
Downloaded from: http://insight.cumbria.ac.uk/id/eprint/3673/

Usage of any items from the University of Cumbria’s institutional repository ‘Insight’ must conform to the following fair usage guidelines.

Any item and its associated metadata held in the University of Cumbria’s institutional repository Insight (unless stated otherwise on the metadata record) may be copied, displayed or performed, and stored in line with the JISC fair dealing guidelines (available here) for educational and not-for-profit activities provided that

- the authors, title and full bibliographic details of the item are cited clearly when any part of the work is referred to verbally or in the written form
  - a hyperlink/URL to the original Insight record of that item is included in any citations of the work
- the content is not changed in any way
- all files required for usage of the item are kept together with the main item file.

You may not

- sell any part of an item
- refer to any part of an item without citation
- amend any item or contextualise it in a way that will impugn the creator’s reputation
- remove or alter the copyright statement on an item.

The full policy can be found here. Alternatively contact the University of Cumbria Repository Editor by emailing insight@cumbria.ac.uk.
The contribution of migrants

In the Brexit debate, much has been said about the significance of migrant labour for businesses across the UK and concerns have been expressed surrounding this source of workers in future. In Cumbria, the county’s industrial structure shows an obvious dependence on some of those sectors that are known to be more reliant on EU migrant workers.

National data for 2015 shows that the share of UK workforce accounted for by EU migrants is above the UK average (6.6 per cent) in accommodation & food (13 per cent), manufacturing (10 per cent), general administration (10 per cent) and transport/storage (8 per cent) which are all significant sectors of employment in Cumbria.

While there is still no accurate data on the number of EU migrants at local levels, we do know the number of new entrants to the labour market in Cumbria from data on registrations for National Insurance (NINos) provided by the UK Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). This shows us the number of new registration involving EU nationals living at an address in Cumbria at the time of registration.

This data is not ideal – we do not know if these workers remain in Cumbria, subsequently move to other parts of the UK or return home. Equally, it is possible that EU migrants registered in other areas of the UK subsequently move to Cumbria. However, at least this provides an indication of the overall scale of movement.

The data shows clear patterns of change over time related to EU expansion. There was a rapid rise after 2004 coinciding with the accession of new member states in Eastern Europe in May 2004 including Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and the Baltic States. A further peak occurred in 2007 following accession of Bulgaria and Romania. The rate of new registration fell between 2007 and 2009 but has since risen but more slowly. In the peak year of 2007 there were 2,335 registrations and in 2016, the figure was just under 1,941.

While we do not have detailed data on business dependence on this source of labour across different sectors and skills categories in Cumbria, the evidence available suggests that EU migrants make an important contribution to the Cumbrian labour market and some employers will have invested much resource in their training and development. It is likely that retention of existing EU migrants in the workforce will be an important consideration for many firms in the county as the UK enters negotiation with the EU on Brexit.