

TRUTH BY NUMBERS

An investigation into the financial impact of
European immigration in the United Kingdom



March 2015
Rapid Formations

I. Abstract

This report has been commissioned by Rapid Formations to develop a firm understanding of European migrants who choose to settle in the United Kingdom and assess whether they pose any impact on the UK's economic stability. Overall, research suggests that migrants from the European Union pose a statistically significant net benefit to UK public finances – with the average European migrant contributing 13.5% more in taxes than they are receiving in government-funded public services. The average European worker is better educated and more likely to be employed than natural-born UK citizens. They are also more likely to start their own businesses, and maintain higher earning salaries than other UK-born workers. This consequently suggests that European immigration is a largely positive component within the UK economy, and contradicts stereotypical portrayals of migrants living in the UK.

Headline figures:

- 28 EU migrants enter the UK every hour (10 EU migrants leave the UK every hour)
- EU migrants cost the UK government £408.12 per second in public expenditures, and contribute £463.35 per second in revenues
- 62% of EU migrants come to the UK for work (12% to study)
- Over a third of all EU migrants that come to the UK seeking work have a job waiting for them upon arrival
- At £28,699, the average salary of an EU migrant worker is 7.6% higher than the average UK worker
- A third of EU workers are classified as professionals, associate professionals or senior management officials
- Migrants are 6.8% more likely to start a company in the UK than natural-born citizens
- Most EU migrants come to the UK from Spain, Poland and France (most migrants leave the UK for Spain, France or Germany)
- Migrants are most likely to settle in London, Greater Manchester or Birmingham
- 35% of Europeans leaving the UK do so for work-related reasons (and four out of five work seekers have a guaranteed job waiting for them abroad)

II. Introduction

In May, UK voters will go to the polls to decide who will govern their country for the next five years – and few issues surrounding this year’s general election have been more bitterly debated than the UK’s role within the European Union. EU legislation guaranteeing free movement within member countries has come under heavy fire for the way in which it has allowed an unprecedented number of European migrants to enter the UK with virtual ease. In many regions of the UK, public perceptions of said migrants have plummeted. In one recent YouGov survey, 71% of voters told pollsters that immigration has been bad for the UK. Many of those voters indicated the primary reason they were largely against allowing additional migrants into the UK was based upon the perception that immigration is a drain on public finances.

It could be argued those perceptions helped bolster the strength of anti-EU party UKIP and afforded them a stellar performance in 2014’s EU elections. Wary of upsetting public opinion, few Westminster parties have consequently proven bold enough to take on the issue of European migration as part of their campaigns in this year’s UK general election. Surveys indicate that absence has been duly noted. In one YouGov poll conducted in February 2015, 34% of voters argued the Conservative Party should be talking more openly about immigration. Comparatively, 45% said the Labour Party needed to better assert its position on immigration, and 46% said the same about the Liberal Democrats.

Yet even as politicians continue to teeter on whether to make a campaign based upon this issue, UK business leaders and voting groups are calling for action. At the start of February 2015, the British Chamber of Commerce, which represents small businesses that employ over five million people in the UK, called on Westminster to hold an immediate “in/out” referendum on the country’s EU membership. Despite the counter-claim that a vast majority of small businesses declare support for the UK’s involvement in European politics, such a referendum would undeniably add fuel to the fire of anti-European sentiment.

Last year was the highest-ever recorded level of EU migration into the UK, with an unprecedented 251,000 foreign-born EU citizens entering the country. A vast majority of those migrants came to the UK in search of work, sparking the assertion that the country’s job pool has become inundated with low-skilled workers – leaving UK residents high and dry. Accusations are also rife that EU migrants enter the UK as so-called ‘benefit tourists’ to take advantage of the country’s welfare state.

By and large, those perceptions appear misconstrued. Almost a third of EU workers are classified as professionals or senior company officials. They’re also more likely to boast a higher education than their UK-born colleagues. Europeans working in the UK also earn a larger salary than natural-born citizens. Overall, European migrants that have immigrated to the UK since 2001 are putting around £2bn more into the system every year than they’re taking out.

