



Home Office



# Migrant Access to Social Security and Healthcare

Policies and Practice in the United Kingdom

# Overview

- Overview of the UK social security system and migrants access.
- Trends of economic activity of non EEA migrants in the UK.
- Uptake of benefits by nationality in the UK.
- Recent and current changes to the social security system.

# The UK's social security system has contributory and non contributory benefits and the NHS

- *Contributory benefits* – are those that individuals earn entitlement to by paying National Insurance contributions.
- *Non-contributory* – are those that are tax financed and do not require contributions.
- *The National Health Service (NHS)* – is tax financed and does not require contributions.

# Some benefits fall under contributory and non contributory branches

Contributory Benefits	Non- Contributory Benefits
Employment	Income related employment
Invalidity	Income related invalidity
State Pension	Pension credit
Survivors	Income support
Sickness	Family
	Long term care benefits

# Generally migrants with time-limited leave can not access non contributory benefits

- *Contributory benefits*
  - There are no migrant specific conditions for claiming contributory benefits.
- *Non contributory benefits*
  - All migrants who have permanent residence in the UK have access to non contributory benefits.
  - Generally any migrant who is in the UK temporarily is giving leave to enter on the condition that they have no access to public funds. Non contributory benefits fall under this heading. Only migrants who's leave stipulates they have access to public funds can claim these benefits.
- *NHS*
  - Currently all migrants that are lawful and settled can access the NHS.

# However some temporary migrants may be given access to public funds

- Family members of UK nationals and EEA nationals.
- Migrants from countries with which the UK has reciprocal agreements regarding benefits.
- Self sufficient migrants who have had their funds temporarily disrupted.

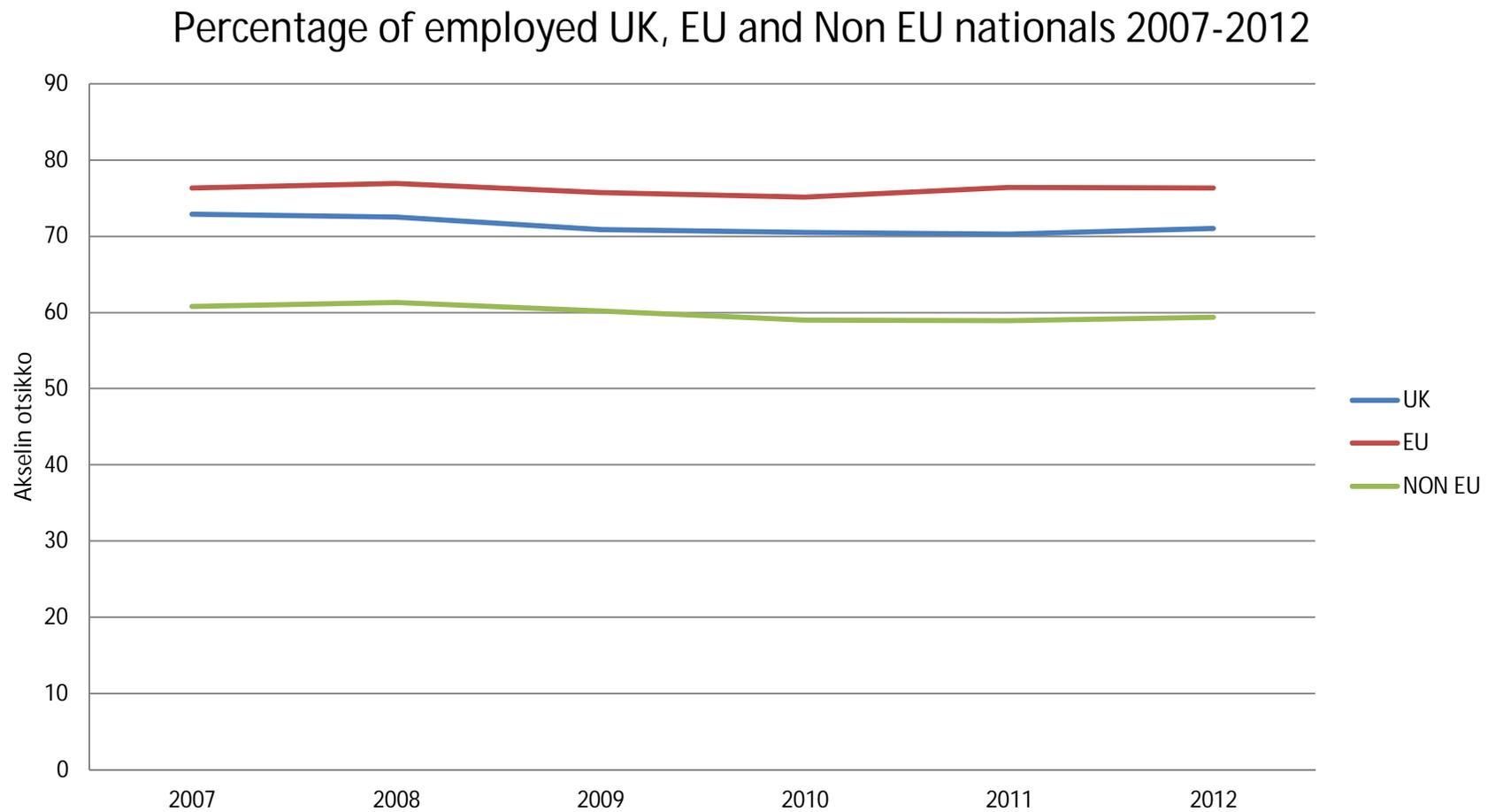
# Migrants must also satisfy the 'habitual residence' test to claim benefits

