



# BRIEFING

## North West: Census Profile

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This briefing summarises key statistics from the 2011 Census for the North West and its constituent districts and unitary authorities. The briefing provides information about population levels; the number, population share, age and gender of foreign-born residents; as well as countries of origin, main languages and passports held. Finally, the briefing compares the North West to other regions of England and Wales and the 2001 and 2011 Census results.

## Key points

In 2011, the total usual resident population of the North West stood at 7,052,177 residents. About 8% of those residents (577,232) were born outside of the UK. This represents an increase of 69% in the non-UK born population of the region since 2001.

In 2011, 47% of the non-UK born population held a UK passport, and 47% held only a non-UK passport. The rest (6%) held no passport

Manchester had the highest number (1 27,061) as well as the highest population share (25%) of non-UK born residents in the region.

Between 2001 and 2011, the total non-UK born population grew numerically the most in Manchester (69,013 additional residents), but the biggest percentage increase (+137.6%) took place in Salford.

Residents born in Pakistan represent the most numerous non-UK born group in the North West (79,289 residents), followed by residents born in Poland, India, Ireland and Germany.

In both 2001 and 2011, the North West occupied the 5th position in terms of population numbers out of the ten regions of England and Wales. In terms of the foreign-born population share, it occupied the 7th position in 2011, up from 8th in 2001.

## Understanding the evidence

The census is the most complete source of information about the population. It is particularly useful for obtaining population estimates for small geographical areas and information on the characteristics of such a population. Other sources of information on population characteristics in the UK such as the Labour Force Survey have large margins of error at the local level, because they are based on survey data and rely on a limited number of observations at the local level. The census is based on a count of people and households, with efforts to include everyone, but it is supplemented by a survey to detect and estimate those who are missed at first.

The latest UK censuses were conducted during 2011, with 27 March 2011 as the official census day of record. In England and Wales the census was conducted by the Office for National Statistics (ONS), the National Records of Scotland in Scotland, and the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency in Northern Ireland. There are different release dates for the data in these censuses (including the migration-related data). Therefore, when comparing the North East to other parts of the UK, the current briefing uses only information from the ONS 2011 Census releases for England and Wales.

When analysing the nature of migration, defining who counts as a migrant is of crucial importance. Yet there is no consensus on a single definition of a 'migrant'. Different datasets—and analyses from these datasets—use a variety of definitions of 'migrant,' including (1) country of birth, (2) nationality, (3) passports held, (4) length of stay, (5) reason for migration and (6) being subject to immigration controls. For example, people who are foreign-born are not all foreign nationals; likewise, some foreign nationals may have lived in the UK for decades while others reside in the UK for only a year. Some are the children born abroad of UK national parent(s)—e.g. service personnel. Others are long-term residents who have acquired British citizenship.

The data analysed in this briefing are based mainly on the census statistics for country of birth as well as passports held, not current nationality. The census collected data on passports held, and this can be used as a proxy for nationality; yet nearly 17% of the total usual resident population of England and Wales held no passport in 2011 (ONS, 2013) and data for passports held is not available for 2001, precluding the measure of change over time. When using data on country of birth, it is important to note that many of those included in the foreign-born category will have British citizenship.

The data presented include statistics for usual residents only, unless otherwise specified. Usual residents are defined as anyone in the UK on census day who had stayed or intended to stay in the UK for 12 months or more (or were outside the UK but had a permanent UK address and intended to stay outside the UK for less than 12 months). In terms of countries of birth, data are available for 160 countries as part of regional totals. At the local level, however, data have not been provided for all countries of origin. Instead, the ONS has identified 27 key countries of origin most common at the national level, and all local analyses of the most frequent countries of origin only refer to the most frequent countries out of the 27 key countries of origin. As such, particularly at the local level, there may be other more numerous foreign-born groups that the current census release does not include. However, the totals for each region of origin are available for local areas.

See the Migration Observatory video interview of Peter Stokes, 2011 Census Statistical Design Manager, for further discussion.

**In 2011, the total usual resident population of the North West stood at 7,052,177 residents. About 8% of those residents (577,232) were born outside of the UK. This represents an increase of 69% in the non-UK born population of the region since 2001**

As shown in Table 1, in 2011, the total usual resident population of the North West stood at just over 7 million people, 577,232 of which had been born outside of the UK. This represents 8.2% of the total resident population of the region (a 61% share increase from 5.1% in 2001). In 2011, the foreign-born population of the North West accounted for 7.7% of the total non-UK born population of England and Wales; in 2001, this was slightly lower at 7.4%.

Since 2001, the non-UK born population grew by 235,133 persons, accounting for 72.9% of the total population growth of 322,413 usual residents in the decade. While overall the population of the North West increased by just fewer than 5% between 2001 and 2011, the non-UK born resident population grew by 68.7% in the same period.

Table 1 – Key census statistics for the North West

	2001	2011	Change (%)
<b>Total usual resident population</b>	6,729,764	7,052,177	+4.8%
<b>UK-born resident population</b>	6,387,645	6,474,945	+1.4%
<b>Non-UK born resident population</b>	342,119	577,232	+68.7%
Non-UK born as share of the region's population	5.1%	8.2%	+61%
Share of non-UK born population of England and Wales	7.4%	7.7%	+4.4%
<b>Non-UK passport holders</b>		300,093	
Non-UK passport holders as share of the region's population		4.3%	

