

Population by Country of Birth and Nationality, 2019



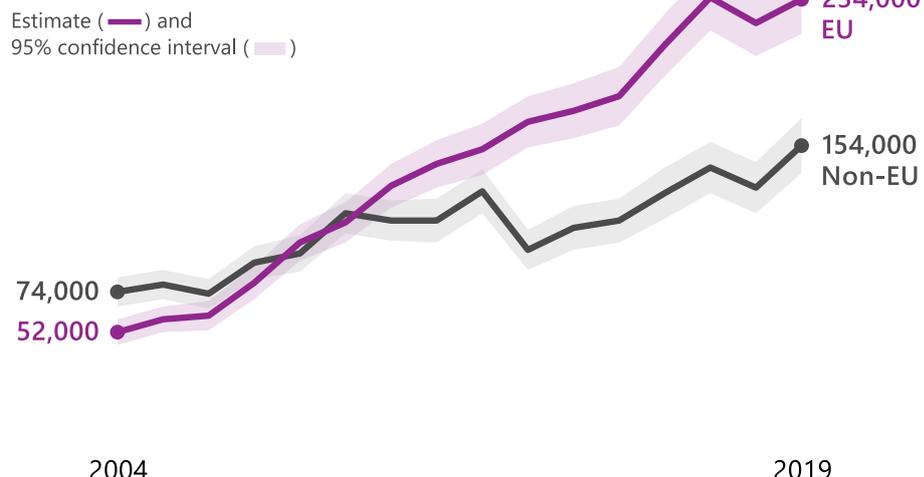
Published on 21 May 2020

This report provides statistics on the number of non-UK born and non-British nationals living in Scotland and each council area, using data from the Annual Population Survey.

In 2019, there were 388,000 non-British nationals in Scotland

Until recently, the population of EU nationals had been growing at a faster rate than the non-EU population. However, over the latest year there was a statistically significant increase in non-EU nationals, whereas EU nationals remained broadly stable over the past two years.

Number of non-British nationals

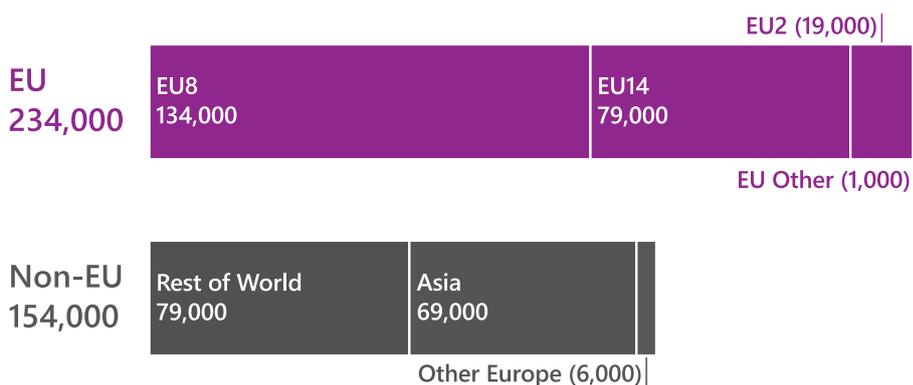


EU nationals made up 60% of Scotland's non-British population

In 2019, there were 234,000 EU nationals living in Scotland, and over half of those people were from EU8 countries.

There were 154,000 non-EU nationals, accounting for 40% of the non-British population.

Number of non-British nationals, 2019

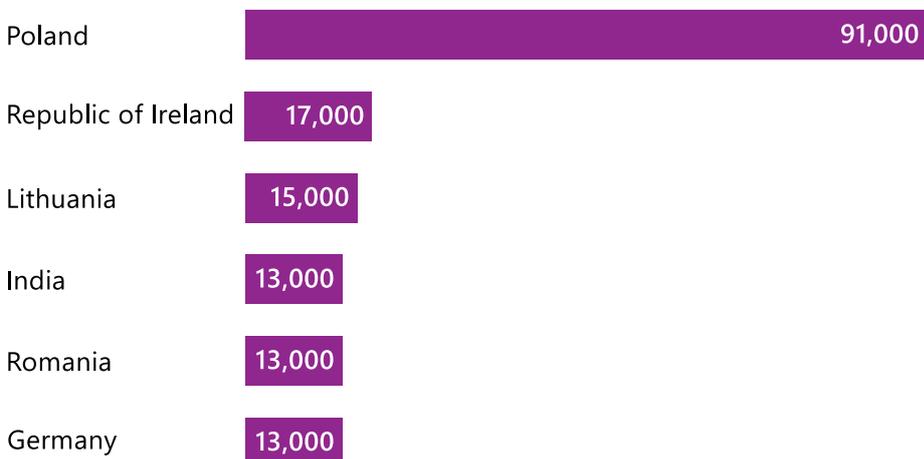


Polish remained the most common non-British nationality

For the thirteenth consecutive year, Polish was the most common non-British nationality, with 91,000 people in 2019.

Polish nationals accounted for almost one quarter (23%) of all non-British nationals living in Scotland.

