Workforce Mobility and Skills in the UK Construction Sector

West Midlands Report

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Prepared for:

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1 Background, Objectives and Methodology

1.1 Introduction

ConstructionSkills commissioned BMRB to undertake a survey of construction workers to provide reliable data on the nature of the workforce in the UK and the Republic of Ireland (ROI) with regard to their competence/ qualification levels and the extent of occupational and geographic mobility within the workforce. This report presents the results of the survey conducted in the West Midlands.

A separate technical appendix is available which includes a full technical report and a copy of the questionnaire used.

Where available, results from the 2007 survey have been compared with those from similar previous research conducted by IFF Research in 2004[1].

1.2 Key objectives of the research

The overall aim of the study was to provide reliable data on the nature of the construction workforce in regard to their competence/ qualification levels and the extent of occupational and geographic mobility within the workforce. More specifically, the key objectives of the research were to examine:

- the qualification and skill levels of the construction workforce in the UK and ROI
- the extent to which the workforce in each region is constituted of workers originating or living in other parts of the UK (or further afield), and general mobility and travel to work issues
- the nature of the mobile workforce/'imported' workforce in terms of their occupations and their competence/ qualification levels
- the scale and extent of occupational mobility within the construction workforce to see how workers in construction occupations change or keep their occupations over time, and related to this the extent to which managers have received training specifically to enhance their managerial skills.

The focus for the survey was on site-based manual occupations, thus excluding associated clerical and sales occupations and professions such as architects, surveyors and engineers.

[1] Comparative findings should be treated as indicative only due to key differences in the types of sites visited in 2004 and 2007. The profile of sites visited showing differences by size and category are included in the technical report.

1.3 Methodology

The key elements of the research approach were as follows:

1.3.1 Desk research

Prior to undertaking primary research a period of exploratory desk-based research was undertaken to examine the scope of information currently available; to identify other surveys and consultations to ascertain what can be learnt from these, and to ensure that any subsequent fieldwork was relevant and informed. The conclusions drawn from the desk research exercise were:

- there are studies covering similar issues to this study, however the target respondents of these studies tended to be employers

- the Labour Force Survey (LFS) is conducted among workers and covers similar issues as this study, however it is not specific to the construction industry

- there is little reliable information on the mobility of workers. The only exception is the LFS but it does not cover certain issues relevant to the construction workforce such as temporary accommodation, or where workers received training

- the desk research confirmed the need for detailed information from construction workers and for more information on workforce mobility in the UK and ROI.

A copy of the presentation summarising the desk research exercise can be found in the technical appendix.

1.3.2 Sampling

For the UK sample a list of current construction projects over £250,000 in value was drawn from Glenigan, an Emap service detailing current and forthcoming construction projects in the UK.

From the projects identified as being eligible for inclusion in the survey (the steps taken to select eligible records from Glenigan are detailed in the technical report), a stratified random sample of 99 postcode districts (e.g. NR2) was drawn to produce a representative sample of locations across the UK. For each selected district six eligible projects were identified. Projects were selected on the basis of value, 35% of sites with a value of less than £1 million and 65% of sites with a value of more than £1 million. In 2004, the survey focused on sites valued at over £1 million and the sampling process aimed to ensure a mix of sites by stage of development (first six months, midway, last six months). In 2007 the requirement was to also sample sites under £1 million, so this criterion needed to be reconsidered in that light. The 2004 definition of stage of development clearly assumed quite large, lengthy projects, appropriate for sites with minimum value of £1 million. With the introduction of smaller sites, some would be completely finished in six months. Therefore it was decided that an appropriate alternative definition would be to select according to value.

Quotas were set on the target number of sites for each region and by value. The target sample profile is described in the technical report.

1.3.3 Telephone survey

A telephone willingness stage was conducted in order to recruit construction projects selected from Glenigan to take part in the research. Interviewers were instructed to identify the best person to speak to about arranging a visit to the construction site and to collect some headline information about the site. Full details of the information collected and number of interviews achieved is included in the technical report.

1.3.4 Site visits

Once permission had been sought to interview at the particular site, the information was forwarded to a local face-to-face interviewer who contacted the site representative to arrange a date to visit. Interviews with construction workers were then conducted face-to-face on site. Interviewing normally took place in a canteen or site office during workers' break periods. In around one in ten cases interviewers were only able to visit the site if they supplied their own personal protective equipment.

A selection of interviewers' experiences of contacting and visiting sites is shown in the technical report.

1.3.5 Challenges

Given the complex nature of this research project a number of challenges arose during the life of the project. Each issue is discussed in detail in the technical report.

1.4 Details of sites covered in the research

The survey results presented in this report are based on fieldwork conducted in the West Midlands from February to July 2007. This consisted of a total of 262 face-to-face interviews with site-based workers obtained across 24 sites.

At the analysis stage, weighting was applied to the data to ensure each nation/region was represented in its correct proportions based on the relative size of the construction workforce. Labour Force Survey figures were used for UK regions/areas, (average profiles from the period October 2006 – June 2007). Unless otherwise stated, with the exception of base totals, the figures in this report are based on weighted data. Weighted, the West Midlands accounted for approximately seven percent of the UK/ROI workforce.

Figures from the site managers interviewed at the telephone fieldwork stage indicated that there were 710 workers across the 24 sites. Using this figure it would appear that around 34% of the potential workforce took part in the research, however it should be noted that there were instances where on the day the site was visited many fewer workers were present than indicated by the site manager when first contacted. This was due to a number of factors, for example the site may have entered into another phase of the project by the time the interviewer was able to visit it.

The proportion of workers interviewed varied greatly, at some sites we interviewed all workers present, on other sites particularly where interviewing only occurred during short break times only a small proportion of workers were interviewed.

1.5 Structure of the report

The report is structured as follows:

Chapter 1	Background, Objectives and Methodology
Chapter 2	Management Summary
Chapter 3	Profile, Work Status and Work Histories of the Construction Workforce
Chapter 4	Qualification and Skills
Chapter 5	Mobility

A separate technical report has been produced.

1.6 Notes on tables

Where respondents can give multiple responses to a question, the sum of the individual responses may be greater than 100 per cent.

Also the percentages in the tables do not always sum to 100 per cent due to rounding, and where percentages in the text differ to the sum of percentages in the tables, this too will be due to rounding.

An asterisk (*) in a table signifies a percentage that is greater than 0 but less than 0.5.

A dash (-) signifies a cell where data has not been included due to too small a base size.

N/A in a table signifies where we are unable to make a comparison with previous years as either the question wasn't asked or the data wasn't available.

With the exception of base totals the figures referred to are weighted.

The report contains some tables showing findings based on relatively small numbers of respondents (less than 70). Such low base sizes carry a greater risk of these figures being unrepresentative of the population in question and should, therefore, be treated as indicative only. Consistent with the 2004 report, only results based on 15 workers or more have been referenced in either tables or the text.

2 Management Summary

ConstructionSkills commissioned BMRB to undertake a survey of construction workers to provide reliable data on the nature of the workforce in the UK and the Republic of Ireland (ROI) with regard to their competence/ qualification levels and the extent of occupational and geographic mobility within the workforce.

