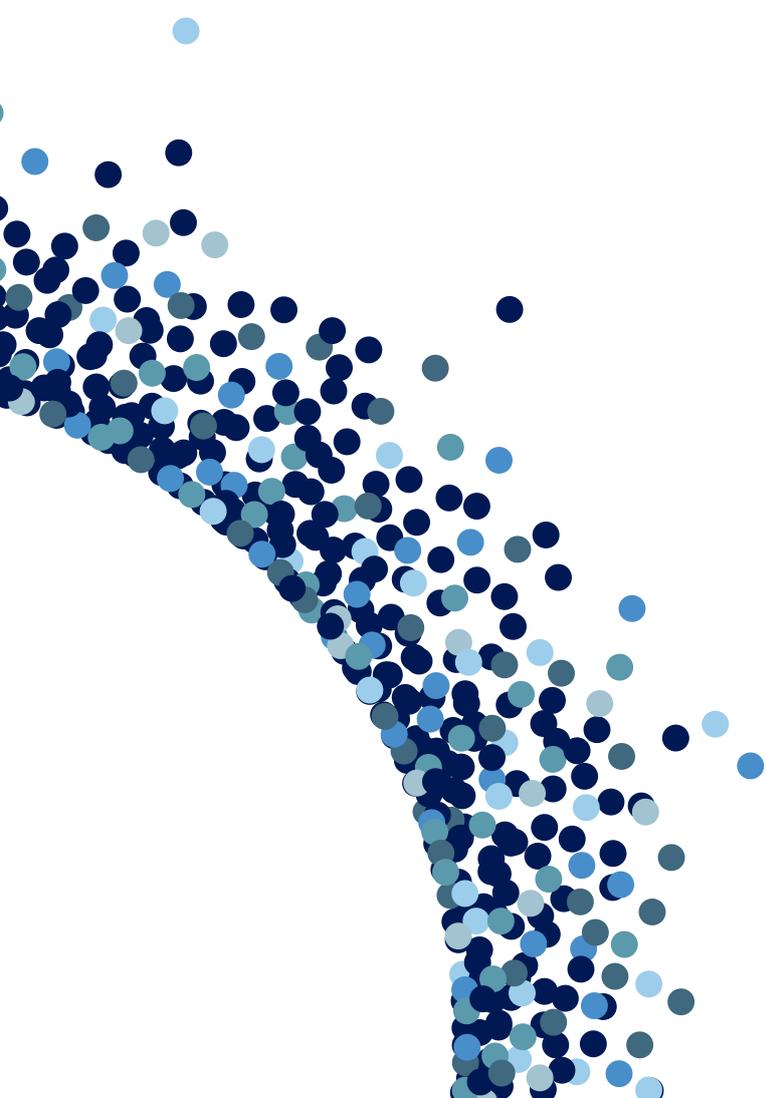




BRIEFING

Long-Term International Migration Flows to and from Scotland



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This briefing provides an overview of Long Term International Migration (LTIM) in Scotland, which includes inflows (immigration), outflows (emigration), and the difference between the two (net migration).

Key points

According to the National Records of Scotland (NRS), net international migration to Scotland for 2011–2012 was estimated to be 9,700, which was less than the net of 25,400 for the previous year.

According to the International Passenger Survey (IPS), net migration to Scotland has averaged 11,000 people since 2001.

In 2011, an estimated 47% of international migrants to Scotland were nationals of non-EU countries.

An estimated 64% of people emigrating from Scotland to an international destination went to non-EU locations in 2011.