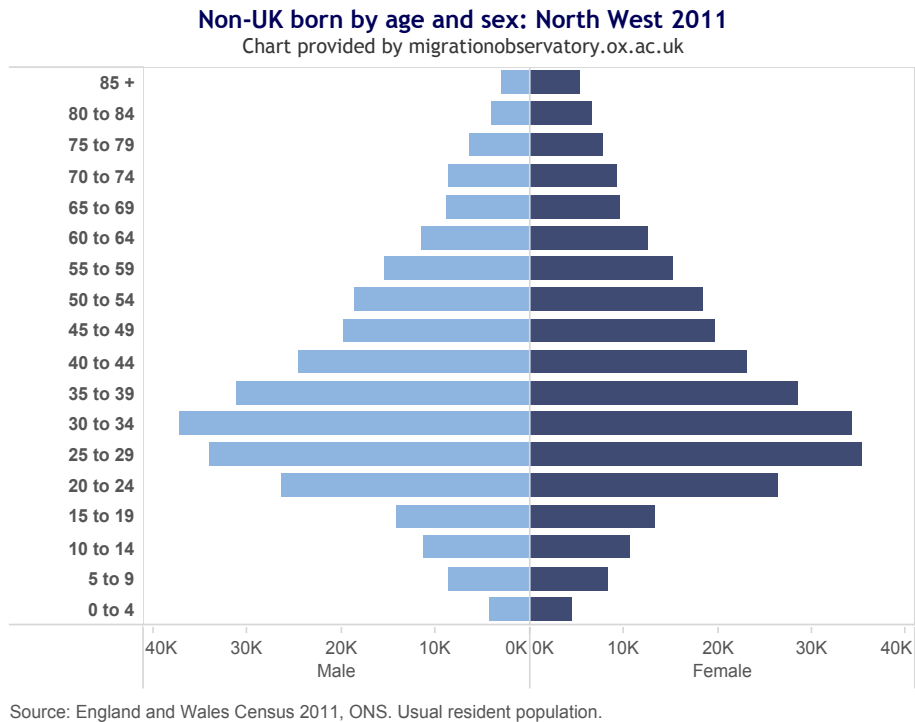
Source: England and Wales Census 2001 and 2011, ONS. Usual resident population.

**In 2011, 50.1% of the region's foreign-born residents were female and 44% were between 20-39 years of age**

In 2011, 43.9% of the region's foreign-born residents were aged 20–39 years of age and 70.7% were aged 20–59 (see Figure 1). In comparison, 24.4% of the UK-born population were between 20 and 39 years old in 2011. The most common age-groups for the non-UK born population of the North West were the 25–29 and 30 to 34 age-groups, each accounting for 12% of the non-UK born population.

Moreover, of the 577,232 non-UK born residents in 2011, 50.1% were female and 49.9% were male. However, the gender distribution of the non-UK born differed somewhat depending on the age-group; a slight majority of those aged 5–19 and 30–59 were men. Within the non-UK born group, the age-group with the largest male share (52.1%) was the 35 to 39 category.

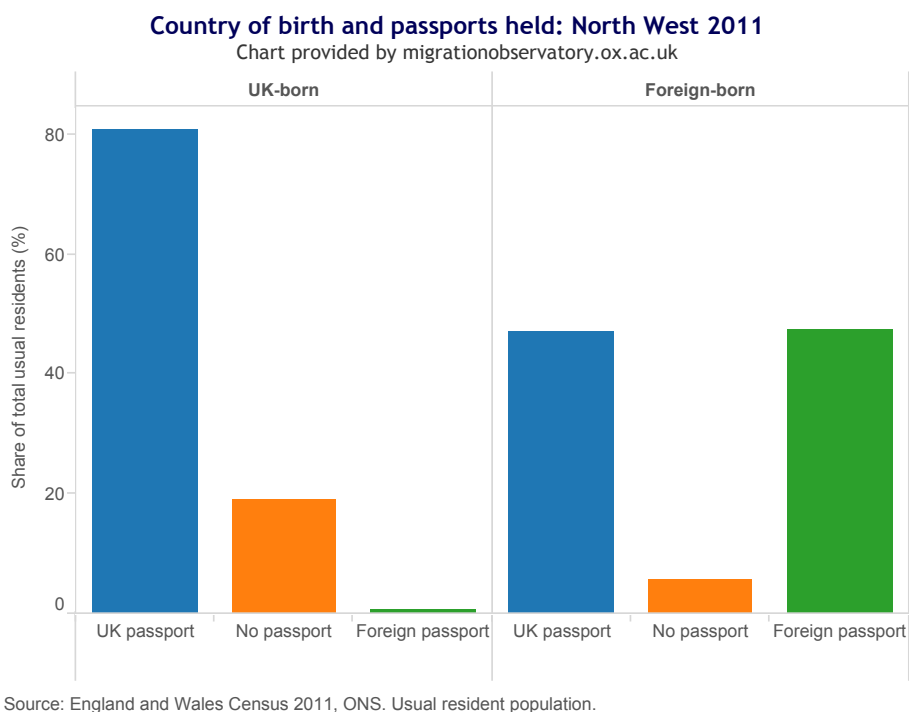
Figure 1



**In 2011, 47% of the non-UK born population held a UK passport, and 47% held only a non-UK passport. The rest (6%) held no passport**

In 2011, 77.9% of residents of the North West held a UK passport and 4.3% (300,093 usual residents) held only a non-UK passport (see Table 1). At the same time, 17.9% of residents held no passport. It is important to note that for residents with dual passports, priority was given to UK passports and then Irish passports in the census data collection process. Thus, respondents with both a UK and a non-UK passport are included as having a UK passport. In terms of the non-UK born population, 47.2% (272,288 residents) held a UK passport, while 47.3% (272,838 residents) held only a non-UK passport (see Figure 2). Only 5.6% of the foreign-born population (32,106 residents) held no passport.

