

Statistical bulletin

Migration Statistics Quarterly Report: May 2015

Immigration to the UK and emigration from the UK, including net migration (the difference between immigration and emigration).



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1. Main points

- Net long-term migration to the UK (immigration less emigration) was estimated to be 318,000 in the calendar year 2014. This was just below the previous peak (320,000 in the year ending (YE) June 2005) and a statistically significant increase from 209,000 in 2013.
- 641,000 people immigrated to the UK in 2014, a statistically significant increase from 526,000 in 2013. There were statistically significant increases for immigration of EU (non-British) citizens (up 67,000 to 268,000) and non-EU citizens (up 42,000 to 290,000). Immigration of British citizens increased by 7,000 to 83,000, but this was not statistically significant.
- An estimated 323,000 people emigrated from the UK in 2014. Overall emigration levels have been relatively stable since 2010.
- 284,000 people immigrated for work in 2014, a statistically significant increase of 70,000 compared with 2013, continuing the rise since the middle of 2012. There were statistically significant increases compared with the previous year for both EU (non-British) non-EU citizens, whereas the increase for British citizens was not statistically significant.
- Latest employment statistics show estimated employment of EU nationals (excluding British) living in the UK was 283,000 higher in January to March 2015 compared with a year earlier and non-EU nationals in employment increased by 11,000. Over the same period, British nationals in employment also increased (by 279,000).
- In 2014, work-related visas granted (main applicants) rose 11,007 (or 10%) to 119,883, including a 6,842 (15%) increase for skilled work.
- National Insurance number (NINo) registrations to adult overseas nationals increased by 221,000 (37%) to 824,000 in the YE March 2015, when compared with the previous year.
- Immigration for study increased from 177,000 to 193,000 in 2014, but this change was not statistically significant. Over the same period visa applications to study at a UK university (main applicants) rose by 0.3% to 168,562.
- The number of immigrants arriving to accompany or join others showed a statistically significant increase, from 71,000 to 91,000 in 2014.
- 46,000 Romanian and Bulgarian (EU2) citizens immigrated to the UK in 2014, a statistically significant increase from 23,000 in the previous 12 months. Of these, 35,000 were coming for work, a statistically significant increase of 19,000 compared with 2013. The latest estimates reflect the first full year since EU2 working restrictions ended on 1 January 2014.
- There were 25,020 asylum applications (main applicants) in the YE March 2015, an increase of 5% compared with the previous 12 months (23,803). The number of applications remains low relative to the peak number of applications in 2002 (84,132). The largest number of applications for asylum came from nationals of Eritrea (3,552), followed by Pakistan (2,421) and Syria (2,222).

2. Overview

The Migration Statistics Quarterly Report (MSQR) is a summary of the latest quarterly release of official international migration statistics. This edition covers those released on 21 May 2015 and it also includes links to other migration products released on that date. The majority of figures presented are for 2014, but where available, figures are provided for the year ending (YE) March 2015.

We use the [UN recommended](#) definition of a long-term international migrant: "A person who moves to a country other than that of his or her usual residence for a period of at least a year (12 months), so that the country of

destination effectively becomes his or her new country of usual residence." Figures relating to visas include long-term and short-term migrants and their dependants; National Insurance number allocations to adult overseas nationals also include long-term and short-term migrants.

A [summary version](#) of this report is also available on our website.

3. Introduction

This edition of the Migration Statistics Quarterly Report (MSQR) includes provisional estimates of international migration for the calendar year 2014.

The MSQR series brings together statistics on migration published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS), the Home Office and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). If you are new to migration statistics, you might find it helpful to read our '[International migration statistics first time user guide](#)' (315.5 Kb Pdf).

Long-Term International Migration (LTIM) estimates are about 90% based on data from the International Passenger Survey (IPS), with adjustments made for asylum seekers, non-asylum enforced removals, visitor and migrant switchers and flows to and from Northern Ireland. The MSQR uses LTIM estimates where available. However, for some categorisations it is not possible to estimate the full LTIM statistic. In such cases IPS statistics are presented. In these tables the IPS totals will not match LTIM totals, but will still give a good measure of magnitude and direction of change. In the main body of the report (Section 1 onwards) any IPS statistics are indicated as such.

There is considerable interest in migration statistics both nationally and internationally, particularly in relation to the impact of migration on society and on the economy. Migration statistics are a fundamental component of our mid-year population estimates. These are used by central and local government and the health sector for planning and monitoring service delivery, resource allocation and managing the economy. Additionally, migration statistics are used to monitor progress against a government stated ambition of delivering annual net migration in the tens of thousands, not the hundreds of thousands¹.

For further information on how our migration statistics are used, along with information on their fitness for purpose, please see the '[quality and methodology information for long-term international migration \(LTIM\) releases](#)' (217.6 Kb Pdf).

Further information on the accuracy of our estimates, including details on statistical significance can be found in the "accuracy of migration estimates" section.

New for this release:

- A new [interactive explainer tool](#) is available for an overview of our population and migration statistics. A [complete overview](#) is available on our website.

Notes for introduction

1. [Conservative Manifesto 2015](#) – for immigration see page 29.

4. Net migration to the UK

Net migration is the difference between immigration and emigration. The net migration estimate for 2014 is 318,000 and has a confidence interval of +/-44,000. This is a statistically significant increase from the estimate of

209,000 (+/-35,000) in 2013. This continues the generally increasing trend in net migration over the last 2 years since the recent low of 154,000 in the year ending (YE) September 2012.

Figure 1.1a shows rolling annual estimates from the YE June 2005 onwards. Net migration is now almost equal to the peak of 320,000 in the YE June 2005. Figure 1.1b provides annual totals from 1970 to 2014 to show the longer-term context.

Figure 1.1a: Long-term international migration, United Kingdom, 2005 to 2014 (year ending December 2014)

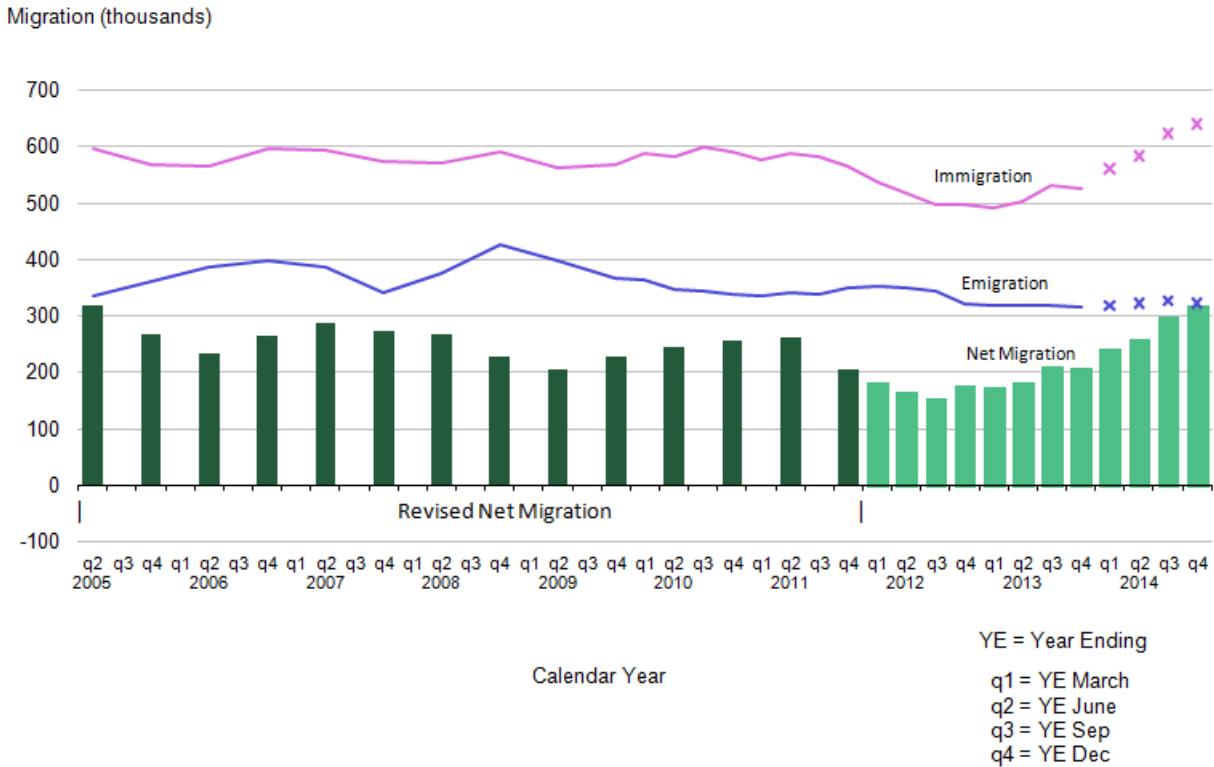
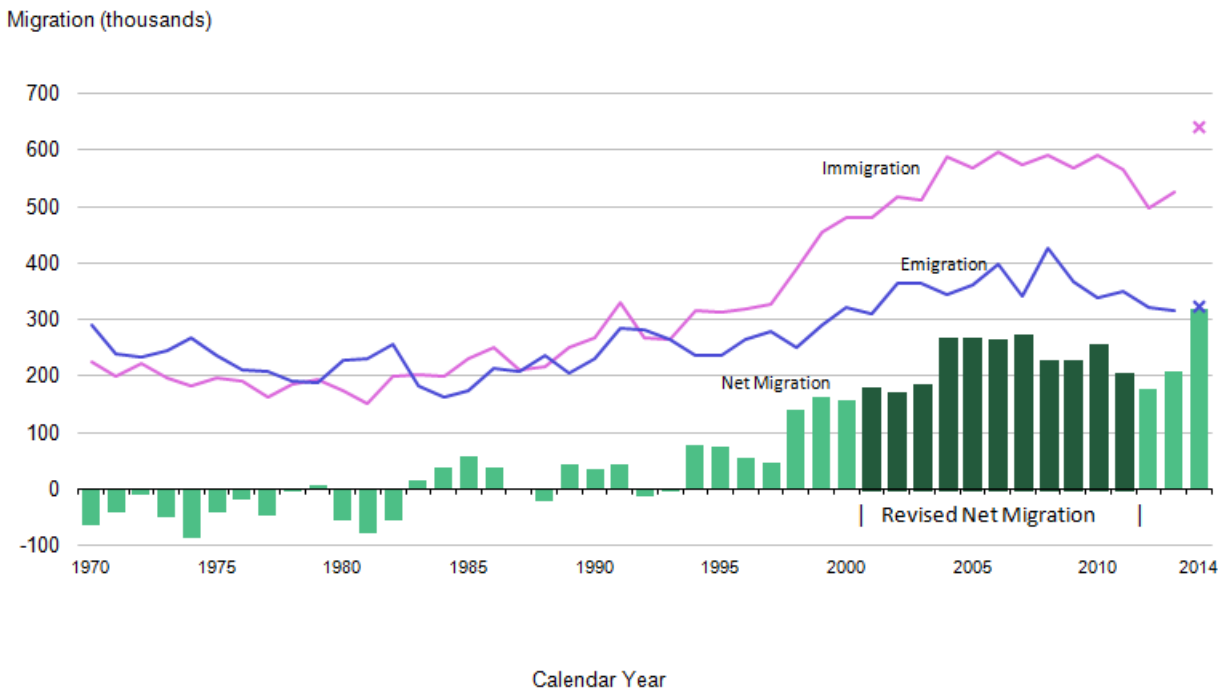


Figure 1.1b: Long-Term International Migration, United Kingdom, 1970 to 2014 (annual totals)



An [interactive version of Figure 1.1b](#) with additional commentary is available.