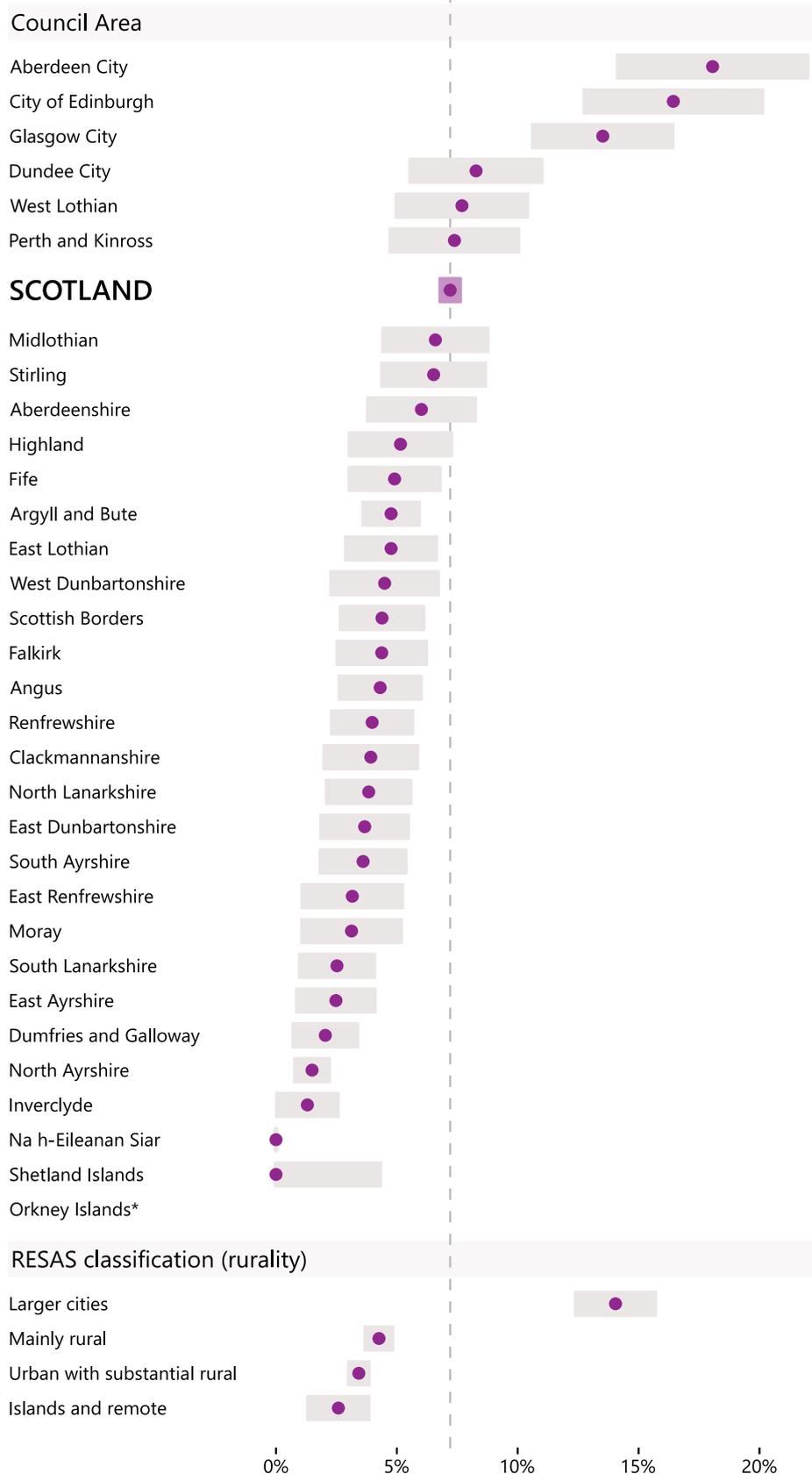
Most common non-British nationalities in Scotland, 2019



Population who are non-British nationals (percentage)

Estimate (●) and 95% confidence interval (■)

7% of the population are non-British



* Estimates for Orkney Islands are not available due to disclosure control.

Population of non-British nationals varies across council areas

In 2019, cities had the largest proportion of non-British residents – highest in Aberdeen City (18%), City of Edinburgh (16%) and Glasgow City (14%). This compares to the Scottish average of 7%.

Estimates of EU and non-EU nationals living in council areas are available on the NRS website.

Confidence intervals are reported to the nearest thousand. For Na h-Eileanan Siar they round to zero; for Shetland Islands the lower limit rounds to zero.

Non-British nationals are more likely to live in larger cities

This groups areas according to their level of rurality using four different groups: larger cities, urban with substantial rural areas, mainly rural, and islands and remote.

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Key Findings

Population by nationality

- In 2019, there were estimated to be 388,000 non-British nationals living in Scotland. This accounted for about 1 in 14 people living in Scotland.
- Of all non-British nationals, 3 in 5 were EU nationals (234,000) and 2 in 5 were non-EU nationals (154,000).
- The population of EU nationals remained broadly stable over the past two years (change not statistically significant). This followed a period of growth where the number of EU nationals grew at a faster rate than the non-EU population, following the expansion of the EU in 2004. Most recently, there was a statistically significant increase in the number of non-EU nationals between 2018 and 2019, mainly driven by people from outside Europe.
- Polish remained the most common non-British nationality in Scotland in 2019, with 91,000 nationals (23% of the total non-British population).
- The council areas with the largest proportion of residents with a non-British nationality were Aberdeen City (18%), City of Edinburgh (16%) and Glasgow City (14%).

