

# International recruitment in Social Care - challenges and opportunities

**Executive insights survey**

July 2019



## Executive summary

- The purpose of this executive survey, among Care England members, was to assess **the relevance of International recruitment**, in recent years and going forward, **as a potential solution to the workforce challenges of our UK Care sector**
- We received responses from the Executive teams of 35 Social Care providers, demonstrating the **significant interest in the topic**
- **Recruitment and retention were a consistent challenge for all respondents**, with 1 in 4 respondents experiencing over 16% vacancy rates and around 1 in 2 respondents showing staff turnover in excess of 16%, both particularly significant among the largest providers
- **35% of respondents continue to recruit or have recruited from countries like Romania, Poland, Italy, Spain, India and the Philippines**, largely because of lack of local staff
- The feedback on **the quality of care workers from abroad was positive, with 44% of executives rating overseas workers 7/10** and as high as 8/10, with no ratings below 5/10
- However, **feedback on the ease of the international recruitment process was mixed**, ranging from very difficult to very easy, with respondents using a variety of channels, from international recruitment agencies to direct recruitment and job fairs
- **Finding the right recruitment partner was rated as the most critical success factor**, with 100% of respondents rating it 'important' or 'very important'

## Executive summary

- Other softer elements, such as **career development opportunities and non-pay benefits, scored high among the most critical success factors** for international recruitment and retention
- **Over the next 5 years, 65% of organisations are either planning to recruit internationally or not ruling it out**, with majority of respondents (75%) considering or not ruling out engaging an international recruitment and retention specialist
- In summary, the survey largely confirms that **International recruitment will play a significant role for years to come in the UK Care sector, with very positive feedback on overseas care workers and a few barriers to overcome**, to make the recruitment and retention process easier and fully successful, ideally with the support of a trusted recruitment and retention partner

## About us

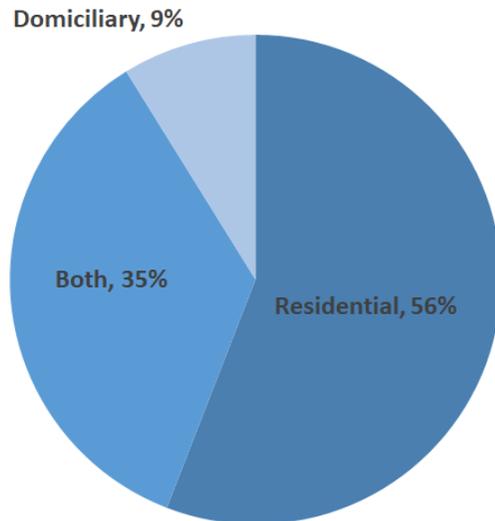
- We created **Talent for Care** ([www.talentforcare.uk](http://www.talentforcare.uk)) to bring innovation and sustainability to international recruitment and retention of care workers
- **Innovation is essential** to connect tens of thousands of highly skilled international care workers, to our social care needs and opportunities
- We share the same values of **integrity, sustainability, drive and partnership**, with all our teams and partners in the countries where we operate
- We believe **retention is also a major opportunity**, to be rapidly addressed in new, simple and cost effective ways
- If you are considering bringing care talent from overseas in a sustainable way, while fixing any leaks in the bucket, please do not hesitate to contact us for an informal introduction:  
[alessandro.alagna@talentforcare.uk](mailto:alessandro.alagna@talentforcare.uk), 07950 345 274 or 01494 702 712



