

Article

Living abroad: dynamics of migration between the UK and the EU2

This is the final report, in a series of six, being published in response to an increased user need for data about the people who may be most likely to be affected by the UK's decision to leave the EU.

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1 . Main points

- In 2016, there were 413,000 EU2 citizens resident in the UK – the majority (79%) of these were Romanian.
- Analysis of data from 2014 to 2016 estimates 81% of EU2 citizens resident in the UK were aged between 16 and 64 years old.
- The construction and the distribution, hotels and restaurants industries were popular employers of EU2 citizens resident in the UK between 2014 and 2016, each employing 23% of EU2 citizens.
- The number of UK citizens resident in the EU2 countries in 2016 was 6,200 – 71% were aged between 15 and 64 years old.
- As of February 2017, there were 1,423 people resident in EU2 countries in receipt of a UK State Pension – the number of UK State Pension recipients in EU2 countries has steadily increased over the last 14 years but remains much lower than other EU countries such as Spain and France.

2 . Things you need to know about this release

This report is the sixth in a series being published to provide more information on British citizens living in the European Union (EU), and EU citizens living in the United Kingdom (UK). This series has been created in response to an increased user need for data about the people who may be most likely to be affected by the UK's decision to leave the EU.

It presents the available statistics that estimate the numbers of British people living in Bulgaria and Romania, and Bulgarian and Romanian citizens living in the UK.

Romania and Bulgaria are referred to as EU2 countries because both countries joined the EU on 1 January 2007. Between 2007 and 2013, EU2 citizens had certain restrictions placed on them; in the first 12 months of stay, working Bulgarian and Romanian citizens were generally required to hold an accession worker card or apply for one of two lower-skilled quota schemes. Other Bulgarian and Romanian citizens could apply for a registration certificate, giving proof of a right to live in the UK. These restrictions were lifted on 1 January 2014.

Figure 1 shows EU country groupings used in this report. As well as using EU2 to refer to Romania and Bulgaria, we use EU8 to refer to Hungary, Slovakia, Slovenia, Poland, Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania (the group of countries who joined the EU in 2004). We also use EU14, which is the EU15 group shown in Figure 1 not including Ireland.

Figure 1: EU groupings used within UK migration statistics 2017



Previously we published an article on this topic entitled [What information is there on British migrants living in Europe?](#). Now, more up-to-date data about UK citizens living in the EU are available, and more detailed analysis has been conducted using data from the 2011 round of European censuses.

In addition, we have used the Annual Population Survey (APS) three-year-average dataset. In order to provide detailed information on the characteristics of individual nationality groups living in the UK, it is necessary to average data over a three-year time period, from 2014 to 2016. The impact of this when considering EU2 citizens is that the estimate, an average of 2014 to 2016, is lower than the latest annual data (2016), because the resident population from EU2 countries has increased in this time period. These differences have been quantified in Table 2. It is possible that three-year APS data may over-represent certain occupations due to the labour market restrictions that were in place for EU2 migrants working in the UK until 1 January 2014. While these restrictions were in place, the UK only allowed highly skilled and skilled workers, as well as a limited number of low-skilled workers specifically for the agricultural and food-processing sectors.

Additional analyses of short-term migration and visits of less than 28 days are also included in this report. Together, these sources provide a more complete picture of how many UK and EU citizens are “living abroad”, how many are staying abroad for shorter periods of time, and what they are doing while there.

There are three “types” of migrant discussed in this report.

Long-term resident

Those people who have lived abroad for one year or longer, or intend to live there for one year or longer. However, because this doesn’t include those spending part of the year abroad, two further “types” are considered.

Short-term migrant

Those spending 1 to 12 months living abroad. This can be for any reason and would include those who spend part of the year living abroad (for example, winter in EU2 countries and summer in the UK).

Visitor

Those spending up to 28 days abroad. This group is largely holidaymakers and will include those who repeatedly spend time in EU2 countries.

All of the statistics in this report use a citizenship definition to identify migrants, as this is considered to be the most useful in identifying those who may be most likely to be affected by the UK’s decision to leave the EU.

This is particularly the case when compared with the use of a “country of birth” definition of a migrant, which can miss some groups of citizens. Differences in the use of these two definitions are fully explained in the January 2017 report, [What information is there on British migrants living in Europe?](#)

Citizenship can change over time, and multiple citizenships can be held. The ways that multiple citizenships are dealt with are different between the different data sources in this report. For more information, please see Appendix 1.

3 . EU2 citizens living in the UK

There were 413,000 EU2 citizens living in the UK in 2016 according to the [Population by country of birth and nationality estimates](#), based on one year of data from the Annual Population Survey (APS).

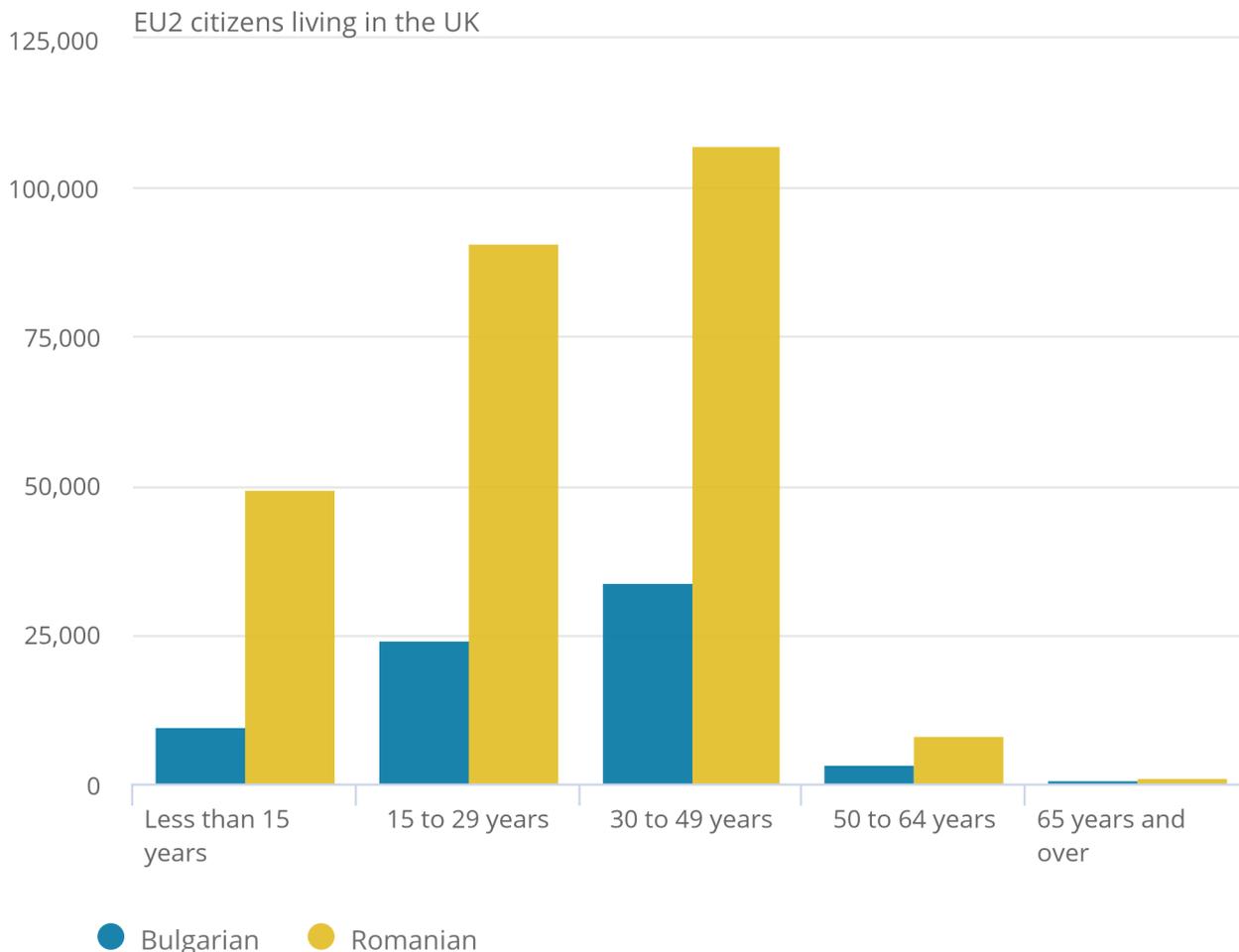
For more detailed analysis it is necessary to use the three-year pooled APS dataset, which provides a larger sample than annual data. It is an average for the years January 2014 to December 2016.