Understanding the evidence

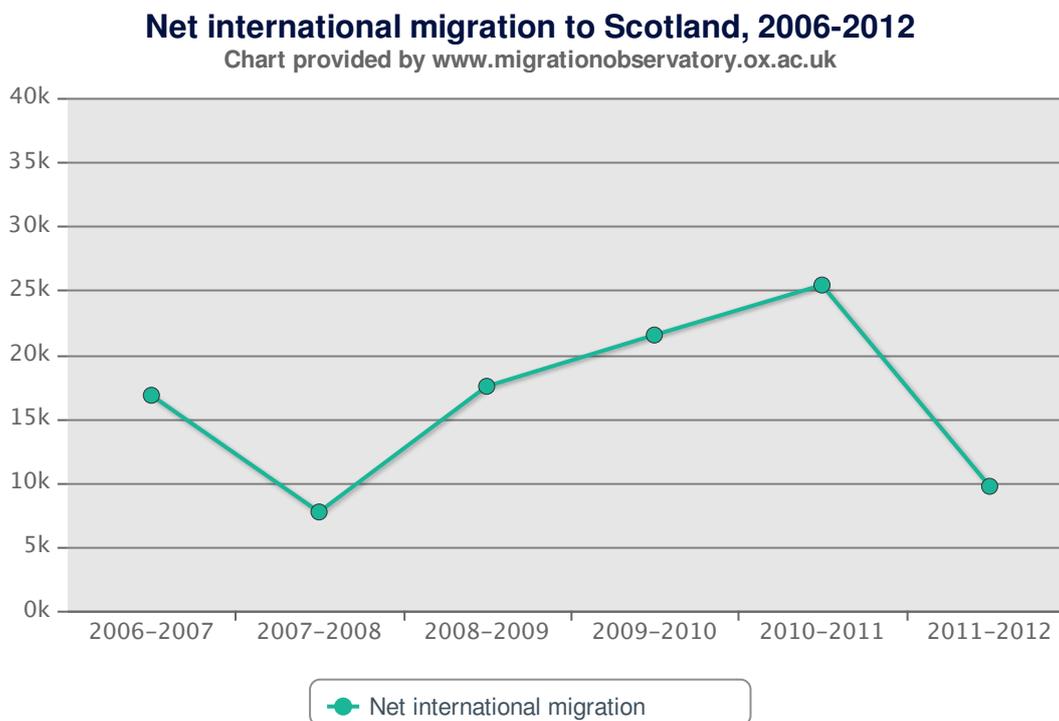
Data in this briefing are based on the International Passenger Survey (IPS), conducted by the Office of National Statistics (ONS). Data used below come either directly from the IPS, or from calculations based on the IPS. The ONS' Long Term International Migration (LTIM) figures begin from ONS, but also include Home Office data on asylum seekers and the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency. For the purposes of focusing on migration flows in Scotland, however, the original IPS data are also used. The National Records of Scotland (NRS) have also published estimates of migration flows since mid-2006, which are also based on LTIM. These are included in the briefing as well.

In order to accurately interpret LTIM and IPS data, it is important to be clear about their underlying limitations and definitions. ONS uses the current United Nations standard definition of an international long-term international migrant to produce LTIM estimates: a person who moves to another country for at least one year. For further discussion, see 'evidence gaps and limitations' and the Migration Observatory briefing "Who Counts as a Migrant?"

The NRS 2011-12 net migration estimate for Scotland (9,700) fell from its highest ever level in 2010-2011

Figure 1 shows that, according to NRS estimates, international net migration to Scotland since mid-2006 has been positive—meaning that the number of people coming to Scotland from overseas destinations has been greater than the number leaving. In 2011-2012, this figure stood at 9,700, a decline of 15,700 from the previous year to June 2011 when net migration to Scotland was its highest at 25,400.

