



National Insurance number registrations by non-UK nationals, 2020/2021

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1.1 Overview

In 2006 the Department for Work and Pensions Information Directorate first published data on the number of national insurance number registrations to non-UK nationals. The data were sourced from the National Insurance recording system (NIRS). It is based on the most recently recorded address of person registering.

Datasets can be accessed by quarter for either financial or calendar years by local authority district, with data broken down to country of origin of the person registering. This article uses the analysis by financial years.

Data used in this report is by year of registration for a national insurance (NI) number. This may differ from a person's year of arrival in the country as some people may engage in activities for which a NI number (NINo) is not needed such as studying or homemaking. In addition, this data measures new registrations for a NI number (or inflow). It does not measure outflow (people returning home) or the stock of people in the country. The original data is published at local authority district, adjusted for reasons of disclosure control so that we may not know numbers from a specific country registering in a specific district, but can see that the total registering somewhere in the county is higher than the sum of the district figures that are not suppressed.

We have further rounded the data in the report to the nearest 10, so if summed, some totals may differ from the sum of the district values.

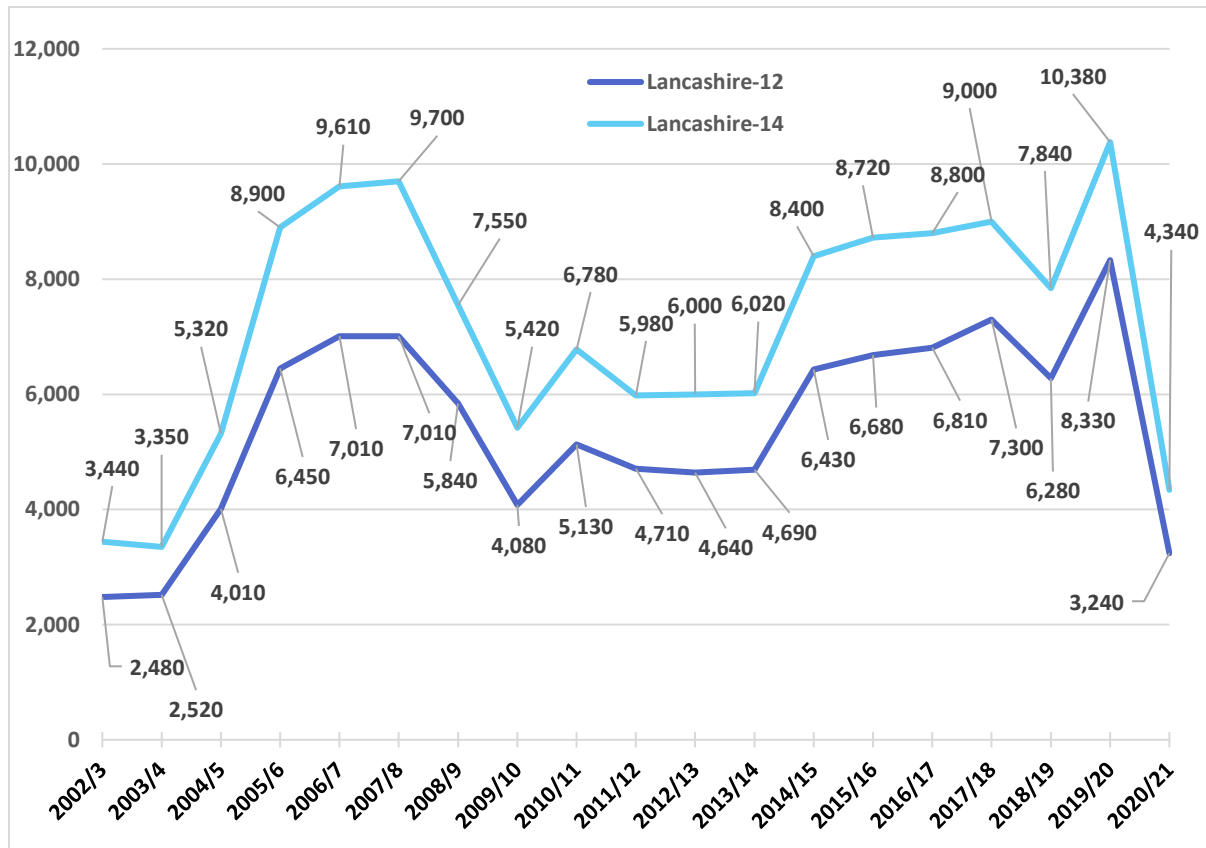
1.2 Overall trend in NINo registration by foreign nationals

- Data showed around 3,240 registrations in the Lancashire-12 area in 2020/21.
- The number of registrations in Lancashire-14 was 4,340 in 2020/21.
- India, for the second year running, was the main source of registrations for the Lancashire-12 area with 730 or 22.4% of the total.
- Of the 730 registrations by Indian nationals, 610 were in the Preston City Council area.
- Registrations were highest in Preston in 2020/21, with 1,240 registrations.
- All districts experienced large decreases in the number of registrations compared to 2019/20, ranging from -50% to -72%.

