

Migrant Workers in Kent

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This bulletin summarises the results of National Insurance Number allocations to adult overseas nationals entering the United Kingdom and looks at the number registering in Kent during the period 2002 to 2017.

The number of new National Insurance Number allocations to adult overseas nationals (NINo) is used as a measure for the number of new migrant workers in an area

Kent Summary

- There was a total of 615,467 new NINos allocated to overseas nationals coming to work in England in 2017. This was 18.1% lower than was seen the previous year.
- The South East region had the 2nd highest proportion of all the new allocations in England with 84,303 new allocations (13.7% of the England total).
- There were a total of 12,528 NINo allocations in Kent in 2017, 2,108 fewer than the previous year.
- NINo allocations to overseas nationals have fallen 14% in Kent since 2016.
- 67.4% of new allocations in Kent were to nationals originating in the EU Accession States.
- The top country of origin for workers registering in Kent was Romania which accounted for 3,578 new allocations (28.6% of allocations in the county).
- Maidstone district had the highest number of NINo allocations of all the Kent districts (2,477), accounting for just under a fifth of all the allocations in Kent.
- All Kent districts saw a fall in allocations since 2016 except Swale (+118, +6.9%)
- 70.3% of Kent allocations were to workers aged 34 and under
- The average age of an overseas worker issued new NINo in Kent was 30.2

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Introduction

The data used in this bulletin is taken from the National Insurance Recording System and is published by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). The data is randomly adjusted at source to avoid the release of confidential data.

The data cover overseas nationals allocated a National Insurance Number (NINo) on the National Insurance Recording System (NIRS). The figures cover overseas nationals who wish to work or claim benefits in the UK. This includes those who are self-employed or students working part time. All overseas nationals allocated a NINo are included, regardless of their intended length of stay in the UK.

The data show only those who are entering the UK each year and not those currently in the UK or those who are leaving. It shows where the person was at time of registration and not their subsequent movements. It is therefore not possible to determine how many migrant workers there are in an area at any one time.

The definition of migrant workers used in this bulletin - overseas nationals allocated a NINo - differs from other published statistics on this topic, such as statistics on foreign workers derived from the Labour Force Survey (LFS).

The LFS defines a foreign worker as someone who works but has foreign citizenship, and a foreign-born worker as anyone born outside of the UK, including British citizens. In addition to these two datasets there are numerous datasets related to the total number of migrants moving into and out of Kent. Such datasets provide counts of all migrants not just those who are migrating to work.

Additional information regarding migrant workers and the rules governing their entrance to the UK is available at the end of this bulletin.

This bulletin begins by looking at the total number of migrant workers allocated a National Insurance Number between January and December 2017 regionally in England. It then looks at allocations in Kent compared to 2002 and 2016, and at district level by world area of origin, gender and age group.

EU Accession States includes all the countries that had accession status prior to January 2017.

NOTE: When referring to Kent we mean the Kent County Council Area which includes all twelve local authority districts but does not include the Medway Unitary Authority.

Analysis

The "NINO Registrations To Adult Overseas Nationals Entering The UK" database contains quarterly data going back to January 2002 and holds a selection of breakdowns for administrative geographical areas.

The data covers adult overseas nationals entering the UK and allocated a National Insurance Number (NINo) on the National Insurance Recording & Pay As You Earn System (NPS).

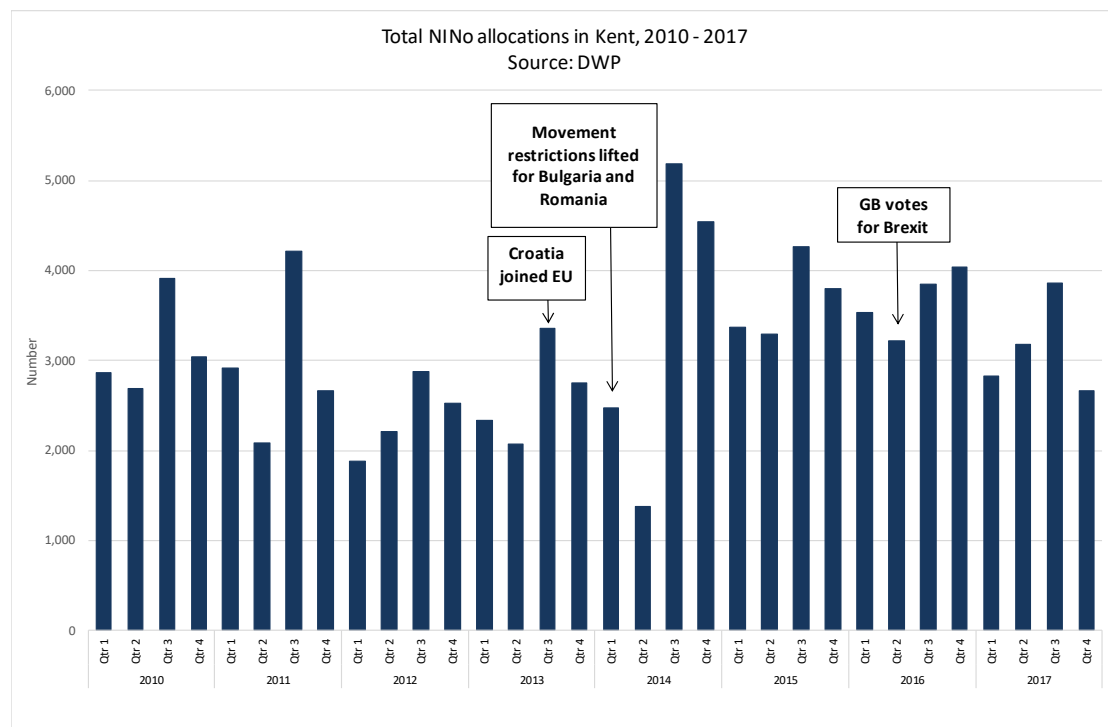
All adult overseas nationals allocated a NINo are included, regardless of their length of stay in the UK.

Quarterly NINo allocations

The quarterly series reflects both seasonal effects in the registration of adult overseas nationals entering the UK and operational factors in recording a NINo on the NPS computer system. Caution should be taken in interpreting trends based on all quarterly tables. Particular caution should be taken in interpreting data for the first quarters of years.

The quarterly timeseries of NINo allocations in Kent from 2010 is presented in chart 1.

Chart 1: Quarterly NINo allocations in Kent



Quarterly NINO allocations to European Union workers

Quarterly allocations to workers from EU8 countries (those which joined the European Union in May 2004) has been gradually declining since the end of 2014, while allocations to workers originating from other parts of Europe have remained fairly constant. This is shown in chart 2.

