**Rebordering Britain and Britons after Brexit:**

**Survey, panels and interviews with British, EU and non-EU migrants, 2021-2024**

This archive contains files containing data and documentation from the ESRC project ‘Rebordering Britain and Britons after Brexit’ (MIGZEN) (Ref: ES/V004530/1).

**1. Data Files**

The data files are organized by project phase as follows:

**Phase 1: Survey**

This folder contains two files (.xls), namely the quantitative data collected for the survey ‘Migration and Citizenship after Brexit,’ and the codebook used to turn the survey questions into variables for data analysis. Related files:

* Survey data
* Survey codebook

**Phase 2: People’s Panel**

This folder contains one file (.xls), which contains the quantitative and qualitative data collected for the ‘People’s Panel,’ consisting of six short tasks covering the impact of Brexit, Covid-19 and other major events on the lives and practices of those taking part. Related file:

* People’s Panel data.

**Phase 3: Interviews**

This folder contains the transcripts (.doc) of fifty-four semi-structured qualitative interviews undertaken with various groups of people arriving or leaving the UK. Transcripts are organized per group, each in a dedicated folder (.zip). Additionally, it contains a pseudoanonymized database (.xls) containing interviewees’ demographics, interview date and modalities. Related files:

* BREM.zip: This folder contains ten interviews with British citizens who have emigrated;
* BRET.zip: This folder contains fifteen interviews with British citizens who have returned to live in the UK after Brexit;
* FAM.zip: This folder contains three interviews with family migrants who have moved to the UK after Brexit;
* HSW.zip: This folder contains seven interviews with highly skilled workers who have moved to the UK after Brexit;
* UKR: This folder contains interviews with nineteen Ukrainian citizens beneficiaries of one of the Ukraine visa schemes opened by the UK after the 2022 Russian invasion;
* Interview Data List (.xls).

**2. Data Collection Files**

The data collection files are organized by project phase, next to the documents used to collect research participants’ informed consent. They are organized as follows:

**Phase 1: Survey**

This folder contains the questionnaire (.doc) used to undertake the survey ‘Migration and Citizenship after Brexit.’ Related file:

* Survey questionnaire and structure.

**Phase 2: People’s Panel**

This folder contains seven files (.doc), consisting of the initial questionnaire used to collect demographic information on the People’s Panel participants, and the questions used for each of the six tasks undertaken. Related files:

* MIGZEN\_Peoples\_Panel\_Opt\_in and demographics;
* Task\_1\_Jubilee;
* Task\_2\_Summer;
* Task\_3\_Commonwealth;
* Task\_4\_Ties;
* Task\_5\_CostofLiving;
* Task\_6\_Migration\_in\_Global\_Britain.

**Phase 3: Interviews**

This folder contains the guides (.doc) used to undertake the qualitative interviews. Related files:

* British emigrant interview guide;
* Migrant in UK interview guide;
* British repatriate interview guide.

**Ethical consent documentation**

This folder contains the documents (.doc) used to collect research participants’ informed consent. Related files:

* MIGZEN Participant Information Sheet;
* MIGZEN Consent Form.

## Phase 1: Online Survey

The online survey **Migration and Citizenship after Brexit** was conducted as the first phase of the MIGZEN research project. It had a broad target population consisting of those moving to and from the UK before the end of the Brexit transition period, and specifically: (a) British citizens or nationals who were currently living/have lived in an EU/EEA member state (excluding UK); (b) Foreign-born and citizens of an EU/EEA member state who were currently living/have lived in the UK, and (c) Foreign-born and non-EU/EEA persons who were currently living / have lived in the UK. It was designed to understand whether and in what ways Brexit and the COVID-19 pandemic had affected respondents’ perceptions, plans and decisions on whether to stay put, migrate, or repatriate, and how these events had how these events have changed, if at all, attitudes towards the EU, country of residence and origin, understandings of citizenship, identity and belonging.

It was administered via Qualtrics (an online survey platform) and was open for five weeks (13 December 2021 - 16 January 2022), during which we collected 2,024 unique and valid responses.

**Survey Design**

The survey contained 96 questions organised into six modules, exploring: current residency and migration/legal status; citizenship and migration trajectories; relationships; identities and belongings; social, political and community participation; and socio-demographic information. These were formulated as either multiple choice or open-ended questions, the latter allowing participants to describe their circumstances, position and identities in their own words.

At the start of the survey, participants were asked to confirm their eligibility (i.e., age and inclusion in one of the target populations groups) and to provide informed consent.