Population by country of birth

- In 2019, there were estimated to be 502,000 people living in Scotland who were born outside the UK. This was about 9% of the population.
- Of those who were born outside the UK, 235,000 (47%) were born in an EU country, and 267,000 (53%) were born elsewhere in the world.
- Poland remained the most common non-UK country of birth in Scotland with around 1 in 6 people (80,000) born outside the UK being born there.
- The council areas with the largest proportion of residents born outside of the UK were Aberdeen City (22%), City of Edinburgh (20%) and Glasgow City (17%).

Do these statistics take into account the effect of COVID-19 on our population?

These numbers come from the Annual Population Survey (APS) and cover the year ending December 2019, so do not take into account recent change since then. The APS estimates the number of non-British nationals and non-UK born living in the UK at a particular point in time, regardless of when they moved here.

For insights into the impact of COVID-19, please see:

- [The Migration Statistics Quarterly Report](#) published by the Office for National Statistics on 21 May 2020
- [Home Office Statistics relating to COVID-19 and the immigration system](#), to be published on 28 May 2020

1. Introduction

This publication summarises the latest estimates of the Scottish population by country of birth and nationality, for the year ending December 2019. These estimates are produced using the Annual Population Survey (APS) which is carried out by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). The APS has a sample size of around 300,000 respondents in the whole of the UK, and is the largest household survey in the UK (other than the Census and Census coverage survey). In 2019, the sample size for Scotland was around 35,000 people.

The population estimates by country of birth and nationality are available for Scotland's council areas and can be accessed on the [National Records of Scotland \(NRS\) website](#). The statistics can be used to understand the profile of the population living in local areas, and are often used by central and local government for planning and monitoring service delivery.

Country of birth The country a person was born in. This cannot change.

Nationality The nationality the person stated when they were interviewed. This can change, for example, someone may later apply to become a British national.

Why are the estimates from the APS different from the mid-year population estimates (MYE)?

- The APS is a household survey, so it does not include most communal establishments like care homes, prisons and student halls of residence.
- The [MYE](#) cover the year from 01 July to 31 June, whereas this publication covers the calendar year.

The MYE provide estimates of the population by sex and age while the APS can be used to provide estimates by country of birth and nationality.

What are you looking for?

The data used in this publication

All figures from this publication

Data for council areas

Individual country data from the APS for Scotland and other regions across the UK

Analysis from ONS on trends at UK level

Where is it?

[Data](#)

[Charts](#)

[Data](#)

[ONS tables](#)

[ONS statistical bulletins](#)

2. Population by nationality

How many non-British nationals are there in Scotland?

There were about **388,000 non-British nationals** living in Scotland in 2019, which accounted for 7% of the Scottish population. This was a statistically significant increase of 36,000 people from 2018. A breakdown by nationality group is shown below in [Table 1](#); [significant changes](#) are marked with an asterisk.

1 in 14 people living in Scotland was a non-British national

Table 1: Population by nationality in Scotland, 2019

Nationality	2018	2019	Change over year	Percentage of non-British population (2019)
All	5,364,000	5,385,000	21,000	-
British	5,010,000	4,995,000	-15,000	-
Non-British	352,000	388,000	36,000*	-
EU (total)	221,000	234,000	13,000	60%
EU14	82,000	79,000	-3,000	20%
EU8	122,000	134,000	12,000	35%
EU2	15,000	19,000	4,000	5%
EU Other	2,000	1,000	-1,000	0%
Non-EU (total)	131,000	154,000	23,000*	40%
Other Europe	12,000	6,000	-6,000*	2%
Asia	58,000	69,000	11,000	18%
Rest of the World	61,000	79,000	18,000*	20%

Source: Annual Population Survey (APS), Office for National Statistics (ONS)

Note: All estimates rounded to the nearest thousand. Totals may not add exactly due to this rounding.

* Statistically significant change at the 95% level

EU14 Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Republic of Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden

EU8 Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia

EU2 Bulgaria, Romania

EU Other Cyprus, Malta, Croatia

Of all **non-British nationals** living in Scotland in 2019:

- 234,000 (60%) were EU nationals, and
- 154,000 (40%) were non-EU nationals.

The population of non-British nationals living in Scotland increased over the latest year

