# Migrant households now account for nearly £1 billion in monthly universal credit payments amid surging net migration



Migrant households in Britain are reportedly receiving nearly £1 billion in universal credit welfare benefits each month, with recent analyses revealing that this alarming figure reached £941 million in March. This sharp rise from just £461 million three years ago starkly illustrates the crippling financial implications of the previous Conservative administration's lax post-Brexit immigration policies, which have led to record net migration numbers reportedly cresting 906,000 in 2023. Such figures mean migrant households are now shouldering around 15.5 percent of total universal credit payments, a burdensome leap in taxpayer liability.

While eligibility for universal credit requires residential or refugee status, which aligns migrants with benefits available to British nationals, the financial strain on the welfare system is dire. The Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) has spotlighted the eye-watering annual housing costs for asylum seekers—which include individuals who may have entered the UK illegally—at approximately £4.7 billion. This staggering figure capsulates growing apprehensions over the strain migration places on essential public services like healthcare, education, and housing.

The newly minted Labour government led by Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer now stands under withering scrutiny for its approach to immigration, particularly amidst austerity measures. Starmer has drawn fire for placing immigrant welfare above the needs of British citizens, including proposing cuts to vital programmes like winter fuel aid for the elderly. In a candid moment, he acknowledged that mass migration has not delivered on its lofty promises of increased wealth and societal harmony, warning that the trend threatens to reduce Britain to an “island of strangers.”

Concerns voiced by opposition figures highlight the government's financial prioritisation, with current policies directing funds away from the UK’s elderly in favour of supporting migrant benefits. Critically, one prominent voice has pointed out, “On the day that we learn migrant benefits cost us £1bn a month, many hundreds are crossing the English Channel. Labour are ruining our country.”

Despite Starmer’s declarations to curb net migration by the end of the decade, projections suggest that the numbers will still linger in the hundreds of thousands. The ongoing failure to extricate the UK from the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) further compounds these challenges, detracting from effective deterrents that could stem the tide of illegal crossings.

Moreover, a recent report from the Centre for Migration Control indicates that UK taxpayers have shouldered an estimated £36 billion in costs due to foreign students and economically inactive migrants since 2020. This staggering financial drain underscores an urgent necessity for a reevaluation of prevailing immigration policies, which appear to only exacerbate the already overwhelming welfare burdens on the state.

