


Section A		
Institution: University of St Andrews 		
Unit of Assessment: UoA 14: Geography and Environmental Studies		
Title of case study: Migration and constitutional change in Scotland: evidencing policy positions, informing practitioners and shaping public perceptions.		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2013 - 31 December 2020		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s):	Role(s) (e.g. job title):	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:
David McCollum	Senior Lecturer	03 October 2011 - present
Hill Kulu	Professor	01 April 2016 - present
Allan Findlay	Professor	01 October 2011 - 30 September 2017
Period when the claimed impact occurred: 01 August 2013 - 31 December 2020		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? No		
Section B		
1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)		
<p>Immigration is a perennially contentious issue in most relatively high-income countries. This impact case study relates to tussles over immigration policy in the context of debates about constitutional change in Scotland and the UK. This issue is important because population growth in Scotland has specifically been identified as a key contributor to, and consequence of, a more vibrant society and a more dynamic economy. This research examined Scotland's migration 'needs' and the extent to which policy could potentially better respond to them. Our research demonstrates that Scotland faces demographic challenges that are distinct to those in the rest of the UK. As such it argues that a 'Scottish' migration policy is merited.</p> <p>The research has shaped and substantiated the policies and policy stance of policymakers and other stakeholders with regards to immigration policy and other migration-related issues. It has formed a distinctive and significant part of the evidence base that has been used to support claims for the devolution of immigration policy by institutions such as The Scottish Government, the Migration Advisory Committee and the Convention Of Scottish Local Authorities. Related to this, our research has influenced political debates around immigration policy towards labour and international student migration (in the Scottish Parliament and the House of Commons Scottish Affairs Committee) and has informed citizen understanding of issues relating to migration and Scottish constitutional change through our extensive public knowledge exchange activities.</p>		
2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)		
<p>The chief focus of this body of research has been to critically assess the highly policy relevant issue of migration and immigration policy in Scotland in the context of constitutional change. Much of the work was funded through the ESRC Future of the UK and Scotland programme, an extensive suite of research which examined various economic and political aspects of constitutional change and their implications for the future of the UK and Scotland. Our research was notable in that it was one of the few studies that consistently examined these issues through a migration and demography lens. The research was mainly carried out in the run up to the September 2014 referendum on Scottish independence, the Smith Commission which followed it (to examine which further legislative powers should be devolved from the UK to Scottish Parliaments) and reported in November 2014, and more recently debates about migration and immigration policy in Scotland in the context of Brexit (between 2016 and 2020). The research examined labour market (R1, R2) and international student aspects (R3) of international migration,</p>		

analysed public opinion (R4) and local authority perspectives (R5) and modelled population changes in order to determine Scotland's migration 'needs' and the extent to which policy could potentially respond to them (R6).

The key insights emerging from this body of research are that Scotland's experience of and attitudes towards immigration are distinctive (R4) and that Scotland faces specific demographic challenges, which will have considerable economic implications (R1, R2). Specifically, due to modest fertility rates, Scotland is much more reliant on immigration for demographic stability and growth, there is somewhat less public hostility to immigration, and international students are more important to the financial sustainability of Scotland's tertiary education sector (R3). The research contends that immigration policies that are specifically suited to Scotland's needs are merited, and that there is (qualified) support for this amongst policymakers, practitioners and (to an extent) the public in Scotland (R5). Critically, the research demonstrates that this is feasible in practical terms and under various constitutional scenarios. The research also finds that these issues are ever more pressing in the context of Scotland's demographic and economic vulnerabilities within a more restrictive post-Brexit UK immigration policy (R6). The papers cited in section 3 below are representative of our larger body of work on these issues.

Section 3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

The following academic papers (R1-R5) were published in high ranking Geography and interdisciplinary journals following a rigorous peer-review process and were based on peer-reviewed ESRC funded projects.

