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International Migration in Northern Ireland: an Update

NIAR 35-15

Around 175,000 long-term international migrants are estimated to have arrived in Northern Ireland between 2000 and 2014. This paper, which contains recent statistics from the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA), updates a previous paper (February 2012) and describes the key elements of this remarkable demographic change.

Key Points

- For many decades Northern Ireland was a net exporter of people. From 1871 right through to 1990, the number of people leaving Northern Ireland far exceeded those who came here to live. In fact, an estimated net total of just under one million people left Northern Ireland during this period.
- Between 2000 and 2014, an estimated 175,000 long-term international migrants came to Northern Ireland, while 143,000 left, leaving a net total of 32,000. Local government districts in the west and south-west of Northern Ireland saw the largest net inflow of new residents, in particular: Mid Ulster (9,800), Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon (9,300) and Newry, Mourne and Down (6,000).
- In 2013-14 Northern Ireland had the lowest international migration rate of any UK region. This compares with the peak year of 2006-7, when Northern Ireland had the highest migration rate (5.2 per 1,000 population) in the UK.
- Poland continues to be the most popular country of origin for international migrants coming to live in Northern Ireland. During 2014 and 2015, however, migration from Romania rose substantially, albeit from a low baseline.
- Around 1,000 members of the Roma community, mostly from Romania, are thought to be living in Northern Ireland, mainly in South Belfast.
- International migration impacts upon the host community in a myriad number of ways, including maternity services, school enrolments, social housing, health and social care, and hate crime.
- Births to mothers born outside the UK and Ireland now account for over 10 per cent of all births in Northern Ireland each year. In 2014, 18 per cent of all births in the Mid Ulster local government district were to non-UK and Ireland mothers, followed by Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon (15%), Belfast (15%), Fermanagh and Omagh (14%) and Newry, Mourne and Down (14%).
- The number of newcomer pupils in Northern Ireland has risen by almost three-quarters (73.9%), from 6,795 in 2008 to 11,815 by 2014
- Between 2006 and 2014, an estimated 11,700 migrant households applied for social housing, of whom 2,000 were successful.
- Figures from the Regional Interpreting Service show that just under half a million requests (493,660) for interpreters were made between January 2004 and December 2014.
- Hate crime incidents and offences with a racial motive increased substantially between 2011 and 2014.

- There are many positive aspects of migration. For example, it is argued that migration contributes to economic growth, fills labour shortages, brings much needed skills, and enriches our society through cultural diversity.

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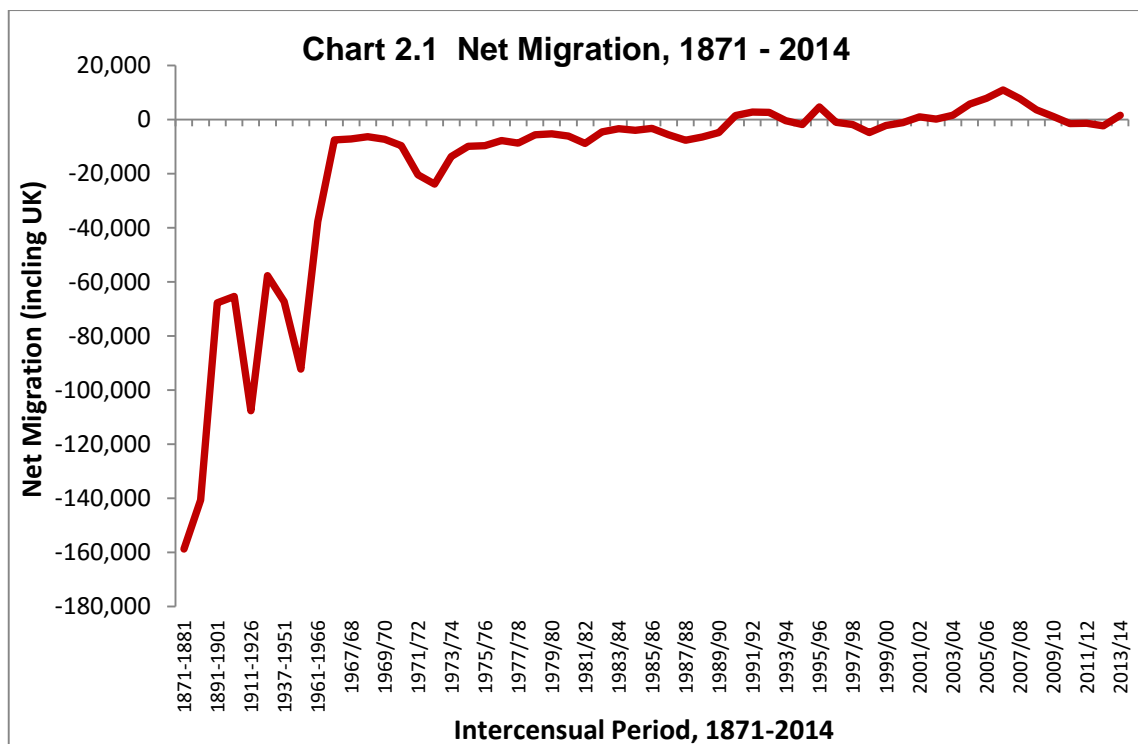
1 Introduction

Since the year 2000, Northern Ireland has witnessed an unprecedented wave of international migration mainly, but not exclusively, from central and eastern Europe. Between 2000 and 2014, almost 175,000 long-term international migrants are estimated to have arrived in Northern Ireland. In the process, Northern Ireland has moved from a position of net migration loss to one of annual population gain.

This paper updates a previous paper (NIAR 10-12) and contains the most recent statistics on migration.

2 Historical Migration Patterns, 1871 - 2014

While this Paper is primarily focused on *international* migration, it may be helpful to begin by providing a brief overview of migration patterns in general. Chart 2.1 shows *net* migration (the difference between outflows and inflows) for the entire period, 1871 – 2014. In this instance, migration includes both international migration (between Northern Ireland and countries outside the UK), and flows between Northern Ireland and other parts of the UK.



Source: NISRA (2015) Historical Migration, 1871-2014

The chart clearly shows that for many decades Northern Ireland was a net exporter of people. From 1871 right through to 1990, the number of people leaving Northern Ireland far exceeded those who came here to live. In fact, an estimated net total of just under one million people left Northern Ireland during this period ¹. Net migration then moved into positive territory for a brief period (1990-1993), before resuming its negative trend until the millennium. Between 2001 and 2008, the trend was generally positive, with more people coming here to live than leaving. Migration again moved into negative territory in the period 2009 – 2013, before another upturn in 2014.

3 Estimating Long-term International Migration

Long-term International migration refers to the number of people leaving or arriving to live in Northern Ireland to and from areas outside the UK, for a period of at least twelve months. Net international migration is the difference between outflows from Northern Ireland and inflows to Northern Ireland. Migration estimates are calculated from mid-year to mid-year (e.g. the most recent migration estimates occurred between July 2013 and June 2014). There are no estimates for short-term / temporary migration.