Figure 2



### Manchester had the highest number (127,061) as well as the highest population share (25%) of non-UK born residents in the region

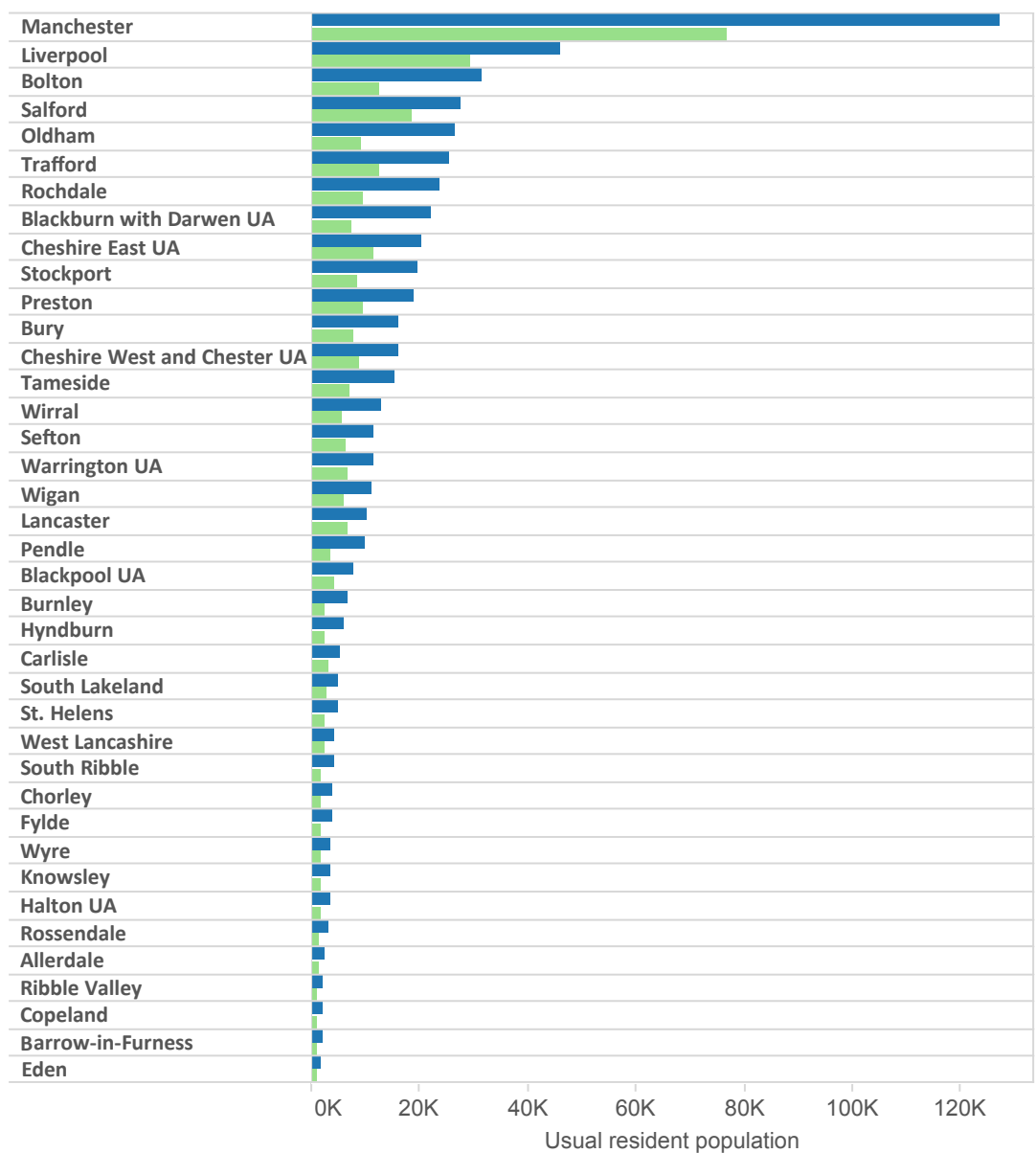
As shown in Figure 3, out of all the districts and unitary authorities of the region, the Manchester district had the highest number of non-UK born residents, with 127,061 foreign-born residents in 2011. Its foreign-born population accounts for a quarter (25.3%) of the local resident population. Moreover, its non-UK born population accounts for 22% of the total foreign-born population of the North West, while in total Manchester’s residents represent 7% of the resident population of the region. In fact, the metropolitan county of Greater Manchester concentrated 56% of the non-UK born population of the region (its total population accounts for 38% of the resident population of the region).

In terms of the size of the non-UK born population, Manchester was followed by the Liverpool district, with 46,125 foreign-born residents in the area in 2011, representing 9.9% of the locality’s usual resident population. In terms of the population share, however, the district of Preston comes out second after Manchester, with its 18,732 non-UK born residents in 2011 representing 13.4% of the local population. Conversely, the locality with the smallest foreign-born population was the Eden district, with 1,797 non-UK born residents representing 3.4% of the local population. However, the area with the lowest population share of non-UK born residents was the district of Knowsley, where the 3,406 non-UK born residents made up 2.3% of the local population in 2011.

Figure 3

#### Non-UK born and non-UK passports held: North West 2011

Chart provided by migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk



Source: England and Wales Census, 2011, ONS. Usual resident population.

Note: Non-UK born and Non-UK passport holders are overlapping categories; the vast majority of residents with a foreign-passport will also be foreign-born.

■ Non-UK born    ■ Non-UK passport

In terms of non-UK passports held, Manchester also had the highest number of residents with only a non-UK passport in 2011, with 76,706 foreign-passport holders accounting for 15.3% of the local population (see Figure 3). This also represents 25.6% of all those with only a non-UK passport in the North West in 2011. Conversely, the Barrow-in-Furness district had the smallest number of residents with only a non-UK passport in 2011, with the estimated 897 residents representing 1.3% of the local population. However, the lowest percentage of the population represented by residents with only a non-UK passport was in Knowsley, where the 1,636 non-UK passport holders represented 1.1% of the local population in 2011.

