



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

## Research and Information Service Research Paper

---

25 May 2017

**Dr Raymond Russell**

# **International Migration in Northern Ireland: an Update**

**NIAR 56-17**

Around 188,000 long-term international migrants are estimated to have arrived in Northern Ireland between 2000 and 2015. This paper, which contains recent statistics from the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA), updates a previous paper (NIAR 35-15) 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 2015, around 188,000 long-term international migrants came to Northern Ireland, while 153,000 left, leaving a net total of 35,000. In the decade after the EU expansion of 2004, local government districts in the west and south-west of Northern Ireland saw the largest net inflow of newcomers, in particular: Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon (9,200), Mid Ulster (9,100), and Newry, Mourne and Down (5,900).
- In a continuation of recent trends, Northern Ireland had a lower net international migration rate in 2014-15 than Great Britain (1.5 per 1,000 population compared with 5.3). This compares with the peak year of 2006-7, when Northern Ireland had the highest international 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 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 around 10 per cent of all births in Northern Ireland each year. In 2015, 14 per cent of all births in the Mid-Ulster and Belfast local government district were to non-UK and Ireland mothers, followed by Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon (13%).
- The number of newcomer pupils in Northern Ireland has risen by nearly two-thirds (49%) in recent years, from 8,674 in 2011 to 13,943 by 2016.
- Between August 2007 and July 2015, an estimated total of 12,408 migrant households applied for social housing, of whom 2,107 were successful.
- Figures from the Regional Interpreting Service show that over half a million requests (535,000) for interpreters were made between January 2008 and December 2015.
- The number of hate crime incidents and offences with a racial motive fell during 2015.

- It has been argued that migration contributes to economic growth, fills labour shortages, brings much needed skills, and enriches our society through cultural diversity.
- Brexit, and the decision to leave the EU, has made the prediction of future migration levels both challenging and uncertain,

# Contents

- 1 Introduction .....7
- 2 Historical Migration Patterns, 1871 - 2015 .....7
- 3 Estimating Long-term International Migration .....8
- 4 Long-term International Migration, 2000 – 2015 .....8
  - 4.1 International Migration by Local Government District..... 10
  - 4.2 International Migration: Regional Comparison ..... 11
  - 4.3 International Migration: Countries of Origin..... 12
  - 4.4 The Roma ..... 14
- 5 Impact of long-term International Migration..... 15
  - 5.1 Births to Non-UK Mothers..... 15
  - 5.2 Newcomer Pupils ..... 17
  - 5.3 Social Housing ..... 19
  - 5.4 Health and Social Care: Interpreter Services .....20
  - 5.5 Hate Crime .....21
- 6 Future Trends in International Migration .....23



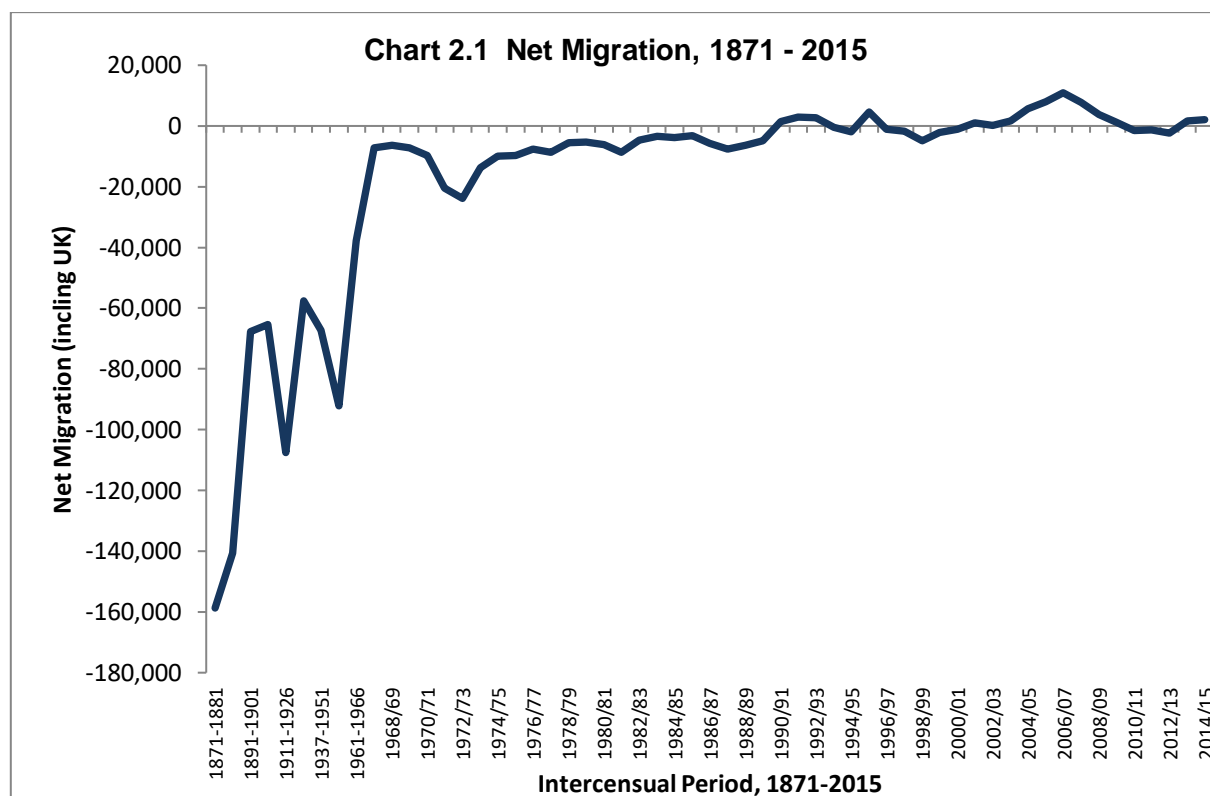
## 1 Introduction

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 2015, over 188,000 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 35-15) and contains the most recent statistics on migration.