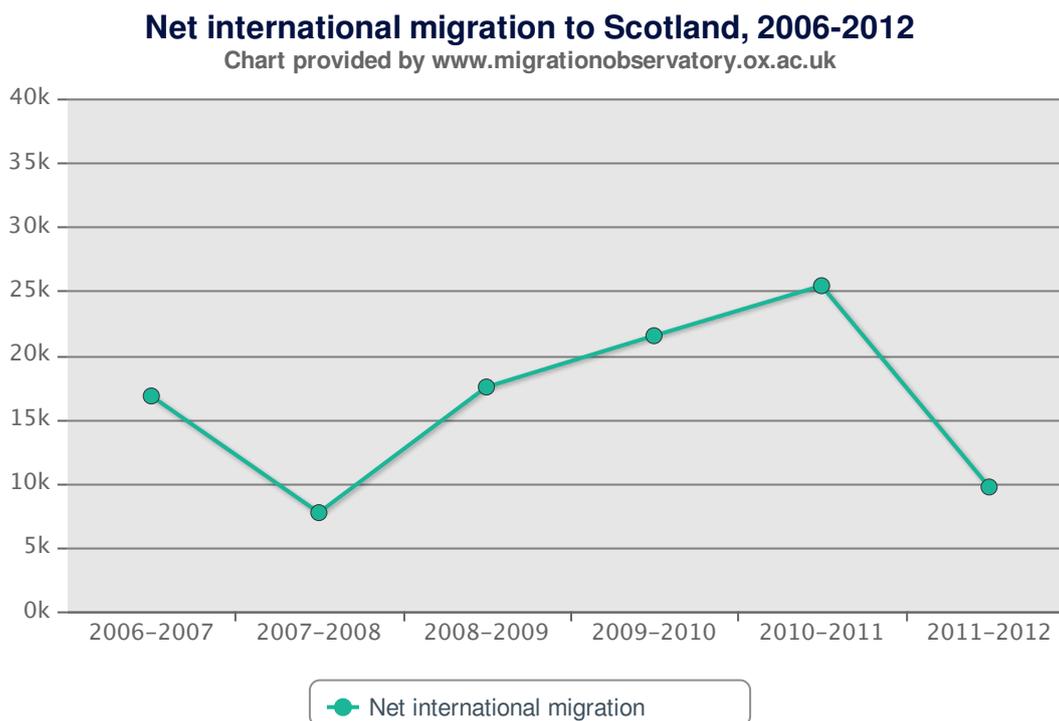
Figure 1



Meanwhile, Figure 2 displays ONS LTIM estimates of immigration, emigration, and net migration from 1991 to 2011. Over 1991 to 2002, net migration levels increased but with fluctuations. Since 2003, net migration estimates have been positive. Much of this period overlaps with the accession of eight countries to the EU in 2004. Furthermore, the estimates of immigration have either increased or remained stable year-on-year, with the exception of 2011 when it showed a decrease from 2010. Figure 1 also shows that emigration has largely remained at similar levels over the past two decades, ranging between 20,000 and 30,000 for most calendar years.

With emigration fairly stable and immigration increasing, net migration has increased in the past decade. Average annual net migration from 1991-2000 was -3,000. This is in contrast to the average annual net migration from 2001-2011 which amounted to 11,000.

Figure 2



Source: National Records of Scotland (NRS), In, Out and Net Migration Between Administrative Areas and Overseas & Components of migration by administrative area, mid-2011 to mid-2012, Table 5c

Compared to other constituent countries of the United Kingdom, Scotland experiences less net migration than England but more than Wales or Northern Ireland: in 2011, net migration to England was 204,000, -2,000 in Wales, and -3,000 in Northern Ireland.

The share of EU citizens in Scottish IPS inflows and net flows has increased, but non-EU citizens still contributed the largest shares of both in 2011

Table 1 and Table 2 show inflows and net flows respectively into Scotland by citizenship, as estimated by the International Passenger Survey. IPS figures are used because published LTIM estimates for Scotland are not disaggregated by citizenship. Since these are estimates, they are published with margins of error. This indicates that we can be 95% confident that the actual number of people of each nationality entering Scotland falls within a these margins error, but this includes wide range of values. For more information, see 'Evidence gaps and limitations' section.

In 2011, an estimated 14,000 EU citizens, or 37% of total inflow, entered Scotland as migrants. In the same year, citizens from non-EU countries (Commonwealth and other countries) represented 47% of international immigrants to Scotland, while 16% were British citizens. The share of EU citizens among international immigrants to Scotland has increased compared to 2004 when it was 16% (estimated 5,000 arriving migrants), peaking in 2007 when an estimated half of all international migrants to Scotland were from the EU. Meanwhile, the share of Commonwealth citizens coming to Scotland has declined as a share of total immigration to Scotland, from 39% of total inflows (12,000 people) in 2004 to 21% (10,000 people) in 2011.

