

Trade Union Membership Among the Migrant Community

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Union Membership and Migration

- Migration is an important issue to union movement
 - conflicts associated with protecting the interests of existing members as opposed to expanding membership
 - perception that migrants, particularly economic migrants, are likely to be difficult to organise (McGovern, 2008)
 - migrants from different countries bring with them quite different expectations of trade unionism (Milkman, 2000, 2008)
- Previous research on international migration to Europe and union membership (Kranendonk and de Beer, 2016).
 - Union density in country of birth
 - Relationship between countries of birth and destination
 - Assimilation to membership levels within destination country



Overview of Research

- Present new estimates of trade union membership among the migrant community for the UK.
- Research questions:
 - Can lower levels of membership be accounted for by characteristics of migrants and jobs held?
 - Do migrants assimilate to UK levels of membership or do ‘country of birth’ effects persist?
 - Do these effects vary according by age of entry to the UK or time spent in the UK?
- Analysis based upon Labour Force Survey for 2007-15 combined with OECD database of trade union density for 34 countries – some back to 1960.



Measuring Trade Union Membership: Harder than it may seem?

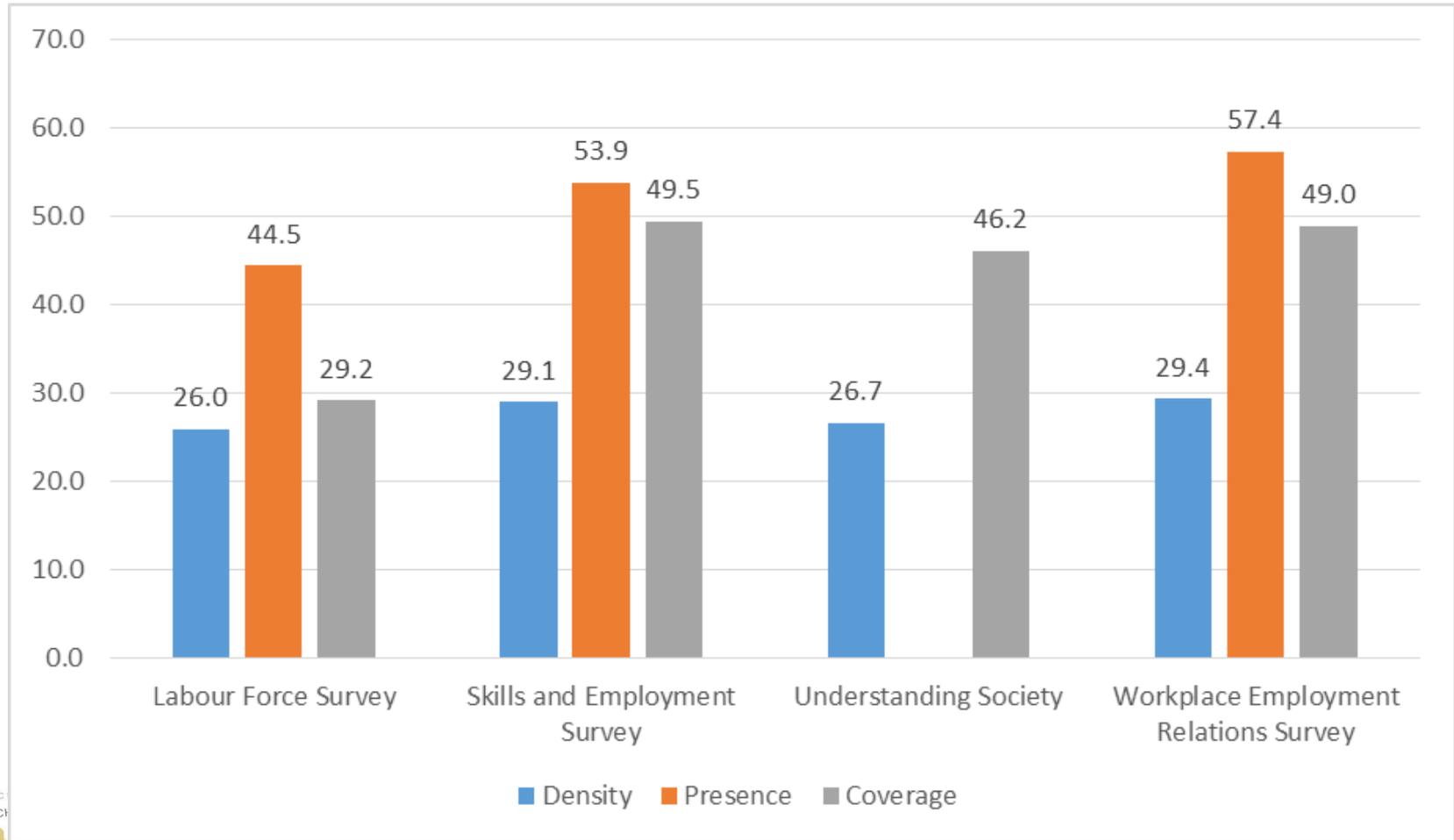


Trade Union Membership and the LFS

- Questions on union membership, presence and coverage have been included in Q4 since 1989, 1993 and 1996 respectively.
- **Union Membership (Density)**
 - **1)** Are you a member of a trade union or staff association? **Ask All**
- **Union Presence**
 - **2)** Are any of the people at your place of work members of a trade union or staff association? **If No to 1)**
- **Union Coverage**
 - **3)** Are your pay and conditions of employment **directly affected** by agreements between your employer and any trade union(s) or staff association(s)? **Ask All**



