The EU refugee 'crisis' and implications for the UK

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Presentation at the Radical Statistics 2016 Conference 'Statistics of crisis in UK and EU' held in York.

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1. Introduction
How does the EU refugee 'crisis' affect us here in the UK? Or to make the question more relatable, how does it affect our local areas, areas that you and I live in; places like York (the venue for the 2016 Radical Statistics conference)? This paper looks at how far we can answer these questions using the available data on migration, identifies important gaps in this information and suggests how they can be filled and complemented. The paper concludes with a challenge: to consider balancing our thirst for migration data against the potentially negative - or even apparently benign - impacts of its use in relation to vulnerable people.

Before launching into the main body of the paper, I should reflect that I am using the term refugee 'crisis' hesitantly, having been asked to discuss this topic within the broader theme of crisis at the Radstats

conference. My hesitation relates to the risk of unnecessarily problematising refugees themselves. I am personally inclined to agree with researchers and others who instead suggest that there is a crisis of refugee *protection.*[1] For the remainder of this paper, I refer to the refugee crisis (for ease, without quotation marks) but with this understanding of it being a rather imperfect term.

1.1 How the refugee crisis affects us directly

There are several ways in which the EU migrant crisis could affect us, UK residents and citizens, directly, and this context is changing rapidly.[2]

- Back in September 2015, the then-Prime Minister David Cameron agreed that the UK would take up to 20 000 Syrian refugees over a five year period under what is known as the 'Syrian Resettlement Programme' or the 'Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme'. Syrian refugee resettlement is the most clear, direct way in which the refugee crisis is affecting the UK and local areas where we all live. The local response has been unprecedented, in terms of the way in which people throughout the country have been willing to sign up to this scheme. In Yorkshire and Humber every one of the 21 councils is taking part, agreeing to resettle small numbers of Syrians. The local media in York, for example, reported that 'York will welcome 60 Syrian refugees from January.'[3] Nothing like this has happened before in terms of a uniform political response to refugees across our region and across the country.

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[1] For further discussion of this point, see for example, Ansems de Vries, L., Carrera, S., and Guild, E. (2016) *Documenting the Migration Crisis in the Mediterranean: Spaces of Transit, Migration Management and Migrant Agency.* CEPS Paper in Liberty and Security in Europe, No. 94 www.ceps.eu/publications/documenting-migration-crisis-mediterranean-spaces-transit-migration-management-and and Crawley, H., Duvell, F., Sigona, N., McMahon, S. and Jones, K. (2016) *Unpacking a rapidly changing scenario: migration flows, routes and trajectories across the Mediterranean.* MEDMIG Research Brief No.1.
www.medmig.info/research-brief-01-unpacking-a-rapidly-changing-scenario/
[2] Indeed, some policies have developed between the time of giving this paper at the Radical Statistics conference in February 2016, and submitting a written version in late 2016. I have tried to incorporate these changes in order to not mislead the reader, while remaining a fairly faithful version of the paper that was delivered earlier.
[3] 'York will welcome 60 Syrian refugees from January', *York Press*, 16 November 2015 www.yorkpress.co.uk/news/14032902.York_will_welcome_60_Syrian_refugees_from_January/

- Second, the 'Jungle' in Calais was a makeshift migrant camp that became more prominent politically due to the refugee crisis. Numbers of residents fluctuated, but reached a reported 7000 individuals. Until it was demolished in October 2016, the presence of migrants there was a political issue about who had responsibility for dealing with the migrants there: the UK or France. Since then, 750 children who had been living in the Jungle and other vulnerable children with their families from outside the EU (under the 'Dubs amendment' of the Immigration Act 2016) were brought to the UK to be looked after by relatives here or local authorities around the country.[4] However, most of those who had been living in the Jungle were moved to accommodation centres around France, rather than coming to the UK, thus not affecting somewhere like York significantly.

Finally it is worth noting that there is an agreement among EU member states to relocate across Europe the well-documented large number of asylum-seekers and refugees who have arrived in Italy and Greece during the refugee crisis (and continue to do so). This relocation plan was designed to share the refugee 'burden' more fairly. Approximately 6000 individuals have been relocated around Europe so far, but around 30 000 are still in Greece and Italy awaiting relocation.[5] However, the UK has chosen not to participate in this relocation scheme, so the large numbers of individuals documented in the media haven't affected the UK or somewhere like York directly.

