

A summary of the latest statistics on international migration and travel mobility for Scotland – providing Scottish-specific secondary analysis of various releases from National Records of Scotland (NRS), the Office for National Statistics (ONS), the Home Office, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA).

Impact of COVID-19 on migration statistics

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on international travel mobility which in turn will impact on levels of migration. The statistics included in this summary cover different definitions and time periods, some of which do not yet take into account the impacts of the pandemic. However, when viewed together, they provide the best overview of changes in international migration and travel mobility. The pandemic has also affected the International Passenger Survey (IPS), the main source used to measure long term international migration. More information on this and plans for future migration reporting is included on the next slide.

Main points

Since the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic:

- There has been a significant decline in work-related activity, with a reduction of National Insurance numbers (NINo) allocated to overseas nationals. A NINo is needed to work in the UK or to claim benefits. Over the latest quarter, October to December 2020, there were 3,700 NINo registrations to overseas nationals living in Scotland. This is a 71% decrease compared to the same quarter in 2019. DWP's allocation process for NINos was disrupted as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic which has resulted in a significant reduction in the number of NINos allocated.
- The total number of non-British nationals living in Scotland (409,000 people) increased over the year to June 2020. This was mainly driven by an increase in non-EU nationals. Polish remained the most common non-British nationality at 88,000 nationals, followed by Indian at 22,000 nationals.
- We have seen widespread decline in international air travel to Scotland since March 2020 due to coronavirus travel restrictions. At Scottish airports, there was a reduction of over 98% in monthly passenger arrivals between April to June 2020 compared to the same months in 2019. After travel restrictions began to ease from July 2020, there was some uplift in arrivals at Scottish airports; however, passenger arrivals between July and September 2020 remained significantly lower compared to the same months last year.

Prior to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic:

- International migration consistently added to Scotland's population since the EU expansion in 2004. Latest data show 28,000 more people coming to Scotland from overseas than leaving in 2019.

Future migration reporting – development of admin-based migration estimates (ABME)

Impact of COVID-19 on migration statistics

The International Passenger Survey (IPS), previously the main source used to measure long-term international migration (LTIM), was suspended on 16 March 2020 due to COVID-19, which means it is not possible to provide LTIM estimates after this period. The [August 2020 Migration Statistics Quarterly Report](#) provided the last set of long-term international migration estimates based on IPS data.

As weaknesses in the IPS have been widely acknowledged, and with the impact of the pandemic, a decision has been taken that the IPS will no longer be used to measure international migration going forward.

Future migration reporting

Future international migration statistics will now be based on a range of administrative data. ONS are leading the cross-government [transformation programme](#) to deliver new measures of international migration based on administrative data.

An update on progress in developing these new admin-based migration estimates (ABME) is planned for publication in early 2021. So far, the main focus of this work has been on two sources of data, which have shown greatest potential for the measurement of long-term international migration:

- Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) [Registration and Population Interaction Database \(RAPID\)](#)
- Home Office Visas and Border data











ONS, working with other government departments, are rapidly progressing work to develop ABMEs but it is important to acknowledge that future migration reporting will look different as methods are adapted and there is a period of transition to understand ABMEs and the changes. International migration statistics will continue to be badged as experimental statistics during this period of development.




In relation to UK migration statistics, ONS are collaborating closely with NRS and the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) to ensure that we can produce comprehensive UK migration statistics. This includes incorporating the Northern Ireland migration estimates produced separately by NISRA and ensuring alignment with the migration statistics for local areas in Scotland and Northern Ireland, produced by NRS and NISRA respectively.

Latest migration statistics for Scotland and the UK

To fully understand migration trends, we need to consider all available data sources and look at not just year-on-year change but also evidence over a longer time series. The table below sets out the latest estimates across a range of sources, and analysis over time is then shown on later slides.

- In the year to December 2019, 28,000 more people came to Scotland from overseas than left, adding to the population. There were 45,000 people moving to Scotland from overseas and 17,000 people leaving in this period.
- In the year to June 2020, the number of non-British nationals living in Scotland stood at 409,000 people, which is an increase from the previous year.
- There were 17,100 National Insurance number (NINo) allocations to overseas nationals in Scotland in the year to December 2020. This is a reduction of 65% over the year. Over the most recent quarter, October to December 2020, there were 3,700 NINo registrations down 71% compared to the same quarter in 2019. The NINo allocation process was disrupted as a result of the coronavirus pandemic; demand for NINo services may have been impacted, but this cannot be inferred from these statistics.