It is estimated that 328,400 citizens of EU2 countries were resident in the UK between 2014 and 2016, of which 78% were Romanian citizens (256,800) and 22% were Bulgarian citizens (71,700). Totals may not sum due to rounding. The reason for the difference is the resident population from EU2 countries has increased in this time period. These differences have been quantified in Table 2. These figures mirror the size of total outbound international migration from these countries. According to the [UN International Migrant Stock 2015](#), approximately 1.2 million Bulgarian-born and 3.4 million Romanian-born people emigrated from their country of birth.

The majority of Bulgarian and Romanian citizens living in the UK were estimated to be aged between 16 and 49 years (81% and 77% respectively), a similar proportion to EU8 (73%), Spanish (70%) and French citizens (69%) residing in the UK.

Figure 2: Age of EU2 citizens living in the UK, 2014 to 2016

Figure 2: Age of EU2 citizens living in the UK, 2014 to 2016



Source: Office for National Statistics, Annual Population Survey, pooled data, 2014 to 2016

Source: Office for National Statistics, Annual Population Survey, pooled data, 2014 to 2016

4 . What are EU2 citizens living in the UK doing?

Of the 328,400 EU2 citizens estimated to be living in the UK in 2014 to 2016, approximately 61,000 were under 16 or over 64 years old (19%).

Of those EU2 citizens aged 16 to 64 years (considered to be “working age”), 211,200 were estimated to be in employment (79%), 11,500 were estimated to be unemployed (4%), 12,600 were estimated to be inactive due to study (5%) and 32,100 were otherwise economically inactive (12%). Economically inactive people could include those staying at home with children or who sought early retirement, for example.

EU2 citizens made up approximately 11% of all EU citizens in employment in the UK between 2014 and 2016.

Of the Bulgarian citizens aged 16 to 64 years and resident in the UK, approximately 85% were employed, 2% were unemployed, 5% were inactive due to study and 8% were otherwise economically inactive.

Of the Romanian citizens aged 16 to 64 years and resident in the UK, approximately 77% were employed, 5% were unemployed, 5% were inactive due to study and 13% were otherwise economically inactive.

The most common employers for EU2 citizens are the distribution, hotels and restaurants industry and the construction industry, which both employ 23% of the EU2 workforce.

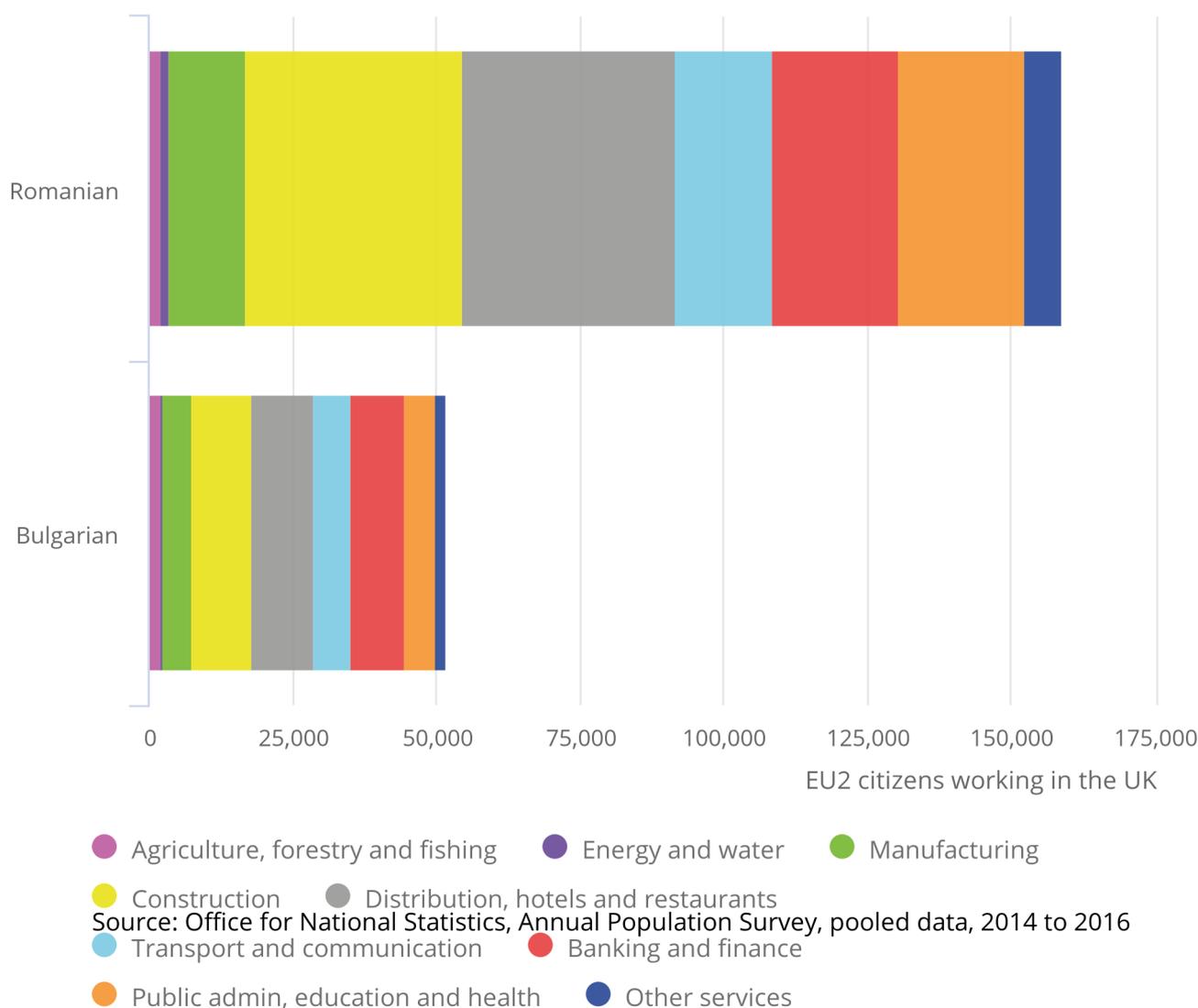
The construction industry can include building work, civil engineering, and plumbing or electrical work. The three-year pooled APS estimates that the construction industry employed approximately 2,095,000 people in 2014 to 2016, 2% of whom are estimated to be EU2 citizens. One in four Romanian and one in five Bulgarian citizens work in the construction industry.

Approximately 23% of Romanian citizens and 20% of Bulgarian citizens work in the distribution, hotels and restaurants industry. EU2 citizens are estimated to have made up 1% of the distribution, hotels and restaurants industry.

Of Bulgarian citizens in employment in the UK, 18% work in the banking and finance industry, compared with 14% of Romanian citizens working in the industry.