Comparisons of Union Membership for the UK



LFS, SES, USOC – 2012;
WERS - 2011



Trade Union Membership Among the Migrant Community

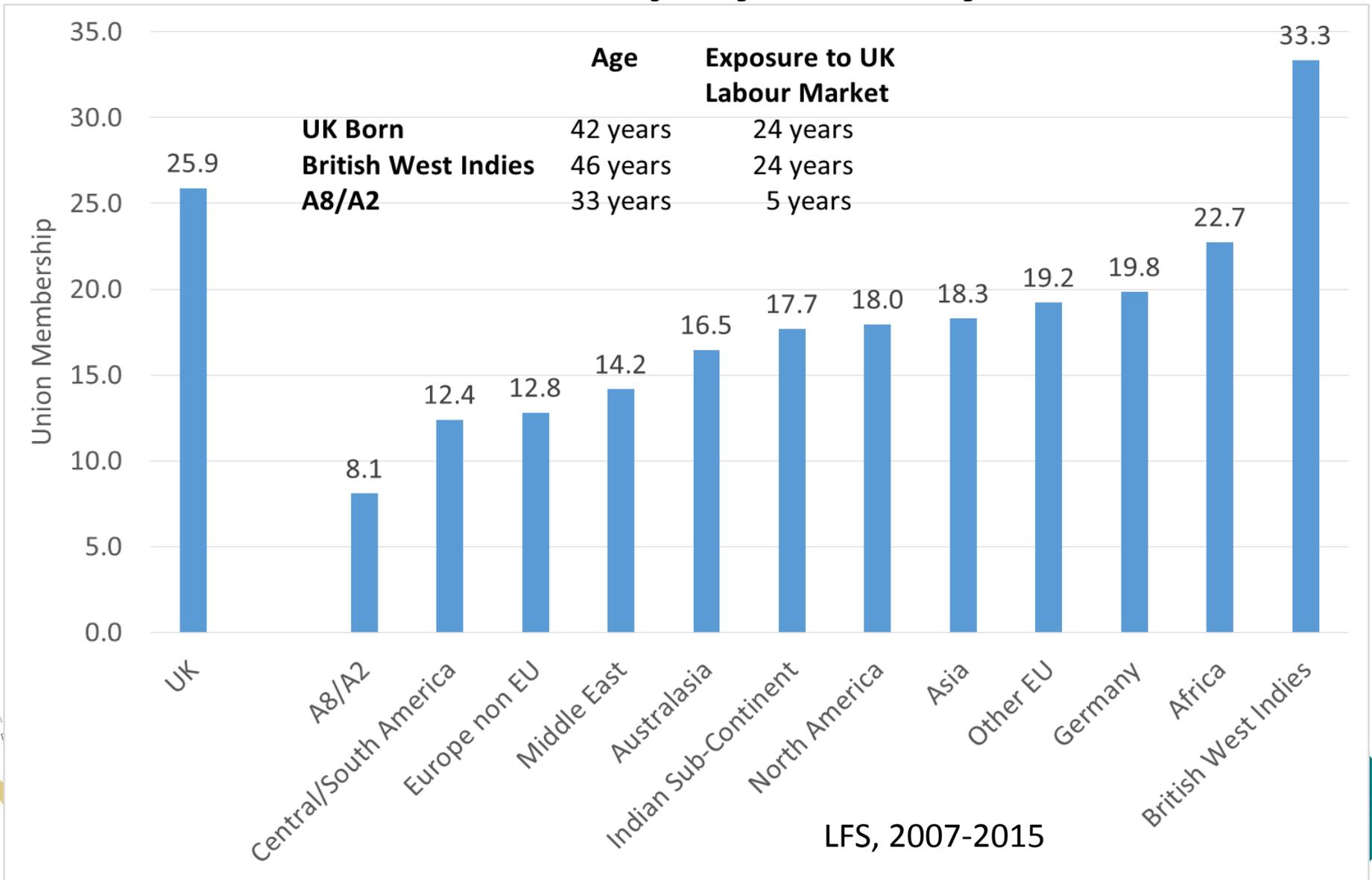


Migration to UK

- The UK has experienced a high level of in-migration from all parts of the world over several decades
 - 1950s/60s migration of workers from former colonies in response to increasing demand for cheap labour
 - steady removal of national barriers to migration within Europe to support free movement of labour (e.g. the Single European Act of 1986, Schengen Agreement of 1985)
 - expansion of the EU in 2004 resulted in large increase in inward migration from the A8 Eastern European member states – particularly Poland
 - further eastward expansion of the EU borders occurred in January 2007, when Romania and Bulgaria (the “A2” countries) joined
 - economic crisis in Europe further encouraging migration from established EU countries



Union Membership by Country of Birth

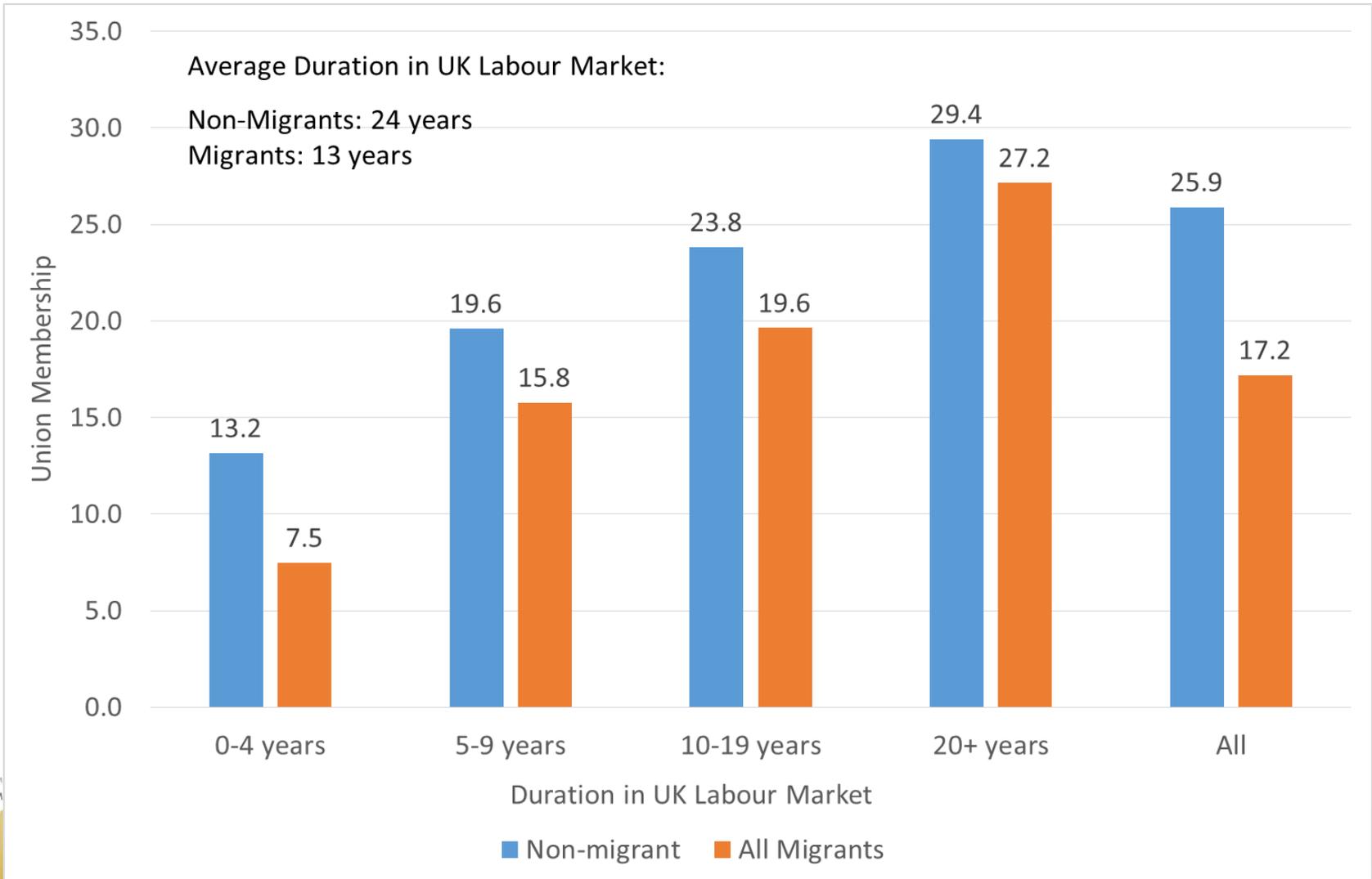


Understanding Union Membership

- Encompassing hard to observe benefits, the value of union membership can only be fully appreciated through its direct 'experience' or through that of others (see Bryson and Gomez, 2003; Gomez and Gunderson, 2004; Bryson et al., 2004)
- Experience goods are optimally disseminated via personal recommendations (Charlwood 2002; Machin 2002)
 - Supportive social networks (family, friends, colleagues) have a positive impact on union joining behaviour
- Young workers exhibit lowest levels of union membership
 - Both nature of jobs held (Payne 1987; Spillsbury, 1989) and 'job shopping' reducing the expected benefits of membership (Boxall et al 2003, Furåker and Berglund 2003)



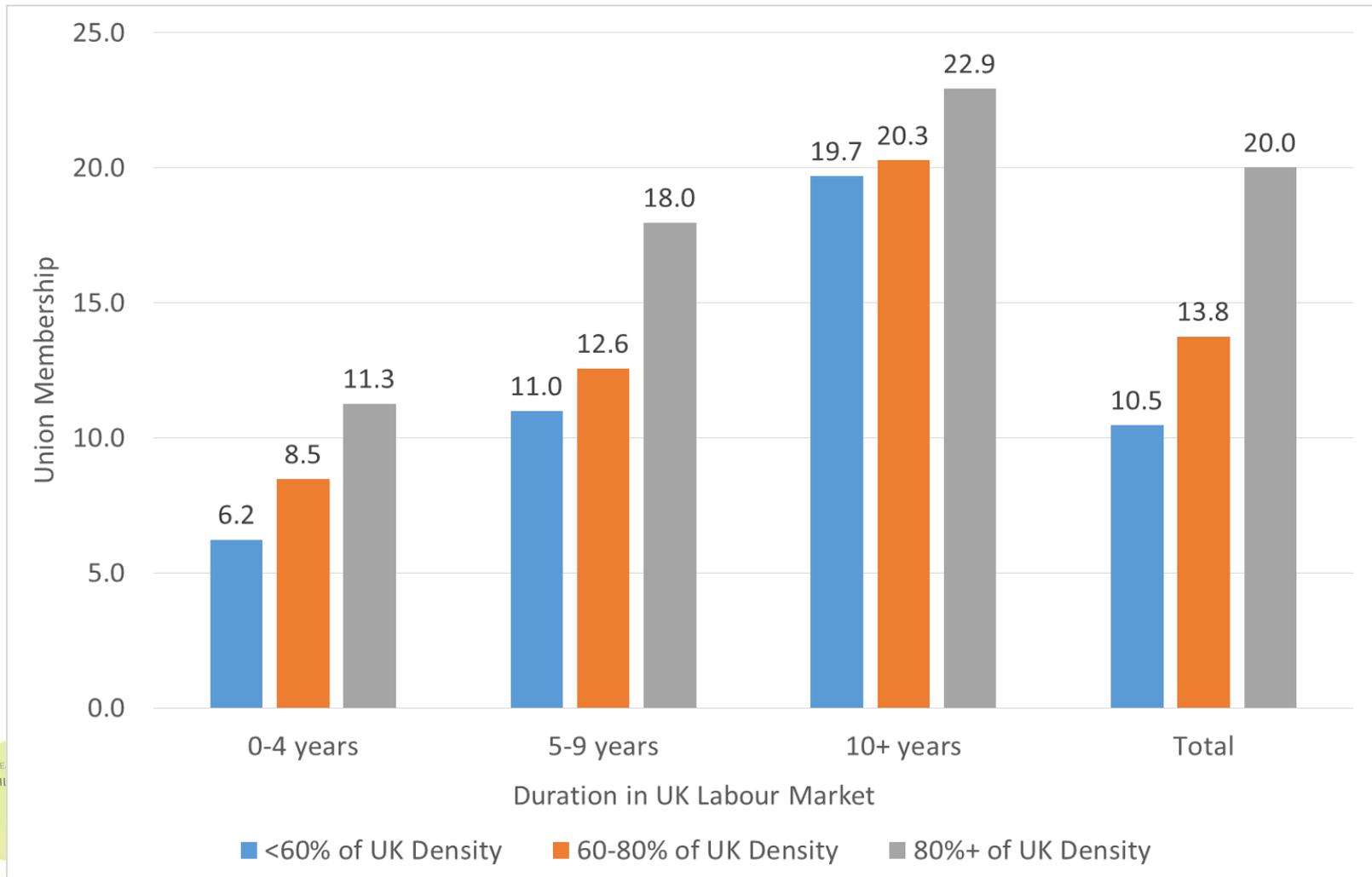
Membership and Labour Market Duration



LFS, 2007-2015



Membership and Density in Country of Birth



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Relative Odds of Membership among Migrants

	No Controls	Personal Controls	Job Controls
Model 1: Baseline			
Migrant	0.607	0.707	0.736
Non Migrant	ref.	ref.	ref.
Model 2: Distinguishing Pre/Post SLA Migrants			
<SLA Migrant	0.814	0.821	0.836
>SLA Migrant	0.552	0.646	0.680
Non Migrant	ref.	ref.	ref.
Model 3: Country of Birth Effects			
<60% of UK Density	0.342	0.496	0.567
60-80% of UK Density	0.467	0.631	0.686
80%+ of UK Density	0.762	0.793	0.789
No Density Data	0.668	0.753	0.775
Non Migrant	ref.	ref.	ref.

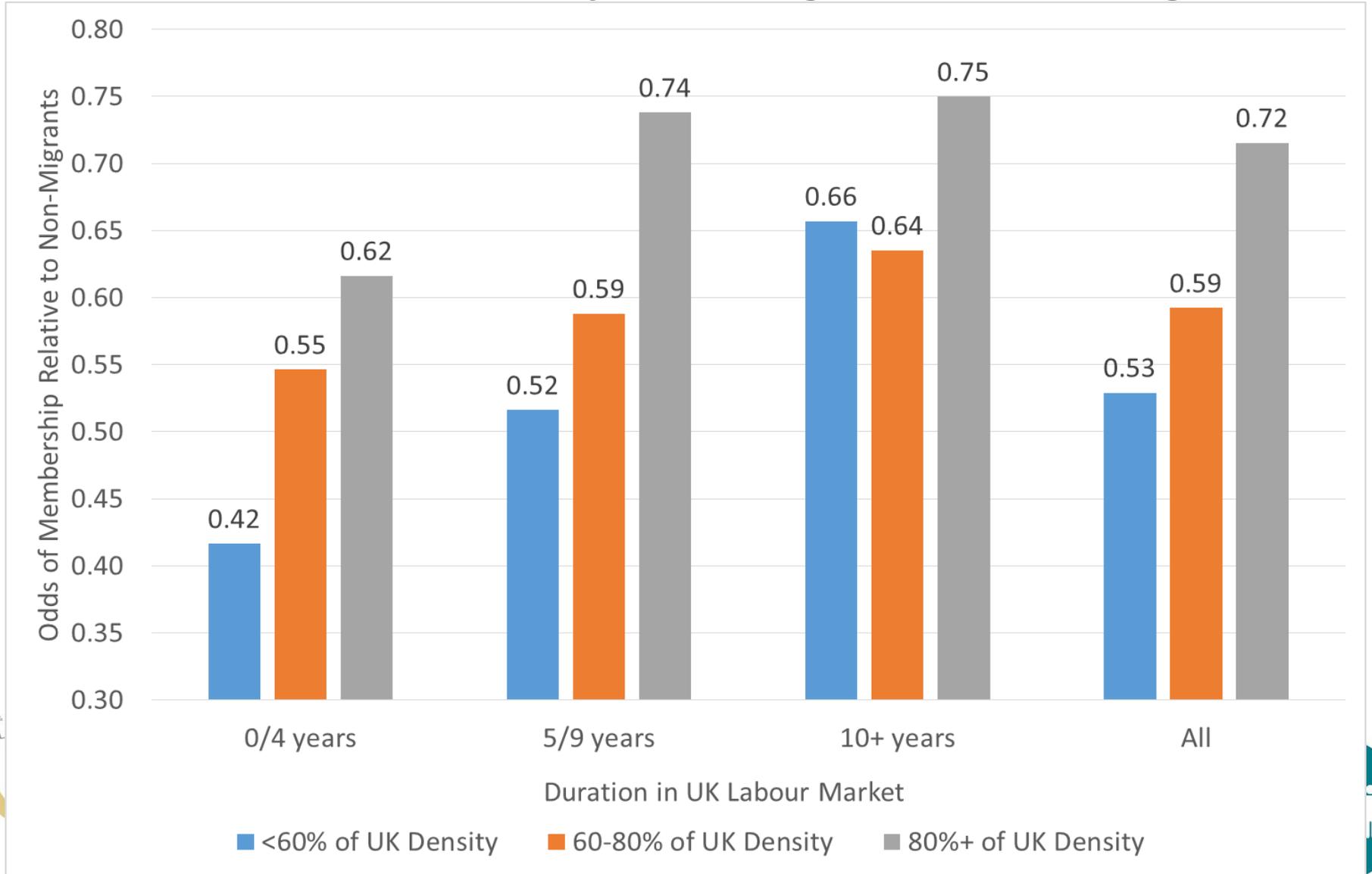
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LFS, 2007-2015



Odds of Membership Among Post SLA Migrants



Concluding Comments

- Those born outside of the UK are approximately 25% less likely to join unions than non-migrants even after controlling for other personal and job related characteristics
- This gap is wider for those who were older than the School Leaving Age (SLA) on arrival to the UK (32% compared to 16%).
- Union density in the country of birth influences the subsequent union joining behaviour of post SLA migrants
- Country of birth effects for post SLA migrants do not persist for those who have been in the UK for more than 10 years
- Findings are consistent with 'experience good' model of union joining behaviour