1.2   Resettling refugees in an existing migration context

Syrian refugee resettlement is the main direct way in which the refugee crisis is affecting local areas in the UK, but this is not taking place in a vacuum. When local areas are planning how to prepare for Syrian arrivals, there are a number of other factors to take into consideration. First, the refugee crisis has added another dimension to public opinion and debate on immigration. While a lot of the responses have been positive, there is a much longer-standing anti-immigration

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[4] During 2016, 30 unaccompanied children were brought to live in Yorkshire and Humber from Calais, and 50 children were reunited with family members in this same region. Source: 'The region's response to the refugee crisis in 2016', Migration Yorkshire press release 22.12.16 www.migrationyorkshire.org.uk/?page=NewsView&itemid=261

[5] 'Delivering on migration and border management: Commission reports on progress made under the European Agenda on Migration', *European Commission* press release, Brussels, 28 September 2016 http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-16-3183_en.htm

discourse. Public attitudes towards Syrian refugees are changeable. Local councils have to take into consideration issues like existing community tensions and levels of hate crime when they are looking at where to house the refugees, and whether school places can be found nearby.

Second, there is an existing context of asylum 'dispersal'. Asylum seekers who are waiting for a decision on their asylum claim for protection in the UK from the Home Office are housed in a number of places across the country. Places that participate in this dispersal system have this context to consider. York is not a dispersal area but is still affected because there are dispersal areas in neighbouring West Yorkshire. Once an asylum seeker has had a decision from the Home Office on their case, they are free to move wherever they want. There is a small refugee community in York, for example, because they will have moved here from nearby areas.

Third, there is a much broader context of wider migration in York, other migrant groups who live and work here, from different places and here for different reasons such as to study and to work. Planning for new arrivals needs to take account of the migrant population across the city and how that is changing. Planners also need to consider the impacts of that migration. This includes the capacity of local services to incorporate new arrivals in their client base. It also means taking account of the contributions made by migrants to local life such as refreshing the workforce amid an ageing population, filling skills shortages, bringing a renowned 'work ethic', new skills and perspectives to the workplace, language skills, and cultural diversity in areas such as music, food, sport, and celebrations.

2. What do we know about migration to local areas?

Local areas like York need to gather relevant data on migration in preparation for their changing population. We need to look at the different ways in migrants are categorised and how information is recorded and collected about them.

2.1 Defining and categorising migrants

There is a near-universal definition of a long-term migrant in official statistics: someone who moves to a new country for at least a year.

This is used by ONS[6] and by the UN.[7] The definition helpfully excludes people who are tourists or visitors who aren't intending to stay, so focus on the relatively permanent population of a local area. However, migrants are not a homogenous group. They are so diverse in terms of their demographics, backgrounds and needs that local services need more detailed and nuanced data than simply long-term migrants overall. Most (administrative) datasets don't provide information on migration like this.

There are various ways used to categorise and classify migrants. One way reflects individuals' country of origin and immigration status, because this affects their rights and entitlements to be able to work, study, apply for family reunion or to claim benefits and access services. Five key divisions according to immigration status[8] are as follows:

- EEA national: *A person from a member state of the European Economic Area*
- Third country national: *A person from outside the European Economic Area*
- Asylum seeker: *A person who has applied for protection from persecution under the UN Convention and is awaiting a decision from the Home Office on this application*
- Refugee: *A person given permission to stay in the UK as a result of a process which began with a claim and/or assessment for protection under the UN Convention*
- Undocumented migrant: *A person who does not have permission from the Home Office to be in the UK.*

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[6] ONS (2016) *Long-Term International Migration Quality and Methodology Information* pp.1-2 www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/qmis/longtermmigrationindicatorssuiteqmi

[7] United Nations Statistics Division webpage: 'International migration'. http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/sconcerns/migration/migrmethods.htm

[8] Within each of these categories are further subcategories which are not outlined here. For example, refugees are granted different forms of protection such as 'refugee status' or 'humanitarian protection', and have associated immigration statuses such as 'indefinite leave to remain'. For further discussion, see Integration up North (2015) *Understanding immigration status*. Introduction to Migration series, guidance booklet #3. Migration Yorkshire: Leeds. www.migrationyorkshire.org.uk/introductiontomigration-iun and Brown, D. (2008) *Status and category matter: refugee types, entitlements and integration support*. Yorkshire and Humber Regional Migration Partnership: Leeds. www.migrationyorkshire.org.uk/?page=researchdetails&itemid=216

Another way of categorising migrants is to look at their reason for migration. Examples include: workers (or economic migrants); students; people coming to join family who are already living in the UK; asylum seekers and refugees fleeing persecution; returning UK nationals; visitors/tourists; and short-term migrants (coming for study or work opportunities for less than a year).

2.2 What migration statistics are available?

There is no ideal migration dataset, none that captures these different migrant groups and purposes at a local level. *Figure 1* describes some of the main datasets available and what they cover.