Migration is the most difficult component of population change to measure, as unlike births and deaths, there is no complete system for registering migration. In Northern Ireland, migration is estimated using Medical Card registrations and de-registrations supplied by the Business Service Organisation (BSO). It is recognised that the medical card method is deficient in recording young adult males, as well as the significant proportion of migrants who return to their county of origin without de-registering. The data is therefore upscaled and weighted to take account of these factors. NISRA is content that their methods yield robust and accurate estimates ².

NISRA also use other administrative data sources to validate and supplement the medical card data, such as applications for National Insurance number (NINOs), and data from the School Census, Health and Social Care Trusts, the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, and birth registrations.

4 Long-term International Migration, 2000 – 2014

Table 4.1 and Fig 4.1 (overleaf) present estimates for net international migration during the period 2000 – 2014. On 1 May 2004, eight central and eastern European countries (the “A8”) joined the EU. Twelve of the EU-15 Member States imposed labour market restrictions on A8 nationals, the exceptions being the UK, Ireland and Sweden. With

¹ NISRA (2015) Historical **Migration, 1871 to 2014**. Available at: [http://www.nisra.gov.uk/archive/demography/population/midyear/Migration_\(1871_to_2014\).xls](http://www.nisra.gov.uk/archive/demography/population/midyear/Migration_(1871_to_2014).xls)

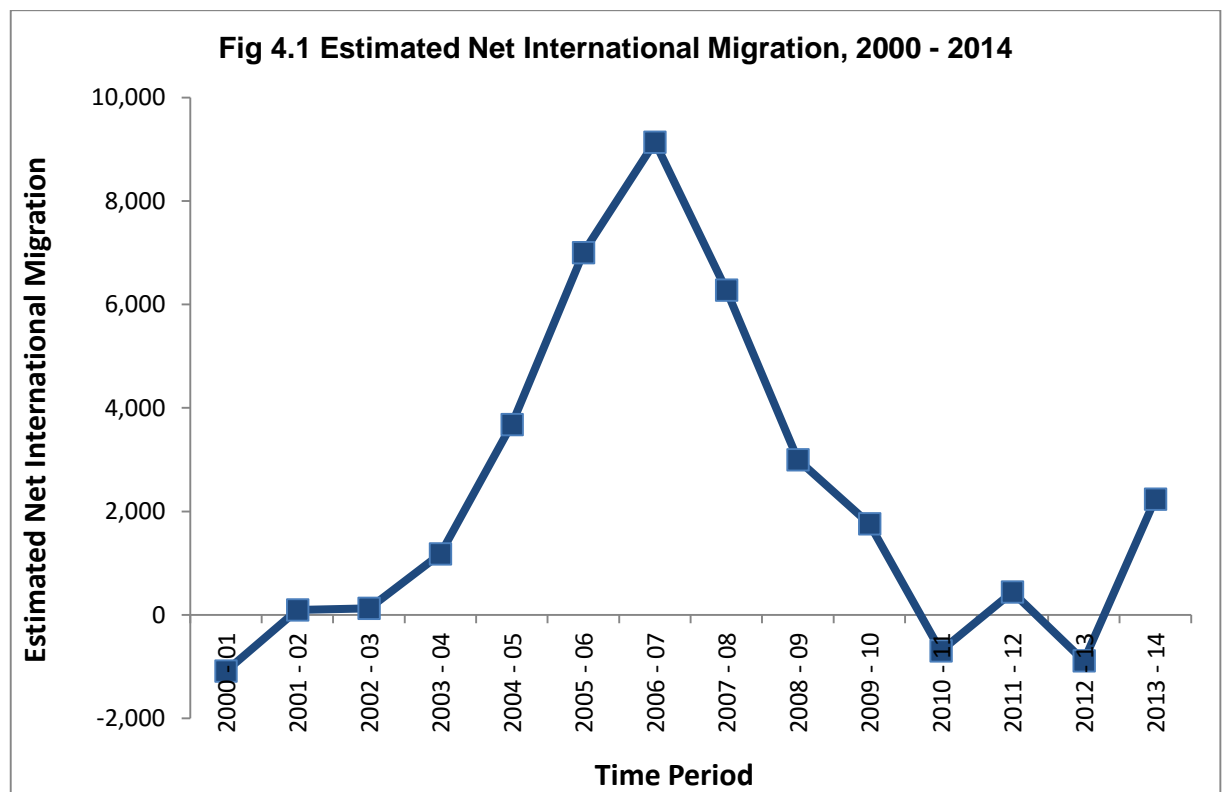
² NISRA (2015) **Statistical Bulletin: Long-term International Migration Statistics for Northern Ireland (2014)**. Available at: <http://www.nisra.gov.uk/archive/demography/population/migration/Mig1314-Bulletin.pdf>

comparatively free access to the labour market, citizens from the A8 countries began to arrive in the UK and Ireland in large numbers ³.

Table 4.1 Estimated Net International Migration, 2000 - 2014

Time-period	Estimated International Inflows	Estimated International Outflows	Estimated Net International Migration
Jul 2000 - Jun 2001	6,524	7,609	-1,085
Jul 2001 - Jun 2002	6,488	6,393	95
Jul 2002 - Jun 2003	6,810	6,683	127
Jul 2003 - Jun 2004	8,174	6,996	1,178
Jul 2004 - Jun 2005	12,544	8,861	3,683
Jul 2005 - Jun 2006	15,803	8,797	7,006
Jul 2006 - Jun 2007	19,773	10,633	9,140
Jul 2007 - Jun 2008	18,261	11,981	6,280
Jul 2008 - Jun 2009	14,404	11,406	2,998
Jul 2009 - Jun 2010	13,877	12,115	1,762
Jul 2010 - Jun 2011	13,401	14,097	-696
Jul 2011 - Jun 2012	12,922	12,480	442
Jul 2012 - Jun 2013	12,736	13,623	-887
Jul 2013 - Jun 2014	13,300	11,063	2,237
Total	175,017	142,737	32,280

Source: NISRA (2015) Migration by additional breakdowns, 2013-14, Table 3.1



³ The A8 countries include Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia.

International migration flows peaked in 2006-07, when a total of 19,800 people came to live in Northern Ireland from outside the UK, while 10,600 left to live abroad, leaving a net inflow of 9,100 people. With the onset of the global financial crisis in 2008, migration flows began to decline and level off. After a net loss of international migrants in 2012-13, when more people left Northern Ireland than came to live here, net migration moved into positive territory again in 2013-14, with a net increase of 2,200 people. This represents a substantial change from 2012-13, when 900 more people left Northern Ireland to live abroad, than entered Northern Ireland from outside the UK.

4.1 International Migration by Local Government District (LGD 2014)

Table 4.2 and Map 4.1 (overleaf) show net international migration in the eleven new local government districts (LGDs) during the period 2004 – 2014 ⁴.