The following report, commissioned by company formation agents Rapid Formations, provides an in-depth analysis outlining who these migrants are, where they come from and how they’re contributing to help drive the UK economy forward.

III. European Migrants: Who Are They?

How many European migrants come to the UK?

Last year proved to be a record-breaking year for European migration into the UK. In the year ending September 2014, 251,000 EU migrants entered into the UK. That figure was a statistically significant increase of 43,000 from the number of European migrants that came to the UK the previous year. On average, 20,916 foreign-born EU migrants are entering the UK each month. That amounts to 4,826 per week, and 687 per day. Every hour, 28 new European migrants come to the UK.

251,000 EU migrants came into the UK in 2013/2014, equating to:

- 20,916 per month
- 4,826.92 per week
- 687.67 per day
- 28.65 per hour
- 0.48 per minute
- 0.008 per second

Source: http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171778_396645.pdf

European workers were leaving the UK, too. In the year ending September 2014, 89,000 foreign-born EU citizens emigrated from the UK – a slight increase from the 78,000 EU citizens that migrated the year prior. Last year, approximately 7,416 non-UK EU citizens emigrated from the UK per month, 1,711 per week and over 243 per day. Every hour, around 10 European migrants leave the country.

A more detailed breakdown of UK emigration can be found on page eight of this report.

89,000 EU migrants left the UK in 2013/14, equating to:

- 7,416.66 per month
- 1,711.54 per week
- 243.84 per day
- 10.15 per hour
- 0.17 per minute
- 0.003 per second

Source: http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171778_396645.pdf

In turn, the net migration of foreign-born EU residents into the UK came in at 168,000. This was a statistically significant increase from the year prior, in which the net migration of non-UK EU residents was approximately 106,000.

Where do migrants come from?

The EU consists of 28 countries: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Ireland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

The majority of EU migrants that entered the country last year originated from the institutionally-established EU15 collective. The EU15 consists of Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Republic of Ireland, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

More specifically, the single-highest proportion of European migrants travelling to the UK do so through Spain. In 2013, 33,000 Spanish migrants entered the UK. Comparatively, 27,000 Polish migrants entered the country that year – a relatively small decline of around 2,000 from the previous year. The third most common country of origin amongst European migrants was France, with 22,000. Italy came in fourth, with 16,000, whilst Romania finished fifth with 15,000. Around 12,000 Lithuanians immigrated into the UK, establishing Lithuania as the sixth most popular country of origin. The Netherlands and Portugal came in seventh and eighth with 8,000 migrants each.

That being said, statisticians point out that country of last residence will not necessarily reflect nationality. For example, around 27% of immigrants arriving from Spain in 2013 were British citizens.

Top countries of origin

- 1) 33,000 Spain
- 2) 27,000 Poland
- 3) 22,000 France
- 4) 16,000 Italy
- 5) 15,000 Romania
- 6) 12,000 Lithuania
- 7) 8,000 Netherlands
- 8) 8,000 Portugal

Source: <http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/HTMLDocs/dvc215/index.html#sty=true&flow=flow0&period=38&fix=UK&view=200,-40,940,635>

In 2014, the UK also recorded a statistically significant increase in the number of EU2 migrants entering the country. This European region is comprised of Romania and Bulgaria. In the year ending in June 2014, a combined 32,000 migrants entered the UK from the EU2 region. Between June and September, an additional 5,000 Romanians and Bulgarians immigrated to the UK.

Bulgaria and Romania joined the EU on January 1, 2007. Migrants from these countries coming to the UK were subsequently subject to transitional EU employment restrictions, which placed limits on the kind of employment they could undertake. Yet these restrictions were lifted on January 1, 2014 – affording more EU2 citizens the opportunity to live and work in the UK.