- The habitual residence test has two elements
  - An assessment of legal right of residence.
  - An assessment of whether the applicant intends to settle in the UK and make it their home for the time being.
- Factors considered:
  - length of time in the UK
  - reasons for coming to the UK
  - length they intend to stay
  - If they own property in the UK
  - Have friends and family in the UK or children in school

# For access to the NHS migrants must be an 'ordinary resident'

- If someone is ordinarily resident it means that their residence in the UK is voluntary and for settled purposes for the time being.
- Like the habitual residence test there is no clear residency period that defines someone as an ordinary resident.
- Decision makers assess if someone is an ordinary resident.
- The current Immigration Bill proposes changes to migrants access to health.

# Non EU nationals are less likely to be employed than UK nationals

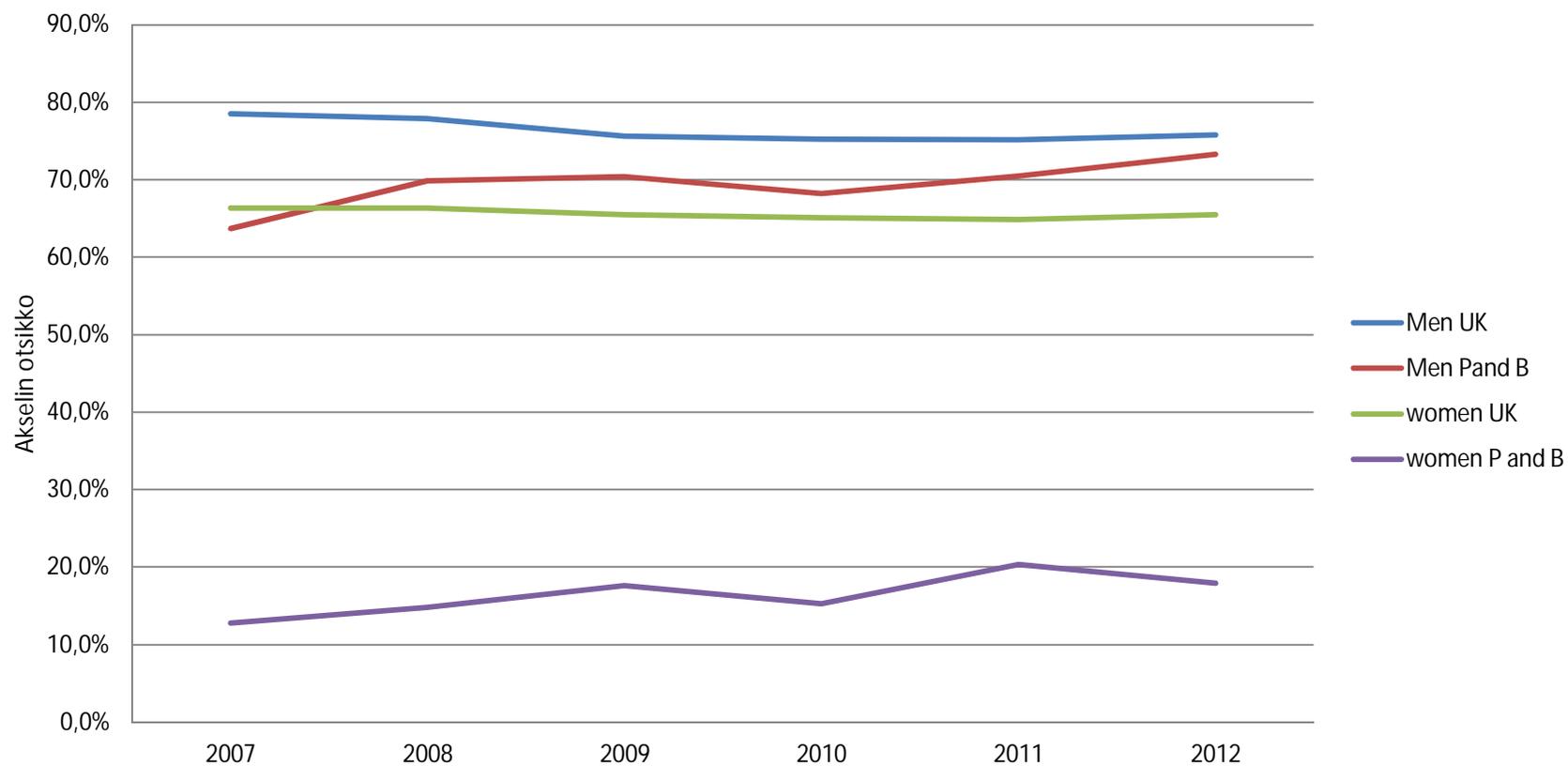


# The percentage of Non-EU migrants employed varies by nationality

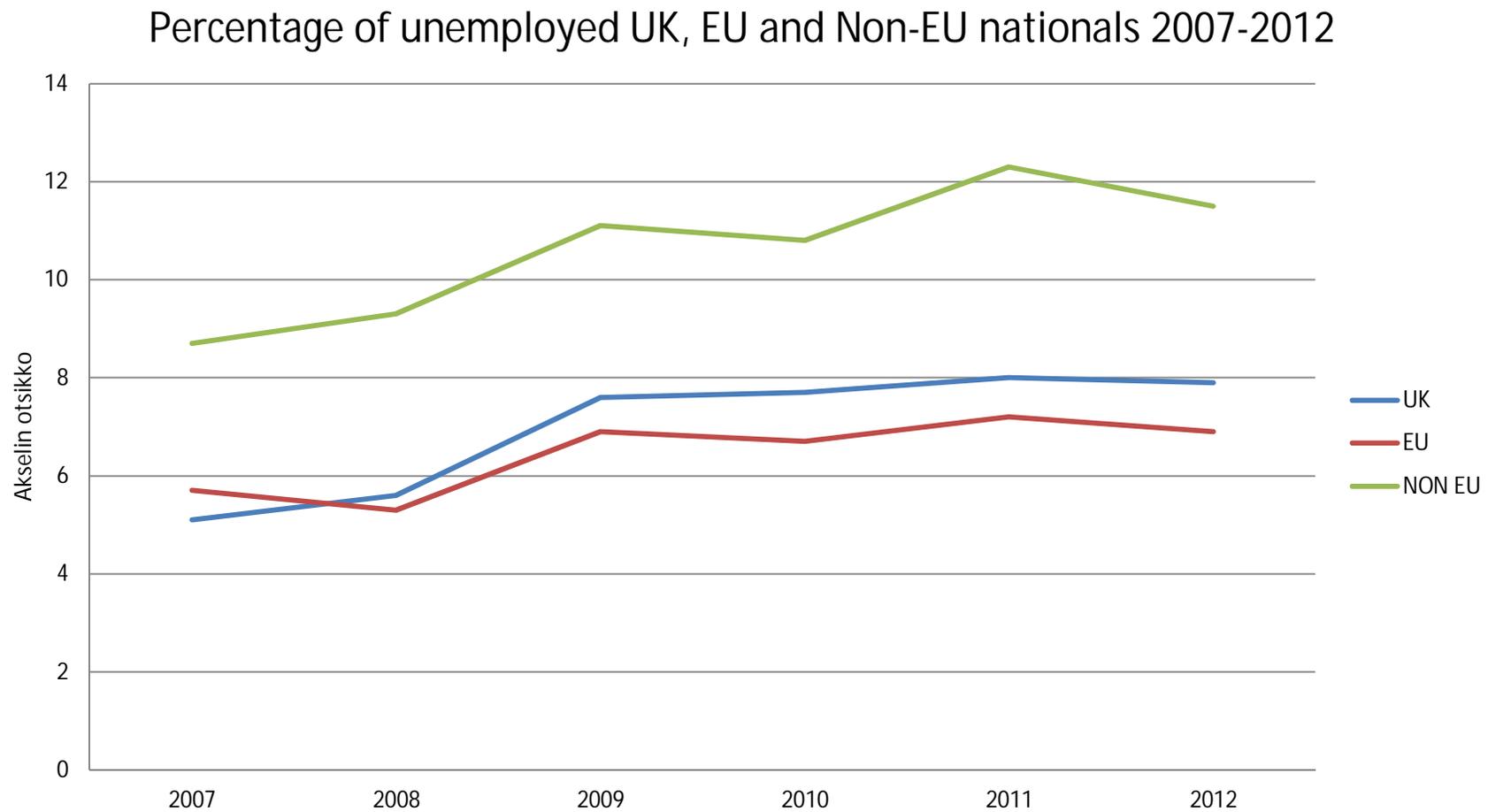
- The APS estimates shows a high percentage of individuals from Australia, South African and the Philippines are employed (over 80%).
- While persons from Bangladesh (51%) Pakistan (47%) and China (36%) show low levels of employment in comparison to UK nationals.
- Large numbers of Chinese nationals come to the UK to study while high numbers of nationals from Pakistan and Bangladesh come to the UK to be with family.