Table 4.2 Net International Migration (rounded) by LGD, 2004 – 2014

LGD 2014	Total Net Migration, 2004 – 14
Mid Ulster	9,800
Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon	9,300
Newry, Mourne & Down	6,000
Fermanagh & Omagh	3,300
Mid & East Antrim	2,600
Belfast	1,500
Lisburn & Castlereagh	1,400
Causeway Coast & Glens	320
North Down & Ards	200
Antrim & Newtownabbey	-350
Derry & Strabane	-2,200
Northern Ireland	32,000

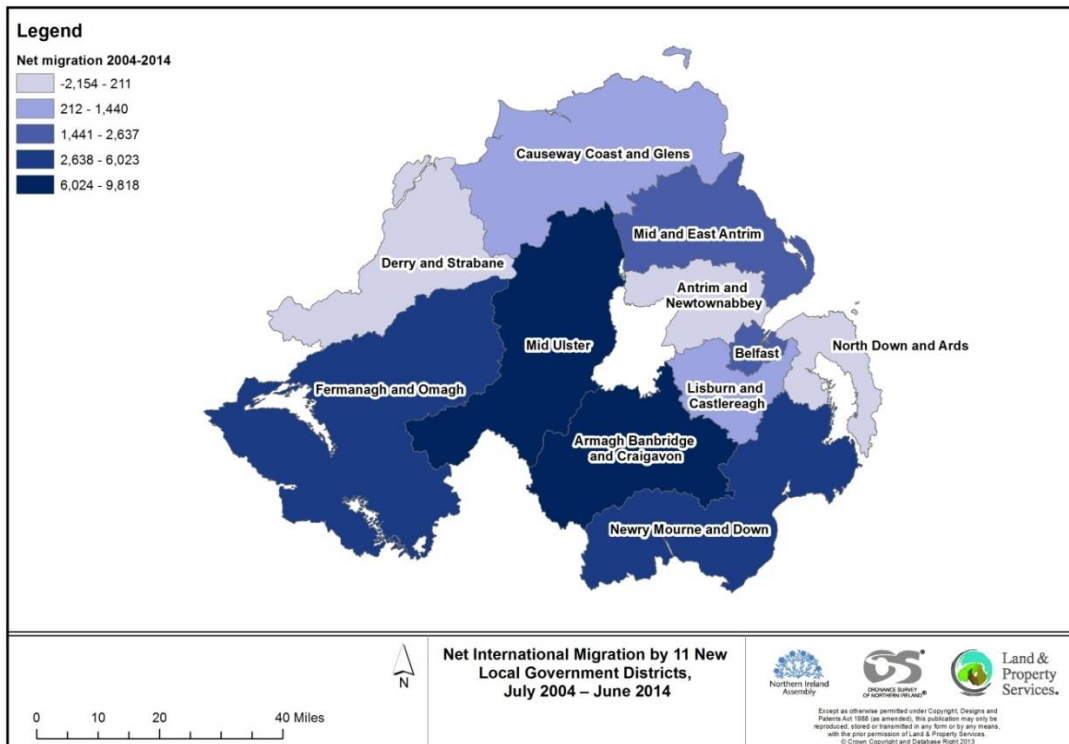
Source: NISRA (2015) Migration by additional breakdowns.

Overall, there was a net inflow of 32,000 international migrants to Northern Ireland over the ten-year period. Local government districts in the west and south-west of Northern Ireland saw the largest inflow of new residents, in particular: Mid Ulster (9,800), Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon (9,300) and Newry, Mourne and Down (6,000).

⁴ NISRA (2015) **Migration by additional breakdowns, Table 3.2.** Available at: http://www.nisra.gov.uk/archive/demography/population/midyear/Net_Mig_1314.xls

Two council areas experienced a net outflow, namely, Antrim and Newtownabbey (-350) and Derry and Strabane (-2,200).

Map 4.1 Net International Migration (rounded) by LGD, 2004 – 2014



4.2 International Migration: Regional Comparison

Table 4.3 presents a regional comparison for net international migration (per 1,000 population) in the four UK nations and the Republic of Ireland during 2013-14.

Table 4.3 Net International Migration in 2013-14 per 1,000 population, UK Nations and Ireland

Country	Migrants per 1,000 pop.
England	4.5
Wales	1.9
Scotland	1.5
Northern Ireland	1.2
Republic of Ireland	- 4.6

Source: NISRA (2015) Net international migration in UK countries

The table shows that, proportionately, Northern Ireland had the lowest international migration rate of the UK nations in 2013-14, at 1.2 persons per 1,000 population, compared with England (4.5), Wales (1.9) and Scotland (1.5). This compares with the peak year of 2006-7, when Northern Ireland had the highest migration rate (5.2) in the UK. In the Republic of Ireland, there was a net outflow of 4.6 per 1,000 population in 2013-14. Again, this compares with the Celtic Tiger period (2003 – 08) when migration averaged around 15.0 per 1,000 population. Net international migration peaked in the Republic of Ireland in 2006 – 07 with a figure of 24.8 per 1,000 population.

4.3 International Migration: Countries of Origin

Data from Census 2011, plus various administrative sources, indicate that Poland has been, and continues to be, the top country of origin for international migrants coming to live in Northern Ireland (Table 4.4).

More recent trends suggest that Northern Ireland is becoming an increasingly popular destination for migrants from Romania. On 1 January 2014, a change came into effect which gave Romanian and Bulgarian nationals the same rights to live and work in the UK as other EEA nationals. Analysis of medical card registrations show a significant rise in the number of registrations by Romanian nationals (and a modest increase for Bulgarians) in 2014 and the first half of 2015 (Table 4.5)

Table 4.4 Top 10 Countries of Origin, Census 2011

Country of Origin	Count
Poland	19,658
Lithuania	7,341
India	4,796
USA	4,251
Germany	3,908
Philippines	2,947
Slovakia	2,681
Canada	2,323
Latvia	2,297
China	2,223

Source: NISRA (2013) Census of Population 2011, Table QS208NI

Table 4.5 Medical Card Applications by Romanian and Bulgarian Nationals, 2005-15

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Jan – June 2015
Romania	108	81	104	109	137	253	297	178	205	1,407	680
Bulgaria	30	36	69	100	177	162	111	95	105	413	193

Source: NISRA (2015) Medical Card applications, BSO, 2005-15

Table 4.6 contains an analysis of medical card data, and shows the top three countries of origin for migrants coming to Northern Ireland in 2014 by local government district (LGD). Romania was the top country of origin for new medical card registrations in Belfast LGD, as well as being in the top three of several other Districts. This marks the first year since records began (2006) that Romania has been a top country in any of the LGDs. Poland appears in the top three of each of the 11 LGDs⁵.

Table 4.6 Medical Card Registrations in NI: Top 3 countries by LGD, Jan – Dec 2014

LGD	First	Second	Third
Antrim & Newtownabbey	Poland	China	Romania
Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon	Poland	Portugal	Lithuania
Belfast	Romania	Poland	Irish Republic
Causeway Coast & Glens	Poland	Irish Republic	France
Derry & Strabane	Irish Republic	Poland	USA
Fermanagh & Omagh	Irish Republic	Poland	Hungary
Lisburn & Castlereagh	Poland	Irish Republic	Romania
Mid & East Antrim	Poland	Romania	Slovakia
Mid Ulster	Lithuania	Poland	East Timor
Newry, Mourne & Down	Irish Republic	Poland	Bulgaria
North Down & Ards	Irish Republic	Lithuania	Poland
Northern Ireland	Poland	Irish Republic	Romania

Source: NISRA (2015) International In-Migration statistics, 2014

⁵ NISRA (2015) Statistical Bulletin: Long-term International Migration Statistics for Northern Ireland (2014). Available at: <http://www.nisra.gov.uk/archive/demography/population/migration/Mig1314-Bulletin.pdf>

The increase in Romanian nationals coming to Northern Ireland is also confirmed by figures from the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) relating to National Insurance Number (NINO) applications. NINO applications from Romanians coming to Northern Ireland rose from 270 in 2012-13 to 2,420 in 2014-15⁶.