The UK government has subsequently recorded a significant increase in the number of EU2 citizens migrating to the UK. Approximately 11,000 more EU2 migrants travelled to the UK in 2013/2014 than were recorded the previous year.

How old are migrants?

Of all EU migrants, nearly nine in ten are of working age. According to long-term international migration data collected by the ONS, around 48.9% of EU migrants that came to the UK in 2013 were between the ages of 15 and 24. Meanwhile, 40.9% of European migrants were between the ages of 25 and 44. Just 6.5% of migrants were aged 45-60 (for women) and 45-64 (for men). One per cent of EU migrants were over the legal age of retirement.

According to research from UCL's Centre for Research and Analysis of Migration, the average EU15 migrant is age 27. The typical EU8 migrant, is 26 years old.

European immigration by age

- 2.7% under 15
- 48.9% are 15-24
- 40.9% are 25-44
- 6.5% are 45-59/64
- 1% are 60/65 and over

Source: <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/publications/re-reference-tables.html?edition=ton33677-346138>

How do migrants get here?

A vast majority of European migrants travel to the UK via air. In fact, estimates from the annual ONS International Passenger Survey in 2013 indicate that 72% of EU migrants entered the UK by air. Of those that travelled by air, over 43% entered the country through either Stanstead or Luton airports. Meanwhile, 16.4% of EU migrants travelling by air entered the UK through Heathrow. By comparison, around 27.9% of all EU migrants entered the UK by sea or via the Channel Tunnel.

Top travel methods

- 72% travel by air

The most common points of entry are:

- 1) Stanstead or Luton airports
- 2) Heathrow Airport
- 3) Gatwick Airport

4) Manchester Airport**5) Other**

- **28% travel by sea or Channel Tunnel**

Source: <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/migration1/long-term-international-migration/2013/table-3-19.xls>

Where do migrants settle?

The vast majority of migrants choose to settle in London. According to ONS figures, one third of all foreign-born migrants now live in the UK capital. The most popular area of settlement in London is Westminster, followed by Tower Hamlets, Newham and Camden.

Outside of the capital, the second most popular destination of settlement is Greater Manchester – which attracts just over 4% of all migrants. Birmingham is third, with 2.4%. Meanwhile, Coventry, Edinburgh, Sheffield and Glasgow all attract roughly 1.4% of all migrants.

Top areas of settlement

- 1) Greater London
- 2) Greater Manchester
- 3) Birmingham
- 4) Coventry
- 5) Edinburgh
- 6) Glasgow
- 7) Sheffield

Source: <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/publications/re-reference-tables.html?edition=tcn%3A77-326593>

In total, approximately 89.2% of foreign-born migrants that come to the UK choose to settle in England. Comparatively, 5.6% of migrants settle in Scotland, 2.7% settle in Wales and 2.5% settle in Northern Ireland.

What sort of work do migrants do?

Around one in ten EU-born migrants come to the UK in pursuit of higher education; however, an overwhelming majority enter the country for work-related reasons. In the year ending June 2014, estimates show that 141,000 EU citizens arrived to work – which translates to approximately 60% of all European migrants. This number poses a noticeable increase from 118,000 the year prior. A majority of the 141,000 job seekers that entered the UK in 2013/2014 came from EU15 countries, at 69,000. Meanwhile, 47,000 workers entered the country via EU8 nations, and 24,000 came from EU2 nations.

It's worth noting that approximately 81,780, or 58%, of those workers had a definite job offer waiting for them upon arrival in the UK. That same figure equates to 33% of all EU migrants that entered the UK last year.

Twelve per cent of EU migrants also came to the UK to study. The remaining 28% can effectively be categorised as “other”. The most commonly cited subcategory within that group is entry to join family that already resides somewhere within the country.

