

Sir Andrew Dilnot
Chair, UK Statistics Authority
by email

Full Fact

23rd December 2015

Dear Sir Andrew

Thank you for your letter of 11th November, in which you indicated that the Authority would discuss with officials how to improve the publication of statistics related to migrants' benefits. I would be grateful to know what progress the Authority has made since in establishing the basis of these figures.

Last week we learned that HM Revenue and Customs has refused a Freedom of Information request from the National Institute of Economic and Social Research on the basis that providing the data would affect ongoing negotiations with the EU on migrants' access to benefits.

NIESR requested data on how many National Insurance Numbers issued to recent migrants were "active"—meaning how many showed recent payments of tax, national insurance, or benefit claims. This data has shown higher levels of immigration than the net migration statistics have.

I am concerned that HMRC has declined to provide this data to NIESR when it relates to a major public debate on international migration numbers, and bears on the value and public understanding of official migration statistics.




Yours sincerely

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