



BRIEFING

Scotland: Census Profile

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This briefing summarises key statistics from the 2011 Census for Scotland and its constituent council areas. The briefing provides information about population levels; the number and population share of foreign-born residents; as well as countries of origin, year of arrival and main languages. Finally, the briefing compares Scotland to England and Wales, and the 2001 and 2011 Census results.

Key points

In 2011, the total usual resident population of Scotland stood at an estimated 5,295,403 resident, 7% of whom (369,284 residents) were born outside of the UK.

The Edinburgh council area had the highest number (75,696) of non-UK born residents in the region, while Aberdeen council area had highest population share (16%) in the region.

Between 2001 and 2011, the largest numerical increase in the non-UK born population took place in Glasgow City (39,917 additional residents), but the highest percentage increase occurred in Aberdeen City (167.2% increase).

Residents born in Poland represent the most numerous non-UK born group in Scotland (55,231), followed by residents born in India (23,489) and Ireland (22,952).

Nearly two thirds (63%) of non-UK born persons resident in Scotland in 2011 arrived in the country since 2001.

In 2011, Scotland had a smaller non-UK born share within its local population (7%) than England & Wales (13%). However, the non-UK born population increased at a higher rate in Scotland (by 93%) than in England and Wales (by 62%) between 2001 and 2011.

Understanding the evidence

The census is the most complete source of information about the population. It is particularly useful for obtaining population estimates for small geographical areas and information on the characteristics of such a population. Other sources of information on population characteristics in the UK such as the Labour Force Survey have large margins of error at the local level, because they are based on survey data and rely on a limited number of observations at the local level. The census is based on a count of people and households, with efforts to include everyone. The latest UK censuses were conducted during 2011, with 27 March 2011 as the official census day of record. In England and Wales the census was conducted by the Office for National Statistics (ONS), the National Records of Scotland (NRS) in Scotland, and the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) in Northern Ireland.

When analysing the nature of migration, defining who counts as a migrant is of crucial importance. Yet there is no consensus on a single definition of a 'migrant' ([LINK: Briefing: Who counts as a migrant](#)). Different datasets—and analyses from these datasets—use a variety of definitions of 'migrant,' including (1) country of birth, (2) nationality, (3) passports held, (4) length of stay, (5) reason for migration and (6) being subject to immigration controls. For example, people who are foreign born are not all foreign nationals; likewise, some foreign nationals may have lived in the UK for decades while others reside in the UK for only a year. Perhaps most importantly, not all non-UK born UK residents are subject to immigration control. Some are the children born abroad of UK national parent(s)—e.g. service personnel. Others are long-term residents who have acquired UK citizenship. EEA nationals are also not subject to immigration control, yet are often considered migrants in public debate and in net migration counts. This includes EEA nationals born outside the EEA. When using data on country of birth, it is important to note that many of those included in the foreign-born category will have UK citizenship.

The data presented include statistics for usual residents only. Usual residents are defined as anyone in the UK on census day who had stayed or intended to stay in the UK for 12 months or more (or were outside the UK but had a permanent UK address and intended to stay outside the UK for less than 12 months). In terms of countries of birth, data are available for all countries for Scotland as a whole. At the local level, however, data have not been provided for all countries of origin. Instead, the NRS has identified 33 key countries of origin most common at the national level, and all local analyses of the most frequent countries of origin only refer to the most frequent countries out of the 33 key countries of origin. As such, particularly at the local level, there may be other more numerous non-UK born groups that the current census release does not include.

In 2011, the total usual resident population of Scotland stood at an estimated 5,295,403 resident, 7% of whom (369,284 residents) were born outside of the UK (see Table 1)

In 2011, the total usual resident population of Scotland stood at an estimated 5,295,403 residents. Of this total, 7% (369,284 residents) were born outside of the UK (see Table 1). Between 2001 and 2011, the non-UK born population increased by 177,713 residents; this represents an increase of 92.8% within the decade. As a percentage of total usual residents, the non-UK born population's share increased by 3.2 percentage points from 3.8% in 2001 to 7% in 2011; this represents an increase of 84.3%.

Table 1 – Key census statistics for Scotland

	2001	2011	Change (%)
Total usual resident population	5,062,011	5,295,403	+4.6%
UK-born resident population	4,870,440	4,926,119	+1.1%
Scottish-born resident population	4,410,400	4,411,884	+0.03%
Non-UK born resident population	191,571	369,284	+92.8%
Non-UK born as share of the region's population	3.8%	7%	+84.3%
European-born	55,766	172,243	+167.7%
EU-born*	41,836	134,910	+222.5%
Accession countries since 2001		76,689	

Source: Scotland Census 2001 and 2011, NRS. Usual resident population. *Excludes UK and Ireland. Note that this is comparing the EU in 2001 and the EU in 2011, categories which include a different set of countries in the two census years.