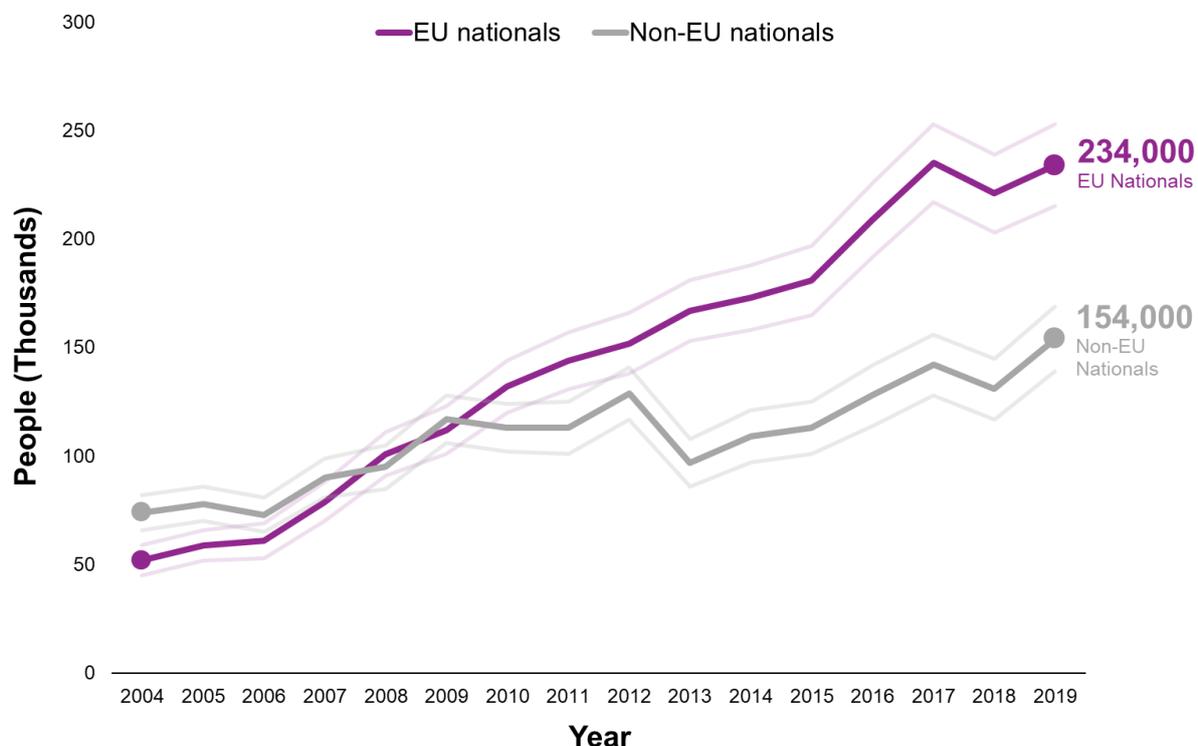
Most EU nationals were from EU8 countries (134,000). Within the non-EU population, nationals of the Rest of the World (79,000) made up over half of the population, followed by nationals of Asia (69,000).

The increase of non-British nationals living in Scotland was mainly due to the statistically significant increase of nationals of the Rest of the World (The Americas, Africa and Oceania).

How has the number of non-British nationals changed over time?

Figure 1 shows the change in the number of EU and non-EU nationals living in Scotland. Following the EU expansion in 2004, the EU national population increased up until 2017. Between 2017 and 2018, both the EU and non-EU population remained broadly stable (as the change was not statistically significant). Until recently, the EU population had been growing at a faster rate than the non-EU population. While the EU population remained broadly stable between 2018 and 2019, there was a statistically significant increase in the number of non-EU nationals over the latest year.

Figure 1: Population by nationality in Scotland, 2004 to 2019

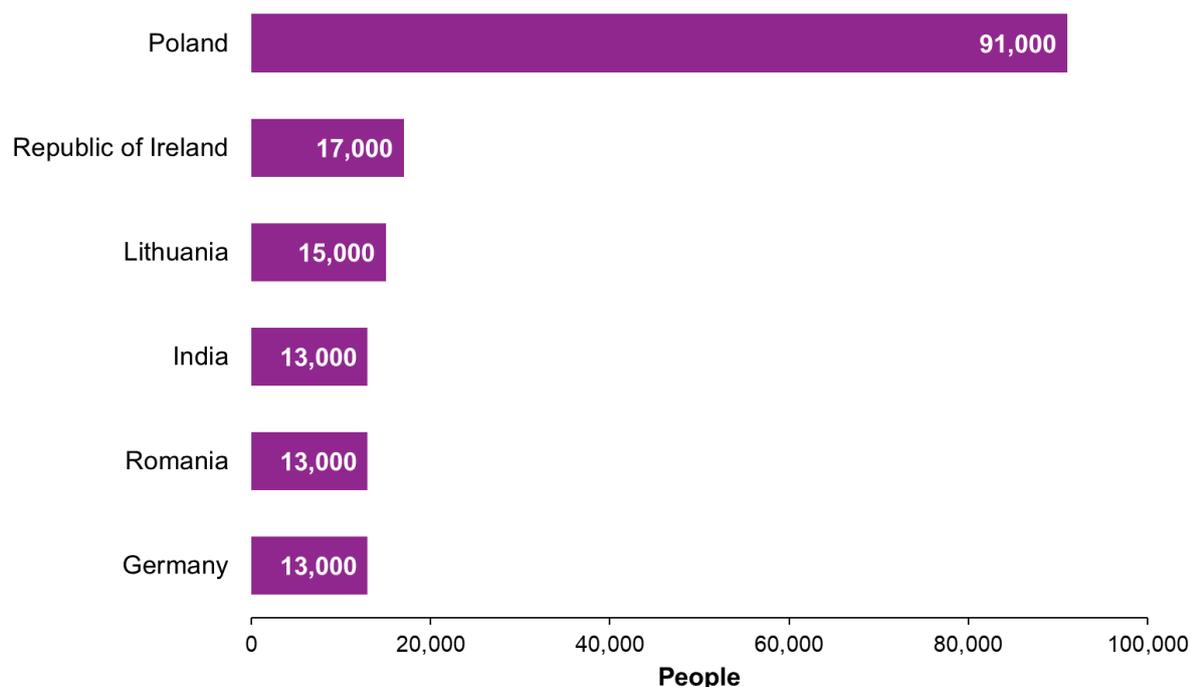


Note: Lighter lines represent the 95% confidence interval on these estimates

What are the most common non-British nationalities in Scotland?

Polish remained the most common non-British nationality in Scotland. In 2019, Polish nationals accounted for almost one quarter (23%) of all non-British nationals living in Scotland. The most common non-British nationalities in Scotland in 2019 can be seen in [Figure 2](#). Breakdowns of the most common nationalities by EU and non-EU are available from the [NRS website](#).