Figure 3: EU2 citizens working in the UK by citizenship and industry of employment, 2014 to 2016

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Source: Office for National Statistics, Annual Population Survey, pooled data, 2014 to 2016

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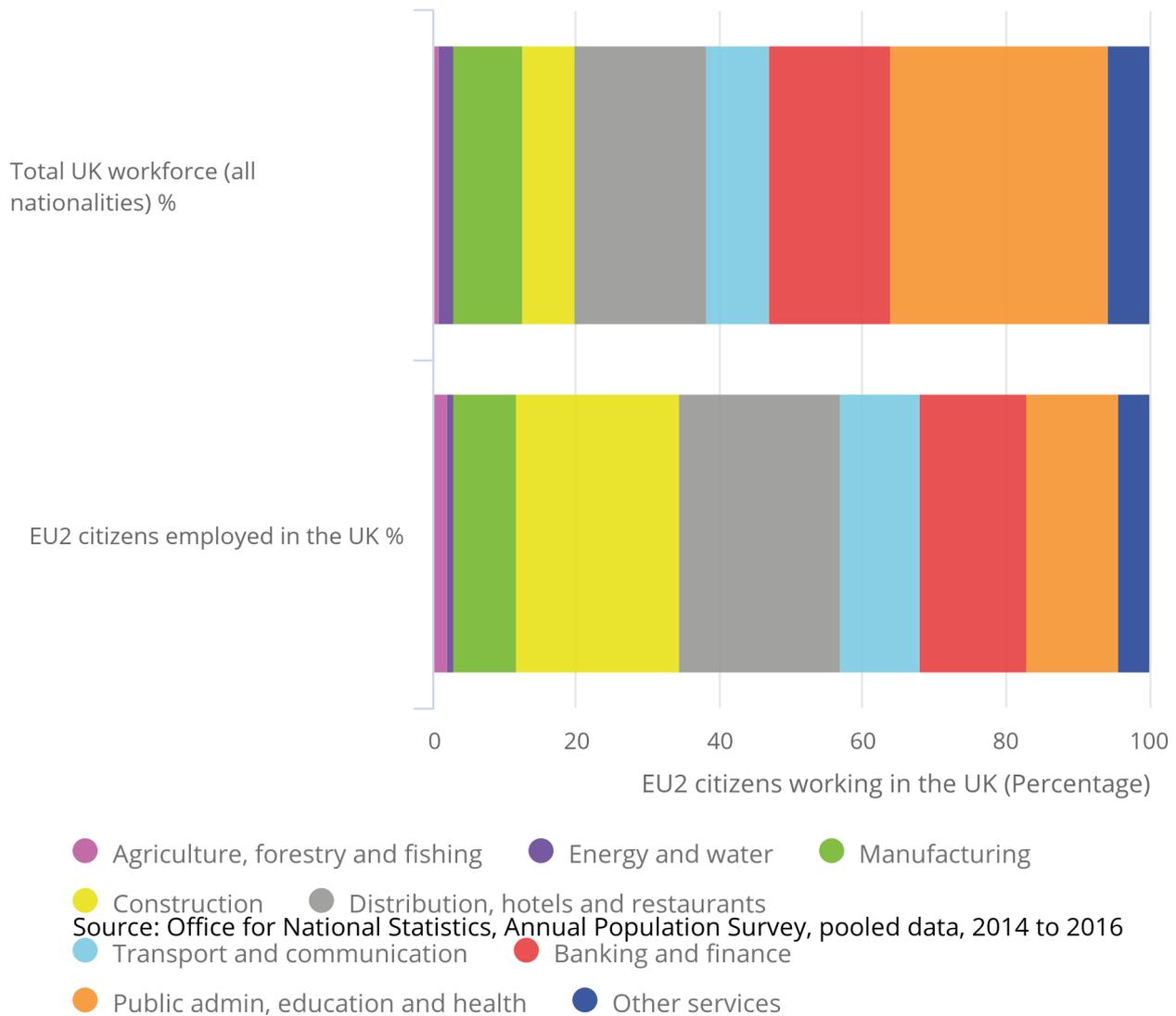
Nearly one-third of the total UK workforce was estimated to be employed in the public administration, education and health industry. A smaller proportion of EU2 citizens were estimated to be employed in this industry (13%), accounting for less than 1% of the total working in this industry.

This is similar to the proportion of EU8 citizens who are estimated to be resident in the UK and are employed in public administration, education and health (11%), which accounts for 1% of the total in the industry. Of EU14 citizens resident in the UK and in employment, 27% worked in public administration, education and health. EU14 citizens account for 2% of the industry.

Industry sector does not always reflect job content – for example, people working in construction could occupy a variety of jobs, such as managerial, labouring, cleaning and development.

Figure 4: Proportion of EU2 citizens working (aged 16 to 64 years old resident in the UK in employment) and total UK population (aged 16 to 64 and in employment), by industry, 2014 to 2016

Figure 4: Proportion of EU2 citizens working (aged 16 to 64 years old resident in the UK in employment) and total UK population (aged 16 to 64 and in employment), by industry, 2014 to 2016



Source: Office for National Statistics, Annual Population Survey, pooled data, 2014 to 2016

The three-year pooled APS estimates that 31% of EU2 citizens resident in the UK and in employment worked in elementary occupations between 2014 and 2016. Elementary occupations require a minimum general level of education (that is, that which is acquired by the end of the period of compulsory education).

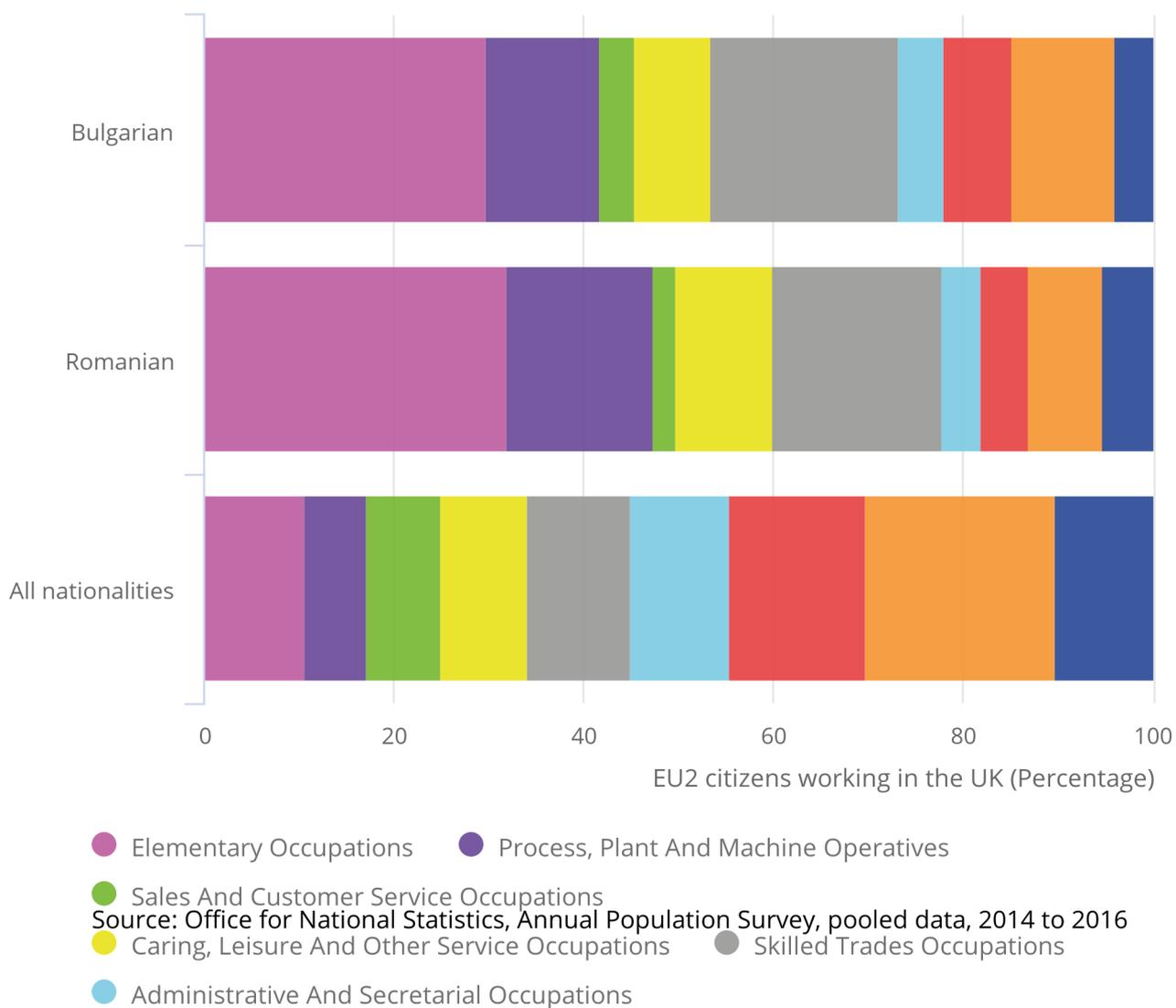
A further 18% of EU2 citizens employed in the UK were estimated to work in skilled trades occupations and 15% in process plant and machine operative occupations. This would be expected due to the high proportions of EU2 citizens employed by the construction industry.