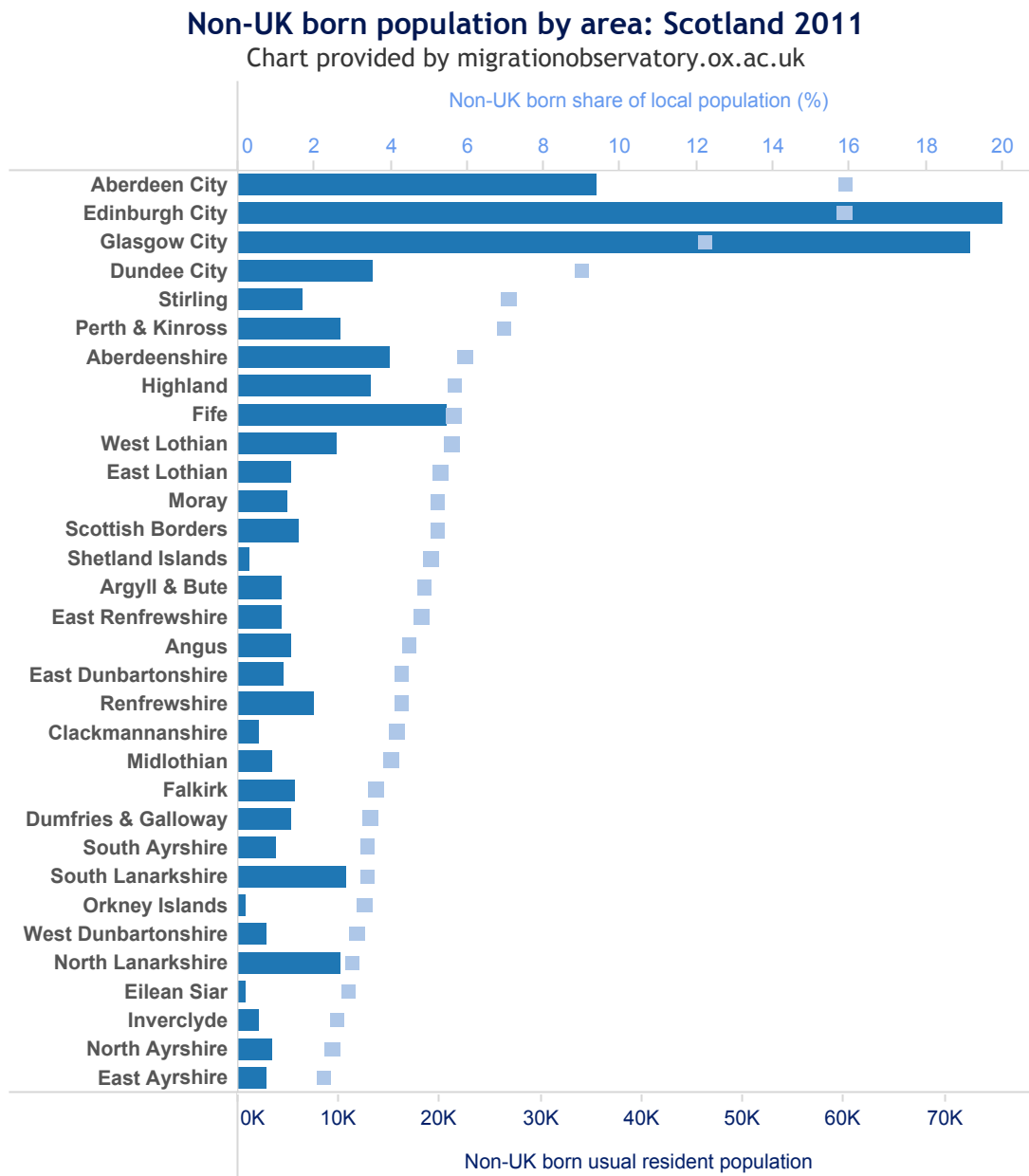
In 2011, the 134,910 EU-born residents of Scotland (excluding UK and Ireland) represented 36.5% of the total non-UK population. To compare, in England and Wales in 2011, the same statistic was 27.1%. The non-UK born population born in Europe (also excluding those born in Ireland) increased by 222.5% between 2001 and 2011. A large part of this increase will be accounted for by the influx of migrants from the EU Accession countries; in fact, 56.8% of the total non-UK (and non-Irish) EU-born population of Scotland in 2011 was accounted for by residents born in countries that have joined the EU since 2001.

The Edinburgh council area had the highest number (75,696) of non-UK born residents in the region, while Aberdeen council area had highest population share (16%) in the region

As can be seen from Figure 1, the council area with the largest non-UK born population in 2011 was Edinburgh City, with 75,696 non-UK born usual residents, representing 15.8% of the local population. However, in terms of the foreign-born percentage of the local population, Aberdeen City comes out as the top locality with a slightly higher 15.9% non-UK born population share.

Conversely, the non-UK born population was the smallest in the Orkney Islands, with 709 foreign-born residents in 2011. However, the Orkney Islands council area has the overall smallest population within Scotland, and its non-UK born residents represent 3% of the local population. This measure was lowest in East Ayrshire, where the 2,774 non-UK born residents accounted for 2% of the local population.

Figure 1



Source: Scotland Census 2011, National Records of Scotland. Usual resident population.

■ Non-UK born population ■ Non-UK born share of local populati..