Figure 2: Most common non-British nationalities in Scotland, 2019



Note: As these estimates are based on a survey, they are subject to confidence intervals

Where in Scotland do non-British nationals live?

The population estimates by nationality groups are also available for Scotland's council areas and can be accessed on the [NRS website](#).

The council areas with the largest proportion of residents with a **non-British nationality** were:

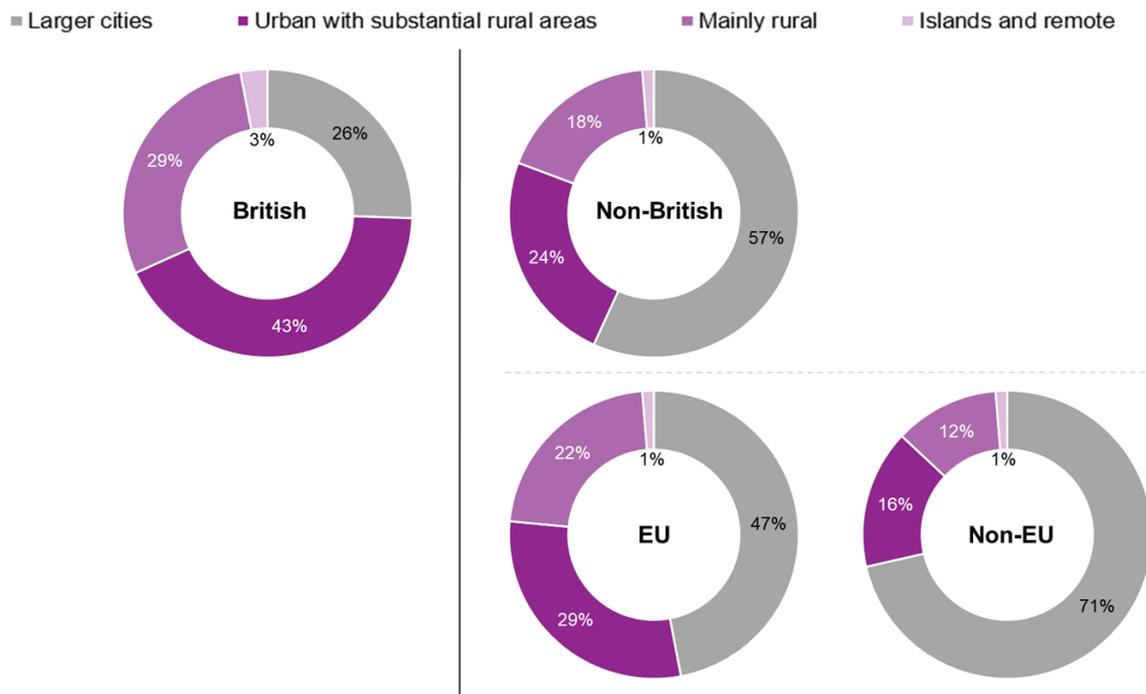
- Aberdeen City (18%),
- City of Edinburgh (16%), and
- Glasgow City (14%).

The same council areas had the largest numbers of **non-British nationals** in 2019:

- City of Edinburgh (84,000),
- Glasgow City (83,000), and
- Aberdeen City (41,000).

To get a sense of where people live within the country, councils can be grouped together using the [RESAS classification](#)¹ of Scottish council areas. This groups areas according to their level of rurality using four different groups: *larger cities*, *urban with substantial rural areas*, *mainly rural*, and *islands and remote*. As shown in [Figure 3](#), different nationality groups tend to live in slightly different areas within Scotland.

Figure 3: Population by nationality and RESAS classification, 2019



Note: Figures are rounded and may therefore not add up to 100%

British nationals, who make up 93% of Scotland’s population, live mostly in urban with substantial rural areas (43%), with 29% living in mainly rural areas and just over a quarter (26%) living in larger cities.

Non-British nationals made up about 15% of the population in larger cities in 2019

The **non-British population** in Scotland were more likely to live in cities. In 2019, over half of non-British nationals (57%) lived in larger cities, compared to 26% of British nationals. Within the non-British population,

71% of non-EU nationals lived in larger cities compared to 47% of EU nationals.

In 2019, 18% of non-British nationals lived in mainly rural areas, compared to 29% of British nationals; 1% of the non-British population lived in islands and remote areas, compared to 3% of the British population.

¹ The Scottish Government’s Rural and Environmental Science and Analytical Services (RESAS) have developed a fourfold classification of council areas according to their level of rurality. More information can be found in their research paper: [Understanding the Scottish rural economy \(2018\)](#).

3. Population by country of birth

How many non-UK born people are there in Scotland?

In 2019, there were 502,000 people living in Scotland who were **born outside of the UK**; this was about 9% of the population. A breakdown of the non-UK born population by country groupings is shown in [Table 2](#).

Table 2: Population by country of birth in Scotland, 2019

Country of birth	2018	2019	Change over year	Percentage of non-UK born population (2019)
All	5,364,000	5,385,000	21,000	-
UK	4,893,000	4,881,000	-12,000	-
Non-UK	469,000	502,000	33,000	-
EU (total)	229,000	235,000	6,000	47%
EU14	98,000	91,000	-7,000	18%
EU8	112,000	121,000	9,000	24%
EU2	14,000	17,000	3,000	3%
EU Other	4,000	5,000	1,000	1%
Non-EU (total)	241,000	267,000	26,000	53%
Other Europe	20,000	15,000	-5,000	3%
Asia	108,000	127,000	19,000	25%
Rest of the World	113,000	126,000	13,000	25%

Source: Annual Population Survey (APS), Office for National Statistics (ONS)

Note: All estimates rounded to the nearest thousand. Totals may not add exactly due to this rounding.