During the 1960s and 1970s, there were more people emigrating from the UK than arriving to live in the UK. During the 1980s and early 1990s, net migration remained at a relatively low level. Since 1994, it has been positive every year and rose sharply after 1997. During the 2000s, net migration increased, in part as a result of immigration of citizens from the countries that joined the EU in 2004. Since 1998 and up to 2013, annual net migration has fluctuated between around 150,000 and 270,000. The estimate for net migration in 2014 is 318,000.

The most recent increases in net migration have been driven by higher levels of immigration coupled with stable levels of emigration. Table 1 shows that there was a statistically significant increase in immigration to 641,000 (+/- 38,000) in 2014, from 526,000 (+/-29,000) in 2013. The latest immigration figure is the highest in the series but users should be aware that no revisions were made to immigration and emigration estimates at the time the net migration estimates for 2001 to 2010 were revised.

Emigration was estimated to be 323,000 (+/-23,000) in 2014, similar to the figure of 317,000 (+/-19,000) a year earlier.

Table 1 shows the headline figures for 2014 and the previous year with their corresponding confidence intervals. The annual differences are also presented with the confidence interval for these differences.

Table 1: Latest changes in migration, (year ending December) 2013 and 2014

	YE Dec 2013	95% CI	YE Dec 2014	95% CI	Difference	95% CI
Net migration	209	+/- 35	318	+/-44	109	+/- 56
Immigration	526	+/-29	641	+/-38	115	+/- 48
Emigration	317	+/-19	323	+/-23	-6	+/- 29

Source: Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Figures are rounded to the nearest thousand. Difference may not sum due to rounding.
2. Further information on confidence intervals can be found in the MSQR Information for Users.
3. The difference has been calculated by subtracting the 2013 estimate from the 2014 estimate. Where the confidence interval for the difference does not contain zero, we can say that the difference is statistically significant. This means that the difference is likely to reflect a real change in migration flows. There are statistically significant differences for immigration and net migration but not for emigration.
4. YE = Year Ending.
5. CI = Confidence Interval.
6. 2014 estimates are provisional.

In December 2013, we published a report on the history of immigration to the UK based on the 2011 Census, which provides further evidence of the drivers behind historical migration to the UK.

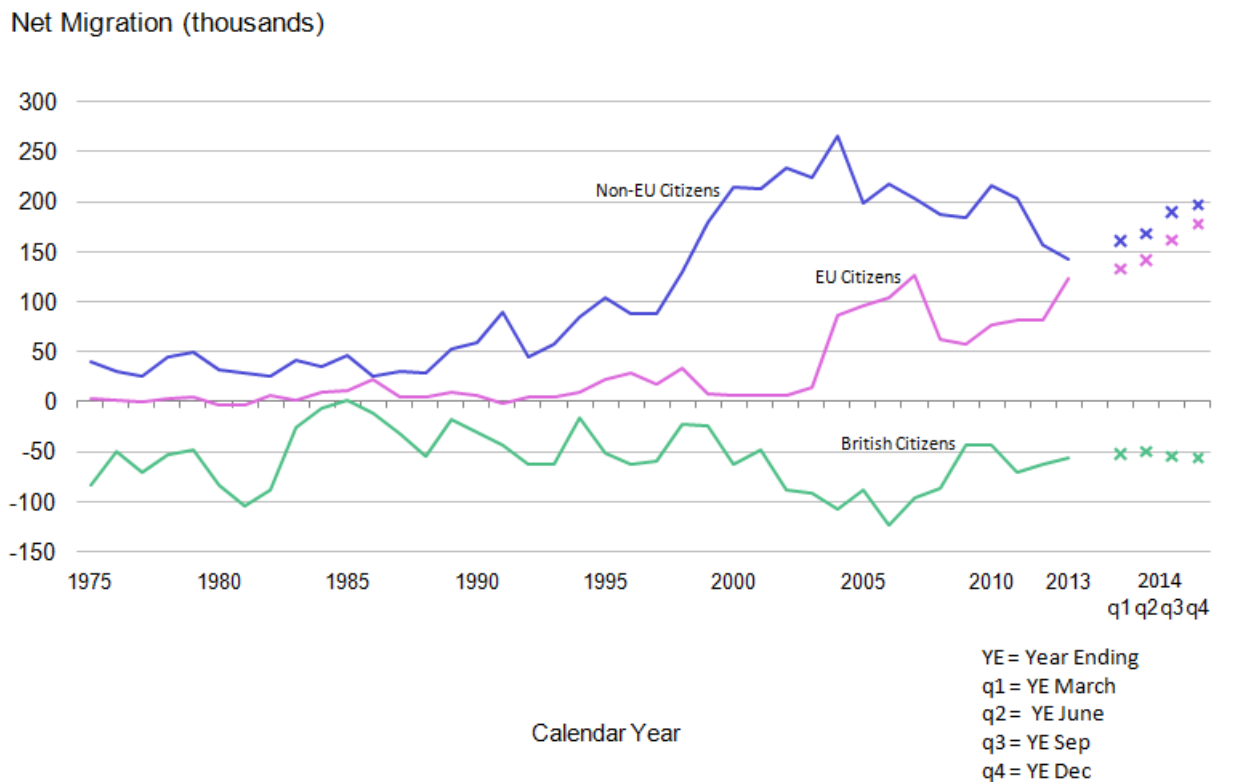
Figure 1.2 shows trends in net migration for EU, non-EU and British citizens.

The latest LTIM estimates show a statistically significant increase in the total EU net migration to its highest level of 178,000 in 2014, up from 123,000 in 2013. LTIM estimates also show that net migration of EU15 citizens is the highest in the series (82,000), a non-statistically significant increase from 58,000 in 2013. The latest IPS estimates for 2014 show a statistically significant increase in net migration of EU2 citizens to a new peak of 42,000, up from 20,000 the previous year. This reflects the first full year of data since transitional controls on the employment of EU2 migrants ended on 1 January 2014.

Until the YE September 2013 there had been a decline in the net migration of non-EU citizens; however, the estimates for 2014 show a statistically significant increase from the previous year, from 143,000 to 197,000. This is driven by a statistically significant increase in net migration for Commonwealth citizens from 48,000 to 86,000 in 2014. Overall, non-EU net migration is at its highest level since the YE December 2011 (Figure 1.2).

Net migration of British citizens is negative, reflecting higher emigration than immigration for this group. This has remained relatively stable over the last few years, and was estimated to be 56,000 in 2014. The largest estimated value of net migration was -124,000 in the YE December 2006.

Figure 1.2: Long-Term International net migration by citizenship, United Kingdom, 1975 to 2014 (year ending December 2014)



The latest IPS estimates¹ show that there was a statistically significant increase in net migration of South Asian citizens, which increased from 22,000 up to 48,000 in 2014. The following increases are all statistically significant North American citizens showed an increase in net migration to 22,000, up from 5,000 the previous year; Central and South American citizens also showed an increase from 4,000 in 2013 to 15,000 in 2014 and Oceania increased to 11,000, up from 2,000 the previous year.

Notes for net migration to the UK

1. In addition to the conventional citizenship and country groupings, IPS estimates are now output to [new groupings \(371.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#) following a [consultation](#) in 2014.

5. Immigration to the UK

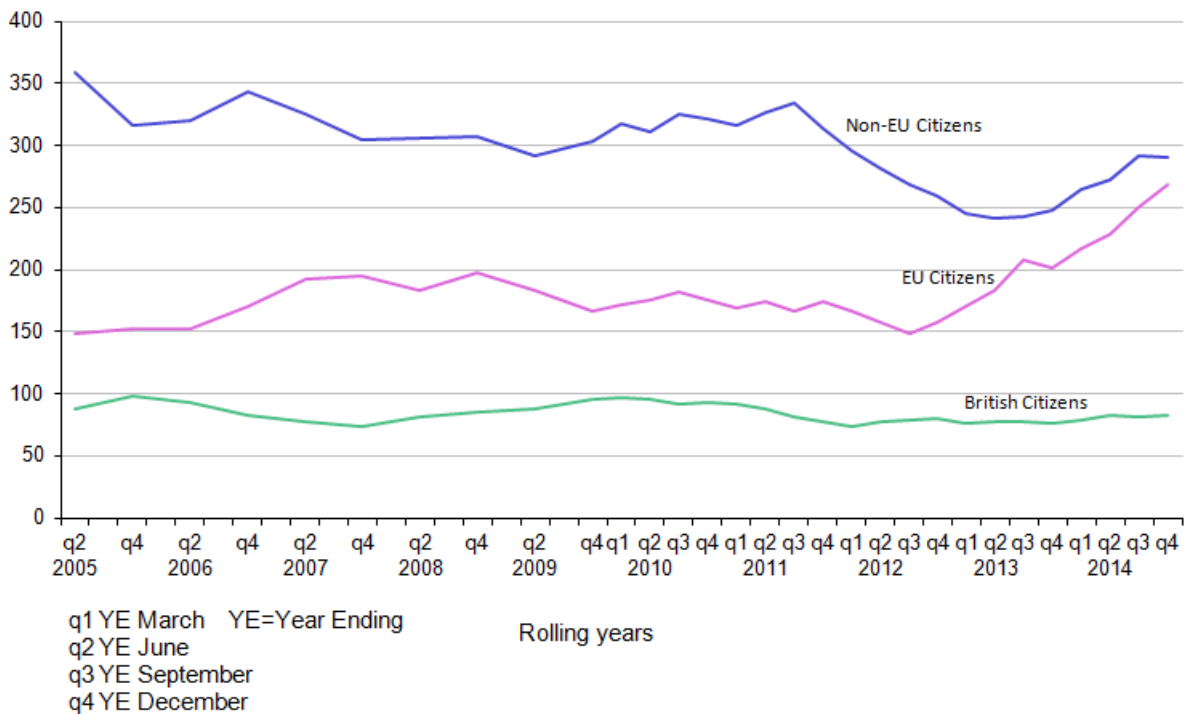
In Section 1, we looked at net migration, the difference between immigration and emigration. In this section, we look at the immigration component in more detail.