The mounting evidence of increasing strain on British welfare and public services fundamentally calls for a critical overhaul of existing immigration strategies. As taxpayers confront the harsh fiscal realities imposed by these policies, the discussion surrounding the sustainability of current migration practices is growing ever more urgent, with a clear demand for substantial reforms to forge a more equitable and manageable system moving forward.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.breitbart.com/europe/2025/05/31/migrants-receiving-nearly-1-billion-in-universal-credit-welfare-benefits-per-month-in-britain/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.breitbart.com/politics/2025/03/17/foreigners-benefitted-from-7-6-billion-in-universal-credit-welfare-payments-in-britain/> - An analysis of official data reveals that over a million migrants benefited from the Universal Credit welfare scheme in Britain, costing taxpayers £7.6 billion in 2023. Projections based on Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) data estimate that approximately 1,158,000 foreign nationals received Universal Credit, a monthly welfare subsidy for low-income working-age households. Migrants become eligible for the same benefits as native Britons once granted refugee status or indefinite leave to remain. The Centre for Migration Control (CMC) suggests that this figure is likely to increase due to record numbers of foreigners entering the UK under previous Conservative governments.
3. <https://www.breitbart.com/europe/2024/02/20/jobless-migrants-and-foreign-students-cost-uk-taxpayers-36-billion-since-2020-report/> - A report by the Centre for Migration Control found that the British taxpayer has subsidised foreign students and economically inactive migrants without jobs to the tune of £36 billion over the past three years. An analysis of Office for National Statistics (ONS) data revealed that between October and December, an estimated 724,000 migrants aged 16 to 64 were living in the UK and deemed 'economically inactive'. When including international students, the number of foreigners receiving financial support from the government climbed to 1,135,949 in 2023, a 25% increase from 2020. In total, foreign students and jobless legal migrants cost the UK taxpayer £35.84 billion since 2020.
4. <https://dailysceptic.org/2025/03/17/more-than-one-million-foreigners-are-claiming-benefits/> - Benefits are being claimed by over one million foreign nationals, costing over £7.5 billion a year, according to an analysis of Government figures. Households with at least one foreign national claimant received more than £7.5 billion in Universal Credit in 2023, figures from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) show. Foreign nationals become eligible for Universal Credit and other benefits on the same terms as British citizens once they are granted indefinite leave to remain and have settled or refugee status. After paying national insurance for 10 years, they are also entitled to the state pension. The analysis by the Centre for Migration Control (CMC) suggests 40 nationalities – after getting indefinite leave to remain, settled status or refugee protection – are claiming benefits at a greater rate per head of population than British citizens. Three nationalities – Congolese, Iraqis and Afghans – are claiming benefits at four times the rate of British people.
5. <https://www.migrationcentral.co.uk/p/over-one-million-migrants-claiming> - There are 1.15 million foreign-born individuals claiming some form of in-work benefit, imposing significant costs on British taxpayers. The Centre for Migration Control reports that 1.15 million foreign-born individuals in Britain are claiming working-age benefits, including Universal Credit and housing support. This figure is drawn from the 2019 edition of Nationality at point of National Insurance number registration of DWP working-age benefit recipients and reflects the trend of the preceding years. The breakdown of benefit types claimed by migrants is as follows: a combination including out-of-work Universal Credit: 224,756; a combination including in-work Universal Credit: 192,125; a combination including Housing Benefit: 467,036; Other (including legacy benefits such as JSA): 158,124. The raw figures, by country of birth, are as follows: Polish: 89,040; Pakistani: 85,881; Bangladeshi: 54,589; Romanian: 45,727; Indian: 33,561; Portuguese: 32,063; Nigerian: 23,627; Irish: 17,933. When cross-referenced with ONS figures from 2021, it is calculated that 40 country of origin groups in the UK have a higher benefit claim rate than the British population (107 per 1,000). The top 10 are as follows: Congolese, Iraqi, Afghan, Algerian, Eritrean, Syrian, Somali, Iranian, Moroccan, and Slovakian. Age adjusted to just include the working age of each country’s population shows that there are 27 countries of origin which have a higher working age benefit claim rate than the British.
6. <https://www.migrationwatchuk.org/key-topics/jobs-welfare> - In 2015/16, working-age benefits claimed by non-UK nationals cost an estimated £13.6 billion. Large amounts are paid out to non-UK nationals in state benefits. As table 1 below shows, the working-age benefit bill for EU migrants in the UK in 2015/16 was £4.7 billion, or nearly £13 million per day. This bill may well have risen further as the number of EU workers has risen by 200,000 since March 2016. Meanwhile, the estimated bill for non-EU migrants is £8.9 billion in 2015/16. Calls for continued easy access to an unlimited pool of foreign labour amount to demands for continued subsidies by the taxpayer for businesses to hire workers from overseas on low pay. This ignores their responsibility to pay a fair day’s pay for a fair day’s work and to provide adequate training (alongside the government) for the UK’s young people.
7. <https://www.breitbart.com/europe/2024/08/31/record-1-6-million-out-of-work-migrants-costing-the-taxpayer-8-5-billion-per-year-report/> - The British taxpayer is footing the bill for a record number of out-of-work migrants, who are reportedly costing the government up to £8.5 billion per year. A record 1,689,000 foreigners are currently unemployed or otherwise 'economically inactive' in the UK, according to analysis of government figures by the Centre for Immigration Control. The think tank noted that the current level is the highest in British history, surpassing the previous high in 2012 of 1,628,000. Centre for Migration Control researchers calculated that support for unemployed immigrants could cost the taxpayer as much as £8.5 million per year. However, this estimate did not include the costs of asylum seekers and foreign students to the state, meaning the total financial drain of mass migration policies is likely much higher.