

# Economic analysis of Immigration and Immigrants' Integration after Brexit in UK

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## Abstract

*Immigration and integration are the two most debated issues in British in recent years. It is an interdisciplinary topic in which many researchers try to understand their meaning. After Brexit, Britain faces the critical issue of migration. This article examines the issue of immigration in relation with that of the integration of the immigrants after British exit from the European Union. In this purpose, we covey insights of the British labour force. It shows that immigration and integration are hotly debated issues. Thus they are much discussed in the media across Europe particularly in a British multiculturalist country. In this way, our purpose is to tackle uncertainties of millions of EU and non-EU migrants who crossed the Mediterranean and the Eurozone. The right of free movement of people and services along EU members' states has become a British puzzle. Besides it deals with the skilled migrants workers who were working in the UK before the Brexit and after Brexit. It shows all uncertainties and the future destination of those migrants in Britain. So, the purpose of British government was to cut migration after the exit of the EU. Thus, it shows that even though British exit from the EU, former EU skilled migrants may stay in Britain waiting for new UK immigration regulations so that they can work there. These skilled immigrants, international students, humanitarian refugee settlement and British nationals Hong Kong are big economic contributors to UK economy.*

*Keywords: immigration, integration, brexit, economy, united kingdom*

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## Résumé

*L'immigration et l'intégration sont les deux questions les plus débattues en Grande-Bretagne ces dernières années. Il s'agit d'un sujet interdisciplinaire dans lequel de nombreux chercheurs tentent de comprendre leur signification. Après le Brexit, la Grande-Bretagne est confrontée à la question critique de l'immigration. Cet article examine la question de l'immigration en relation avec celle de l'intégration des immigrés après la sortie britannique de l'Union européenne. À cette fin, nous fournissons des informations sur la main-d'œuvre britannique. L'article montre que l'immigration et l'intégration sont des questions très débattues. Elles sont donc très discutées dans les médias à travers l'Europe, en particulier dans un pays britannique multiculturaliste. Ainsi, notre objectif est de répondre aux incertitudes des millions de migrants européens et non européens qui ont traversé la Méditerranée et la zone euro.*

*Le droit à la libre circulation des personnes et des services dans les États membres de l'UE est devenu un casse-tête pour les Britanniques. En outre, il traite des travailleurs migrants qualifiés qui travaillaient au Royaume-Uni avant et après le Brexit. Il montre toutes les incertitudes et la destination future de ces migrants en Grande-Bretagne. L'objectif du gouvernement britannique était donc de réduire l'immigration après la sortie de l'UE. Ainsi, cela montre que même si les Britanniques sortent de l'UE, les anciens migrants qualifiés de l'UE peuvent rester en Grande-Bretagne en attendant les nouvelles réglementations britanniques en matière d'immigration afin de pouvoir y travailler. Ces immigrants qualifiés, étudiants internationaux, réfugiés humanitaires et ressortissants britanniques de Hong Kong contribuent largement à l'économie britannique.*

*Mots clefs: immigration, integration, brexit, economy, united kingdom*

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## **Introduction**

On June 23, 2016, the United Kingdom exit from the European Union which is well-known as Brexit. The UK withdrawal's has brought new legal policies in matter of immigration and integration in Britain. With this event, the UK is not bound to EU regulations anymore. This will bring many changes to British immigration and integration policies. So it will have international legal implications, economic uncertainties, political and social uncertainties among British People. Since then, controlling immigration was an important issue alongside the British conservative government. For some researchers or scholars, by this unprecedented event which is known as Brexit, the UK government will be able to change its policy on immigration. Thus, the conservative party as the governing party of Britain will be able to implement tough, hard or soft measures to cut net EU immigration and restrict illegal non-EU nationals. The government has the complex challenge to tackle these issues.

Prior to the British exit from the EU, the then 2010 conservative-Liberal Democrats government wanted to implement tough measures on non-EU economic immigrants. (Dennison and Goodwin, 2015:169-170). Before the EU referendum, we heard some speculations on the outcome of the flow immigration on natives' employments. Some commentators thought that the net immigration from the EU and non-EU immigration crowded UK labour market. For those speculators, this phenomenon has negative impact on the outcome of the labour market. It will increase unemployment of

British natives. Consequently, UK-born citizens fail to get a job from UK companies in which we have many migrants coming from EU and outside the European Union.