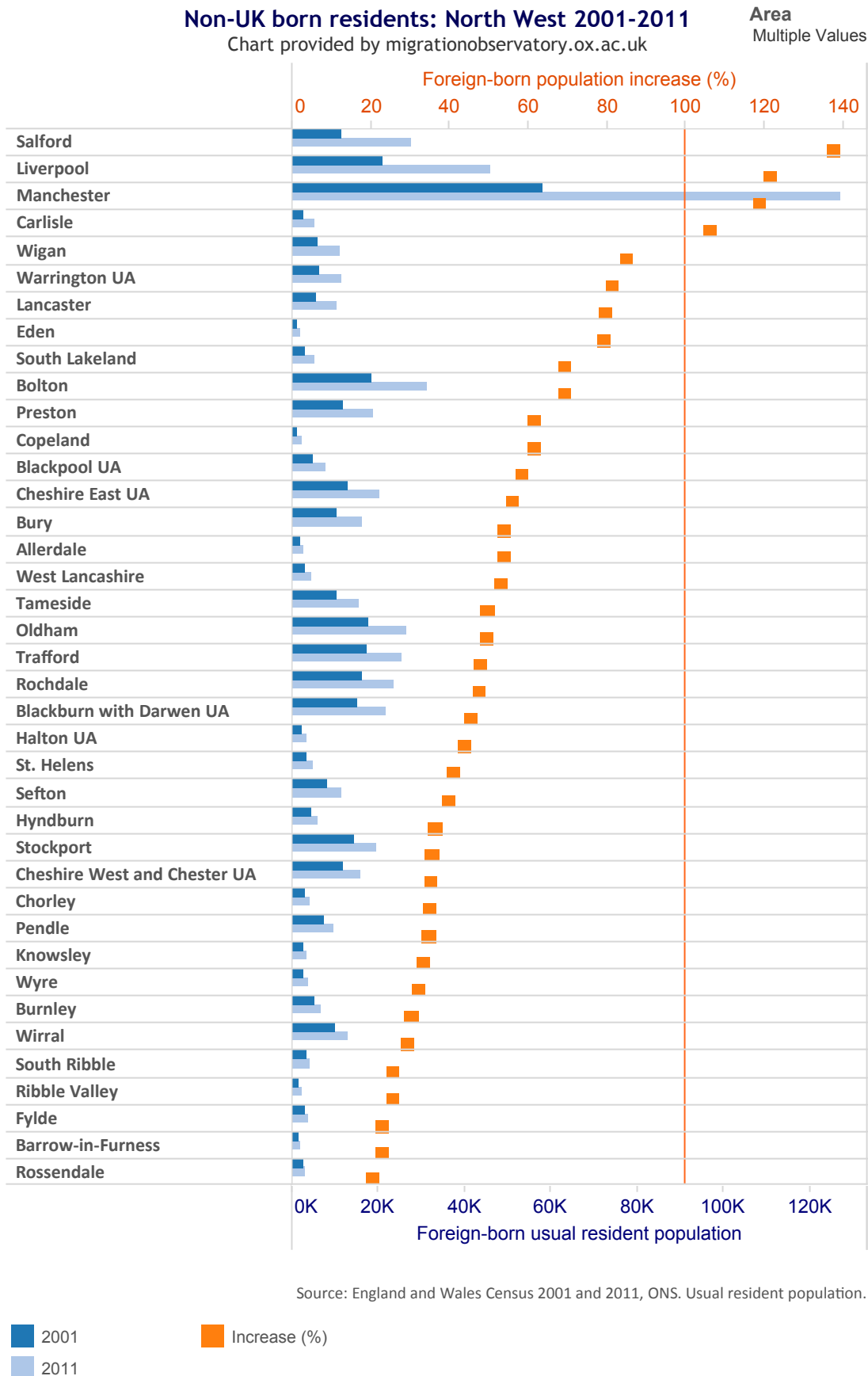
While there were 577,232 non-UK born persons usually resident in the North West in 2011, there were also 15,984 short-term residents (defined as staying between 3 and 12 months) born outside of the UK in the region in the same year. As well as having the largest non-UK born resident population, Manchester also had the highest number (5,506) of non-UK born short-term residents, amounting to 34.5% of all the non-UK born short-term residents in the North West. The lowest number (estimated 14 residents) of non-UK born short-term residents was in the district of Rossendale.

### **Between 2001 and 2011, the total non-UK born population grew numerically the most in Manchester (69,013 additional residents), but the biggest percentage increase (+137.6%) took place in Salford**

Between 2001 and 2011, the non-UK born population increased in each county, district and unitary authority within the North West, but to varying degrees and at different speeds (see Figure 4). The largest numerical increase took place in Manchester, with the number of foreign-born residents rising by 69,013 persons during the intercensal period, representing an increase of 118.9%. The highest percentage increase, however, took place in the district of Salford (also located within the Greater Manchester metropolitan county), with an increase of 137.6% between 2001 and 2011. According to the census results, this was the 11th highest increase in England and Wales.

At the same time, the non-UK born population grew by the smallest number of residents in Barrow-in-Furness, increasing by 377 residents (an increase of 23%). The lowest percentage increase in the foreign-born population, however, occurred in Rossendale, where the growth in the non-UK born population of 534 residents represented a 21% increase (12th lowest increase for England and Wales).