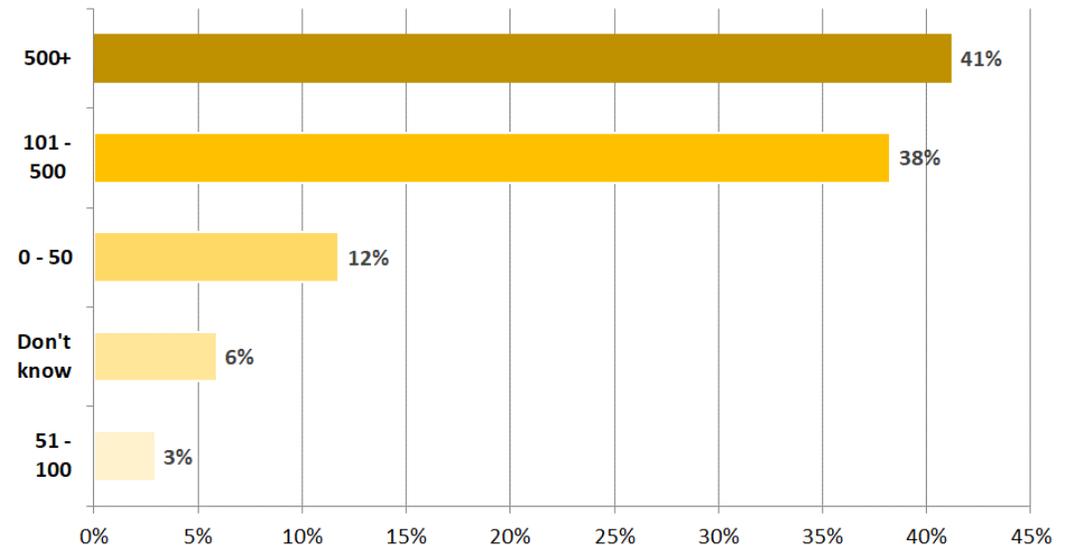
# Profile of survey respondents

- **35 residential and domiciliary care organisations** took part in our executive survey, with over 40% of respondents employing over 500 members of staff
- The profile of respondents included CEOs/Owners, Operations, HR executives and Care managers

What type of care does your organisation provide?



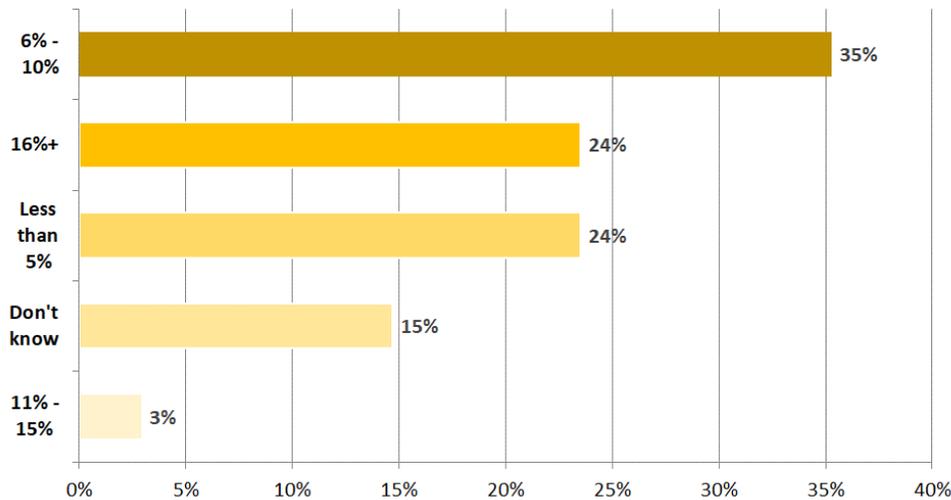
How many people are there in your organisation (FTEs)?