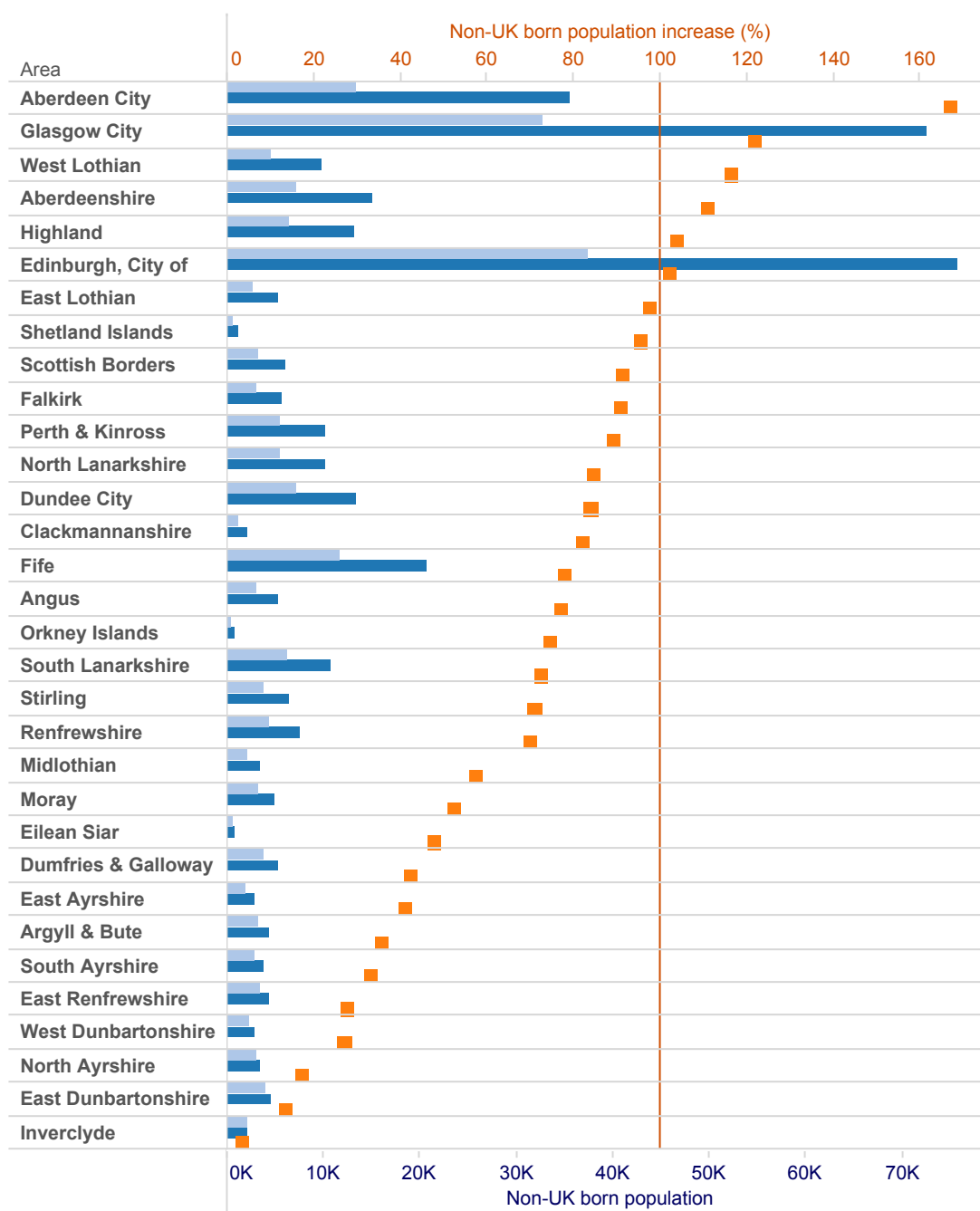
Between 2001 and 2011, the largest numerical increase in the non-UK born population took place in Glasgow City (39,917 additional residents), but the highest percentage increase occurred in Aberdeen City (167.2% increase)

Between 2001 and 2011, the non-UK born population increased in each council area in Scotland, but to varying degrees and at different speeds (see Figure 2a). The largest numerical increase took place in Glasgow City, with an increase of 39,917 non-UK born residents, from 32,690 in 2001 to 72,607 in 2011. This represents an increase of 122% in the non-UK born population. However, the highest percentage increase took place in Aberdeen City, where the non-UK born population grew by 167% in the intercensal period; from 13,264 in 2001 to 35,436 in 2011.

Figure 2a

Non-UK born residents: Scotland 2001 and 2011

Chart provided by migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk



Source: Scotland Census 2011, National Records of Scotland. Usual resident population.

■ 2001 ■ 2011 ■ Increase (%)