Figure 4

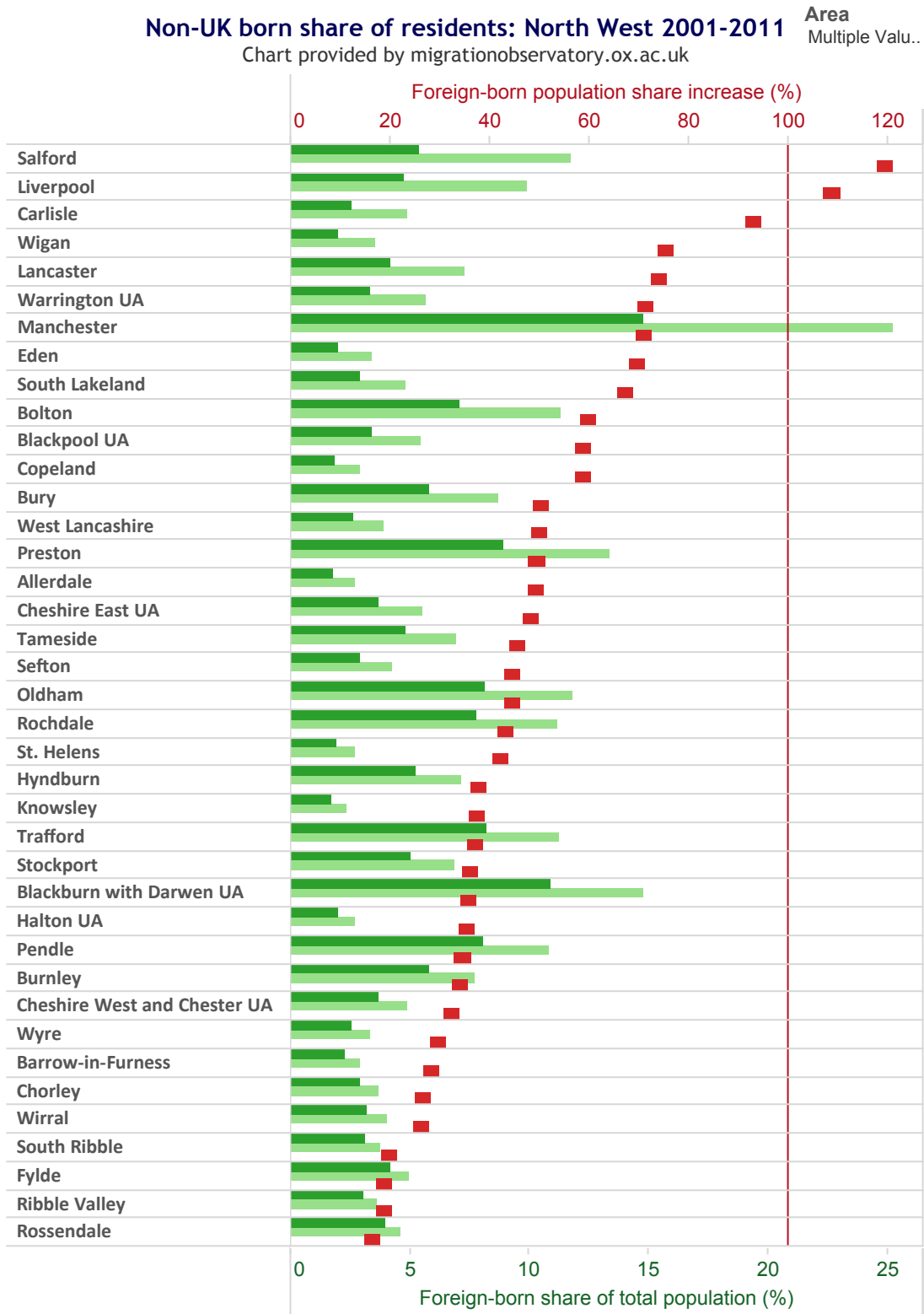


As shown in Figure 5, as the non-UK born population increased in each area of the North West since 2001, so has there been an increase in the foreign-born share of the local population in each local area of the region. In terms of the non-UK born as a proportion of the total resident population within a given area, the highest increase (a 119.5%



increase from 5.4% in 2001 to 11.7% in 2011) took place again in Salford. The area with the lowest percentage change in the share of the foreign-born population within the resident population was again Rossendale, with the non-UK born share increasing by 16.5% (from 3.9% in 2001 to 4.6% in 2011).

Figure 5



Source: England and Wales Census 2001 and 2011, ONS. Usual resident population.

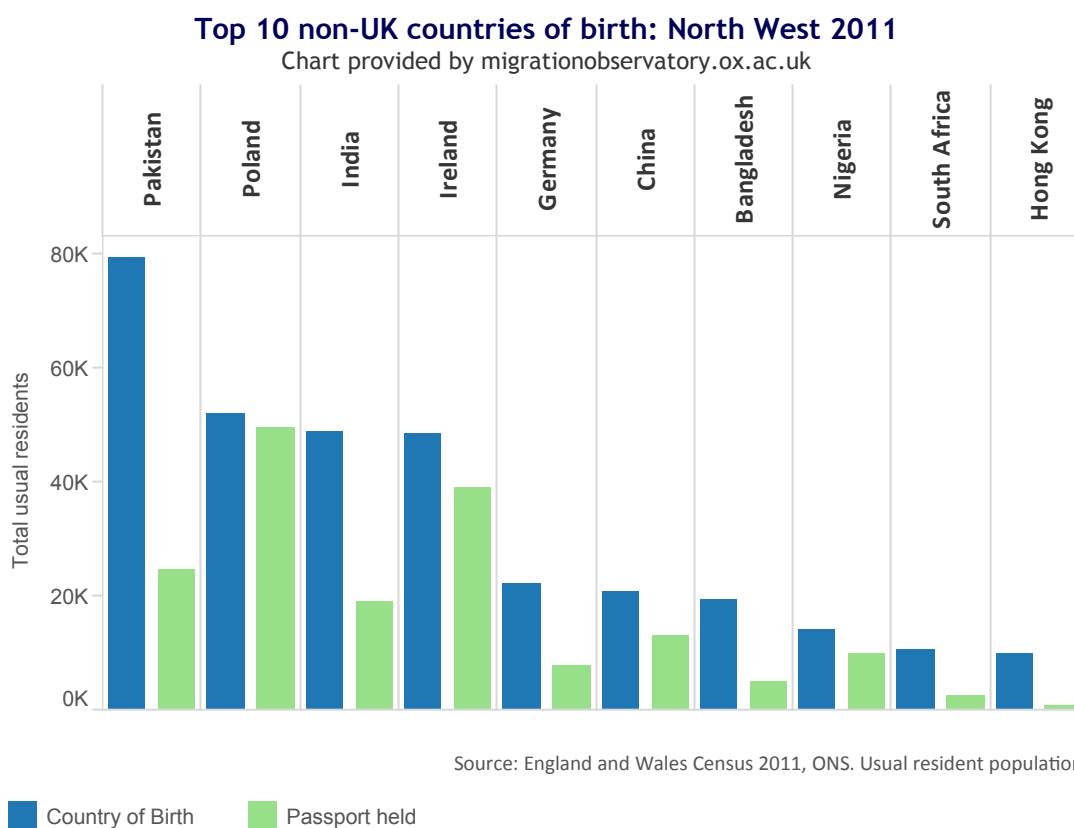
■ 2001      ■ Share increase (%)  
■ 2011