None of the above changes were statistically significant at the 95% level.

Around 1 in 11 people living in Scotland were born outside the UK

Of all **non-UK born** people living in Scotland in 2019:

- 235,000 (47%) were born in the EU, and
- 267,000 (53%) were born outside the EU.

Within the EU born population, 121,000 people were born in EU8 countries. This was over half of all EU born people and accounted for almost a quarter of all non-UK born people living in Scotland in 2019.

People born in Asia and the Rest of the World (The Americas, Africa and Oceania) accounted for half of all non-UK born people in Scotland.

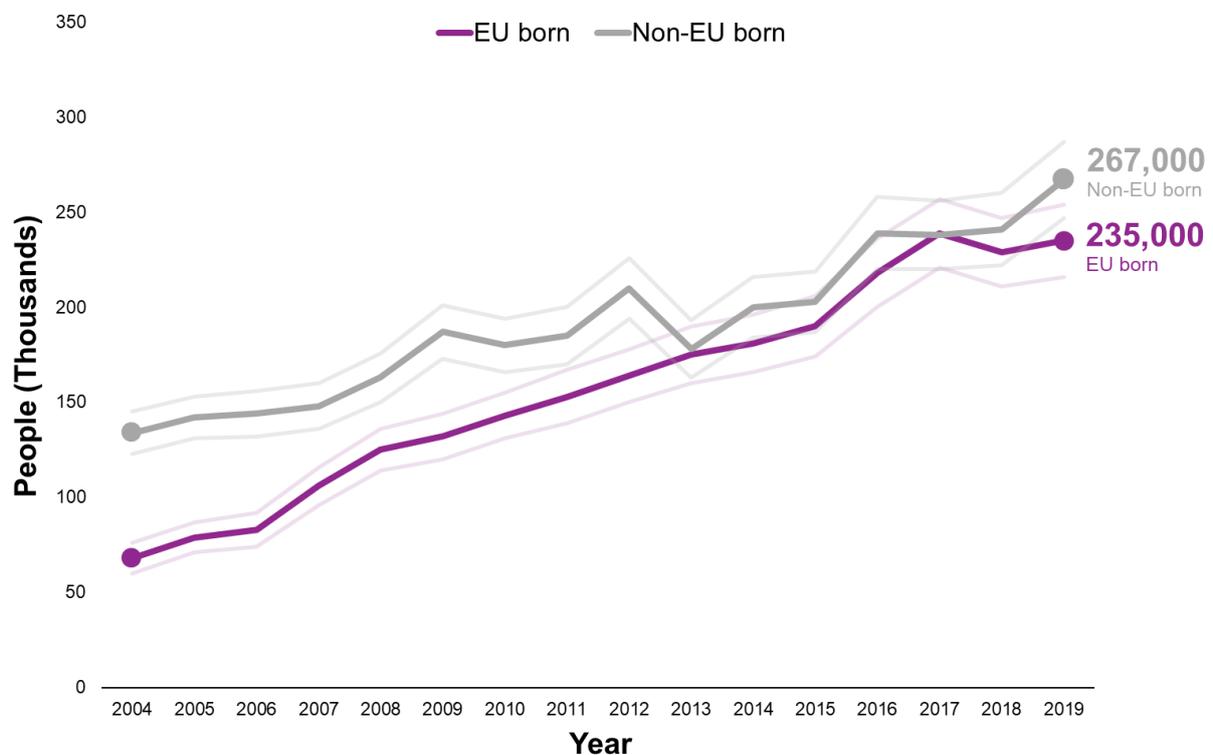
How has the non-UK born population living in Scotland changed over time?

Figure 4 shows the change in **EU born and non-EU born** populations of Scotland since 2004. Over the most recent year:

- The EU born population remained broadly stable, having experienced steady growth up to 2017.
- The non-EU born population increased; however, this increase was not statistically significant.

As these estimates come from the APS, there is sampling variability and a degree of uncertainty around the estimates. Confidence intervals are used to show this uncertainty and these are displayed in Figure 4 alongside the estimates.