4.4 The Roma

An unspecified proportion of Romanian nationals in Northern Ireland belong to the Roma community. Precise estimates for the number of Roma do not exist⁷, but it is thought that around 1,000 Roma are presently living in various parts of Northern Ireland, particularly South and East Belfast⁸.

Roma are the largest ethnic minority group in Europe: their actual number is uncertain, but the European Commission estimate it at between 10-12 million⁹. According to Fremlova and Amstead (2011), a number of Roma from Eastern Europe, particularly from the Czech Republic, Poland, Romania, and Slovakia, initially came to the UK in 1990s seeking asylum to escape persecution and discrimination in their countries of origin¹⁰. With the enlargement of the EU between 2004 and 2007, growing numbers of Roma exercised their right to free movement, and came to live in the UK, including Northern Ireland. Many settled in the Botanic – Lower Ormeau¹² areas of South Belfast.

The Roma are generally employed in the informal sector, selling copies of the *Big Issue*, local newspapers, flowers, or working as car wash attendants in sites across Belfast. A recent EU survey of 11 Member States found that Roma households are much more likely to be at risk of extreme poverty than non-Roma residents. For example, in Romania and Hungary around 90 per cent of Roma live in households

⁶ NISRA (2015) **NINO applications by Nationality, April 2009 to March 2015**. Available at: <http://www.nisra.gov.uk/archive/demography/population/migration/Mig1314-In.xls>

⁷ Census 2011 did not contain a category for the Roma, who often prefer to remain invisible to the authorities, mainly due to centuries of persecution in their countries of origin in Central and Eastern Europe.

⁸ Education Support for Northern Ireland (2014) **Roma – Information for Schools**. Available at: <http://www.education-support.org.uk/teachers/ids/roma/>

⁹ EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (2012) **The Situation of Roma in 11 EU Member States**. Available at: http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/2099-FRA-2012-Roma-at-a-glance_EN.pdf

¹⁰ Fremlova, L. and Anstead, A. (2011) **Discrimination as standard**. Runnymede Bulletin, Winter 2010-11, Issue 364, pp. 18-19. Available at: [http://equality.uk.com/Roma_files/Discrimination as standard.pdf](http://equality.uk.com/Roma_files/Discrimination%20as%20standard.pdf)

¹¹ Between 1942 and 1944, hundreds of thousands of Roma were transported by the Nazis across Europe to extermination camps in Poland and murdered. In a resolution of 15 April 2015, the European Parliament officially recognised 2nd August each year as Roma Holocaust Memorial Day (see European Commission Statement, 15/5444 [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release STATEMENT-15-5444_en.pdf](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_STATEMENT-15-5444_en.pdf))

¹² Education Support for Northern Ireland (2014) **Roma – Information for Schools**. Available at: <http://www.education-support.org.uk/teachers/ids/roma/>

affected by severe material deprivation¹³. Another survey, this time conducted in England, found that 97 per cent of Roma respondents claimed their lives had improved since coming to England¹⁴. A remarkable statistic, given their present precarious circumstances, and one which serves to highlight just how difficult their lives must have been in their countries of origin.

A small, but growing number of Roma pupils are now attending schools in Northern Ireland, the majority (76%) in Belfast. According to the latest School Census the number has risen from 30 in 2009-10 to 230 by 2014-15¹⁵. One hundred and thirty two children are attending primary school, while the remainder (73) are enrolled in post-primary education¹⁶.

5 Impact of long-term International Migration

International migration influences the host community in a myriad number of ways. The following section examines some of the most significant impacts, including maternity services, school enrolments, social housing, health and social care, and hate crime.

5.1 Births to Non-UK Mothers

Birth statistics clearly show the impact of migration. Table 5.1 presents statistics on births in Northern Ireland by the country of birth of the mother for the full period, 1997 – 2014. It shows a significant increase in the number of births to mothers born in the EU Accession (A8) countries and the rest of the world.

¹³ EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (2012) Op cit., p. 26

¹⁴ European Dialogue (2009) **Movement of Roma from new EU Member States: a mapping survey of A2 and A8 Roma in England**. Report for Department for Children, Schools and Families, p. 8. Available at: http://equality.uk.com/Resources_files/movement_of_roma.pdf

¹⁵ DENI (2015) **Roma Pupils in Education, 2014/15 Key Statistics**. School Census, Department of Education. Available at: <https://www.deni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/Roma%20infographic.pdf>

¹⁶ The attendance of Roma children at primary school is highly localised, with three or four schools accounting for the majority of pupils. For example, in one small primary school in West Belfast, Roma pupils account for half (50 per cent) of the total enrolment, or 70 out of 139 pupils (source: NISMP, 2015, The integration of newcomer children with interrupted education into Northern Ireland schools, A Belfast-based case study). Available at: <http://www.migrationni.org/DataEditorUploads/NISMPNewcomerChildrenwithInterruptedEducation.pdf>

Table 5.1 Births in Northern Ireland by Country of Birth of Mother, 1997 – 2014

Registration Year	All countries	NI, other UK, ROI	A8	Rest of World	Not Stated	% A8 + Rest of World
1997	24,087	23,518	2	542	25	2.6
1998	23,668	23,082	3	548	35	2.7
1999	22,957	22,341	6	579	31	2.9
2000	21,512	20,891	5	584	32	3.1
2001	21,962	21,272	12	649	29	3.5
2002	21,385	20,640	16	708	21	3.9
2003	21,648	20,723	21	875	29	4.8
2004	22,318	21,153	34	1,096	35	5.9
2005	22,328	21,208	118	986	16	5.7
2006	23,272	21,824	390	1,058	-	7.1
2007	24,451	22,504	775	1,170	2	8.9
2008	25,631	23,284	1,080	1,267	-	10.2
2009	24,910	22,592	1,113	1,205	-	10.3
2010	25,315	22,842	1,235	1,238	-	10.8
2011	25,273	22,796	1,210	1,267	-	10.9
2012	25,269	22,810	1,201	1,258	-	10.8
2013	24,277	21,834	1,257	1,186	-	11.1
2014	24,394	21,925	1,258	1,211	-	11.2