EU countries are:

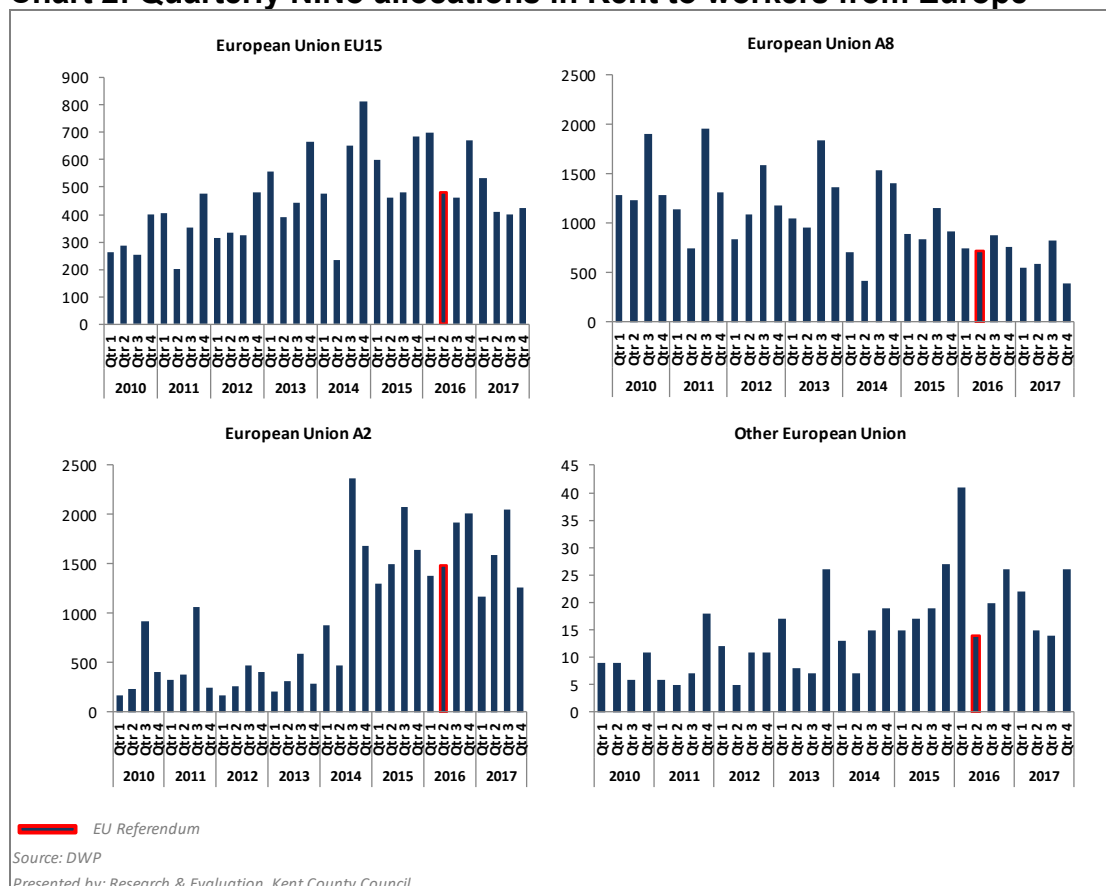
EU 15: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Ireland, Spain, Sweden (NOTE: EU15 data shows allocations from EU15 nations excluding Great Britain)

EU 8: Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Slovenia, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia which joined in May 2004

EU 2: Romania and Bulgaria which joined Europe in 2007 however they experienced restricted movement into GB until January 2014

EU Other: Malta, Cyprus and Croatia

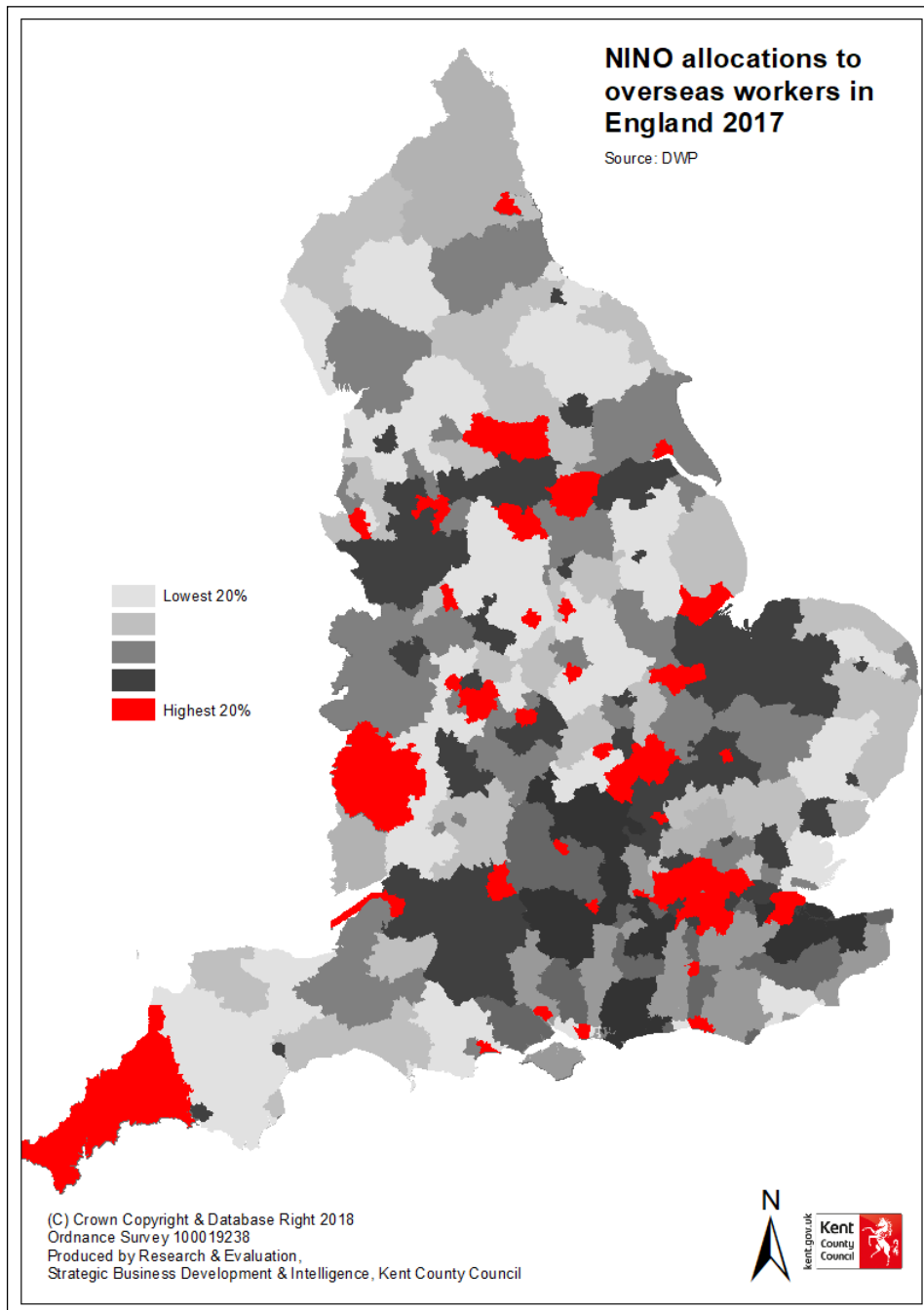
Chart 2: Quarterly NINO allocations in Kent to workers from Europe



Annual number of migrant workers

Map 1 shows the distribution of NINo allocations in England in 2017. Areas in red show the top 20% of English local authority districts with the highest number of new National Insurance Number allocations to overseas nationals.