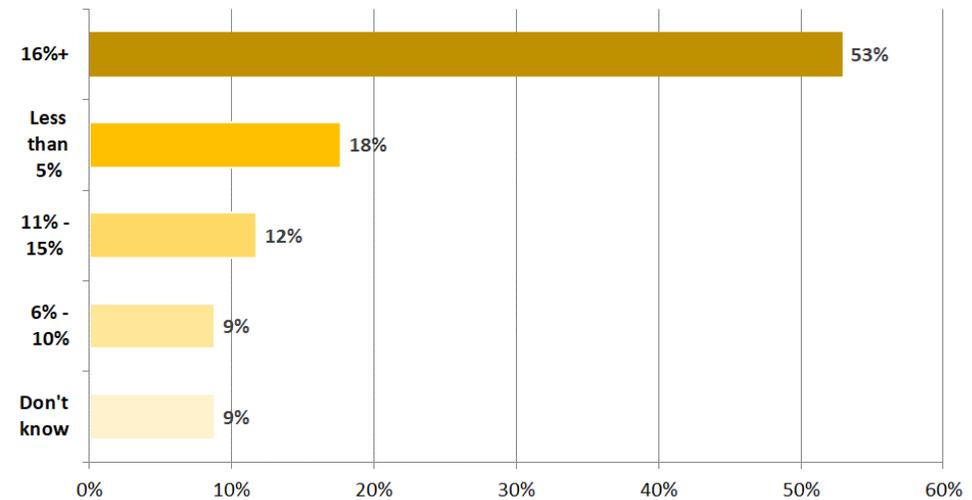
# Recruitment and retention challenges

- With current estimates of over 100,000 care worker vacancies in the UK, it might be no surprise that nearly **one in four respondents (24%) has vacancy rates of over 16%**; on a positive note, the same proportion (24%) is managing to keep **vacancy rates below 5%**
- Retention rates are undoubtedly a concern, with **53% of the sample experiencing staff turnover of over 16%**; conversely, nearly **one in 5 respondents (18%)** is doing very well, by **keeping attrition below 5%**
- From further analysis, there seem to be a correlation between size and workforce challenges, with **all respondents with over 500 employees showing staff turnover of over 16%**; 87% of respondents with over 16% vacancies have over 500 staff; conversely, the large majority of **organisations with less than 5% vacancies and less than 5% staff turnover are relatively small**

What is the current level of care staff vacancies within your organisation?



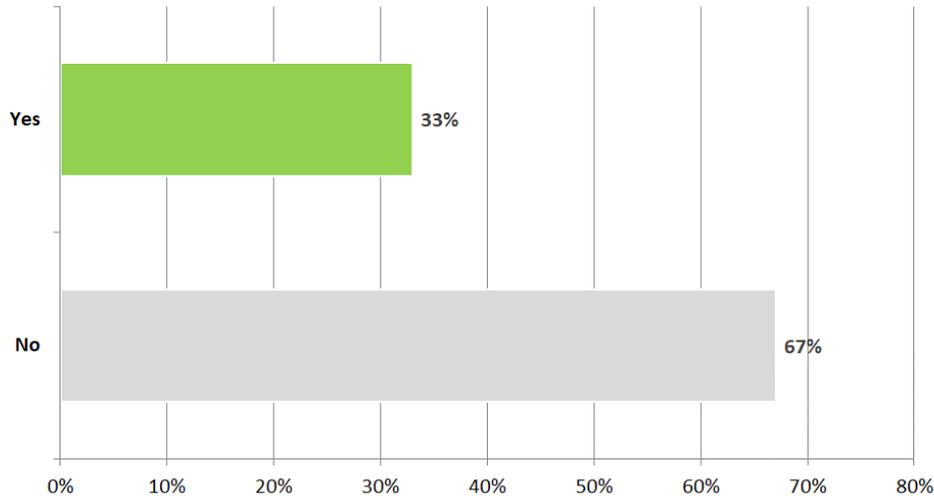
What is your annual staff turnover?