However, labour market and EU free movement are the main debate. The British will was to benefit from the EU market without acknowledging some of the EU regulations. The UK loathes the EU free movement which they think it has crowded the British labour market. It is a complicated situation in which we face two antagonist ideas. Great Britain is for the EU market without abiding to its rules. British and EU interests cannot work together in matter of free regulations. Nevertheless, Christian Dustmann and Tommaso Frattini (2014) state that EU migrants are positive fiscal impact because they are important fiscal contributors to UK public finances. In general, they have important fiscal impact to the UK economy.

Between 2004 and 2007, the European Union welcomed new Eastern European countries. By the way, the United Kingdom has welcomed many EU migrants from these new Eastern member states. Therefore, recent Eurozone economic crisis of 2008 has increased the numbers of EU migrants. All the EU members' states face this mass migration in Europe. Thus, many European countries face a crisis after the economic effects of this event. (Ágopcsa, Cojourn 2:1 (2017). In fact, contracts ratified by those members' states compelled them to accept all these EU regulations.

For more than a decade, Britain has been accusing the EU of being the cause of mass migration in the country. Its legal and political system was denied by the UK. By EU regulations towards free movement of persons, Britain faced a flow of migrants on its coastal areas and throughout the country. Indigenous British people are more critical to the flow of mass immigration. This flow of people to the West was a main issue in British politics before their exit from the EU. According *Le Monde* correspondent in the United Kingdom Cécile Ducourtieux, a French journalist newspaper, despite the utopic “*promises*” used by the “Leave campaign” which led to Brexit we have more immigrants. On June 23<sup>rd</sup>, the United Kingdom cuts its ties with the European Union with 52% out and 48% in the EU (Ford and Goodwin, 2017: 17). Britain was doubtful since the beginning of this European integration. In a nutshell, even if we have Brexit has been

voted, “(...) *the number of net arrivals has doubled since 2016.*” (*Le Monde*). Clearly, even though British people voted to exit from EU, the number of immigrants towards Britain has increased. Immigration and integration after Brexit are two closely linked issues. It’s difficult to make forecasts. This is the very fact that allows us to study the perspectives of the contingencies of these subjects. The question of immigration is also related with the simmering economic issues which are salient topics behind the British exit.

The British government has decided to cut immigration tentacles on the United Kingdom. It wants to unleash British people from what it thought as an invasion Britain. Its main purpose is to stop illegal immigration which is qualified by the government as an invasion of the kingdom.

Britain ratified the principles set out in the Charter of the Fundamental Rights of European Union in 2000. The ratification of this charter means that the United Kingdom is obliged to follow these directives in order to comply with international law. And so the right to free movement of goods and people is an inalienable right within the member countries of the European Union. The right to free movement of persons and services belongs among the four right of which was legislation at the beginning of the European Union.

Besides, on March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023, a new law was introduced in the house commons well-known as Illegal Migration Bill. The main purpose of this new law is to “*prevent and deter unlawful migration, and in particular migration by unsafe and illegal routes, by requiring the removal from the United Kingdom of certain persons who enter or arrive in the United Kingdom in breach of immigration control*”. (Commons Library Research Briefing, 10 March 2023:4) This tough measure is characterised as a critical issue in the European Union in which the United Kingdom was part of it. The denial about Eurozone and migration are part of this new bill. After the Brexit, immigration and free movement of persons have become critical issue around the EU members’ states. These two topics are in denial in Britain. Brexit is a complex issue in which Britain was not prepared to embrace some international laws which is a compulsory to abide on them. The central hypothesis is that EU and non-EU migration are net fiscal contributors to UK economy. In other words, these two groups are of greater impact on British public finances. They are important net fiscal contributors

to British economy. Economic researchers think that immigration has an increased impact on the economy of those countries which have more positive impact on their public economy.