The number of registrations in Lancashire-12 was 3,240 in 2020/21. The decrease of 5,090 from 2019/20 constitutes a very substantial -61% fall. Continuing uncertainty over the status of EU nationals working in the UK following the withdrawal of the UK from the European Union may have contributed to the decrease, though as free movement of workers from EU states was strictly speaking still legal for nine of the 12 months, it would seem more likely that Covid-19 related travel restrictions were the main cause. Registrations by both Indian and Pakistani nationals were down by around -45% on 2019/20 but registrations from the whole EU were down by -72.2%. The figure for total registrations in the Lancashire-12 area equates to 1.4% of the UK total of 229,780.

Data showed around 4,340 registrations in the Lancashire-14 area in 2020/21, 6,040 fewer than in 2019/20. Registrations fell between 2007/08 and 2009/10, after which they recovered, and were largely static from 2011/12 to 2013/14. The latest falls are to low figures last seen before 2006. The figure for the Lancashire-14 area equates to 1.88% of the UK total. Total registrations in Lancashire-12 and Lancashire-14 since 2002/03 are shown in figure 1.

Figure 1: Approximate numbers of registrations in the Lancashire-12 and Lancashire-14 areas



Source: Department for Work and Pensions

1.3 Origin of foreign nationals in Lancashire

In 2020/21 the national origin for the greatest number of registrations in the Lancashire-12 area was India, with 730. Of these 610 registered in the Preston City Council area. Please refer to the Microsoft Power BI slides (also embedded on this [article's front page](#)) for the breakdown of country of origin for each district. (Figure 2.b and Figure 4). This was the second year running that India has been the main origin. Registrations from Pakistan at 470 were around half the previous year but, were enough for second place.

For five years in succession from 2015/16 Romania had been the source for over 1,000 new registrations in the Lancashire-12 area, and the main source in four of

those years, but in 2020/21 was only third with 350. Numbers from Bulgaria reduced by nearly three quarters to 240, but this still qualifies for fourth place. Spain, Nigeria and Italy all improve their position in the rankings. Poland had been the main source for registrations in Lancashire for the 12 years until 2015/16, but this year drops three places from fifth to eighth with just 120 registrations.

Iran features in the top ten for the second time with 70 registrations. The Philippines, the Ukraine and Egypt for the first time appear in the table of 14 nations, while Latvia, Portugal and Slovakia are pushed out.

If the table showed all registrations for the Lancashire-14 area, it would look slightly different. India would again be highest with 950, Pakistan also second with 660, Romania third with 440 and Bulgaria fourth with 250, but the Philippines would be in fifth place with 220. The same 14 nations as for Lancashire-12 would appear in the table, but the lower places would be slightly rearranged.

Table 1: Origins of foreign nationals registering in the Lancashire-12 area

	India	Pakistan	Romania	Bulgaria	Spain	Nigeria	Italy	Poland	Iran	Philippines	Ukraine	China	Egypt	Hungary
2020/21	730	470	350	240	140	130	130	120	70	60	50	40	40	40
2019/20	1,340	850	1,270	800	300	120	340	630	130	80	10	140	50	110
2018/19	400	440	1,200	890	210	80	290	740	70	40	10	110	30	150
2017/18	300	410	1,700	840	220	80	360	1,060	70	20	10	130	20	220
2016/17	190	420	1,280	550	220	80	530	1,140	20	10	10	130	20	300
2015/16	180	360	1,110	530	220	80	400	1,590	10	20	20	110	10	280
2014/15	220	310	790	480	260	100	370	1,740	10	20	10	120	10	340
2013/14	170	330	150	210	170	80	170	1,510	10	20	10	130	20	340
2012/13	310	380	60	130	170	90	120	1,310	10	20	0	140	10	310
2011/12	320	580	90	160	90	100	110	1,060	10	40	20	210	10	230
2010/11	520	550	100	150	70	80	90	1,100	20	40	20	220	10	240
2009/10	500	430	120	150	40	70	70	770	10	70	10	190	10	120
2008/09	750	510	90	220	60	50	100	1,680	10	70	10	300	10	190
2007/08	670	550	50	140	50	80	90	2,930	10	70	50	350	10	160
2006/07	610	580	20	10	40	40	70	3,100	10	110	40	290	10	160
2005/06	580	460	30	40	50	30	90	2,590	10	80	60	250	10	100
2004/05	510	420	30	40	40	30	70	800	10	80	20	270	10	20