# Cultural reasons explain some of these differences

Average UK Employment rates in men and women and in nationals from Pakistan and Bangladesh

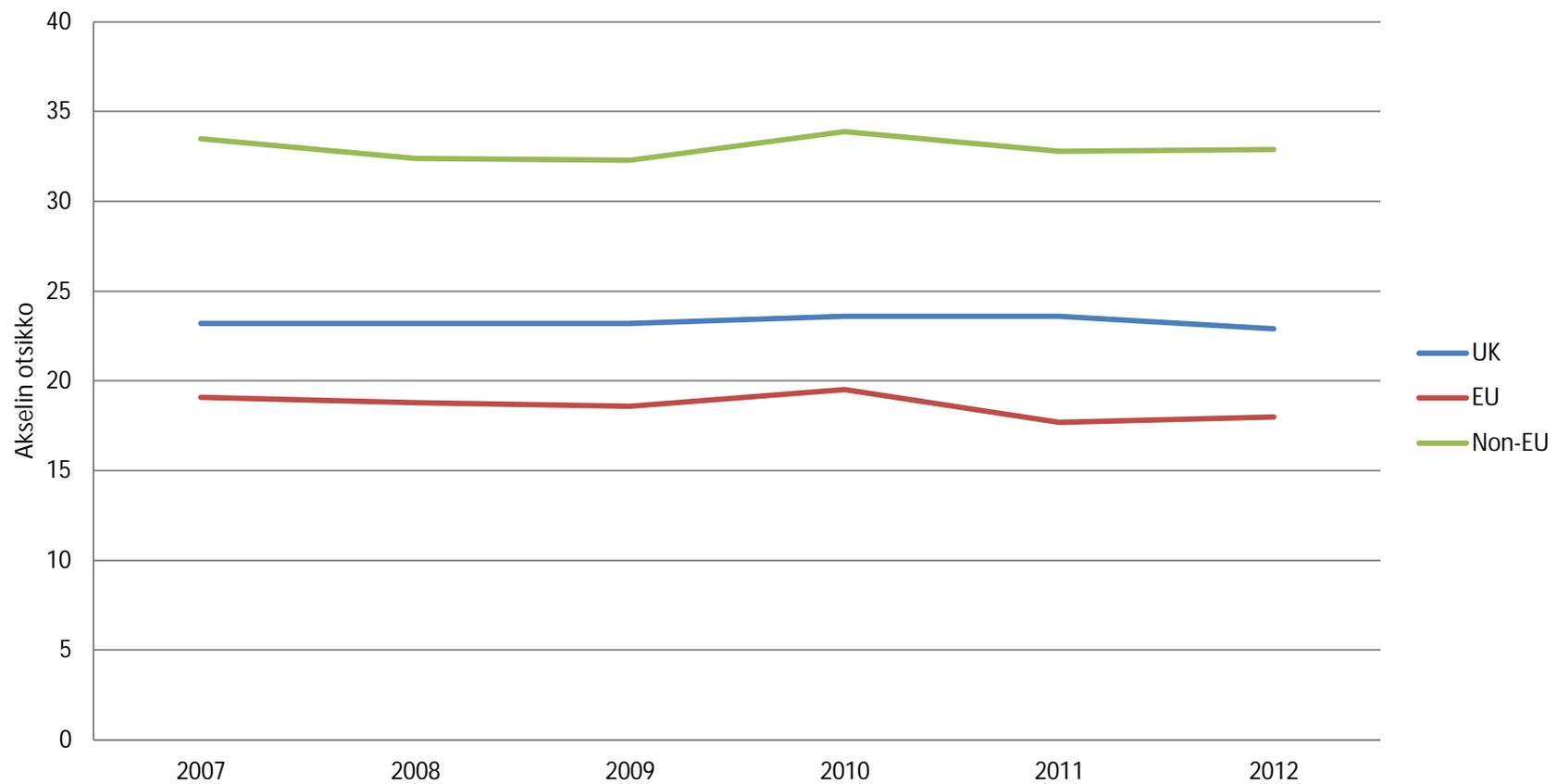


# Non-EU nationals are more likely to be unemployed than UK nationals



# And more likely to be inactive

Percentage of inactive UK, EU and Non EU nationals 2007-2012



