



MIGRATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE EEA-WORKERS IN THE UK LABOUR MARKET

Consultation Response - GuildHE

Matthew Guest - GuildHE Senior Policy Advisor
Jack Fleming - GuildHE Project Officer

October 2017

SUMMARY

1. *[GuildHE](#) is an officially recognised representative body for UK Higher Education. Our members include universities, university colleges, further education colleges and specialist institutions from both the traditional and private (“for profit” and “not for profit”) sectors. Member institutions include some major providers in professional subject areas including art, design and media, music and the performing arts; agriculture and food; education; maritime; health and sports.*
2. *Throughout this consultation, we shall be responding primarily from the perspective of how migration affects the higher education sector. Our evidence should be read in conjunction with that submitted by Universities UK and the Universities and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA). Both provide further in-depth analysis and case examples.*

Our three major comments

3. We share the following three overarching comments together with Universities UK and UCEA:
 - a. EEA nationals are critical to the success and global competitiveness of UK universities (research, teaching, knowledge exchange). Furthermore, they are strategically important to specific subject areas in a variety of roles - whether as lab technicians or language specialists.
 - b. The impact of EEA nationals extends far beyond the universities and colleges in which they are employed – restricting future flows would have a negative impact on the UK.
 - c. Brexit is an opportunity to rethink the migration system for non-UK migration as a whole rather than just for EEA nationals.
4. We would be happy to facilitate the MAC in meeting our members to gather further evidence about the effects of current and potential migration systems and would be willing to act as a conduit for information between our members, the MAC and the Government.

INTRODUCTORY NOTES

Irish migration

1. Throughout the briefing note which accompanies this call for evidence, the Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) has assumed that free movement of people will continue across the Republic of Ireland/Northern Ireland land border.
2. This is the preferable position. The breakdown of the CTA could have severe implications for relations between the UK and Ireland, as well as the social order and stability of the island. That being said, it is hard to see how a CTA could be maintained between Ireland and the UK, without leaving open a 'backdoor' to other EEA migrants entering the UK.
3. With that in mind, it is far from certain that the CTA between the UK and Ireland will be maintained in its current form. The MAC should not assume that the CTA will remain unaltered after Brexit and, crucially, should not predicate recommendations for a future immigration system on that assumption.

Migration statistics

4. In the accompanying briefing note, the MAC made reference to data from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) International Passenger Survey (IPS), which records the flows of migrants entering and leaving the UK.
5. Recent work by the ONS and the Home Office has highlighted weakness in the data collected by the IPS.¹ The IPS can be useful for understanding overall migration flows, but cannot be used to reliably identify net migration of specific groups, such as workers, family members or students, and therefore is not useful for determining the impact of migration on the labour market: For example, Net EU migration of 133,000 in 2016 does not necessarily mean 133,000 EU citizens looking for employment.
6. Likewise, evidence submitted to the House of Commons Science and Technology Committee highlighted the importance of 'nuance' in discussion of migration.²
7. We would ask the MAC to bear these points in mind within migration discussions.

¹ Office for National Statistics, [What's happening with international student migration?](#) (August 2017)

² House of Commons Science and Technology Committee, [Leaving the EU: implications and opportunities for science and research \(Seventh Report of Session 2016–17\)](#), (November 2016)

EEA MIGRATION TRENDS

EEA migrant characteristics and sources of evidence for Higher Education

8. At present GuildHE institutions employ EEA nationals in a wide range of roles. Data on staff, including their nationality, average age, employment level and function, and contract type, are made available by the Higher Education Statistics Authority (HESA). HESA provide data on **29 GuildHE member institutions (out of a total 43)**, along with four institutions which are members of GuildHE's sub-associations, CREST and UKADIA.³
9. It should be noted that HESA groups nationality by EU rather than EEA Membership, however the difference between these two groups is trivial when considering the trends highlighted here.
10. It should also be pointed out that migration does not only affect the labour market. Recent analysis conducted by UCL's Centre for Research and Analysis of Migration (CReAM) has found that EU migrants arriving since 2000 have been net contributors to the UK economy.⁴ When compared with natives of the same age, gender composition, and education, recent immigrants are 39% less likely than natives to receive benefits. It is therefore important that a 'whole-economy' picture of the role of immigration be developed.
11. EU nationals employed at GuildHE institutions also tend to be younger than their UK counterparts, by around five years (see Figure 1). This lower average age means that EU employees are likely to place a lesser burden on public services than their UK counterparts.
12. Similarly, non-EU migrants employed at GuildHE member institutions are likely to be around five years younger than their UK colleagues. This suggests that the mobile, migrant populations are likely to have a lower average age in general, reducing their 'cost' to the economy.