Map 1



The regional distribution of migrant workers entering the country for the period 2017 is shown in table 1. There were a total of 615,467 new National Insurance Numbers to overseas nationals (NINOs) allocated in England during this period, a reduction of 135,657 (-18.1%) since the previous year.

Overall the London region had the highest number of NINO allocations in 2017 with 246,857 (40.1% of all allocations in the country).

The South East had the 2nd highest number of NINO allocations (84,303), equivalent to 13.7% of all allocations in England. The lowest number of allocations in England was in the North East which had 9,702 new NINOs (1.6% of the England total).

Table 1: NINO allocations by region, 2017

| | NiNO | | Number | | Number | |
|--------------------------|----------------|--------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| | allocations | % of England | change since | % change | change since | % change |
| | 2017 | allocations | 2002 | since 2002 | 2016 | since 2016 |
| England | 615,467 | 100% | +337,122 | +121.1% | -135,657 | -18.1% |
| North East | 9,702 | 1.6% | +4,651 | +92.1% | -1,301 | -11.8% |
| North West | 47,999 | 7.8% | +29,190 | +155.2% | -9,443 | -16.4% |
| Yorkshire and The Humber | 35,869 | 5.8% | +23,716 | +195.1% | -7,626 | -17.5% |
| East Midlands | 43,387 | 7.0% | +32,162 | +286.5% | -8,206 | -15.9% |
| West Midlands | 55,738 | 9.1% | +36,047 | +183.1% | -12,376 | -18.2% |
| East | 57,053 | 9.3% | +34,572 | +153.8% | -11,669 | -17.0% |
| London | 246,857 | 40.1% | +106,146 | +75.4% | -56,807 | -18.7% |
| South East | 84,303 | 13.7% | +47,616 | +129.8% | -18,377 | -17.9% |
| South West | 34,564 | 5.6% | +23,030 | +199.7% | -9,847 | -22.2% |

Source: DWP

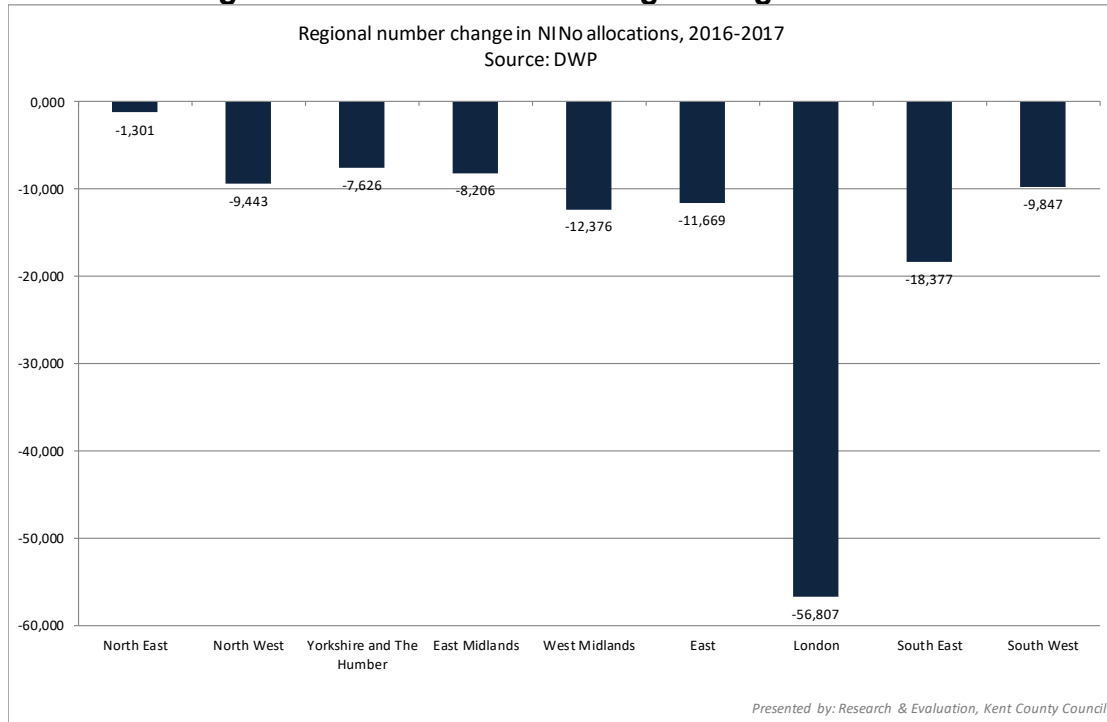
Presented by: Research & Evaluation, Kent County Council

Note: Figures have been randomly adjusted at source to avoid release of confidential data

Chart 3 shows how the number of NINO allocations has changed regionally since the previous year.

All regions saw a fall in new NINOs allocated in 2017. The highest reduction was seen in the London region (-56,807, -18.7%), the South East region saw the second highest reduction (-18,377, -17.9%).

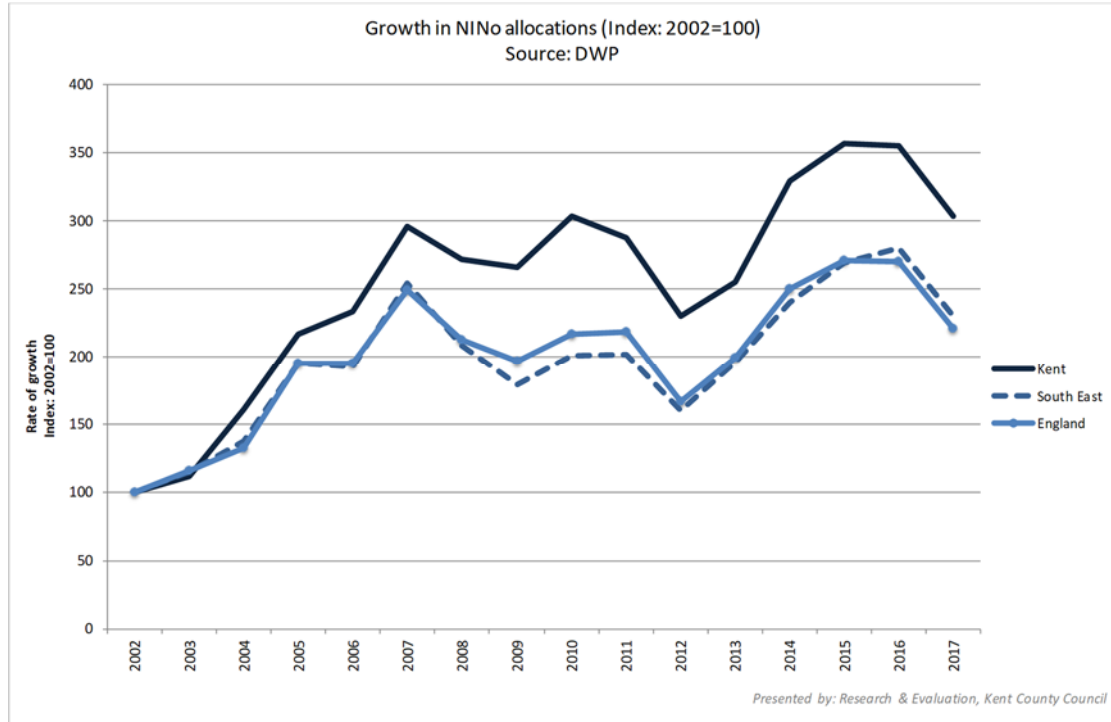
Chart 3: Change in NINo allocations in English regions