# The percentage of Non-EU inactive migrants varies by nationality

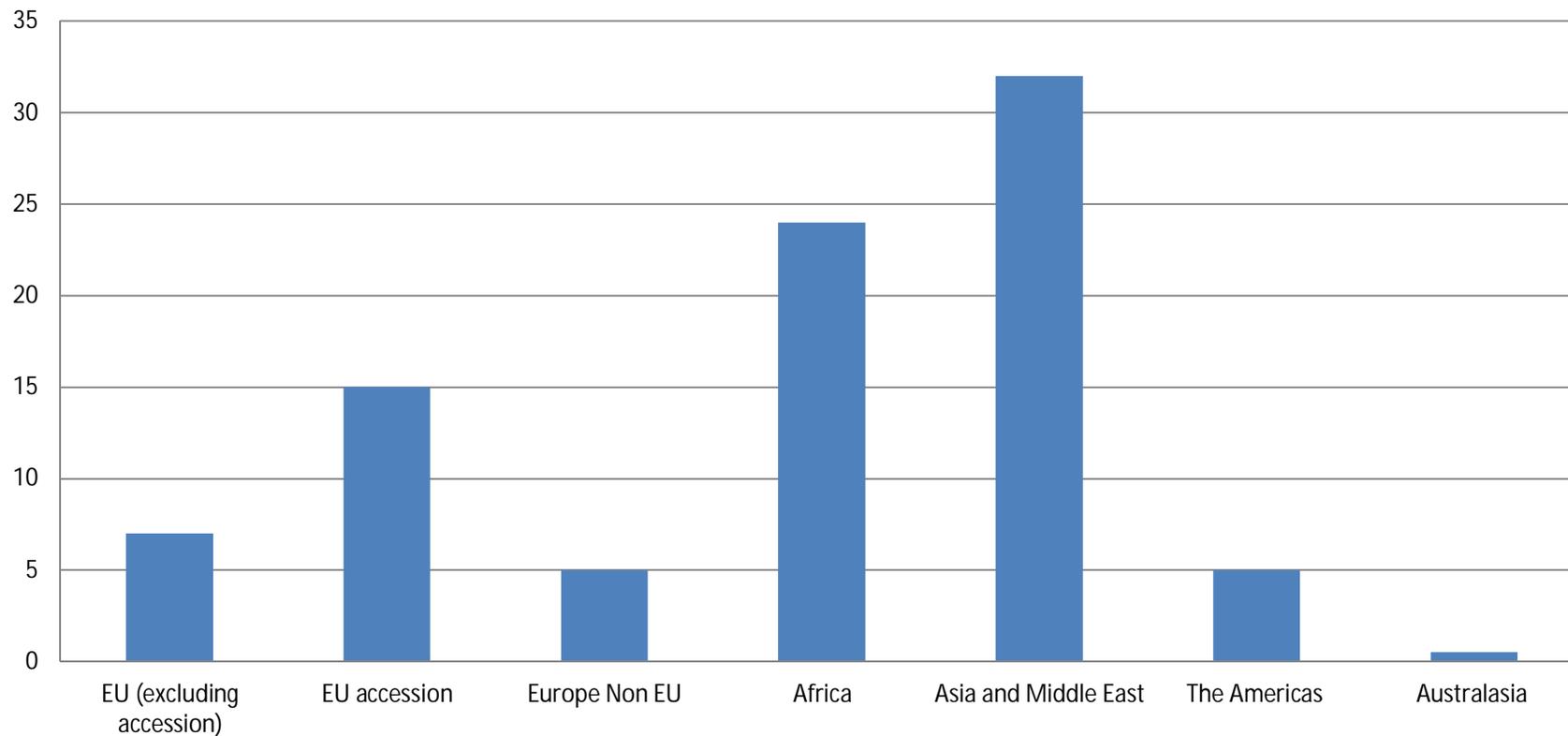
- The highest overall percentage of inactive nationals were from China (59%), Bangladesh (44%) and Pakistan (43%).
- Nationals from Australia and South Africa had much lower percentages of inactive nationals (14% and 13%).