R1. McCollum, D. Tindal, S. and Findlay, A. (2016). 'The political economy of immigration policy: The example of Scotland'. *Scottish Affairs* 25(4). pp 506-529.
<https://www.eupublishing.com/doi/pdfplus/10.3366/scot.2016.0154>

R2. Bell, D. Findlay, A. and McCollum, D., and Wright, R.E. (2014). 'Labour migration policy and constitutional change in Scotland'. *Oxford Review of Economic Policy* 30(2). pp 310-324.
DOI: [10.1093/oxrep/gru019](https://doi.org/10.1093/oxrep/gru019)

R3. Tindal, S. Packwood, H. Findlay, A. Leahy, S. and McCollum, D. (2015). 'In what sense 'distinctive'? The search for distinction amongst cross-border student migrants in the UK'. *Geoforum* 64. pp 90-99. DOI: [10.1016/j.geoforum.2015.06.001](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2015.06.001)

R4. McCollum, D. Nowok, B. and Tindal, S. (2014). 'Public attitudes towards migration in Scotland: exceptionality and possible policy implications'. *Scottish Affairs* 23(1). pp 79-102. DOI: [10.3366/scot.2014.0006](https://doi.org/10.3366/scot.2014.0006)

R5. McCollum, D. and Packwood, H. (2017). 'Rescaling migration studies: migration policy-making and implementation at the local government level'. *Scottish Geographical Journal* 133(3-4). pp 155-171. DOI: [10.1080/14702541.2017.1409363](https://doi.org/10.1080/14702541.2017.1409363)

R6. Boswell, C. Bell, D. Copus, A. Kay, R. and Kulu, H. (2019). 'UK Immigration Policy After Leaving the EU: Impacts on Scotland's Economy, Population and Society'. Expert Advisory Group on Migration and Population. The Scottish Government. Edinburgh.
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/uk-immigration-policy-leaving-eu-impacts-scotlands-economy-population-society/>

Section 4. Details of the impact

Our research focus has primarily been on the immigration policies that are best suited to Scotland. Whilst control over immigration policy has largely been retained by the UK Government, the Scottish Government and key stakeholders in Scotland and the wider UK (supported by our research) have consistently argued for greater autonomy in this respect. Our research has shaped and **substantiated the specific policies and policy stance** of Scottish policymakers and a diverse range of stakeholders in Scotland and the rest of the UK with regards to migration issues. Related to this, our research has spearheaded wider **political debates around immigration policy** towards labour and international student migration. It has also informed **citizen understanding of issues relating to migration and constitutional change**. Our impact in each of these areas is detailed below.

1. Informing the public of Scottish immigration issues

We have widely promoted our research insights (R2, R4, R5) into the opportunities and challenges associated with a 'Scottish' immigration policy to a diverse audience. This includes the popular media such as *BBC Sunday Politics* programme, *The Guardian Live Chat*; debates attended by the general public and journalists, including the Edinburgh Festival of Politics, David Hume Institute, Spring seminar The Politicians and Professionals series; and popular outputs orientated towards informing citizen understanding of social issues and democratic participation, including *The Conversation* (readership: approximately 27,000,000) and the *ESRC Society Today* magazine (readership: approximately 17,000). Our Centre for Population Change (CPC) Working and Briefing papers on these issues feature in the 'top three' most downloaded lists for the research centre since its inception in 2009 (600,000 downloads for CPC outputs in this period, S1, p. 5). Likewise, our invited chapter in the e-book *Scotland's Decision: 16 Questions to think about before the Referendum* was downloaded more than 100,000 times in the 6-week period (S1, p. 2) leading up to the Scottish independence vote.

2. Enriching Scottish policies and policy stances on migration

Based on established and ongoing dialogues, as well as working with knowledge exchange professionals in the CPC and Future of the UK and Scotland programmes, we have been able to maximise the impact of our findings in the policy realm. Our research findings demonstrated that Scotland merits a distinct immigration policy. Illustration of how this could work in practice was discussed by Prof Findlay at his invited appearance at the House of Commons' Scottish Affairs Committee on Demography of Scotland and the Implications of Devolution in 2016 (S2). His recommendations were cited in the Final Report of the UK Parliamentary Inquiry, in which the Committee called on the UK and Scottish Governments to continue to work together to tackle Scotland's demographic challenges (S2). Our research (R1, R2, R4, R6) has been cited in numerous migration policy reports by and for the Scottish Government (S3). Accordingly, the Scottish Government has confirmed that: "*such evidence and insight has helped inform the Scottish Government's thinking and development of its policy positions on and how best to meet Scotland's migration needs.*" (S4)