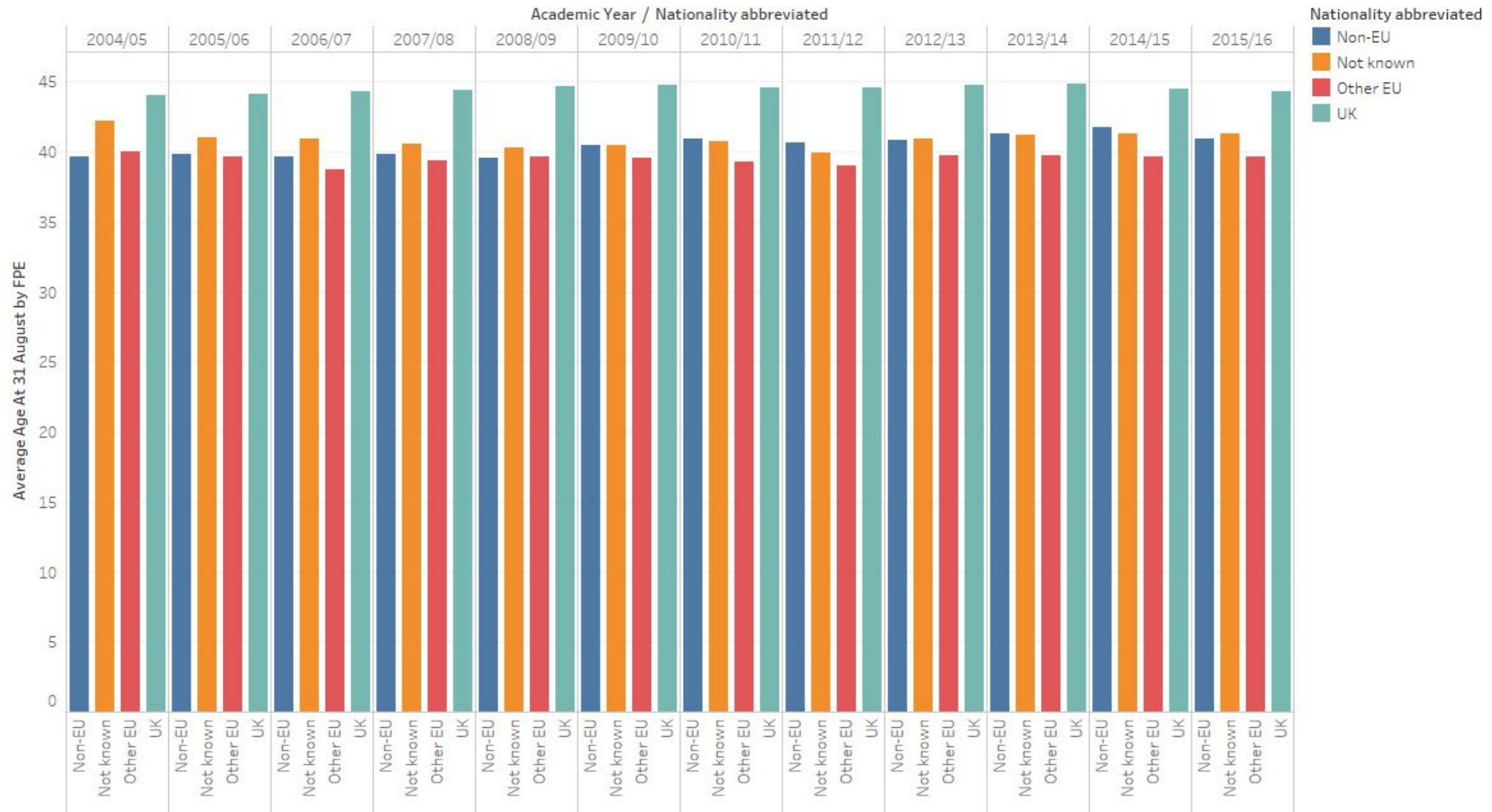
³ HESA Staff Record [2004/05 - 20015/16], copyright Higher Education Statistics Agency Limited.

Neither the Higher Education Statistics Agency Limited nor HESA Services Limited can accept responsibility for any inferences or conclusions derived by third parties from data or other information obtained from Heidi Plus.

A full list of institutions analysed can be found in Appendix 1.