Kent saw a total of 12,528 new NINo allocations in 2017, 14.4% lower than the previous year. While Kent has shown a faster rate of growth since 2002 than England as a whole, over the last year saw a smaller percentage fall in allocations.

The rate of growth in number of NINo allocations since 2002 in Kent compared to England and the South East is shown in chart 4.

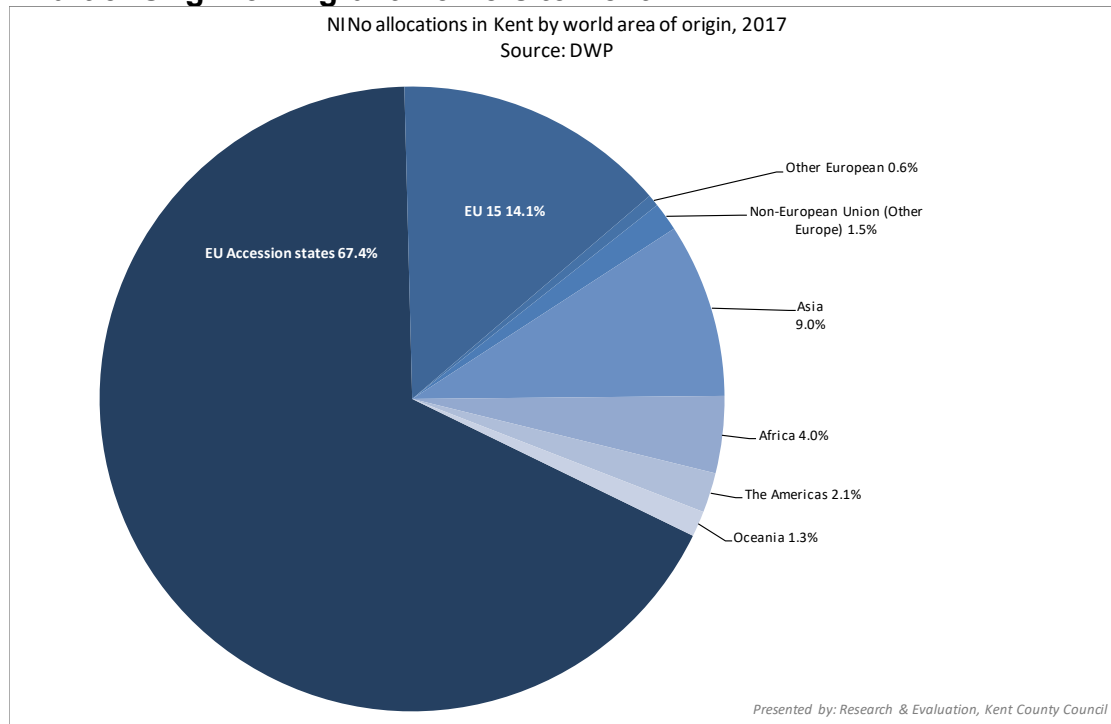
Chart 4: Growth in NINo allocations since 2002



Where have migrant workers registering in Kent come from?

The world area of origin data displayed in Chart 5 shows the origin of applicants registering in Kent based on their nationality. In 2017 of the 12,528 new NINo allocations in Kent 67.4% (8,442 NINOs) were to workers from the EU Accession States.

Chart 5: Origin of migrant workers to Kent



Since 2002 new NINo allocations in Kent to nationals from Africa, Asia and the Middle East, and Australasia and Oceania have fallen while allocations to nationals from Europe and The Americas have increased.

The biggest increase in both number and percentage terms in Kent was to those workers originating from the EU Accession States (EU8 and EU2). The increase in allocations to applicants from the EU Accession States was first seen in 2004 following the expansion of the European Union and reached a peak in 2010. The number of allocations fell slightly until 2014 saw a big rise in allocations. This was largely due to the inflow of workers from Romania and Bulgaria (EU2) following the lifting of restrictions to their movements in January 2014. In the year to 2017 allocations to EU2 workers fell slightly by 10.5% (714 fewer NINos) and to EU8 by 23.9% (-744 NINos).

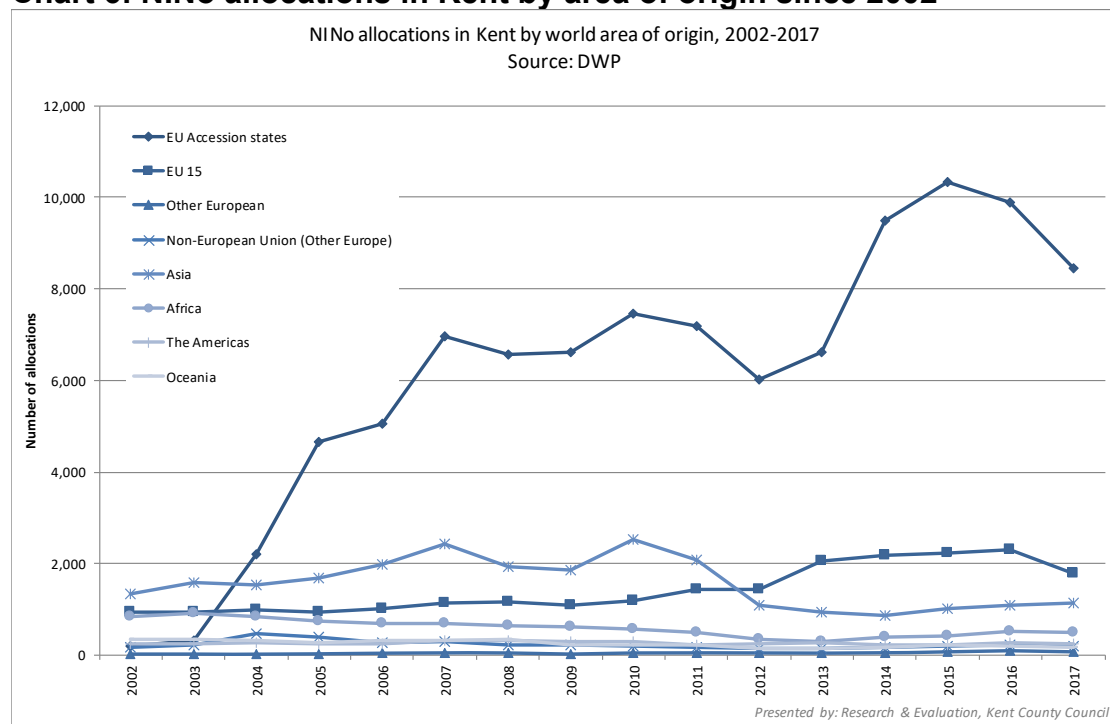
Overall allocations to workers coming to Kent from EU Accession States in 2017 accounted for 67.4% of the total NINo allocations in the county.