### Residents born in Pakistan represent the most numerous non-UK born group in the North West (79,289 residents), followed by residents born in Poland, India, Ireland and Germany

As shown in Figure 6, residents born in Pakistan represent the most numerous non-UK born group in the North West with 79,289 residents, amounting to 13.7% of the region’s non-UK born population (and 1.1% of the total population of the region). This is followed by residents born in Poland (51,999), India (48,676), Ireland (48,456) and Germany (22,094). Within the top 10 countries of birth for the non-UK born population were also China, Bangladesh, Nigeria, South Africa and Hong Kong. The resident population born in these 10 countries represents more than half (56.2%) of the total foreign-born population of the region.

In terms of passports held, Poland comes out in top place for the North West in terms of the number of residents that held only a non-UK passport) with 49,591 residents holding a Polish passport in 2011. This represents 16.5% of all residents with foreign passports only in the North West. In this category, residents with Irish passports come second with 38,915 residents and Indian-passport holders come third with 24,507 residents.

Figure 6



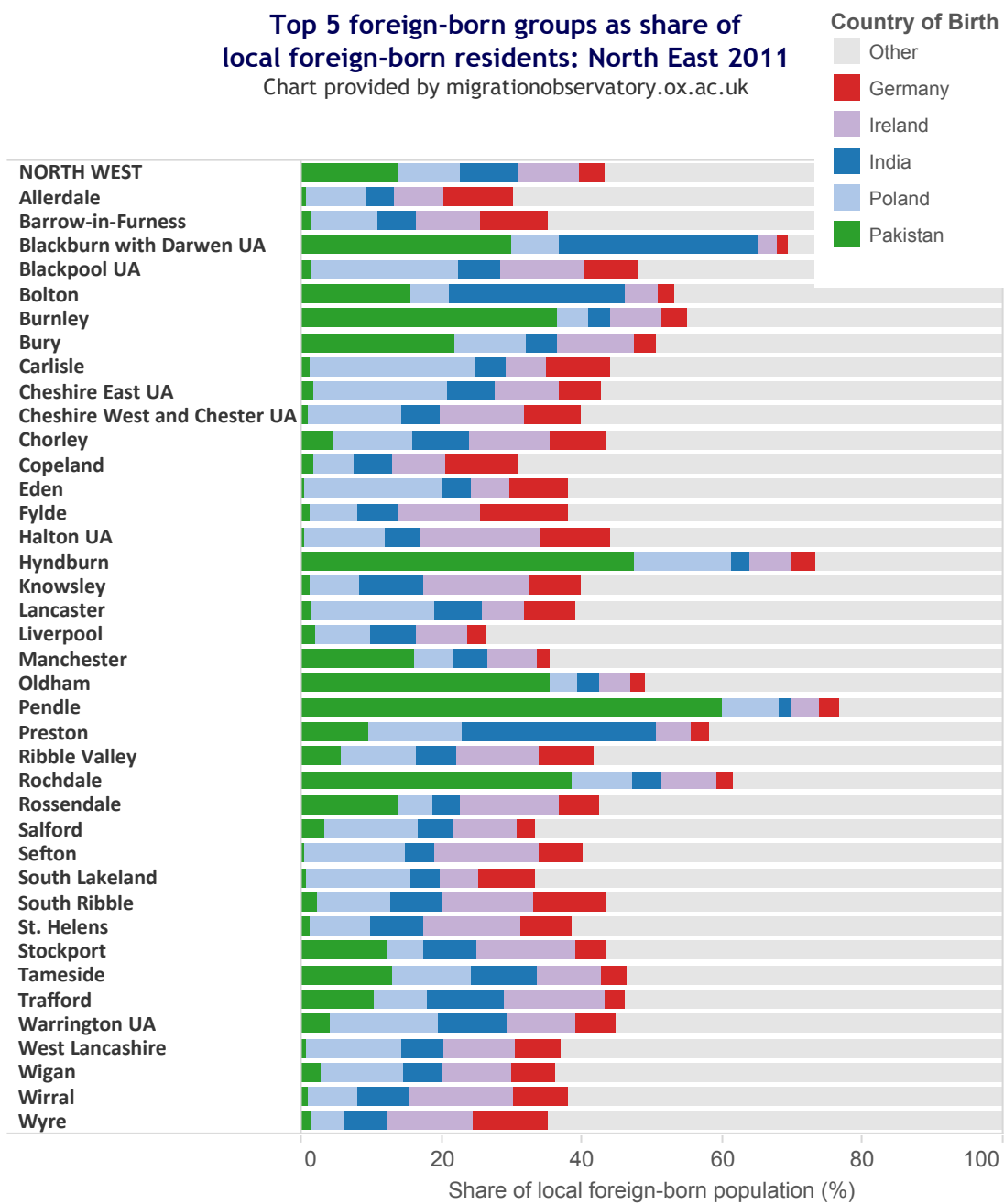
Of those residents born in Pakistan, 68% held a UK passport in 2011, while 30% held only a non-UK passport (28% held a Pakistani passport) and 1% held no passport. In terms of residents born in Poland, 87% held a non-UK passport only (85.5% held a Polish-passport) and 4% held a UK passport, while 9% held no passport. The differences in the relationship between the non-UK born and non-UK passport-holders measures in the cases of Pakistan and Poland can be partly explained, on the one hand, by the fact that EU citizens have less need to acquire UK citizenship as they are not subject to immigration controls and on the other, by the historical differences in migration from these countries. In fact, 93.9% of Polish-born residents living in the North West in 2011 arrived in the UK since 2001 (91.7% since 2004). Conversely, 59.4% of Pakistani-born residents living in the North West in 2011 arrived in the country before 2001; as such they have had more opportunity to become eligible and apply for