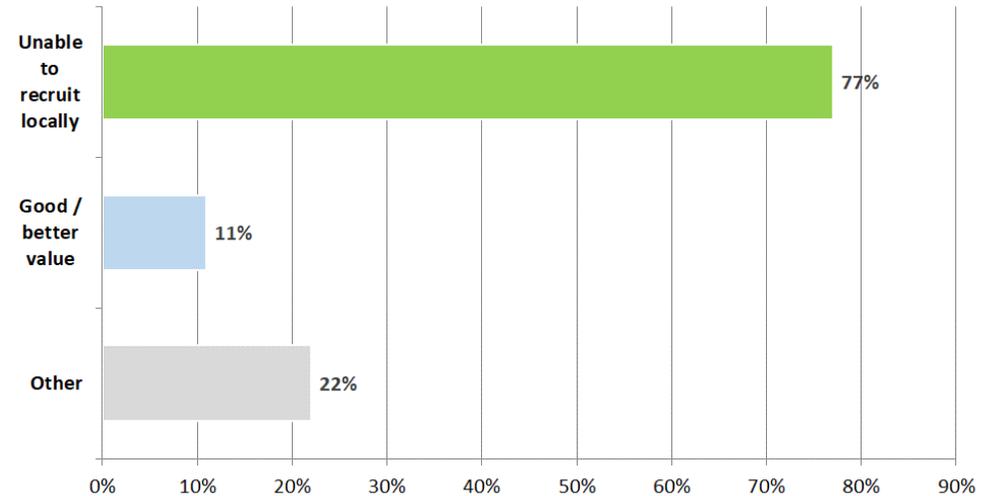
# International recruitment

- **Over 1/3 of respondents (35%) have recruited directly from abroad**, confirming that international recruitment, although not as widespread as in Healthcare, is relatively common in the Care sector
- Unsurprisingly, the overwhelming reason for recruiting from abroad is the **shortage of qualified local staff**

Do you recruit, or have you ever recruited, care staff directly from outside the UK?



Why do you recruit, or have you ever recruited, care staff directly from outside the UK? (\*)

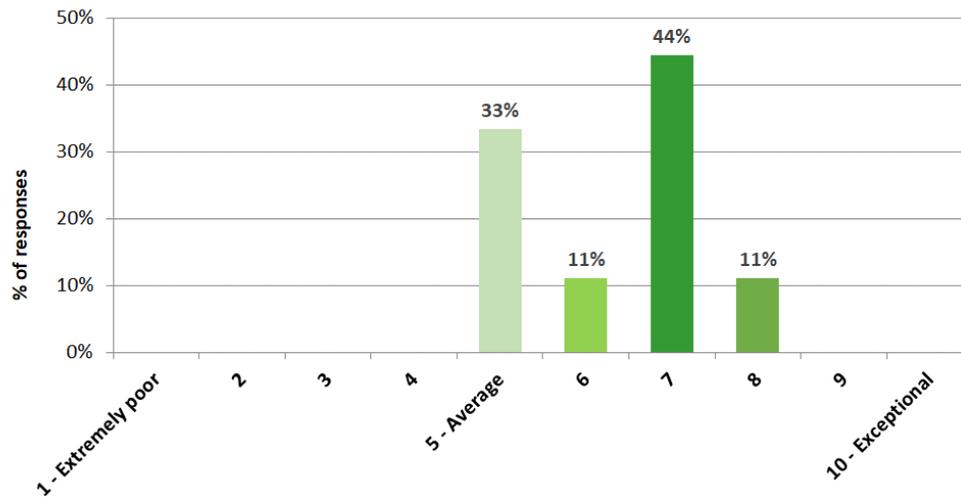


(\*) Multiple answers allowed, therefore the total can be greater than 100%

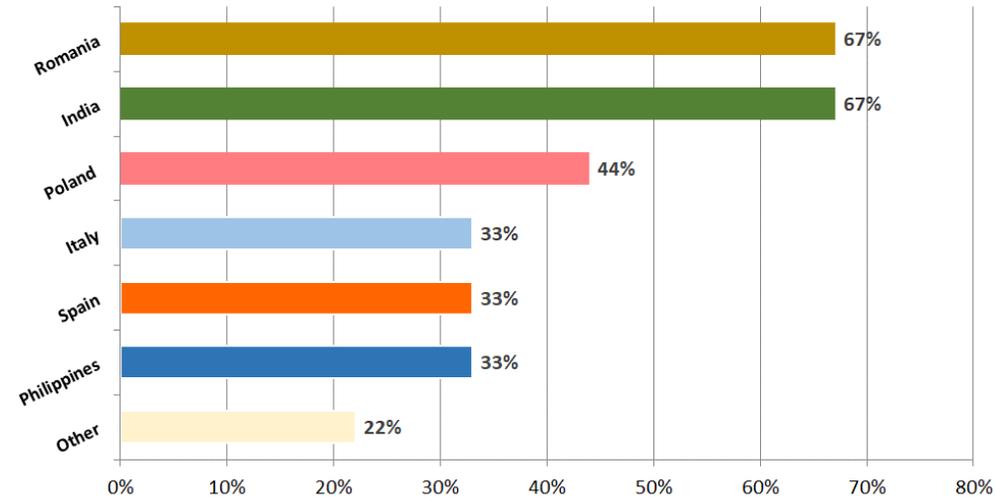
# Quality and origin of overseas workers

- Feedback on the quality of overseas workers was **consistently very positive**, with **66%** of respondents rating them **above average**
- Recruitment mainly took place from **Eastern and Southern Europe**, as well as **India** and the **Philippines**

How would you rate the quality of the overseas workers?