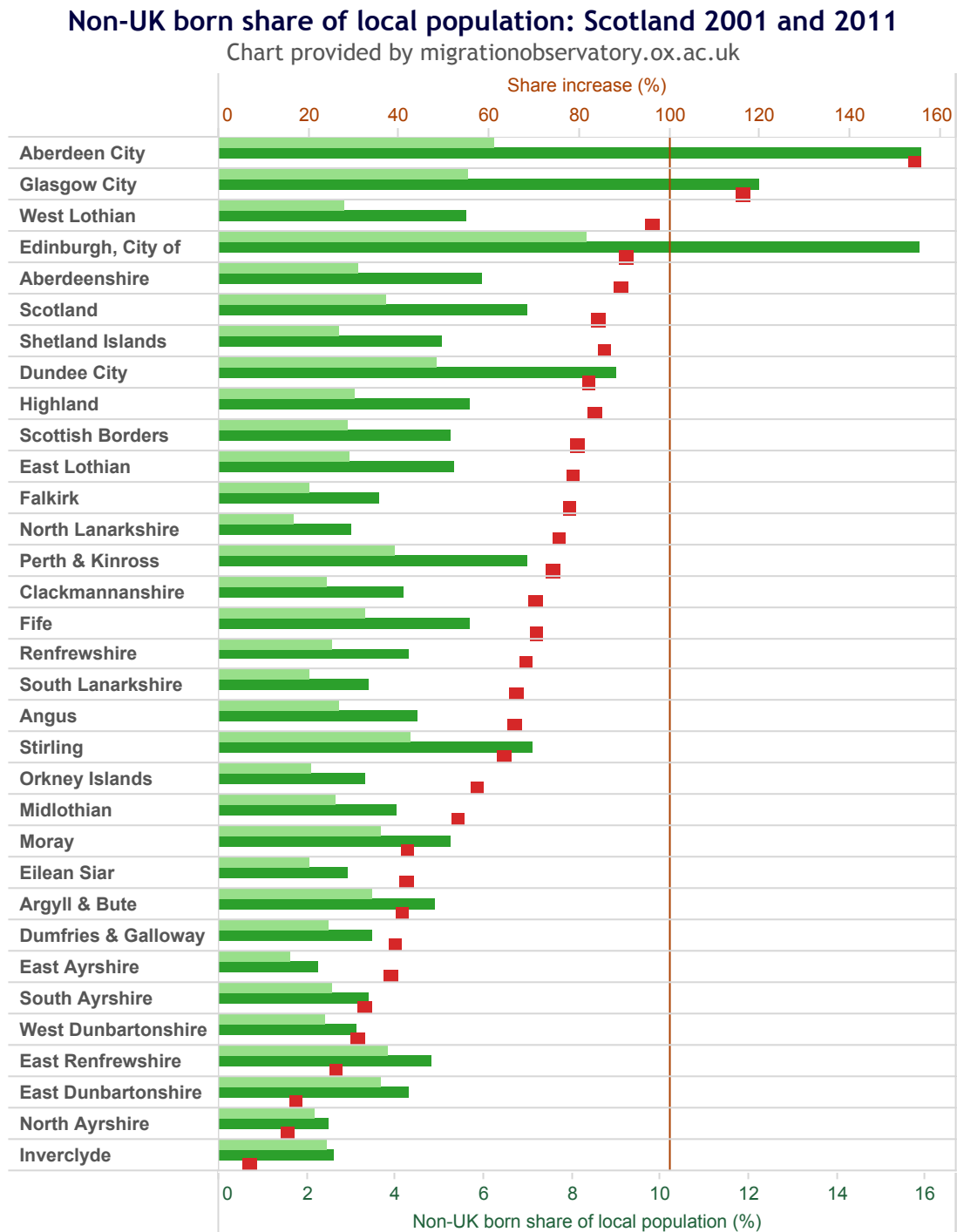
Conversely, the smallest numerical increase in the non-UK born population occurred in Inverclyde, where the non-UK born population grew by estimated 72 residents. This amounts to a 3.5% increase between 2001 and 2011, the lowest for all the Scottish council areas.

The total non-UK born share of the local population increased the most in Aberdeen (by 154%), from 6% in 2001 to 16% in 2011

As stated previously, the proportion of non-UK born residents in the resident population increased by 84% between 2001 and 2011. However, the rate of the increase differed in various council areas. As shown in Figure 2b, between

2001 and 2011, the foreign-born population share increased the most in Aberdeen City; while non-UK born residents made up 6.3% of the local population in 2001, this rose to 15.9% in 2011, representing a share increase of 154%. This was followed by Glasgow City, where the foreign-born share increased by 116% from 5.7% in 2001 to 12.3% in 2011.

Figure 2b



Source: Scotland Census 2011, National Records of Scotland. Usual resident population.

■ Share 2001
 ■ Share 2011
 ■ Share increase (%)

At the same time, the council area that experienced the lowest increase in the population share of foreign-born residents was Inverclyde, where the proportion increased by 15.5% from 2.2% in 2001 to 2.5% in 2011. The

council area of North Ayrshire had the second lowest increase; the foreign-born population share increased by 17% from 3.7% in 2001 to 4.3% in 2011.

Residents born in Poland represent the most numerous non-UK born group in Scotland (55,231), followed by residents born in India (23,489) and Ireland (22,952)