A list of all the countries classed as Accession States can be found at the end of this bulletin along with details of when they joined the EU.

In the last year the total number of NINo allocations in Kent fell by 14.4% (2,108 fewer allocations). Allocations fell to workers from all world areas with exception to those from Asia which increased slightly by 3.0% (+33 NINos).

Chart 6 shows annual NINo allocations in Kent since 2002 by the world area of origin.

Chart 6: NINo allocations in Kent by area of origin since 2002



Country of origin

The top ten countries from which NINo applicants in Kent originated in 2017 are shown in table 2.

Five of the top ten countries of origin are EU Accession States.

In 2002 and 2003 the top country of origin of new workers in Kent was South Africa and India respectively. From 2004 to 2013 Poland was the top country of origin, however in 2014 it was replaced by Romania which has remained top ever since. While Poland remains within the top three countries of origin it has been overtaken by both Romania and Bulgaria in recent years.

In 2017 there were 3,578 new NINo allocations in Kent to workers from Romania accounting for 28.6% of all new allocations in the county. This was a fall of 18.1% since the previous year (-789). There was a reduction in new allocations to most countries of origin within the top ten with the exception of Bulgaria which increased by 3.3% (+79 new NINos) and Nepal (+0.3%, +1 NINo).

The biggest increase in NINos in Kent was to workers from Bulgaria (79 more NINos, +3.3%) and workers from Eritrea (+52 NINos, +88.1%). The most significant reduction was to workers from Romania, the biggest reduction of any single country of origin. In 2017 there were 789 fewer allocations to Romanian nationals than the previous year (18.1% fewer NINos).

Since 2016 there has been a reduction in NINos from all Accession States with the exception of Bulgaria (+79, +3.3%).

Table 2: Kent top 10 countries of origin

| | Accession Country | 2017 | | Change since 2002 | | Change since 2016 | |
|--------------|-------------------|---------------|-------------|-------------------|---------------|-------------------|---------------|
| | | Number | % | Number | % | Number | % |
| Total | | 12,528 | 100% | +8,403 | 203.7% | -2,108 | -14.4% |
| Romania | A2 | 3,578 | 28.6% | +3,555 | +15456.5% | -789 | -18.1% |
| Bulgaria | A2 | 2,498 | 19.9% | +2,451 | +5214.9% | +79 | +3.3% |
| Poland | A8 | 1,181 | 9.4% | +1,142 | +2928.2% | -320 | -21.3% |
| Lithuania | A8 | 446 | 3.6% | +427 | +2247.4% | -101 | -18.5% |
| Italy | | 427 | 3.4% | +337 | +374.4% | -154 | -26.5% |
| Nepal | | 307 | 2.5% | +181 | +143.7% | +1 | +3% |
| Spain | | 290 | 2.3% | +196 | +208.5% | -131 | -31.1% |
| France | | 232 | 1.9% | -45 | -16.2% | -47 | -16.8% |
| Hungary | A8 | 232 | 1.9% | +220 | +1833.3% | -102 | -30.5% |
| Portugal | | 200 | 1.6% | +150 | +300.0% | -42 | -17.4% |

Source: DWP

Presented by: Research & Evaluation, Kent County Council

Note: Figures have been randomly adjusted at source to avoid release of confidential data

Migrant workers in Kent districts

The following section looks at the characteristics of overseas nationals allocated a NINo at Kent local authority district level.

When compared with other authorities in the South East Maidstone district had the 8th highest number of NINOs in 2017 (2,477). Shepway and Dover districts had among the lowest allocations in the region with 410 and 404 NINOs respectively.

Chart 7: NINo allocations in the South East region

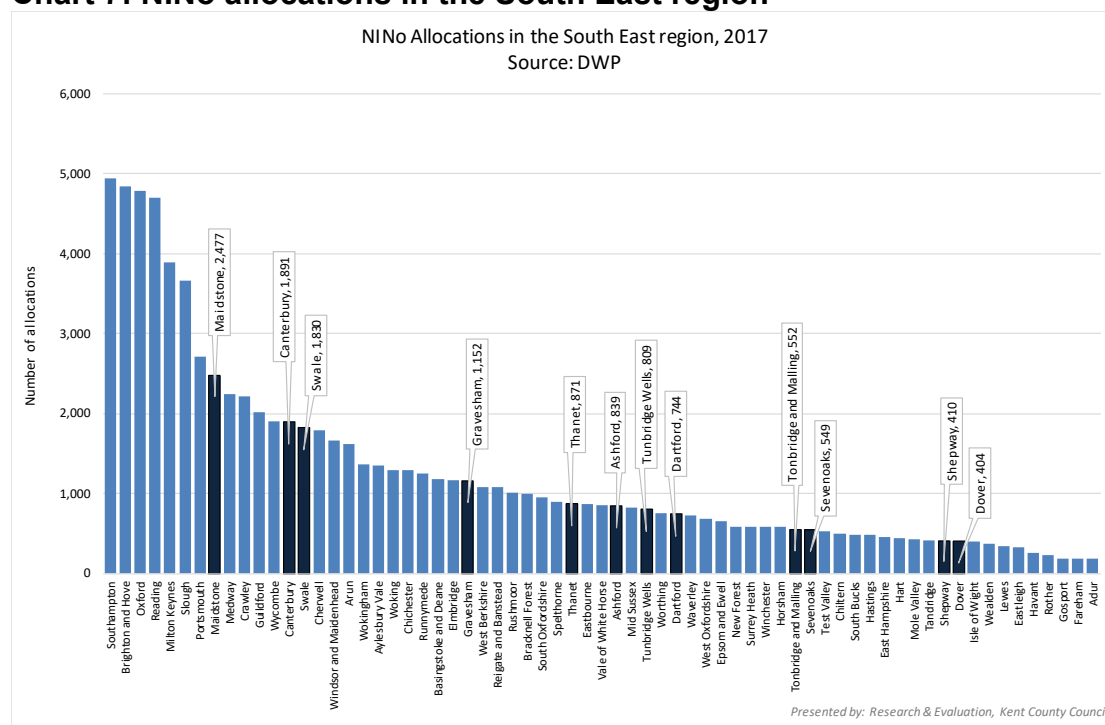


Table 3 shows the distribution of migrant workers across Kent local authority districts and shows the number and percentage change since 2016 and 2002.