The survey results presented in this summary are based on fieldwork conducted in the West Midlands from February to July 2007. This consisted of a total of 262 face-to-face interviews with site-based workers obtained across 24 sites.

This summary highlights the key findings for each of the major themes covered. Where available, results from the 2007 survey have been compared with those from similar previous research conducted by IFF Research in 2004[2].

Detailed results are available in the body of the full report, and a full technical report is available containing full details of sampling and methodology.

2.1 The profile of the workforce

A wide range of occupations was covered in the research, though in the West Midlands labourers/general operatives (20%), carpenters/joiners (16%) and plant/machine operatives (14%) accounted for half of the total workforce.

Around three-fifths (62%) of workers interviewed were employed directly by a company. Three in ten (31%) were self-employed and just 7% worked for an agency. This represents a significant shift since 2004 towards direct employment (from 47%), away from self-employment (48% in 2004) and has brought the region into line with the overall UK/ROI profile.

The level of self-employment varied enormously by occupation being particularly high among bricklayers.

Three-quarters (73%) of workers were employed on a permanent basis.

The West Midlands had a slightly older and more experienced workforce than in 2004, bringing the age profile into line with the UK/ROI overall, and retaining parity in terms of experience: 13% were aged 55 + (compared with 8% in 2004) and three-quarters (74%) had worked in the industry 20 years or less (compared with 66% in 2004).

2.2 Qualifications and skills

The site-based workforce in the West Midlands is better qualified than the UK/ROI as a whole, fewer having no qualifications (16% v 22%). This is largely due to an improvement in the proportion of unqualified workers in the region, down from 24% in 2004.

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[2] Comparative findings should be treated as indicative only due to key differences in the types of sites visited in 2004 and 2007. The profile of sites visited showing differences by size and category are included in the technical report.

Four-fifths (79%) of the West Midlands workforce have a construction skill card or certificate. This compares favourably with the UK/ROI average (68%), and is also an improvement on 2004 (63%). Across all occupational groups the majority of workers hold a skill card or certificate, with the lowest penetration amongst labourers/general operatives (68%).

Just under half (48%) of all site-based workers in the West Midlands hold a construction related qualification (other than a skill card or certificate), which is the UK/ROI average, and practically unchanged since 2004. Workers with five or more years experience in the industry were more likely than those with two years or less experience to hold a relevant qualification (52% cf. 33%). NVQs/SVQs have overtaken City and Guilds since 2004 to become the most commonly held qualifications.

A fifth of workers said they had managerial or supervisory duties at the site. Nearly three-fifths of these workers (58%) said that they had ever received any training designed to improve their managerial or supervisory knowledge or skills, which is much higher than in 2004 (28%) and now compares favourably with the national average (40%). That said, the most common form of management/ supervisory training continues to be in-house as opposed to more formal industry-recognised training.

One in six of the West Midlands workforce (17%) is currently working towards a construction qualification, a slight improvement on 2004 (13%) and average for the UK/ROI. Three-fifths of those working towards a qualification do not currently hold one. This suggests that the region's relatively well-qualified workforce should be sustained, if not improved further in coming years. The most common qualification being worked towards were NVQs/SVQs.

Some upskilling may be demand-led by workers, although the potential remains limited. Four-fifths of workers (80%) believe they have all the skills they require for their current job, although one in six (17%) say they need more training or qualifications, but only 3% needing more experience. Younger workers were the most likely to say they needed more training and qualifications (56% of under 25s). This assessment accords with the overall UK/ROI picture, and is broadly in line with 2004.

Workers with no qualifications and not working towards any were no more likely than average to see the need for more training or qualifications, so education and information is still required to reach these people.

Overall, a fifth (18%) expressed a need for basic skills training, with equal demand for reading, writing, maths and speaking English. Demand was greater amongst younger workers (32% of those aged under 25).

Nearly a quarter (23%) say they want to change the work they do, which may necessitate further training. This is somewhat more than the 18% in 2004, and above average for the UK/ROI (14%). The vast majority of these (90%) say that to achieve this aim they will need further training and qualifications. This represents 20% of all workers interviewed.

One challenge to delivering training to site-based workers is the relatively short time that workers stay at one site as well as the uncertainty that exists about how long the work will last

Only around half of workers (47%) expected be on site for more than six months and a quarter (23%) expected their work on site to last over a year. Only 5% were uncertain as to how long they'd be on site for. Although workers in the West Midlands spend slightly longer on site than the UK/ROI average, this still represents a potential barrier to training. However, this appears to be a substantial improvement on 2004, when only 14% of West Midlands workers expected to be on site for more than six months.

2.3 Mobility

The West Midlands has a relatively mobile workforce, with a medium level of importing workers and a high level of exporting.

Seven in ten (70%) of those currently working in the West Midlands originate from the region, placing it mid-table amongst the nations/regions in terms of 'home grown' workers. Neighbouring East Midlands is the most likely external source of workers (7%), followed by workers the ROI (5%).

The majority of construction workers in the West Midlands have residences (both permanent and current) in the region, as is true of all nations/regions. Over four-fifths (87%) of workers in the region have a permanent address in the West Midlands. The remainder almost exclusively (10%) have a permanent address in a neighbouring region so journeys may well be over short distances only, and reflect more general commuting patterns across regional boundaries. Overall 31% of respondents with a permanent address in the West Midlands are working outside the region. This makes the West Midlands the nation/region most likely to export workers, significantly above the UK/ROI average (18%).

The mean average number of miles travelled to work (each way) was 18 miles (20 miles in 2004), which is somewhat lower than the UK/ROI average (24 miles), as it was in 2004. Only 5% were travelling over fifty miles each way to work, which is half the UK/ROI average (11%). This of course will be affected by the geographical size and population density of the regions.

3 Profile, Work Status and Work Histories of the Construction Workforce

In this chapter we look at the demographic details of the construction workers interviewed in terms of age, ethnicity and gender. We also look at the proportion working directly for a company, self-employed or for an agency, and the extent to which they are working on a permanent or temporary basis. In addition we examine the occupational profile of the sample and career histories in terms of how many years they have worked in construction and the previous roles workers have had within the sector.

3.1 Demographic profile of the sample

The following table shows the demographic profile of our sample of construction workers in the West Midlands and compares this to the profile in 2004 and the overall workforce interviewed in the survey.

Table 3.1 Demographic profile of the sample

	West Midlands 2007 %	West Midlands 2004 %	Overall Workforce (UK/ROI) 2007 %
Age: 16–19	**8**	23	8
20–24	**13**		16
25–34	**27**	30	25
35–44	**25**	24	25
45–54	**13**	14	16
55+	**13**	8	10
Ethnicity: White	**92**	96	96
Black	**4**	N/A	2
Asian	**3**	N/A	1
Other	**1**	4	1
Gender: Male	**100**	99	99
Female	**0**	1	<1

Base: West Midlands respondents (2007: 262; 2004: 517); Overall workforce (3,877)

There is a broad spread of construction workers by age, with a fifth (21%) aged under 25, and a further one in four (26%) aged 45+. This is largely in line with the overall UK/ROI profile, but a slightly older profile than that recorded in the West Midlands in 2004.

