International movement of researchers

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RAND EUROPE

RAND Europe is an independent not-for-profit public policy research institute

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Expertise in research systems analysis

Our recent work on researchers' mobility

Literature review

Industry consultation

Survey of 1,285 researchers (based in the UK)

Survey of 2,465 researchers (based around the world)

Researchers are an internationally mobile workforce

Increase in percentage of UK academic staff who are non-UK nationals:

72% of active UK researchers have trained or worked as researchers abroad

Europe is a particularly mobile and connected research community

- Over half of European researchers have trained or worked abroad for at least one year

The UK is an important destination

During FP7 (2007–2013), the **UK was the most popular destination for the European MCSA programme**, which supports researchers' career development.

Among EU member states, the UK has been the **top receiving country for PhD candidates** from both within and outside the EU

The UK leads the EU in the number of prestigious ERC grants it hosts. In 2016:

117 grants were awarded to researchers who would work in the UK

although only **45 grantees had UK nationality**.

People move to advance their career…

Professional opportunities encourage mobility:

Training

Jobs

Research environment

Professional motivations are more important than **personal drivers** in mobility of researchers overall

People move to advance their career… but choose to stay or return home for a mix of reasons

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FAMILY CHALLENGES *WERE THE MOST FREQUENTLY CITED OBSTABLE TO INTERNATIONAL RELOCATION*

27%

reported that **family-related challenges** had prevented them from **relocating abroad**

International mobility has benefits

Most researchers feel pressure to be mobile

of researchers agree that there is an **expectation of international mobility** in the research community

Family and personal reasons are the top two drivers of non-mobility, followed by career development

For those returning to the UK, **career development** is the most frequently selected driver, followed by family and personal reasons

> It was not easy to leave everyone I loved behind and move with $600 USD and a suitcase. The loneliness of having no one else in a whole country is very real.
>
> *Mexican researcher working in the United States*

Mobility costs money

Visas can be a barrier for some

Brexit is a concern for UK-based academic researchers

Because of Brexit and related uncertainty, and … some hate crime myself and my wife have experienced in the UK, we are moving to Italy.
- Italian researcher (established) working in the UK

Brexit has had a significant effect on my willingness to remain long term
- Professor working in the UK

I am absolutely shattered that after more than 10 years in the UK our ability to remain, to retire, to draw a pension, of our children to settle in the UK permanently, are now in question.
- Professor working in the UK

What does this mean for UK research?

- International movement benefits research systems
- Addressing obstacles can make the UK more attractive:
  - funding
  - visa support
  - wellbeing support
  - help with family obstacles

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THE ROYAL SOCIETY

- Sponsors of the international survey:

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