Figure 1: Key migration datasets

There are **two key quarterly national migration publications** which provide official statistics and migration estimates at the national level, provided separately by ONS[9] and the Home Office.[10] They are published on the same day and present much of the same data but with a different focus. ONS' *Migration Statistics Quarterly Report* focuses on migration estimates and longer term trends, while the Home Office's *Immigration Statistics* has a focus on third country nationals, highlighting visa, asylum and refugee resettlement data.

An obvious starting point for local migration information is **Census data**. It gives data on 'non-UK born' residents and their country or region of birth. This is a good proxy for migrant residents at a local level, the stock of migrants. It isn't perfect for our purposes. It includes UK nationals for example, who were born abroad. It also includes people who were born abroad but have lived here for decades and have British citizenship – are they still classed as migrants? The census data, of course, gets outdated quickly and can only provide a snapshot of the population at one point in time. This is particularly pertinent when trying to measure migration, since migration occurs at a fast pace and on a daily basis.

We can also get **asylum statistics** for EU countries[11] that is comparative at a national level. It includes information on numbers in

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[9] ONS publishes the *Migration Statistics Quarterly Report* at: www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration
[10] The Home Offices publishes *Immigration Statistics* every quarter at: www.gov.uk/government/collections/immigration-statistics-quarterly-release
[11] Available each quarter from Eurostat (2016) *Asylum quarterly report* http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Asylum_quarterly_report http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Asylum_statistics

each country, numbers relative to the population and decision-making on asylum claims. There are UK asylum statistics[12] that are more detailed, providing snapshot information on asylum-seekers being supported in local authority areas while awaiting a decision on their asylum claim. There are very few statistics on those who have reached the end of the asylum process, either being accepted as refugees or refused and may be making an appeal or expected to leave the UK. Recently, the numbers of **resettled Syrian refugees** in local authority areas has become available in the *Immigration Statistics*.

There is also some data on **new arrivals from overseas**. These come from administrative datasets that tell us trends in certain groups of newcomers. A key source is national insurance numbers (NINOs) published by DWP[13] on new NINOs issued to foreign nationals each year; these are a good indicator of latest trends in arrivals from different countries, although they exclude children and people who are not working or claiming benefits. Another useful administrative dataset is GP registrations[14] which tells us about people whose last address was overseas, although it may lag behind true trends as many migrants may not register with a GP for some time after their arrival. There is also data on overseas students produced by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA).[15]

Having some data, albeit limited, can be very helpful for planning services. However, it is not always easy to understand or interpret the data well. Two examples are given in *Box 1*.

Box 1: Examples of potentially confusing migration data

A: The net migration debate

You will probably be familiar with the government target to reduce net migration (immigration minus emigration) from the hundreds of thousands to tens of thousands. This target has driven much policy in this area since 2010. When the quarterly national statistics are

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[12] Available each quarter from the Home Office's *Immigration Statistics* at:
www.gov.uk/government/collections/immigration-statistics-quarterly-release
[13] Available from Stat-Xplore https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/
[14] Available in the annual ONS *Local Area Migration Indicators* downloadable spreadsheet, alongside other migration data at a local authority level at:
www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration
[15] Available at: www.hesa.ac.uk/data-and-analysis/students

produced, people are keen to see how the government is doing in relation to the net migration target.

When the quarterly migration statistics were released in February 2016, it was announced that the net migration level was 323 000 (for the year ending September 2015).[16] Depending on which paper you read, you might have got the message that net migration had gone up or gone down. The Independent, The Sun, The Huffington Post, Sky News and Reuters all claimed an increase, while the BBC and The Guardian described a decrease.

Which was true? Well it depends on what figure you are comparing with. If you compared net migration with the figure for the same time last year (292 000), then it had gone up. However, if you compare the net migration figure with the most recently published data prior to this release (i.e. the figure for the year ending June 2015: 336 000) then it had gone down.[17] Ironically neither change was statistically significant, not to mention that the data is marked provisional when newly-released and published with a confidence interval (this time it was 323 000 with a 95% CI of +/-37 000[18]). This is an example of why the public may hear contradictory stories from the same dataset, which could reinforce existing disillusionment around migration policy and/or statistics.

B: Partial local asylum statistics

The national asylum data tells us, for example, about asylum applications, countries of origin and decision-making on claims. The *Immigration Statistics* report[19] tells us there were 38 900 applications for asylum in 2015, that Eritreans (not Syrians) were the top nationality, making 3700 applications in 2015, and that the rate of applications is growing fastest from Sudanese nationals. Changes in the top countries reflect the impact of the EU refugee crisis, for example the inclusion of Syria now in the top four countries, and the reducing place of Pakistan, which has been consistently high in previous years.