As may be expected the workforce interviewed was very male dominated, with no female workers being interviewed in the West Midlands. This is comparable with the UK/ROI as a whole, and is almost unchanged since 2004.

Similarly, the vast majority (92%) of those interviewed described themselves as white, although this is relatively more ethnically diverse compared to the UK/ROI profile, or that of 2004.

3.2 Work status

Around three-fifths (62%) of workers interviewed were employed directly by a company. Three in ten (31%) were self-employed and just 7% worked for an agency. This represents a significant shift since 2004 towards direct employment (from 47%), away from self-employment (48% in 2004) and has brought the region into line with the overall UK/ROI profile.

As at the overall UK/ROI level, there is a clear link in the West Midlands between time spent in the industry and the incidence of self-employment. Only one in ten of those who have been in the industry up to two years are self-employed, compared with a third of those who have been in construction for five or more years. Conversely, those new to the industry are more likely to work via an agency: 22% of those with less than a years' experience, compared with just 4% of those with five or more years' experience.

Table 3.2 Work status

	West Midlands 2007 %	Overall Workforce (UK/ROI) 2007 %	Years working in construction			
			<1 year %	1–2 %	3–4 %	5+ %
Employed by a company	**62**	64	72	74	67	59
Self-employed	**31**	29	0	11	22	36
Work for an agency	**7**	5	22	16	11	4

Base: West Midlands respondents (262); Overall workforce (3,877)

In terms of age, self-employment is most common amongst 25–59 year olds (38%), which is broadly in line with the UK/ROI overall.

There were also wide differences in the likelihood of being self-employed by occupation, as summarised in the following table.

Table 3.3 Level of self-employment by occupation			
High		**Low**	
2007	2004	**2007**	2004
Bricklayers (65%)	Dry-liners (100%)	**Plant/Machine Operatives (11%)**	Plant/Machine Operatives (25%)
	Bricklayers (90%)	**Labourers/General Operatives (13%)**	Pipe Fitters (28%)
	Carpenters (59%)		Painters/Decorators (37%)
	Groundworkers (54%)		Labourers/General Operatives (39%)

Results are broadly comparable with the overall UK/ROI picture, with bricklayers most likely to be self-employed, plant/machine operatives least likely. There are some similarities with the results from 2004 in the West Midlands, but small base sizes mean that some occupations have to be excluded from the analysis, so direct comparison is difficult.

Agency workers only accounted for 7% of those interviewed in the West Midlands. Agencies appear to be used mainly for labouring/general operative positions (26% of labourers are employed by an agency). This is very similar to the overall UK/ROI picture.

Three-quarters of workers are employed on a permanent basis (73%), which is virtually unchanged since 2004 (72%), and very similar to the picture in the UK/ROI as a whole. A permanent contract is almost universal for employees (96%), but much less common for those who are self-employed (33%). A similar state of affairs is apparent at the UK/ROI level, although the self-employed in the West Midlands are less likely to be in a permanent position (cf. 56% UK/ROI overall).

3.3 Occupational profile

Results showing how workers classified their current role or occupation are shown in table 3.4, which lists those occupations mentioned by 1% or more of the sample. Later in the report differences are discussed by occupation; not all occupations shown are used in those discussions, as bases less than 15 are too low to be reliable. The results are compared with those from 2004 in the third column and the final column on the table show comparative UK/ROI data.

Table 3.4 Occupational Profile			
	West Midlands 2007 % No.	West Midlands 2004 % No.	Overall Workforce (UK/ROI) 2007 % No.
Labourer/General Operative	**20 (53)**	11 (59)	17 (674)
Carpenter/Joiner	**16 (42)**	10 (54)	14 (559)
Plant/Machine Operative	**14 (36)**	5 (28)	13 (502)
Bricklayer	**13 (34)**	12 (62)	13 (536)
Manager	**12 (11)**	N/A	3 (111)
Supervisor	**6 (15)**	N/A	5 (192)
Electrician	**5% (13)**	9 (49)	7 (247)
Painter/Decorator	**5 (13)**	5 (24)	2 (97)
Plumber	**4 (10)**	3 (17)	5 (183)
Civil Engineering Operatives	**4 (10)**	N/A	2 (75)
Plasterer/Dry-liner	**3 (8)**	6 (32)	5 (190)
Pipe Fitter	**2 (6)**	5 (25)	3 (102)
Banksman/Banksperson	**2 (5)**	N/A	2 (81)
Scaffolder	**2 (4)**	3 (16)	3 (112)
Technical	**2 (4)**	N/A	1 (38)
Ceiling fixer	**2 (4)**	N/A	1 (27)
Mechanical Fitter	**2 (4)**	N/A	<1 (16)
Roofer	**1 (3)**	4 (21)	4 (133)
Steel Erector/Rigger	**1 (2)**	N/A	2 (75)
Base: West Midlands respondents (2007: 262; 2004: 517); Overall workforce (3,877)			

The occupational profile of the West Midlands workforce in 2007 is broadly in line with the overall UK/ROI profile, and the regional profile from 2004. However, plant/machine operatives are more common in the West Midlands than previously, although in line with the UK/ROI as a whole. Managers are more common in the West Midlands.

3.4 Years working in construction

The length of time spent working in construction ranges from just 6% of new entrants who have worked in the industry for less than a year, to a quarter (26%) of those who have worked in the industry for over 20 years. Table 3.5 summarises findings showing cumulative proportions. The results for the West Midlands are broadly in line with the overall UK/ROI figures, but there was an increase in experience at all stages from five years up to 20 years from 2004. The UK/ROI profile has changed similarly over that period.

Table 3.5 Years spent working in construction (cumulative)			
	West Midlands 2007 %	West Midlands 2004 %	Overall Workforce (UK/ROI) 2007 %
Less than 6 months	**4**	3	5
A year or less	**6**	7	11
2 years or less	**14**	16	17
5 years or less	**29**	25	33
10 years or less	**50**	43	50
20 years or less	**74**	66	71
More than 20 years	**26**	34	27
Base: West Midlands respondents (2007: 262; 2004: 517); Overall workforce (3,877)			

Labourers/general operatives were more likely to be recent recruits to the industry (34% had worked in the sector for two years or less), suggesting that people are likely to start out doing this type of work before moving on to more skilled occupations in the industry. Labourers/general operatives tend to be inexperienced at the UK/ROI level also, as they were in 2004.

3.4.1 Construction employment

Around a third of workers (37%) ended up in the construction industry after starting their working life in another field. This was higher for plant/machine operatives (47%), whereas carpentry/joinery is more likely to attract workers straight after leaving education, as only around a quarter of workers with this occupation had started out working in another field. These levels of employment outside of construction are a little lower than in 2004 (43% started outside of construction), but accord with the UK/ROI as a whole.