Most EU migrants work as industry professionals. Around 24.5% of all EU workers are classified as professionals, associate professionals or senior management officials. By comparison, just 16.7% of domestic-born UK workers are considered professionals. Meanwhile, 22% of EU workers hold elementary or low-skilled positions. Approximately 12% of EU migrants are skilled tradespeople, 11% are process, plant and machine operations and 9.5% of EU migrants work as associate professionals or technical workers. Finally, 8.5% are in the caring and leisure industry, 8% work as administrative or secretarial workers, and 8% hold managerial or senior official posts. The final 6% of EU migrants work in sales or customer services.

EU workers by occupation

- 8% Managers, directors and senior officials
- 15% Professionals
- 9.5% Associate professionals, technical workers
- 8% Administrative and secretarial workers
- 12% Skilled tradespeople
- 8.5% Caring & leisure service workers
- 6% Sales & customer service workers
- 11% Process, plant and machine operators
- 22% Elementary or low-skilled workers

Source: <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/publications/re-reference-tables.html?edition=tom%3A77-380082>

Evidence also suggests that European workers make larger contributions to some of the UK’s more high-value industries. According to the Centre for Economics and Business Research (CEBR), 23.1% of EU14-born workers are employed in the financial, real estate, professional and administrative sectors. Meanwhile, just 16.8% of native UK workers are involved in said industries.

Figures from CReAM also indicate that the average EU migrant is also more likely to hold a university degree than their UK-born job competitors. A quarter of all European migrants now possess some form of higher education qualification, versus 24% of UK-born workers. Over 60% of Western and Southern European migrants are found to have earned a college or university degree, versus around a quarter of Eastern European migrants. Eighty per cent of non-EU migrants possess some form of higher education degree.

By comparison, 13% of Western Europeans and 8% of Eastern Europeans are said to possess a low education. Researchers say 53% of UK natives possess a low education level.

Overall, 79.2% of EU nationals living in the UK are currently employed, versus 75.4% of natural-born citizens. The average EU worker also boasts a noticeably higher salary than the typical UK-born worker. European workers bring in an average of £28,699 per annum. That equates to around

£2,391 per month, or £551 per week. The typical EU worker earns an average of £14.12 per hour. These wage levels are noticeably higher than that of the average UK-born worker. Most domestic workers earn £26,664 per year – 7.6%, or £2,035, less than the average EU-born worker.

The average EU worker earns a salary of £28,699 per year, equating to:

- £2,391 per month
- £551 per week
- £112.99 per day
- £14.12 per hour
- £0.24 per minute

*** Compare this to the average UK-born worker's salary of £26,664

Sources: <http://www.cebr.com/reports/migration-benefits-to-the-uk/>, <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/re/lms/labour-market-statistics/december-2012/index.html>

IV. UK Emigration: why do some migrants choose to leave?

Which migrants choose to leave the UK?

Not all European migrants choose to remain in the UK. In the year ending September 2014, 89,000 non-UK EU citizens emigrated from the UK. That's a noticeable – though not necessarily statistically significant – increase from 78,000 the year prior. Of those EU-born emigrants, around 55% were citizens from EU15 countries, 39% were from EU8 countries, and 5% were from EU2 countries (Romania and Bulgaria).

That amounts to 46,000 emigrants from Western European (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and UK), 32,000 from Eastern Europe (Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia) and 4,000 from Bulgaria and Romania.

Where do European emigrants come from?

- 89,000 non-UK European migrants left the UK in 2014
- 46,000 of those migrants were EU15 citizens
- 32,000 of those migrants were EU8 citizens
- 4,000 of those migrants were EU2 citizens

Source: http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171778_396645.pdf

The most recent available government statistics indicate the majority of individuals that choose to emigrate from the UK are single. In 2010, 61% of those that chose to leave the country were single, 37% were married and 2% were either widowed or divorced. On average, 55% of emigrants are men, and 45% are women. Approximately 93% of all people that emigrated from the UK in 2010 were of working age (15-59 for women and 15-64 for men).

Who is leaving the UK?