Local asylum data shows current numbers of supported asylum

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[16] ONS (2016) *Migration Statistics Quarterly Report: February 2016*
www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/bulletins/
migrationstatisticsquarterlyreport/february2016
[17] You can see this visually in the ONS *Migration Statistics Quarterly Report* (reference above). See on p.5:
Figure 1: Long-Term International Migration, UK, 2005 to 2015 (YE September 2015).
[18] Confidence intervals are not mentioned in the 'Main Points' summary in the *Migration Statistics Quarterly Report,* but are provided throughout the remainder of the report and with an explanation for readers (p.26).
[19] Home Office (2016) *Immigration Statistics, October to December 2015*
www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-statistics-october-to-december-2015

seekers around the country. They are unevenly spread, particularly concentrated in the North, reflecting the dispersal system to move asylum seekers away from London and the South-East.[20] York, for example, doesn't receive dispersed asylum seekers, but neighbouring areas of West Yorkshire do.

While this data is not particularly easy to find (hidden away in the downloadable data tables for the *Immigration Statistics* labelled 'Asylum data tables Vol.4' as Table as_16_q), it is also worth noting what it doesn't include. This data shows asylum seekers who are supported under Section 95 of the 1999 Immigration and Asylum Act, which is the legislation underpinning the support for individuals whose asylum claim is still being considered by the Home Office. There are a number of asylum seekers who aren't included in this category: refused asylum seekers (some supported formally, some not), asylum seekers in induction centres awaiting dispersal accommodation, and unaccompanied asylum-seeking children who are being looked after by the local authority. So the data only gives a partial picture of the asylum seekers in an area, and in this respect is misleading for those with little prior knowledge.

It is very difficult to plan services using this partial data. It is also snapshot data, only providing a picture for a particular date in time. So we might know the figure for today, but we don't know how many a local area has supported during the whole calendar year. Since asylum seekers wait different lengths of time for a decision on their application, someone who gets a decision quickly might only appear in these statistics once, while someone who is waiting for years for a decision will be counted in this dataset many times over. The published data doesn't tell us how many people have been granted refugee status and might present to housing services for example, or to JobCentre Plus.

2.3 Making sense of the different migration data and knowledge available

How do we make sense of these different datasets about different migrant groups all at once for a particular are like York? At a national level, the data suggests what we might expect of migration trends in the future. A continuing rise in EU arrivals and asylum applications is likely, and we know which countries of origin are dominant.

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[20] See this visually on a map of the UK in section 8 'Asylum' of the *Immigration Statistics*.

Correspondingly, we expect some decreases in non-EU migrants, due to policy measures taken to restrict their entry in order to meet the net migration target. However, closing some routes might simply lead to displacement of migrants to other routes, such as short-term study visas or the asylum route.

We also anticipate some things that won't change quickly, such as immigration from countries joining the EU (since candidate countries like Iceland or Serbia are not close to becoming full members). Policy direction has shifted in the last few years from changes to restrict migrant entry to reducing access to welfare by migrants who are already in the UK. This of course, will change once the UK has left the EU, but in the interim only uncertainty seems certain. Ironically leaving the EU could trigger *more* migration before the rules change, and make people already here more likely to settle here permanently than return to their countries of origin for fear of not being able to come back.

Migration data: an example for York[21]

The following figures provide examples of how different migration datasets for local places like York can be collated and presented to give an overview of trends. While most datasets measure different migrant groups or indicators, using different administrative units and for different dates, they combine to provide a narrative that weaves a story of migration to a locality which is more useful than relying on a single dataset. ONS provides estimated numbers of long-term immigrants arriving in local areas each year (*Figure 2*, for example, shows the estimate for York in 2015 was 2900 long-term immigrants, rounded to the nearest 100, and *Figure 3* presents the time series for York over the previous decade, labelled 'MYE Immig.').

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[21] All charts and maps in this paper were devised by Migration Yorkshire, with support from Edge Analytics.