Source: Department for Work and Pensions

1.4 The political background to trends in National Insurance number registrations

The UK left the European Union on 31st January 2020. There followed an 11 month 'transition period' in which negotiations between the UK and EU were conducted to establish a new relationship between the two bodies. During this period the UK was effectively a member of the Single Market, so EU legislation still applied, including the conditional free movement of workers from EU states. This right to free movement ended with the transition period on the 31st December 2020. Immigration is now regulated under the provisions of the 'Immigration and Social Security Co-ordination (EU Withdrawal) Act 2020'. The latest figures in this article relate to the time-span that covers 9 months of the transition period, three months of the tighter regulations but also coincide with the severe restrictions on travel implemented as measures to halt the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Residents of the 'accession states' of Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia, which joined the European Union in May 2004, became entitled to move to the United Kingdom to seek work according to Article 45 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. Prior to 2004/05 there had been no NI registrations for most of these countries in Lancashire with the exception of Poland. We had seen four of these accession states listed in table 1 in 2019/20, but this year just two remain.

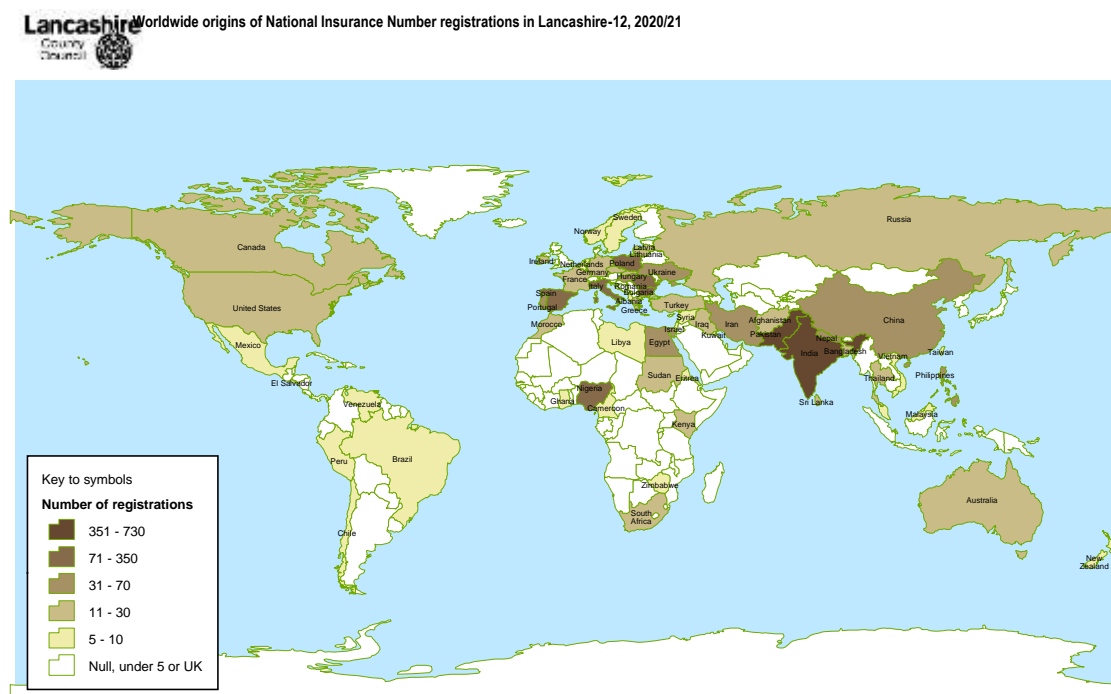
Although Romania and Bulgaria were admitted to the European Union in January 2007, there was a transitional period of seven years in which other member states could impose restrictions on workers from the two countries. The restrictions varied between the countries; in the UK employers had to apply for work permits while the workers required "accession worker cards". It was predicted that there might have been a mass exodus from the countries, which have some of the lowest levels of economic activity in the EU. The restrictions were lifted in January 2014, after which the number of registrations by Romanian and Bulgarian nationals increased rapidly.

Following the UK vote to leave the EU in the referendum of June 2016, there was great uncertainty about the status of EU citizens already working in the UK and any who might find work in the UK subsequently. Whereas this may have led to a fall in registrations in 2018/19, the effect was eclipsed by a sharp rise in registrations from South Asia in 2019/20.