## 2 Historical Migration Patterns, 1871 - 2015

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 – 2015. In this instance, migration includes both international migration (between Northern Ireland and countries outside the UK and Ireland), and flows between Northern Ireland and other parts of the UK.



Source: NISRA (2016) Historical Migration, 1871-2015

N.B. For the period 1871 – 1966, the intercensal periods (usually 10 years) are displayed, while the period 1967 – 2015 is shown as two-year periods.

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 <sup>1</sup>. 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 and 2015.

### 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 2014 and June 2015). 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 country 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 <sup>2</sup>.

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 – 2015

Table 4.1 and Fig 4.1 (overleaf) present estimates for net international migration during the period 2000 – 2015. 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

---

<sup>1</sup> NISRA (2015) **Historical Migration, 1871 to 2015**. Available at: <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/sites/nisra.gov.uk/files/publications/Migration-%281871-to-2015%29.XLS>

<sup>2</sup> NISRA (2015) **Statistical Bulletin: Long-term International Migration Statistics for Northern Ireland (2015)**. Available at: <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/sites/nisra.gov.uk/files/publications/Mig1415-Bulletin.pdf>

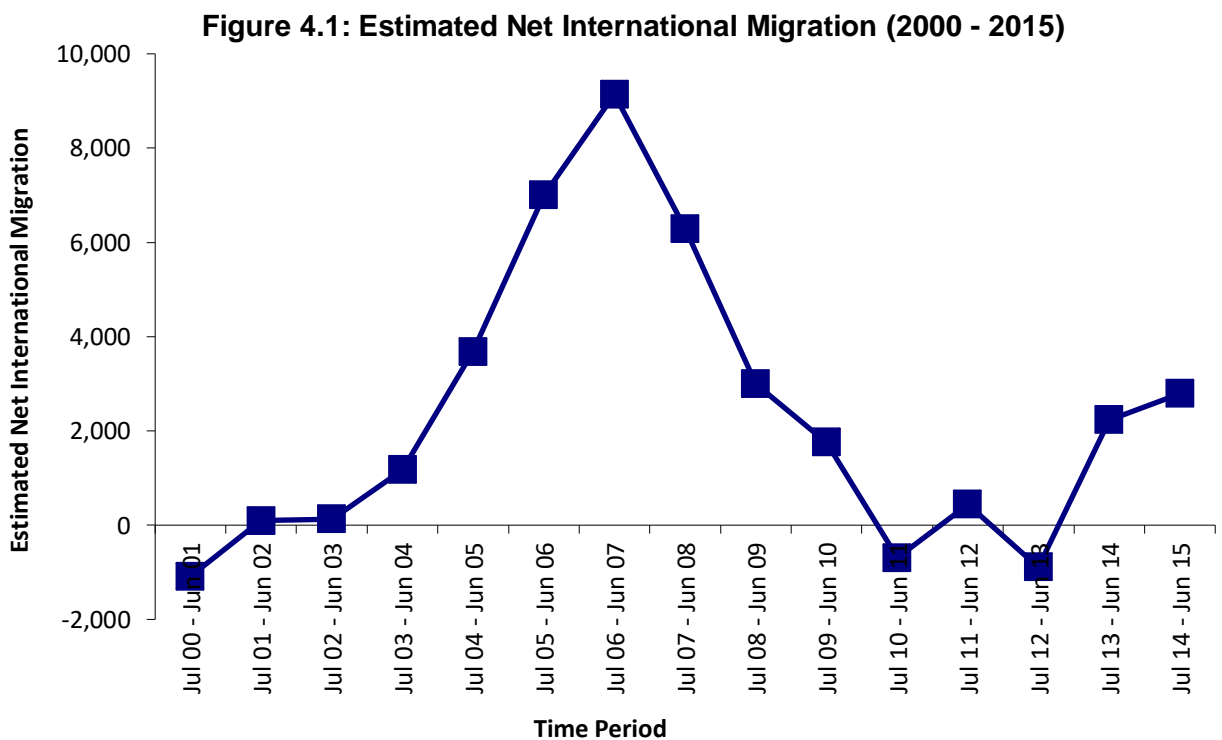


comparatively free access to the labour market, citizens from the A8 countries began to arrive in the UK and Ireland in increasing numbers <sup>3</sup>.

**Table 4.1 Estimated Net International Migration, 2000 - 2015**

Time-period	Estimated International Inflows	Estimated International Outflows	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
Jul 2014 - Jun 2015	13,093	10,298	2,795
<b>Total</b>	<b>188,1010</b>	<b>153,035</b>	<b>35,075</b>

Source: NISRA (2016) Migration by additional breakdowns, 2014-15, Table 3.1



<sup>3</sup> The A8 countries are 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 2010-11 and 2012-13, when more people left Northern Ireland than came to live here, net migration moved into positive territory again in 2013-14, with an increase of 2,200 people. Figures for the most recent year available (2014-15) show that the upward trend has continued, with a net increase of 2,800 new residents.

In summary, apart from the years ending mid-2011 and mid-2013, international migration to Northern Ireland has been in positive territory since 2004.

#### 4.1 International Migration by Local Government District

Table 4.2 and Map 4.1 (overleaf) show net international migration in the eleven new local government districts (LGDs) during the period 2005 – 2015 <sup>4</sup>.