⁴ Dustmann and Frattini, "[The Fiscal Effects of Immigration to the UK](#)", *Economic Journal*, Vol.124, Issue 580 (2014), pp.F593–F643

Figure 1. Institution Staff Age Profile

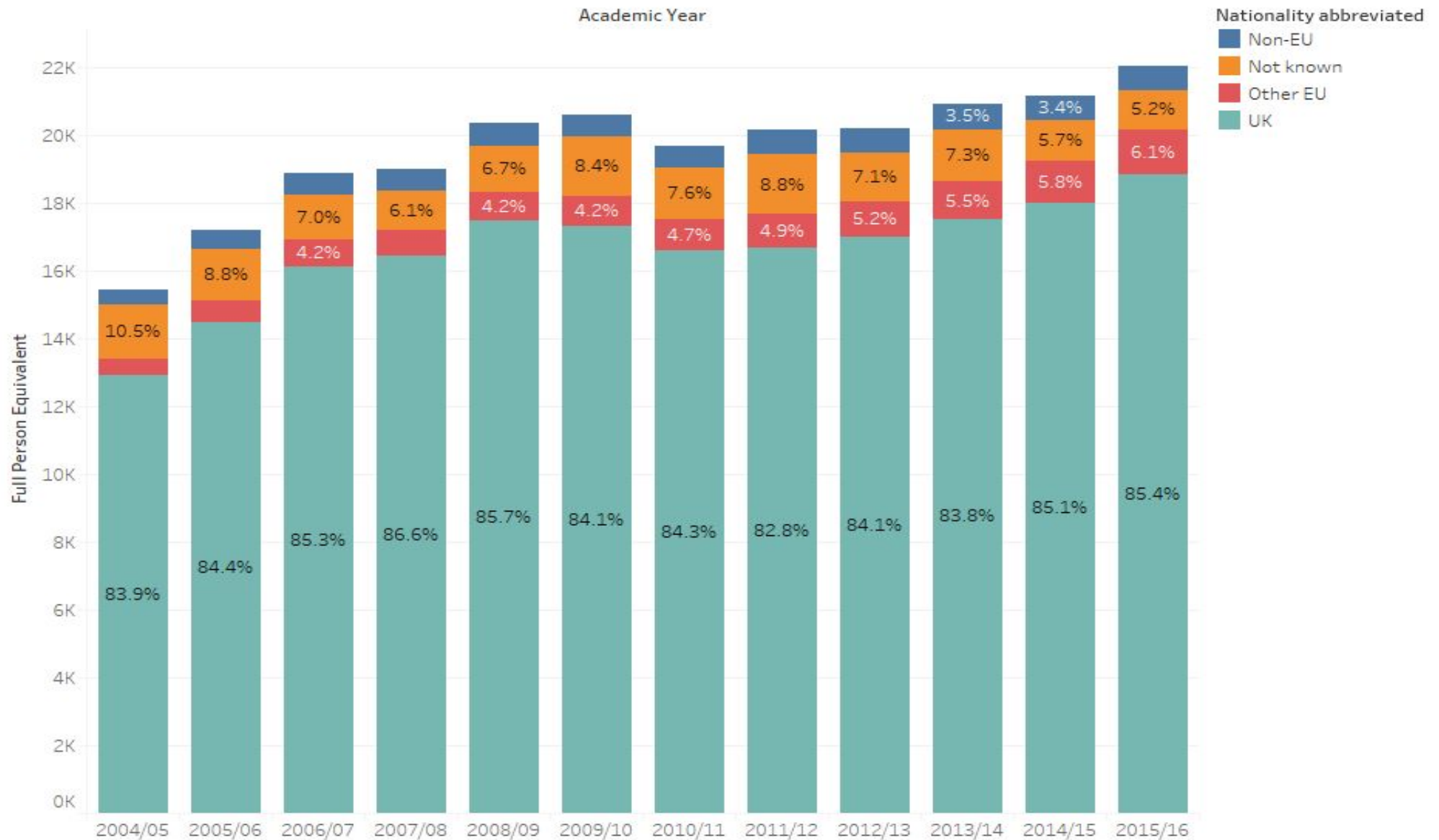


Average Age At 31 August by FPE for each Nationality abbreviated broken down by Academic Year. Color shows details about Nationality abbreviated. The data is filtered on Provider short name, which keeps 33 of 179 members.