Those who had worked in other fields before starting their construction careers were asked what their previous job had been. A diverse range of jobs was mentioned. In a large number of cases this was doing jobs for which construction seems like the natural progression (or indeed which are construction jobs but in other sectors).

Since starting their first job in construction, the vast majority had only ever worked in this sector, four-fifths (82%) reported having worked in construction continuously and a further 5% had only worked in this sector though had had spells of being out of work. Overall 12% had dipped in and out of the construction sector since their first construction job[3]. This was most likely among labourers/general operatives (25%) indicating that this dipping in and out of the

[3] These results exclude workers whose first serious job is for their current employer.

industry is perhaps more common among the relatively unskilled occupations. This profile is very much in line with the UK/ROI overall.

3.4.2 Occupational switching and progression

An area of particular interest in the research was the extent of switching between occupations within construction. To this end workers were asked if they had always worked in their current role/occupation and if not what their previous occupation had been.

Three out of five workers (60%) said that they had always worked in the same occupational area as their current job. This is in line with the region in 2004 (65%) and the UK/ROI overall in 2007 (60%).

4 Qualifications and Skills

A key objective of this research was to measure the competence/ qualification levels of the construction workforce. A number of questions were asked to ascertain this:

- whether any construction skill certificate or card was held and if so which and, in the case of CSCS and CSR cards, to what level

- what formal qualifications relevant to the construction industry they held ot with managerial or supervisory duties were asked about any training specifically designed to improve their managerial or supervisory skills or knowledge.

We also asked workers to assess their own skills, including basic skills and whether they felt they needed more training to do their current job.

4.1 Construction skill cards and certificates

There is a general move in the industry for all persons working on or visiting construction sites to have a construction skill card or certificate. Already, many sites won't let workers on without an appropriate card to prove their skills. And this is set to increase as the industry-wide deadline approaches for a fully qualified workforce by 2010.

Nearly four-fifths (79%) of workers said they held a skill card or certificate of some description, which is an encouraging increase compared with the proportion who said they held a skill card or certificate in 2004 (63%), and also above the UK/ROI average (68%).

Perhaps unsurprisingly those with less than a year’s experience (50%) were least likely to have a skill card or certificate. Likelihood of possessing a skill card/certificate continues to rise gradually after the first year in the industry. Workers aged under 25 are also less likely to hold a skill card/certificate (16–19 year olds: 52%, 20–24 year olds: 63%).

Table 4.1 Whether have a skill card/certificate by other variables			
	West Midlands 2007 %	West Midlands 2004 %	Overall Workforce (UK/ROI) 2007 %
Overall	**79**	63	68
<1 year in construction	**50**	29	39
1–2 years	**74**	45	60
3–4 years	**78**	N/A	65
5+ years	**82**	N/A	75
16–19	**52**	N/A	43
20–24	**63**	N/A	62
25–44	**85**	70	73
45+	**86**	67	72
Employed directly	**78**	75	70
Self-employed	**80**	52	69
Agency worker	**89**	57	62
Base: West Midlands respondents (2007: 262; 2004: 517); Overall workforce (3,877)			

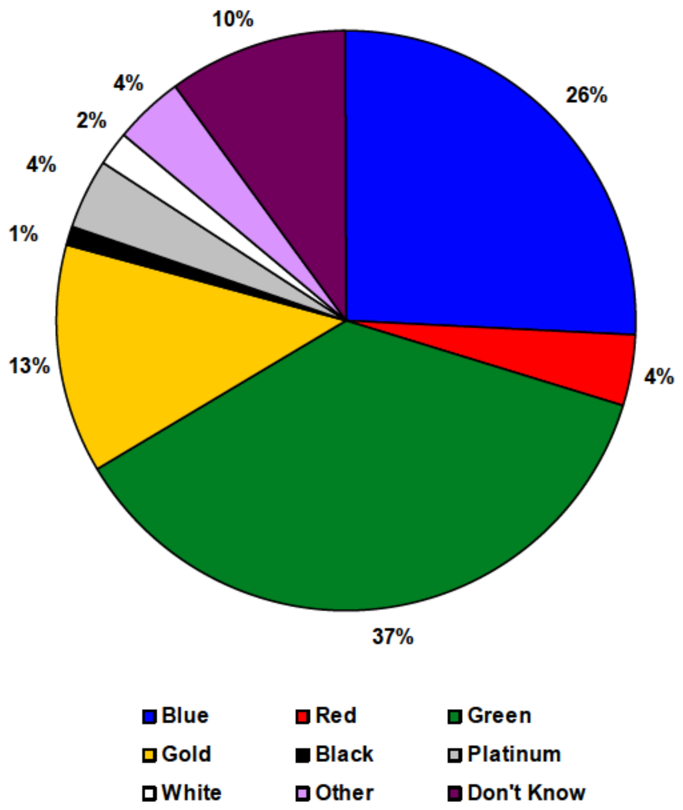
The main differences by occupation are shown in the following table that lists occupations with the highest and lowest penetrations from the 2004 and the 2007 surveys.

Table 4.2 Whether have a skill card/certificate by occupation			
***High** likelihood*		***Low** likelihood*	
2007	2004	**2007**	2004
Plant/Machine Operatives (94%)	Plant/Machine Operatives (96%)	**Labourers/General Operatives (68%)**	Labourers/General Operatives (44%)
Bricklayers (88%)	Groundworkers (79%)		Plasterers (40%)
	Plumbers (76%)		

The high overall likelihood of holding a skill card or certificate in the West Midlands means that incidence is high amongst most occupations.

Workers with a CSCS/CSR skill card were asked its colour/level. Almost two-fifths (37%) held a green, general site workers card, with a quarter (26%) having a blue, skilled construction/plant operative NVQ/SVQ 2 card, and 13% possessing a gold, craft/supervisor NVQ/SVA 3 card. Despite saying they held a CSCS/CSR card, one in ten (10%) were not sure what colour or level it was. Chart 4.1 shows the proportions of card-holders with each colour of card.

Chart 4.1 Colour of CSCS/CSR skill card held



Base: West Midlands respondents who hold a CSCS/CSR card (179)

4.2 Construction qualifications held

Workers were also asked what other formal qualifications relevant to construction they held (excluding first aid certificates). As a relatively high proportion (4% in the West Midlands; 8% overall) did not give an answer to this question, results in this section are based on those who gave an answer. Nearly half (48%) of workers interviewed in the West Midlands held a construction specific qualification, which is comparable to 2004, and to the UK/ROI as a whole.

As may be expected, there were differences by age and length of time worked in the industry. Workers with five or more years experience in the industry were more likely than those with two years or less experience to hold a relevant qualification (52% cf. 33%).