**Table 4.2 Net International Migration (rounded) by LGD, 2005 – 2015**

LGD	Total Net Migration, 2005 – 15
Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon	9,200
Mid Ulster	9,100
Newry, Mourne & Down	5,900
Fermanagh & Omagh	3,100
Mid & East Antrim	2,800
Belfast	2,200
Lisburn & Castlereagh	1,100
Ards & North Down	90
Causeway Coast & Glens	- 10
Antrim & Newtownabbey	- 360
Derry & Strabane	-2,000
<b>Total, Northern Ireland</b>	<b>31,100</b>

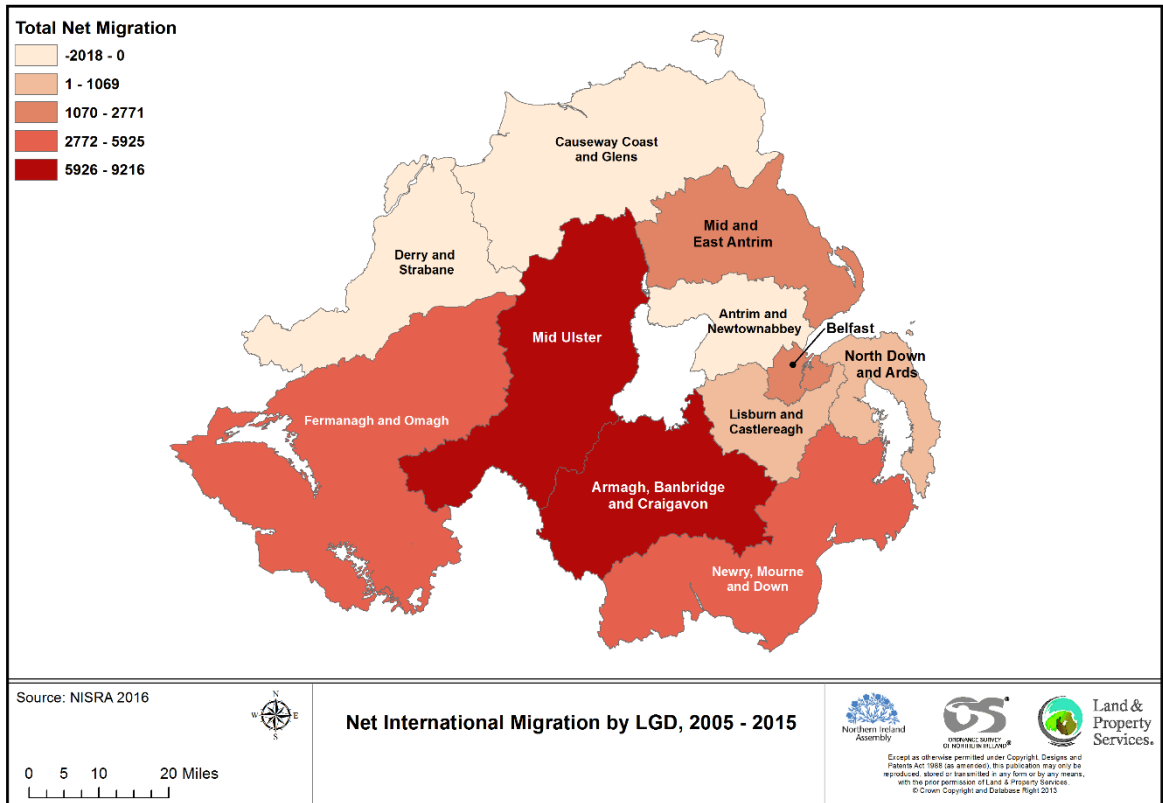
Source: NISRA (2016) Migration flows

Overall, there was a net inflow of 31,100 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 influx of newcomers, in particular: Armagh, Banbridge and

<sup>4</sup> NISRA (2016) **Long-term international migration (2015), official migration estimates, (migration flows)** . Available at: <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/sites/nisra.gov.uk/files/publications/Mig1415-Official.xls>

Craigavon (9,200), Mid Ulster (9,100) and Newry, Mourne and Down (5,900). Two council areas experienced a net outflow, namely, Antrim and Newtownabbey (-360) and Derry and Strabane (-2,000).

**Map 4.1 Net International Migration by LGD, 2005 – 2015**



#### 4.2 International Migration: Regional Comparison

Table 4.3 (overleaf) presents a comparison for net international migration (per 1,000 population) between Great Britain and Northern Ireland during the period 2004-15. The table shows that the rate of net international migration (the difference between inflows and outflows) has been consistently lower in Northern Ireland than in GB. An exception was the years 2005 – 2007, when the Northern Ireland rate exceeded the GB rate. For example, in 2006 – 2007 the rate of net international migration was 5.2 per 1,000 population in Northern Ireland compared with 4.7 in GB. By mid-2015, the rate in Northern Ireland was 1.5 compared with 5.3 per 1,000 in GB.

**Table 4.3 Net International Migration (per 1,000 population) during 2004 – 15, GB and Northern Ireland comparison**

Country	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
GB	5.4	3.9	4.7	4.4	3.3	4.0	4.3	2.7	3.0	4.1	5.3
N. Ireland	2.1	4.1	5.2	3.6	1.7	1.0	- 0.4	0.2	- 0.5	1.2	1.5

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

### 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). This is confirmed by medical card registrations <sup>5</sup>, which show that Poland topped the list once again in 2015, with 1,872 registrations.

Recent trends suggest that Northern Ireland is also becoming an increasingly popular destination for migrants from Romania and Bulgaria. 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 and Bulgarian nationals in 2014 and 2015 (see 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

<sup>5</sup> The Medical Card Register is maintained by the Health and Social Care Business Services Organisation (BSO) and is a list of patients registered with a family doctor.

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

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Romania	108	81	104	109	137	253	297	178	205	1,407	1,367
Bulgaria	30	36	69	100	177	162	111	95	105	413	441

Source: NISRA (2016) Medical Card registrations by country of last residence 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 2015 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<sup>6</sup>. For Northern Ireland as a whole, the top three countries were Poland (1,900 registrations), Ireland (1,500) and Romania (1,400).