Patterns of EEA migration over time

13. As highlighted in the briefing note which accompanies this call for evidence, EEA migrants have risen from around 3% of the UK in work labour force in the year ending December 2006, to almost 7% in the year ending December 2016. This mirrors the trend seen within GuildHE institutions, where EU workers have risen from 2.9% of total staff in the academic year 2005/06 to a peak of 6.1% of staff in 2015/16. Non-EU staff percentages have remained broadly stable at around 3.4% of all staff since 2006/07.
14. Over the same period, the percentage of staff for whom nationality is unknown has halved from 10.5% to 5.2%. This suggest that the percentage of EU staff has not changed significantly, but rather, that staff have now been more accurately identified in HESA data returns.
15. The sector as a whole has also grown significantly during this time. GuildHE member institutions staff levels have risen from a around 15,500 FPE staff to around 22,000 FPE staff (Figure 2). This growth indicates that EEA workers are not 'squeezing out' UK workers. Rather, as the sector has grown, more staff from all areas have been employed.
16. Nonetheless, the loss of EU staff would certainly have a significant impact, and require major changes to recruitment processes. Changes to migration policies which adversely affect the ability of EEA staff to work in the UK may be particularly significant for GuildHE members given their small size, as this could mean the loss of staff crucial to running particular courses or projects, with less potential for other staff to pick up the burden.

Figure 2. Institution Staff by Nationality (Full Person Equivalent)

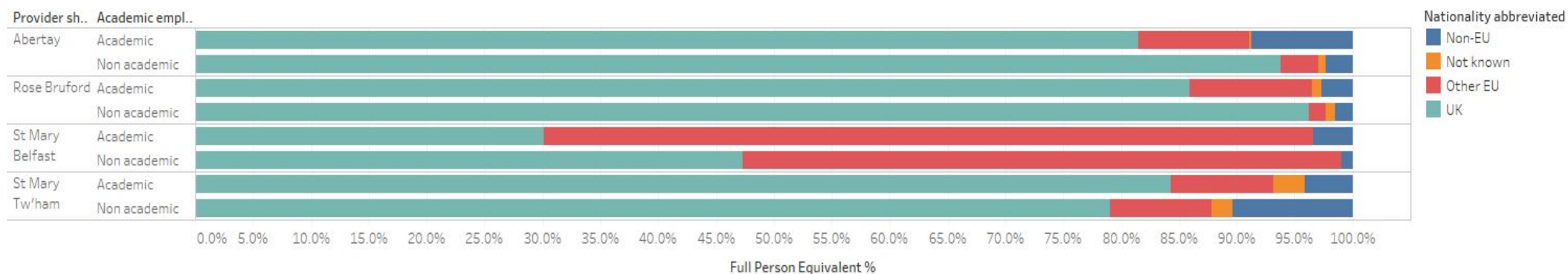


Full Person Equivalent for each Academic Year. Color shows details about Nationality abbreviated. The marks are labeled by Full Person Equivalent %. The data is filtered on Provider short name, which keeps 33 of 179 members.

Assessment of impact for possible reduction of EEA migrants

17. The highest potential impact for a GuildHE member is St Mary's University College in Belfast, where 70% of academic staff and 52% of non-academic staff are non-UK EU nationals. These non-UK EU nationals (with the exception of fewer than 5 academic staff from Germany), are all Irish citizens. Were Irish staff to lose the freedom to work in the UK, without being subject to visa restrictions, the impact on St Mary's University College, and other similar institutions in Northern Ireland, could be catastrophic.
18. Institutions with a particular reliance on EU staff are not, however, limited to Northern Ireland alone. They include; the University of Abertay, Dundee, where 12.6% of academic staff are EU nationals; St Mary's University, Twickenham, where 14% of academic staff and 10% of non-academic staff are EU nationals, and; Ravensbourne, where 15% of teaching staff are EU nationals (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Nationality Breakdown (Case Study Institutions)



Full Person Equivalent % for each Academic employment marker broken down by Provider short name. Color shows details about Nationality abbreviated. The view is filtered on Provider short name, which keeps Abertay, Rose Bruford, St Mary Belfast and St Mary Tw'ham.

19. Furthermore, creative arts institutions rely on staff from outside the UK – at least 10% in most cases - and many of these are EU nationals. Like the wider creative industries, these HEIs require similar quick and flexible migration options as highlighted by the Creative Industries Federation's Global Talent Report published earlier this month⁵.
20. Other GuildHE members such as AECC University College, and alternative providers like the British and Irish Modern Music Institute (BIMM) and the SAE Institute have transnational structures, with branch campuses across the EU. These institutions could suffer were they unable to use staff flexibly across their campuses.

⁵The Creative Industries Federation, [Global Talent Report: Why the UK's creative industries need international workers and how to attract them](#) (October 2017)

21. Staffing in the higher education sector can be broadly split into those in academic roles (teaching, research or both) and non-academic roles. The following two sections provide further evidence on the current picture and potential impacts.