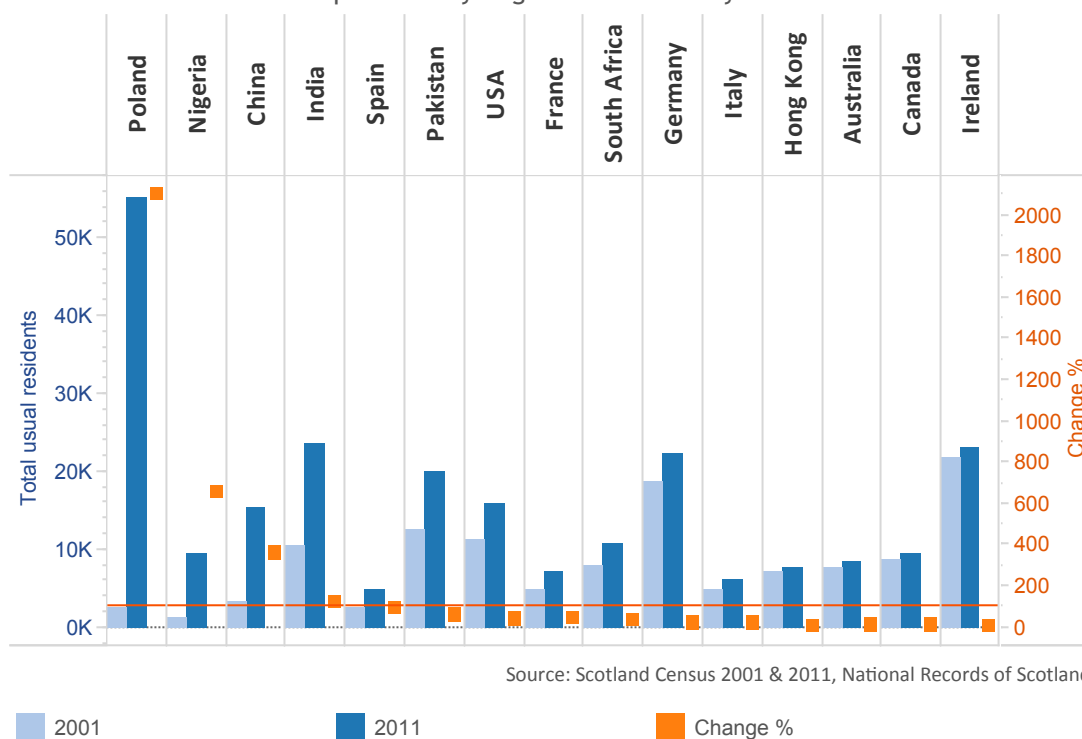
In 2011, the top country of birth of foreign-born residents in Scotland was Poland (55,231 residents), followed by India (23,489 residents) and the Republic of Ireland (22,952 residents). Figure 3 shows the top 15 countries of birth for non-UK born residents in 2011, and the change in population numbers for each country of birth since 2001.

The largest numerical as well as proportional increase occurred for the Polish-born group; the number of residents of Polish birth increased by 52,726 persons (from 2,505 in 2001 to 55,231 in 2011). This represents an increase of 2,105%, moving Poland to 1st place in 2011 from 18th in 2001 in terms of the top countries of birth of non-UK born residents living in Scotland. In 2011, Polish-born residents represented 15% of the total non-UK born population residing in Scotland (this was 1.3% in 2001)

Figure 3

Top 15 non-UK countries of birth in 2011 and change on 2001: Scotland 2001 & 2011

Chart provided by migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk



Source: Scotland Census 2001 & 2011, National Records of Scotland.

The second largest numerical increase occurred for the Indian-born group, with the number of non-UK born residents growing by 12,966 residents from 10,523 in 2001 to 23,489 in 2011. This represents an increase of 123%, the fourth highest in the region. In terms of the percentage increase, the Nigerian-born group comes out second after the Polish-born group, as it increased its numbers by about 655% from 1,253 residents in 2001 to 9,458 residents in 2011. At the same time, the lowest percentage increase between 2001 and 2011 took place for the Irish-born group; the Irish-born resident population increased by 5% in the decade, from the 21,774 residents born in the Republic of Ireland in 2001 to 23,489 residents in 2011.

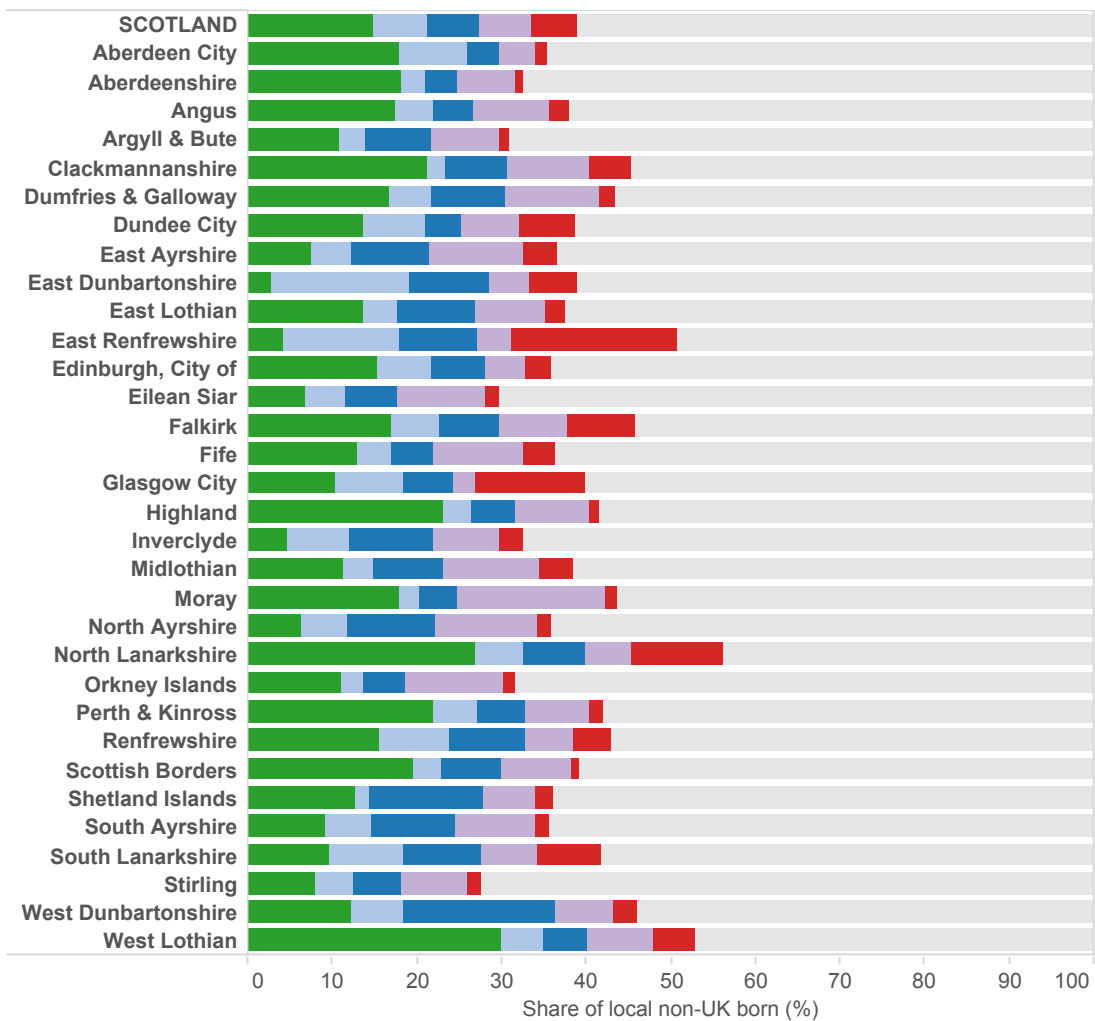
Polish-born residents represented the highest percentage of non-UK born residents in the West Lothian council area (30%), while for Indian-born residents this was highest in East Dunbartonshire (16%)