Which countries outside the UK have you recruited from in the past? (\*)

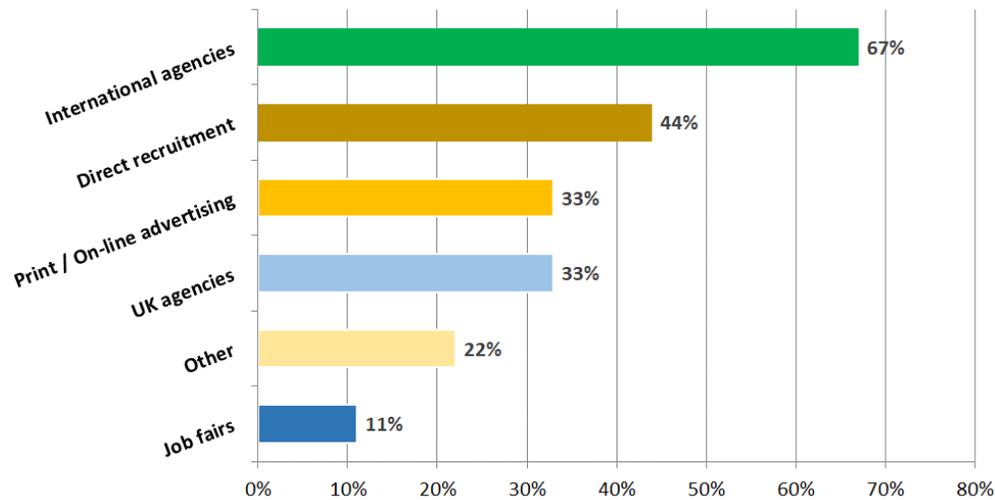


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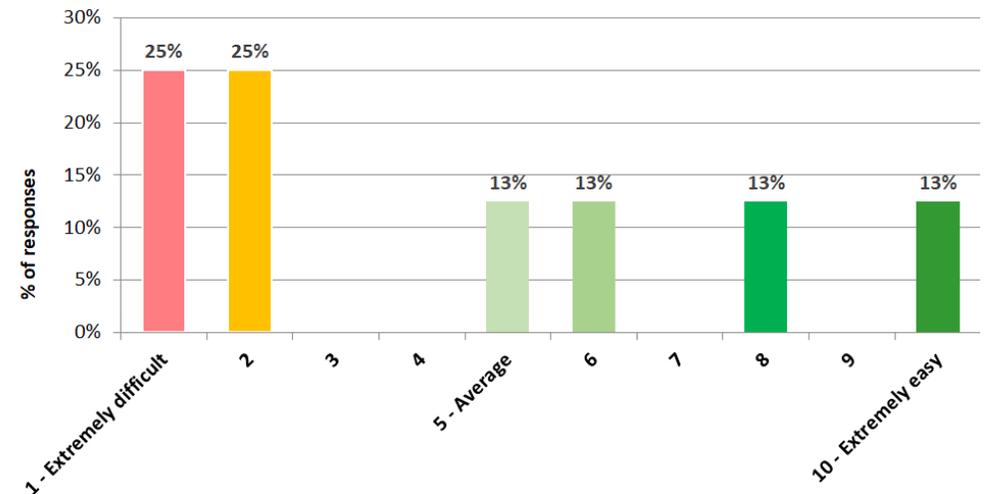
# Channels and ease of international recruitment

- **Over 2/3 of the sample (67%) used international recruitment agencies** to drive the process, among a variety of channels
- **The experience of international recruitment appears to be mixed**, with half of respondents finding the process very or extremely difficult, while the other half not so much or even extremely easy (13%)

Which recruitment channels did / do you use? (\*)



How easy did you find the recruitment process?