Questions in modules 1-5 developed the project’s research questions, while we designed module 6 drawing from existing survey tools and in particular the UK census (2021); the European Social Survey (2020); the ILO Labour Force Surveys and ‘how to survey’ guides prepared by organizations and groups doing anti-discrimination work.

Most modules included a mix of closed and open-ended questions. Closed questions consisted of: (i) multiple choice; (ii) Likert scales; (iii) matrixes; open-ended questions consisted of: (iv) requests of optional additional information; (v) text boxes; (vi) ethnic and/or racial self-identification. Cognizant of the constrained nature of multiple- choice questions, we systematically included in each an open text option, thereby maximizing the survey’s overall inclusiveness and context-specificity.

**Pilotting and cognitive interviewing**

Before launching the survey, we asked representatives of our project partners *The3Million, British in Europe* and *Migrant Voice*, to review the survey and suggest any adjustments. We revised the survey taking on board their comments and suggestions.

To pilot and test the survey, we conducted a round of cognitive interviewing and field testing. This helped us to further develop the questions’ clarity and effectiveness and identify any branching failures in the survey logic. This testing was conducted with seven volunteers, drawn from across the target population who took part in a videocall with a member of the research team. Each volunteer was invited to: (i) respond to the survey; (ii) report in real time any doubt, problem or barrier they may have encountered; (iii) offer their advice on how to improve the formulation of unclear or ambivalent questions. Insights gained through this phase were subsequently incorporated in the survey’s final version.

**Sampling and distribution**

Participation was by self-selection. Our recruitment strategy was designed to reach out as many different voices as possible among the target populations. We thus circulated our call for participants as widely as possible, investing energies in encouraging the participation of typically underrepresented nationalities and social groups. To this end, and particularly to diversify the profile of respondents, we translated recruitment materials in the languages of the ten most numerous groups of foreign nationals living in the UK – as per the Home Office Immigration Statistics – and distributed calls for participation to migrant and diaspora organizations.

The survey was administered in the form of an anonymous link that we shared across multiple means of online communication: (i) project and partners’ websites; (ii) social media (Facebook and Twitter); (iii) emails to relevant organizations and associations at the local, national and European levels.

**Analysis**

Upon conclusion of the survey, we exported the data into a .CSV file and cleaned it for use with STATA MP4 and NVivo12 to undertake quantitative and qualitative data analysis respectively. We addressed the open-ended responses to the multiple-choice questions (see ‘Structure and design’) by recoding them manually, as relevant and appropriate, either under existing or new responses. The question on ethnic/racial self-identification was open-ended and it required creating categories anew, which we did inductively and with the goal to offer a broad versus granular picture of respondents’ identities. Using STATA, we undertook a descriptive analysis of the responses to the closed questions, while we used NVivo to undertake inductive thematic analysis of the open-ended questions.

**Limitations**

*Individual vs. relational information*. The survey was designed for and administered to individuals, and it did not include a household roster, which means that we do not have granular information on the composition of their household. We also do not know whether and how many respondents were related to each other and/or lived in the same household.

*Incomplete sociodemographic data*. Approximately one fourth of the respondents (26%) dropped out before completing the survey, meaning that we do not have their sociodemographic information. Very few of those who did reach the end of the survey provided information on their individual and (if applicable) household income, which compelled us to drop this variable from the analyses due to its weak statistical power.

## Phase 2: The MIGZEN People's Panel

Between May and December 2022, the **MIGZEN People’s Panel** tracked the ongoing impact of Brexit and the Covid-19 pandemic on future migration plans, understanding of citizenship and sense of belonging of a cohort of British citizens living abroad, EU citizens and other immigrants living in the UK since before the end of the Brexit transition period.

The novel design of this element of the MIGZEN research was intended to bring together a broad range of participants from across different demographics, including those who had moved to and settled in the UK, either through the EU’s Freedom of Movement regime or UK immigration controls, and British citizens who had made lives for themselves in the EU’s 27 member states.

The primary aim of the panel was to keep a finger on the pulse of how and in what ways Brexit, Covid-19, and other major events occurring over the period covered by the research continued to impact on the lives and practices of those taking part.

### **Recruitment & Sampling**

We recruited participants from three target populations who have arrived/settled in their current country of residence pre-Brexit: British citizens living in the EU/EEA; EU-27/EEA citizens who have been living in the UK, and citizens of countries outside of the EU27/EEA/Britain who have been living in the UK.