Our assertion that Scotland is 'different' from other parts of the UK with regards to migration has been widely used to make the political case for supporting the reintroduction of the post-work study visa for international students in Scotland. It was directly quoted by Jayne Baxter, MSP for Mid Scotland and Fife, and James Dornan, MSP Glasgow Cathcart, to support these calls in a debate in the Scottish Parliament on the Post-Study Work Visa (PSWV) on 24th March 2015. Baxter said, "*In Scotland, we have a different way of looking at immigration. David McCollum from the University of St Andrews said: 'The character of immigration in Scotland is distinctive in terms of both the nature of immigration flows and social attitudes to immigration ... Scotland is dependent on migration for demographic stability and growth to a greater extent than the other constituent countries of the UK.' [So] The UK Government's policy is coming at much too high a cost across the whole of the UK and has an even worse effect in Scotland*" (S5, pp. 77-78).

Calls for the reintroduction of the PSWV (since reinstated in the form of the new Graduate Immigration Route), based on and citing our research (R3), have since been consistently echoed by a broad coalition of research users. These diverse beneficiaries include learned societies such as The Royal Society of Edinburgh, Universities UK, the Scottish Government, the National Union of Students and the Migration Advisory Committee. For example, the Royal Society of Edinburgh said "*your research-based contributions have helped to inform and strengthen our responses to the Migration Advisory Committee's (MAC) calls for evidence, including on the international impacts on international students in the UK (January 2019) and on a points-based immigration system and salary threshold (November 2019).*" (S6)

3. Providing evidence for policy makers and practitioners on migration

Enabled by our reputation as leading 'go to' experts in Scotland on migration, our team has had frequent collaborations with policy stakeholders aimed at directly communicating the practical

lessons and implications of our research. For example, in May 2017 Prof. Findlay and Dr McCollum were amongst a small group of invited experts to an all-day Scottish Government - Europa Institute roundtable event on “Meeting Scotland’s Immigration Needs in the Context of Brexit”. The meeting directly informed the Scottish Government’s position on EU migrants and free movement post-Brexit (S4). We have worked closely with the COSLA Strategic Migration Partnership concerning our research findings and their implications, which they have used to help local authorities prepare for and respond to migration: *“Our collaborative work [with St Andrews] has provided local authorities with a better understanding of migration in their local areas, which has influenced integration policy and service provision.”* (Chief Officer of the COSLA Migration, Population and Diversity Team) (S7).

One of these lessons concerned the impact on international students in the UK and our research has been utilised in a wide range of policy arenas addressing this issue. It directly informed the MAC’s 2018 recommendations to the UK Government with regards its policy on international students (S8, p. 37). Our work was also quoted in Call for Evidence submissions to this MAC report from the Greater London Authority (S8, pp. 283 & 286) and the Royal Society of Edinburgh (S8, pp. 498 & 506) to warn that the UK risks becoming less competitive in the market for international students due to restrictive immigration policy and rhetoric. Our research is also used in the 2014 MAC report on Migrants in Low Skilled Work to evidence the role of migration and recruitment agencies in the functioning of the low-wage economy, with the MAC calling for enhanced regulation of recruitment practices in these sectors based on our findings (S8 pp.118, 136, 138, 142 & 166). These contributions are significant because the MAC is the Public Body that is sponsored by the Home Office to directly advise the UK Government on immigration policy. Our work was also cited in the Unite 2015 submission to the Scottish Government’s consultation on the Scottish Agricultural Wages Board, which is a Public Body which sets minimum standards of pay and conditions in the sector, including for (often seasonal) migrant workers. This and other evidence were successfully used to argue for the preservation of this Board: *“The evidence in favour of retaining the Scottish Agriculture Wages Board is compelling”* (Rural Affairs Secretary, December 2015, S9).



