

# Influx of Romanian migrants 'threatens to cause social unrest'

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As Britain prepares for an influx of Romanians and Bulgarians next year, schools in poorer parts of Germany are already struggling to cope with arrivals from the two states.

Germans warn that "social peace" is being endangered and British ministers are looking at ways to deter migrants heading to the UK. David Cameron has ordered the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to commission research to estimate how many Bulgarians and Romanians will come to Britain seeking work.

Officials are examining whether changes can be made to the benefits system to make Britain less attractive, as a large influx could undermine efforts to reduce net migration to under 100,000 by 2015.

They are considering restrictions on access to the health service. "The NHS is a national health service, not an international one," Mark Harper, the Immigration Minister said last month.

About 50,000 people from Romania and Bulgaria will come to Britain each year when restrictions are lifted next year, Migration Watch UK said.

Germany has already experienced a big rise. The German Association of Cities is concerned that recent arrivals have put some districts at risk of social breakdown. Germany's generous social benefits have acted as a magnet.

Experts said that it was urgent for the German Government and the EU to invest in making life better for Europe's most impoverished people by

reducing both "push and pull" factors in wealthier and poorer nations.

"The social balance and social peace is extremely endangered," it concluded in an internal paper seen by *Der Spiegel*. "German cities face significant costs as a result of this poverty migration." Officials in Berlin, Dortmund, Duisberg, Hamburg and Hanover say they are struggling to absorb a sixfold increase in economic migrants since the two countries joined the EU in 2007.

Germany had an 18.2 per cent rise in migrants from Bulgaria in the first half of last year, according to the latest statistics, and 26.2 per cent from Romania. Parents are entitled to child benefit of €184 (£155) a month for the first two children, €190 a month for the third and €215 for the fourth, compared with €18 a month per child in Bulgaria and €10 a month in Romania, along with €40 a month maternity benefit for the first two years.

This has encouraged large families to settle in areas such as Berlin's poor Neukoelln district. "It is chain migration," said Klaus Bade, a professor at the University of Osnabrück and an expert on European migration. "First comes one family, then comes the extended family and then come more relatives. Once there is proof that one can live here, and there is proof of social help, so the others follow."

He called on the EU to tackle "push" factors such as the discrimination against Roma in the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary which makes Germany appear a haven of tolerance.