

## Steve Doughty - Daily Mail

10 May 2007, Steve Doughty of the Daily Mail misquotes an Office of National Statistics Report to grossly overestimate the number of visitors from Romania and Bulgaria to the UK.

Article: 50,000 a month arrive from two new EU nations  
 Journalist: Steve Doughty, Social Affairs Correspondent  
 Publication: Daily Mail  
 Date: 10 May 2007  
 Story Link: [click here](#)

Misquoted Data Source: Office of National Statistics, 'Overseas Travel and Tourism'; April 2007 In his 10th May 2007 article, '50,000 a month arrive from two new EU nations', STEVE DOUGHTY, Social Affairs Correspondent of the Daily Mail, makes two errors of fact and uses his misinterpreted data to imply an exaggerated level of immigration from Romania to the UK.

### Factual Error 1

'The number of visitors from Eastern Europe has risen by a quarter since Romania and Bulgaria joined the EU, a Government survey has revealed.

The first count taken since the beginning of the year shows there were around 50,000 arrivals each month from the two new members.'

Wrong.

Although he is correct to say that visitors from the A12 countries rose from 540,000 in Q1 of 2006, to 680,000 in Q1 of 2007 – a rise of 140,000 – Romanians and Bulgarians comprise 60,000 of this figure, not 150,000 as Steve Doughty claims.

|      |    | EU27 | A12 | EU25 | EU15 |
|------|----|------|-----|------|------|
| 2006 | Q1 | 4413 | 540 | 4382 | 3873 |
|      | Q2 | 5545 | 622 | 5528 | 4922 |
|      | Q3 | 6214 | 886 | 6157 | 5328 |
|      | Q4 | 5046 | 671 | 5013 | 4375 |
| 2007 | Q1 | 4580 | 680 | 4520 | 3900 |

Excerpted from Office of National Statistics, 'Overseas Travel and Tourism'; April 2007, Table 2a, page 8. Data is in thousands.

The ONS report clearly and specifically breaks down its data to separate visits to the UK by nationals of the EU15 (the countries that were members prior to May 2004), the EU25 (to include the 10 central and eastern European countries that joined the EU in May 2004), and the EU27 (the EU 25 plus, since 1 January 2007, Romania and Bulgaria). The A12 category refers to all the countries that have become EU members since May 2004.

As the red figures indicate, visits from A12 countries have risen from 540,000 in Q1 of 2006 to 680,000 in Q1 of 2007. Notwithstanding that Steve Doughty's headline figure of 150,000 is exaggerated in itself, the actual figure of 140,000 represents the total number of visitors from all new member states (the A12), not just Romania and Bulgaria.

Visits to the UK by Romanian and Bulgarian nationals is calculated through the difference between the figures for the EU27 and the EU 25. The respective figures are shown in blue.

Subtracting the figure for the EU25 (4520) from that for the EU27 (4580) shows that there were 60,000 visits to the UK by Romanian and Bulgarian nationals in Q1 of 2007. The number of Romanian and Bulgarian visitors to the UK in Q1 of 2006 was 31000. Until 1 January 2007 all visitors to the UK from Bulgaria and Romania were required to obtain an entry visa prior to travel.

It is also important to note that the ONS Data is a travel and tourism statistic. It refers to all visits to the UK and so includes multiple visits, business trips and tourism. These figures do not refer to immigration.

### Factual Error 2

'The figures, released by the Office for National Statistics, quantify visitors from around the world who said their stay in Britain would be temporary.

But on past evidence it would be no surprise if the east European 'visitors' decided to stay longer.

There is no time restriction on them, though they must apply for permits if they want to work.&rdquo;

Wrong.

EU law places a 90 day initial limit on visits from EU nationals. After this EU nationals are expected to declare their presence in the K and state the legal grounds on which they continue to remain in the country &ndash; for example as a worker or a student. [link]

Although nationals of the 10 central and eastern European countries that joined the EU in May 2004 do not need work permits, most Romanians will require a work permit to entitle them to remain, and the UK government has limited the number of work permits available to Romanians and Bulgarians. Steve Doughty does go on to acknowledge this limit later in his article.[link]

#### Gross Distortion 1

&ldquo;The figures are, admittedly, subject to the vagaries of the International Passenger Survey, the heavily-discredited Government survey used to plot levels of immigration and emigration. Officials are desperately searching for a more accurate way to count.

Nevertheless they add to anecdotal evidence that Romanians and Bulgarians are taking advantage of the unrestricted entry to Britain that EU membership has given them.&rdquo;

Misleading.

Having asserted that the level of visitors from Romania and Bulgaria is far higher than it is, Steve Doughty uses this misleading fact to imply that this mass of Romanians and Bulgarians are now abusing a right to travel to the UK.