Measure	Source	Scotland			UK		
		Change over year	Latest estimate	Year ending	Change over year	Latest estimate	Year ending
Net migration	LTIM*		+28,000	Dec 2019		+313,000	Mar 2020
In migration	LTIM*		45,000	Dec 2019		715,000	Mar 2020
Out migration	LTIM*		17,000	Dec 2019		403,000	Mar 2020
Non-British nationals	APS		409,000	Jun 2020		5,963,000	Jun 2020
National Insurance number allocations	DWP		17,100	Dec 2020		322,200	Dec 2020

 Increase
  Decrease
  Change is not statistically significant

* Experimental statistics undergoing development

Migration flows*

Scotland

UK

Estimates of long-term international migration (LTIM) to Scotland and the UK, measuring those with an intention to stay 12 months or more.

Covering periods prior to the pandemic, international migration continued to add to the population at both UK and Scotland level.

At Scotland level:

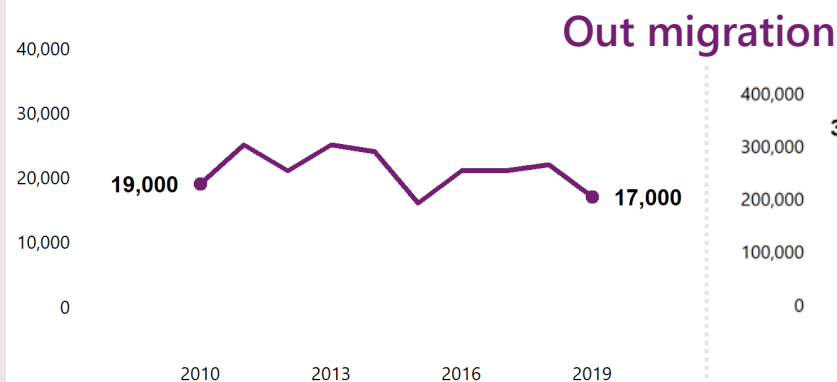
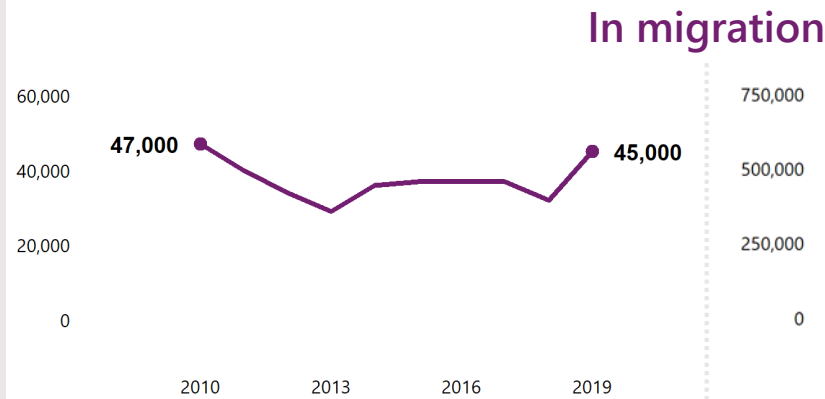
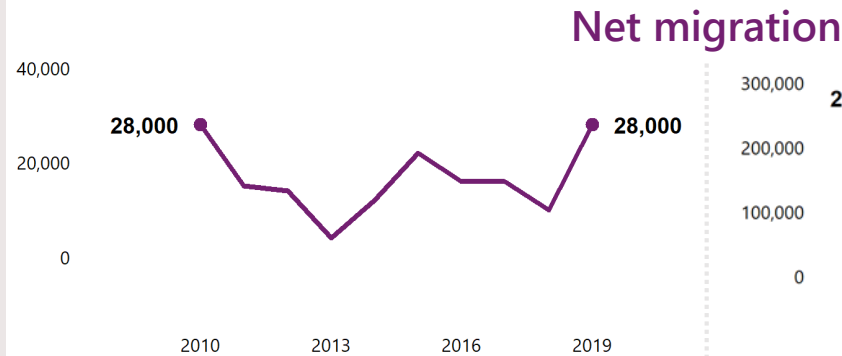
- In the year to December 2019, 28,000 more people came to Scotland from overseas than left.
- This was a statistically significant increase from the previous year.

