek to balance immigration control objectives with workforce sustainability, safeguarding, and long-term integration outcomes

- further longitudinal and family-focused research examining the effects of immigration uncertainty on children's wellbeing, educational progression, household stability, and economic participation over time

The findings presented in this report are intended to contribute to ongoing evidence-based discussion concerning migration policy, workforce sustainability, safeguarding, and family impact within sectors reliant on internationally recruited labour. Further independent analysis and scrutiny may help strengthen understanding of these issues and support informed policy development.

6.4. Distribution Statement

This report is intended for circulation to Members of Parliament, parliamentary committees, peers, policy and research organisations, civil society bodies, workforce stakeholders, and relevant media organisations.

It is submitted as an evidence-based contribution to ongoing discussion concerning migration policy, workforce sustainability, safeguarding, and the impact of ILR settlement pathways on migrant workers and their families.

The report is intended to support:

- evidence review and independent analysis
- informed policy consideration and scrutiny
- wider discussion relating to workforce sustainability, family impact, and long-term integration outcomes

The findings should be considered alongside existing research literature, administrative data, sector evidence, and future independent analysis in order to support balanced and proportionate policy development.

6.5. Disclaimers and Methodological Notes

6.5.1. Nature of the Evidence

Survey findings are based on self-reported responses from a self-selected sample. The findings reflect the lived experiences, perceptions, and reported impacts among respondents and should not be interpreted as statistically representative of the wider UK migrant population or the health and social care workforce as a whole.

6.5.2. Community-Led Research Context

This report was developed by Justice for Carers, a grassroots community initiative representing migrant care workers and their families. It does not claim the institutional status, resources, or methodological infrastructure of a university, government body, or large-scale research organisation. The report should therefore

be understood as a community-led evidence contribution intended to provide insight into lived experiences and emerging themes relevant to ongoing policy discussion.

6.5.3. Purpose of the Analysis

The report is intended as qualitative and indicative evidence, highlighting patterns, themes, and areas of concern rather than providing population-level estimates, predictive modelling, or causal inference.

6.5.4. Use of External Evidence

External research, official statistics, and policy sources are referenced for contextual alignment, comparative analysis, and policy discussion only. Such sources are not used to generate new statistical claims regarding the survey population itself.

Some online publications, webpages, datasets, and government resources referenced in this report may subsequently change location, be updated, archived, or become unavailable following the time of access. References are cited based on the versions available during the drafting and review period of this report. Where possible, direct publication links, datasets, archived sources, or document-specific references have been used to support transparency and traceability.

6.5.5. Data Handling, Verification and Anonymity

Responses were collected voluntarily and handled in accordance with good-faith data handling practices appropriate to a grassroots-led study. Personal identifiers have not been included within the report, and qualitative testimonies are presented in anonymised form. While direct independent verification of individual circumstances was not undertaken, reasonable steps were taken to identify duplicate, inconsistent, or low-information responses.

6.5.6. Methodological Limitations and Mitigation

As a community-led study, the research is subject to limitations commonly associated with self-selected survey participation, including potential response bias and uneven demographic representation. However, reasonable steps were taken to strengthen data integrity and analytical consistency, including:

- removal of duplicate or low-information responses
- consistency checks across submissions
- structured categorisation of quantitative responses
- careful thematic review and classification of qualitative responses

6.5.7. Interpretation and Use

The findings should be considered alongside administrative data, official statistics, academic research, and future independent analysis. The report is intended to contribute to evidence-informed discussion and should not be treated as a standalone basis for policy conclusions.

6.5.8. Legal and Political Neutrality

This report does not constitute legal advice and is not affiliated with, endorsed by, or acting on behalf of any political party, government department, or advocacy organisation. It is presented as an independent, evidence-based contribution to public policy discussion.

6.5.9. Methodological and Technical Notes

Survey responses were collected through an online questionnaire distributed among migrant care workers and related migrant communities in the UK. Basic data cleaning and consistency checks were undertaken prior to analysis, including removal of duplicate or low-information submissions and exclusion of non-UK resident responses from the analytical sample.

Percentages presented in the report are based on valid responses for each question. Multi-select questions were analysed by counting the number of respondents selecting each option. Open-text responses were reviewed and thematically categorised to identify recurring themes and illustrative experiences in **Appendix A**. The full survey questionnaire is provided separately in **Appendix B**.