Approximately 10% of EU2 citizens were employed in the caring, leisure and other service occupations.

It is possible that these data may over-represent certain occupations due to the labour market restrictions that were in place for EU2 migrants working in the UK until 1 January 2014. While these restrictions were in place, the UK only allowed highly skilled and skilled workers, as well as a limited number of low-skilled workers specifically for the agricultural and food-processing sectors.

Figure 5: Proportion of EU2 citizens (aged 16 to 64 years and resident in the UK) and total UK population(aged 16 to 64), in employment, by occupation, 2014 to 2016

Figure 5: Proportion of EU2 citizens (aged 16 to 64 years and resident in the UK) and total UK population(aged 16 to 64), in employment, by occupation, 2014 to 2016



Source: Office for National Statistics, Annual Population Survey, pooled data, 2014 to 2016

APS data for 2016 show that 25% of EU2 citizens estimated to be aged 16 to 64 years, living in the UK, and in employment were self-employed. This compares with an estimated 14% of all those employed in the UK. Figure 6 shows that approximately 61% of EU2 citizens were employed in low or lower-middle skilled jobs compared with 43% of UK citizens, 38% of EU14 citizens, 69% of EU8 citizens and the national average of the total UK workforce (44%).

Comparing a worker's highest qualification and the average level of qualification held by those in the job can determine whether someone is matched, overeducated or undereducated for their job. Previous analysis has shown that [37% of EU2 citizens are overeducated for the job they are working in](#).

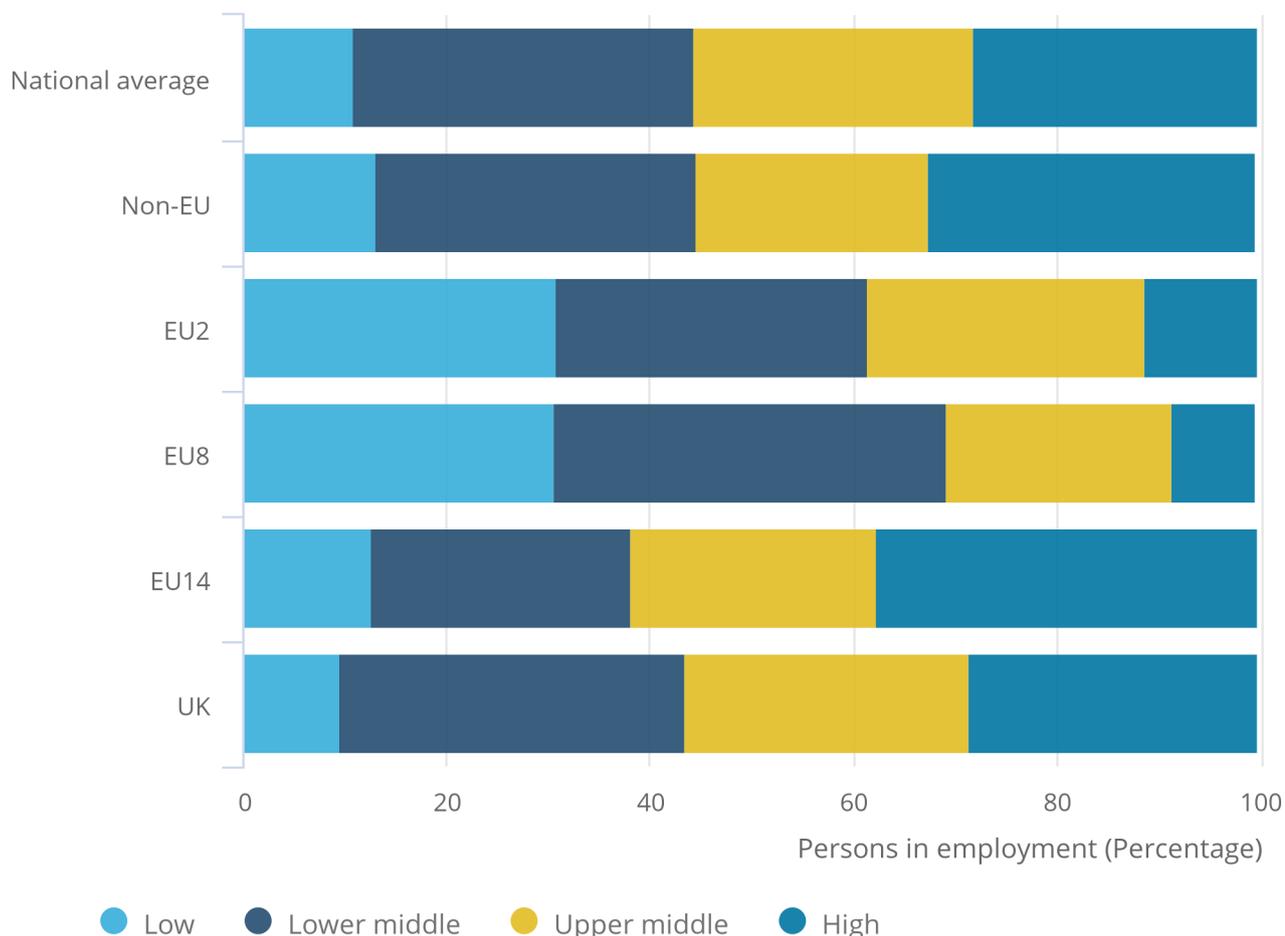
Foreign qualifications can be difficult to capture within a survey, and are sometimes classified as having an "other qualification".

Analysis in [International immigration and the labour market, UK: 2016](#) release found that EU2 citizens employed in the UK were estimated to work more hours on average than UK citizens. An estimated 61% of EU2 citizens in employment work more than 40 hours a week, compared with 32% of UK citizens.

National average (median) earnings in the UK are estimated at £11.30 per hour; EU2 citizens working in the UK are estimated to receive a lower average wage (£8.33 per hour).

Figure 6: Distribution of workers in each nationality group by skill level of occupation in the UK, 2016

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Source: Office for National Statistics, Annual Population Survey, 2016

Source: Office for National Statistics, Annual Population Survey, 2016

5.1 to 12 month Short-Term International Migration to England and Wales by citizens of EU2 countries

In the latest period, for the year ending June 2015, there were 78,000 short-term visits by EU2 citizens to England and Wales. Figure 7 shows this is an increase from the year ending June 2013.