This article examines the issue of immigration in relation with that of the integration of the immigrants after British exit from the European Union. In this purpose, we convey insights of the impact this issue on British labour force market. We will be drawing on research from the Home Office, which is responsible for refugee integration, settlement and citizenship policy, and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), which is responsible for community cohesion in England. In addition, Apart from a few authors who have carried out research on the issues of immigration and integration of immigrants in the UK, the Migration Observatory feeds into debates on international migration and public policy, and is one of our sources of research, and the Office of National Statistics which collects and publishes statistics related to immigration and integration and the impact of these two groups on British economy. This paper is divided into two sections. The first section deals with the economic contribution of EU and non-EU immigrants to the UK economy and the second section is about the reasons for immigration and integration of EU and non-EU immigrants

## 1. The economic contributions of migrants to the UK economy

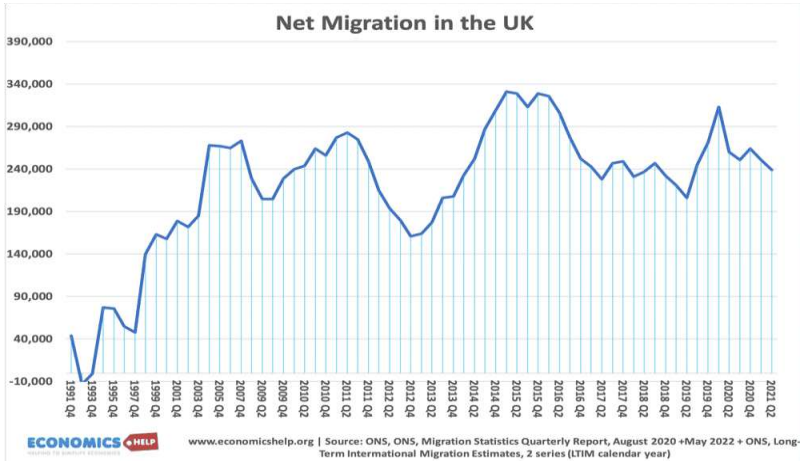
One of the most debated themes on UK referendum was immigration. It was one of the most contentious issue in British politics. Thus, it was considered as “*an iceberg issue*” according to Robert Ford. It was a political means of 2005 British General election. (2006). First of all, the purpose’s aim is to make something clear about immigration. The British EU referendum was more about a manhunt than a referendum. So, according to Réka Ágopcsa “*In June 2015, 45% of the British public thought that immigration was the most burning issue facing Britain*” (Ágopcsa, Cojourn 2:1 2017, in Ipsos MORI, 2015). As member of the European Union, Great Britain was obliged to accept Brussels regulations which has been ratified by himself. Most of the time, the “Leave campaign”, afraid of the loss of British sovereignty, was one of the debate about EU migration. Thus, we face the clash between sovereignty and immigration. For the

“Leave campaign”, EU membership has many negative aspects on UK economy.

However, several researchers have shown many positive impacts on EU net fiscal migrants’ contribution to the UK economy. This issue of EU migration brings relevant costs and benefits to UK economy. The “Leave campaign” forget the output of these immigrants into the British economy. In fact, immigrants contribute much more on UK businesses. But we have negative aspects on the employments of low-skilled workers who receive less than they had before about their wages. (Dustmann *et al.* 2013). Migration has negative impact on British economy and its labour market. Costs and benefits was avoided by this camp on the debate of this phenomenon of immigration. Thus, Christian Dustmann and Tommaso Frattini stated that “(...) *recent immigrants endowed the country with productive human capital between 2000 and 2011 that would have cost the UK £6.8bn in spending on education.*” (Dustmann and Frattini, 2014).

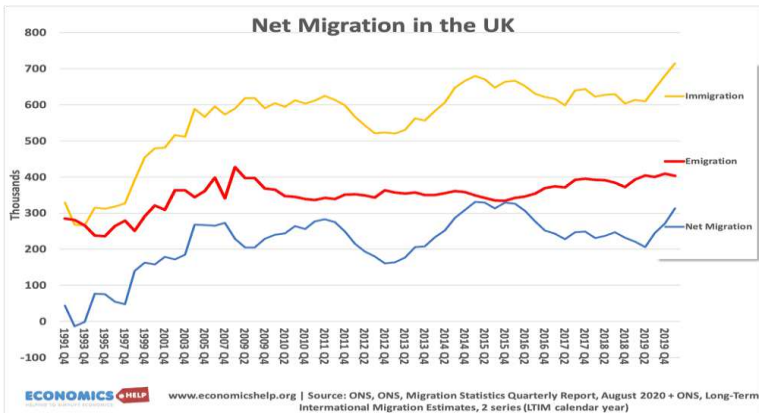
According to me, Western countries need net EU and non EU migration due to its ageing population. EU referendum of 2016 led to the fall of net EU migration but increase the flow of non EU migration. This phenomenon has a positive impact to UK economy since the Brexit. (Pettinger, 2021).