Figure 2: Overview of latest migration figures for York[22]

Measure (latest year available)	York
Population (2015)	206 900
Biggest cause of population change	International migration
Non-British population (2015)	6% (13 000)
Born outside UK (2015)	10% (20 000)
Long-term migrant arrivals (official estimate 2015)	2900
Net migration estimate (2015)	1600
Short-term arrivals (2014)	730
Top countries of origin of arrivals (2015)	**Poland, China,** Romania, Spain

Figure 3: Three different measures of immigration to York over time
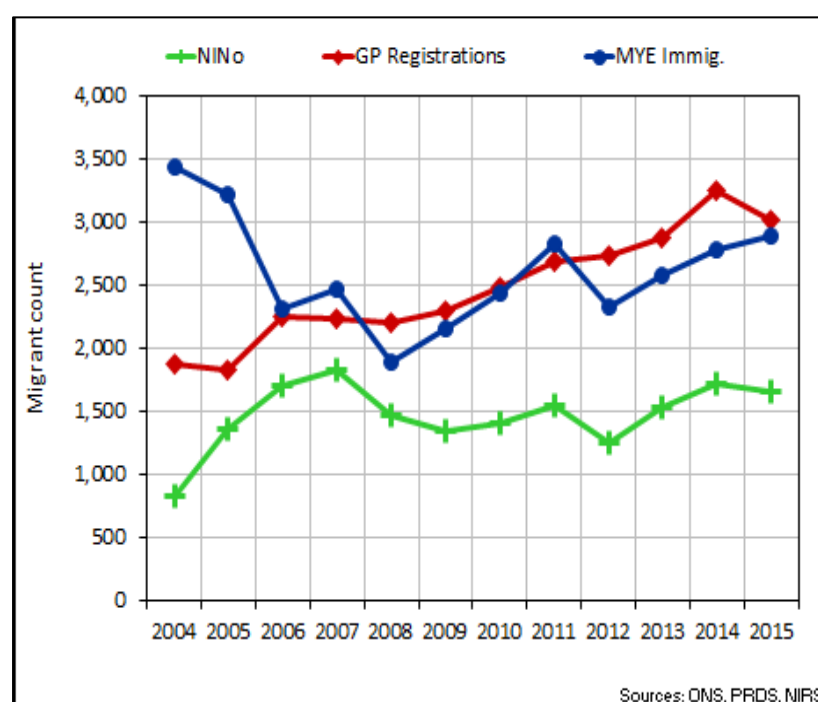
Figure 3 compares the official long-term immigration estimate from ONS (labelled as 'MYE Immig.') with GP registrations by people whose last residence was overseas ('GP Registrations') and the number of new national insurance number registrations by people from overseas ('NINO'). In York's case, the relatively high number of GP registrations but low NINO registrations is likely to reflect the prominent

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[22] All the data in this table comes from ONS, except for the final row (regarding top countries of origin) which is derived from National Insurance Numbers published by DWP.

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international student population, who may register for health services more frequently than they may seek work alongside their studies.

Figure 4: Geographical settlement by different migrant groups to York

a) Residents born in EU countries (2011 Census)

Area: York
Variable: Country of birth
Category: EU
Type: Counts

	Area Code	Area Name	Counts
1	E05001745	Acomb	176
2	E05001746	Bishopthorpe	57
3	E05001747	Clifton	681
4	E05001748	Derwent	52
5	E05001749	Dringhouses and Woodthor	225
6	E05001750	Fishergate	592
7	E05001751	Fulford	78
8	E05001752	Guildhall	549
9	E05001753	Haxby and Wigginton	188
10	E05001754	Heslington	301
11	E05001755	Heworth	545
12	E05001756	Heworth Without	51
13	E05001757	Holgate	466
14	E05001758	Hull Road	573
15	E05001759	Huntington and New Earswic	228
16	E05001760	Micklegate	631
17	E05001761	Osbaldwick	78
18	E05001762	Rural West York	144
19	E05001763	Skelton, Rawcliffe and Clifto	296
20	E05001764	Strensall	189
21	E05001765	Westfield	318
22	E05001766	Wheldrake	44

≥   <
44 - 171 [7]
171 - 299 [6]
299 - 426 [2]
426 - 554 [3]
554 - 681 [4]
Zero or no value