Table 4.3 Hold any construction specific qualification			
	West Midlands 2007 %	West Midlands 2004 %	Overall Workforce (UK/ROI) 2007 %
Overall	**48**	50	48
<1 year in construction	**12**	15	15
1–2 years	**50**	18	30
3–4 years	**41**	54	39
5+ years	**52**	56	57
16–19	**37**	N/A	30
20–24	**44**	N/A	40
25–44	**56**	55	54
45+	**39**	52	50
Employed directly	**44**	52	48
Self-employed	**59**	48	54
Agency worker	**41**	39	30

Base: West Midlands respondents who gave a response 2007 (252); All West Midlands respondents 2004 (517); All UK/ROI respondents who gave response (3,594)

Similar to the UK/ROI results, the likelihood of having a construction-related qualification peaks among the 25–44 age group. In contrast to 2004, self-employed workers in the West Midlands are more likely to hold a relevant qualification than those employed by a company.

As with skill cards/certificates, there was variation by occupation in the proportion of workers with a construction qualification. This is summarised in table 4.7, showing the occupations with highest proportions of workers with a qualification and the occupations with lowest relative proportions.

As in 2004, bricklayers are amongst the most likely to hold construction specific qualifications, and labourers/general operatives least likely to hold them.

Table 4.4 Whether have construction qualifications			
***High** likelihood*		***Low** likelihood*	
2007	2004	**2007**	2004
Bricklayers (71%)	Electricians (84%)	**Labourers/General Operatives (27%)**	Roofers (14%)
Carpenters (61%)	Plumbers (71%)	**Supervisors (27%)**	Labourers/General Operatives (17%)
	Bricklayers (68%)		Groundworkers (18%)

Workers who said they had a construction qualification were asked what type of qualification they held. Where more than one response was given the highest qualification was recorded.

Table 4.5 Main type of highest qualification held			
	West Midlands 2007 %	West Midlands 2004 %	Overall Workforce (UK/ROI) 2007 %
NVQ/SVQ	**52**	33	51
City and Guilds	**36**	47	34
Apprenticeship	**3**	N/A	4
Construction Award	**2**	7	2
HNC/HND/BTEC higher	**2**	3	1
Degree	**2**	N/A	1
Base: West Midlands respondents with qualification (2007: 122; 2004: 256); All UK/ROI respondents who gave response (1,810)			

Half of qualified workers (52%) had an NVQ/SVQ and a third (36%) had a City and Guilds qualification. Since 2004 there has been a switch towards NVQs/SVQs away from City and Guilds qualifications (previously 33% and 47% respectively). This movement from City and Guilds to NVQs/SVQs is also seen at the UK/ROI level, and the incidence of each qualification is also comparable.

Workers were also asked where their highest qualification was attained. For the majority of workers holding a construction qualification, 83%, this had been attained in the West Midlands. This is an increase on 2004 (75%), and places the West Midlands amongst the regions with the highest proportion of qualified site workers who gained that qualification within the same region, indicating a relatively self-reliant region. West Midlands workers who gained their qualification outside of the region most commonly did so in the neighbouring East Midlands (9%). Mobility issues are discussed in chapter 5.

4.3 Working towards construction qualifications

One in six of the workforce (17%) said they were working towards a construction qualification, which is slightly higher than in 2004 (13%), but identical to the UK/ROI average. Predictably this was much higher among younger workers and those who had been working in the industry for 1–5 years.

<table>
<tr><th colspan="4">Table 4.6 Working towards a construction specific qualification</th></tr>
<tr><th></th><th>West Midlands 2007 %</th><th>West Midlands 2004 %</th><th>Overall Workforce (UK/ROI) 2007 %</th></tr>
<tr><td>Overall</td><td>17</td><td>13</td><td>17</td></tr>
<tr><td><1 year in construction</td><td>39</td><td>9</td><td>28</td></tr>
<tr><td>1–2 years</td><td>37</td><td>37</td><td>32</td></tr>
<tr><td>3–4 years</td><td>37</td><td>N/A</td><td>36</td></tr>
<tr><td>5+ years</td><td>10</td><td>N/A</td><td>11</td></tr>
<tr><td>16–19</td><td>52</td><td rowspan="2">72</td><td>47</td></tr>
<tr><td>20–24</td><td>29</td><td>27</td></tr>
<tr><td>25+</td><td>11</td><td>9</td><td>12</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Base: West Midlands respondents (2007: 262; 2004: 517); Overall workforce (3,877)</td></tr>
</table>

Over half of 16–19 year olds (52%) were working towards a qualification, dropping to one in three (29%) among 20–24 year olds, and just one in ten workers aged 25+. Directly employed workers (21%) are twice as likely as self-employed workers (10%) to be working towards a construction qualification.

Three-fifths of those working towards a qualification (62%) did not already have a construction qualification, representing 10% of the total workforce.

In terms of the type of qualifications being worked towards, NVQs/SVQs were the most likely, mentioned by 66% of those working towards a qualification. Just 7% were working towards a City and Guilds qualification and 2% were on an apprenticeship scheme.

4.4 Managerial qualifications

A further area of investigation in relation to training and qualifications was to look at the extent to which workers with managerial or supervisory duties have had training specifically designed to improve their managerial and supervisory skills.

A fifth of workers (20%) said they had supervisory or managerial duties on site, which is in line with the UK/ROI average. Time worked in the industry was a key indicator, a quarter (23%) of those with five or more years experience having managerial or supervisory duties on site compared with just 9% among those working in construction for less than five years.

Nearly three-fifths (58%) of those with managerial and supervisory duties had received training designed to improve skill in this area. This is much higher than in 2004 (28%), and higher than across the UK/ROI as a whole (40%).

Those who had received some training were most likely to have undertaken in-house training rather than anything that was part of any accredited, industry-recognised programme, as is the case for the UK/ROI overall, and in 2004. The types of training undertaken are shown in table 4.7.

Table 4.7 Type of training received to improve management or supervisory skills			
	West Midlands 2007 %	West Midlands 2004 %	Overall Workforce (UK/ROI) 2007 %
None/can't remember	**42**	72	47
In-house training	**35**	16	31
SMSTS (Site Manager Safety Training Scheme)	**15**	2	8
Chargehand and Team Leader Training	**8**	1	10
Site Safety Supervisors Course (for CSR)	**8**	N/A	7
Project Management Short Courses	**6**	N/A	3
Managing Safely in the Construction Industry (for CSR)	**6**	N/A	3
Civil engineering Site Managers Scheme	**6**	2	3
NVQ/SVQ Level 4 in Construction Site Management	**6**	N/A	1
IOSH (Institute of Occupational Safety and Health)	**4**	N/A	3
IOSH Managing Safely for Construction Managers	**4**	N/A	3
Institute of Supervision and Management Workshops	**3**	N/A	1
Assessor and Verifier Training	**2**	N/A	5
CIOB Site Management Education and Training Scheme (SMETS)	**2**	1	2
Supervisory Management Training and Development	**2**	1	2
CIOB Site Supervisor (First Line Supervisor – FLS)	**2**	N/A	2
CSCS Training	**2**	N/A	1
CITB training	**2**	N/A	3
Safety for Senior Executives (for CSR)	**2**	N/A	1
IOSH Safely for Senior Executives	**2**	N/A	1
Base: All with management and supervisory duties of West Midlands (2007: 52; 2004: 82); All UK/ROI respondents who gave response (678)			

4.5 Summary of qualification and skills card status

Table 4.8 summarises the situation regarding qualifications and skill cards/certificates attained and working towards. The results for the West Midlands are compared with the results in 2004 and the overall results in 2007.