Table 1 - Inflows of international migrants to Scotland by citizenship (in thousands)

Year	Total inflow	British		EU (non-British)		Commonwealth		Other	
		Inflows	Margin of error	Inflows	Margin of error	Inflows	Margin of error	Inflows	Margin of error
1991-1999	17 (average)	8	±5	2	±3	3	±2	4	±3
2000-2003	21 (average)	6	±5	4	±4	6	±4	6	±4
2004	31	7	±4	5	±6	12	±7	7	±5
2005	32	9	±6	6	±5	10	±5	7	±6
2006	33	3	±2	13	±8	1	±6	3	±2
2007	36	7	±4	18	±8	7	±3	4	±3
2008	41	12	±10	15	±9	7	±4	8	±5
2009	44	11	±4	17	±7	9	±4	7	±4
2010	45	11	±5	17	±7	9	±3	8	±3
2011	38	6	±3	14	±5	8	±3	10	±4

Source: ONS, International Passenger Survey, Table 3.14

The most popular destinations for people leaving Scotland are non-EU countries

IPS data also provide information on the next intended residence of people leaving Scotland. It is important to note that this may differ from their final eventual residence, and does not account for instances when individuals migrate to another country for a short while before moving onward to a third country.

Table 2 shows the estimated number of international migration from Scotland, which includes people moving to the EU, the Commonwealth, or another foreign country. The table does not include people moving between Scotland and other parts of the UK. In 2011, an estimated 8,000 people emigrated from Scotland to an EU country, while 16,000 (64%) moved to a non-EU country, which includes Commonwealth and other countries. However, it is important to note the wide margins of error around these estimates.

Table 2 - Destinations of emigrants from Scotland to outside the UK (in thousands)

Year	EU		Commonwealth		Other foreign	
	Total	Margin of error	Total	Margin of error	Total	Margin of error
Average 1991-1999	5	±4	8	±4	7	±4
Average 2000-2003	6	±5	10	±4	8	±5
2004	5	±4	11	±5	10	±6
2005	9	±6	9	±4	9	±8
2006	5	±5	9	±4	9	±5
2007	7	±5	13	±5	5	±4
2008	13	±7	7	±3	5	±3
2009	8	±6	9	±3	8	±4
2010	6	±4	6	±2	6	±4
2011	8	±6	9	±2	7	±5

Source: ONS, International Passenger Survey, Table 3.14

Evidence gaps and limitations

As results from a survey, IPS data are actually estimates of the 'real' number of incoming and outgoing international migrants. The margin of error surrounding a figure, or 'confidence interval', gives a sense of the range in which one can be confident that the true value lies. This is important to recognise when interpreting survey results, especially when observing large reported increases or decreases in consecutive years: the actual values may differ. In the case of IPS data, all confidence intervals indicate a 95% margin, meaning roughly that we are 95% sure that the real value lies within the published margin of error.

Importantly for this briefing, LTIM estimates are not currently disaggregated for Scotland beyond basic statistics on immigration, emigration and net migration. IPS data on citizenship and previous country of residence for international immigrants, or next destination of international emigrants, are available but have large margins of error around the estimates. It is important to recognise that the IPS is designed to collect data on a broad set of issues including towns visited and purchases made while in the UK. Given that migrants make up a relatively small proportion of the total respondents, there is a degree of uncertainty in these figures. This is relevant for disaggregating migrants across some source and destination countries, where the number of migrants interviewed may be very small. Therefore, the ONS reports these figures using broad regional categories only.

The IPS asks individuals about their intended stay in the UK or abroad in order to measure inflows and outflows. However, these future plans may or may not actually materialise. The ONS accounts for these changes using several methods—for example, by adjusting for 'visitor switchers' who originally intend to stay for less than twelve months but subsequently stay longer, and 'migrant switchers' who intended to stay for more than twelve months but left within a year – to produce their LTIM estimates. These adjustments remain less than perfect but have recently been reviewed to attempt to capture migration behaviour more accurately.

Related material

- Migration Observatory briefing "Who Counts as a Migrant?"
- NRS - Table 5c: Components of migration by administrative area, mid-2011 to mid-2012
- NRS - Table 7c: Rest of UK/Overseas moves and total resident population of Scotland by age group, mid-2011 to mid-2012
- NRS - "In, Out, and Net Migration Between Administrative Areas and Overseas"
- Office of National Statistics (ONS) - International Passenger Survey, Area of Destination or Origin Within the UK By Sex, Table 3.07



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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