Note: 2011 Census data

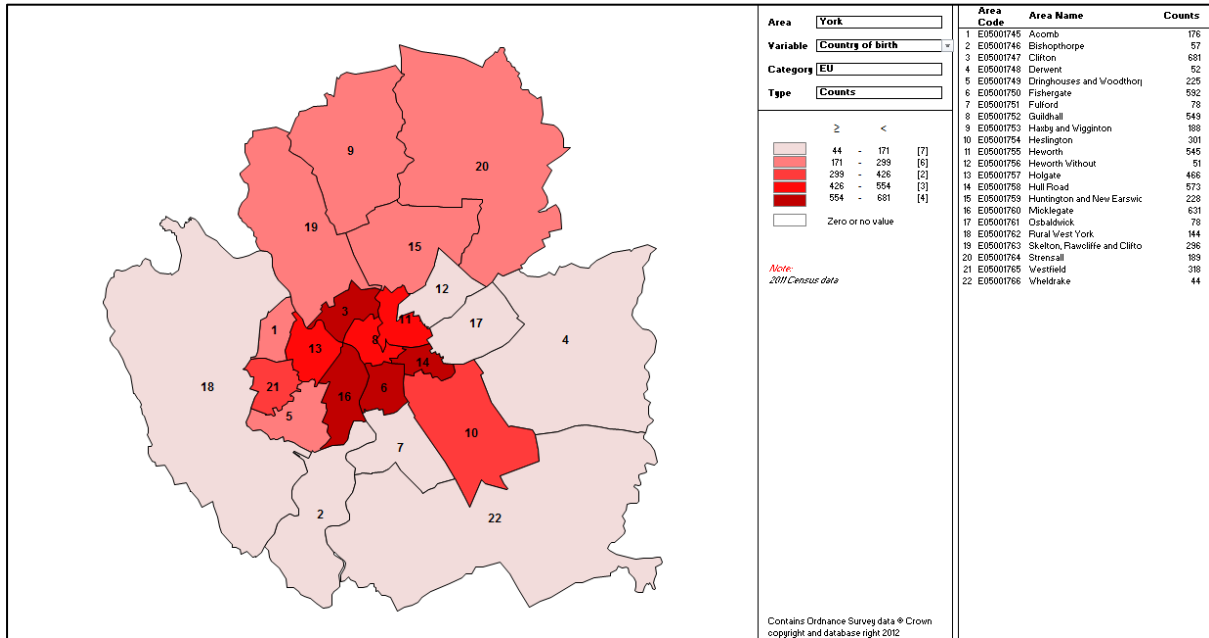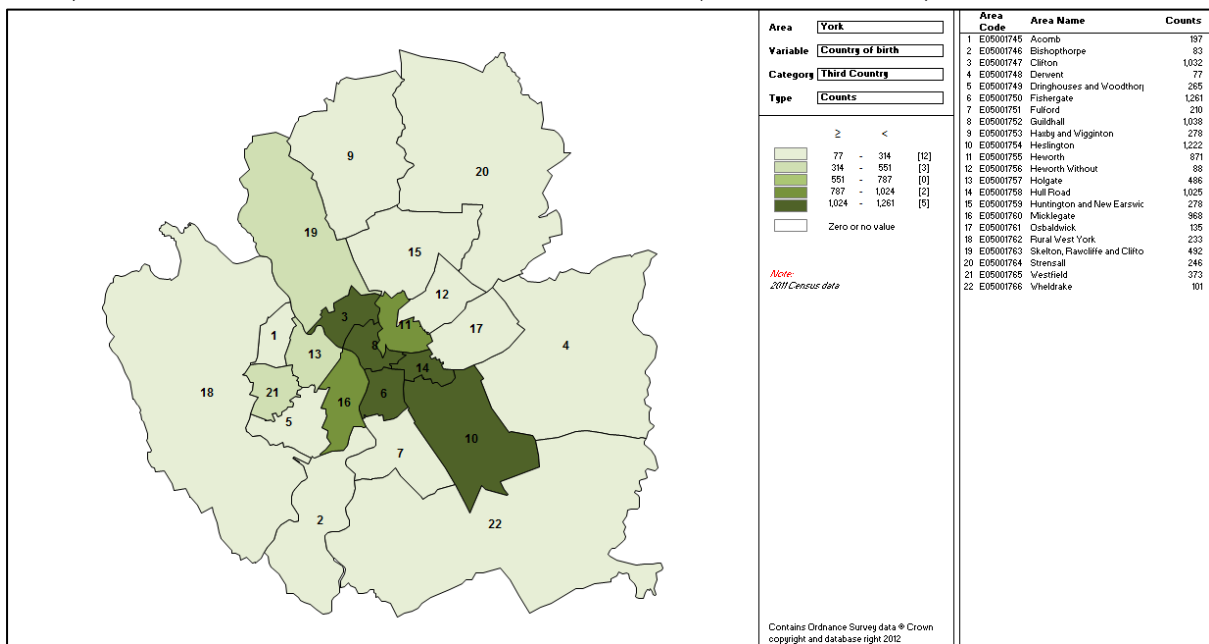Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2012

Figure 4a uses Census 2011 data on York residents who were born in an EU country (excluding the UK). This dataset is divided into wards, which are listed in the right hand column. York city centre largely falls into Guildhall ward, labelled as area 8 on the map.

b) Residents born in non-EU countries (2011 Census)