The latest immigration estimate for 2014 is 641,000, with a confidence interval of +/-38,000. There has been a statistically significant increase in immigration from 526,000 (+/-29,000) in the previous year. The latest immigration figure of 641,000 is the highest in the series but users should be aware that no revisions were made to immigration and emigration estimates at the time the net migration estimates were revised.

There has been a statistically significant increase among both EU and non-EU citizens (Figure 2.1). Immigration of EU citizens has increased to 268,000 in 2014 from 201,000 in 2013. Despite showing a slight decline from the last quarter, non-EU immigration increased to 290,000 in 2014 from 248,000 in the previous 12 months. While the increase in EU immigration continues the recent trend that began in 2012, immigration of non-EU citizens had declined from 2011 to mid-2013, before the recent increase (Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1: Immigration to the UK by citizenship, 2005 to 2014 (year ending December 2014)

Immigration (thousands)



The trends in migration patterns among EU and non-EU citizens reflect their different rights to immigrate to the UK and the impact of government policy.

British citizens

Long-Term International Migration estimates by citizenship show that in 2014, the estimated number of British citizens immigrating to the UK was 83,000. This figure is similar to the 76,000 British citizens estimated to have immigrated to the UK in the previous year. IPS estimates show that the majority of British citizens are immigrating for work-related reasons (46,000). The next most common reason is “going home to live” (14,000), followed by accompanying/joining others (11,000) and formal study (5,000). Generally, immigration of British citizens remains relatively stable, both in terms of the overall level and the main reasons for immigrating.

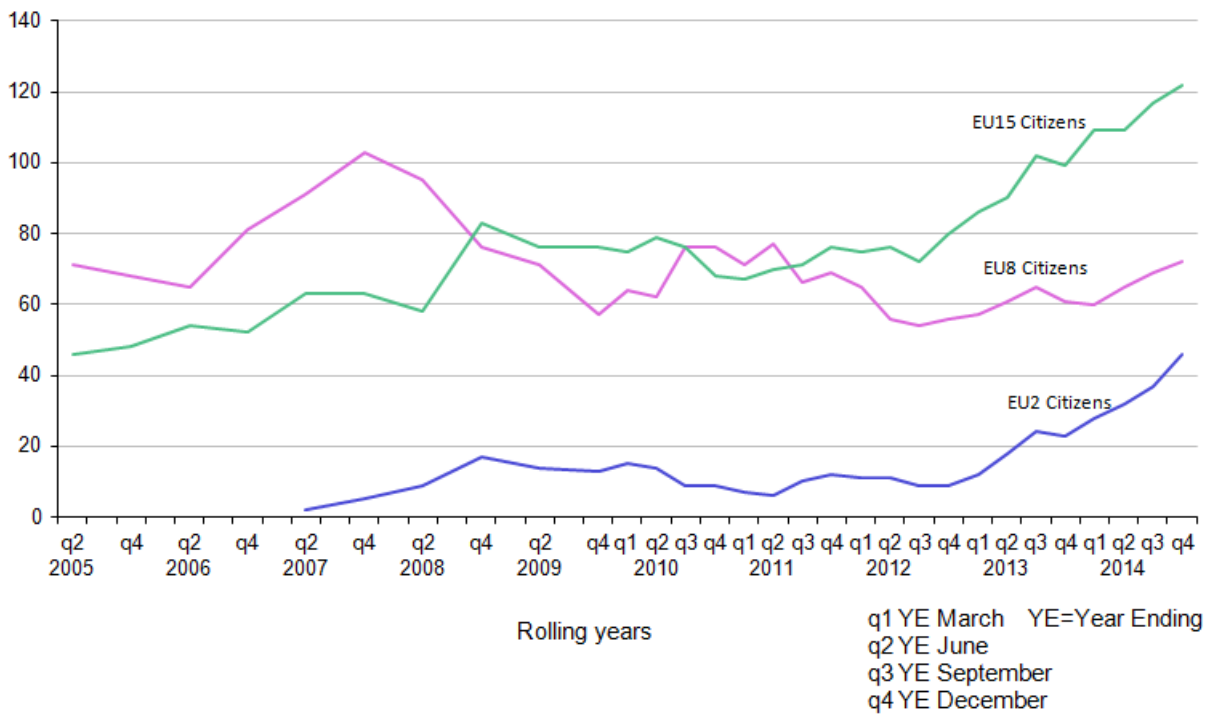
EU citizens

Immigration of EU citizens (excluding British) was estimated to be 268,000 in 2014, a statistically significant increase from 201,000 in the previous year and the highest recorded level for this group (Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.2 shows estimates for specific groups of EU countries, namely the first 15 EU member states (EU15), the 8 Central and Eastern European countries that joined in 2004 (EU8) (LINK to glossary) and Bulgaria and Romania (EU2), which joined in 2007. IPS estimates show that 50%, 30% and 19% of total EU immigration in 2014 was accounted for by citizens of the EU15, EU8 and EU2 respectively.

Figure 2.2: EU immigration to the UK, 2005 to 2014 (year ending December 2014)

Immigration (thousands)



EU15 citizens

The recent increase in EU immigration has been partly driven by a statistically significant increase in the number of EU15 citizens (excluding British) arriving in the UK from 104,000 in 2013 to 133,000 in 2014 (LTIM figures). This is the highest estimate recorded for this group.

IPS estimates show that the most common reason for immigration among EU15 citizens is work, with 74,000 (61%) arriving for this reason in 2014, a slight but not statistically significant increase from 62,000 in the previous year.

EU8 citizens

Over the last 5 years immigration of EU8 citizens has been relatively stable. An estimated 81,000 EU8 citizens (LTIM figures) immigrated to the UK in 2014 compared with 70,000 in the previous year. This increase is not statistically significant. These levels are lower than the peak of EU8 citizens who immigrated in 2007 (112,000). IPS estimates show that in 2014, the majority (67%) of EU8 citizens arrived for work-related reasons (48,000).

It should be noted that from May 2011 transitional controls that applied to EU8 citizens seeking work in other EU countries expired (these were never applied in the Irish Republic, Sweden and the UK). This may have had the effect of diverting some EU8 migration flows to other EU countries, such as [Germany](#), which in 2013 experienced its highest level of net migration since 1993.

EU2 citizens

Bulgaria and Romania joined the EU on 1 January 2007. Migrants from these countries coming to the UK were initially subject to transitional employment restrictions, which placed limits on the kind of employment they could undertake. The latest estimates reflect the first full year since these restrictions ended on 1 January 2014.

The latest IPS estimates for 2014 show that an estimated 46,000 Bulgarian and Romanian (EU2) citizens migrated to the UK. This was a statistically significant increase from 23,000 in the previous year. An estimated 35,000 (76%) of EU2 citizens arrived for work-related reasons, which is a statistically significant increase from 16,000 in 2013.

Non-EU citizens

Immigration of non-EU citizens increased to 290,000 in 2014 from 248,000 in the previous year (LTIM figures). This was a statistically significant increase of 42,000. (Figure 2.1).

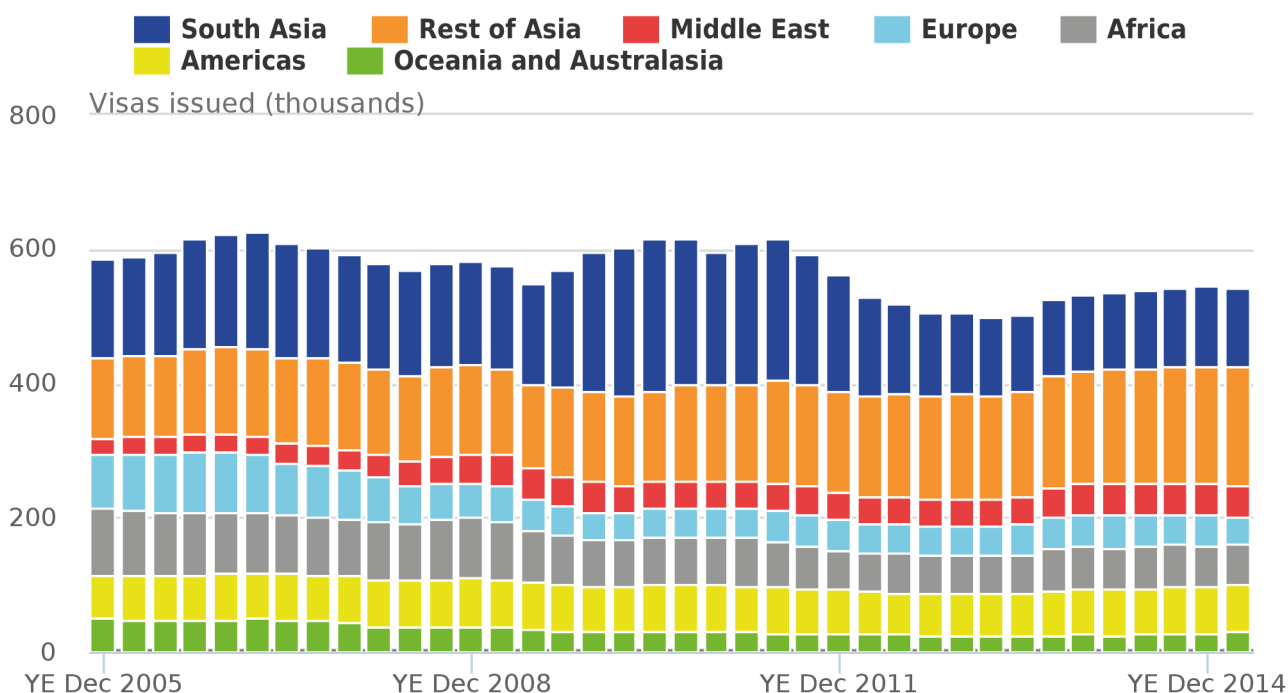
In 2014 there was an increase in immigration for the Other Foreign citizenship group, to 162,000 from 147,000 in 2013 (LTIM figures). This increase was not statistically significant. IPS estimates show that the majority of these Other Foreign citizens arrived for formal study (92,000); the numbers arriving for study have been stable for some time.