Table 4.8 Qualification status			
	West Midlands 2007 %	West Midlands 2004 %	Overall Workforce (UK/ROI) 2007 %
Hold a formal construction qualification or a skills card/certificate or working towards a qualification	**88**	79	82
Hold a formal construction qualification or a skills card/certificate	**84**	76	78
Hold a skills card/certificate	**79**	63	68
Hold a skills card/certificate but no other construction qualification	**38**	27	33
Working towards a qualification	**17**	13	17
Base: West Midlands respondents (2007: 262; 2004: 517); Overall workforce (3,877)			

As we have seen earlier in this report, the West Midlands slightly outperforms the UK/ROI as a whole in terms of the qualifications, card and certificates currently held by construction site workers, and is average in terms of working towards such qualifications. The West Midlands has improved on all these measures since 2004. The region performs most notably better compared with the UK/ROI, and with 2004, in terms of holding skill cards or certificates.

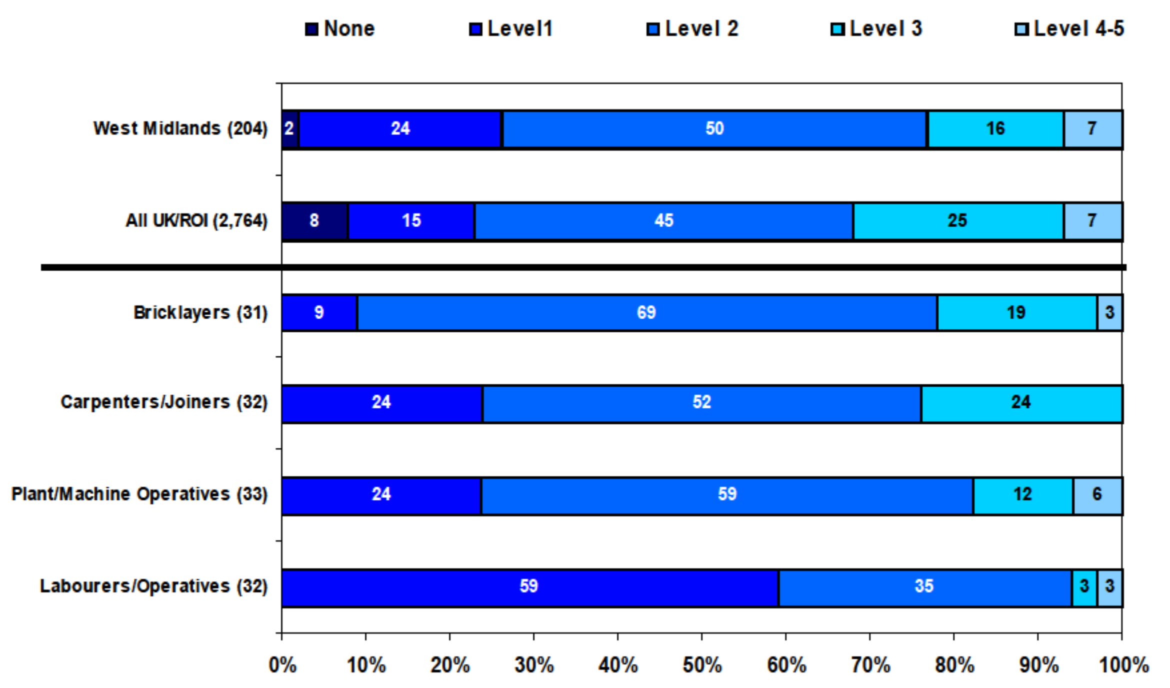
4.6 Competence/qualification level of the construction workforce

Using the responses given by workers for qualifications and skill cards/certificates held and managerial training undertaken, the highest competence/qualification levels have been derived for each worker. The technical report shows the definitions of each level, which are largely the same as those used in the 2004 survey[4].

Chart 4.2 shows the results overall, and by occupation where base size allows.

[4] In 2004 Green CSCS and CSR cards were categorised as Level 2, in 2007 they were categorised as Level 1.

Chart 4.2 Competence/qualification level by occupation



Base: All respondents where a competence/ qualification level could be calculated (204)

Just 2% of the workforce have no competence/qualification level (i.e. no qualification or management training or skill cards/certificates held). Half (50%) of the workforce have a level 2 competence/qualification level, and around a quarter (23%) have level 3 or above (lower than the UK/ROI average of 32%).

Results varied by occupation, although among those occupations with sufficient base size for analysis, all workers had at least level 1 competence/qualification level. Competence/qualification levels were highest among bricklayers and carpenters (22% and 24% of whom respectively had achieved level 3 or above).

4.7 Self assessment of skill level

Workers' own perceptions as to whether they had all the skills they need to do their current job were ascertained after they were asked about the various qualifications they held or were working towards. Table 4.9 summarises the results.

Four-fifths of workers (80%) believe they have all the skills they require for their current job, although one in six (17%) say they need more training or qualifications with only 3% needing more experience. Predictably younger workers were the most likely to say they needed more training and qualifications (56% of under 25s). This assessment accords with the overall UK/ROI picture, and is broadly in line with 2004.

Table 4.9 Self assessment of skill level and training needs for current job			
	West Midlands 2007 %	No skill card/qualification/ nor working towards any 2007 %	Overall Workforce (UK/ROI) 2007 %
Have all the skills needed for current job	**80**	84	76
Need more training or qualifications	**17**	16	13
Need more experience	**3**	-	8
Don't know	**0**	0	3
Base: West Midlands respondents (262); No qualification nor working towards any (32); Overall workforce (3,877)			

Workers with no skill card or qualifications and not working towards any qualifications were no more likely than average to see the need for more training or qualifications. Predictably, workers with no qualifications who were working towards a qualification were more likely (48%) to express the need for more training and experience; however they were equally likely to think that they had all the skills needed for their job.

All workers were also asked whether they felt they needed training in basic skills. Overall, a fifth (18%) expressed a need for such training, with equal demand for reading, writing, maths and speaking English. Younger workers were more likely to identify this need (32% of those aged under 25).

Table 4.10 Need for training in basic skills			
	West Midlands 2007 %	All identifying a need 2007 %	Overall Workforce (UK/ROI) 2007 %
Any need identified	**18**	100	**21**
Reading	**9**	47	12
Speaking English	**9**	47	12
Writing	**8**	43	10
Maths	**9**	49	10
Base: West Midlands respondents (262); All identifying a training need (48); All respondents (3,877)			

The other means by which increased training may arise from a demand-led worker angle is those wishing to change occupation within the sector and anticipating the need for re-training. Overall 23% say they want to change the work they do. This is somewhat more than the 18% in 2004, and also above the average for the UK/ROI (14%). The vast majority of these (90%) say that to achieve this aim they will need further training and qualifications. This represents 20% of all workers interviewed.