**Figure 1: Net Migration in the UK from 1991 to 2021**



Source: Impact of Immigration on UK Economy, 17 June 2021 by Tejvan Pettinger, <https://www.economicshelp.org/blog/6399/economics/impact-of-immigration-on-uk-economy/> **Inflows and Outflows**

**Figure 2 Net Migration in the UK from 1991 to 2019**



Source: Impact of Immigration on UK Economy, 17 June 2021 by Tejvan Pettinger, <https://www.economicshelp.org/blog/6399/economics/impact-of-immigration-on-uk-economy/>

The increase net migration has contributed into the UK public economy. These two figures show an increase of non-EU immigrants to UK. We see the opposite for non-EU nationals. This category outnumber EU immigrant. From 1999 to 2019, we have witnessed to an increase of these non-EU nationals.

## 2. Reasons for immigration and integration of EU and non-EU immigrants

Integration is “*the process of becoming a full member of a group or society, and becoming involved completely in its activities.*” (Showel, 2007: 786). One of the most salient issues on immigration is migrants fleeing tyranny, persecution or refugees fleeing war and seeking asylum and safety into the UK. They come to Britain seeking job opportunities... on *The New York Times*, Megan Specia, reporting from London on May 25, 2023 stated that “*In 2022, that figure jumped to 1.163 million, an all-time high and a figure that is unlikely to be matched soon.*” (Megan Specia, *The New York Times*, May 25, 2023) But allowing in too many foreigners, this is what frustrate indigenous people in Britain. The fact that Britain would be able to control its policies on immigration by taking back control of its borders was much debated by those who wanted to UK exit from the EU.

Thus, illegal migrants will be repatriated to their countries. Therefore, British voters decided to quit the European Union. This objective, so much vaunted by the most radical wing of British integration within the European Union seems to have plunged foreigners into uncertainty. Another thing which attracts immigrants to come and settle in Britain is the commonwealth. In other words, among these immigrants, there are some of them who are sons or father. (Pettinger, 2021).

However, foreign minorities face many uncertainties in British landscape. Since the coalition government between Conservative Party and Liberal Democrats, many immigration policies was announced. Thus, the Conservative Party has tried to implement more restrictive immigration policies to cut the flow of net EU and non-EU migration. Nowadays, these policies are not at the top of the political debate. The majority of the British population no longer consider immigration to be a very important issue. In fact, “*Britons*



*favor ‘controlled openness’ over closed door as immigration soars”.* (Simon Montlake, July 26, 2023).

The British do not totally reject immigrants, but they do want assiduous controls on migrants entering the United Kingdom. In other words, they are in favour of screening all immigrants wishing to set foot on British soil. They remain open to legal immigration. We can assume that the British are welcoming migrants to their country. Nevertheless, the population is resistant to illegal immigrants.

There seems to be a preference for immigrants among the British population. The natives criticise the government for not controlling the borders properly. They are in favour of very great restrictions on immigrants along the British borders. However, they also want immigrants’ quality, such as professionals who can work in the National Health Service... In this immigration quality, they are in favour of the integration of students, scientists, bankers, etc... The United Kingdom is for a “*controlled openness*” (Simon Montlake, July 26, 2023). In fact, legal immigrants are welcomed in Britain. They are keen on immigrants but against illegal immigrants (Simon Montlake, July 26, 2023). The fact is that “*Britain has major labor shortages, particularly in health care, social services and agriculture, partly because of Brexit.*” (Megan Specia, *The New York Times*, May 25, 2023)

As seen above, after the British exit from the European Union, we have more migrants from non-EU countries than those from EU members’ states. There are many reasons for non-EU migrants and EU migrants that led these two groups to come and stay or settle in UK. The main reason to come Britain is to pursue their university or college studies throughout UK schooling system. In addition, people arriving to UK’s shores come for work, family reasons, and seeking asylum.

