

**Subject:** Request for population statistics.

**FOI reference:** 202100241281

**Date received:** 21 September 2021

**Date responded:** 8 October 2021

**Information requested:**

The request related to NRS statistics on Population by Country of Birth and Nationality:

'In a summary of your recently released 2020 population estimates you state: "In 2020, there were estimated to be 406,000 non-British nationals living in Scotland. Overall, about 8% of the resident population of Scotland had a non-British nationality. In 2020, of all non-British nationals, 247,000 (61%) were EU nationals, and 159,000 (39%) were non-EU nationals."

'I believe the number of EU nationals that were estimated to be eligible to apply for settled status was 3 million with some 6 million applying (UK wide).'

You asked:

"a) did NRS contribute to the UK government's underestimate [of EU nationals that were estimated to be eligible to apply for settled status]? If so, what figure was supplied to the UK government (or ONS).

b) is it correct to assume that a similar percentage of "unknown" EU citizens reside in Scotland?

c) does the recently published estimate for Scotland (above) correct for the UK-wide under-estimate? If so, how? If not, why not?

d) given the delayed census in Scotland, what is the estimated difference between actual and estimated population figures (based on previous censuses) per year since the last census?'

**NRS Response:**

The answers to these questions are:

a) The estimate of non-British nationals living in the UK and in Scotland comes from the Annual Population Survey. This survey is run by Office for National Statistics (ONS), and ONS supply the data to NRS which is included in our publication.

b) There are some important differences between the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) statistics and estimates of the EU nationals population from the Annual Population Survey, which means these data sources are not directly comparable. As

the figures for Scotland and the UK come from the same source, they are affected in the same way. These differences have been explained in this [blog](#), and in more detail in this [note](#), both produced by ONS.

c) Our publication explains how these statistics are produced, what the coverage of the Annual Population Survey is, and how the figures differ from other sources of data. Data for Scotland is supplied by ONS and more information on the methodology can be found in their [latest release](#).

d) We do not know in advance what the census results will be. When the 2011 Census was carried out, we produced a [report](#) comparing the census results with our annual population estimates.

Under section 25(1) of FOISA, we do not have to provide you with information if it is already reasonably accessible to you