Academic staff (teaching & research)

22. The percentage of UK nationals working at GuildHE institutions has risen from approximately 77% in 2004/05 to 81% in 2015/16. Over the same period, the percentage of EU workers has increased from around 3% to 7%.

23. Across the Higher Education sector as a whole, non-UK EU staff make up around 17% (4/25) of the total Academic workforce, according to analysis of HESA data conducted by the Royal Society⁶ and backed up evidence submitted to this call by UCEA⁷.

24. When the unknown group is excluded, the data shows UK staff share declining while EU staff percentages increase. However it is possible that EU staff were more likely to be previously unidentified than UK staff.

25. During this period the total number of academic staff employed has increased nearly 50%, from 7,170 to 10,730. The number of identified EU staff has more than trebled from 225 to 725 (Figure 4), while the number of staff whose nationality is not known has declined.

26. A broadly similar growth pattern is seen whether one considers staff in teaching or research roles, reflecting growth across the entire sector.

27. It is important to note that inward movement by EEA and non-EEA academics is partially offset by outward movement from UK academics. Universities UK International has found that, from 2007-2013, 21,594 EU academics received financial support to work in the UK through EU programs such as Erasmus+ and Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowships and exchange schemes, while 14,316 UK academics were supported to spend time abroad.⁸

28. These figures for academic staff will include staff such as language tutors, who have specific skill sets, not easily replicated (particularly if they are native speakers), but which would not be classed as highly skilled under the current Tier 2 regulations, making it harder to recruit such staff from outside the EEA.

29. These figures may also include academics and researchers employed at creative institutions. Arts and art working, and much arts research, are inherently collaborative ventures and much of this is currently cross-border. These work areas may face challenges after Brexit if the post-Brexit immigration system is developed without proper consideration and consultation. In this context, we would draw attention to evidence submitted by

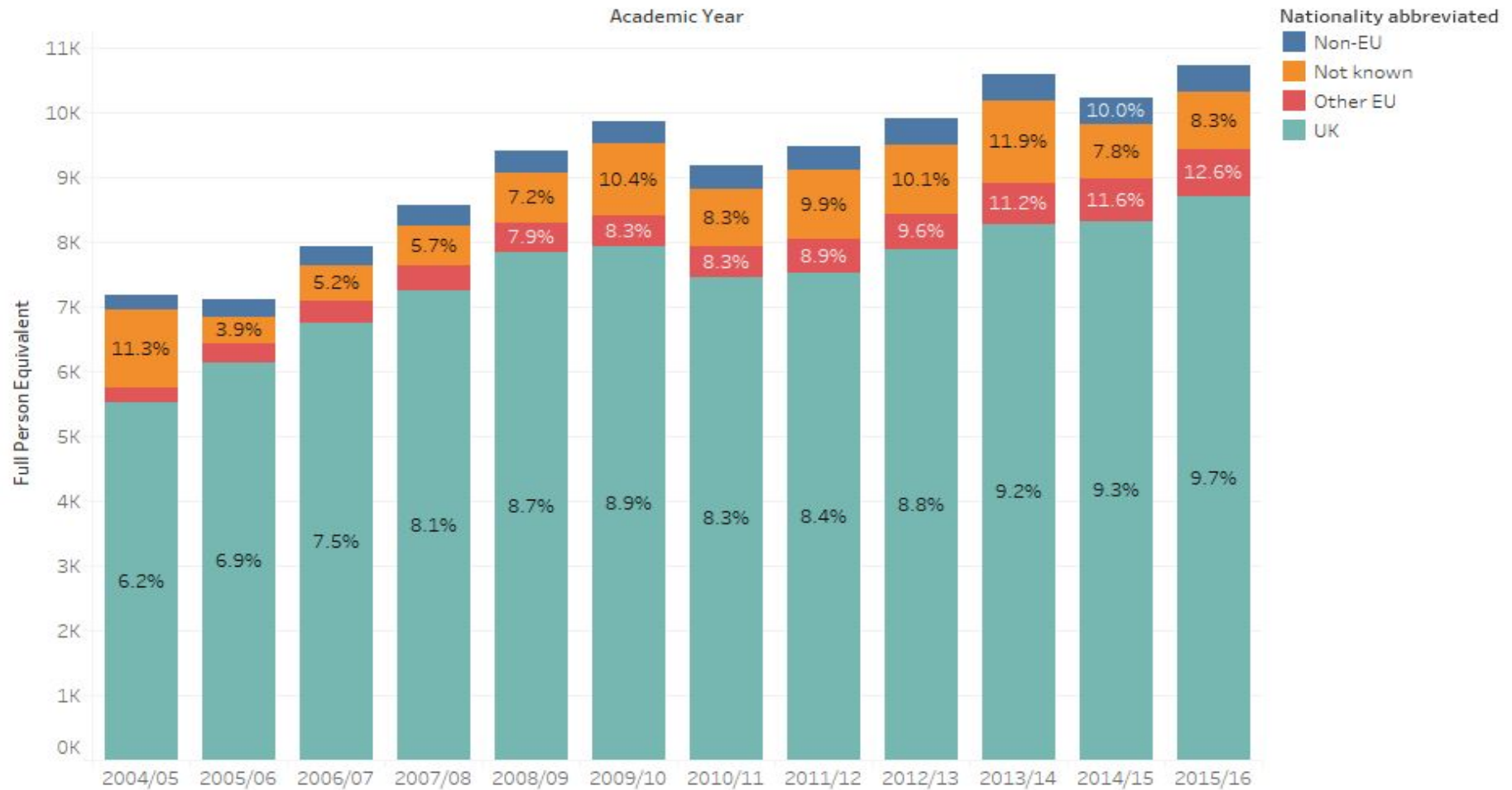
⁶ The Royal Society, [UK research and the European Union The role of the EU in international research collaboration and researcher mobility](#) (May 2016)