British citizenship. It is also important to note that many within the German-born category will be children of British military personnel stationed in Germany at the time of their birth, who will thus have British citizenship.

**As a percentage of the non-UK born within each area of the region, the Pakistani-born group was the least evenly distributed among the top 5 foreign-born groups**

It is important to note that the top non-UK born groups were not evenly distributed across the region. For example, while Manchester’s residents represented 7% of the population of the region, its Pakistani-born residents accounted for 26% of all Pakistani-born of the region. Conversely, the Polish-born group’s distribution followed more closely the overall population distribution within the region.

Figure 7



Source: England and Wales Census 2011, ONS. Usual resident population  
 Note: These 5 countries of origin are those of the most numerous foreign-born groups in the region. The ONS has not released data for other countries of origin at the local level, only for the region as a whole.

Moreover, the top 5 non-UK born groups represented differing percentages of the total non-UK born population in different areas of the region (see Figure 7). As a share of the foreign-born within each area of the region, the

Pakistani-born group was the least evenly distributed among the top 5 foreign-born groups. While Pakistani-born residents accounted for 13.7% of the foreign-born population of the region, in the Pendle district, this stood at 60%, the highest in the region. At the same time, residents born in Pakistan represented the lowest proportion of non-UK born residents in the Halton unitary authority (0.4%). On the other hand, the Polish-born population was relatively more evenly distributed in terms of its share of the local foreign-born population. While this foreign-born group accounts for 9% of all the non-UK born residents of the North West, it represents the highest share of local foreign-born in the Carlisle district (23.5%), while the lowest in Oldham district (3.9%).

### **In terms of main spoken language, 345,088 residents of the North West (5.1% of total population) spoke a language other than English as their main language in 2011**

There were 345,088 residents of the North West who spoke a language other than English as their main language in 2011. This represents 5.1% of the total resident population aged 3 and above. Within this group, the most commonly spoken language was Polish, spoken by 14% of those who used a language other than English as their main language. This was followed by Urdu (12%), Panjabi (8%), Chinese languages (Cantonese, Mandarin and all other Chinese languages, 8%), Gujarati (7%), Bengali (with Sylheti and Chatgaya, 6%) and Arabic (5%), to name those languages spoken by 5 or more per cent of those in the North West who did not speak English as their main language in 2011. Table 2 shows the top 15 languages (or language groups) in the North West. These languages (or language groups) account for 74% of all the languages spoken by those not using English as their main spoken language.

Table 2 – Main spoken language if not English: North West 2011

	Usual residents	Share (%)*
<b>Polish</b>	48,990	14.2%
<b>Urdu</b>	40,600	11.8%
<b>Panjabi</b>	28,679	8.3%
<b>Chinese languages(1)</b>	27,133	7.9%
<b>Gujarati</b>	23,158	6.7%
<b>Bengali(2)</b>	21,956	6.4%
<b>Arabic</b>	16,974	4.9%
<b>French</b>	7,665	2.2%
<b>Persian/Farsi</b>	7,048	2%
<b>Spanish</b>	6,154	1.8%
<b>Portuguese</b>	5,776	1.7%
<b>Kurdish</b>	5,568	1.6%
<b>Somali</b>	4,982	1.4%
<b>German</b>	4,779	1.4%
<b>Italian</b>	4,457	1.3%
<b>Other</b>	91,169	26.4%
<b>Total</b>	345,088	100%

Source: England and Wales census, 2011. Usual resident population above 3 years of age; \*Share of all those who spoke a language other than English as their main language; (1) with Sylheti and Chatgaya; (2) Mandarin, Cantonese + all other Chinese languages.

Among those residents of the North West who did not select English as their main spoken language in 2011, 76% reported speaking English very well or well (38% each). At the same time, 20% reported not being able to speak English well, while 4% reported they couldn't speak English at all (1% and 0.2% of all residents above the age of 3 respectively). Compared to the whole of England and Wales, foreign-born residents in the North West reported a slightly lower English proficiency. While 76% of those who did not speak English as their main language in the region stated they could speak English very well or well, for England and Wales as a whole, this was 79% (this includes those who did not speak English or Welsh as their main language in Wales).