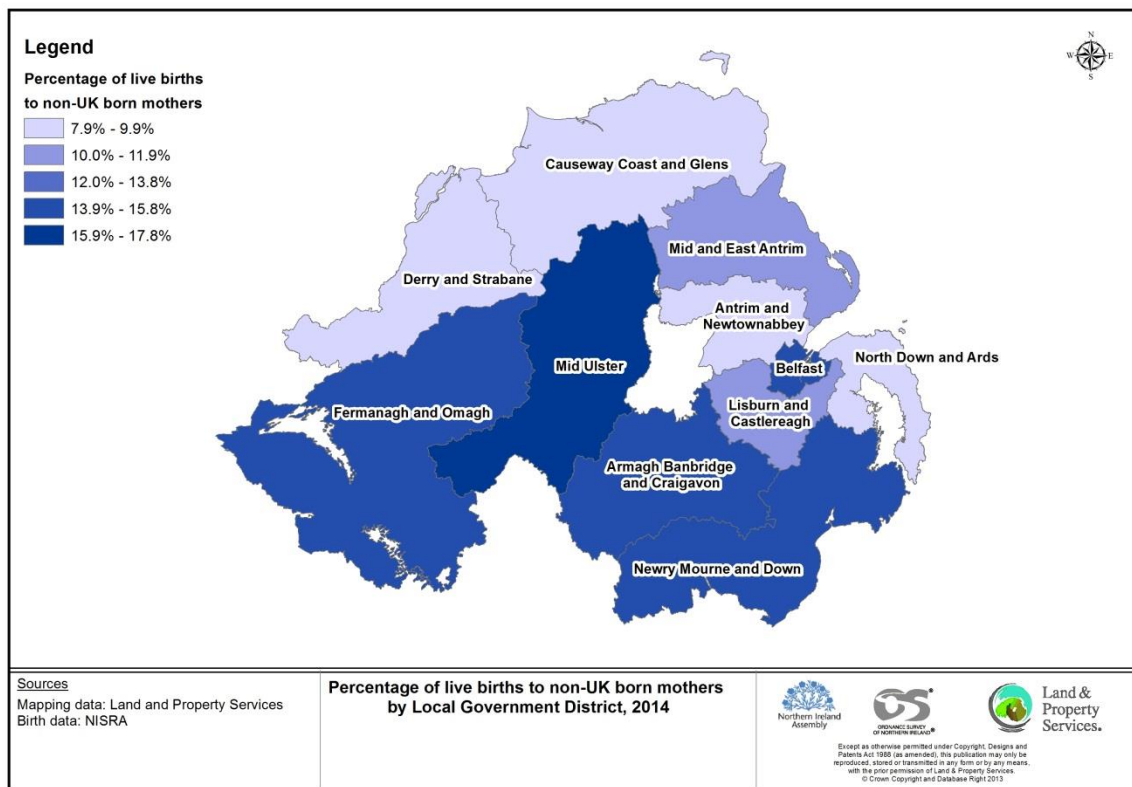
Source: NISRA (2015)

In 1997, only 2 babies in Northern Ireland were born to mothers from the A8 countries. By 2008, this figure had risen to 1,080, and has hovered around the 1,200 mark ever since. Births to mothers born in the rest of the world (excluding the UK, Ireland, and the A8) have also increased, albeit at a lower rate, from 542 in 1997 to 1,211 in 2014. Table 5.1 shows that births to mothers born outside the UK and Ireland (column 7) now account for over 10 per cent of all births in Northern Ireland each year¹⁷.

Births to non-UK born mothers have not been equally spread across Northern Ireland: the largest number of such births have occurred in Belfast, plus the south and west regions (Map 5.1). In 2014, for example, births to non-UK nationals accounted for 18 per cent of all births in the Mid Ulster local government district, followed by Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon (15%), Belfast (15%), Fermanagh and Omagh (14%) and Newry, Mourne and Down (14%). North Down and Ards (7.9%) had the smallest proportion.

¹⁷ NISRA (2015) Births **by country of birth of mother, 1997-2014**. Available at: http://www.nisra.gov.uk/archive/demography/publications/annual_reports/2014/Table3.15_2014.xls

Map 5.1 Births to non-UK Mothers by LGD in 2014



Apart from maternity services and requests for interpreters (see section 5.4), however, there is no evidence that newcomers to Northern Ireland are heavy users of health and social care. In fact, migrant workers have a considerably younger age profile than the host population, and tend to be in less need of medical care.

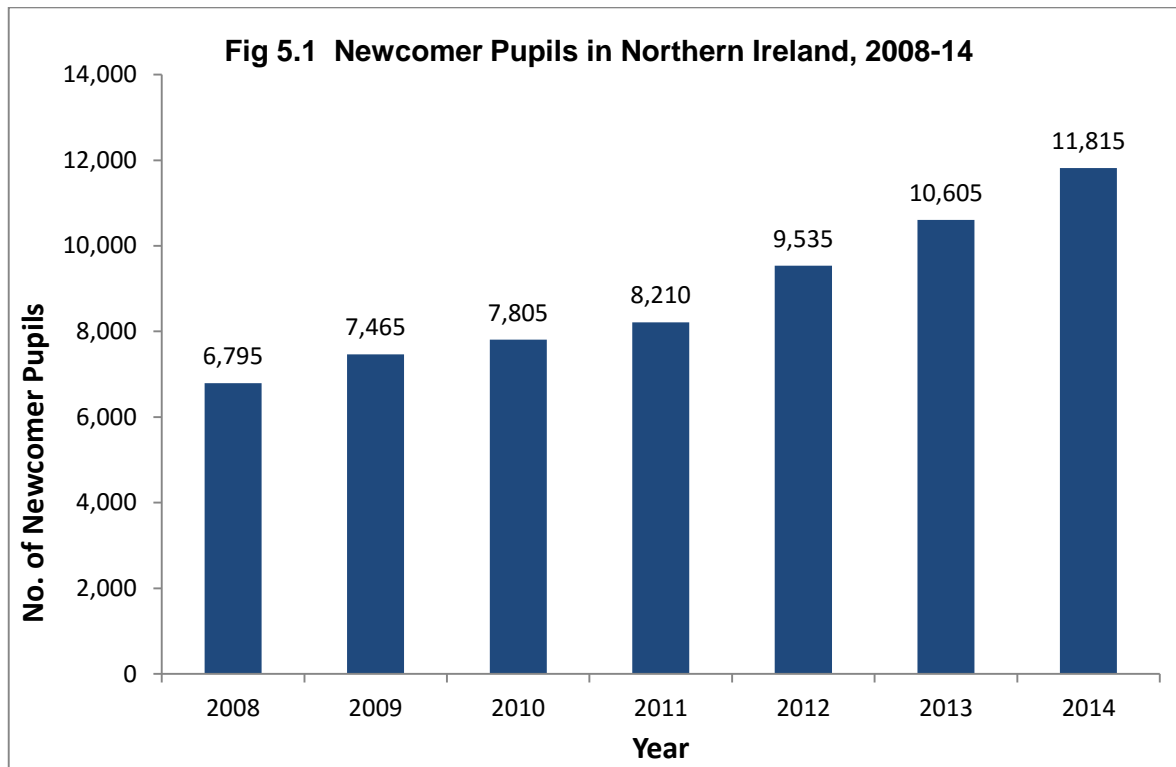
5.2 Newcomer Pupils

A newcomer pupil is one who has enrolled in a school but who does not have the satisfactory language skills to participate fully in the school curriculum, and does not have a language in common with the teacher, whether that is English or Irish¹⁸. This category, which has previously been referred to as English an Additional Language, is primarily composed of children from a migrant worker background.