Figure 4: Population by country of birth in Scotland, 2004 to 2019



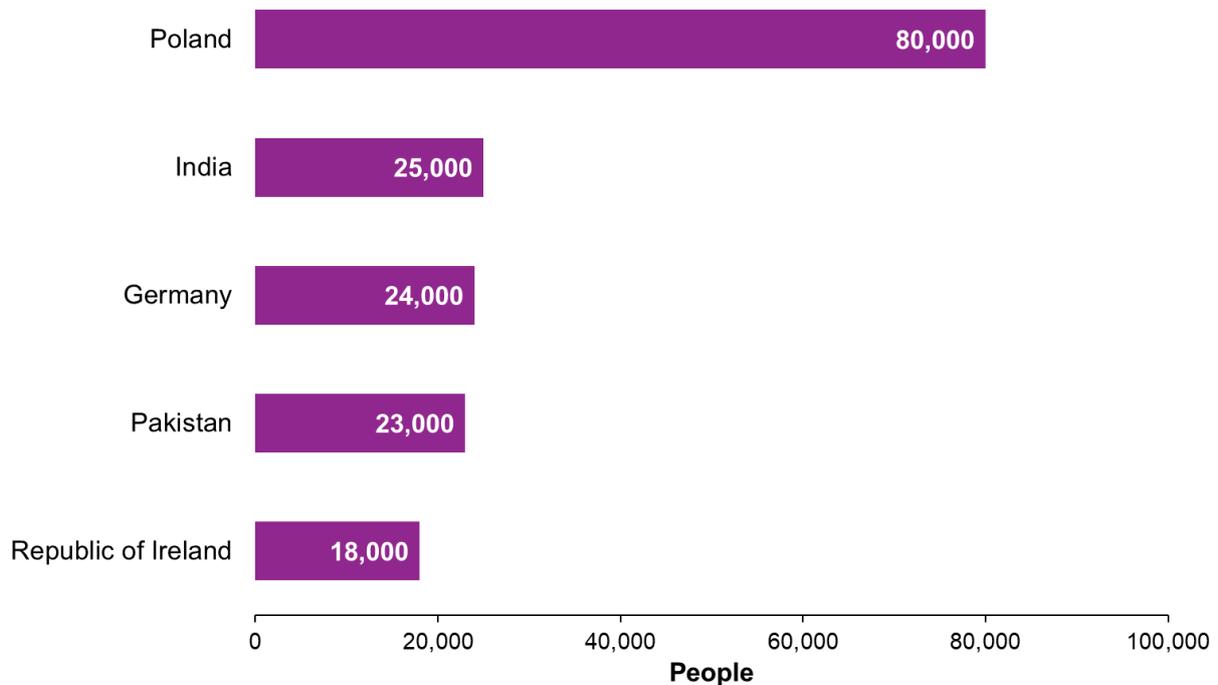
Note: Lighter lines represent the 95% confidence interval on these estimates

More information about confidence intervals and statistical significance can be found in the [Background information](#) section of this publication.

What are the most common non-UK countries of birth in Scotland?

The most common non-UK countries of birth in Scotland in 2019 are shown in [Figure 5](#). **Poland** remained the most common non-UK country of birth with 16% (80,000) of all non-UK born people living in Scotland being born there. Breakdowns of the most common countries of birth by EU and non-EU are available from the [NRS website](#).

Figure 5: Most common non-UK countries of birth in Scotland, 2019



Note: As these estimates are based on a survey, they are subject to confidence intervals

Where in Scotland do people born outside the UK live?

The population estimates by country of birth groupings are available for Scotland's council areas and can be found on the [NRS website](#).

The council areas with the largest proportion of their population **born outside the UK** were:

- Aberdeen City (22%),
- City of Edinburgh (20%), and
- Glasgow City (17%).

The same council areas had the largest numbers of people being **born outside the UK** in 2019:

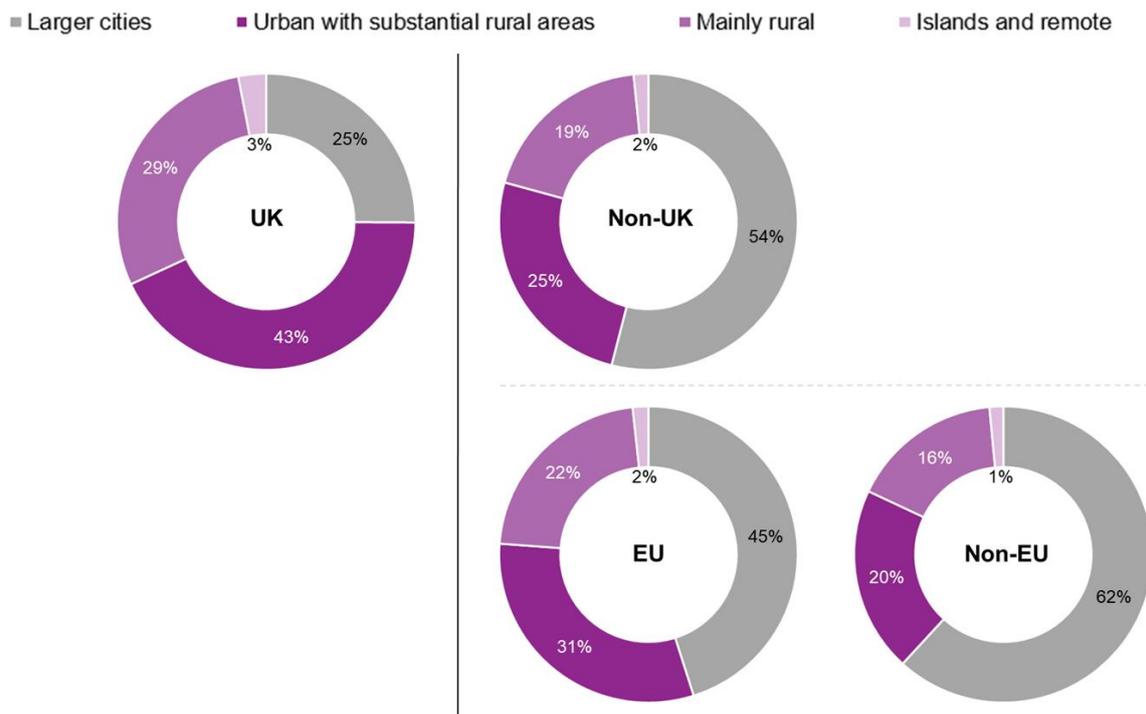
- Glasgow City (103,000),
- City of Edinburgh (103,000), and
- Aberdeen City (50,000).