**Table 4.6 Medical Card Registrations in NI: Top 3 countries by LGD, Jan – Dec 2015**

LGD	First	Second	Third
Antrim & Newtownabbey	Poland	Romania	Lithuania
Ards and North Down	Lithuania	Romania	Poland
Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon	Poland	Lithuania	Portugal
Belfast	Romania	China	Republic of Ireland
Causeway Coast & Glens	Poland	Republic of Ireland	Germany
Derry & Strabane	Republic of Ireland	Poland	USA
Fermanagh & Omagh	Republic of Ireland	Poland	Hungary
Lisburn & Castlereagh	Poland	Republic of Ireland	Romania
Mid & East Antrim	Romania	Poland	Czech Republic
Mid Ulster	East Timor	Poland	Lithuania
Newry, Mourne & Down	Republic of Ireland	Poland	Bulgaria
Northern Ireland	<b>Poland (1,900)</b>	<b>Ireland (1,500)</b>	<b>Romania (1,400)</b>

Source: NISRA (2016)

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

<sup>6</sup> NISRA (2016) Statistical Bulletin: Long-term International Migration Statistics for Northern Ireland (2015). Statistical Bulletin, 15 December 2016. Available at: <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/sites/nisra.gov.uk/files/publications/Mig1415-Bulletin.pdf>

Insurance Number (NINO) applications. NINO applications from Romanians coming to Northern Ireland rose from 270 in 2012-13 to 2,710 in 2015-16 <sup>7</sup>.

#### 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 exist <sup>8</sup>, but it is thought that around 1,000 Roma are presently living in various parts of Northern Ireland, particularly South Belfast <sup>9</sup>.

Roma are the largest ethnic minority group in Europe: their actual number is uncertain, but the European Commission estimate it at between 10-12 million <sup>10</sup>. 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 origin <sup>11</sup>. 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 Ormeau 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.

An EU survey of 11 Member States in 2012 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 affected by severe material deprivation <sup>12</sup>.

A small, but growing number of Roma pupils are now attending schools in Northern Ireland, the majority (75%) in Belfast. According to the latest School Census the number has risen from 30 in 2009-10 to 283 by 2015-16 <sup>13</sup>. One hundred and sixty

---

<sup>7</sup> NISRA (2015) **NINO applications by Nationality, April 2005 to March 2016**. Available at: <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/sites/nisra.gov.uk/files/publications/Mig1415-In.xls>

<sup>8</sup> 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.

<sup>9</sup> Education Support for Northern Ireland (2014) **Roma – Information for Schools**. Available at: <http://www.education-support.org.uk/teachers/ids/roma/>

<sup>10</sup> 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](http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/2099-FRA-2012-Roma-at-a-glance_EN.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> Fremlova, L. and Amstead, 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)

<sup>12</sup> EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (2012) Op cit., p. 26

<sup>13</sup> DENI (2016) **Roma Pupils in Education, 2015/16 Key Statistics**. School Census, Department of Education. Available at: <http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/27292/1/Roma%201516.pdf>

seven children are attending primary school, while the remainder (116) are enrolled in post-primary education <sup>14</sup>.

## 5 Impact of long-term International Migration

International migration influences the host community in various 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 – 2015. 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.

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

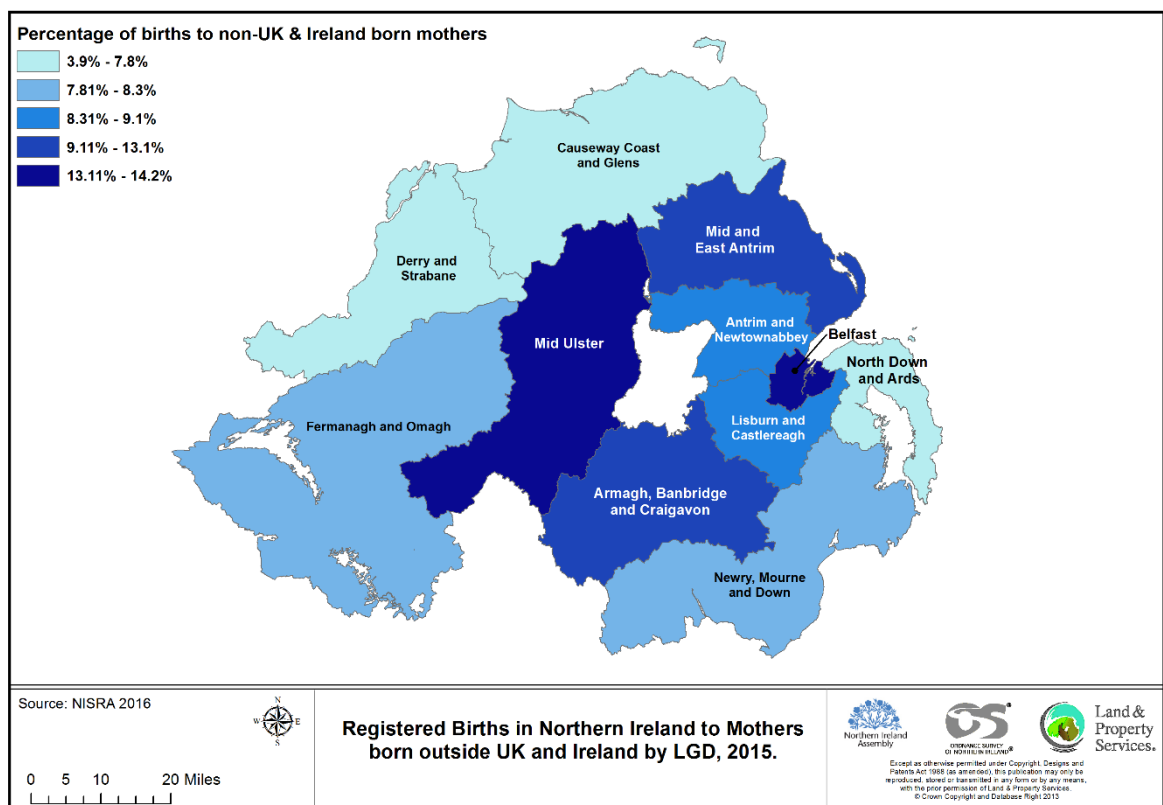
Registration Year	All countries	NI, other UK, ROI	A8	Rest of World	Not Stated	A8 + Rest of World (%)
1997	24,087	23,518	2	542	25	2.6%
1998	23,668	23,082	3	548	35	2.7%
1999	22,957	22,341	6	579	31	2.9%
2000	21,512	20,891	5	584	32	3.1%
2001	21,962	21,272	12	649	29	3.5%
2002	21,385	20,640	16	708	21	3.9%
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%
2015	24,215	21,789	1,205	1,221	-	10.0%

