

Busting myths: application of new data sources and analyses



Home Office

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- Collaborative piece of research on international student migration.
- The work culminated in the publication of three outputs in August 2017 which set out our progress towards developing a better understanding of international student migration through making use of new and emerging data sources.

Collaborating to understand net migration

- Since the 2010 election, focus on the net migration ambition, to reduce net migration from the “hundreds of thousands” to the “tens of thousands”.
- (August 2012) Confidence intervals for the net migration figures introduced published
- (Feb 2014) EU2 (Romania and Bulgaria) identified as a separate grouping
- (May 2013) ONS figures on reason for migration didn't reflect that students emigrate to work; original reason for migration for those emigrating introduced [International Migration - How to interpret Table 4](#)
- Continued interest in international student migration - a common assumption was that a large number overstaying their visas

Outline of Exit checks data collection

Biometric Enrolment

Visa Application

Visa Issued

OVERSEAS VISA POST



T I M E L I N E

ISA's ELECTRONIC RECORDS

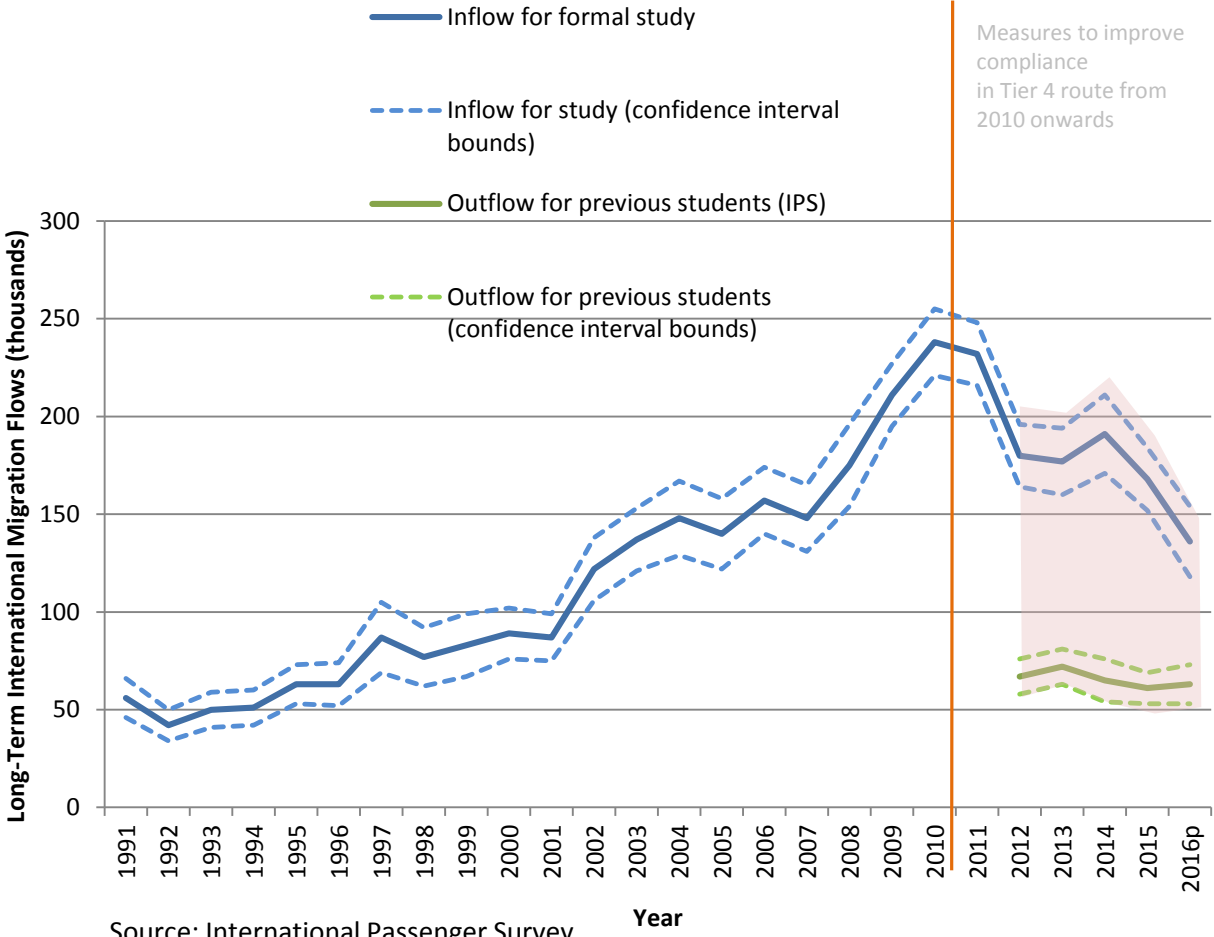
08/04/2015	IABS	Biometric Enrolment
09/04/2015	Proviso/CRS	Visa Application
10/04/2015	Proviso/CRS	Visa Issued
01/05/2015	API	Inbound Passenger Record
01/05/2015	PCP	Passport Scanned
01/05/2015	SBVP	Secure ID Biometric Check against IABS biometrics
14/05/2015	API	Outbound Passenger Record
10/10/2015	Proviso/CRS	Visa Expires

ISA Identity

Out of country-
Departed
Overstayer
Compliant

KEY EVENTS

The information we had on non-EU international students....



