

## **Blame the immigrants.**

Since the EU was expanded in 2004 immigration into the UK from Eastern European countries has increased markedly. Even supermarkets now cater for Poles, Lithuanians, Latvians and Slovaks. At the same time this group of workers has been blamed for everything that has beset the UK and many things which haven't. Here are a few:

*“Organized gangs of Poles are using spear guns and bin liners to clear our ponds of carp. Eastern Europeans are considered a bigger threat to fish stocks than global warming.”* While Poles do eat carp for Christmas, the demise of the carp, or wild mushrooms from our forests is not under threat.

*“Eastern Europeans are eating all our swans”,* well actually all of the Queen's swans. The Queen has not filed a complaint with the police; and possibly this is because no one has seen anyone eating a swan.

*“Unemployment is rising because all the immigrants are taking the jobs.”* This observation coincided with a rise in immigration and a rise in unemployment. When immigration continued to rise and unemployment fell, the rumour persisted.

*“Bad service in restaurants is down to Eastern Europeans not knowing how to speak English.”* Or is it down to poorly skilled workers finding jobs in restaurants?

*“Poles cause the highest number of accidents in the UK because they drive like they do at home - fast and drunk.”* This seems strange given that Poland has the toughest anti drink-driving rules in the whole of Europe.

*“A British worker earning £30,000 per annum has suffered a reduction in earnings of around £230 per annum because of the fear of unemployment.”* Is this fear due to competition from immigrants, competition from international companies, or technology such as computers or robots?

### **Questions**

1. What are the benefits of EU enlargement?

2. Why do you think it is more common to raise the fears of economic enlargement, rather than emphasize the benefits?