Source: NISRA (2016)

<sup>14</sup> 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 accounted for half (50 per cent) of the total intake, 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>)

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 1,221 in 2015. Table 5.1 shows that births to mothers born outside the UK and Ireland (column 7) now account for around 10 per cent of all births in Northern Ireland each year <sup>15</sup>.

**Map 5.1 Births to non-UK and Ireland Mothers by LGD in 2015**



Births to non-UK and Ireland 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 2015, for example, births to non-UK and Ireland nationals accounted for 14 per cent of all births in the Mid Ulster and Belfast local government districts, followed by Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon (13%). Derry City and Strabane (3.9%) had the smallest proportion <sup>15</sup>.

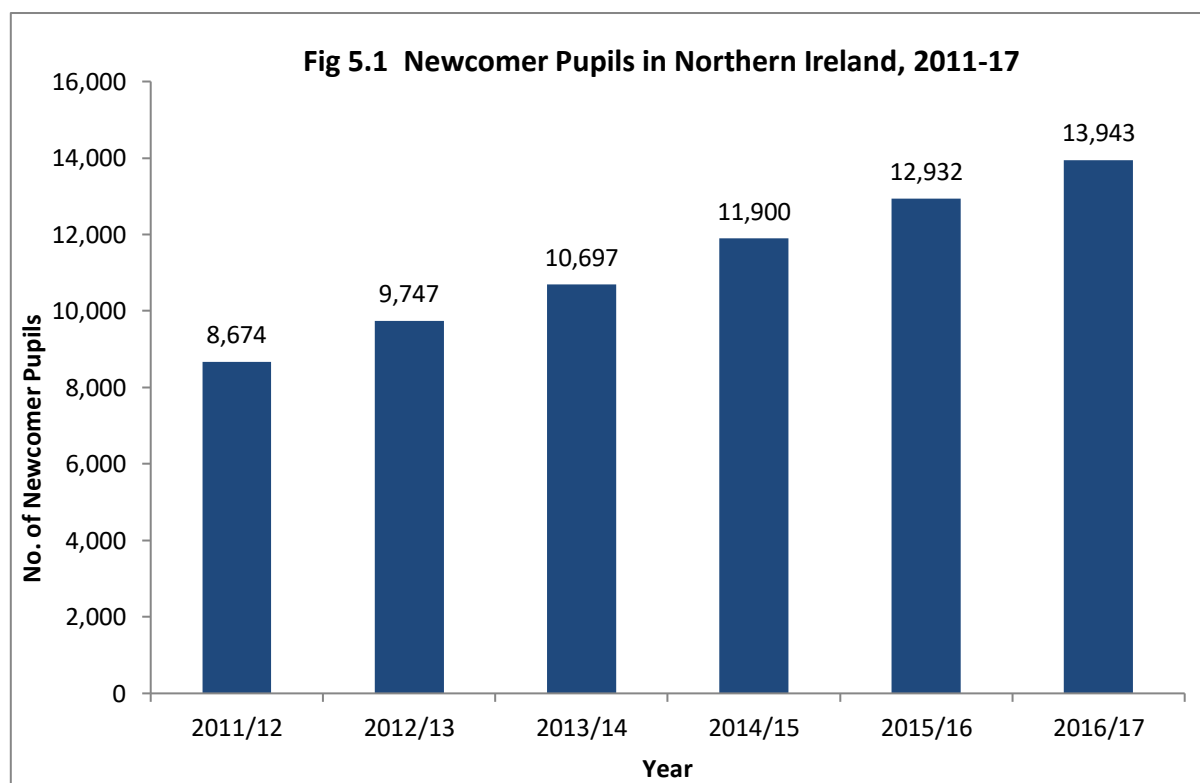
<sup>15</sup> NISRA (2016) **Births by country of birth of mother and LGD, 1997-2014, Table 2.15**. Available at: <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/sites/nisra.gov.uk/files/publications/Mig1415-In.xls>



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 <sup>16</sup>.

## 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 Irish <sup>17</sup>. This category, which has previously been referred to as English as an Additional Language, is primarily composed of children from a migrant worker background.