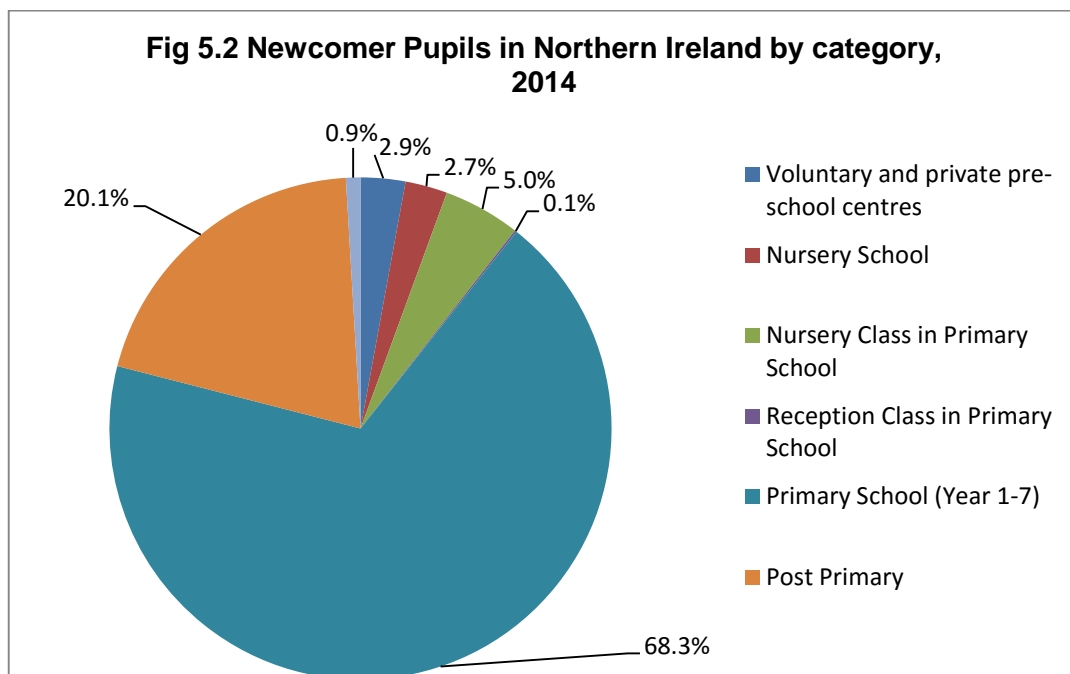
Fig 5.1 (overleaf) shows that the number of newcomer pupils in Northern Ireland has risen by almost three-quarters (73.9%), from 6,795 in 2008 to 11,815 by 2014. Post-primary pupils accounted for 20 per cent of newcomers, while the remainder were in

¹⁸ DENI (2015) **Newcomer Pupils in Education, 2014/15 Key Statistics**. School Census Department of Education. Available at: <https://www.deni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/newcomer%20infographic.pdf>

pre-school, and primary school (Fig 5.2). The latest figures for 2015-16 show there are now 12,900 newcomer pupils, accounting for 3.8 per cent of the school population ¹⁹.



Source: DENI (2015) Newcomer pupils in education

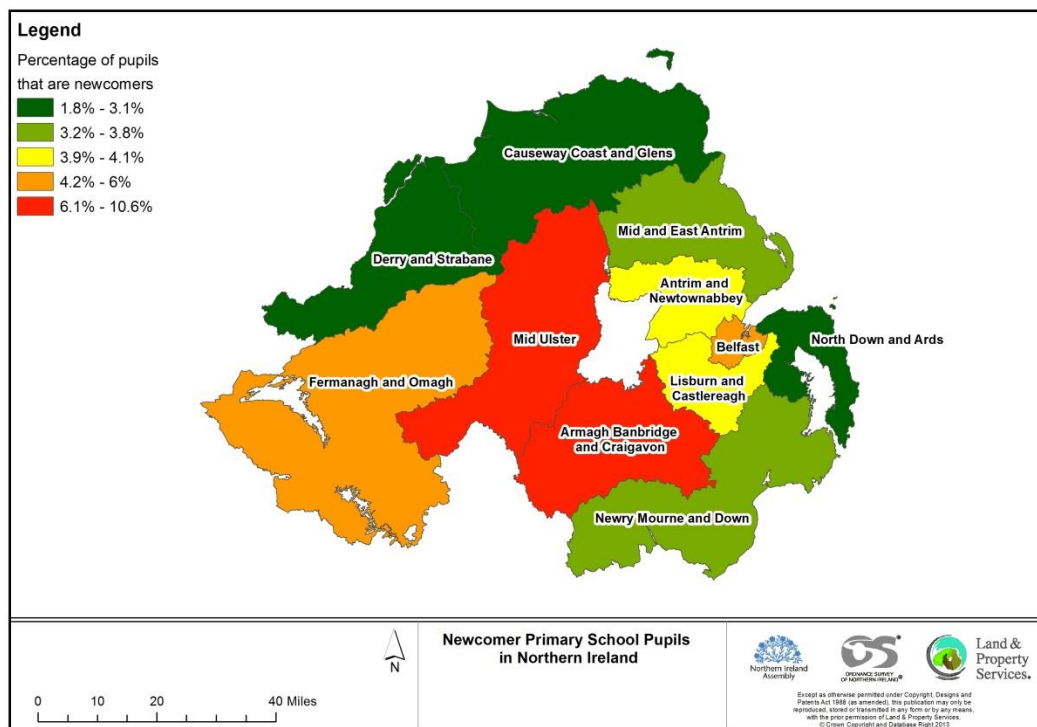


Source: DENI (2015) Newcomer pupils in education

¹⁹ DENI (2016) Newcomer Pupils, 2001/02 to 2015/16. Available at: <https://www.deni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/newcomer%20time%20series%201516.XLSX>

Figure 5.3 shows the distribution of newcomer pupils by the new council areas in October 2014.

Fig 5.3 Distribution of Newcomer Pupils in Northern Ireland by LGD 2014



Mid Ulster (11% of total enrolments), Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon (7.4%) and Belfast (6.0%) have the highest proportion of newcomer pupils. Derry and Strabane and Ards and North Down (both 1.8%) have the smallest proportion²⁰

5.3 Social Housing

While the majority of migrants live in the private rented sector, a growing number of migrant households have applied for social housing in Northern Ireland.

During the period August 2006 – July 2014 (most recent figures available), an estimated total of 11,671 migrant households applied for social housing, of whom 2,011 were successful²¹. Table 5.2 contains a breakdown of the allocation figures by

²⁰ DENI (2015) **Newcomer Pupils in Education, 2014/15 Key Statistics**. School Census Department of Education. Available at: <https://www.deni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/newcomer%20infographic.pdf>

²¹ Social Housing includes both Housing Executive and Housing Association properties. Figures sourced from NISRA (2015) **International In-Migration by sex and single year of age (2014)**, Tables 2.22 and 2.23. Available at: <http://www.nisra.gov.uk/archive/demography/population/migration/Mig1314-In.xls>

nationality for the period 2006 - 2014, and shows that Polish nationals were the largest group (39%), followed by Lithuanians (14%) and Portuguese (10%)²².

Craigavon council area, with a total of 392 allocations, had the largest number of migrant social housing tenancies during the period 2007 – 2014, followed by Belfast (380) and Dungannon (205). Larne and Banbridge had the smallest number of migrant social tenancies, with less than five allocations during the seven-year period²³.