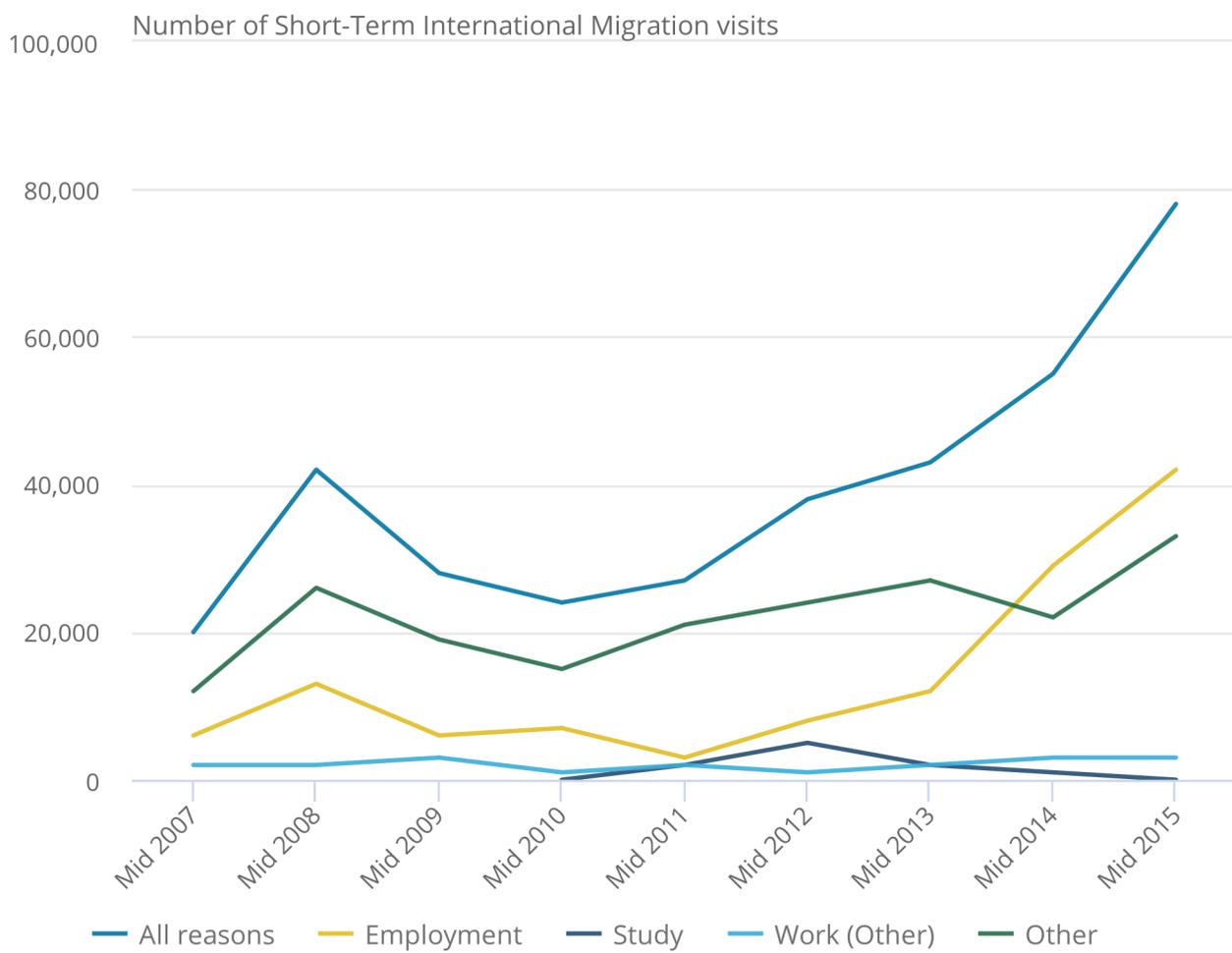
Of all short-term visits made by EU2 citizens, 45,000 (58%) of these were for “work” and 33,000 (42%) of the visits were for “other” reasons.

The “work” grouping consists of “employment” (migration to work, paid in the new country in which the migrant works) and “work (other)” (self-employment and visiting on business for their existing employer). The “other” grouping includes holidays and travelling, visiting or accompanying family and friends, working holidays, medical treatment, and religious pilgrimage.

Short-term international migration to England and Wales by EU2 citizens made up 7% of the total short-term international migration to England and Wales in the year to mid-2015 made by all countries.

Figure 7: Short-Term International Migration by EU2 citizens to the UK, 2007 to 2015

Figure 7: Short-Term International Migration by EU2 citizens to the UK, 2007 to 2015



Source: Office for National Statistics, Short-Term International Migration, 2015

Source: Office for National Statistics, Short-Term International Migration, 2015

6 . EU2 citizens visiting the UK for less than 28 days

There were 1.2 million visits to the UK by citizens of EU2 countries in 2016.

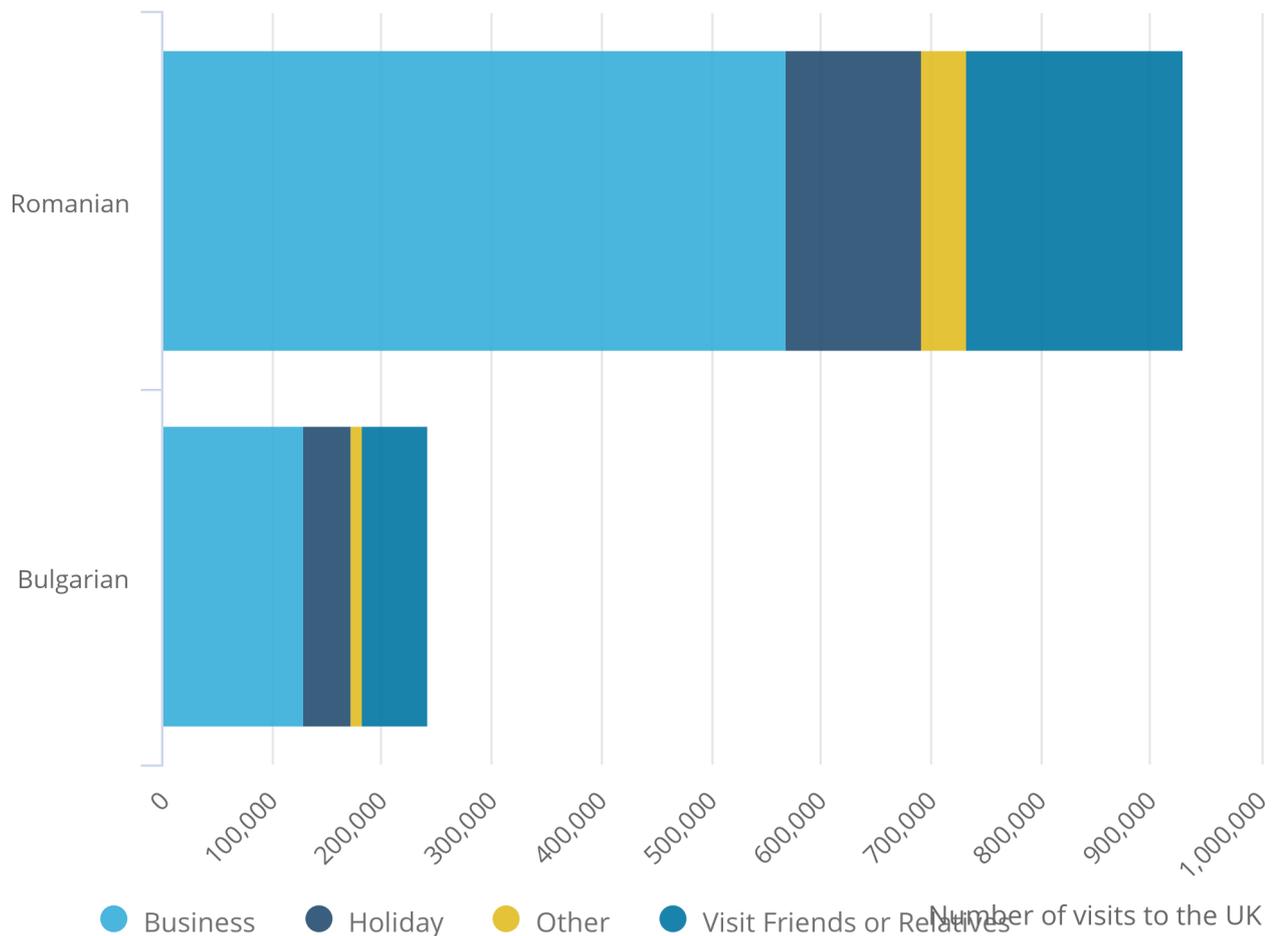
Citizens of Romania made the most visits to the UK of either EU2 country in 2016 (930,500). The majority of visits by Romanians to the UK are for business (61%) and visits to family and friends (21%).