Just under a fifth of all new NINo allocations in Kent (19.8%) were to migrant workers registering in Maidstone district (2,477 allocations), 261 fewer than last year. Dover district had the lowest proportion with 3.2% (404 allocations).

All Kent districts saw a fall in the number of allocations since the previous year with the exception of Swale district which saw a 6.9% increase (118 more NINOs than 2016). Canterbury saw the biggest reduction with 427 fewer allocations than in 2016, a reduction of 18.4%.

When looking at long term changes Maidstone district has seen the biggest increase since 2002 with 1,935 more allocations, closely followed by Swale (+1,681) and Canterbury (+1,414).

Table 3: Change in NINo allocations in Kent districts

| | 2017 | | Change since 2002 | | Change since 2016 | |
|-----------------------|---------------|--------------|-------------------|----------------|-------------------|-------------|
| | Number | % Kent total | Number | % | Number | % |
| Ashford | 839 | 6.7% | +423 | +101.7% | -123 | -12.8% |
| Canterbury | 1,891 | 15.1% | +1,414 | +296.4% | -427 | -18.4% |
| Dartford | 744 | 5.9% | +368 | +97.9% | -260 | -25.9% |
| Dover | 404 | 3.2% | +183 | +82.8% | -108 | -21.1% |
| Gravesham | 1,152 | 9.2% | +786 | +214.8% | -267 | -18.8% |
| Maidstone | 2,477 | 19.8% | +1,935 | +357.7% | -261 | -9.5% |
| Sevenoaks | 549 | 4.4% | +267 | +94.7% | -155 | -22.0% |
| Shepway | 410 | 3.3% | +136 | +49.6% | -112 | -21.5% |
| Swale | 1,830 | 14.6% | +1,681 | +1128.2% | 118 | 6.9% |
| Thanet | 871 | 7.0% | +539 | +162.3% | -168 | -16.2% |
| Tonbridge and Malling | 552 | 4.4% | +304 | +122.6% | -160 | -22.5% |
| Tunbridge Wells | 809 | 6.5% | +363 | +81.4% | -183 | -18.4% |
| Kent | 12,528 | 100% | +8,403 | +203.7% | -2,108 | -14% |

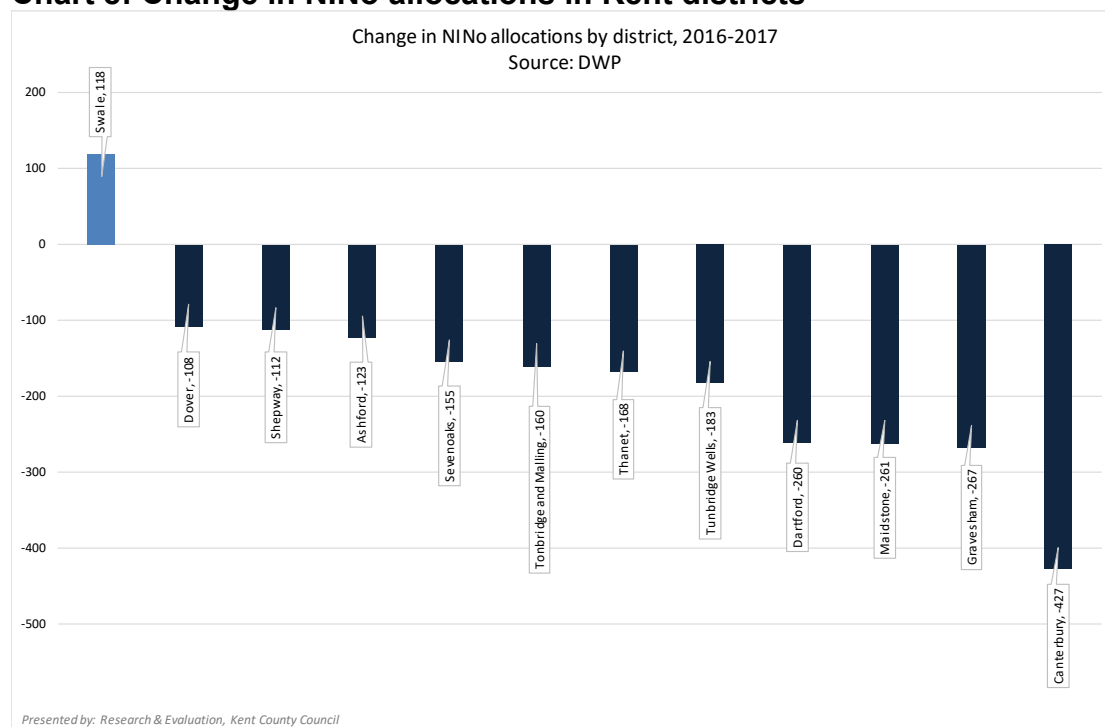
Source: DWP

Presented by: Research & Evaluation, Kent County Council

Note: Figures have been randomly adjusted at source to avoid release of confidential data

Chart 8 shows the change in NINo allocations in Kent districts since last year ranked from highest to lowest.

Chart 8: Change in NINo allocations in Kent districts



Nationally the highest proportion of NINo allocations was to workers from EU Accession States. This is also reflected in the South East region and in Kent as a whole. In Kent workers from the EU Accession States accounted for more than two thirds of all new NINo allocations. In Kent all districts had a higher proportion of new migrant workers from the EU Accession States than the England average of 47.0% with the exception of Shepway (35.4%). In Swale district 92.3% of allocations went to new migrant workers from the EU Accession States, the highest proportion of any district in Kent. However Maidstone district had the highest number of allocations to workers from the EU Accession States with 2,477 NINos, accounting for 80.9% of the allocations in that district.

A high proportion of NINos in Ashford and Shepway were to workers originating from Asia and the Middle East, accounting for 25.3% and 26.3% of allocations in each respective district. This is largely due to new allocations to workers from Nepal. The high proportion of Nepalese registering for a NINo in these areas is largely because of the number of Ghurkha soldiers formerly based locally applying to stay in the UK following active service in the British Army.

Canterbury (6.6%), Dartford (5.9%), Gravesham (6.4%) and Shepway (8.0%) districts saw a higher percentage of allocations to workers from Africa than the national average.

Table 4 shows the proportion of NINo allocations in each district by world area of origin and compares them to the UK average. Figures highlighted red show proportions higher than the national average.