Source: DENI (2017) Newcomer pupils in education

Fig 5.1 shows that the number of newcomer pupils in Northern Ireland has risen by almost two-thirds (61%), from 8,674 in 2011/12 to 13,943 by 2016/17, and now

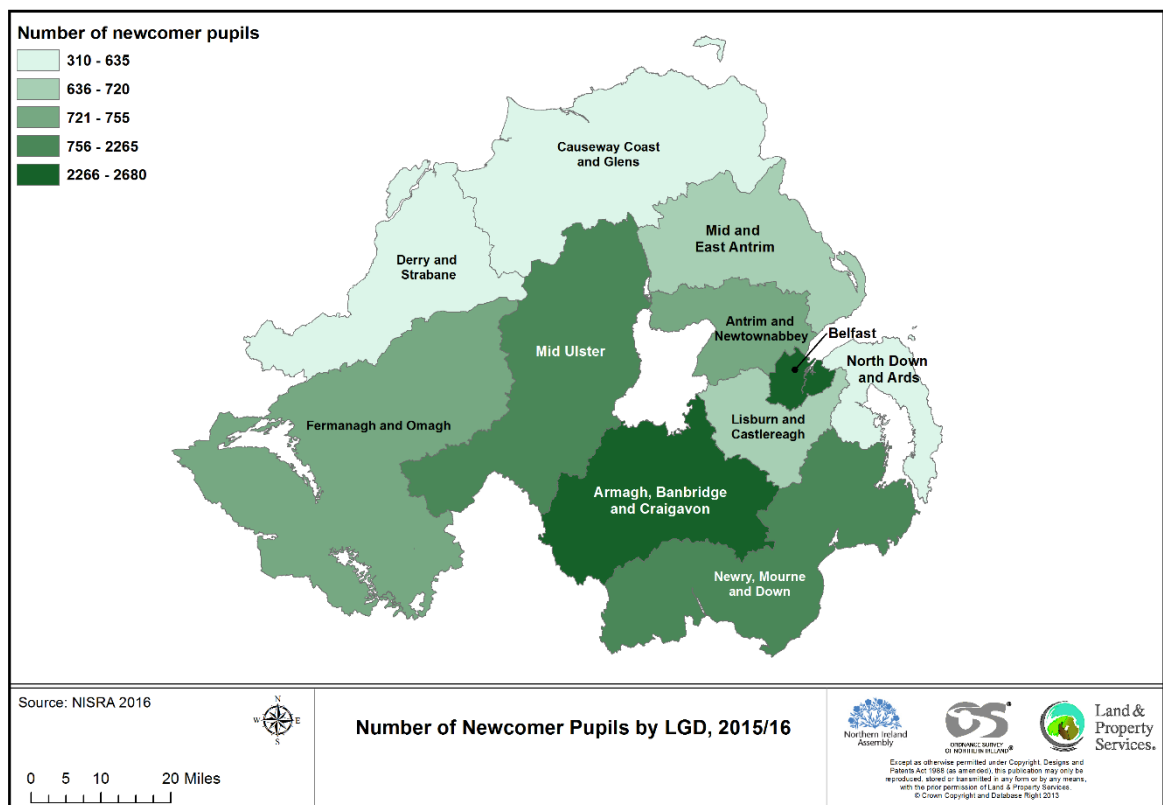
<sup>16</sup> Shirlow, P. and Montague, R. (2014) **Challenging Racism: Ending Hate**. Queen's University Belfast / Centre for Democracy and Peacebuilding. November 2014. Available at: <http://www.qub.ac.uk/research-centres.../filestore/Filetoupload,472425,en.pdf>

<sup>17</sup> DENI (2016) **Newcomer Pupils in Education, 2015/16 Key Statistics**. School Census Department of Education. Available at: <http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/27290/1/newcomers%201516.pdf>

comprise 4.1 per cent of the school population. Post-primary pupils account for 20 per cent of newcomers, while the remainder are in pre-school and primary school <sup>18</sup>.

Figure 5.2 shows the distribution of newcomer pupils by LGD in October 2015.

**Fig 5.2 Distribution of Newcomer Pupils in Northern Ireland by LGD, 2015/16**



Source: NINIS, NISRA (2016)

Belfast (2,680), Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon (2,605) and Mid Ulster (2,265) have the highest number of newcomer pupils, while Derry and Strabane (360) and Ards and North Down (310) have the smallest number <sup>19</sup>.

<sup>18</sup> DENI (2017) Statistical Bulletin 2/17, **Annual enrolments at schools and in funded pre-school education in Northern Ireland, 2016/17**. Available at: <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/education/Statistical%20Bulletin%20combined..Census%20statistical%20bulletin%20-%20Feb%2017%20FINAL%20revised.pdf>

<sup>19</sup> NISRA (2016) **Long-term international migration (2015) - administrative data relating to Northern Ireland**, 15 December 2016. Available at: <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/sites/nisra.gov.uk/files/publications/Mig1415-Stock.xls>.

### 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 2007 – July 2015 (most recent figures available), an estimated total of 12,408 migrant households applied for social housing, of whom 2,107 were successful<sup>20</sup>. Table 5.2 contains a breakdown of the allocation figures by nationality for the period 2007 - 2015, and shows that Polish nationals were the largest group (39%), followed by Lithuanians (15%) and Portuguese (10%)<sup>21</sup>.

The former Belfast council area, with a total of 460 allocations, had the largest number of migrant worker allocations during the period 2007 – 2015, followed by Craigavon (457) and Dungannon (225). Larne and Banbridge had the smallest number of migrant social tenancies, with less than twenty five allocations during the eight-year period<sup>22</sup>.