Table 5.2 Migrant worker social housing allocations by Nationality, 2006 - 2014

Nationality	Number of Migrant Worker Social Housing allocations	Percentage
Polish	783	38.9
Lithuanian	280	13.9
Portuguese	205	10.2
African	31	1.5
Other/undisclosed	717	35.7
Total	2,011	100.0

Source: NISRA (2015) International In-Migration 2014, Table 2.23

There are approximately 120,000 social housing dwellings in Northern Ireland, 88,000 owned and managed by the Housing Executive, and 32,000 by housing associations²⁴. In July 2014, 1,342 migrant worker households held Housing Executive tenancies²⁵, representing around 1.5 per cent of all Housing Executive stock. Overall, an estimated three-quarters (76%) of migrant workers live in private rented accommodation, with only 3 per cent in Housing Executive stock, and 5 per cent in housing association properties²⁶.

²² NISRA (2015) **International In-Migration by sex and single year of age (2014), Tables 2.23**. Available at: <http://www.nisra.gov.uk/archive/demography/population/migration/Mig1314-In.xls>

²³ NISRA (2015) **International In-Migration by sex and single year of age (2014), Table 2.20**. Available at: <http://www.nisra.gov.uk/archive/demography/population/migration/Mig1314-In.xls>

²⁴ NIHE (2015) **Northern Ireland Housing Market – Review and Perspectives 2015 – 2018**. Available at:

²⁵ NIHE (2015) **Black and Minority Ethnic and Migrant Worker Mapping Update, July 2015**. Available at: http://www.nihe.gov.uk/black_and_minority_ethnic_and_migrant_worker_mapping_update.pdf

²⁶ NIHE (2014) **Housing Myths and Migrants**. Available at: http://www.nihe.gov.uk/housing_myths_and_migrants_updated.pdf

5.4 Health and Social Care: Interpreter Services

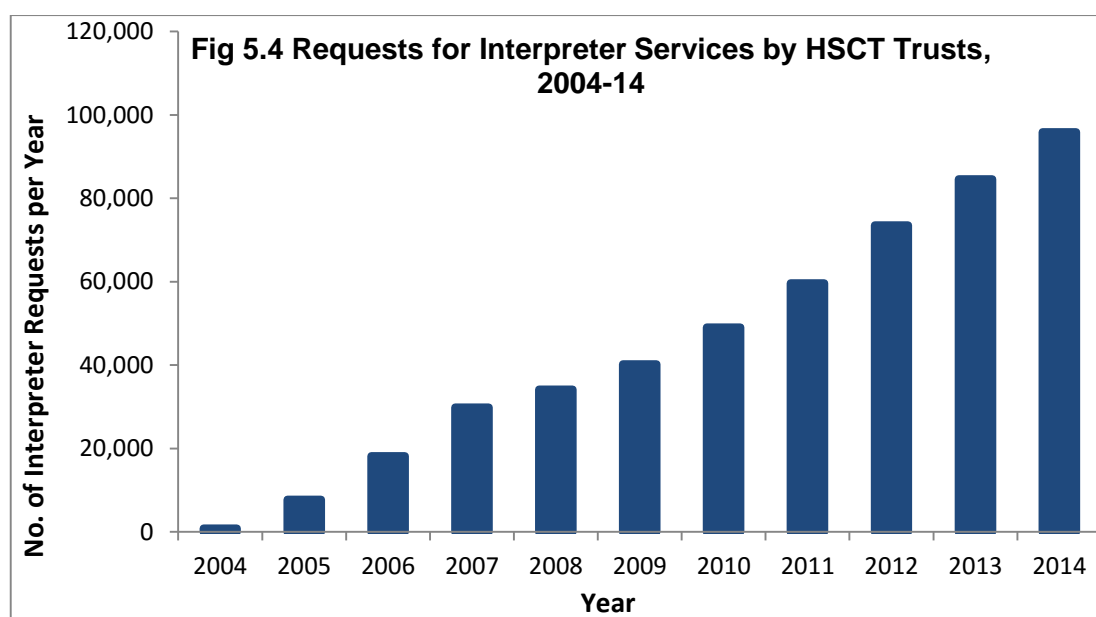
An indication of just how significant the impact of international migration has been on the health and social care sector is provided by figures from the Regional Interpreting Service. The Interpreting Service, which has 316 interpreters registered in 36 languages, is provided by the Belfast Trust for all health and social care organisations in Northern Ireland. The service is provided free-of-charge to service users.

As Table 5.3 and Fig 5.4 illustrate, requests for interpreters have risen substantially in recent years, from 825 in 2004 to 95,895 in 2014. Overall, a total of just under half a million requests (493,660) were made between January 2004 and December 2014.

Table 5.3 Requests for Interpreter Services by HSCT Trusts, 2004-14

Year	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Interpreter requests	825	7710	1815	2984	3419	4018	4904	5965	7354	8462	9589
			0	5	0	0	5	5	5	0	5

Source: NISRA (2015) International Stock Migration, 2014



The largest proportion of requests come from the Southern HSC Trust (50%), followed by the Belfast Trust (25%), the Northern Trust (13%), Western Trust (7.7%) and the South Eastern Trust (4.2%)^{27 28}. During the eleven-year period (2004 – 2014), the

²⁷ NISRA (2015) International **Stock Migration by sex and single year of age (2014)**. Available at: <http://www.nisra.gov.uk/archive/demography/population/migration/Mig1314-Stock.xls>

²⁸ A request for interpreter services may not necessarily result in an actual interpreter appointment.

largest number of requests have been made on behalf of Polish nationals (33%), followed by Lithuanians (17%), Chinese (9.7%), and Portuguese (8.8%).

5.5 Hate Crime

Incidents and offences with a racial motive are a relatively new category of crime statistic in Northern Ireland, and were first recorded as such by the PSNI in 2004. Hate crime refers to incidents or notifiable offences with a perceived racist, homophobic or sectarian motive. A racist incident is defined as any incident, which may or may not constitute a criminal offence, which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person.