Table 4: Proportion of district NINOs by world area of origin

| 2017 | Total | EU | Non-European Union | | | Asia | Africa | The Americas | Oceania |
|--------------------------|----------------|------------------|--------------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|
| | | Accession states | EU 15 | Other European | (Other Europe) | | | | |
| Ashford | 839 | 47.1% | 16.0% | 0.0% | 2.0% | 25.3% | 3.3% | 4.2% | 1.5% |
| Canterbury | 1,891 | 49.3% | 23.3% | 2.2% | 2.5% | 11.3% | 6.6% | 3.7% | 1.1% |
| Dartford | 744 | 59.0% | 19.1% | 0.7% | 1.7% | 10.8% | 5.9% | 2.3% | 0.9% |
| Dover | 404 | 62.9% | 13.6% | 0.0% | 1.2% | 14.4% | 4.0% | 3.7% | 1.2% |
| Gravesham | 1,152 | 69.1% | 13.2% | 0.0% | 1.7% | 7.8% | 6.4% | 1.0% | 0.6% |
| Maidstone | 2,477 | 80.9% | 8.3% | 0.0% | 1.0% | 5.2% | 2.2% | 0.8% | 1.1% |
| Sevenoaks | 549 | 59.7% | 22.0% | 0.0% | 1.1% | 4.0% | 3.6% | 3.8% | 4.7% |
| Shepway | 410 | 35.4% | 20.5% | 0.0% | 2.7% | 26.3% | 8.0% | 3.9% | 0.0% |
| Swale | 1,830 | 92.3% | 3.2% | 0.0% | 0.4% | 1.6% | 1.0% | 0.6% | 0.4% |
| Thanet | 871 | 68.4% | 12.3% | 1.5% | 2.6% | 8.4% | 4.2% | 2.0% | 0.9% |
| Tonbridge and Malling | 552 | 67.9% | 15.2% | 0.0% | 1.1% | 6.3% | 4.2% | 2.4% | 3.6% |
| Tunbridge Wells | 809 | 59.5% | 22.2% | 0.0% | 0.6% | 9.1% | 3.0% | 2.6% | 2.6% |
| Kent | 12,528 | 67.4% | 14.1% | 0.6% | 1.5% | 9.0% | 4.0% | 2.1% | 1.3% |
| Medway | 2,243 | 64.7% | 14.3% | 0.4% | 1.6% | 8.7% | 7.0% | 2.0% | 1.1% |
| Kent & Medway | 14,771 | 67.0% | 14.2% | 0.6% | 1.5% | 9.0% | 4.4% | 2.0% | 1.3% |
| South East | 84,303 | 48.6% | 24.9% | 0.5% | 2.2% | 13.9% | 4.1% | 3.6% | 2.0% |
| England | 615,467 | 44.9% | 27.5% | 0.5% | 2.4% | 14.3% | 4.4% | 3.5% | 2.4% |

Source: National Insurance Recording System.

Data supplied by: Department for Work & Pensions (DWP)

Notes: Figures have been randomly adjusted at source to avoid the release of confidential data

"-": data is nil or negligible

Figures highlighted in red show percentages higher than the UK average

Table presented by: Research & Evaluation, Kent County Council

When looking in more detail at the specific country of origin all districts showed that the top country of origin was one of the European Accession States, the most frequent being Romania.

The top countries of origin for NINOs in Kent districts are shown in table 4.

Table 5: Top 3 Countries of Origin for NINOs in Kent Districts

| 2017 | Number 1 | NiNOs | Number 2 | NiNOs | Number 3 | NiNOs |
|-----------------------|----------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|
| Ashford | Romania | 178 | Nepal | 142 | Bulgaria | 82 |
| Canterbury | Romania | 520 | Bulgaria | 263 | Italy | 97 |
| Dartford | Romania | 204 | Poland | 113 | Lithuania | 44 |
| Dover | Romania | 70 | Bulgaria | 54 | Poland | 41 |
| Gravesham | Romania | 402 | Poland | 147 | Lithuania | 126 |
| Maidstone | Romania | 791 | Bulgaria | 728 | Poland | 352 |
| Sevenoaks | Romania | 131 | Bulgaria | 52 | Poland | 42 |
| Shepway | Romania | 82 | Nepal | 69 | France | 21 |
| Swale | Bulgaria | 847 | Romania | 635 | Lithuania | 89 |
| Thanet | Romania | 181 | Poland | 133 | Bulgaria | 124 |
| Tonbridge and Malling | Romania | 201 | Bulgaria | 91 | Poland | 42 |
| Tunbridge Wells | Romania | 181 | Bulgaria | 178 | Poland | 81 |
| Kent | Romania | 3,578 | Bulgaria | 2,498 | Poland | 1,181 |

Source: DWP

Presented by: Research & Evaluation, Kent County Council

Note: Figures have been randomly adjusted at source to avoid release of confidential data

For the last three years the number one origin in all Kent districts has been Romania, Bulgaria or Poland.

Romania was the top country of origin for all NINOs allocated in Kent districts in 2017 with the exception of Swale which saw more allocated to nationals from Bulgaria than any other country. Only three countries which are not EU Accession States appeared in the top three of any district. This was Nepal which was the second highest country of origin in Shepway and Ashford, Italy which was the third highest in Dartford and France which was third highest in Shepway.

Age profile of migrant workers

In 2017 the majority of new migrant workers in Kent (70.3%) were aged 34 and under at the time of registration, just below the national average of 73.5%. More information is provided in table 6.

Table 6: Percentage of all Kent NINOs by age group

| | 2017 | |
|--------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| | 34 & under | 35 & over |
| Ashford | 70.0% | 29.6% |
| Canterbury | 77.7% | 22.2% |
| Dartford | 72.6% | 27.8% |
| Dover | 70.3% | 29.2% |
| Gravesham | 68.1% | 32.6% |
| Maidstone | 70.9% | 29.4% |
| Sevenoaks | 69.0% | 32.4% |
| Shepway | 70.7% | 28.0% |
| Swale | 64.2% | 35.9% |
| Thanet | 69.3% | 31.1% |
| Tonbridge and Malling | 73.2% | 27.7% |
| Tunbridge Wells | 67.7% | 32.1% |
| Kent | 70.3% | 29.7% |
| Medway | 71.0% | 29.0% |
| Kent & Medway | 70.4% | 29.6% |
| South East | 73.2% | 26.8% |
| England | 73.5% | 26.5% |