**Table 5.2 Total Migrant worker social housing allocations by Nationality, Aug 2007 – Jul 2015**

Nationality	Number of Migrant Worker Social Housing allocations	Percentage
Polish	828	39.3
Lithuanian	311	14.8
Portuguese	203	9.6
Latvian	20	0.9
African	31	1.5
Other/undisclosed	714	33.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,107</b>	<b>100.0</b>

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 associations<sup>23</sup>. In July 2015, migrant worker households accounted for an estimated 1,500 NIHE

<sup>20</sup> Social Housing includes both Housing Executive and Housing Association properties. Figures sourced from NISRA (2016) **Long-term international migration (2015) - migration flows, Tables 2.22 and 2.23**. 15 December 2016. Available at: <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/sites/nisra.gov.uk/files/publications/Mig1415-In.xls>

<sup>21</sup> NISRA (2016) **Long-term international migration (2015) - migration flows, Tables 2.23**. 15 December 2016. Available at: <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/sites/nisra.gov.uk/files/publications/Mig1415-In.xls>

<sup>21</sup> NISRA (2016) **Long-term international migration (2015) - migration flows, Tables 2.20**. 15 December 2016. Available at: <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/sites/nisra.gov.uk/files/publications/Mig1415-In.xls>

<sup>23</sup> NIHE (2015) **Northern Ireland Housing Market – Review and Perspectives 2015 – 2018**. Available at:

tenancies <sup>24</sup>. 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 properties <sup>25</sup>.

#### 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 is provided by the Business Service Organisation (BSO) for all health and social care organisations in Northern Ireland, and 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 34,190 in 2008 to 97,845 in 2015. Overall, over half a million requests (534,975) were made between January 2008 and December 2015 <sup>26</sup>.

**Table 5.3 Requests for Interpreter Services by HSCT Trusts, 2008-15**

Year	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Interpreter requests	34,190	40,180	49,045	59,655	73,545	84,620	95,895	97,845

Source: NISRA (2015) International Stock Migration, 2015

The largest proportion of requests come from the Southern HSC Trust (49%), followed by the Belfast Trust (27%), the Northern Trust (12%), Western Trust (7.4%) and the South Eastern Trust (4.4%) <sup>27 28</sup>. During the eight-year period (2008 – 2015), the largest number of requests were made on behalf of Polish nationals (34%), followed by Lithuanians (18%), Chinese (11%), and Portuguese (9.9%).

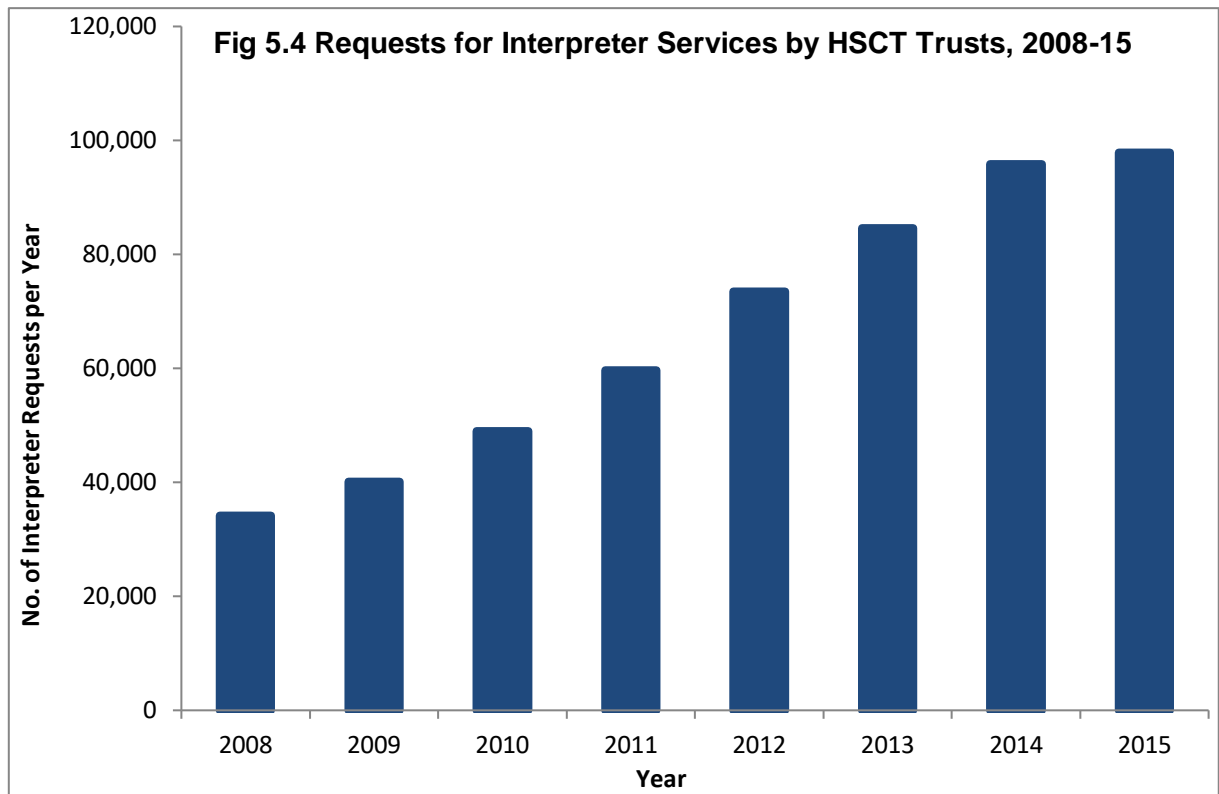
<sup>24</sup> NISRA (2016) **Long-term international migration (2015) - administrative data relating to Northern Ireland, Table 4.12** 15 December 2016. Available at: <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/sites/nisra.gov.uk/files/publications/Mig1415-Stock.xls>

<sup>25</sup> NIHE (2015) **Housing Myths and Migrants**. Published October 2015. Available at: [http://www.nihe.gov.uk/housing\\_myths\\_and\\_migrants\\_updated.pdf](http://www.nihe.gov.uk/housing_myths_and_migrants_updated.pdf)

<sup>26</sup> NISRA (2016) **Long-term international migration (2015) - stocks**, 15 December 2016. Available at: <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/sites/nisra.gov.uk/files/publications/Mig1415-Stock.xls>

<sup>27</sup> NISRA (2016) **Long-term international migration (2015) - stocks**, 15 December 2016. Available at: <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/sites/nisra.gov.uk/files/publications/Mig1415-Stock.xls>

<sup>28</sup> A request for interpreter services may not necessarily result in an actual interpreter appointment.

