

The migration portion of the Prime Minister EU deal was based on the claimed that:

“we now know that, at any one time, around 40 per cent of all recent European Economic Area migrants are supported by the UK benefits system”. David Cameron, Chatham House, 10/11/2015

The argument being that if a large % of EU migrants claimed tax credits then their withdrawal might be a disincentive to migrate. Today's figures show this to be at most 23%.

The PM's statistics had already been given to the Times which dutifully reported 43% - “almost half”

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Mariya Savinova, who won gold in the 800m at London 2012, and Ekaterina Poistogova, who took bronze, were named in the World Anti-Doping Agency's report

London Olympics were 'sabotaged' by Russians

Huge state-sponsored doping programme revealed

Matt Dickinson Geneva

Russia faces being banned from the Olympics in Rio next year after investigators found that it "sabotaged" the London 2012 Games by running a state-sponsored doping programme.

The scale of the corruption, which had "an inherited attitude from the old Cold War days", was laid bare in a report published by the World Anti-Doping Agency yesterday.

Allegations include that the head of a Moscow laboratory destroyed 1,417 blood and urine samples and members

of the FSB, the Russian security service, infiltrated anti-doping work by posing as engineers at the Sochi Winter Olympics. Laboratories are thought to have been bugged as part of a wider pattern of "direct intimidation and interference by the Russian state".

Dick Pound, the former president of the World Anti-Doping Agency, who led the three-year independent commission, warned that the existence of athletics was threatened by the scandal. Russian authorities gave athletes notice of tests, bullied doping control officers and their families and took

brides to cover up missed tests. "It may be a residue of the old Soviet system," Mr Pound said.

Vitaly Markov, the Russian minister of sport, was implicated, he added. "It was impossible for him not to be aware of it. And if he is aware of it, he's complicit in it." Mr Pound said at a press conference in Geneva to unveil the 325-page report.

Mr Markov is also a member of FIFA's executive committee and in charge of organising the 2018 football World Cup in Russia. Mr Pound warned that the revelations could be "the tip of the iceberg", stretching far beyond Russia and

athletics. Interpol is investigating allegations that Lamine Diack, the former president of the International Association of Athletics Federations, and associates took more than €1 million in bribes to help to cover up Russian doping. Mr Diack was arrested by French prosecutors last week.

Mr Pound criticised the IAAF, the sport's governing body now headed by Lord Coe, for lax procedures. Lord Coe responded yesterday by calling the report "alarming" and urging the IAAF council to consider sanctions against

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Almost half of migrants from EU are on benefits

Sam Coates, Bruno Waterfield
Michael Savage

Nearly half of all new arrivals from the European Union are claiming benefits, David Cameron will say today.

The prime minister will place the four-year benefit ban for EU migrants at the forefront of his renegotiation with Brussels as he sets out the detail of his demands for the first time.

Mr Cameron will say that 41 per cent of EU migrants rely on the support of the UK benefits system during their first four years in the country. This represents 224,000 EU nationals out of 526,000 new arrivals.

About 148,000 of these new arrivals, some 66 per cent receive tax credits, housing benefit and other welfare hand-outs available to people in work.

Downing Street says that EU migrants entitled to so-called "in-work" benefits claimed an average of £5,000 per family, costing UK taxpayers £530 million in 2013. Under the government's planned reforms, none of these claims would be permitted for migrants in their first four years.

No10 also said the figures, released for the first time today, suggested that more than 10,000 recently arrived EU families were claiming over £10,000 per year through in-work welfare in 2013.

A government source said the new analysis made clear the need for changes to the welfare rules, and the four-year benefit ban will reduce the financial incentive for EU migrants to come to Britain in the first place.

"Because of how generous the UK's in-work benefits can be, it can make financial sense for an EU citizen to go from an average wage elsewhere in Europe, to a minimum wage in the UK, using the in-work benefits to top up the income," said the source.

"These benefits act as a taxpayer-backed subsidy for EU migrants to come to the UK to perform low-paid jobs. The prime minister's renegotiation will put an end to this for the first four years."

Mr Cameron will set out his main EU reform demands in a speech and a letter

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Roll of fat around the waist doubles risk of an early death

Tom Whipple Science Editor

People who have a roll of fat around

fat around the waist, a major study has found.

The researchers, who analysed

overweight all over. The researchers, from America's Mayo Clinic, who published the study in the journal

The waist circumference is taken at the narrowest part of the abdomen and the hip circumference is measured around

Francisco Lopez-Jimenez, the director of preventive cardiology at the clinic. "I don't think we know what is going on for

The Government later then released a DWP statistical note to back up the claim:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/475765/uk-benefits-and-tax-credits-eea-migrants.pdf

And the working's included were:

*“This represents **between 195,000 and 235,000 (numerator)** EEA Nationals in recently arrived households claiming benefits or tax credits at March 2013 out of **525,000 (denominator)** recently arrived EEA nationals resident in the UK at March 2013.”*

However it turns out from today's figures that the 525,000 denominator should have been 1m – meaning that the figure should have been closer to 23% (as we have always said).