⁷ See the MAC EEA Workers Submission from UCEA, 2017

⁸ Universities UK International, [International Facts and Figures. Higher Education](#) (May 2017)

the Creative Industries Federation highlighting the specific challenges that could be created for creative businesses should such 'quick fixes' and non-holistic approaches to the immigration system be implemented.

Figure 4. Academic Staff by Nationality (Full Person Equivalent)



Full Person Equivalent for each Academic Year. Color shows details about Nationality abbreviated. The marks are labeled by Full Person Equivalent %. The data is filtered on Provider short name and Academic employment marker. The Provider short name filter keeps 33 of 179 members. The Academic employment marker filter keeps Academic. The view is filtered on Nationality abbreviated, which keeps Non-EU, Not known, Other EU and UK.

Non-academic staff

30. Non-academic staff also play key roles for GuildHE members. EU nationals represent between 2% and 5% of our members' workforce in most classifications (see Figure 5), below the UK labour force average of 7%.⁹ Non-EU nationals are slightly less prevalent but largely similarly represented.
31. These non-academic roles also include key skillsets to the functioning of HEIs which could be hard to replicate, for example skilled laboratory technicians, who have very specific skill sets, but would not be classed as highly skilled workers for the purposes of the Tier 2 system. Please refer to the evidence submitted by Universities UK and UCEA for some specific examples.
32. In Elementary Occupations and in Sales and Customer Service Occupations, EU nationals make up around 9% of the workforce (Figure 5). This picture has remained broadly unchanged since 2012/13.

⁹ Office for National Statistics, [International immigration and the labour market. UK: 2016](#) (April 2017)

Figure 5. Non-Academic Staff by SOC Code



Full Person Equivalent % for each Academic Year broken down by Activity Standard Occupational Classification (SOC). Color shows details about Nationality abbreviated. The data is filtered on Provider short name and Academic employment marker. The Provider short name filter keeps 33 of 179 members. The Academic employment marker filter keeps Non academic. The view is filtered on Nationality abbreviated and Academic Year. The Nationality abbreviated filter keeps Non-EU, Not known, Other EU and UK. The Academic Year filter keeps 2012/13, 2013/14, 2014/15 and 2015/16.

RECRUITMENT PRACTICES, TRAINING AND SKILLS

33. International staff, including EEA play key roles in all parts of the higher education sector and in delivering professional training for many parts of the UK workforce. For evidence relating to this section, we particularly reference the submission made to the MAC by the Universities and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA).
34. Modern research places a high premium on international collaboration; over half of UK research now involves international collaboration.¹⁰ Furthermore, the House of Commons Science and Technology Committee found that world-leading research relies on international staff to such a degree that the movement of academic staff should be addressed “separately from discussions about immigration control more broadly, with firm commitments provided as soon as possible.”¹¹
35. The quality of teaching and research at universities depends on being able to recruit academics who are specialists in their field, irrespective of nationality. Furthermore, expertise in a specific field takes many years to acquire – it is not possible to up-skill domestic workers simply and quickly.
36. Higher education plays a key role in providing skilled graduates to meet workforce needs. Given the prevalence of EU staff, if the sector were suddenly to face new barriers to recruiting EU staff, we may conclude that skills shortages across the economy would be exacerbated.
37. The UK already has a shortage of graduates with language skills. This is estimated to cost 3.5% of GDP. Language skills will also be crucial in a post-brexite global market-place, where the UK is seeking to strike independent trade agreements. EEA workers play a key role in meeting this particular aspect of the labour market’s needs.¹²
38. For example, courses in modern foreign languages regularly rely on overseas staff, particularly staff from the EEA, as courses French, Spanish and German are among those most commonly studied. The All-Party Parliamentary Group on Modern Languages has found that 35% of modern language teachers, and 85% of assistants are non-UK EU nationals.¹³
39. IT staff are already identified as a shortage occupation. Were stricter immigration controls introduced, this would result in a smaller talent recruitment pool, and, as already explored further limiting the ability of universities and colleges to provide the skilled employees needed to fill these gaps.