After Brexit, we face a rise of net non-EU citizens coming to the UK. The majority of this net increase of net overall immigrants of non-EU citizens is due to work, study and humanitarian routes visa, refugee settlement, ‘*Hong Kong British Nationals (Overseas) status holders*’ and Ukraine from 2019 to December 2022 (Sumption *et al*, p. 7, 09 Aug, 2023). Non-EU arrivals according to ‘The Migration Observatory’, at the University of Oxford, “*The Net migration was unusually high in 2022, as several factors came together at the same*

time, including the war in Ukraine” (Sumption *et al*, p. 6, 09 Aug, 2023).

International students, skilled workers, humanitarian visa routes, refugee settlement (Asylum seekers reach a higher record) are reasons of many immigrants in Britain. As told above, the United Kingdom is not entirely against immigration. But the UK government is for high-quality immigration. In fact, new study policies enabled by the government make the UK educational system more attractive to international students. In May 2022, the English newspaper *The Guardian* stated that international students contributed to British economy average 42 billion in 2021/2022. (O'Carroll and Adams, Fri 27 Jan 2023). After Brexit EU and non-EU citizens receive the same status in UK universities. This shows the decline in the number of EU students enrolled at British universities after Brexit. (O'Carroll and Adams, Fri 27 Jan 2023). Nonetheless, the aim of the Department for education is to host many EU students in the long-term because “*EU students remain an important part of our international education strategy ambition of hosting at least 600,000 students a year and generating £35bn in exports for the UK economy, both by 2030.*” said the spokesman of this department (O'Carroll and Adams, Fri 27 Jan 2023). Furthermore skilled workers

British national (Overseas) contributed about £69,900 in 2019 in productivity throughout UK in matter of “infrastructure system”, “working methods”, and *proficiency in local language*. A trend states that “*As a baseline though, should 300,000 people migrate to the UK, the UK’s economy could benefit from a £12 billion stimulus (...). If 1 million individuals immigrate over a five year period, the UK could benefit from their productivity leading to an eventual economic stimulus of £40 billion.*” (Niculescu-Marcu, July 6, 2020). These Hong Kongers have more impact on the British economy. “*UK GDP could be boosted by £12-40 billion from migration of skilled Hong Kongers*”. (Niculescu-Marcu, July 6, 2020). Workers from Hong Kong have a net economic contribution to UK that is why they receive a warm welcome from Britain.

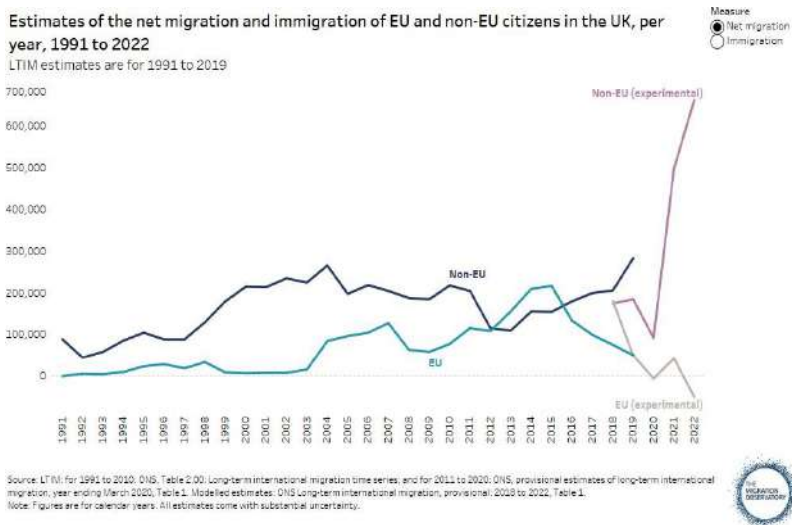
*Figure 3: Reasons for Migration in to UK*



**Madeleine Sumption, Peter William Walsh, Ben Brindle, 09 AUG 2023, BRIEFING: Net migration to the UK, The Migration Observatory, at the University of Oxford COMPAS (Centre on Migration, Policy and Society) University of Oxford, 58 Banbury Road, Oxford, OX2 6QS, available at <https://migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/MigObs-Briefing-Net-Migration-to-the-UK.pdf>**

This figure shows that studies are more likely the issue which attracts immigrants to UK. After studies, we have job opportunities. International students are more integrated in Britain than low-skilled workers.