In contrast to the previous increase, immigration estimates of non-EU citizens showed a decline between the year ending (YE) September 2011 to YE September 2013. This decline has largely been due to lower immigration of Asian citizens, in particular for study. Visa statistics suggest this is likely to be related to the sharp decline in study applications by sponsors in the further education sector (see Section 2.3).

IPS estimates show that there was an increase in immigration of citizens from many of the country groups. Statistically significant increases were shown for citizens of the Middle East and Central Asia (20,000 in 2014 from 13,000 the previous year) and South Asian citizens (66,000 from 44,000 the previous year). North American citizens also show a statistically significant increase in immigration from 18,000 to 31,000, of which 14,000 (45%) immigrated for formal study. Citizens of Oceania showed a statistically significant increase from 15,000 in 2013 to 22,000 in 2014.

Nationality information on migrants that are subject to immigration controls, coming from non-EU countries, is provided by data on entry clearance visas.

Figure 2.3: Entry clearance visas granted (excluding visitor and transit visas), by world area, UK, 2005 to year ending March 2015



Notes:

1. A small number (1 to 2 thousand per year excluding visitor and transit visas) of Home Office visas cannot be ascribed to a world area and are categorised as “Other”. This category does not appear in the above chart.
2. European Economic Area (EEA) nationals do not require a visa to enter the UK, however see p 34 of User Guide to Home Office Immigration Statistics for exceptions (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/user-guide-to-home-office-immigration-statistics--9>).
3. See the Glossary in the link below for discussion of world regions and differences between Home Office and DWP definitions (<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-statistics-october-to-december-2014>).

Figure 2.3 shows trends in visas granted (excluding visitor and transit visas) by world area since 2005. From the YE September 2009 onwards, those with an Asian nationality have accounted for the majority of visas and have driven the recent fluctuations in visa numbers. Asian nationals accounted for 293,777 (54%) of the 543,647 visas granted in the YE March 2015, with India and China each accounting for 16% of the total.

The number of visas granted in the YE March 2015, excluding visitor and transit visas, was 5,950 higher than in the YE March 2014 (537,697). This included increases for India (up 5,033 or +6%), China (up 3,942 or +5%) and Australia (up 3,581 or +20%).

There are a range of potential reasons why IPS figures may be different from figures for visas granted or passenger arrivals, and hence why the trends in the different series may not match, including:

- sampling variation in the IPS
- differences between intentions and visa length
- timing differences between when visas are granted and when an individual actually travels
- visa and admissions data includes dependents, and both short term and long term migrants

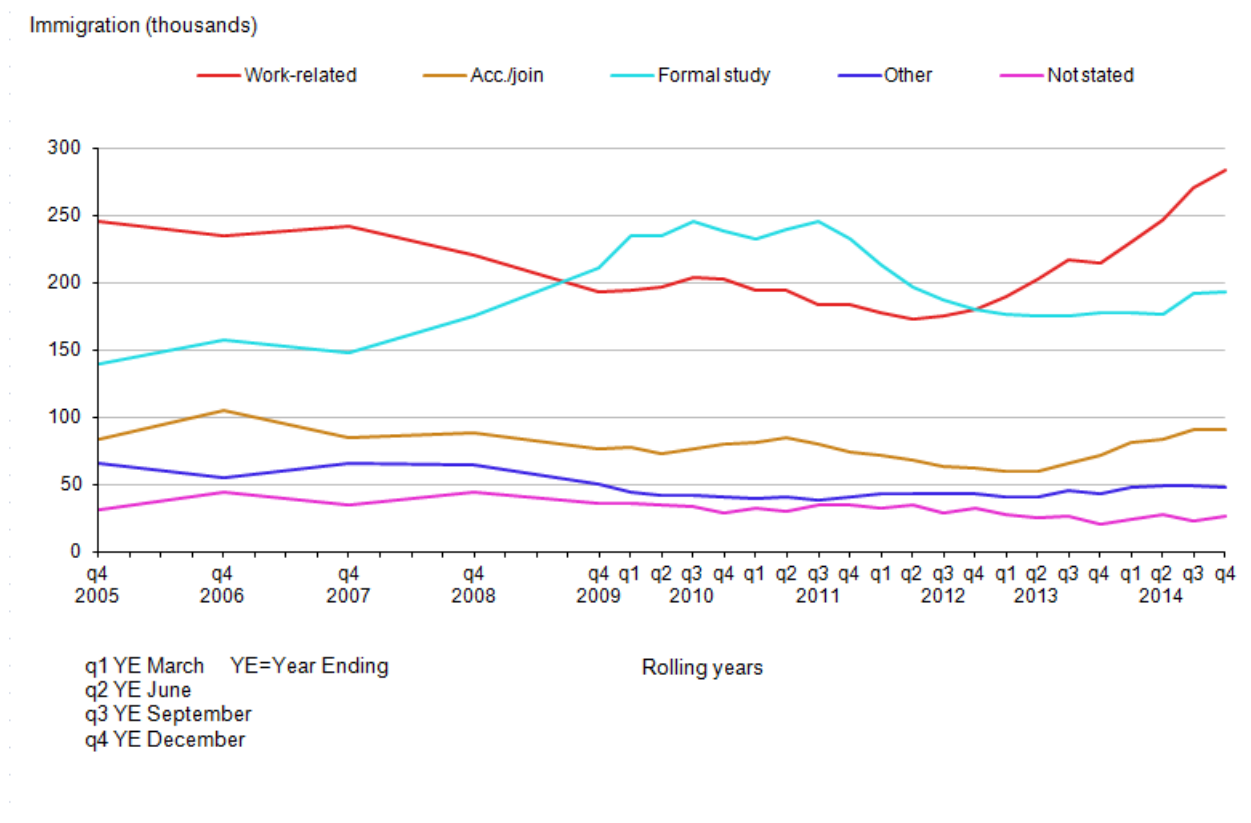
Although the above figures exclude visitor and transit visas, they will include some individuals who do not plan to move to the UK for a year or more, as well as dependants. There is evidence that recent increases up to 2013 in visas granted reflect higher numbers of short-term visas. The Home Office published a research note, which indicated that the increase from 2012 to 2013 in total visas granted, excluding visit and transit visas, was accounted for by higher numbers of short-term (less than 1 year) visas. Nevertheless, recent trends in visas granted have also provided a good leading indicator for trends in long-term non-EU immigration.

For more information see the [Home Office Immigration Statistics January to March 2015 bulletin](#). In addition, we have published our annual report on [Short-Term International Migration](#), 21 May 2015.

2.1 Immigration to the UK by main reason

The next sections describe the main reason for migration for long-term immigrants to the UK. Three-quarters of immigrants to the UK are people migrating to work or study (Figure 2.4). Changes in flows of people migrating for these reasons are affected by the differing rights of EU and non-EU citizens to migrate to the UK and by the impact of government policy.

Figure 2.4: Long-term international migration estimates of immigration to the UK, by main reason for migration, 2005 to 2014 (year ending December 2014)



IPS long-term immigration estimates for work and formal study broadly follow the same long-term trends as visas granted for work and study. However, IPS estimates will be lower than the visa figures because the IPS estimates exclude those individuals who intend to stay for less than 1 year.

Home Office visa statistics show that most of the 543,647 visas granted (excluding visitors and transit visas) to non-EEA nationals in the YE March 2015 were for study (216,466, excluding student visitors) or for work (171,043). In addition, 68,794 student visitor and 34,713 family-related visas were granted.

Furthermore, the dependants of those granted a visa to work or study are included in the work and study visas figures, whereas the reason for migration for such individuals, in most cases, are likely to be recorded as accompanying/joining others on the IPS.

IPS statistics and visa statistics represent flows of people, only a proportion of whom will remain for longer periods. A recent Home Office research report "[The reason for migration and labour market characteristics of UK residents born abroad](#)" (September 2014) uses our data from the Labour Force Survey to provide estimates of the number of residents born abroad by the reason for original migration.

One finding of this research was that the distribution of original purposes given for migrating by people resident in the UK who were born abroad is very different from that produced when looking at the migration flows reported in the IPS. For example, the proportion of people who come for family purposes or as a dependant takes greater significance, because of the higher likelihood of people who come for relationship reasons to stay longer. Similarly, although many foreign students are temporary, the analysis confirmed findings in other studies that a number of foreign students do stay on as residents.

2.2 Immigration for work

For long-term international migration flows the most commonly stated reason for immigration to the UK is work (Figure 2.4). This has been the case historically, with the exception of 2009 to 2012 when study was the most common main reason for immigration.

The majority of sources show that immigration for work has increased over the last year for both EU and non-EU citizens. Data from the IPS, LFS and National Insurance number (NINo) registrations suggest that there has been an increase in immigration for work among EU citizens. The IPS and NINo data suggest that this increase applied to both EU15 and EU2 citizens. The LFS, which includes short-term migrants and changes in employment in the resident population, also suggests that there has been an increase in EU15 and EU2 citizens in employment as well as citizens of the EU8.