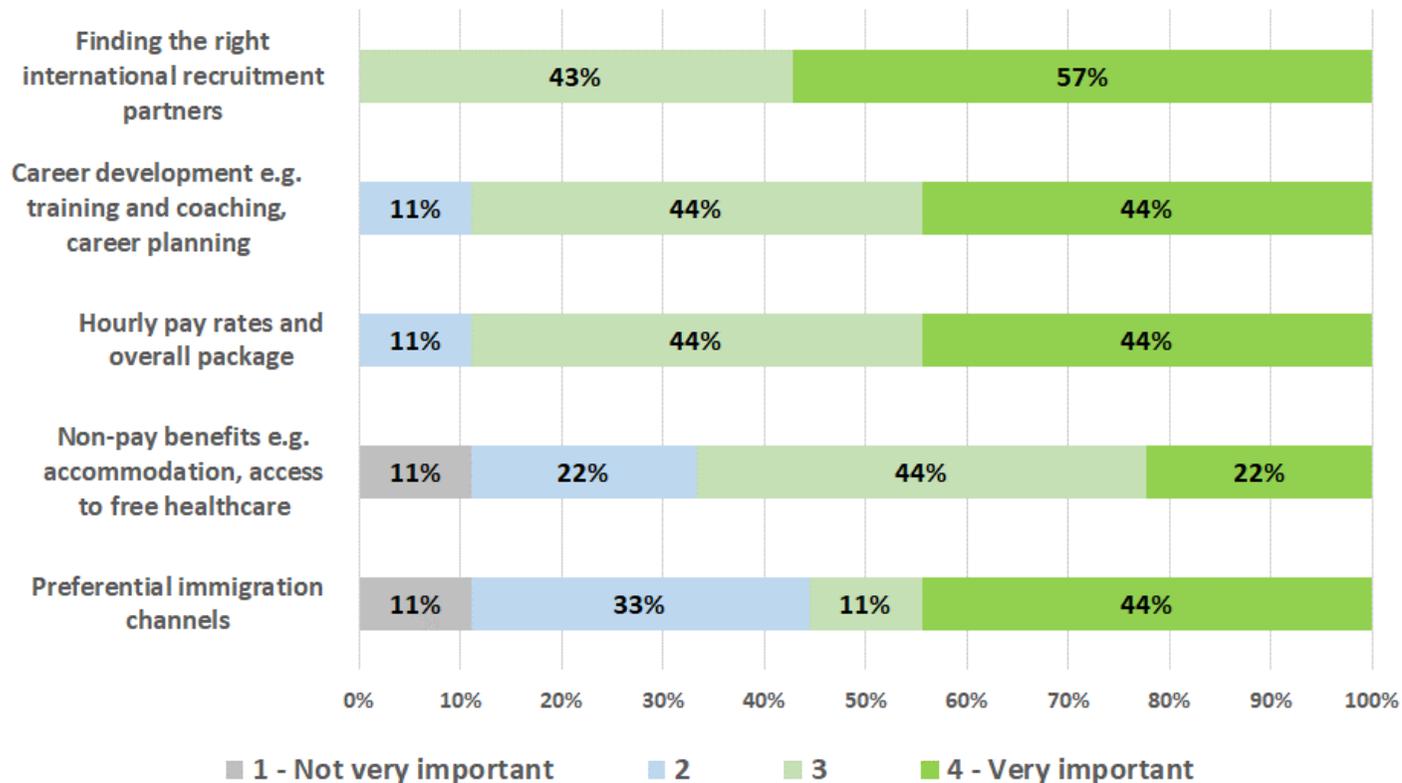


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# Critical success factors for international recruitment and retention

- **Finding the right recruitment partners** emerges as **the most critical factor** for the success of international recruitment and retention, with **100% of respondents** rating it important or very important
- A significant proportion of respondents also rated softer factors, such as **Career development opportunities (88%)** and **Non-pay benefits (66%)**, as ‘important’ or ‘very important’