We circulated our Call for Participants (in English) on the MIGZEN project’s social media, amongst the approx. 2000 people who had taken part in the MIGZEN survey in the winter of 2021/22, and through our networks established through previous research ([Eurochildren](http://www.eurochildren.info/%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) and [BrExpats](https://brexitbritsabroad.org/)). Our partner organisations the3million, British in Europe, and Migrant Voice also circulated these calls through their networks. Finally, we reached out to university networks, migrant-run or centred organisations across the UK and EU. Our recruitment drive took place concurrently with the launch of the first task in May 2022. We then continued to engage in active recruitment until the end of the 3rd task.

Interested participants were invited to respond to a set of eligibility questions administered via the online survey platform Qualtrics, followed by an online consent form, and a voluntary survey to capture sociodemographic information. We had initially aimed to recruit 200 panellists, but the first round of recruitment far exceeded this. Anticipating attrition, we decided to extend this to 400.

### **Design**

A set of six tasks was administered to the panel via the online survey platform Qualtrics on a monthly basis from May 2022 to December 2022. These were designed to deepen our understanding of how those taking part related to the themes at the heart of the research: migration, mobility, and Britain’s borders after Brexit. Each task was distributed to panellists and kept open for 3 weeks. Reminders were sent one week before closing, and participants were given the options to opt out at any point during or in between tasks. Those opting into the panel were assigned a panellist code so we could link responses from the same participant across tasks/longitudinally.

Tasks were framed in response to emergent findings of the MIGZEN project or ongoing and pressing real-world events. Each task was designed to take approx. 5-10 minutes to complete and included a combination of open and closed questions as appropriate to the task, framed to elicit reactions, assessments, associations, or feelings of those participating. The table below offers an overview of the tasks:

| **Task name** | **Themes** | **Open** | **Type of questions** | **No. of responses** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **The Jubilee & You** | The Queen’s Platinum Jubilee celebrations. Feelings about the Queen and the monarchy.   | 24 May– 15 Jun   | Picture upload, Open (text and word) & closed (multiple choice & likert scale)  | 410  |
| **Moving through Summer** | Travel restrictions & chaos, uneven mobility and freedom of movement, transnational family trips.  | 21 Jun – 13 Jul   | Open (text and word) & closed (multiple choice)  | 349  |
| **The Commonwealth Games 2022** | Feelings and knowledge about the Commonwealth Games and Commonwealth as an institution.   | 20 Jul – 10 Aug   | Open (text and word) & closed (multiple choice & likert scale)  | 300  |
| **Connecting families** | Family ties, connecting and staying in touch across borders.  | 14 Sep - 5 Oct   | Open (text) & closed (multiple choice & likert scale)  | 295  |
| **Crises upon Crises** | Cost of living crisis, energy crisis.  Impact on people’s lives and perceptions of government response to crises.  | 10 Nov – 1 Dec  | Open (text) and closed (multiple choice & likert scale)  | 268  |
| **The UK Border after Brexit** | Migration to Global Britain. Perceptions of flows and numbers, as well as government responses.  | 7 Dec – 29 Dec   | Open (text) & closed (likert scale)  | 252  |

Table 1:  People’s Panel tasks.

We expected high levels of attrition but had unexpectedly high retention, thus ending up with a cohort of 190 participants who participated in all 6 tasks (Table 2), with nearly 300 people completing at least 4 tasks.

| **Task participation count out of 6** | **Participants** |
| --- | --- |
| 1   | 54  |
| 2  | 41  |
| 3  | 38  |
| 4  | 41  |
| 5  | 64  |
| 6  | 190  |

Table 2: Number of people who completed number of tasks out of a total of 6 tasks.

The data produced through this phase was analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively via Excel.

## Phase 3a: Interviews with repatriating British citizens

**Recruitment**

This element of the research sought to examine the experiences of those British citizens repatriating to the UK from the EU/EEA since the Brexit referendum. Interviews took place between May and September 2022, and focussed on participants’ experiences of settling back in the UK, the feelings attached to this decision and their assessment of it.

The call for participants was published on the project website, which directed users towards a Qualtrics-based contact form; it was also distributed by project partner’s British in Europe, relevant advisory board members, the project’s social media channels and published in relevant Facebook groups (with prior permission from administrators). We also drew on Professor Benson’s established networks with British citizens in the EU, and contacted people who had earlier participated in our survey having agreed to be contacted for follow-up research activities.