Romanian citizens made more visits for business reasons than Bulgarians (569,800 and 130,100 respectively).

However, this is lower than the number visits for business reasons undertaken by Polish citizens (878,500), French citizens (762,300) and German citizens (758,600) in 2016.

Figure 8: Visits to the UK by EU2 citizens, 2016

Figure 8: Visits to the UK by EU2 citizens, 2016



Source: Office for National Statistics, International Passenger Survey, 2016

Source: Office for National Statistics, International Passenger Survey, 2016

7 . How many UK citizens are living in EU2 countries?

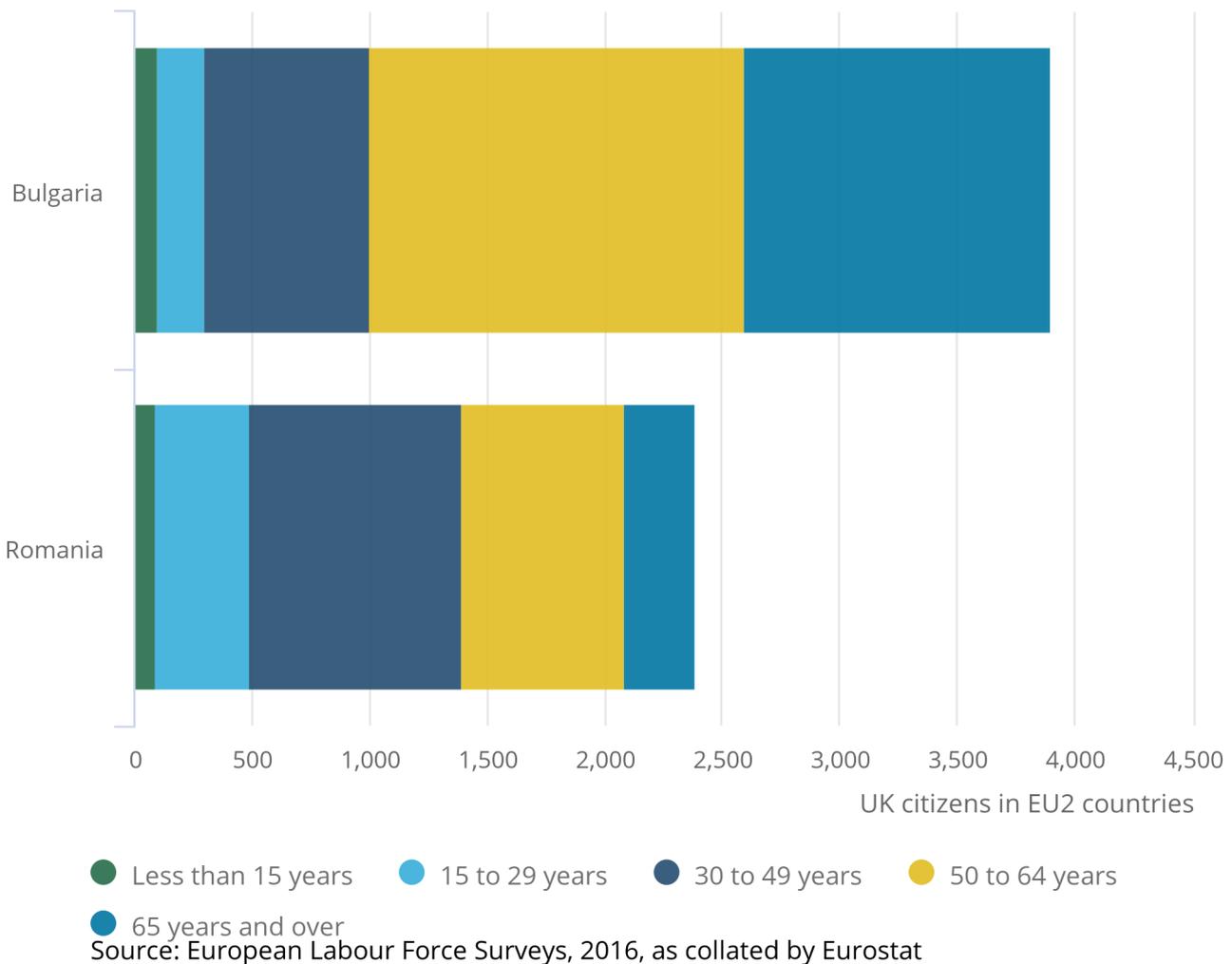
The European Labour Force Surveys, 2016, as collated by Eurostat, provides the latest available data on UK citizens living in the EU2 countries. The number of British citizens living in EU2 countries is approximately 6,200. There are 3,900 British citizens estimated to be resident in Bulgaria (63%), and 2,300 in Romania (37%).

UK migrants living in Bulgaria are predominantly aged 50 years and older (72%). UK migrants living in Romania are predominantly aged 30 to 49 years (38%). Of UK citizens resident in EU2 countries, 71% are estimated to be between the ages of 15 and 64 years.

There are 200 British citizens aged 0 to 15 years living in EU2 countries. There are more children who were born in the UK and live in EU2 countries (11,700) and these are likely to be children born to immigrants who were living in the UK and have since returned. Of these, 65% were resident in Romania.

Figure 9: Age of British citizens living in EU2 countries, 2016

Figure 9: Age of British citizens living in EU2 countries, 2016



Source: European Labour Force Surveys, 2016, as collated by Eurostat

8 . UK State Pension recipients residing in EU2 countries

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) report (from [administrative data](#)) shows that there were 1,423 people, residing in EU2 countries, in receipt of a UK State Pension in February 2017. There were 1,233 recipients resident in Bulgaria and 190 recipients resident in Romania.