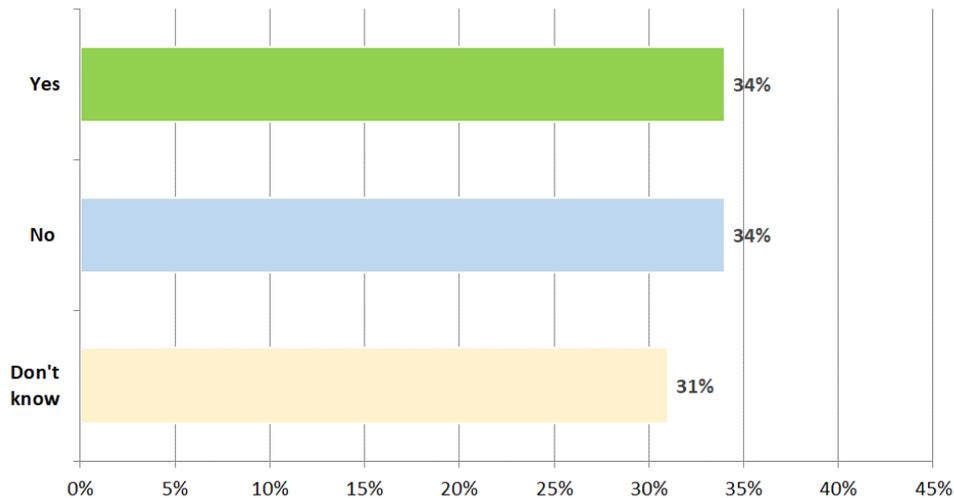
In your experience, which of the following factors are the most important for recruitment and retention?



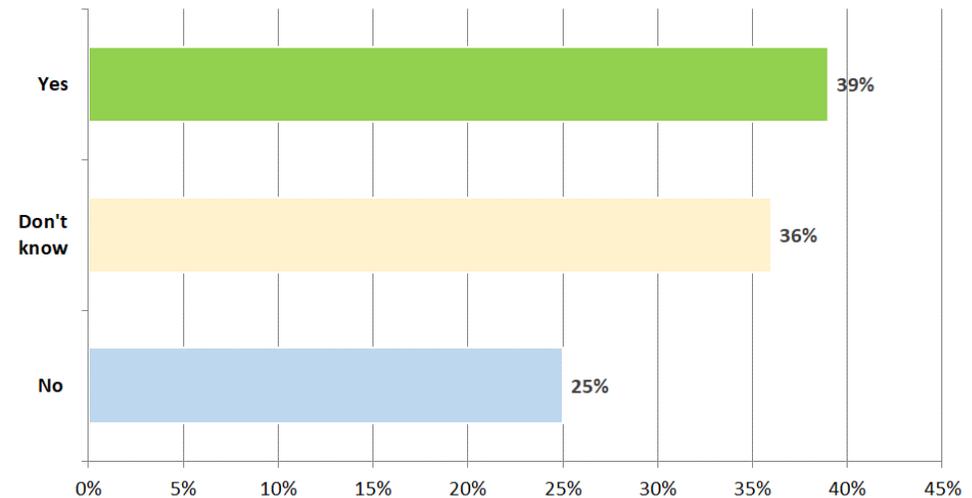
# Future international recruitment and retention plans

- Over the next 5 years, **2 out of 3 care providers are either planning to recruit internationally or not ruling it out**, suggesting that **international recruitment is likely to become ever more relevant** for the UK care sector
- **Most respondents (39%) would consider using a specialist recruitment and retention partner** to support their international recruitment activities, while **another 36% would not rule it out**

Over the next 5 years, do you expect you will need to recruit more care workers internationally for your organisation?



Would you consider using a specialist international recruitment agency to help you to recruit and retain overseas care workers?



## We would be delighted to hear from you

At Talent for Care **we are changing the approach to international recruitment**, which, according to the findings of this executive survey, will most likely play a relevant role to address care worker shortages across the country. We therefore need **international recruitment that works for the Care sector, not just Healthcare.**

At the same time, **we are working hard to address the major retention challenges** that most care providers we know have been experiencing for quite some time. We see **retention as a major opportunity**, very often missed because of quite basic and addressable root causes. We have therefore adapted an **innovative approach**, originally developed for A+E nurses in the North East, to the retention of care workers across the country.

Please do not hesitate to contact us to share your thoughts and our experience, **we would be delighted to hear from you for an informal introduction:**



**Alessandro Alagna, Director – Talent for Care**

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**A special thank you** to all of those who responded to the survey and to Alistair White and the team at Care England – **great to work with you all!**