At UK level, in the year to March 2020:

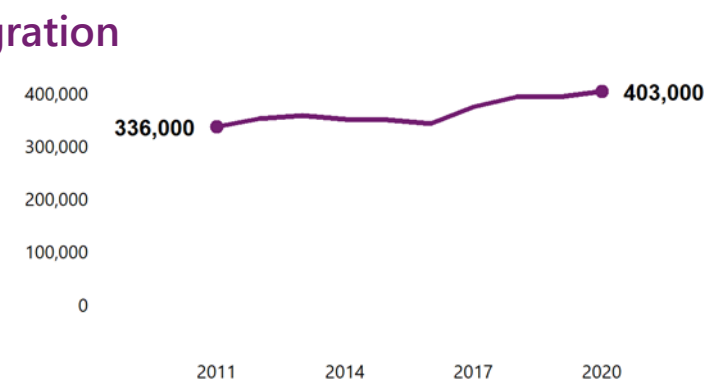
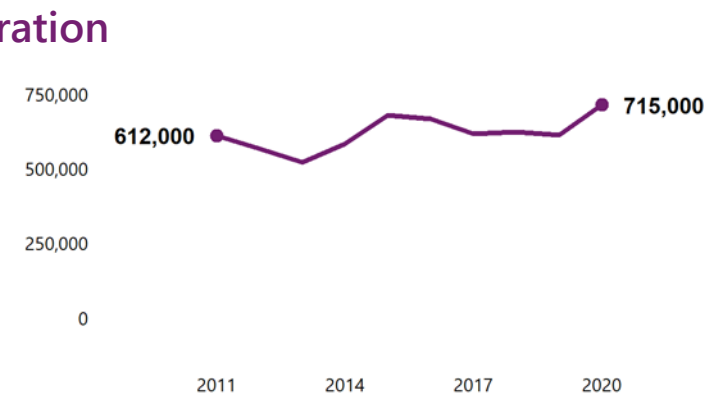
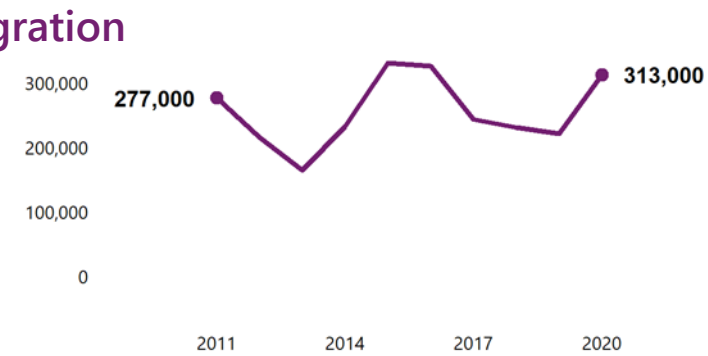
- 313,000 more people came to the UK than left, adding to the UK's population.
- There were 715,000 people moving to the UK and 403,000 people leaving the UK in this period.
- After having remained stable between 2016 and 2019, recent data suggest that migration levels were beginning to increase in the past 12 months leading up to the coronavirus pandemic.

* Experimental statistics undergoing development. ONS are moving away from using the International Passenger Survey (IPS) to measure long-term international migration, and towards using administrative data to deliver new measures of migration. More information can be found on Slide 2.

Long-term International Migration to year ending: Dec 2019



Long-term International Migration to year ending: Mar 2020



Migrant stocks

Estimates of the number of non-British nationals living in Scotland and the UK at a particular point in time, from the Annual Population Survey (APS).

In Scotland:

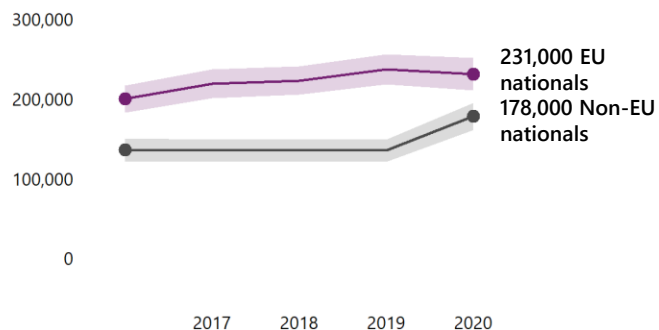
- There were 231,000 EU nationals living in Scotland in the year to June 2020, and over half of those people were nationals of EU8 countries.
- There were 178,000 non-EU nationals, accounting for 44% of the non-British population.
- Polish remained the most common non-British nationality in the year to June 2020, with 88,000 nationals. The second most common non-British nationality was Indian, with 22,000 nationals.

In the UK:

- The non-British population of the UK was 6.0 million in the year to June 2020, where around 1 in 11 of the UK population had a non-British nationality, and the majority (59%) of these held an EU nationality.
- Polish has been the most common non-British nationality in the UK since 2007. Polish nationals (815,000) accounted for 14% of the total non-British population in the UK in the year ending June 2020.