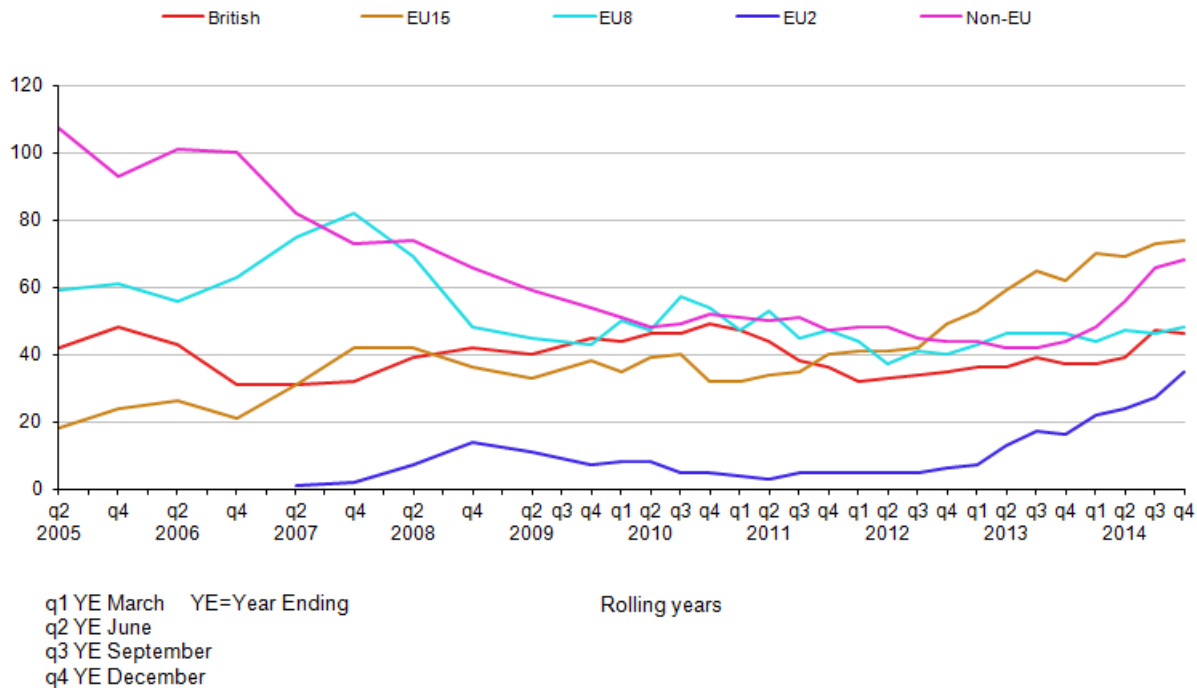
There has also been an increase in the number of non-EU citizens who have immigrated for work-related reasons. According to the latest IPS figures, the number of non-EU immigrants for work-related reasons showed a statistically significant increase to 68,000 in 2014, up from 44,000 the previous year. 82% of non-EU immigrants who arrived for work-related reasons had a job to go to. This is consistent with the increase in visas issued to non-EU citizens. These visas were predominantly issued to skilled workers. More information from individual sources is as follows:

- LTIM estimates show that in 2014 a total of 284,000 people migrated to the UK for work-related reasons. This is a statistically significant increase from 214,000 in the previous year and is the highest figure in the series, although users should be aware that no revisions were made to reason for migration estimates at the time the overall net migration estimates were revised.
- IPS estimates show a statistically significant rise in immigration of both EU and non-EU citizens for work.
- [Labour market statistics](#) from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) show that the number of non-UK nationals in employment increased by 294,000 (or 11%) to 3.1 million in January to March 2015 compared with the same quarter in the previous year (2.8 million). Employment of EU nationals increased by 283,000 (17%) to 1.9 million and employment of non-EU nationals increased by 11,000 (1%) to 1.2 million. The growth in overall employment over the last year was 576,000 and of this 49% can be accounted for by a growth in employment for UK nationals.
- Visa data gives further information on non-EU immigration. In the YE March 2015, there were 9% more work-related visas granted (up 14,720 to 171,043) than in the previous year, largely accounted for by 13% higher tier 2 skilled work grants (+10,648) and 26% higher grants of tier 5 youth mobility visas (+5,268). Over the same period there was a corresponding 12% increase in applications to sponsor a visa for skilled work (55,589 in the YE March 2015, main applicants). The largest proportion of applications were for the information and communication sector (23,541), followed by professional, scientific and technical activities (10,768), and financial and insurance activities (6,608) sectors. More than half (56%) of sponsored skilled workers were Indian nationals and a further 12% were USA nationals
- In the YE March 2015, the number of new National Insurance numbers (NINos) allocated to non-UK nationals was 824,000 (Figure 2.6), an increase of 221,000 (37%) on the previous 12 months

It is important to note that these data sources have definitional differences and are not directly comparable with each other. More information on this is available in the [MSQR Information for Users \(364.2 Kb Pdf\)](#) .

Figure 2.5: Immigration to the UK for work-related reasons by citizenship, 2005 to 2014 (year ending December 2014)

Immigration (thousands)



The latest IPS estimates show that around 58% of immigrants arriving for work were EU citizens, 25% were non-EU citizens and a further 17% were British citizens.

EU immigration for work began to increase following the EU Accession (enlargement) in 2004, from 65,000 in 2004, to 125,000 in 2007. There was a decline in EU immigration for work during 2008, particularly among EU8 citizens, following which it remained steady at around 90,000 until 2012. In the last 2 years, EU immigration for work increased again. IPS estimates show that 159,000 EU citizens arrived for work in 2014 – a statistically significant increase from 125,000 in the previous year. This comprised the following:

- EU15 citizens – an increase to 74,000 from 62,000; this is not statistically significant
- EU8 citizens – remaining steady at 48,000
- EU2 citizens – an increase to 35,000 from 16,000; this is a statistically significant increase

Approximately 60% of all EU immigrants arriving for work-related reasons had a definite job to go to. The equivalent percentages for the EU15, EU8 and EU2 citizenship groups are 70%, 56% and 43% respectively.

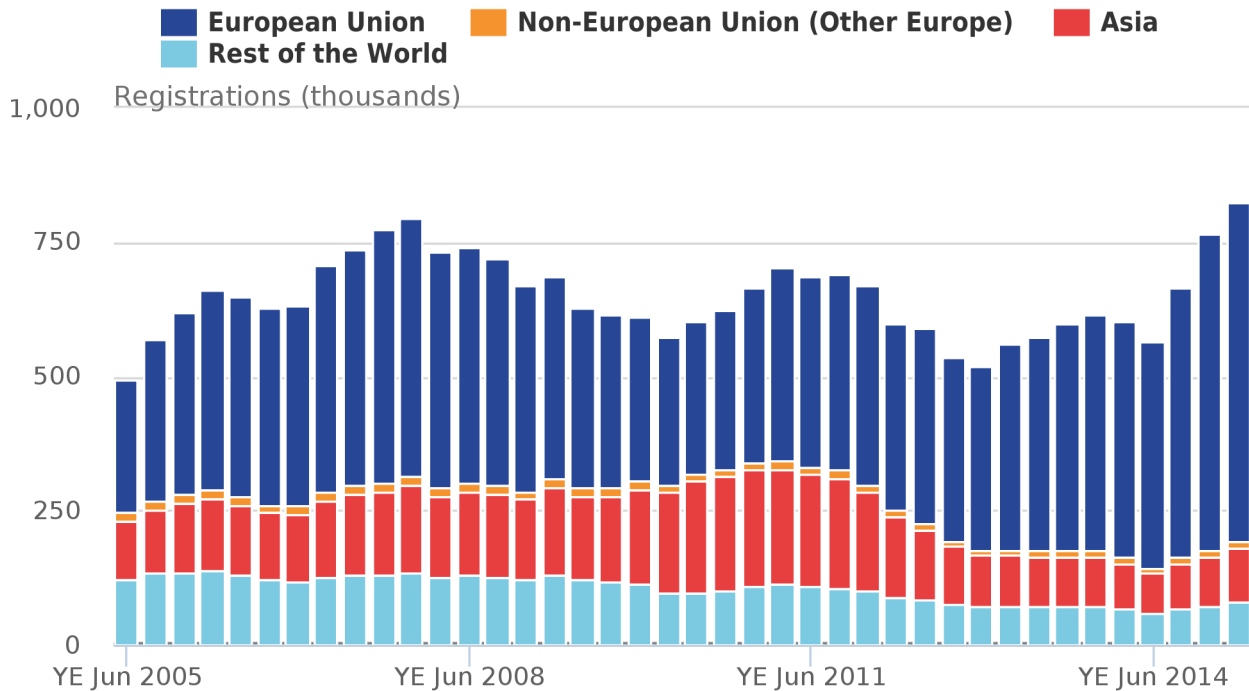
In 2004, 113,000 non-EU citizens arrived for work with an intention to remain more than 12 months. This figure declined until 2013 but the latest estimates show that there has been a statistically significant increase in non-EU immigration for work to 68,000 in 2014, up from 44,000 in the previous year (Figure 2.5).

The latest IPS estimates show that there were statistically significant increases in migrants from South Asia and Oceania coming to the UK for work-related reasons. South Asian citizens arriving for work-related reasons increased from 11,000 to 23,000 between 2013 and 2014. The majority (91%) had a definite job to go to. Citizens of Oceania immigrating for work is estimated to be 15,000 in 2014, up from 9,000 the previous year of which 60% (9,000) had a definite job to go to.

National Insurance number (NINo) allocations to overseas nationals

The number of NINos registered to non-UK nationals rose to 797,000 in 2007 following a steady increase since 2004. For several years they fluctuated around 600,000, falling to a low of 519,000 in 2012. However, latest data show a recent increase to 824,000 registrations in the YE March 2015 (Fig 2.6). It should be noted that these figures also include short-term migrants and are not a direct measure of when a person immigrated to the UK, as those registering may have arrived to live in the UK weeks, months or years before registering – and may have subsequently returned abroad

Figure 2.6: National Insurance number allocations to adult overseas nationals by world area of origin, UK, 2005 to 2015



Source: Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), National Insurance number allocations to adult overseas nationals

Notes:

1. The figures are based on recorded registration date on the National Insurance Recording and Pay as you Earn System (NPS), ie after the NINo application process has been completed. This may be a number of weeks or months (and in some cases years) after arriving in the UK.