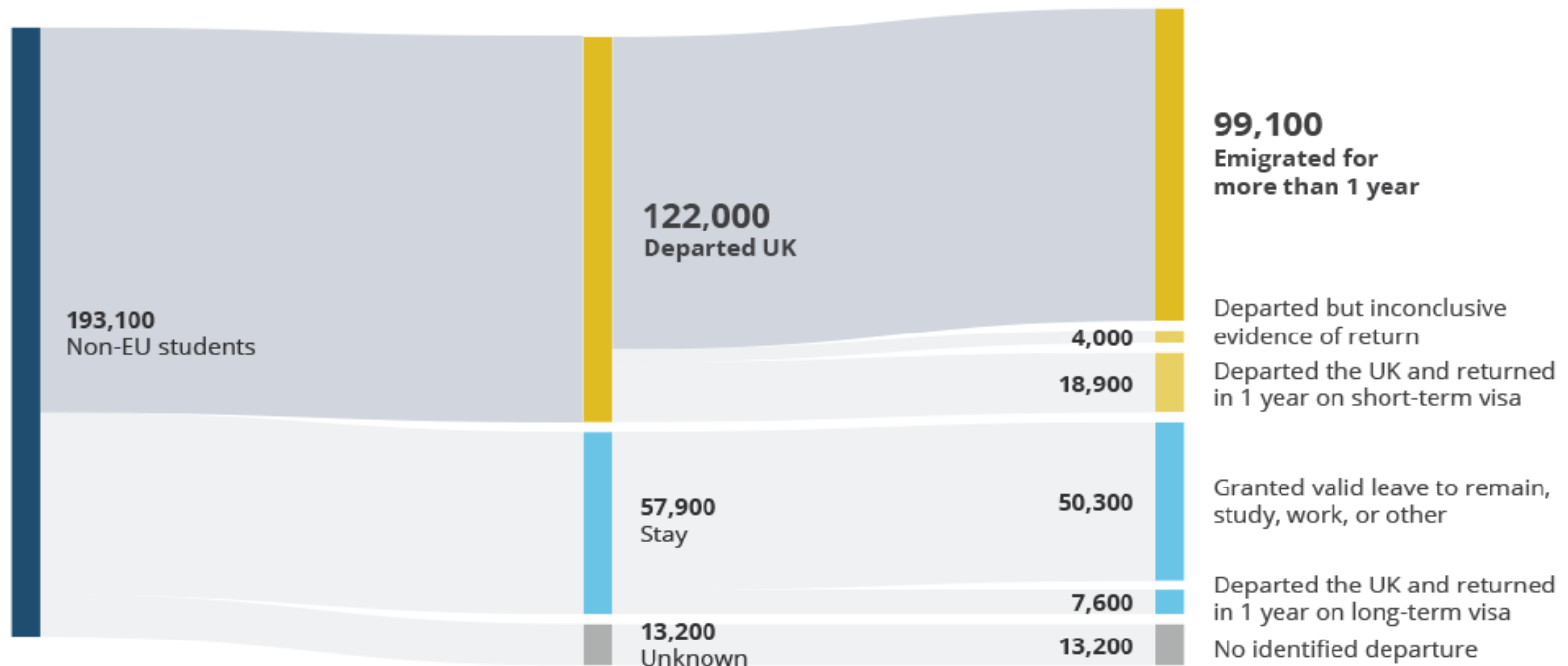
- International students contribute around a quarter of total immigration to the UK
- The International Passenger Survey (IPS) is used to estimate migration flows
- In the year ending March 2017- total immigration for study was 139,000 and emigration of former students was 59,000, leaving a “gap” of 80,000

How we responded...

- The Home Office and Office for National Statistics (ONS) completed a collaborative piece of research on international student migration.
- This research involved experimental analysis of Home Office Exit Checks data which linked multiple operational data sources abroad, at the border, and within the UK, as well as information supplied by airlines and other carriers; investigated coverage issues; and compared results with existing survey estimates.
- Another key dataset involved was the commission of a brand new survey: the 'Survey of Graduating International Students' (SoGIS). This was a collaboration between ONS, CPC Southampton University and Universities UK.

What we found...