→ Prof. Kulu has served on the Scottish Government’s influential 5-member Expert Advisory Group on Migration and Population since its inception in 2018. It directly advises the Scottish Government on immigration policy and their evidence has helped them to argue that the UK’s proposed immigration policy post-Brexit poses specific demographic and economic risks to Scotland (S4). For example,

the Scottish Government’s Public Finance and Migration Minister, Ben Macpherson, said: *“Evidence from our Expert Advisory Group on Population formed the basis of our February policy paper Migration Helping Scotland Prosper, which irrefutably shows that Scotland’s migration needs are distinct from the rest of the UK.”* (S10). This high-profile policy paper details how a tailored migration policy would operate to meet Scotland’s distinct demographic needs and effectively forms the basis of the Scottish Government’s immigration policy. It was showcased by the First Minister for Scotland at a launch event in Edinburgh on 27th January 2020 to widespread political, public and media attention (S11).

Section 5. Sources to corroborate the impact

S1: Downloads for *Scotland’s Decision* e-book and CPC Working Papers & Briefing Papers.
<https://www.ft.com/content/1801bef0-eaba-11e5-888e-2eadd5fbc4a4>
http://www.cpc.ac.uk/news/latest_news/?action=story&id=641

S2: House of Commons Scottish Affairs Committee discussion of Demography of Scotland and the implications of Devolution, 29th June 2016.

<http://data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/committeeevidence.svc/evidencedocument/scottish-affairs-committee/demography-of-scotland-and-the-implications-for-devolution/oral/34865.html>, pp. 17-30.

Final report: <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201617/cmselect/cm Scotaf/82/82.pdf>, pp. 6, 14-17 and 32.

S3: Pages 28-30 and 70-71 of 2016 Scottish Government report into 'The impacts of migrants and migration into Scotland'.

<https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/research-and-analysis/2016/10/impacts-migrants-migration-scotland/documents/00508814-pdf/00508814-pdf/govscot%3Adocument/00508814.pdf>

Pages 2, 11-12 and 30-31 of 2018 Scottish Government report into 'Farm Workers in Scottish Agriculture: Case Studies in the International Seasonal Migrant Labour Market'.

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/farm-workers-scottish-agriculture-case-studies-international-seasonal-migrant-labour/pages/3/>

Pages 28-32 of the Scottish Government paper 'Migration: Helping Scotland Prosper'.

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/migration-helping-scotland-prosper/>

S4: Written statement from Senior Principal Researcher, Scottish Government. 1st May 2020.

S5: Official report. Meeting of the Scottish Parliament 24th March 2015. The Scottish Parliament.

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=9872&mode=html>

S6: Written statement from the Policy Advice Manager at the Royal Society of Edinburgh. 3rd March 2020.

S7: Written letter of support from the Chief Officer of the COSLA Migration, Population and Diversity Team. 23rd January 2020.

S8: Citations in MAC reports and in the submissions of evidence from other organisations to them e.g. Royal Society of Edinburgh (RSE) and Greater London Authority (GLA).

Pages 118, 136, 138, 142 and 166 of 2014 MAC report on 'Migrants in low-skilled work'.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/333083/MAC-Migrants_in_low-skilled_work_Full_report_2014.pdf

Page 37 of MAC report on 'Impact of International Students in the UK'.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/739089/Impact_intl_students_report_published_v1.1.pdf

Pages 283 and 286 of GLA 2018 submission to 'Impact of international students in the UK: Call for evidence responses'.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/739092/Impact_intl_students_CfE_1of3.pdf

Pages 498 and 506 of RSE 2018 submission to 'Impact of international students in the UK: Call for evidence responses'.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/739092/Impact_intl_students_CfE_1of3.pdf

S9: Statement on The Scottish Government website. 22nd December 2015.

<https://account.ruralpayments.org/publicsite/futures/news-events/protecting-the-rights-of-low-paid-workers/>

S10: Email from Minister for Public Finance & Migration, Scottish Government, 26th June 2020.

S11: Article from the Guardian, 27th January 2020