People who left their contacts online were subsequently contacted via email by a project team member and were sent the participant information sheet and consent form – containing detailed information on the project purpose, process and procedures – alongside a request, if they consented to participate, to set up a time for an interview.  We sent one reminder to individuals who did not reply to our first email, but pursued this no further if we received no response.

**Interview design**

Interviews followed a semi-structured format and were broadly organised around the decision to repatriate, preparations for the move, the experience of resettlement in the UK and the assessment of the return decision. They lasted an hour on average and were audio-recorded with the participants’ permission.

Every participant was also asked to provide (voluntary) demographic information by filling up a Qualtrics-based online form.

**Data Collection**

Interviews were conducted online via Microsoft Teams, which is GDPR-compliant and offers recording. In total, we conducted **fifteen interviews**.

**Post-interview processing**

Interviews were transcribed and cleaned; personal and identifying information was removed before importing the transcript to NVivo for analysis.

**Analysis**

Interviews were thematically analysed using a coding framework elaborated starting from Professor Sigona’s work on EU citizens leaving the UK and returning to the EU/EEA after Brexit. Key themes included the relationship between the return decision and respondents’ family members in the migration country and the UK, feelings about the Brexit referendum and its impact on their own and their family lives, as well as the broader British society, identities and belongings, assessments of their life in the UK against that which they conducted in the EU/EEA, and future plans.

## Phase 3b: Interviews with Hong Kongers, Ukrainians and other new migrants to the UK

**Recruitment**

The second round of interviews was designed to document the experiences of those newly arriving in the UK, and it took place between September 2022 and February 2023.

The target population for this element of the research was designed to reflect the significant changes in migration flows to the UK since the end of the Brexit transition period—notably, the sharp decline in the number of EU citizens newly arriving in the UK, the significant numbers of those arriving in the UK via the Hong Kong BN(O) and Ukraine visa, and those coming to the UK via skilled and family visa routes.

To recruit participants we circulated recruitment materials directing to a Qualtrics-based contact form via our project partners, the project’s social media channels, relevant Facebook groups (with prior permission from administrators), professional organizations, personal contacts, migrant and diaspora organizations and networks offering support to migrants and refugees in England and Scotland. In order to encourage recruitment across the broad demographics of those newly arriving in the UK, we translated the contact form, participant information sheet and consent form into Ukrainian and Cantonese. We also arranged to offer interviews in these languages upon request.

People who left their contacts online were subsequently contacted by a member of the project team and were sent the participant information sheet and consent form – containing detailed information on the project purpose, process, and procedures – alongside a request, if they consented to participate, to set up a time for an interview.  We sent one reminder to individuals who did not reply to our first email, but pursued this no further if we received no response.

**Interview Design**

Interviews followed a semi-structured format; they lasted an hour on average and were audio-recorded with the participants’ permission. Questions were broadly organised around finding out about migration and settlement experiences and relationships to place of origin and the UK and were adjusted to account for different migration motives and trajectories.

Every participant was also asked to provide (voluntary) demographic information by filling up a Qualtrics-based online form (in English) or a paper copy of it for interviews conducted in Ukrainian or Cantonese.

**Data collection**

Interviews largely took place online via Microsoft Teams, which is GDPR-compliant and offers recording, with a few (n.14) taking place in-person, in a public space (e.g., café). They were conducted in either English (n.35), Ukrainian (n.14) or Cantonese (n.4). Where interviews were carried out in Ukrainian or Cantonese, we employed researchers with fluency in these languages to conduct, transcribe and translate the interviews on our behalf, using the interview guide developed by the project team. Researchers signed a confidentiality agreement, and they were trained on the interview guide and procedures by a project team member. To ensure quality and consistency in the outputs delivered, the team reviewed the first interview conducted by each, and offered feedback as appropriate.

In total, we conducted **fifty-three interviews**: twenty-two with Hong Kongers, twenty with Ukrainians, seven with highly skilled workers and four with family migrants.

**Post-interview processing**

Interviews were transcribed and cleaned; personal and identifying information was removed before importing the transcript to NVivo for analysis.

**Analysis**

Interviews were thematically coded using a coding framework collectively developed by the team; each member piloted it, and everyone’s comments and observations were subsequently integrated in its final version. Key themes included people’s pre-departure imaginings of Britain; reasons underpinning their move to the UK; the capital, assets and resources carried and/or developed in migration; perceptions and experiences of belonging, integration and discrimination; social networks and the roles of these in people’s settlement trajectories; relationship between people’s country of origin and the UK, their views on ‘Global Britain’ and Brexit, and their plans for the future.