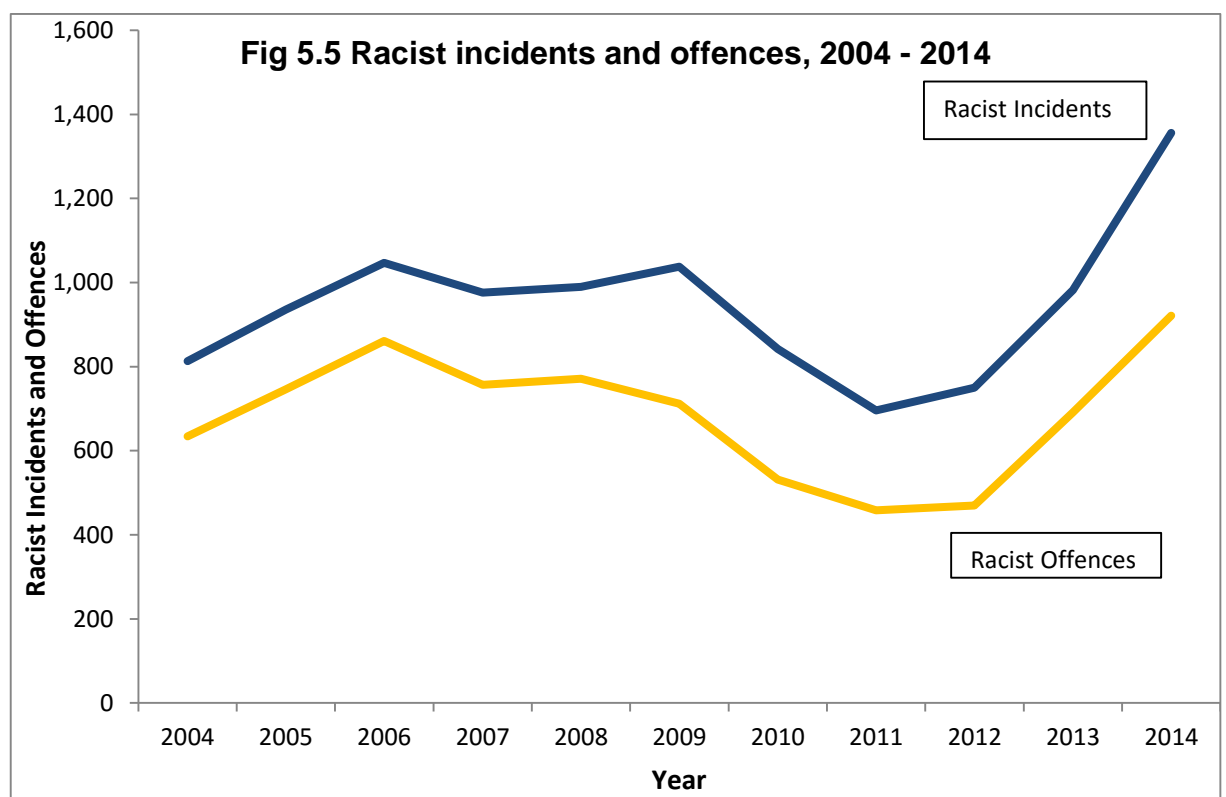


Figure 5.5 and Table 5.4 illustrate trends in racist incidents and offences for the period 2004 – 2014. The figure shows that the number of incidents / offences fluctuated between 2004 and 2011, with a number of peaks and troughs. However, an upward gradient has been evident over the past three years (2012 – 2014), with the number of incidents almost doubling, rising from a low of 696 in 2011 to a figure of 1,356 in 2014. The number of notifiable offences has also doubled, from 458 in 2011 to 921 in 2014.

Table 5.4 Racist Incidents and Offences, 2004 – 2014

	Incidents	Offences
2004	813	634
2005	936	746
2006	1,047	861
2007	976	757
2008	990	771
2009	1,038	712
2010	842	531
2011	696	458
2012	750	470
2013	982	691
2014	1,356	921

Source: NINIS (2015) Hate Crime Offences (Administrative geographies) 2014

5.6 Economic Benefits of Migration: a Brief Note

While migrants use public services in Northern Ireland, in the same way as other citizens, it is important to note that they also make an important contribution to the economic and cultural life of the region. Shirlow and Montague (2014) have drawn attention to the myths and negative stereotyping associated with migrant communities in Northern Ireland, and point out:

“In fact, recent European immigrants in the UK have paid £8.8 billion more in tax than they have consumed in public services. In Northern Ireland, migration also contributes to sustaining economic growth, filling labour shortages, bringing much needed skills and enriching our society through cultural diversity.” (Shirlow and Montague, 2014, p. 3) ²⁹.

Migrants also make a vital contribution to the National Health Service (NHS). For the UK as a whole, it has been estimated that around 30 per cent of the doctors and 40 per cent of the nurses working in the NHS were born abroad ³⁰.

In an early study (2008), Oxford Economics were asked by the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) to assess the *net economic impact* of migrant workers (i.e. the genuine ‘additional’ impact of migrant workers over and above the

²⁹ Shirlow, P. and Montague, R. (2014) Challenging **Racism: Ending Hate**. Queen’s University Belfast / Centre for Democracy and Peacebuilding. November 2014. Available at: <http://www.qub.ac.uk/research-centres.../filestore/Filetoupload,472425,en.pdf>

³⁰ Hassan, M. (2003) cited in ³⁰ Shirlow, P. and Montague, R. (2014) .

economic growth that might have occurred anyway in Northern Ireland in the absence of immigration) ³¹.

For the year 2008, their central estimate for the overall net economic impact of post-2004 migrant workers in Northern Ireland was an additional 40,000 jobs and £1.2bn GVA ³². Overall, the authors concluded that migrant workers have made a significant positive contribution to the Northern Ireland economy, filling labour shortages during a 'golden era' period (when unemployment was at a historic low).

The topic of *Displacement*, the extent to which migrants are employed at the direct expense of local workers, was also considered. Based upon a survey of 600 local employers, the authors concluded that displacement effects had been relatively modest, largely due to 'occupational segregation' – the tendency for migrants to be employed in a very different section of the market to indigenous workers, thereby creating minimal displacement effects ³³.

Since 2008, however, the economic outlook in Northern Ireland has worsened considerably, with an anaemic recovery from recession coupled with significant cuts in public expenditure. With migrants now likely to be competing with local workers for a smaller pool of jobs, the balance of net benefits may change.

6 Future Trends in International Migration

In 2013-14, 13,300 people came to live in Northern Ireland from outside the UK, while 11,100 left to live abroad, leaving a net inflow of 2,200 people ³⁴. Estimates of future trends in international migration are produced by NISRA and form part of their bi-annual Population Projections series. The latest projections (2014) ³⁵ suggest a net inflow of international migrants of 3,000 in 2015, falling to 2,000 per year between 2016 and 2019. Thereafter, net migration is projected to fall to around 1,000 per year up to 2035.

It is important to note, however, that international migration is notoriously difficult to predict, as there are so many factors involved. The current migrant crisis in Europe, for

³¹ Source: Department for Employment and Learning (2009). **The Economic, Labour Market and Skills Impacts of Migrant Workers in Northern Ireland**. Oxford Economics with FGS McClure Watters and Perceptive Insight Market Research. Belfast: DEL. Available at: http://www.delni.gov.uk/the_economic_labour_market_and_skills_impact_of_migrant_workers_in_northern_ireland.pdf

³² GVA is defined by the authors as 'Gross value added, a common measure of the value of economic output, which is primarily made up of wages and profits' (page ii).

³³ An example is the food processing industry which, according to the authors, may have disappeared entirely from Northern Ireland in the absence of migrant workers.

³⁴ NISRA (2015) **Statistical Bulletin: Long-term International Migration Statistics for Northern Ireland (2014)**. Available at: <http://www.nisra.gov.uk/archive/demography/population/migration/Mig1314-Bulletin.pdf>

³⁵ NISRA (2015) **Northern Ireland Population Projections, 2014 – Components of Change**. Available at: <http://www.nisra.gov.uk/archive/demography/population/projections/NPP14-coc.xls>

example, which is a product of the continuing conflicts in Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan (and other countries) highlights the inherent difficulties in accurately predicting migrant flows. Unforeseen events such as wars, droughts and climate change, can dramatically alter even the most carefully prepared calculations.