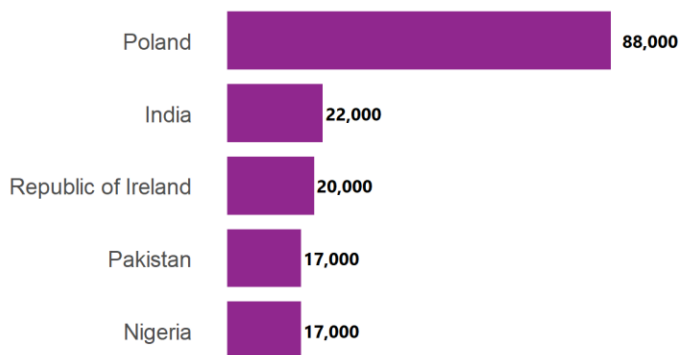
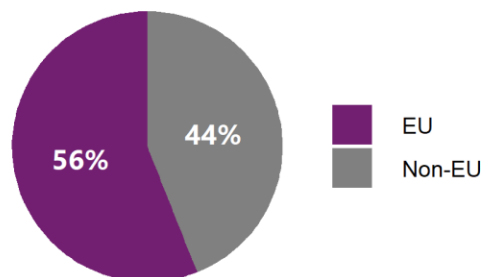
Scotland

Migrant stocks to year ending: Jun 2020



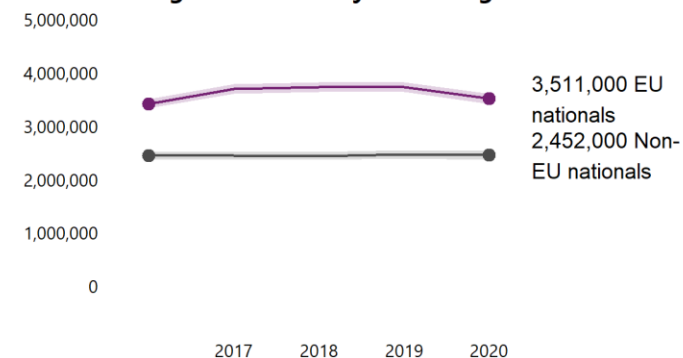
Non-British nationals in Scotland: 409,000

7.6% of total population



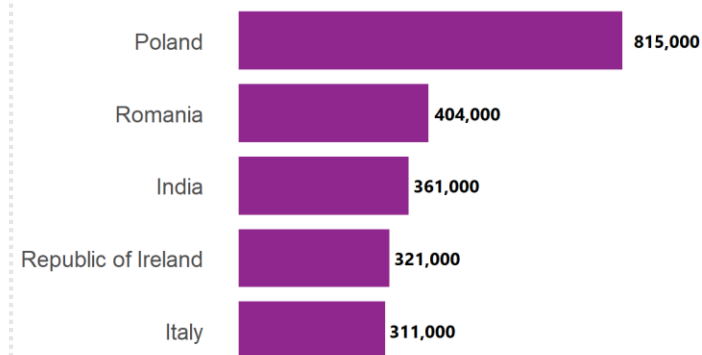
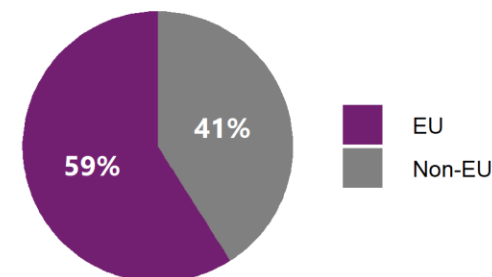
UK

Migrant stocks to year ending: Jun 2020



Non-British nationals in the UK: 5,963,000

9% of total population



*Shaded sections indicate the 95% confidence intervals

National Insurance number (NINo) allocations*

Statistics on National Insurance numbers (NINo) allocated to adult overseas nationals come from DWP, and are updated every quarter. These are a measure of non-British nationals who are applying for a NINo for the first time, for the purpose of working and accessing benefits in the UK. The data will include short term migrants and people who may have been in the country a while before registering.

Scotland

In the year ending December 2020, there were a total of 17,100 NINo allocations to adult overseas nationals in Scotland (down by 65% from previous year).

- 5,400 of these allocations were to (non-UK) EU nationals (down by 80% from previous year).
- 11,700 of these allocations were to non-EU nationals (down by 44% from previous year).

UK

In the year ending December 2020, there were a total of 322,200 NINo allocations to adult overseas nationals in the UK (down by 58% from previous year).

- 116,000 of these allocations were to (non-UK) EU nationals (down by 75% from previous year).
- 205,500 of these allocations were to non-EU nationals (down by 33% from previous year).