Figure 6 shows where people lived in Scotland in 2019 by country of birth and RESAS classification:

About 18% of the population of larger cities were born outside the UK

- Most of the non-UK born population (54%) lived in larger cities, compared to 25% of the UK born population.
- A smaller proportion of EU born people lived in larger cities (45%) than non-EU born people (62%).
- A larger proportion of EU born people lived in urban with substantial rural areas (31%) compared to non-EU born people (20%).
- 22% of EU born people lived in mainly rural areas, compared to 16% of non-EU born people.

Figure 6: Population by country of birth and RESAS classification, 2019



Note: Figures are rounded and may therefore not add up to 100%

4. Links to related statistics

Other statistical publications that use the Annual Population Survey (APS), and other publications about population and migration in Scotland, can be found at the links below.

Population by country of birth and nationality, UK (ONS) – uses data from the APS to estimate the non-British national and non-UK born populations of the UK as a whole

Non-UK nationals in Scotland's Workforce (Scottish Government) – uses data from the APS to provide insight into labour market characteristics of non-British nationals

Mid-Year Population Estimates, Scotland (NRS) – headline population and migration statistics for Scotland, as at mid-year (30 June)

Migration flows, Scotland (NRS) – measure the number of people moving to and from an area over a specific period of time

Migration Statistics Quarterly Summary (NRS) – a summary of the latest migration statistics for Scotland, bringing together data from a range of sources to give an overview of key migration trends in Scotland, presented alongside UK-level data for comparison

5. Background information

All the latest statistics in this report come from the Annual Population Survey, carried out by the Office for National Statistics, covering the period January 2019 to December 2019. The Annual Population Survey (APS) is the Labour Force Survey (LFS) plus a number of sample boosts. The boost for Scotland is funded by the Scottish Government.

How does the APS compare with the mid-year population estimates?

As the APS is a household survey, it does not cover most people living in communal establishments; this means that the population totals from the APS will be different from the official mid-year population estimates, which cover the entire population.

Can changes in migrant stocks be compared against changes in migration flows?

Changes in the number of people living in Scotland who are non-UK born/non-British nationals are not directly comparable with estimates of long-term international

migration (such as the estimates of migration used in the mid-year population estimates). There are a few reasons for this:

- Non-UK born/non-British nationals could move to Scotland from other parts of the UK, and not be included in estimates of long-term international migration (but will instead be included in cross border migration).
- There are definitional differences between the International Passenger Survey (which is used to estimate long-term international migration) and the APS:
 - The APS is a survey of residential addresses and does not include most communal establishments, whereas the International Passenger Survey includes people who may live in communal establishments.
 - The APS measures the total resident population ('stock') so captures people who may have moved to Scotland many years ago, whereas the long-term international migration estimates ('flows') measure people moving over a specific period.

What is 'statistical significance'?

All estimates produced from the Annual Population Survey (APS) are subject to sampling variability and depending on which sample we choose, the estimate can vary slightly. **Confidence intervals** are used as a measure of the precision of the estimate and to show the range in which the true data value is likely to fall. Most commonly, 95% confidence intervals are used.

When two estimates are very close, sometimes their confidence intervals overlap and it's hard to say if there is a real difference. For example, the difference may be due to sampling error or has occurred simply by chance. In this case, the difference between the numbers is **not statistically significant**. Statistical tests are also used to confirm this.

When the confidence intervals for two estimates do not overlap, the difference between these numbers is **statistically significant**. In other words, when a difference is said to be statistically significant it reflects a real difference and has not occurred simply by chance.

6. Notes on statistical publications

National Statistics

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority (UKSA) has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in line with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics (available on the [UKSA](#) website).

National Statistics status means that official statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value.

All official statistics should comply with all aspects of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They are awarded National Statistics status following an assessment by the Authority's regulatory arm. The Authority considers whether the statistics meet the highest standards of Code compliance, including the value they add to public decisions and debate.

It is National Records of Scotland's responsibility to maintain compliance with the standards expected of National Statistics. If we become concerned about whether these statistics are still meeting the appropriate standards, we will discuss any concerns with the Authority promptly. National Statistics status can be removed at any point when the highest standards are not maintained, and reinstated when standards are restored.

Information on background and source data

Further details on data source(s), timeframe of data and timeliness, continuity of data, accuracy, etc. can be found in the 'Metadata' document that is published alongside this publication on the [NRS website](#).

National Records of Scotland

We, the National Records of Scotland, are a non-ministerial department of the devolved Scottish Administration. Our aim is to provide relevant and reliable information, analysis and advice that meets the needs of government, business and the people of Scotland. We do this as follows:

Preserving the past – We look after Scotland's national archives so that they are available for current and future generations, and we make available important information for family history.

Recording the present – At our network of local offices, we register births, marriages, civil partnerships, deaths, divorces and adoptions in Scotland.

Informing the future – We are responsible for the Census of Population in Scotland which we use, with other sources of information, to produce statistics on the population and households.

You can get other detailed statistics that we have produced from the [Statistics](#) section of our website. Scottish Census statistics are available on the [Scotland's Census](#) website.

We also provide information about [future publications](#) on our website. If you would like us to tell you about future statistical publications, you can register your interest on the Scottish Government [ScotStat website](#).

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Enquiries and suggestions

Please contact our Statistics Customer Services if you need any further information.
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