Table 2: National Insurance number registrations to adult overseas nationals entering the UK, year ending March 2015

World area	Year to March 2014 total	Year to March 2015 total	Difference	% Change to previous year
Total	603.3	824.2	220.9	37%
European Union	440.1	629.4	189.3	43%
Non European Union	162.6	193	30.4	19%
EU15	190.4	237.9	47.5	25%
EU8	181.8	194.7	12.9	7%
EU2	64.9	192.9	128	197%

Source: Department for Work and Pensions

Notes:

1. The figures are based on recorded registration date on the National Insurance Recording and Pay as you Earn System, i.e. after the NINo application process has been completed. This may be a number of weeks or months (and in some cases years) after arriving in the UK.
2. The data series include both short-term and long-term migrants.
3. The number of new registrations of NINos to non-UK nationals over a given period is not the same as the total number of non-UK nationals who hold a NINo.
4. The total number of non-UK nationals who have been allocated a NINo is not the same as the number of non-UK nationals working in the UK. This is because people who have been allocated NINos may subsequently have left the UK, or they may still be in the UK but have ceased to be in employment.
5. Some people arriving into the UK may already hold a NINo from a previous stay in the UK. Once a person has been allocated a NINo, they do not need to reapply in order to work in the UK.

Increases in immigration for work among EU15 and EU2 citizens are reflected in data on NINo registrations to adult overseas nationals (Table 2) from within the EU. Transitional employment controls were lifted for EU2 nationals on 1 January 2014.

For EU citizens the number of NINo registrations in the YE March 2015 was 629,000, an increase of 189,000 (43%) on the previous year. Romanian (152,000), Polish (116,000), Italian (58,000), Spanish (54,000), and Bulgarian (41,000) form the top 5 EU nationalities for NINo registrations in the YE March 2015.

For non-EU citizens the number of NINo registrations in the YE March 2015 was 193,000, an increase of 30,000 (19%) on the previous year. Indian (35,000), Pakistani (14,000), Chinese (13,000), Australian (12,000) and Nigerian (12,000) form the top 5 non-EU nationalities for NINo registrations.

Labour market statistics

The [latest labour market statistics](#) from the labour force survey show that the number of non-UK nationals in employment increased by 294,000 (11%) to 3.1 million in January to March 2015 compared with the same quarter in the previous year (2.8 million). Employment of EU nationals increased by 283,000 (17%) to 1.9 million and employment of non-EU nationals increased by 11,000 (1%) to 1.2 million. The growth in overall employment over the last year was 576,000 and of this, 49% can be accounted for by a growth in employment for UK nationals.

[Labour market statistics](#) show an estimated 173,000 EU2 citizens were employed in the UK in January to March 2015, an increase of 33% from the same quarter in the previous year. This follows the lifting of labour market restrictions for EU2 citizens in January 2014.

This compares with an increase of 16% to 800,000 for EU15 (excluding British) citizens and an increase of 16% to 929,000 for EU8 citizens. Labour market statistics are a measure of the stock of people working in the UK, rather than a measure of migration flows. Labour market figures cannot be directly compared to long-term migration inflows; in particular they include both short-term and long-term migrants.

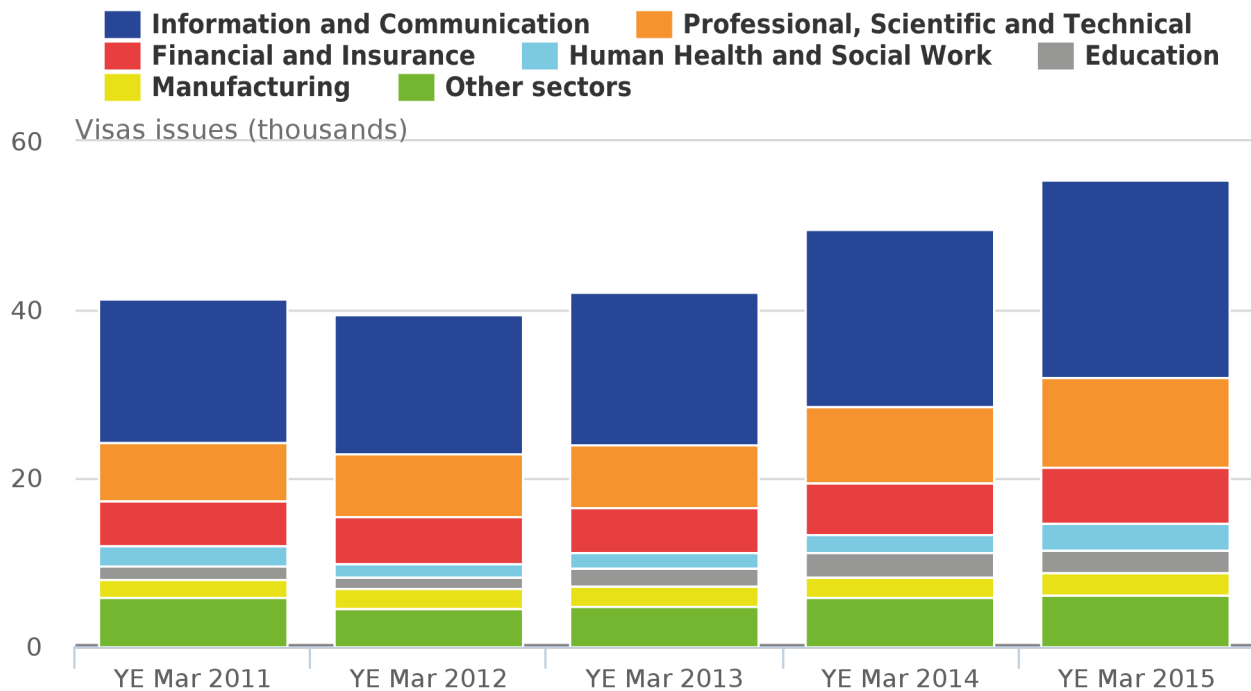
Overall the IPS and LFS estimates and NINo allocations data all provide evidence that there has been increased immigration for work among EU and Non-EU citizens. Labour market statistics are showing increased levels of employment across all EU groupings, with the greatest increases among EU2 citizens. IPS estimates also suggest that this increase has been predominantly among EU2 and EU15 citizens. Note, however, that both NINo and labour market statistics will include short-term workers as well as long-term migrants.

Work-related visas (Non-EEA nationals)

There have previously been falls in work-related visas granted following the introduction of the points based system and more recently related to the closure of the tier 1 general and tier 1 post-study categories to new applicants – see [Home Office Work topic](#)). These trends also reflect the changing economic environment over that period. More recently the numbers of skilled work visas (tier 2) have started to rise.

In the YE March 2015, there were 9% more work-related visas granted (up 14,720 compared with the previous year, to 171,043), largely accounted for by higher numbers of skilled work visas (+10,648) and higher numbers of investor visas (+869). Over the same period, there was also a corresponding 12% increase in sponsored visa applications for skilled work (to 55,589, main applicants). Most of the applications were for the information and communication (23,541), professional, scientific and technical activities (10,768), and financial and insurance activities (6,608) sectors (Figure 2.7).

Figure 2.7: Skilled work visa applications by industry sector, UK, year ending March 2011 to year ending March 2015



Source: Home Office, Immigration Statistics January – March 2015.

Notes:

1. YE = Year ending.
2. As part of the application process for visas, individuals must obtain a certificate of sponsorship from an employer. The data shown relate to the numbers of sponsoring documents used by main applicants applying for Tier 2 (Skilled work) visas.
3. European Economic Area (EEA) nationals do not require a visa to enter the UK.

In the YE March 2015, work-related grants for extensions to stay longer in the UK fell by 19% (-20,138) to 86,786 compared to the YE March 2014. This included falls in tier 1 general (-14,940) and tier 1 post study (-670), both categories closed to new entrants, as well as for tier 1 entrepreneurs (-1,413), and tier 2 skilled workers (-4,508).

The [migrant journey fifth report](#) indicated that, based on data matching, over a quarter (28%) of those issued skilled work visas in 2008 had either been granted permission to stay permanently (settlement) or still had valid leave to remain 5 years later. This was lower than the 44% of those granted skilled work visas in 2004.

2.3 Immigration for study

Immigration to the UK for study increased from 177,000 to 193,000 in 2014, albeit not statistically significantly. Over the same period, visa applications to study at a UK university (main applicants) rose 2% to 171,064.

LTIM estimates show how the number of people coming to the UK to study for 12 months or more has changed over the last 10 years (Figure 2.4). The figures include all educational sectors, including universities and other forms of study. Around 150,000 long-term migrants arrived annually to study in the middle part of the last decade. After 2007 this increased to a 2-year plateau of around 240,000 in 2010 and 2011 before falling below 180,000 by 2013. However, since 2013 the figure has risen (not statistically significantly) to 193,000. IPS estimates for 2014 show that 72% of long-term immigrants to the UK for study are non-EU citizens. Of these, two-thirds are Asian citizens.

IPS estimates also show that the number of old Commonwealth citizens coming to the UK for formal study increased to 9,000 in 2014 from 3,000 the previous year. This is a statistically significant increase.

IPS estimates show that there are statistically significant increases for citizens of North America and Central and South America arriving for study. In 2014 these increased from 6,000 to 14,000 and 5,000 to 11,000 respectively when compared to the previous year.

Immigration of all Asian citizens for formal study rose from 78,000 in the YE June 2008 to a peak of 166,000 in the YE September 2011. Since 2011 Asian student immigration decreased and from the YE March 2013 has been steady at around 90,000. This decline was driven by a decrease in South Asian citizens arriving for study, which fell from 91,000 in the YE September 2011 to 20,000 in 2014. Although Asian citizens arriving to study have decreased over the second half of the last decade, they are still the largest contributors to non-EU immigration for study.