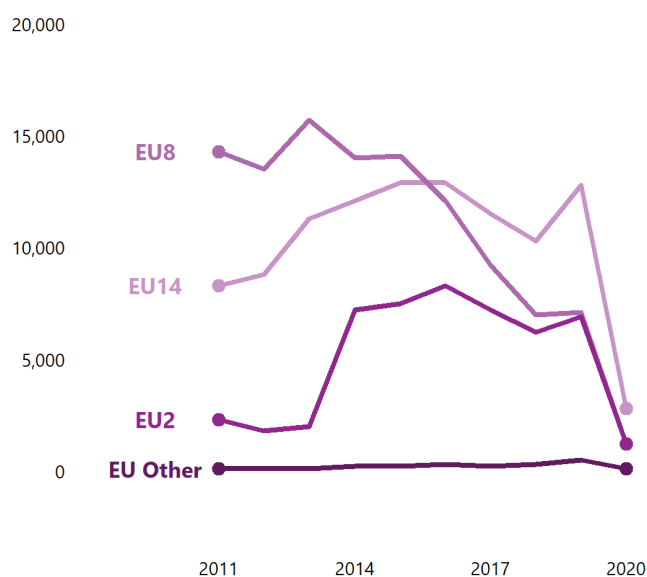
* Due to the coronavirus pandemic, most NINo operations have been suspended since mid-March, which has resulted in a significant reduction in the number of NINos allocated. EU NINo services have been more heavily disrupted than non-EU NINo services.

Scotland

NINo allocations to year ending: Dec 2020

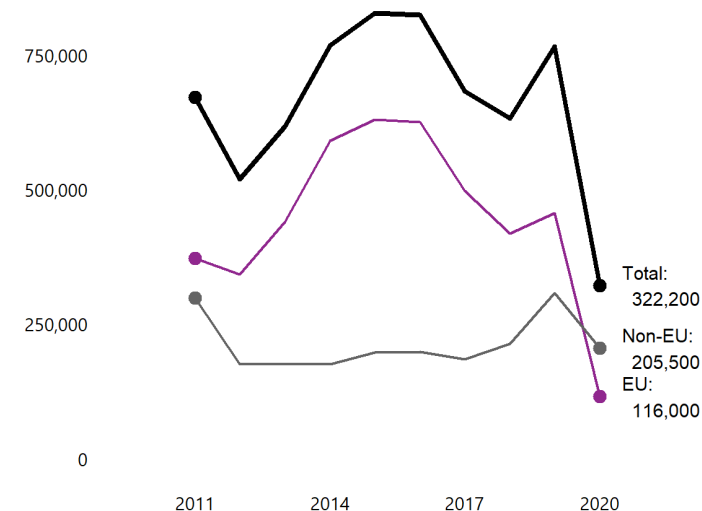


NINo allocations for EU groups to year ending: Dec 2020

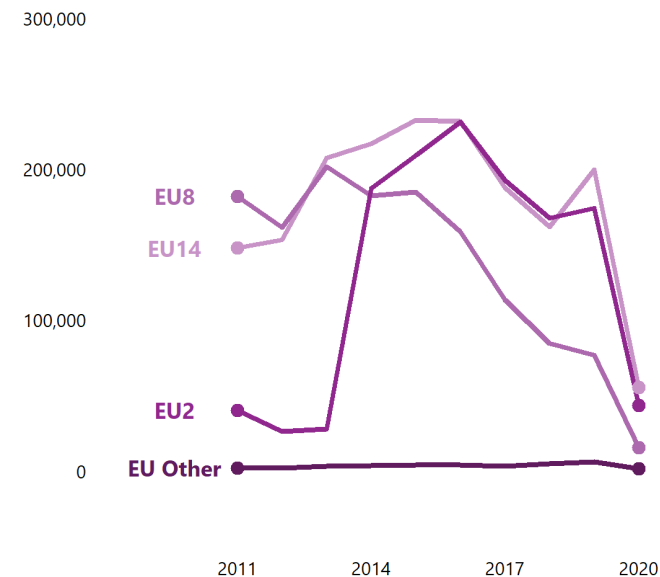


UK

NINo allocations to year ending: Dec 2020



NINo allocations for EU groups to year ending: Dec 2020



National Insurance number (NINo) allocations

In the year ending December 2020:

- From the EU, Scotland received most registrations from EU14 countries (2,800); from non-EU, Scotland received most registrations from Asia (6,600).
- From the EU, the UK received most registrations from EU14 countries (55,500); from non-EU, the UK received most registrations from Asia (127,900).