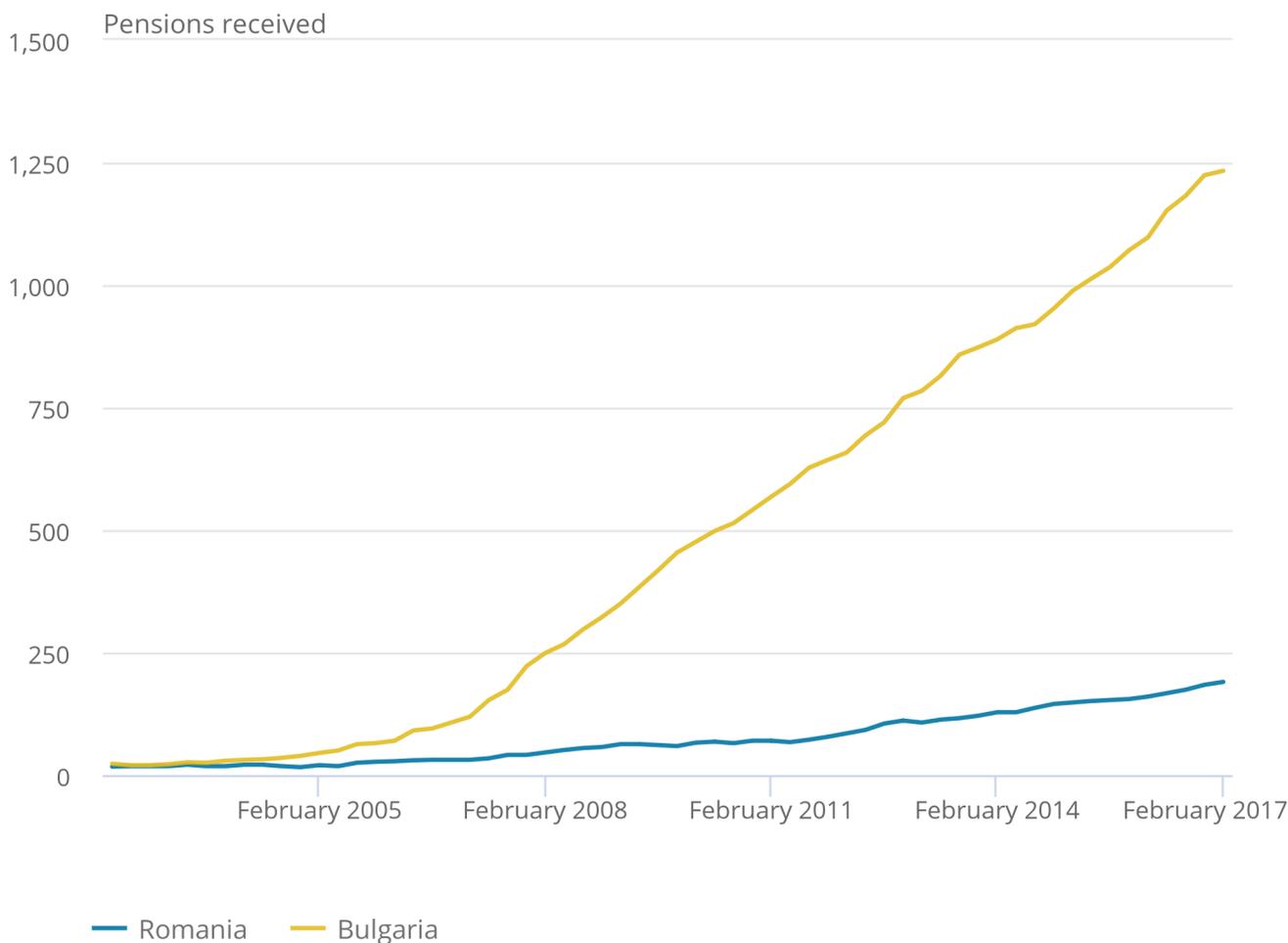
Figure 10 shows an increasing number of State Pension recipients in EU2 countries. The number of UK State Pension recipients is still lower than in other EU countries. For example, 134,840 recipients of the UK State Pension were resident in Ireland, 108,135 were resident in Spain, 66,864 recipients were resident in France and 6,174 were resident in the EU8 countries in February 2017.

The number of UK State Pension recipients in each of the EU2 countries has increased over the last 14 years, the greatest increase being in Bulgaria, with the trend beginning around 2007, when Bulgaria joined the EU.

This may be due to an increasing number of UK citizens migrating to EU2 countries, in particular Bulgaria, as well as the possibility of anyone working in the UK long enough to be eligible to earn a UK State Pension and choosing to retire in an EU2 country.

Figure 10: UK State Pension recipients in EU2 countries, by country of residence, 2002 to 2017

Figure 10: UK State Pension recipients in EU2 countries, by country of residence, 2002 to 2017



Source: Department for Work and Pensions, State Pension administrative data

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9 . 1 to 12 month Short-Term International Migration to EU2 countries, by UK citizens, from England and Wales

There were an estimated 75,000 short-term trips between 1 and 12 months made to EU2 countries by UK citizens in the year ending June 2015 (latest available data).

The most common reason for short-term international migration to EU2 countries was “other”, which accounted for 72,000 visits for the year to June 2015. This category includes living in a second home (owned or rented) for part of the year, prolonged travelling (for example, in a campervan or caravan), as well as working holidays such as summer and ski seasons, where work facilitates an experience and is not the principle reason for visit.

10 . British citizens visiting EU2 countries for less than 28 days

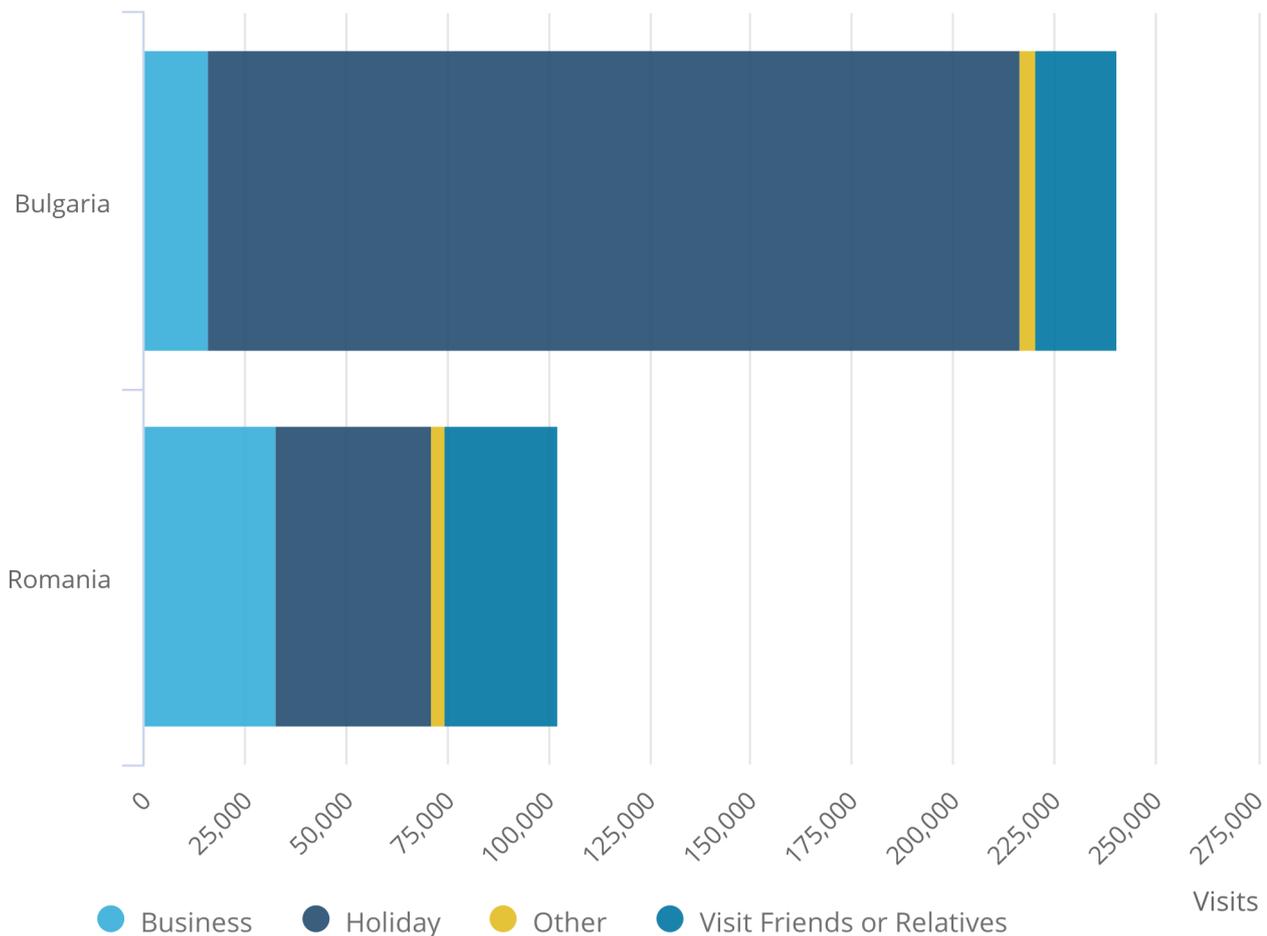
British citizens made an estimated 343,000 visits of less than 28 days to EU2 countries in 2016.

The most common reason for UK citizens to visits EU2 countries was for holidays (69%), with Bulgaria accounting for 240,300 of these visits. This is relatively low compared with holidays to other EU countries such as France (4.9 million) and Spain (11.9 million).

Romania has a higher proportion than Bulgaria of UK citizens visiting for business trips (32% and 7% respectively) and visits to friends and relatives (27% compared with 8%).