**In both 2001 and 2011, the North West occupied the 5th position in terms of population numbers out of the ten regions of England and Wales. In terms of the foreign-born population share, it occupied the 7th position in 2011, up from 8th in 2001**

In terms of a regional comparison, the North West occupied the median (5th) position in terms of the number of non-UK born residents among the 10 census regions of England and Wales (see Figure 8). In 2011, the number of foreign-born residents in the North West (577,232) was about 5 times lower than London's 3 million foreign-born (the region with the highest number of foreign-born residents in England and Wales), and about 4.5 times higher than the 128,573 foreign-born residents in the North East, the region with the lowest non-UK born population. In terms of the share of the foreign-born population within the total regional population, the North West had the 7th highest percentage (8.2%) in 2011 out of the 10 regions of England and Wales, up from 8th (5.1%) in 2001. In 2011, the region with the highest proportion of non-UK born residents was London (37%), while the region with the lowest share was the North East (5%).

Figure 8

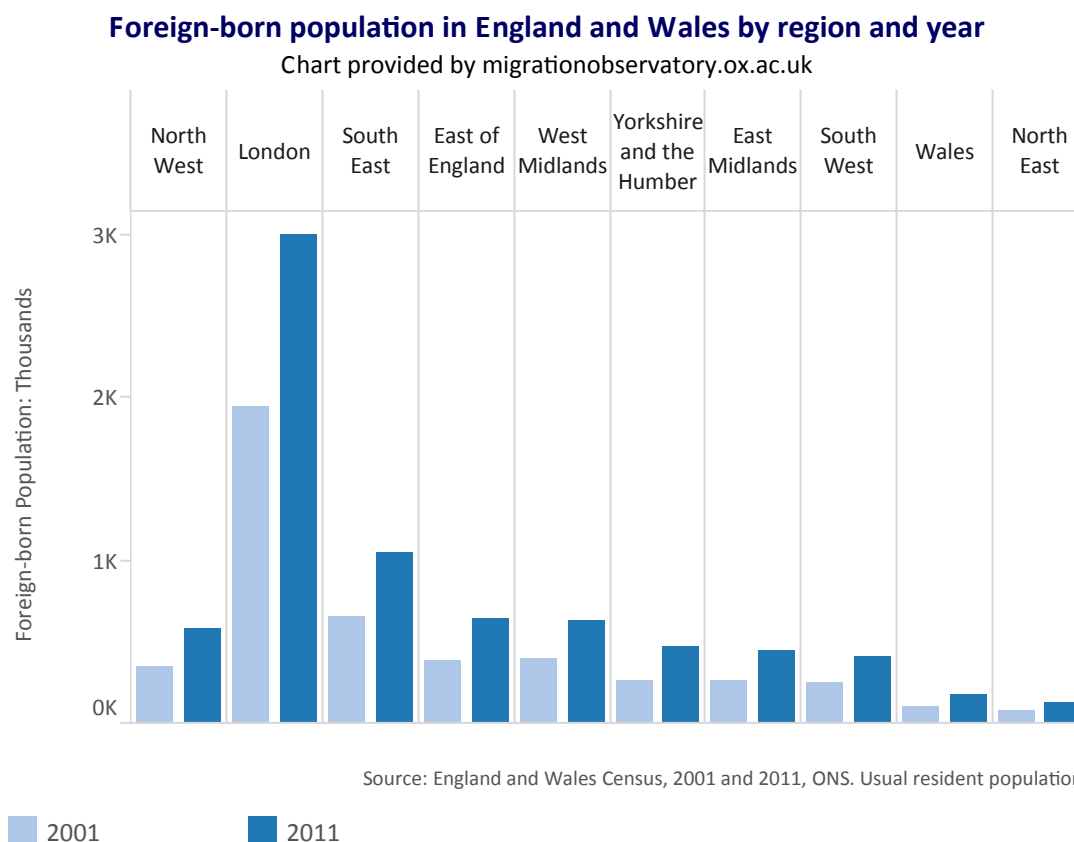


Figure 9

### Foreign-born share of the population in England and Wales by region and year

Chart provided by migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk



### Evidence gaps and limitations

There are two main limitations of the census. Firstly, it is typically only conducted every 10 years. Therefore, other sources of information are important in order to update the information between censuses. Secondly, there are only a limited number of questions included in the census. Therefore, sources of information on the broader characteristics of the population can also complement the census information.

While the census aims to include the entire population, it does have a certain margin of error. For England and Wales as a whole, the relative confidence interval at the 95% confidence level published by the ONS was 0.15% (83,000 people more or less than the estimate). To give an example at the more local level, for Manchester’s usually resident population, the relative confidence interval at the 95% level was 1.96%, suggesting a 95% probability that the true value of the population lies somewhere between 493,266 and 512,988 persons (ONS, 2012). Specific confidence intervals are not currently available for census data relating to country of birth.

### References

- Office for National Statistics. “Detailed country of birth and nationality analysis from the 2011 Census of England and Wales.” London, May 2013.
- Office for National Statistics. “Confidence Intervals for the 2011 Census.” London, December 2012.

### Related material

- Migration Observatory Briefing – Geographical Distribution and Characteristics of Long-Term International Flows to the UK [www.migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/briefings/geographical-distribution-and-characteristics-long-term-international-migration-flows-uk](http://www.migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/briefings/geographical-distribution-and-characteristics-long-term-international-migration-flows-uk)
- Migration Observatory briefing – Migrants in the UK: An Overview [www.migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/briefings/migrants-uk-overview](http://www.migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/briefings/migrants-uk-overview)



### The Migration Observatory

Based at the Centre on Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS) at the University of Oxford, the Migration Observatory provides independent, authoritative, evidence-based analysis of data on migration and migrants in the UK, to inform media, public and policy debates, and to generate high quality research on international migration and public policy issues. The Observatory’s analysis involves experts from a wide range of disciplines and departments at the University of Oxford.



### COMPAS

The Migration Observatory is based at the ESRC Centre on Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS) at the University of Oxford. The mission of COMPAS is to conduct high quality research in order to develop theory and knowledge, inform policy-making and public debate, and engage users of research within the field of migration.

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