As expected, the desire for a change of role was particularly apparent among less skilled workers, particularly labourers/general operatives (45%). The most common roles workers would like to switch to are primarily the more skilled occupations. Better pay was the key motive for change, mentioned by two-thirds of workers (69%) wanting to change roles, although the demand for more interesting work also played a role.

One challenge to delivering training to site-based workers is the relatively short time that workers stay at one site as well as the uncertainty that exists about how long the work will last. The following table shows the results for the length of time workers expect to work at their current site, results are shown for the West Midlands and overall.

Table 4.11 Total length of time expect to work at site

	West Midlands 2007 %	Overall Workforce (UK/ROI) 2007 %
<1 month	**14**	11
1–3 months	**18**	20
>3 up to 6 months	**17**	16
>6 months up to a year	**24**	17
More than a year	**23**	20
Don't know	**5**	17

Base: West Midlands respondents (262); Overall workforce (3,877)

From a training perspective, these figures clearly highlight the difficulty that the construction industry faces in providing site-based training. Only around a half of workers (47%) expected be on site for more than six months and a quarter (23%) expected their work on site to last over a year. Only 5% were uncertain as to how long they'd be on site for. This is broadly the UK/ROI picture, although workers in the West Midlands appear to be onsite for longer (only 37% of UK/ROI workers are on site for six months or more). In addition there is more uncertainty amongst UK/ROI workers as a whole, 17% unsure of how long they will be on site. Furthermore, this appears to be a substantial increase on 2004, when only 14% of West Midlands workers expected to be on site for more than six months, with many more (33%) uncertain of how long they would be on site.

5 Mobility

A key aim of the survey is to gain an understanding of geographic mobility of construction workers and to try to get a measure of which regions are net ‘importers’ and which are net ‘exporters’. Another aim is to identify which types of workers (for example, by occupation and competence/qualification level) are particularly likely to be mobile. The results from this analysis clearly have a bearing on training planning, provision and investment.

What constitutes a mobile worker is not straightforward. Potentially it includes those who live outside a region and travel in on a daily basis, those who live in temporary accommodation while working but whose permanent address is outside the region, those who have moved to the area on a semi-permanent basis, as well as those who received their construction training elsewhere but have now moved to the region on a permanent basis. Hence for the survey a number of questions were asked covering these issues. These were:

- where respondents were from originally
- whether they travel from their permanent address or a temporary address (and if temporary why they work in the current region)
- the proportion of their time working in construction which has been on sites within the region where they are currently working
- the miles they travel to get to the site each day
- whether when they finish this site they expect to get a job which allows them to commute on a daily basis from their permanent address.

These areas are discussed in turn. In the last section we also look at how long workers are typically based at an individual site to give some idea of the frequency of moving between sites. Clearly workers may have spent their whole working life in one region and therefore appear relatively immobile, but if they move site frequently, providing training to these workers could be problematic.

5.1 Worker origin

Workers were asked where they were from originally. As a measure of mobility clearly this is very broad, since people may have moved to a region on a permanent basis and done so many years ago for reasons other than their work. That said there are still some interesting differences between regions as far as importing and exporting workers is concerned which are shown in table 5.1.

Table 5.1 Where from originally/international and inter-region movement													
	Where currently working												
Where from originally	NI %	NE %	Scot %	Wales %	NW %	Y&H %	WM %	ROI %	EM %	SW %	EE %	SE %	Lon %
Northern Ireland	92	*	-	2	1	-	*	*	1	*	1	1	1
North East	*	84	4	1	*	5	**2**	*	1	1	1	1	1
Scotland	1	1	84	*	*	1	**1**	*	1	1	-	*	1
Wales	-	*	-	79	3	1	**1**	-	2	5	*	2	1
North West	*	1	4	2	74	5	**2**	-	2	8	1	1	1
Yorkshire and Humber	*	4	2	-	4	74	**2**	1	9	3	1	1	1
West Midlands	*	-	1	1	11	-	**70**	-	7	7	1	3	*
Republic of Ireland	2	*	-	1	1	2	**5**	67	2	2	5	5	5
East Midlands	*	*	*	1	1	6	**7**	-	65	4	2	2	1
South West	-	1	-	7	-	*	**3**	-	1	60	2	4	*
East of England	1	4	-	-	*	3	**1**	*	2	2	57	7	9
South East	-	1	-	1	*	1	**1**	*	2	8	6	49	15
London	-	*	1	1	*	*	**1**	*	1	3	13	12	33
Outside UK and ROI	2	1	2	4	-	1	**3**	29	2	1	8	8	22

Base: All Respondents (3,877)
NB: Dark shading denotes proportion of workers in region originally from that nation/region. West Midlands workers are also shaded (light).

Seven in ten (70%) of those currently working in the West Midlands originate from the region. This places the West Midlands mid-table in terms of imported versus 'home grown' workers. Neighbouring East Midlands is the most likely external source of workers (7%), followed by workers from ROI (5%).

5.2 Location of workplace, current and permanent residence

Respondents were all asked where they were living to get to their current place of work, whether this was their permanent address and, if not, where their permanent address was. Table 5.2 presents results for *all* regions showing:

- the percentage of workers whose **permanent** residence is in the same nation/region as their current work
- the percentage of workers currently living in the same nation/region while as their current work.

In each instance the corresponding percentages resident in different regions are shown to the left and the percentages resident in neighbouring regions to the right. The results from the 2004 survey are also included for comparison.

Table 5.2 Nation/Region of establishment/permanent residence and work residence

	Region of **permanent** residence						Region of **current** residence					
Region of establishment	% from different nation/region		% from same nation/region		% from neighbouring nation/regions		% from different nation/region		% from same nation/region		% from neighbouring nations/regions	
	2007	2004	**2007**	2004	**2007**	2004	**2007**	2004	**2007**	2004	**2007**	2004
Northern Ireland	**1**	0.5	**99**	99.5	**-**	-	**0.5**	0.5	**99.5**	99.5	**-**	-
Scotland	**8**	2	**92**	98	**4**	1	**1**	1	**99**	99	**-**	1
North East	**9**	5	**91**	95	**6**	4	**8**	4	**92**	96	**5**	3
West Midlands	**13**	11	**87**	89	**10**	10	**7**	10	**93**	90	**7**	9
Wales	**13**	10	**87**	90	**7**	5	**12**	8	**88**	92	**7**	4
Yorkshire and Humber	**16**	12	**84**	88	**15**	10	**12**	8	**88**	92	**11**	8
East of England	**20**	32	**80**	68	**17**	27	**18**	30	**82**	70	**15**	28
North West	**12**	19	**82**	81	**15**	17	**18**	13	**82**	87	**15**	12
South West	**22**	13	**78**	87	**13**	8	**17**	8	**83**	92	**11**	5
East Midlands	**23**	25	**77**	75	**20**	18	**22**	20	**78**	80	**20**	16
London	**32**	43	**68**	57	**30**	25	**30**	29	**70**	71	**30**	26
South East	**32**	27	**68**	73	**24**	23	**31**	21	**69**	79	**25**	21

Base: All respondents (2007: 3,877; 2004: 8,436)

The majority of construction workers in the West Midlands have residences (both permanent and current) in the region, as is true of all nations/regions. Over four-fifths (87%) of workers in the region have a permanent address in the West Midlands. The remainder almost exclusively (10%) have a permanent address in a neighbouring region so journeys may well be over short distances only, and reflect more general commuting patterns across regional boundaries. Overall, 13% of respondents working in the West Midlands are working outside the nation/region where they have their permanent address and only 7% are working outside the nation/region of their current residence (all of whom are currently resident in a neighbouring region). The West Midlands has changed very little in these respects since 2004.