Figure 11: Visits of British citizens to the EU2 countries, for less than 28 days, by reason for visit, 2016

Figure 11: Visits of British citizens to the EU2 countries, for less than 28 days, by reason for visit, 2016



Source: Office for National Statistics, International Passenger Survey, 2016

Source: Office for National Statistics, International Passenger Survey, 2016

11 . Next steps

We are in the process of [improving the evidence on migrants in the UK](#), aiming to make better use of data sources and offer more evidence on migrants living in the UK. Improvements to international data sources on migration could add to the body of evidence on British citizens living in the EU, which we will continue to monitor. In addition, it is possible that access to data sources, such as the Department of Health European Health Insurance Card (EHIC), may contain useful detailed information.

12 . Quality and methodology

More information on how the data was compiled

This report provides updated figures to those previously published in the January 2017 report, [What information is there on British migrants living in Europe?](#)

The January 2017 report established the resident population of citizens as the most useful statistics for identifying who may be affected by the UK's decision to leave the EU. This is particularly the case when compared to the use of a "country of birth" definition of a migrant, which can miss some groups of citizens. It should be noted that people can change their citizenship and some people hold multiple citizenships.

This report uses a variety of additional data sources to provide more up-to-date data on the resident populations and the number of short-term migration events and visits by British citizens to the EU (and by EU citizens to the UK), which may be affected by the UK's decision to leave the EU.

These data sources are not always comparable (see Table 1 for the definitional differences between them). For example, the sources used to identify British citizens in EU2 countries are on a different basis to the sources used to identify EU2 citizens in the UK. However, they have been selected as the best available data to indicate the number of citizens in the UK and the EU2 countries.

Table 1: Comparison of definitions between the data sources used in this report to discuss UK and EU2 citizens

Type of migrant		Source	Citizenship	Migrant definition
Long-term residents	British citizens in EU countries	Labour Force Survey estimates from EU2 national statistical institutions, collated by Eurostat	Yes, estimates are by citizenship.	"A person who moves from their country of usual residence for a period of at least 12 months"
		UK state pensions claimed abroad, DWP	Does not provide estimates by citizenship	No definition is applied, although it is assumed that those claiming pension in another country will be a long-term resident
	EU2 citizens in UK	Annual Population Survey, ONS	Yes, estimates are by citizenship. Citizenship is a response to "What nationality do you hold?"	The APS will include long-term migrants and some short-term migrants although it is unlikely to include short-term migrants living in the UK for very short periods of time
Short-term migrants	British citizens in EU2 countries	Short-term migration estimates, ONS	Yes, estimates are by citizenship.	Those that migrate between 1 to 12 months for all reasons
	EU2 citizens in UK		Citizenship is collected as "passport held" and migrant usually shows passport to the interviewer.	
Visitors	British citizens in EU2 Countries	Visitor estimates, ONS	Yes, estimates are by citizenship.	Visits abroad. For the purposes of this report, data is provided for only those visits of 28 days or less, so that there is no overlap with short-term migration estimates.
	EU2 citizens in UK		Citizenship is collected as "passport held" and migrant usually shows passport to the interviewer.	

Source: Office for National Statistics

Limitations of this research

In order to provide detailed information on the characteristics of individual nationality groups living in the UK, which is robust, it is necessary to average data over a three-year time period, from 2014 to 2016. The impact of this when considering EU2 citizens is that the estimate, an average of 2014 to 2016, is lower than the latest annual data (2016) because the resident population from EU2 countries has increased in this time period. These differences have been quantified in Table 2.

Table 2: Population resident in the UK, excluding some residents in communal establishments, by nationality, 2014 to 2016

	Average of 2014 to 2016	2016
Bulgarian	71,700	85,000
Romanian	256,800	328,000

Source: Office for National Statistics, Annual Population Survey, 2014 to 2016

More information on the data sources used in this report

Three-year pooled Annual Population Survey (APS), annual average from January (ONS)

The APS is a household survey in the UK, it does not measure flows into and out of the UK. The survey itself does not include most communal establishments (managed accommodation such as halls of residence, hotels, hostels and some accommodation provided by employers and care homes). This means that students living in communal establishments will only be included in APS estimates if their parents (resident in a household) are sampled and include the absent student. Students living in non-communal establishments will be captured in APS sampling.

Citizenship is self-reported in the APS.

The APS will include long-term migrants and some short-term migrants although it is unlikely to include short-term migrants living in the UK for very short periods of time. This could have a disproportionate effect on certain categories of overseas nationals.

The industry proportions will not reflect the full impact of additional short-term foreign workers in these sectors. Short-term migrants are likely to be under-represented in the APS and this will affect some sectors more than others. One sector that is likely to be under-represented is agriculture, forestry and fishing. The APS does not include most communal establishments such as some accommodation provided by employers. This may affect the counts of the agriculture, forestry and fishing industry where such arrangements are more common. There are a range of surveys that are able to capture aspects of the workforce in the agriculture industry, for example, June Agricultural Survey (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs), Labour Providers Survey (National Farmers Union) and Annual Population Survey and Labour Force Survey (Office for National Statistics). However, none of these surveys are designed to capture the total number of long- and short-term (seasonal) workers in the agriculture industry by nationality.

The APS three-year pooled dataset January 2014 to December 2016 is less sensitive to more volatile trends than one-year datasets as this dataset is an average of three years.

Short-Term International Migration (ONS)

Data for 2015 are provisional.

Short-Term International Migration (STIM) estimates are derived from the International Passenger Survey (IPS), which is a sample survey and therefore subject to some uncertainty. When data are disaggregated to a country level confidence intervals will be larger, but the data are useful as a broad indication of trends. Users are encouraged to review the published tables for confidence intervals and an insight into the inherent uncertainty in these statistics. For more information, please refer to our [Short-Term International Migration for England and Wales: year ending June 2015](#).

These data only include those travelling to and from England and Wales.

This data source estimates the number of journeys, rather than the number of people visiting. There is evidence to suggest that due to the sampling design and coverage of the IPS between 2004 and 2008, coverage of some routes may have caused some short-term migrants to be missed. For more information, please refer to our [Quality of Long-Term International Migration estimates from 2001 to 2011 full report](#).

STIM estimates are produced directly from the IPS at the end of the person's stay in the country. This means that data for short-term migrants are only available for the reporting period after they have completed their visit, so figures for 2015 are only available in 2017. The STIM estimates from 2016 will be available in May 2018.

International Passenger Survey travel and tourism visitor data (ONS)

Estimates reflect only the number of visits made – there may be multiple visits by one person. These data include British citizens who are resident in the UK, but doesn't include British citizens resident in other countries.

Visits data counts only the number of visits made – there may be multiple trips by one person. These data might also include (but not identify) those who travel to and from the UK or EU2 countries regularly. For the purposes of this report, data are provided for only those visits of 28 days or less, so that there is no overlap with STIM estimates. This is different to regular [Overseas Travel and Tourism reports](#).

European Labour Force Survey (Eurostat)

The Eurostat 2016 data is based on data about the population of each country on 1 January submitted to Eurostat by each country. This refers to the usually resident population and is either based upon population registers, or the last population census of that country adjusted according to population change figures. Both population estimates and census data record those long-term migrants who have lived or intend to live in EU2 countries for more than a year. It doesn't estimate those who live in EU2 countries for shorter periods of time, or who split their time between EU2 countries and the UK. Totals may not sum due to rounding

UK State Pension (Department for Work and Pensions)

Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) administrative data on UK State Pension recipients is available online. These data on pension claimants include both British citizens and non-British citizens who qualify for a UK State Pension. The data are for people who have notified the DWP that they are overseas. People are required to inform the DWP about any change in their circumstances, including change of address.

Those living between EU2 countries and the UK might register to live in an EU2 country and thus be counted in their population estimates, but register their pension to a home they maintain in the UK.

Anybody with qualifying National Insurance contributions and/or credits may be eligible receive the UK State Pension, so recipients are not necessarily British. Registering an address of an EU2 country is not confirmation that the recipient is a long-term resident of an EU2 country.