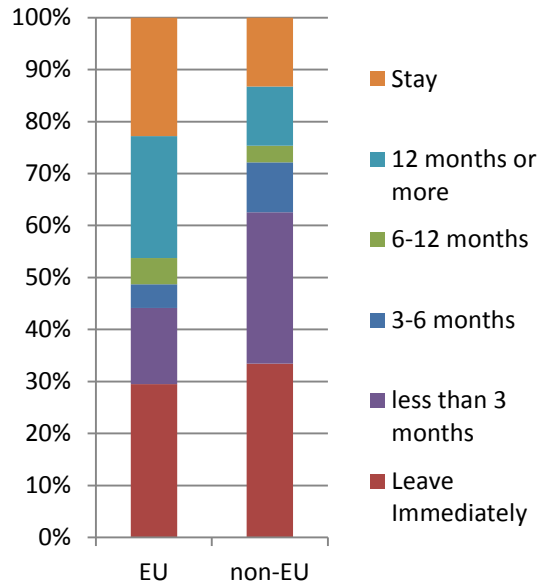
Outcomes for non-EU students with a leave expiry date between 8 April 2015 and 7 April 2016



Source: Office for National Statistics analysis of Exit Checks data

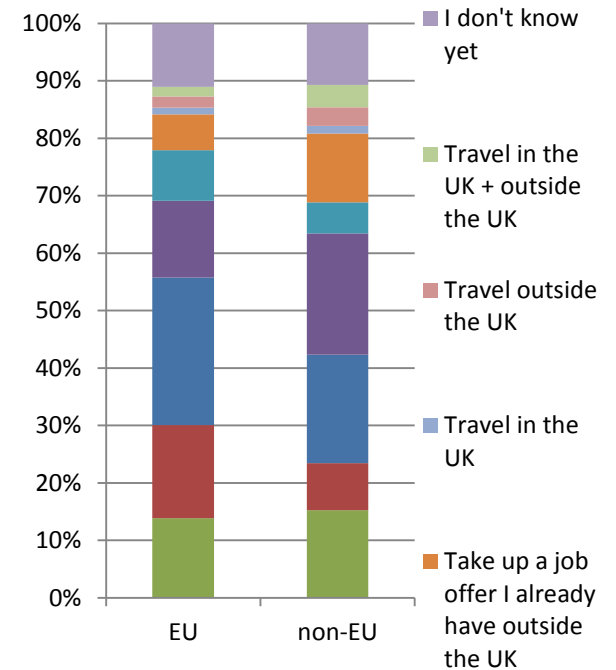
Post-study plans

After finishing your current course of study, how long are you planning to stay in the UK?



Source: Survey of Graduating International Students

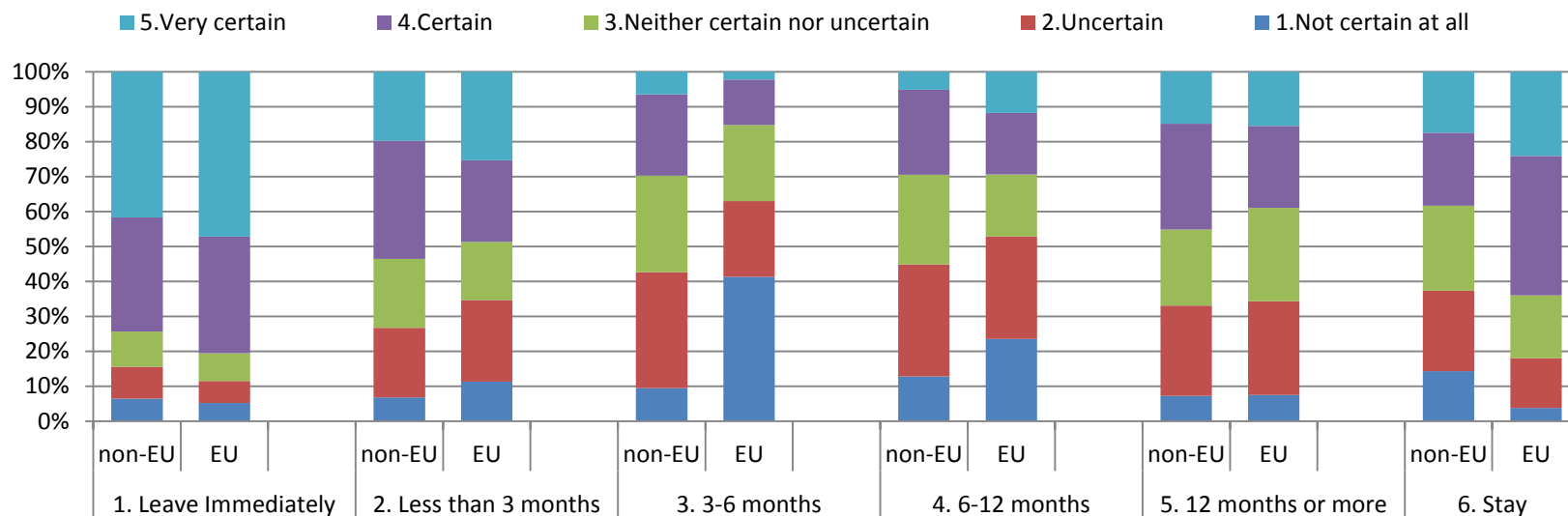
After finishing your current course of study, what are you planning to do?