- 61% of those emigrating from the UK are single
- 37% are married
- 2% are widowed or divorced
- 55% are men
- 45% are women
- 93% are of working age (15-59 for women, 15-64 for men)

Source: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/116025/horr68-report.pdf

The most common occupation group emigrating from the UK is professionals. In 2010, 36% of emigrants that left the UK held professional or managerial occupations, 28% held manual or clerical

occupations and 22% had been students. Nine per cent of emigrants fell into other categories, and 5% were children.

What do EU emigrants do?

- 36% hold a previous occupation they described as “professional or managerial”
- 28% hold manual or clerical positions
- 22% are former students
- 9% other
- 5% children

Source: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/116025/horr68-report.pdf

Why do some Europeans leave the UK?

Of the 89,000 non-UK-born emigrants that left the UK in 2013/14, 45,000 cited work as their primary reason for emigration. Approximately 80% of those migrants had a definite job waiting for them in another country after leaving the UK.

Meanwhile, 18,000 EU citizens left the UK for study-related reasons. Around 4,000 EU migrants left the UK to accompany relatives elsewhere.

Reasons for EU emigration

- 45,000 non-UK-born EU citizens emigrated from the UK for work related reasons
 - 80% of those workers had a guaranteed job waiting for them abroad
- 18,000 European citizens emigrated from the UK for study
- 4,000 European citizens emigrated to join/accompany relatives
- 22,000 EU migrants left the UK for other/unstated reasons

Source: http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171778_396645.pdf

Where do EU emigrants go?

The single biggest EU destination for migrants leaving the UK is Spain. In 2013, 16,000 people emigrated from the UK to Spain. That same year, 15,000 moved to France, and 14,000 moved to Germany. Around 12,000 emigrants went to Ireland, and 10,000 went to Poland.

It's worth pointing out that around 40% of all emigrants leaving the UK in 2013 were British citizens. In turn, some 56% of the people that emigrated from the UK to Spain were born in the UK. Likewise, 47% of people that emigrated from the UK to France in 2013 were British citizens. By comparison, very few British citizens immigrated to Poland that year – indicating the overwhelming majority of migrants that left the UK for Poland are believed to have been of Polish origin.

Top five emigration destinations

- 1) Spain.
- 2) France.
- 3) Germany
- 4) Ireland
- 5) Poland

Source: http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/HTMLDocs/dvc215/index.html#sty=true&flow=flow08;period=38&fix=UK&view=200_40_940_635

V. EU Migrants and Public Services

How much do migrants contribute in taxes?

From 2001-2011, incoming European migrants have paid approximately £20bn to the UK government in public services. In turn, the UK government has spent approximately £15bn on those residents in public services. Citizens of EU15 countries contributed an average of 64% more in taxes than they received in welfare. Meanwhile, Eastern European migrants contributed around 12% more in taxes. Bearing that in mind, it appears that European immigration does pose a net benefit to the UK's public purse.

That being said, the deficit between give and take has narrowed over the course of the last decade. In 2011 (the most recent available data set), EU migrants received an estimated £12.879bn in public services from the UK government. That amounts to £1.073bn per month, £247.673m per week, and £35.28m per day. Every hour European migrants took £1.47 from the public purse – or £24,287.17 per minute, and £408.12 per second.

Public spending on EU migrants

- £12,879,000,000 per year
- £1,073,250,000 per month
- £247,673,076.92 per week
- £35,284,931.51 per day
- £1,470,205.48 per hour
- £24,487.17 per minute
- £408.12 per second

Source: http://www.cream-migration.org/publ_uploads/CDP_22_13.pdf

That same year, EU migrants paid an estimated £14.622bn into the UK public system. This equates to £1.743bn, or 13.5%, more than those individuals received in public services. Consequently, the UK government recorded an overall financial gain from incoming EU migrants. Every month, the government received £1.215bn per month, £281.2m per week and £40m per day in revenues from EU migrants. That amounts to £1.668m per hour, and £27,801 per minute. Every second, the UK made £463.35 in revenues from EU migrants.