# Uptake of benefits in the UK

- The Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) collects data on benefits but this does not include nationality.
- DWP has national statistics on the number of national insurance numbers (NINo) registered to non-UK nationals entering the UK.
- DWP have matched this data to estimate benefit uptake of people who were non-UK nationals when they first registered for NINo (who may subsequently become UK citizens).
- In 2013 6.7% of working age people who were foreign nationals when first registering for NINo were claiming working age benefits. This includes EU migrants. This is in comparison to 16.4% of UK nationals claiming working age benefits.

# Uptake of benefits by Non-EU nationals varies by national groups

Percentage of Non-UK nationals at NINo registration claiming working age benefits



# Uptake of benefit varies by migrant type and benefit type

- Many TCNs recorded here will have since become British Citizens and this is particularly true of those from Africa and Asia. While people from the US and Australia are less likely to apply for citizenship.
- The DWP data is groups nationality and therefore may mask differences in individual national groups.
- Previous research has highlighted that migrants are not a homogenous group and uptake varies by nationality and benefit type (Drinkwater 2011, Barratt and McCarthy 2008).
- Previous research has shown that socio-economic factors play a role in the uptake of benefits (Zimmerman et al. 2012).

# Reforms to the UK benefit system

- Universal credit is a single benefit for working age people with no or insufficient income.
- This benefit will combine and replace:
  - income support
  - income based job seekers allowance
  - income based employment and support allowance
  - housing benefit
  - and tax credits

# Proposals to reform access to the NHS

- There are currently proposals that have been put to parliament that only those permanently resident in the UK may be considered ordinarily resident for the purpose of free NHS treatment.
- The proposals plan to bring the rules regulating migrant access to the NHS into line with wider government policy on migrants' access to benefits and social housing.
- The proposals suggest introducing a health surcharge for non EEA migrants who are coming to the UK for more than six months.

# Conclusions

- The UK social security system is made up of both contributory and non contributory benefits.
- There are no migrant specific conditions for accessing contributory benefits but only migrants with access to public funds can access non-contributory benefits.
- Migrants must satisfy the habitual residence test before accessing income related benefits.
- Non- EEA migrants are less likely to be employed and more likely to be unemployed and inactive compared to UK nationals.
- All lawful migrants who are ordinary residence can access the NHS but there are proposals that Non-EEA migrants who stay for more than 6 months will pay a charge to access health services.



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[Laura.Broomfield@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Laura.Broomfield@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk)