

Appendix

Treatment stimulus

We adapted the following text from Full Fact and displayed to respondents:

[*An independent fact-checking organization/ Telegraph/ Guardian*] has supplied this information on whether the claims about the impact of immigration are accurate.

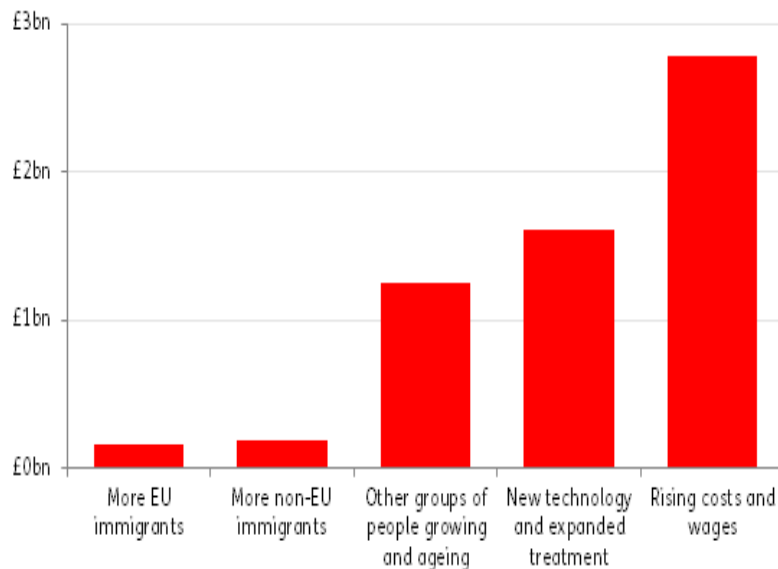
EU immigration contributes to financial pressure on the NHS, but its annual impact is small compared to other factors. Whether EU immigrants pay enough into the public finances overall to cover their costs is difficult to say, and researchers give different answers. However, it does appear that they make more of a net contribution than other groups. The UK doesn't claim back as much as it could of the cost of treating Europeans who come here for a shorter period as visitors or to live as pensioners, which is mostly down to the NHS not asking for money it is due.

£160 million is a significant figure. However, it is small compared to the additional costs caused by other pressures on the health service.

We supplied the following visual from the original Full Fact fact check:

Why is the NHS getting more expensive?

Estimated additional cost pressures on the UK NHS, 2014/15 to 2015/16*



*Single year estimates will not necessarily reflect the long-term relative burdens

Figure A1. Treatment stimulus graph.

Further details about experiment

The statement wording of the dependent variable was as follows:

During the election campaign so far, various statements have been made by politicians and in the media about issues, policies and leaders.

To what extent do you believe or disbelieve these statements?

1. The EU wants the UK to pay £50-60 billion before they negotiate a post-Brexit trade deal.
2. The NHS is under unprecedented pressure due to an influx of EU migrants that has forced doctors to take on 1.5 million extra patients in three years.
3. The deficit has fallen by two-thirds since 2010.
4. The number of people using food banks since 2010 has gone from the tens of thousands to the millions.
5. The number of people in employment in the UK is historically high, as is the proportion of people in work.
6. Almost every police force in the country recorded an increase in crime over the last year.
7. The Treasury loses £40 billion each year due to tax evasion and avoidance by the super-rich and corporate elites.
8. Income inequality is narrowing in the UK.

Only number 2 was corrected in the experiment. Numbers 1 and 3 through 8 were not analyzed in this study. The response categories on the five-point scale ranged from 1 (strongly believe) to 5 (strongly disbelieve). For our false claim, therefore, higher scores indicate “more correct” position.

The first measure on this scale was taken pre-treatment (Wave 1 survey), the second measure then immediately post-treatment (the end of the Wave 1 survey). The third measure was taken in the follow-up survey (Wave 2).