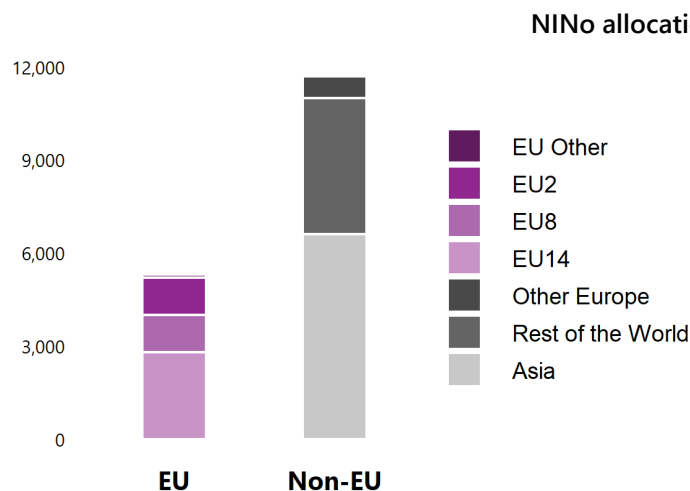
The most common individual countries applying for NINo:

- In Scotland**, Romania (81% decrease from previous year) from the EU and India (31% decrease from previous year) from outside of the EU.
- In the UK**, Romania (75% decrease from previous year) from the EU and India (13% decrease from previous year) from outside the EU.

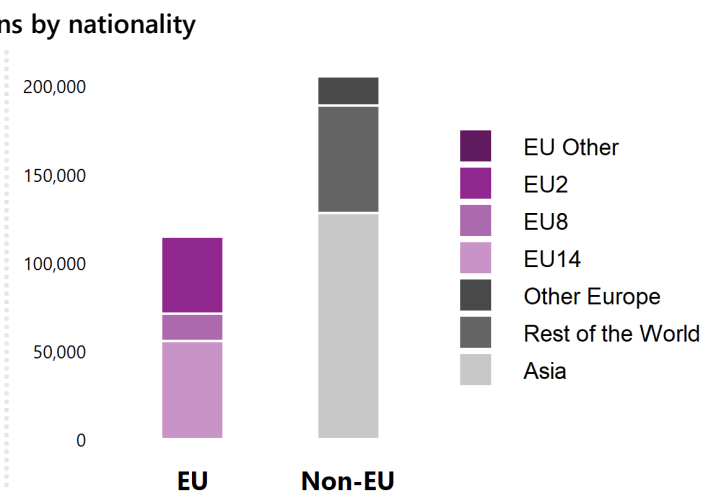
The Scottish council area that had the most new registrations in the year to December 2020 was Glasgow City (5,500, 32% of total registrations).

At UK level, the local authority with the most registrations was Newham (10,100, 3% of total registrations).

Scotland



UK



Top 5 EU and non-EU countries

EU		Non-EU		EU		Non-EU	
Romania	900	India	2,600	Romania	33,300	India	67,600
Poland	700	Nigeria	1,000	Italy	14,200	Pakistan	14,400
Spain	600	Pakistan	700	Spain	10,200	Nigeria	12,300
Italy	600	United States	600	Bulgaria	10,100	China	7,200
Bulgaria	400	Iran	600	Poland	8,100	United States	7,200

Top 10 local authorities



The data in this section comes from the Home Office. The refugee data is released quarterly, three months after the reporting period. It covers Refugees (and others) resettled under the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme. The citizenship data is released once a year in May and it has a 6 month lag. It indicates the number of people attending British citizenship ceremonies in the past year.

Refugees*

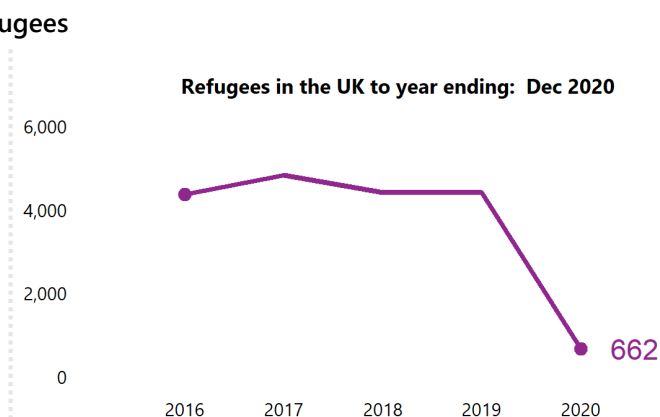
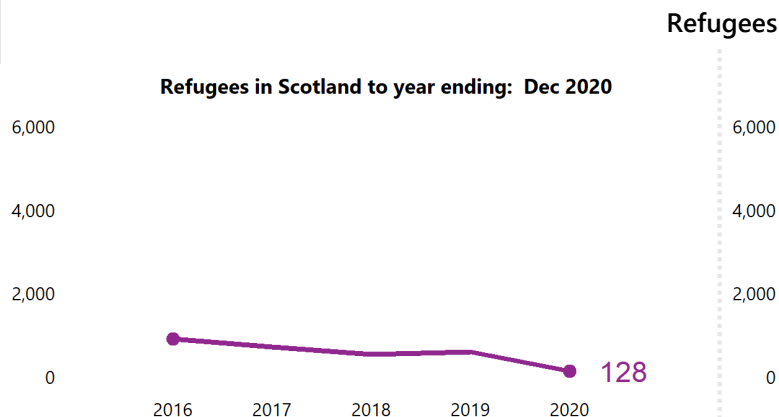
In the year ending December 2020, there were 128 refugees (78% decrease from previous year) resettled in Scotland and 662 (85% decrease from previous year) in the whole of the UK.