Relative to other nation/regions the West Midlands is a region, which draws nearly all workers from the region, other nations/regions in this pack tending to be peripheral nations/regions such as ROI, Scotland, Wales and the North East.

Table 5.3 shows the percentage of construction workers working outside the nation/region where they have a permanent residence.

Overall 31% of respondents with a permanent address in the West Midlands are working outside the region. This makes the West Midlands the nation/region most likely to export workers, significantly above the UK/ROI average (18%). Strong links out of the region to other parts of the country no doubt enable the West Midlands to act as a central hub in this way. Thus the region was amongst the top exporters of workers in 2004 also, but an increase on this measure has now placed the West Midlands at the top of the table. This measure varied widely by nation/region, and, not surprisingly, the more geographically isolated areas of Scotland and Northern Ireland had very few workers who live there while working outside the geographical area.

Table 5.3 Percentage working outside their nation/region of permanent residence

Region of permanent address	**Permanent 2007 %**	Permanent 2004 %
West Midlands	**31**	27
London	**30**	35
East Midlands	**28**	43
East of England	**28**	29
South East	**20**	12
Yorkshire and Humber	**18**	22
North East	**16**	21
Wales	**16**	18
South West	**15**	27
North West	**9**	15
Northern Ireland	**4**	2
Scotland	**1**	8
All	**18**	21

Base: All respondents (2007: 3,877; 2004: 8,436)

5.3 Temporary accommodation

While clearly not everyone based in temporary accommodation will necessarily be ‘imported’ workers (some may also have a permanent address within the nation/region), this group is a proxy for the highly mobile workforce and as such constitutes another measure of mobility.

Overall 6% of West Midlands workers interviewed were based at a temporary address to get to work.

5.4 Proportion of career spent in current location

Workers were asked what proportion of the time they had worked in construction in the UK/ROI had been spent on sites in the nation/region where they were currently working. A third (35%) said they'd spent all of their construction careers on sites in the West Midlands, and a further third (37%) have spent most of their construction career in the region. These figures suggest the construction site workforce is relatively geographically immobile, even if the West Midlands workforce is slightly more mobile than the UK/ROI overall (but slightly less so than in 2004).

Table 5.4 Proportion of construction career spent in current nation/region

	West Midlands 2007 %	West Midlands 2004 %	Overall Workforce (UK/ROI) 2007 %
All of it	**35**	29	43
Most of it	**37**	39	33
Around half	**12**	16	9
Small proportion	**11**	15	8
Only this job	**4**	N/A	3
Don't know	**1**	N/A	3

Base: West Midlands respondents (2007: 262; 2004: 517); Overall workforce (3,877)

The patterns on mobility discussed already in this chapter, particularly on where workers say they were from, are repeated on this measure of mobility. Those currently working in Scotland and in Northern Ireland were particularly likely to have spent all their time in construction within the nation/region (68% and 64% respectively). By contrast, in the East Midlands and London around a quarter had spent all their time on sites within the region (26% and 28% respectively).

Employees are more likely to have spent their entire construction career in the West Midlands than their self-employed counterparts (39% cf. 23%). Not surprisingly, those who have been in the industry a long time are more likely to have ventured outside of the region, having had greater opportunity (in terms of time) to have done so.

5.5 Travel to work distances

The mean average number of miles travelled to work (each way) was 18 miles (20 miles in 2004), which is somewhat lower than the UK/ROI average (24 miles), as it was in 2004.

A quarter (25%) of workers reported travelling less than five miles, with three quarters (76%) travelling less than 25 miles. Only 5% were travelling over fifty miles each way to work, which is half the UK/ROI average (10%). This of course will be affected by the geographical size and population density of the regions.

5.6 Sub-sector mobility

All workers were asked whether they had spent significant parts of their construction career on any of the following types of project: new housing; housing repair and maintenance; commercial work such as shops, offices, pubs etc.; private industrial such as warehousing, land reclamation etc.; public non-housing such as schools, landscaping etc. and infrastructure such as road, tunnel etc. Results are summarised in table 5.5[5].

Table 5.5 Type of projects spent significant periods of construction career on		
	West Midlands 2007 %	Overall Workforce (UK/ROI) 2007 %
New housing	**76**	73
Public non-housing	**51**	44
Commercial work	**50**	43
Housing repair and maintenance	**34**	38
Private industrial	**32**	33
Infrastructure	**27**	21
One type of project only	**29**	34
Two types of project only	**24**	19
Three types of project only	**16**	15
Four types of project only	**14**	12
Five types of project only	**10**	11
Worked on all six types of project	**6**	6
Base: West Midlands respondents (2007: 262); Overall workforce (3,877)		

Most workers (76%) had spent significant periods of their career working on new housing projects while only 34% had spent time working on housing repair, 32% on private industrial and 27% on infrastructure projects. The majority of workers had spent significant parts of their career across different types of project, only a third (29%) had worked within one type of sub-sector only. These results are in line with the UK/ROI overall.

Results vary predictably by length of time in the industry. Four-fifths (83%) of those who had only been in the industry a year or less had worked on just one type of project, compared with just a quarter (24%) of those with five or more years' experience.

[5] Results are not directly comparable with 2004 on this measure as a different number and definition of types of projects was used in 2004.

5.7 Leaving the industry

A final measure of mobility is the anticipated outflow from the workforce, i.e. those leaving the industry. The results for workers aged below 60 are shown in table 5.6.

Table 5.6 Likelihood of working in construction in 5 years time

	West Midlands 2007 %	West Midlands 2004 %	Overall Workforce (UK/ROI) 2007 %
Definitely will	**48**	36	44
Very likely	**34**	33	32
Quite l kely	**10**	20	10
Quite unlikely	**2**	2	2
Very unlikely	**1**	1	2
Definitely will not	**<1**	3	2
Hope to be retired in 5 years	**<1**	N/A	2
Don't know	**4**	5	6

Base: West Midlands workers aged under 60 (2007: 240; 2004: 506); All respondents aged under 60 (3,686)

Only three per cent of workers aged below 60 think it is unlikely they will be working in the industry in five years time, with over four-fifths saying it is definite (48%) or very likely (34%) they will stay. These results are very similar to those for the UK/ROI as a whole, and more positive than in 2004.

Predictably those new to the industry (with less than one year's experience) were more uncertain than average, 17% being unsure whether they would be working in construction in five years' time.