Public revenues raised from EU migrants

- £14,622,000,000 per year
- £1,218,500,000 per month
- £281,192,307.69 per week
- £40,060,273 per day

- £1,668,071.75 per hour
- £27,801 per minute
- £463.35 per second

Source: http://www.cream-migration.org/publ_uploads/CDP_22_13.pdf

In turn, researchers at CReAM estimate the recent EU migrants actually make a larger net contribution to UK public finances than natural born residents. Between 2007 and 2011, European migrants made a positive net contribution of £15.2bn – amounting to £2,610 per capita. Over that same time period, UK natives cost the government £1,900 per capita. Comparatively, non-EEA migrants posed a net fiscal cost of £332 per capita. This disparity likely stems from the fact that European migrants are 43% less likely to be in receipt of state benefits, and 7% less likely to live in social housing.

How do migrants stimulate UK business?

Not only do European migrant workers tend to contribute more to UK public finances than they withdraw in public services, but they are also more likely than a domestic-born worker to start their own business. According to research from the Centre for Entrepreneurs, approximately 10.4% of UK-born workers preside over their own company, versus 17.2% of non-UK nationals. In all, there are 456,073 migrant entrepreneurs in the UK representing 155 countries from across the world. Today approximately one in seven UK companies are founded by enterprising migrant workers.

Experts also assert that high-earning, migrant-founded SMEs in the UK are responsible for employing 1.16m people – or around 14% of all workers. For this exercise, “high-earning” was defined as those SMEs that file annual earnings of between £1-200m.

The largest population of European entrepreneurs hails from Ireland. As of 2014, there were 48,854 Irish entrepreneurs in the UK who are responsible for 56,327 companies. Next came Germany, with 30,755 business owners responsible for creating 33,127 companies. Some 21,757 Polish migrants have started 21,620 companies, and 20,839 French citizens have launched 21,989 companies. Finally, 20,531 Italians now preside over 22,613 UK-based companies.

Top countries of origin for European entrepreneurs

- 1) Ireland
- 2) Germany
- 3) Poland
- 4) France
- 5) Italy

Source: <http://www.creatingourjobs.org/data/MigrantEntrepreneursWEB.pdf>

A vast majority of European entrepreneurs settle in London. But clusters appear all over the country. In Birmingham, there is a community of 8,639 German entrepreneurs. In Stockport, there are 2,886 Norwegian entrepreneurs and in Canterbury there are 1,814 Dutch entrepreneurs.

VI. Conclusion

By and large, research suggests that European immigration poses tangible financial benefits for the UK economy. In recent years, the number of EU-born migrants has risen steadily. Last year turned out to be the biggest increase in European immigration on record – with an unprecedented 251,000 people moving to the UK. It's understandable why such a sharp increase might cause alarm. After all, it stands to reason that public expenditure should rise in relation to the UK population. Yet based upon the findings of this report, EU-born migrants very well may form the most cost-effective population within the UK. They're less likely to receive benefits, more likely to be employed and boast a higher average salary than their fellow UK-born workers.

As UK voters march steadily closer to deciding their country's next parliament, it's worth bearing in mind how various political outcomes may upset the positive net contributions that EU migrants are delivering for the UK economy. Pressure groups have called for an immediate referendum on EU membership, whilst some voters continue to petition the UK government to place restrictions on the rights of immigrants. These elements of uncertainty very well may discourage further immigration – posing an immediate threat to high-value UK industries like finance – which are currently dominated by EU employees. Indeed, CeBR experts reckon an EU exit could ultimately cost the UK economy £60bn worth of GDP over the next three-and-a-half decades alone.

At the end of the day, immigration is a crucial cog in the UK's financial wellbeing. Politicians would do well to take that into consideration whilst developing their party platforms in the run up to May's general election. Yet more important still, voters should have a serious think about the impact of anti-EU or anti-immigration policies as they're stepping into the ballot booth.

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