More understanding of Lancashire's existing ethnic mix of can be found in our [ethnic population reports](#) from the 2011 Census

1.5 Origins of new foreign National Insurance number registrations shown on map

Figure 2: Worldwide origins of National Insurance number registrations in Lancashire



Source: Department for Work and Pensions

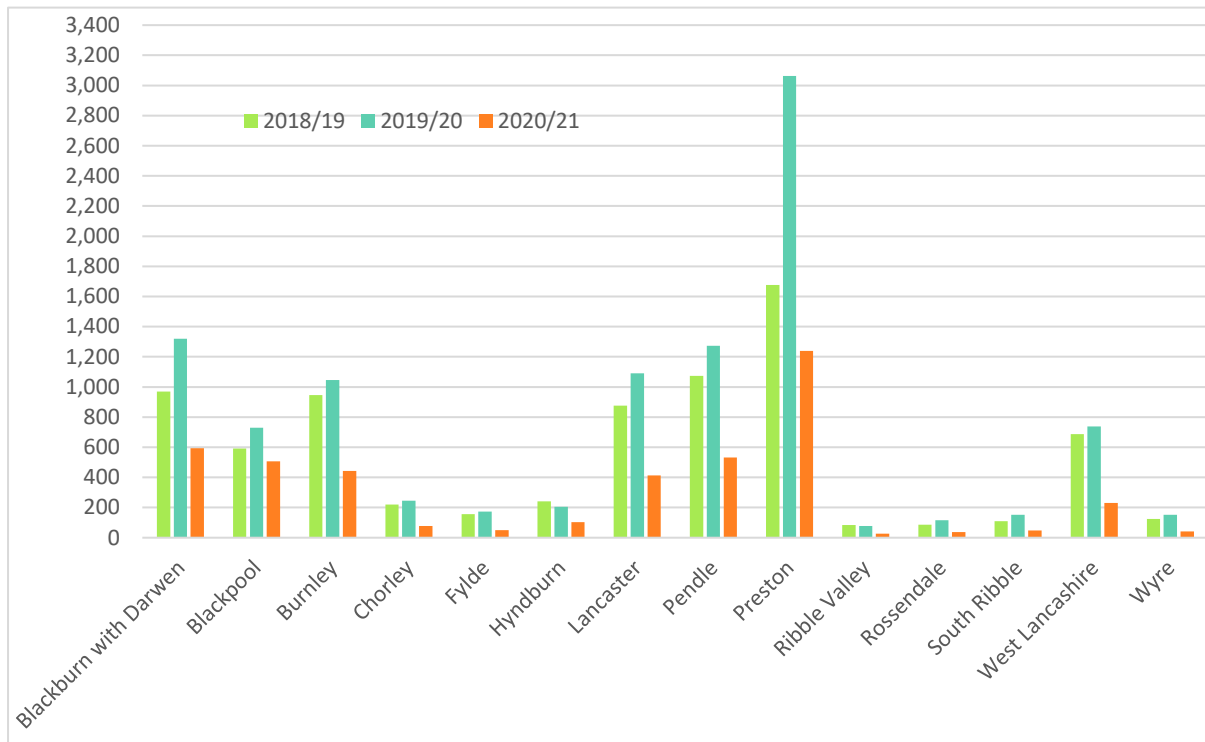
The Microsoft Power BI slides on this article's front page feature two interactive maps which show the country of origin for the Lancashire-14 area and for the districts separately. We have included both maps because the suppression of low values mean that the district figures may not sum to the county total, while some countries of origin only have values given at county level, and merging this data into one source may have resulted in double counting of the totals.

1.6 Districts

Registrations were by far the highest in Preston in 2020/21 (1,240). Pendle, Burnley and Lancaster had high numbers of registrations at 530, 440 and 410 respectively. Ribble Valley had fewest at 30. In the wider Lancashire-14 area, there were 590 registrations in Blackburn with Darwen and 510 in Blackpool.

Figure 3 shows the total foreign national registration in each of the Lancashire authorities for 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21. All districts experienced sharp falls in registrations when comparing 2020/21 to 2019/20.

Please refer to the Microsoft Power BI slides on this [article's front page](#) for the breakdown of country of origin for each district. (Figure 2.b and Figure 4)

Figure 3: NINo registrations by district (2018/19 to 2020/21)

Source: Department for Work and Pensions

1.7 Related websites

The original datasets can be accessed via the DWP's statistical interface [Stat-Xplore](#).

You may be interested in the Office for National Statistics' [Migration Statistics Quarterly Report](#)

[Comparing sources of international migration statistics](#)

[National Insurance number allocations to adult overseas nationals entering the UK](#)