¹⁰ The Royal Society, [Snapshot of the UK research workforce](#) (May 2016)

¹¹ House of Commons Science and Technology Committee, [Leaving the EU: implications and opportunities for science and research \(Seventh Report of Session 2016–17\)](#), (November 2016), pp.13-15.

¹² This countrywide language shortage was highlighted at a joint BEIS / DfE roundtable on Skills by a large range of groups including the CBI, British Chamber of Commerce and British Academy in October 2017

¹³ All-Party Parliamentary Group on Modern Languages, [Brexit and Languages: a checklist for government negotiators and officials](#) (October 2016)

Early career researchers

40. Fixed-term contracts are particularly common among early career academics, whose employment is likely to be linked to a specific, time and funding limited contract. There is an expectation within the research community that the best researchers are internationally mobile, and it is far easier to build this record of mobility early in a career.¹⁴
41. For example, many GuildHE member institutions have a high percentage of early career researchers within their research departments, for whom developing effective research networks is essential.
42. Increased bureaucracy around movement could more severely impact such researchers especially given the fact that many will be starting their research career later in working life and that there is therefore an increased need to establish research networks quickly.
43. Achieving a favourable migration system therefore provides researchers with the opportunity to build and expand upon relationships not only with EU colleagues but also world colleagues in order to carry out the best research possible.

Potential challenges if current Tier 2 regulations were to be expanded to EEA migration

44. The burdens involved in the Tier 2 route are particularly challenging for smaller institutions that do not have the resources to support large numbers of visas. This may explain why non-EU staff share has not risen significantly in the last decade.
45. If Tier 2 regulations were extended to EU staff, this could pose a significant challenge, particularly to small HEIs with more limited resources. An expansion of Tier 2 would also significantly increase financial burdens for GuildHE member institutions, due to increased staff needs to meet the regulatory burden, sponsorship costs etc. This could result in them being locked out from recruiting from the international talent pool.
46. Even without new constraints to the movement of EU workers in the UK, the vote to leave the EU has had a clear impact on the attractiveness of the UK as somewhere for academics to work.
47. Although large-scale staffing impacts have not yet occurred, this may be explained by the prevalence of fixed-term contracts among EEA staff. As those contracts end, uncertainty around the future visa relationship may encourage EEA staff to seek employment elsewhere. Research by the University and College Union in early 2017 found that over three-quarters (76%) of EU academics at UK universities were now more likely to consider leaving UK higher education as a result of the referendum.¹⁵ Such uncertainty damages the capacity of HEIs to develop long-term plans.

¹⁴ S. Guthrie, C. A. Lichten, E. Harte, S. Parks, S. Wooding and J. Corbett, [International mobility of researchers: A survey of researchers in the UK](#). (2017)

¹⁵ House of Commons Education Committee [Exiting the EU: challenges and opportunities for higher education \(Ninth Report of Session 2016–17\)](#) (April 2017)

ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND FISCAL IMPACTS

International contribution

48. International collaboration is known to attract funding and increase research impact. Collaboration is particularly focussed on the EEA; 14 of the top 20 most collaborated-with countries are EEA members.¹⁶ The presence of EEA staff at UK HEIs facilitates this collaboration, by providing a link between UK-based and overseas academics, and fostering international networks.
49. In order to strengthen and maintain their world-leading positions, UK universities must prove that they have a diverse and international community. For example, the QS survey takes into account international faculties. An immigration policy that does not welcome international staff to UK universities could put our institutions at risk of not continuing to compete successfully in a global field.
50. The presence of EU staff also helps to develop cross-European networks for UK staff and institutions, allowing engagement with and access to European-wide science and research networks, infrastructure, funding and research facilities, which boost the domestic economy.