Source: Survey of Graduating International Students

EU students are more likely to plan to stay in the UK to look for work or for further study compared to non-EU students

Certainty of post-study plans

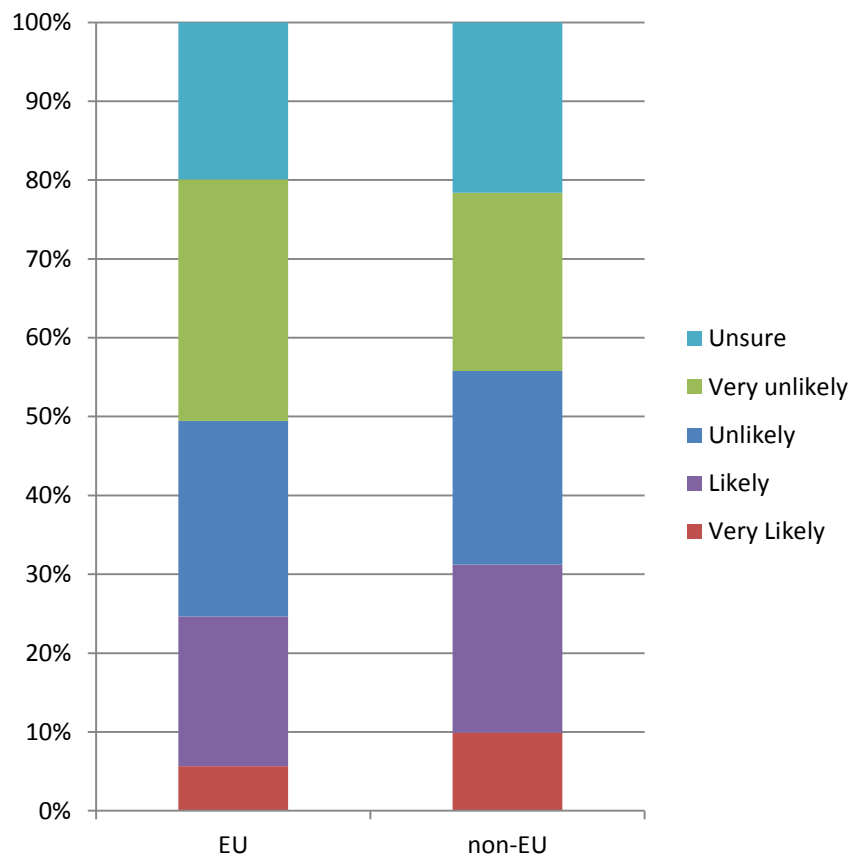


Source: Survey of Graduating International Students, ONS 2017

- Students planning to leave immediately or within 3 months of completing their studies were more certain than those planning to stay for longer than 3 months but less than a year
- This effect was exaggerated for EU students compared to non-EU students

Intentions vs. actual behaviour

Likelihood of returning to UK within 12 months after completing studies



Source: Survey of Graduating International Students, ONS 2017

- 31% of non-EU students stated that they were very likely or likely to return to the UK within 12 months.
- Analysis of Exit Checks data revealed that only 6% of non-EU students whose initial study visa expired between April 2015 & April 2016 returned to the UK within 12 months.

As a result, we were able to conclude that....

1. There is no evidence of a major issue of non-EU students overstaying their entitlement to stay
2. Many people do not simply immigrate for study and leave afterwards...
3. Their lives are complex and they have a high degree of uncertainty about what they will do next

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What, they all leave? BBC host skewers Brexit migration expert over foreign students in UK

BBC HOST Mishal Husain skewered a Brexit migration expert over the impact of foreign students on the UK as official figures today will show 97 per cent leave after graduating.

The Telegraph

H

Immigration figures under review as new checks suggest numbers are far lower than thought

BBC

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NEWS



UK overestimates non-EU students staying illegally, data suggests

The UK does not have a major problem with foreign students abusing the immigration system by remaining in the country illegally, new data suggests.



Theresa May under fire as student visa myth exposed

Prime minister left looking isolated as figures show fewer than 5,000 foreign students stayed on in UK after visas expired



Undergraduates at Aberystwyth University. The UK government has been accused of exaggerating numbers of 'overstayers'. Photograph: Alamy

Theresa May's determination to continue counting foreign students in the government's

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With special thanks to contributing teams at the Home Office including statisticians and operational researchers, immigration system experts and data suppliers.

Any questions?