Moreover, the top non-UK born groups were not evenly distributed across Scotland. Figure 4 shows the share of local non-UK born population represented by each of the top 5 non-UK born groups in the region. It is important to note that data have only been released for the 33 most numerous countries of birth for Scotland as a whole. As such, at the local level there may be other countries represented among the top 5.

Figure 4

Top 5 non-UK born groups as share of local non-UK born residents: Scotland 2011

Chart provided by migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk



Source: Scotland Census 2011, National Records of Scotland.

Note: These 10 countries of origin are the most numerous foreign-born groups in the region out of the 33 countries of birth for which data was released. As such, these are not necessarily the most numerous non-UK born groups at the local level.

Country of birth

- Poland
- India
- Ireland
- Germany
- Pakistan
- Other

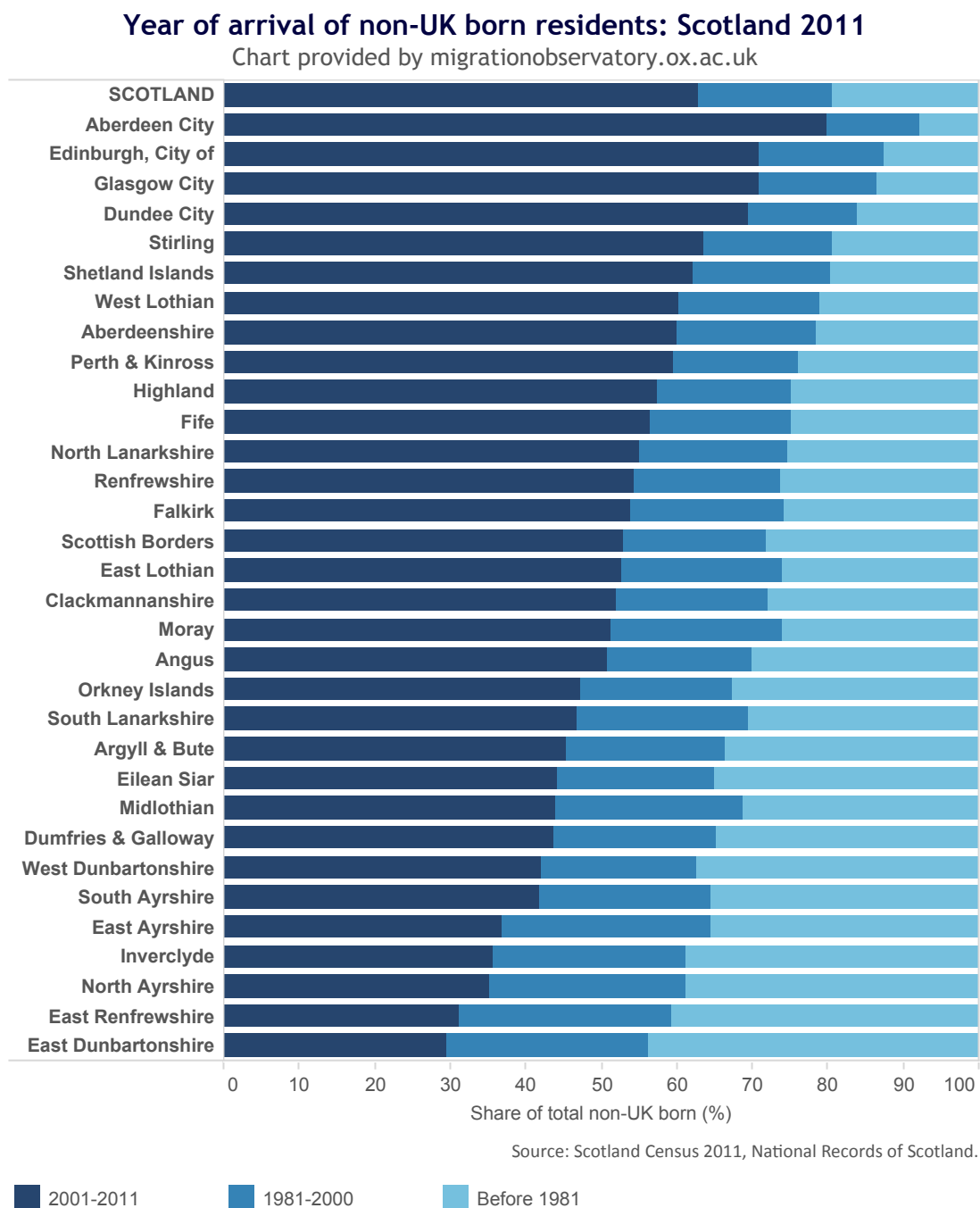
It is useful to illustrate the uneven distribution of foreign-born groups by focusing on the two most populous in Scotland: the Polish-born and Indian-born groups. Residents born in Poland represent nearly 15% of the foreign-born resident population of Scotland. In terms of individual council areas, however, this share is the highest in West Lothian (30%), while lowest in East Dunbartonshire (3%). While the Indian-born group appears to be more evenly