National & regional contribution

51. UK Higher Education is immensely valuable. Recent research by Universities UK has found that UK universities now generate a knock-on impact of nearly £100bn (£95bn) for the UK economy and support almost a million (940,000) jobs throughout the UK.¹⁷
52. Creative focussed institutions alone contribute at least £8.4 billion to the UK economy, 0.5% of the economy's total output.¹⁸
53. As noted above, EEA workers are net fiscal contributors, contributing around £20 billion to the public finances, and are less likely to claim benefits than UK nationals. Their lower average age also means they place a reduced burden on public services.¹⁹
54. Therefore, in order to maintain this high-level of economic impact, it is imperative that the sector continue to deliver world-class teaching and research. This in turn is reliant on being able to recruit the best staff, whether they are from the UK, the EEA or the rest of the world.

¹⁶ The Royal Society, [Snapshot of the UK research workforce](#) (May 2016)

¹⁷ Universities UK, [The Economic Impact of Universities in 2014-15, Report Summary](#) (October 2017)

¹⁸ GuildHE, [The Economic Value of Creative Focused Universities and Colleges](#) (November 2016).

¹⁹ Dustmann and Frattini, "[The Fiscal Effects of Immigration to the UK](#)", *Economic Journal*, Vol. 124, Issue 580 (2014), pp.F593–F643

Local contribution

55. GuildHE institutions in particular tend to be embedded in local economies, (often outside the core areas of economic activity in the UK). They provide crucial sources of local employment (often as the locality's largest employer), supporting local business and industry, and upskilling local citizens. If such institutions were to suffer as a result of the loss of EEA staff, this could be particularly damaging to 'left behind' areas - the very areas the government is committed to helping through the Industrial Strategy.
56. Universities in areas of little migration are likely to bring greater diversity to their local communities and increase cultural awareness. International students are likely to bring tourism (visiting friends and family), further boosting local economies.
57. As recently highlighted by GuildHE, there is an increasing emphasis on the importance of Global Citizenship within the context of fostering citizenship and civic engagement. Universities play a large role in fostering and developing international communities on their campuses, and EEA staff are a key aspect of this. The presence of such international communities leads to a greater understanding of different races and cultures amongst those who attend university.²⁰

A case study - The National Centre for Precision Farming (NCPF), Harper Adams University²¹

58. In addition to providing a major boost to the UK's contribution to domestic and global food security the NCPF has helped catalyse collaborative research and education, involving international partners, on the implementation of precision farming techniques. This includes important aspects of farm animal welfare and environmental protection.
59. The collaborative initiative has the potential to encourage a broader network working to significantly improve the uptake of advanced engineering in European agriculture and provide access to European funding and knowledge transfer opportunities for industrial partners.
60. Recent research has included the world first "Hands Free Hectare" project, growing a crop using only autonomous systems. This project has, so far, been covered in the press in 45 countries and is opening up the possibility for 'next stage' research with international partners, international trade and, potentially, inward investment from overseas companies.
61. This venture, and others like it, rely heavily on a favourable environment for both short-term and longer term migration in order to access the best global talent wherever it is found. Increasingly, that talent needs to be sourced overseas. One example is the new field of Agri-Tech Economics. The skills base is not yet available in the UK, but the NCPF has identified the chance, and has successfully recruited scholars from the USA and Australia, to take an internationally leading position of benefit to the national economy and society.

²⁰ GuildHE, [Active Citizenship: The role of higher education](#) (November 2016)

²¹ Full case study can be found at www.guildhe.ac.uk/blog/innovation-systems-and-the-role-of-small-and-specialist-higher-education-institutions/, pp.193-203.

APPENDIX 1: GUILDHE, CREST AND UKADIA MEMBER INSTITUTIONS FOR WHICH HESA DATA IS AVAILABLE.

| | |
|--|--|
| Arts University Bournemouth | Southampton Solent University |
| Bath Spa University | St Mary's University College, Belfast |
| Bishop Grosseteste University | St Mary's University, Twickenham |
| Buckinghamshire New University (CREST member only) | University College Birmingham |
| Falmouth University | University for the Creative Arts |
| Harper Adams University | University of Abertay, Dundee |
| Leeds Arts University | University of Chichester |
| Leeds College of Music | University of Cumbria (CREST member only) |
| Leeds Trinity University | University of St Mark and St John |
| Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts | University of Suffolk |
| Newman University | University of the Arts London (UKADIA member only) |
| Norwich University of the Arts | University of Winchester |
| Plymouth College of Arts | University of Worcester |
| Ravensbourne | Wrexham Glyndwr University (CREST member only) |
| Rose Bruford College of Theatre and Performance | Writtle University College |
| Royal Agricultural University | York St John University |
| Royal Central School of Speech and Drama | |