Figure 4: Estimates of net migration and immigration of EU and non-EU, per year, 1991 to 2022



**Madeleine Sumption, Peter William Walsh, Ben Brindle, 09 AUG 2023, BRIEFING: Net migration to the UK, The Migration Observatory, at the University of Oxford COMPAS (Centre on Migration, Policy and Society) University of Oxford, 58 Banbury Road, Oxford, OX2 6QS, available at <https://migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/MigObs-Briefing-Net-Migration-to-the-UK.pdf>**

For more than a decade, Britain face an unprecedented number of new immigrants coming for many reasons. This figure shows that from 1999 until 2022, this immigration keep on going. Since mid-2010s, non-EU immigrants come to UK. Non-EU nationals outnumber those from the EU.

## Conclusion

Immigration and integration are currently highly salient topics. The first is at the top of the British debate issue in these recent times. In British politics, it is used to appeal more people particularly elder citizens. The British government tries to control immigration.

After the UK's withdrawal from the European Union, EU and non-EU immigrants face many uncertainties. The latter frightened many immigrants both non-EU nationals and particularly those from the EU. That is the reasons why we have tried to tackle immigration and integration. We have dealt immigrants' status and their integration after British exit from the European project. Besides, the second is an important issue among British People. The integration of EU and non-EU nationals depends on their qualification. In other, they can be easily integrated if these immigrants are highly qualified. They can meet the complex challenge of the ageing of the British population. They can also put an end the shortage in the British labour market.

As said before, Britain is not against immigration from EU and non-EU nationals. The purpose of British government was to cut migration after the exit of the EU. Its aim is to control its immigration policies and to tackle turbulence of the net migration into the UK. It was one of the main aim of the referendum of 23 June 2016. The British people knew that the government will implement some changes on immigration policies.

One of the most salient issue on immigration is migrants fleeing tyranny, persecution or refugee fleeing war and seeking asylum into the UK. But allowing in too many foreigners is what frustrate indigenous people in Britain. Thus, illegal migrants are not allowed to stay into the UK. The British tries to restrict some illegal immigrant to come and stay for short-term or long-term in the UK. They are sent back to their home countries after checking their administrative papers.

In this article, I have found that the British People and the conservative government are not against immigration. But they are in favour of high-quality immigration. Immigrants are important contributors to the UK Economy. They are so productive in many British sectors such particularly in the field of finance. Besides it has shown that these migrants have many positive impacts on EU net fiscal migrants' contribution to the UK economy. This issue of EU migration brings relevant costs and benefits to UK economy.

Thus, our study shows that even though UK exit from the EU, former EU skilled migrants will stay in Britain waiting for new UK regulations and will work there. These kinds of immigrants may stay in UK and work there as they want. Skilled immigrants, international

students, humanitarian refugee settlement and British nationals Hong Kong are big economic contributors to UK economy.

Britain is for international students, high-skilled workers, humanitarian visa routes, refugee settlement. As told above in the body the work, the United Kingdom is not entirely against immigration. But the UK government is for high-quality immigration. In fact, new study policies enabled by the government make the UK educational system more attractive to international students. This high-quality immigration is so important to This immigration is important because it can bridge the gap between the country's ageing population and the labour market, which needs more skilled workers as the years go by. These highly qualified immigrants can work in the National Health Service, infrastructures and so on so forth...

In short, the UK is in the process of legal, skilled immigration, which could reduce the gap in the British labour market. Thus, in many of our sources, we found that migrants from EU member states such as Bulgaria and Poland began to decline after the UK's exit from the EU. The post-Brexit policies are at the root of this decline in the number of migrants from the EU. In these policies, we have seen that EU citizens and those from countries around the world have the same migration rules within the UK. These EU nationals can be frightened by EU referendum speculations about the future of immigration policy in Britain which is told about being tough.

Nevertheless non-EU nationals increase. This situation is caused by a high number of visa route which is granted to non-EU nationals. The British government introduce the visa route to Ukrainian refugees. There is also the granting of visa route to Hong Kong British national (Overseas) status holders. At last, the UK government granted visa to international students in order to study and work there. They even can invest in UK. (Sumption, 21 NOV 2022).

As stated above, the main result of our article is that, now there are more non-EU nationals immigrants than EU immigrants into the UK. Net non-EU nationals immigrants increase in UK and it's the opposite for EU ones. May it be seen as a rejection of Britain of by EU immigrant or Britain immigration policies are unbearable by EU citizens.

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