distributed across the region, there is still variation. Representing 6% of foreign-born residents in Scotland, in East Dunbartonshire Indian-born residents make up 16% of the local non-UK born, while 1.5% in the Shetland Islands.

Nearly two thirds (63%) of non-UK born persons resident in Scotland in 2011 arrived in the country since 2001

As shown in Figure 5, nearly two thirds (63%) of non-UK born persons resident in Scotland in 2011 arrived in the country since 2001. However, this share varied significantly depending on the council area. Aberdeen city had the highest share of more recent migrants; in 2011, 80% of its foreign-born residents had arrived in the country since 2001. On the other hand, this percentage was lowest in East Dunbartonshire, with 70% of non-UK born residents having arrived before 2001, and 44% before 1981.

Figure 5



Of the 5,118, 223 usual residents aged 3 and over, 1.2% (62,128) did not speak English well and 0.2% (11,412) did not speak English at all

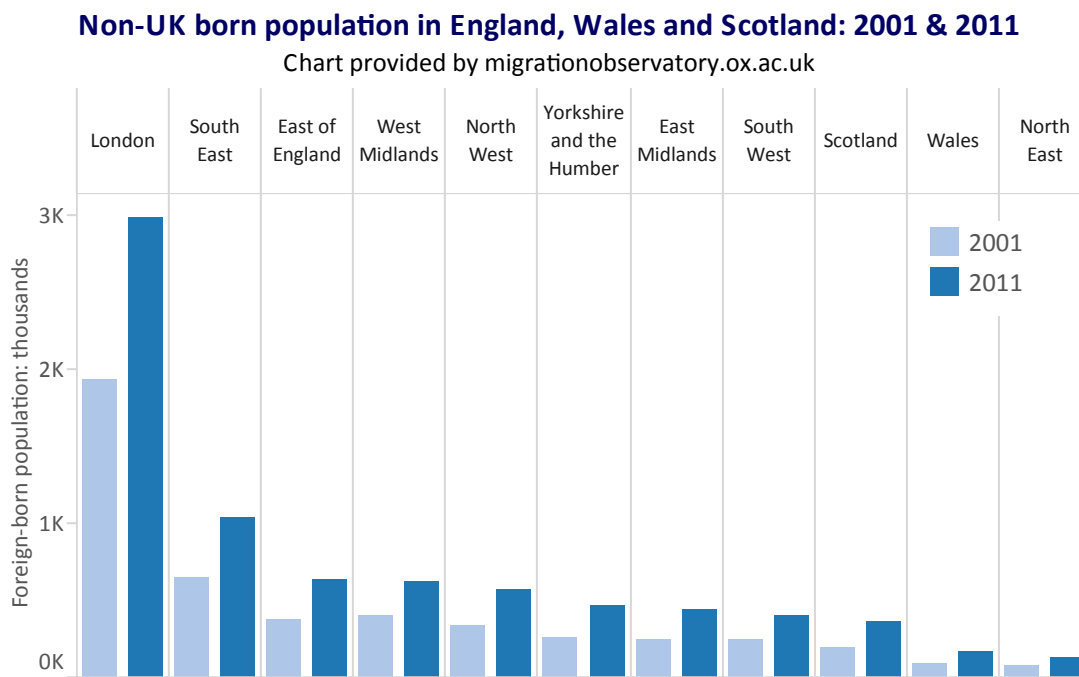
Of the 5,118, 223 usual residents aged 3 and over, 1.2% (62,128) did not speak English well and 0.2% (11,412) did not speak English at all. English proficiency was the highest in Eilean Siar, where 0.7% of the local population above 3 years of age could not speak English well or at all. Conversely, this was lowest in Glasgow City, with 2.7% of local residents not speaking English well or at all in 2011.