Pre-exposure and predisposition models

Table A1. *Pre-exposure and predisposition models (OLS). Dependent variable: Post-treatment belief, five-point scale, higher scores indicate more correct belief.*

Term	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Intercept	2.70*** (0.06)	3.18*** (0.08)	1.42*** (0.09)	1.12*** (0.08)	1.13*** (0.19)
Treatment: Independent fact checker	0.13 (0.09)	0.08 (0.12)	0.26** (0.10)	0.13 (0.09)	0.30 (0.23)
Treatment: The Guardian	0.29** (0.09)	0.26* (0.12)	0.45*** (0.10)	0.27** (0.08)	0.56* (0.23)
Treatment: The Telegraph	0.35*** (0.09)	0.26* (0.12)	0.31** (0.10)	0.34*** (0.09)	0.37+ (0.22)
Pre-treatment: “Strongly believes” false claim <i>dichotomous variable indicating if respondent strongly believed false claim prior to correction</i>	-0.99*** (0.13)				
“Strongly believes” x Fact	0.16 (0.18)				

“Strongly believes” x Guardian	-0.08 (0.18)				
“Strongly believes” x Telegraph	-0.08 (0.18)				
Pre-treatment: “Believes” or “strongly believes” false claim <i>dichotomous variable indicating if respondent “strongly believed” or “believed” false claim prior to correction</i>	-1.20*** (0.11)				
“Believes” or “strongly believes” x Fact	0.11 (0.15)				
“Believes” or “strongly believes” x Guardian	-0.03 (0.15)				
“Believes” or “strongly believes” x Telegraph	0.04 (0.15)				
Pre-treatment belief <i>five-point scale, as DV</i>		0.51*** (0.02)	0.58*** (0.02)	0.56*** (0.02)	
Brexit vote: Leave <i>dichotomous variable, leave vs remain vote in 2016</i>		-0.51*** (0.11)			
Leave x Fact		-0.04 (0.15)			
Leave x Guardian		-0.27* (0.15)			
Leave x Telegraph		-0.03 (0.15)			
Conservative vote intention <i>dichotomous variable, Conservative vs other party voters in 2015</i>			-0.26* (0.12)		
Conservative x Fact			0.18 (0.16)		
Conservative x Guardian			0.02 (0.16)		
Conservative x Telegraph			-0.06 (0.17)		
Familiarity with false claim <i>four-point scale, frequency of prior exposure to false claim self-reported, ranging from “never” to “very often”</i>				-0.01 (0.06)	
Familiarity x Fact				-0.04 (0.08)	
Familiarity x Guardian				-0.10 (0.08)	
Familiarity x Telegraph				-0.03 (0.07)	
R ²	0.13	0.21	0.34	0.31	0.29
Adj. R ²	0.13	0.21	0.34	0.31	0.29
Num. obs.	1,841	1,841	1,587	1,704	1,841

***p < 0.001; **p < 0.01; *p < 0.05; *p < 0.10

Descriptive statistics

Table A2. Descriptive statistics: Group sizes.

Group	N
Control group Wave 1	631
Correction: Fact-checking Wave 1	630
Correction: Guardian Wave 1	631
Correction: Telegraph Wave 1	631
Control group Wave 2	457
Correction: Fact-checking Wave 2	469
Correction: Guardian Wave 2	466
Correction: Telegraph Wave 2	449

Table A3. Descriptive statistics: Means and standard deviations.

Dependent variable	M	SD
Control group Pre-treat	2.45	(1.16)
Correction: Fact-checking Pre-treat	2.30	(1.15)
Correction: Guardian Pre-treat	2.39	(1.23)
Correction: Telegraph Pre-treat	2.35	(1.16)
Control group Post-treat	2.48	(1.24)
Correction: Fact-checking Post-treat	2.61	(1.25)
Correction: Guardian Post-treat	2.68	(1.29)
Correction: Telegraph Post-treat	2.74	(1.27)
Control group Follow-up	2.52	(1.23)
Correction: Fact-checking Follow-up	2.45	(1.20)
Correction: Guardian Follow-up	2.48	(1.24)
Correction: Telegraph Follow-up	2.54	(1.25)
Pre-exposure to false claim: None or low	2.80	(1.16)
Pre-exposure to false claim: Some or high	2.36	(1.23)