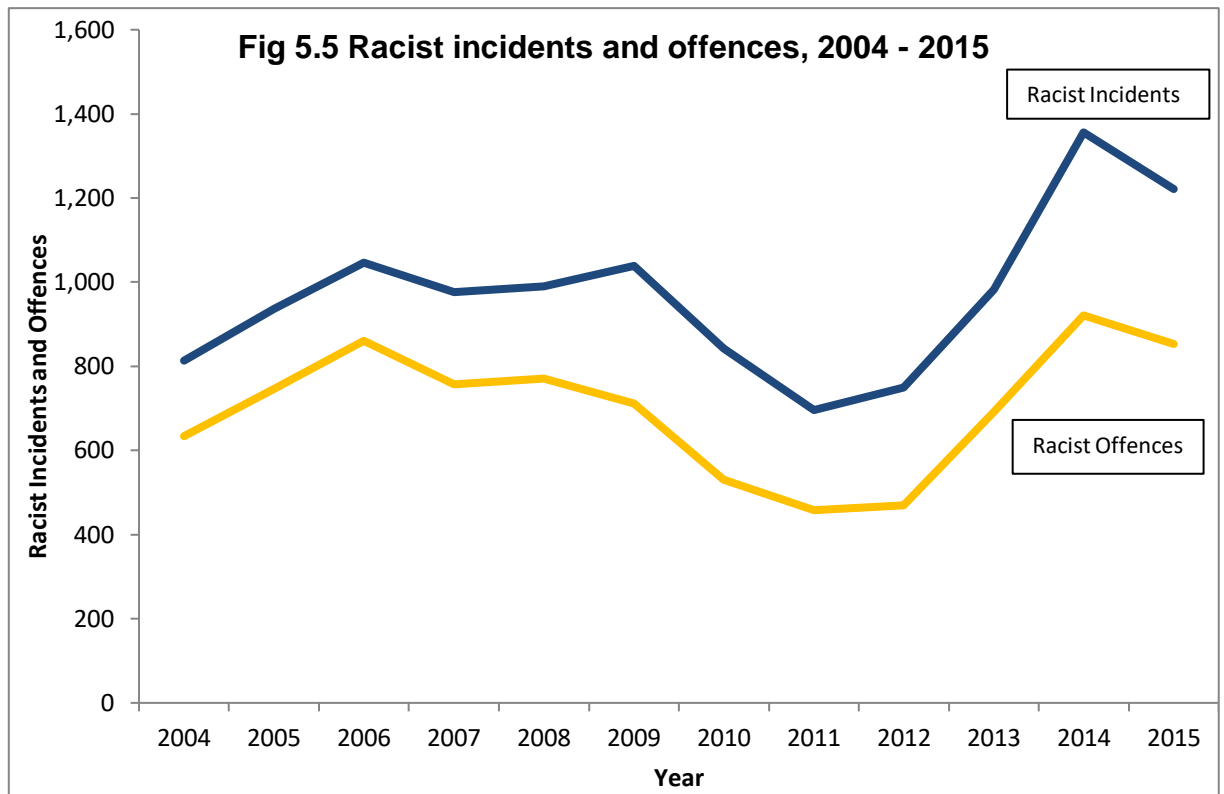


## 5.5 Hate Crime

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 (overleaf) illustrate trends in racist incidents and offences for the period 2004 – 2015. The figure shows that the number of incidents / offences fluctuated between 2004 and 2015 with a number of peaks and troughs. An upward trend during the period 2012 – 2014 was reversed again in 2015, with a fall in both the number of incidents and offences. Overall, comparing 2015 with 2004, the number of racist incidents recorded by police rose by a third (33.4%) while the number of offences increased by a quarter (25.7%)<sup>29</sup>.

<sup>29</sup> NINIS, NISRA (2016) **Incidents and crimes with a hate motivation (administrative geographies), 2004 – 2015**. Available at: <http://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/public/ViewDataSet.aspx?ds=8055&lh=73&yn=2004-2015&sk=131&sn=Crime and Justice&yearfilter=>



**Table 5.4 Racist Incidents and Offences, 2004 – 2015**

	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
2015	1,221	853

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

Myths and negative stereotyping associated with migrant communities in Northern Ireland may well contribute to some racist attacks. Some commentators, however, point out that:

“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) <sup>30</sup>.

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 <sup>31</sup>.

## 6 Future Trends in International Migration

In 2014-15, 13,100 people came to live in Northern Ireland from outside the UK, while 10,300 left to live abroad, leaving a net inflow of 2,800 people <sup>32</sup>. 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) <sup>33</sup> suggest a net inflow of international migrants of 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 many factors involved. This year, added to the usual unpredictable variables, such as war, drought and climate change (all of which can influence migration patterns), is Brexit. The referendum of 23 June 2016, which resulted in a decision to leave the European Union, has made the prediction of likely migration levels in the coming years even more challenging and uncertain.

---

<sup>30</sup> 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>

<sup>31</sup> Hassan, M. (2003) cited in <sup>31</sup> Shirlow, P. and Montague, R. (2014) .

<sup>32</sup> NISRA (2016) **Long-term international migration statistics for Northern Ireland (2015)**. Statistical Bulletin, 15 December 2016. Available at: <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/sites/nisra.gov.uk/files/publications/Mig1415-Bulletin.pdf>

<sup>33</sup> NISRA (2015) **Northern Ireland Population Projections, 2014 – Components of Change**. Available at: <http://www.nisra.gov.uk/archive/demography/population/projections/NPP14-coc.xls>