In both Scotland and the whole of the UK, City of Edinburgh had the most resettled refugees at 39 (121 in previous year).

Citizenships

The labels on the graph indicate the number of people attending British citizenship ceremonies and change over year for each authority.

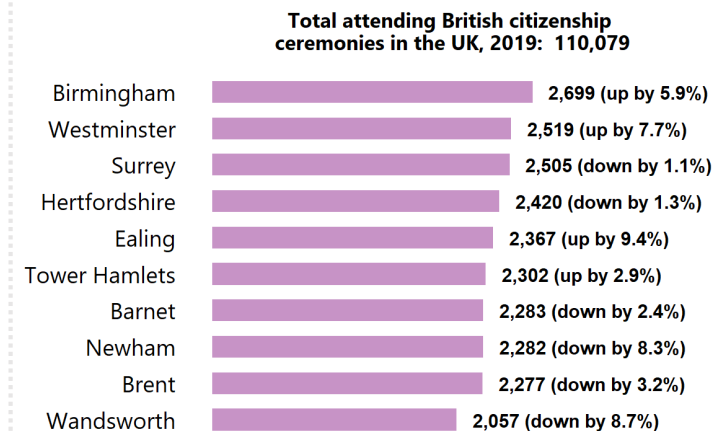
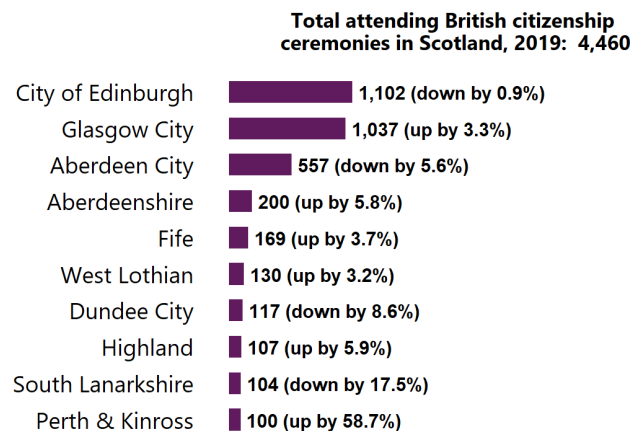
In Scotland, Edinburgh City had the most people attending British citizenship ceremonies (25% of total attendees in Scotland). In the whole of the UK, it was Birmingham (2% of total attendees in the UK).



Top 5 Authorities

Authority	Resettled Refugees	% of Total	Authority	Resettled Refugees	% of Total
City of Edinburgh	39	30.5	City of Edinburgh	39	5.9
North Ayrshire	21	16.4	Norwich	36	5.4
Glasgow City	17	13.3	Bristol, City of	27	4.1
Argyll and Bute	14	10.9	Newry, Mourne and Down	22	3.3
West Dunbartonshire	9	7.0	Gateshead	21	3.2

Citizenships



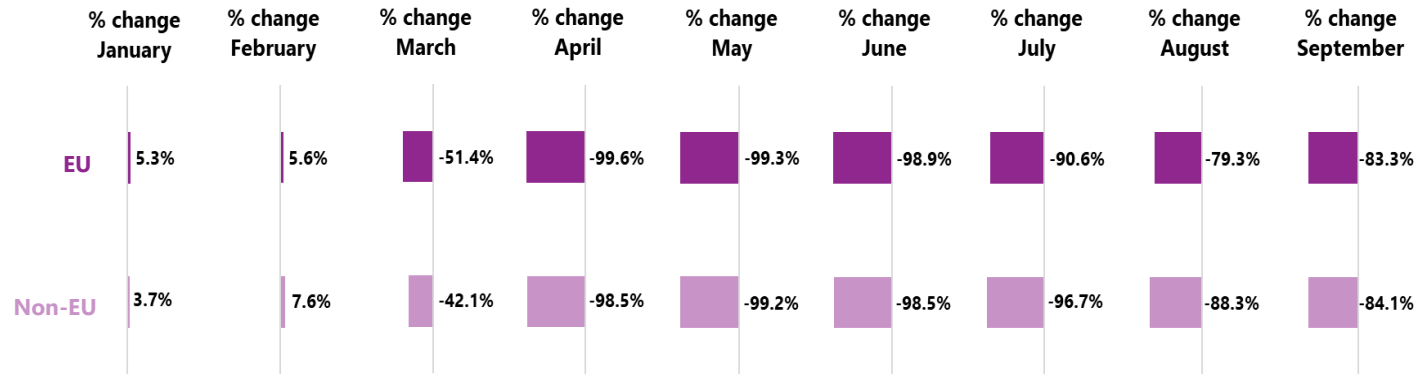
* Due to the coronavirus pandemic, no resettlement activity was undertaken in Q2 (April to June) and Q3 (July to September) of 2020. Resettlement recommenced in December 2020.