Area: York
Variable: Country of birth
Category: Third Country
Type: Counts

	Area Code	Area Name	Counts
1	E05001745	Acomb	197
2	E05001746	Bishopthorpe	83
3	E05001747	Clifton	1,032
4	E05001748	Derwent	77
5	E05001749	Dringhouses and Woodthor	265
6	E05001750	Fishergate	1,261
7	E05001751	Fulford	210
8	E05001752	Guildhall	1,038
9	E05001753	Haxby and Wigginton	278
10	E05001754	Heslington	1,222
11	E05001755	Heworth	871
12	E05001756	Heworth Without	88
13	E05001757	Holgate	486
14	E05001758	Hull Road	1,025
15	E05001759	Huntington and New Earswic	278
16	E05001760	Micklegate	968
17	E05001761	Osbaldwick	135
18	E05001762	Rural West York	233
19	E05001763	Skelton, Rawcliffe and Clifto	492
20	E05001764	Strensall	246
21	E05001765	Westfield	373
22	E05001766	Wheldrake	101

≥   <
77 - 314 [12]
314 - 551 [3]
551 - 787 [0]
787 - 1,024 [2]
1,024 - 1,261 [5]
Zero or no value

Note: 2011 Census data

Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2012

Similarly, *Figure 4b* is also based on Census 2011 data, regarding those who were born *outside* of the EU. Note that the range is greater in this map (reaching 1261) to the previous map (which only reaches 681), suggesting a much larger non-EU resident population in York which is found predominantly in the city centre and around the university area (areas 10 and 14 on the map). Therefore the two maps can only be compared in terms of overall settlement patterns, as their scales are different.

    c) *New arrivals from overseas (2015 National Insurance Number registrations)*
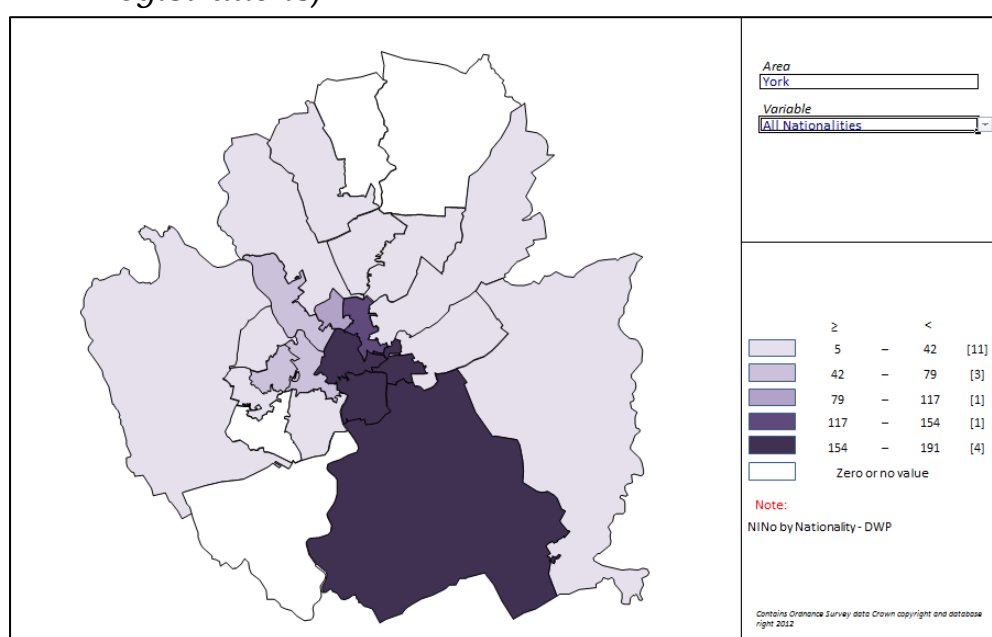
Figure 4c is based on new NINO registrations by overseas nationals during 2015, published by DWP. The dataset uses middle-layer super output areas (MSOA) as the administrative unit (that have reference codes rather than names that are meaningful to residents), thus making it difficult to compare directly to the wards used in the Census data. It also only reflects adults who are working or claiming benefits (these individuals would apply for a NINO), unlike Census data which is based purely on residence. However, all three maps show a similar pattern of geographical settlement.

Many people whose work relates directly or indirectly to migration issues, such as social workers, the police or elected members, don't have expertise in working with statistics. They don't have the time or resources to source all this different material on migration, put it together for their locality and interpret it in terms of service provision.

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At Migration Yorkshire we provide some information collating this for them.[23] There is also an ONS migration indicators spreadsheet that collates some of these figures at local authority level. Finally, some areas have developed local information systems or data observatories that provide one place to bring together their population data, such as Data North Yorkshire,[24] although they have been vulnerable to funding cuts.