Source: DWP

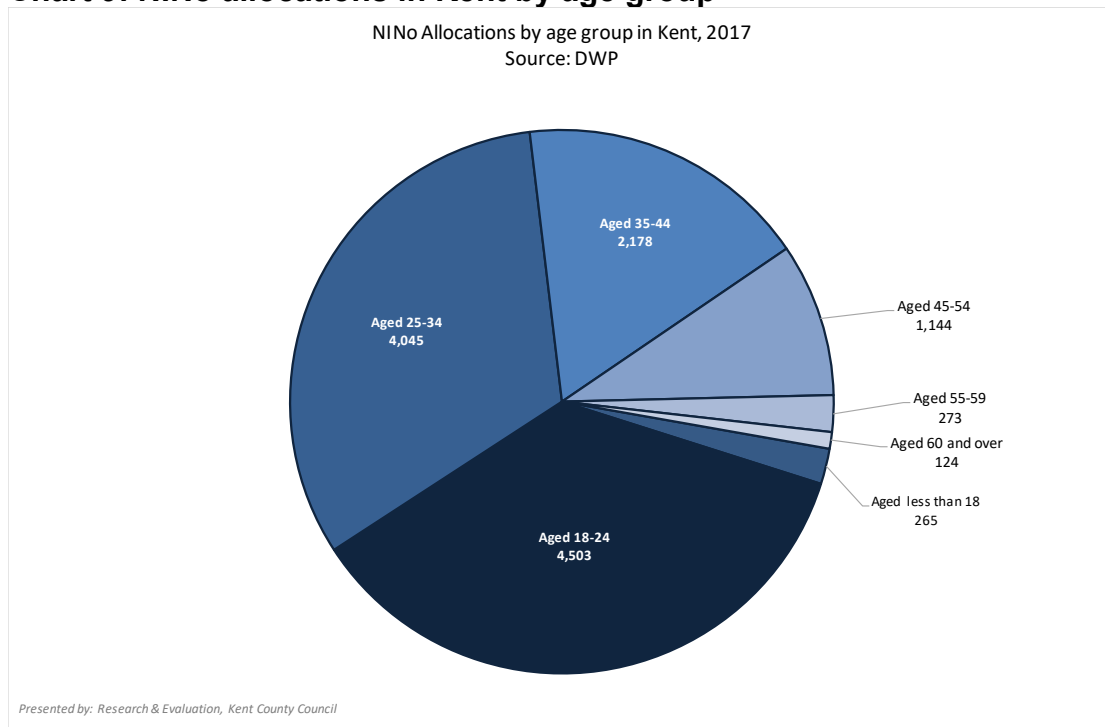
Presented by: Research & Evaluation, Kent County Council

Note: Figures have been randomly adjusted at source to avoid release of confidential data

Looking at the more detailed age groups of overseas nationals allocated a NINo those applicants aged 18 to 24 make up the largest proportion in Kent accounting for more than a third of all new allocations. The smallest age

groups are those aged less than 18 and those aged 55 and over. The proportions of each age group are shown in chart 9.

Chart 9: NINo allocations in Kent by age group

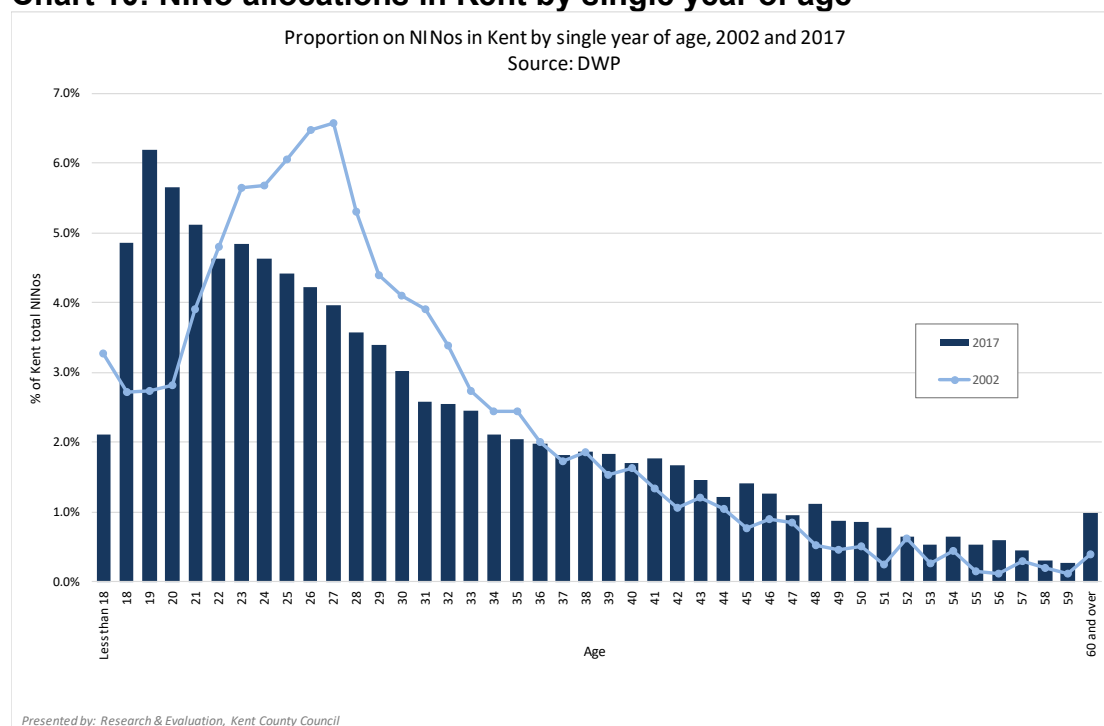


It is also possible to look at NINo allocations by single year of age. In 2017 those aged 19 at registration made up the highest proportion of new NINo allocations in Kent (6.2%) above the national average of 5.2%. There was a higher proportion of new workers registering for a NINo in Kent between the ages of 18 and 21 than was seen nationally and lower proportions of those aged 23 to 32.

Using this information we can calculate the average age of an overseas worker with a new NINo allocation. In 2017 in Kent the average age was 30.2. This is slightly higher than in 2002 when the average age was 29.3.

Chart 10 shows the age profile of workers allocated a NINo in 2017 compared with 2002.

Chart 10: NINo allocations in Kent by single year of age



Additional Information

Migrants from within the European Economic Area

All residents within Switzerland and the European Economic Area (EEA: made up of the 27 European Union member states plus Iceland, Liechtenstein & Norway) are free to enter and stay in the UK. These include the Accession States which are the 13 countries which joined the European Union since 2004.

The Accession States are:

- Malta and Greek Cyprus which joined the European Union in May 2004.
- The A8 countries (Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Slovenia, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia) which joined in May 2004.
- The A2 countries (Romania and Bulgaria) which joined in 2007.
- Croatia joined in July 2013.

Some restrictions were placed on workers from 10 of the Accession States due to fears of mass migration from those countries. Up until 30th April 2011 workers from the A8 countries had to apply to work in the UK through the Worker Registration Scheme after which they were awarded freedom of movement within the European Union. Workers from the A2 countries had to continue to apply for Accession Workers Cards to be able to work. From January 2014 all restrictions on workers from A2 countries were lifted, allowing the freedom of movement granted to all other Accession States.

Migrants from outside the European Economic Area

Migrants from outside Switzerland and the EEA are now controlled by a new points based system introduced in 2008/2009. This system consists of five tiers and each tier has a different points requirements. The five tiers are:

Tier 1 - highly skilled workers, for example scientists and entrepreneurs;

Tier 2 - skilled workers with a job offer, for example teachers and nurses;

Tier 3 - low skilled workers filling specific temporary labour shortages, for example construction workers for a particular project;

Tier 4 - students;

Tier 5 - youth mobility and temporary workers for example musicians coming to play in a concert.

Points are awarded based on the migrant's ability, experience, age and the level of need within the sector the migrant will be working. Migrants applying under any tier except tier 1 have to be sponsored by a UK based employer or educational institution in order for their application to be successful.