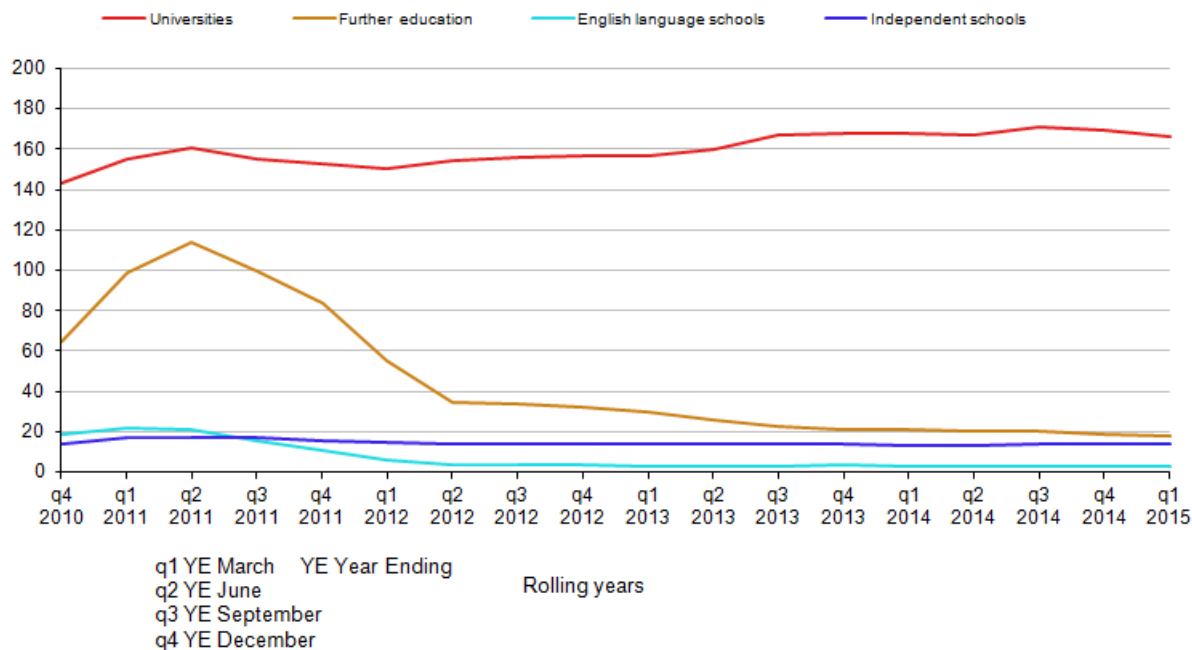
Home Office statistics show that there were 216,466 visas granted for the purposes of study (excluding student visitors) in the YE March 2015, a fall of 1%. There were higher numbers of study visas granted (excluding student visitors) for Chinese (+2,156 or +3%) and Malaysian (+688; +7%) nationals, and falls for Bangladeshi (-1,163; -38%), Indian (-1,068; -8%) and Pakistani (-945; -20%) nationals.

Trends in student numbers over time, as recorded by study visa applications, differ by nationality and by education sector. IPS long-term immigration estimates, while being substantially lower, follow a broadly similar trend to student visas granted, with increases in both series during 2009 and decreases after the year ending June 2011 (and with both study visas granted and IPS increasing more recently).

Statistics on sponsored applications for visas by education sector show that the falls in visas granted to non-EEA nationals for study have been in the non-university sector (Figure 2.8). The total number of study-related sponsored visa applications (main applicants) fell 2% in the YE March 2015 (205,129) compared to the previous 12 months (209,003). This included different trends for different sectors. There was a slight fall in sponsored visa applications for the university sector (to 166,481, -1%) and falls in the further education sector (to 18,297, -11%) and English Language schools (to 3,335, -2%) along with a rise in the independent schools sector (to 13,985, +4%).

Figure 2.8: Study-related sponsored visa applications by sector, UK, year ending December 2010 to year ending March 2015

Visas (thousands)



Student visitors are granted a visa for a maximum of 6 months in duration or in a very small number of cases for 11 months if studying an English Language course. Student visitors are not counted as long-term migrants and cannot extend their stay, so they are not included within the references to study visas in this section.

There were 263,000 student visitor admissions in 2013, much higher than student visitor visas granted (77,601 over the same period). This is largely due to many of the top 10 nationalities for student visitor admissions being non-visa nationalities (including the United States and Brazil). In the year ending March 2015 the number of student visitor visas granted was 68,794, 13% (10,592) lower than the year ending March 2014. The number of student visitor visas granted previously doubled from 37,703 in calendar year 2009 to 77,601 in calendar year 2013.

For more information on immigration to the UK for study, see the [Home Office topic report](#) on Study.

2.4 Immigration for other reasons

Reasons for migrating other than work or study include accompanying or joining family or friends, asylum and returning home to live.

LTIM estimates show that the third most common reason for migrating to the UK is to accompany/join others. In 2014, 91,000 long-term migrants arrived in the UK to accompany or join others, a statistically significant increase from 71,000 in the previous year (Figure 2.4). Immigration to accompany/join others peaked at 105,000 in 2006, prior to the recent economic downturn, but then declined reaching a low of 59,000 in the YE March 2013. Recent increases represent a return to levels similar to those in 2011. According to IPS estimates there was a statistically significant increase in immigration of EU citizens to accompany/join others to 25,000 in 2014, from 15,000 in the previous year.

As would be expected, the vast majority (14,000) of the 16,000 immigrants who stated “going home to live” as their reason for immigrating were British.

Family visas (Non-EEA nationals)

Entry clearance visa statistics show that 34,713 family route visas were granted in the YE March 2015, a decrease of 1% compared with the YE March 2014 (35,214). This is less than half the level of the peak in the YE March 2007 (72,894).

Further information on [visas granted for family reasons](#) has been published by the Home Office.

Asylum applications

There were 25,020 asylum applications in the YE March 2015, an increase of 5% compared with the previous year (23,803). The number of applications remains low relative to the peak number of applications in 2002 (84,132), and now typically accounts for only 4% of long-term inflows. In the YE March 2015, the largest number of applications for asylum came from nationals of Eritrea (3,552), followed by Pakistan (2,421) and Syria (2,222). Grant rates for asylum, humanitarian protection, discretionary leave or other grants of stay vary between nationalities. For example, 85% of the total initial decisions made for nationals of Eritrea and Syria were grants, compared with 22% for Pakistani nationals.

Further information on asylum has been published by the [Home Office](#).

Recent Home Office publication

In February 2015 the Home Office published its "[migrant journey: fifth report](#)", which shows how non-EEA migrants change their immigration status or achieve settlement in the UK.

Main points include:

- 20% (18,359) of those issued skilled work visas (with a potential path to settlement) in the 2008 cohort had been granted settlement 5 years later and a further 8% (6,912) still had valid leave to remain
- Indian nationals were issued the largest proportion (39%) of skilled work visas in the 2008 cohort and, of these skilled Indian nationals, 19% had received settlement after 5 years, while a further 7% still had valid leave to remain

In May 2014 the Home Office published an update to the article "[Extensions of stay by previous category](#)". Looking at extensions data by individuals' previous category, 7,043 former students were granted extensions for work in 2014 (main applicants). The comparable figure for 2013 was 6,238 and for 2012 was 38,505. The large fall from 2012 to 2013 reflected the closure of the tier 1 post-study category to new entrants in 2012.

6. Emigration from the UK

The latest emigration estimate for 2014 was 323,000 with a confidence interval of +/-23,000. Recently levels of emigration have remained very stable and well below the high of 427,000 in 2008. It is important to note that emigration comprises a range of different types of emigrant, including British citizens but also people of other citizenships, including those leaving the UK after a period of work or study.

British citizens accounted for 43% of emigrants in 2014 (139,000). Emigration of British citizens has remained at around the same level since 2009, having fallen from the peak of 207,000 in 2006 (Figure 3.1).

The estimated number of EU citizens (excluding British) emigrating from the UK was 91,000 in 2014, a non-statistically significant increase from the estimated 78,000 EU citizens who emigrated in the previous year. LTIM estimates are not available for every individual EU citizenship grouping.

However, IPS estimates show that emigration among the various EU citizenship groups has been stable over the last few years, with 58% (49,000), 36% (30,000) and 5% (4,000) of EU emigration accounted for by EU15, EU8 and EU2 citizens respectively, in 2014.

The LTIM estimates show the number of non-EU citizens emigrating from the UK in 2014 was 94,000, a decrease, albeit not statistically significant, from the previous year (105,000). While this is not a statistically significant decrease in itself, there was a significant decrease in the number of new Commonwealth citizens emigrating, from 36,000 to 28,000 in 2014.

Figure 3.1: Emigration from the UK by citizenship, 2005 to 2014 (year ending December 2014)

Emigration (thousands)



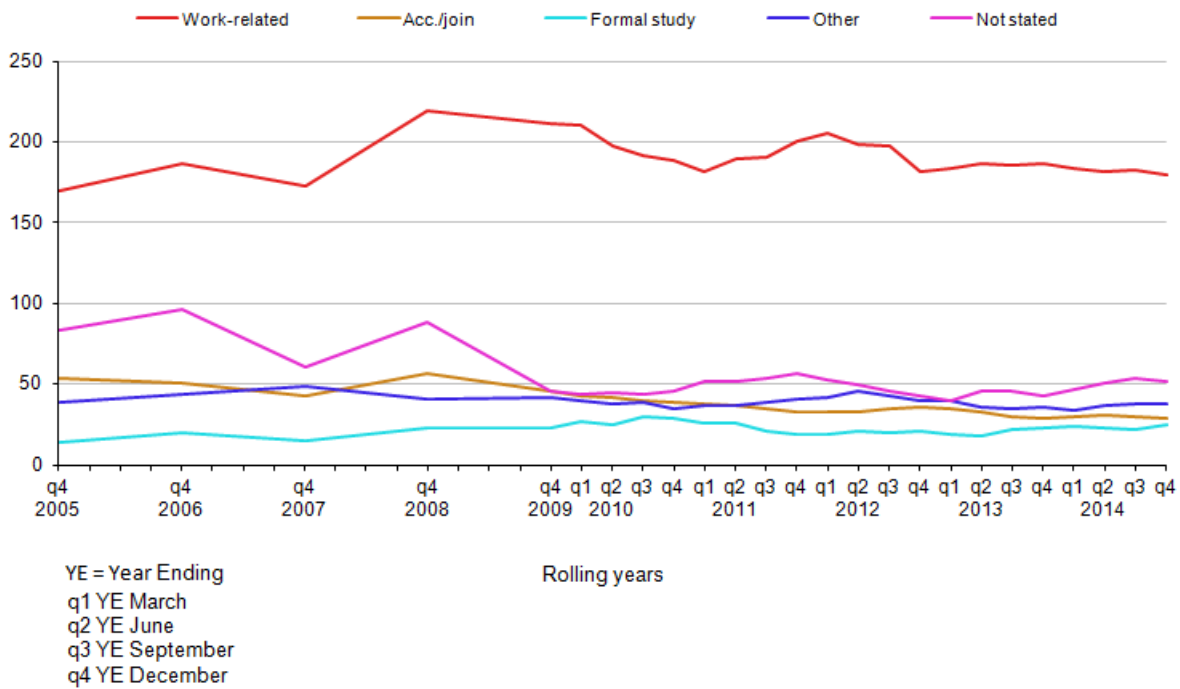
In the LTIM estimates for 2014, work-related reasons continue to be the main reason given for emigration and account for 56% of emigrants. An estimated 180,000 people emigrated from the UK for work-related reasons in 2014, a similar estimate to the previous year (187,000).