While there are currently limited data available regarding main spoken language, it is worth noting that in 2011, there were 284,352 usual residents in Scotland who spoke a language other than English, Scots, Gaelic or British Sign Language at home, representing 6% of all residents aged 3 and over. Of those residents, 19% (54,186) spoke Polish at home.

In 2011, Scotland had a smaller non-UK born share within its local population (7%) than England & Wales (13%). However, the non-UK born population increased at a higher rate in Scotland (by 93%) than in England and Wales (by 62%) between 2001 and 2011

In 2011, Scotland had a smaller non-UK born share within its local population than England & Wales; while 7% of the resident population of Scotland was born outside of the UK, this was 13% for England and Wales. However, the non-UK born population increased at a higher rate in Scotland than in England and Wales; between 2001 and 2011, it increased in Scotland by 93%, while in England and Wales as a whole it rose by 62%.

Figure 6



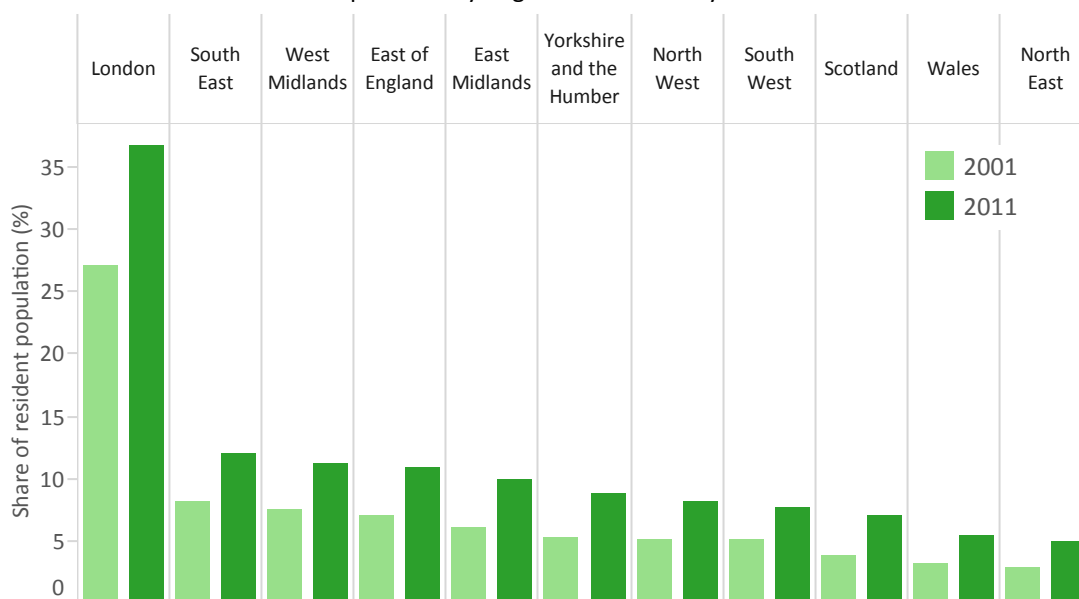
Source: England & Wales Census, ONS & Scotland Census, NRS 2001 and 2011. Usual resident population.

Figure 6 shows a comparison of the numbers of non-UK born residents between Scotland, Wales and the regions of England. In both 2001 and 2011, Scotland had the third smallest number of non-UK born residents out of these 11 countries and regions. This is also reflected when looking at the percentage non-UK born residents constitute of the total resident population; in both 2001 and 2011, Scotland also occupied the third position (see Figure 7).

Figure 7

Non-UK born population share in England, Wales and Scotland: 2001 & 2011

Chart provided by migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk



Source: England & Wales Census, ONS & Scotland Census, NRS 2001 and 2011. Usual resident population.

Evidence gaps and limitations

There are two main limitations of the census. Firstly, it is typically only conducted every 10 years. Therefore, other sources of information are important in order to update the information between censuses. Secondly, there are only a limited number of questions included in the census. Therefore, sources of information on the broader characteristics of the population can also complement the census information.

While the census aims to include the entire population, it does have a certain margin of error. For Scotland as a whole, the relative confidence interval at the 95% confidence level published by the NRS was 0.44% (23,300 people more or less than the estimate). To give an example at the more local level, for Aberdeen’s usually resident population, the relative confidence interval at the 95% level was 2.61%, suggesting a 95% probability that the true value of the population lies somewhere between 216,978 and 228,608 persons. Specific confidence intervals are not currently available for census data relating to country of birth.

Thanks to Sandy Taylor for helpful comments and suggestions on this briefing.

Related material

- Migration Observatory Briefing – Geographical Distribution and Characteristics of Long-Term International Flows to the UK www.migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/briefings/geographical-distribution-and-characteristics-long-term-international-migration-flows-uk
- Migration Observatory briefing – Migrants in the UK: An Overview www.migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/briefings/migrants-uk-overview

Further information

- Census Project Page www.migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/projects/census



The Migration Observatory

Based at the Centre on Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS) at the University of Oxford, the Migration Observatory provides independent, authoritative, evidence-based analysis of data on migration and migrants in the UK, to inform media, public and policy debates, and to generate high quality research on international migration and public policy issues. The Observatory’s analysis involves experts from a wide range of disciplines and departments at the University of Oxford.



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