*“HMRC also shared with us analysis of those who had arrived, or registered for a NINo in the 4 years, to 2013-14 and were subject to income tax NICs and, or received HMRC benefits at some point in 2013/14 – the latest year available. **They found 1.0 million** such individuals were from the EEA and 0.4 million were from non-EEA countries.”*

Today's ONS note Annex 3:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/articles/noteonthedifferencebetweennationalinsurancenumberregistrationsandtheestimateoflongterminternationalmigration/2016><https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/articles/noteonthedifferencebetweennationalinsurancenumberregistrationsandtheestimateoflongterminternationalmigration/2016#annex-3-non-uk-nationals-interaction-with-hm-revenue-and-customs-compared-to-national-insurance-number-registrations-and-long-term-international-migration>

Short Term migrants pay no tax:

A rotating group of short term migrants will in total add up to a permanent presence. It is perhaps worth considering that a short term migrant who works for say 6m and earns below the Personal Allowance of £10,600 they will pay no tax. So there will be a burden in terms of public services and no corresponding tax to pay for it.

Additional Notes on the scale of migration:

Michael O'Connor a former senior HMT and Cabinet Office official:

“My initial thoughts are that it is clear that the present measures give little assurance that the official statistics give an accurate or robust indication of the numbers of people living or working in the UK. One has to agree that much more work needs to be done, and now that HMRC have been made to buy into the process there are all sorts of opportunities for getting to a better understanding of what is really going on.

Notably though, the HMRC appears to count only people within their tax/contribution systems and benefit systems. No allowance seems to have been made for non-taxpaying non-claiming people. These could include 'legitimate' people like non-working partners in childless couples, mothers-in-law whose primary role is looking after a couple's children, and people not earning enough to pay taxes but not entitled to in-work benefits (no eligibility to Working Tax Credits for under-25s) but also any and everyone working in the grey economy and not claiming benefits (including the 'worker' in a couple where mum claims child benefit and *is* in the systems herself)

Also another more general issue is that the publication calls into question is whether the line between long-term and short-term migration is drawn in the right place and it seems that the distinction made is largely artificial. For example, ignoring short-termers means that a rotating cast of six people in a house (which nonetheless always contains six people) are quite ignored in terms of their need for provision of public services, pressure on housing, congestion etc.”

Jonathan Portes of NIESR's take on the statistics:

"I welcome the ONS' analysis & would highlight the following key points:

1. It is clear that there has been a very large rise in short-term migration to the UK from the EU in recent years, and that this accounts for most of the divergence between National Insurance number registrations and the official immigration statistics, based on the International Passenger Survey

2. However, in my view, the evidence suggests that the migration statistics have in fact undercounted EU migration to the UK. In particular, the Long-term International Migration statistics show a gross inflow of EU citizens of 739,000 in the four years to June 2014, while the number registering for a NI number was 1,537,000. As ONS say, most of this difference is accounted for by short-term migration. However, the publication also states:

a) "HMRC also shared with us analysis of those who had arrived, or registered for a NINO in the 4 years, to 2013-14 and were subject to income tax NICs and, or received HMRC benefits at some point in 2013/14 – the latest year available. They found 1.0 million such individuals were from the EEA". (Annex 3). This is of course a snapshot, but suggests that the 739,000 is an underestimate.

b) Table 1, Annex 2, uses DWP data and divides people into "short durations" (30-37%), "longer durations" (43-52%), and "indeterminate durations" (17-25%); the latter "would be classified as long-term but ..there is an element of uncertainty". That is, the number of those who registered who had a "longer term interaction" could have been in the range of perhaps 650,000 to 1.1 million. Of course, some long-term migrants (eg children, the inactive, or those working in the black economy) will have no interactions at all. Again, this suggests that the 739,000 is probably somewhat understated

Taken together, the DWP and HMRC data suggests to me that there was a degree of undercounting of long-term migration from EU member states. I note ONS disagree with this view, and I respect their independent professional view. There are no clear "right answers" here. But my judgement is as stated here.

4. The 1 million number produced by HMRC is also relevant to the Prime Minister's claim, back in November, that more than 40 percent of recently arrived EEA nationals were "supported by the benefit system". A DWP publication at the time stated;

"This represents between 195,000 and 235,000 (numerator) EEA Nationals in recently arrived households claiming benefits or tax credits at March 2013 out of 525,000 (denominator) recently arrived EEA nationals resident in the UK at March 2013."

Today's release shows that the denominator should have been something closer to the HMRC 1 million figure. The Prime Minister's numbers were wrong, as I said at the time, and he should now withdraw and correct them.