3. What don't we know about migration to local areas?

One of the most common questions we get asked at Migration Yorkshire is: 'how many migrants are there in my area?' This is a great question because it allows us to look at the range of data available. The question also exposes the limitations of those datasets and the important gaps in our knowledge about certain migrant groups. Given those limitations, the questioner must also consider what exactly they mean by 'migrants'.

A key difficulty of using migration data is that while there is quite a lot of information at a national level, equivalent information is often unavailable at a local level. For example, we might know the number of people who arrived in the UK last year to join their spouse, but there is no data on where in the UK those people went on to live. This means it is impossible to ensure English language courses are available locally for that particular group of new arrivals, for example. There is almost no meaningful local data on unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, people who have been trafficked to the UK, particular ethnic groups such as migrant Roma or Kurds, refused asylum seekers, newly-recognised refugees, undocumented migrants, and migrants who have come to join family in the UK. Other difficulties include the problem of comparing datasets that define and measure differently, some are difficult to find, and some only provide partial data about a group. Finally, most datasets on migration look at the start of the migration story, new arrivals, rather than further down the line.

Given the inadequacies of migration data and the fact that data is always inevitably behind the pace of events, local knowledge can help fill some of these gaps in our knowledge. People on the ground, people

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[23] See www.migrationyorkshire.org.uk/statistics for downloadable statistics reports for a number of local authority areas in Yorkshire and Humber.
[24] https://datanorthyorkshire.org/

providing local services, usually know a lot more about the true migration picture in real time than the statistics can tell us. A good example of this for York is a 2010 study that supplemented official data with qualitative research to identify ethnic groups living in York.[25] This went beyond the narrow range of ethnicity categories in the Census which showed less than 7 minority groups living in York, feeding into the perception that York is a largely 'white' city. This research found over 90 different ethnic groups, speaking 78 different first languages.

4. What do we need to know about migration to local areas?
While we might bemoan the data we can't get, there is a good ethical question over whether we *ought* to be collecting data on refugees. People who have been through terrible situations and have fled their country will have been through a lot of questioning and want to live a quiet life, in peace, in the UK. Should we subject them to more scrutiny than they've already endured? In addition, local government has a responsibility to keep them safe and to promote cohesive communities, but if new refugees are identifiable (and in York, just 60 people over five years means only an average of 12 per year and therefore possibly quite identifiable) they can become targets of hate crime and community tensions.

With resettled refugees like Syrians there is no direct cost to the local area, as the costs of supporting them to settle here and integrate are borne by central government from the overseas aid budget (and in fact provide employment for local people involved in delivering support). Local services may not need to have any data on Syrian refugees, and local residents will not need detailed data to provide Syrian refugees with a welcome and to treat them with dignity.

An important implication of looking at the migration data for local services is in relation to migrants' levels of need and vulnerability. Data can imply that individuals are all the same, with the same impact, use of services, financial drain or gain. Of course people are different, with different motives, attributes and needs. Most migrants arrive in the UK and integrate without the support of anyone else

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[25] G. Craig et al (2010) *Mapping rapidly changing minority ethnic populations: a case study of York.* Joseph Rowntree Foundation: York. www.jrf.org.uk/report/mapping-rapidly-changing-minority-ethnic-populations-case-study-york

beyond their friends and family members. From a local service provider perspective, we have to consider who is the most vulnerable, and in need of support? Some migrants are more vulnerable than others. They might include: those who have had negative experiences (such as persecution or exploitation), unaccompanied or separated children, those who have been trafficked, the newest arrivals, those not permitted to work, undocumented migrants and destitute migrants.

One dilemma that faces us is having to balance the risks and benefits of sharing data. We have to be mindful of the risks of sharing some of the sensitive, unpublished data that the Home Office shares with stakeholders about asylum seekers and refugees in case it is misused or misinterpreted, or used in a way that might endanger particularly vulnerable people. Sometimes providing data keeps an issue in the news and the public eye which isn't very helpful in some respects. For example, the net migration target might reinforce distrust of statistics and can problematise certain groups such as international students. Dividing data along immigration status or country of origin can lead to simplified interpretations of 'deserving' or 'undeserving' migrant groups.

Conversely, there are opportunities inherent in using migration data. We want to promote the understanding of migration data to encourage a more informed debate on migration. We want to enable our elected members, our councillors to be able to talk confidently about migration in their wards and constituencies. We certainly need *local* data on migrants – or more importantly, *new arrivals*, since they have different needs and demands on services, while people who have been here for a longer time will use services in the same way as any other resident. We want to improve local services' understanding of migration data so that they target their resources most effectively, and be successful in applications for funding. Ultimately we want to bridge the gap between policy, practice, data and research in order to bring about better services and minimise tensions for the benefit of whole communities, not just migrants, but everyone who lives in our local areas.