International travel patterns

The data in this section come from the Civil Aviation Authority. They cover travel patterns by all types of passengers, not just international migrants. Travel data can provide early insight and context to official statistics on international migration. However, they do not provide information about a passenger's nationality or country of residence. These statistics are therefore not a direct measure of migration and should not be interpreted as such; they include all air passengers and relate solely to travel patterns.

- There was **widespread decline in international air travel to Scotland since March 2020**.
- The volume of air passengers arriving to Scotland was significantly lower in March 2020 compared with March 2019. Due to widespread travel restrictions, April to June 2020 then saw further reductions compared with the same months in 2019, with a **reduction of over 98% in passenger arrivals at Scottish airports from both the EU and non-EU**.
- After travel restrictions began to ease from July 2020, there was some uplift in arrivals at Scottish airports; however, passenger arrivals between July and September 2020 remained significantly lower compared to the same months last year.

Annual percentage change in monthly air passenger arrivals at Scottish airports, January to September, 2019 and 2020



Monthly air passenger arrivals at Scottish airports, January to September, 2019 and 2020

World Region of Airport	January		February		March		April		May		June	
	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020
EU	360,700	379,800	352,300	372,000	425,200	206,600	546,400	2,300	611,500	4,500	662,100	7,500
Non-EU	81,800	84,900	73,700	79,300	92,700	53,700	118,700	1,800	141,700	1,100	181,000	2,800

World Region of Airport	July		August		September	
	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020
EU	719,700	67,900	695,800	144,300	654,600	109,100
Non-EU	208,100	6,800	190,500	22,200	186,300	29,600

Summary of data sources

Long-Term International Migration (LTIM), ONS

These statistics are published quarterly as part of the [Migration Statistics Quarterly Report](#). They measure the number of migrants entering and leaving the country in any given period. They are typically called migrant 'flows' and can be used to calculate net migration (the difference between immigration and emigration). Estimates are largely based on migrant intentions to stay in Scotland/the UK for 12 months or more. The data is sourced mainly from the International Passenger Survey.

Update: As weaknesses in the IPS have been widely acknowledged, and with the impact of the coronavirus pandemic, a decision has been taken that the IPS will no longer be used to measure international migration going forward. Future international migration statistics will be based on a range of administrative data in the future.

Migration Statistics, NRS

Latest migration flows for Scotland published by [NRS](#). These include breakdowns for flows between Scotland and overseas, Scotland and the rest of the UK, and internal migration within Scotland.

Population by Country of Birth and Nationality, ONS and NRS

These statistics are published twice a year by [ONS](#) and [NRS](#). They measure the size of the population (non-UK born and non-British nationals) at a particular point in time. They are typically called migrant 'stocks' and are sourced from the Annual Population Survey.

National Insurance number allocations (NINo) to adult overseas nationals entering the UK, DWP

This is administrative data updated each quarter by [DWP](#). The NINo statistics count the volume of registrations to adult non-UK nationals over a calendar quarter. A NINo is generally required if looking to work or claim benefits. The statistics are not a count of the number of adult non-UK nationals currently living in Scotland/the UK.

Immigration statistics, Home Office

The refugees resettled data is published every quarter and covers refugees (and others) resettled under the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme. The Citizenship data is updated once a year and indicates the number of people attending British citizenship ceremonies in a given year. Both of these measures are from administrative data published by the [Home Office](#).

International Travel Patterns, Civil Aviation Authority (CAA)

This includes passenger numbers for international air travel between the majority of UK and foreign airports. For more information, please see the notes and FAQ section of the [CAA website](#).

Local Area Migration, NRS

This tool brings together migration statistics from a range of sources for council and NHS Board areas in Scotland. It is published annually by [NRS](#).

Further information about the strengths and limitations of each data source are available within the publications (use links above).