Of the 33,000 emigrants in the IPS who stated their main reason for migration as “going home to live”, 18,000 were EU citizens and 14,000 were citizens of non-EU countries. The peak of people leaving the UK to return home was in 2008 when 62,000 emigrated for this reason. This peak coincides with the start of the economic downturn.

Using the [new country groupings](#) which we consulted on in 2014, the latest IPS estimates show that in 2014, 56,000 (64%) of the 88,000 non-EU emigrants, were of Asian citizenship.

Figure 3.2: Long-term international migration estimates of emigration from the UK, by main reason, 2005 to 2014 (year ending December 2014)

Emigration (thousands)



[Home Office Research Report 68](#), published in November 2012, presents information from academic research and surveys drawn together to present key aspects of long-term emigration from the United Kingdom. This includes recent outward migration and some trends over the last 20 years, separately for British, EU and non-EU citizens.

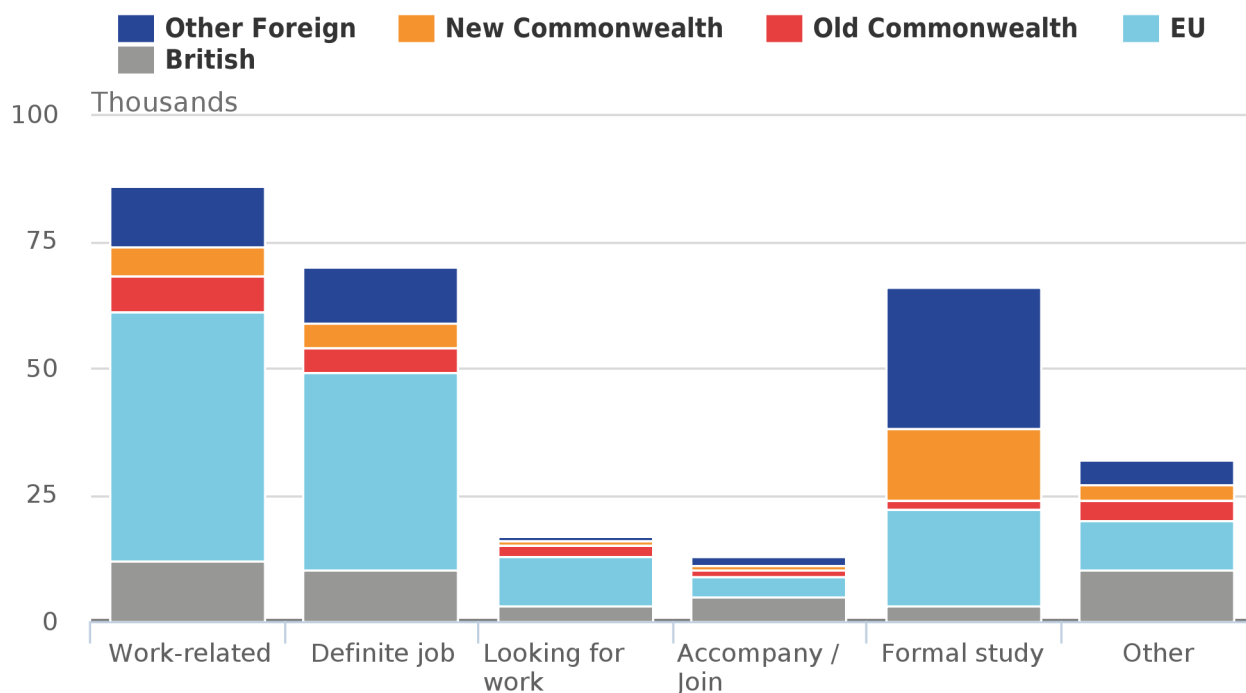
The report considers where emigrants go, how long for, and their motivations. The evidence suggests emigration is mainly for work, and that the most common destinations for British citizens are Australia, Spain, the United States and France. Reasons and drivers for emigration from the UK appear to vary across citizenship groups. While many factors influence emigration, the report says that emigration of British and EU citizens appears to be associated with changes in unemployment and exchange rates. This is less apparent for non-EU citizens.

3.1 People emigrating from the UK by previous main reason for immigration

In 2012 a new question was added to the IPS asking current emigrants who had previously immigrated to the UK about their main reason for migration at the time that they immigrated.

In 2014, IPS data show that 300,000 individuals emigrated from the UK. These comprised 103,000 “new” long-term emigrants (individuals who had not previously lived away from the UK for 12 months or more) and 198,000 long-term emigrants who had formerly immigrated to the UK.

Figure 3.3: Outflow of migrants, who are former immigrants to the UK, by citizenship and previous main reason for immigration (year ending December 2014)



Source: International Passenger Survey (IPS) - Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Figures are provisional.
2. 'Work-related reasons' is the sum of definite job and looking for work.

Work-related reasons and formal study were the 2 most common previous main reasons for immigrating to the UK reported by former immigrants who emigrated in 2014, at 86,000 (43%) and 65,000 (33%) respectively. It should be noted that these IPS emigration flows reflect inward flows in previous years, not the current year.

Of those who had previously immigrated to the UK for work-related reasons, 49,000 (57%) were EU citizens, 13,000 (15%) were citizens of the old or new Commonwealth, and 12,000 (14%) were citizens of other foreign countries.

Of the 65,000 emigrants who had previously immigrated to the UK for formal study, 19,000 (29%) were EU citizens and 44,000 (68%) were non-EU citizens, down from 50,000 the previous year. This decrease is not statistically significant but is driven by a statistically significant decrease for new Commonwealth citizens which estimates 14,000 in 2014, down from 19,000 the previous year.

An estimated 13,000 (7%) had previously immigrated to the UK to accompany or join another person, while 33,000 (17%) had previously immigrated for other reasons or did not state their previous reason for immigration.

Using the new country groupings, the latest IPS estimates show that in 2014, of the 25,000 non-EU citizens who had previously immigrated to the UK for work-related reasons, 14,000 (56%) were citizens of Asian countries. The estimates also show that of the 44,000 non-EU citizens who had previously immigrated to the UK for formal study, 18,000 (41%) were East Asian citizens and 9,000 (20%) were South Asian citizens.

7. Accuracy of migration estimates

Long-Term International Migration (LTIM) estimates are about 90% based on data from the International Passenger Survey (IPS), with adjustments made for asylum seekers, non-asylum enforced removals, visitor and migrant switchers and flows to and from Northern Ireland.

Surveys gather information from a sample of people from a population. In the case of the IPS, the population is passengers travelling through the main entry and exit points from the UK including airports, seaports and the Channel Tunnel. The estimates produced are based on only one of a number of possible samples that could have been drawn at a given point in time. Each of these possible samples would produce an estimated number of migrants. These may be different to the true value that would have been obtained if it were possible to ask everyone passing through about their migration intentions. This is known as sampling variability.

The published estimate is based upon the single sample that was taken and is the best estimate of the true value based on the data collected. However, to account for sampling variability, the estimates are published alongside a 95% confidence interval.

The confidence interval is a measure of the uncertainty around the estimate. Confidence intervals become larger for more detailed estimates (such as citizenship by reason for migrating). This is because the number of people in the sample who have these specific characteristics (for example, EU8 citizens arriving to study in the UK) is smaller than the number of people sampled within a category at a higher level (such as the total number of EU citizens arriving to study in the UK). The larger the confidence interval, the less precise is the estimate. Therefore users of migration statistics are advised to use the highest level breakdown of data where possible.

95% confidence intervals are used, which is a widely accepted level, meaning that over many repeats of the sample under the same conditions, we would expect the confidence interval to contain the true value 95 times out of 100. Equivalently, we can say that there would be a 1 in 20 chance that the true value would lie outside of the range of the 95% confidence interval.

Estimates from the IPS may change from one period to the next simply due to sampling variability. In other words, the change may be due to which individuals were selected to answer the survey, and may not represent any real-world change in migration patterns.

Statistical tests can be used to determine whether any increases or decreases that we see in the estimates from the IPS could be due to chance, or whether they are likely to represent a real change in migration patterns. If the tests show that the changes are unlikely to have occurred through chance alone, and are likely to reflect a real change, then the change is described as being statistically significant. The usual standard is to carry out these tests at the 5% level of statistical significance. This means that we would expect only 1 out of 20 differences identified as statistically significant to have occurred purely by chance.

For information on the accuracy of these statistics, the difference between provisional and final figures and guidance on comparing different data sources, please see the "[MSQR Information for Users \(364.2 Kb Pdf\)](#)".

Revisions to net migration estimates in light of the 2011 Census

In April 2014, we published a [report \(1.04 Mb Pdf\)](#) examining the quality of international migration statistics between 2001 and 2011, using the results of the 2011 Census. A main finding of the report was that over the 10 year period annual net migration estimates were a total of 346,000 lower than total net migration implied by the 2011 Census. However, the report also showed that the quality of international migration estimates improved following changes made to the IPS in 2009.

Within the [report](#), ONS published a revised series of net migration estimates for the UK. [Published tables](#) have been updated on the ONS website to include the revised estimates. The [report \(1.04 Mb Pdf\)](#), a [summary](#) and [guidance \(55.9 Kb Pdf\)](#) on how to use these revised figures are available on our website.

8. List of products

The following are URL links to the products underlying this report, or otherwise associated with the co-ordinated migration release of 21 May 2015. The department releasing each product is indicated.

[The MSQR user information \(ONS\) \(364.2 Kb Pdf\)](#) – guidance on interpreting confidence intervals, the difference between provisional and final estimates, and the comparability and quality of input data sources.

[International migration statistics first time user guide \(ONS\) \(315.5 Kb Pdf\)](#) – an introduction to the key concepts underpinning migration statistics including basic information on definitions, methodology, use of confidence intervals and information on the range of available statistics related to migration.

[Guidance on revised net migration statistics \(ONS\) \(55.9 Kb Pdf\)](#) – information for users on how to interpret the revised net migration estimates for 2001 to 2010 alongside published LTIM estimates.

[Long-term international migration – Frequently asked questions and background notes \(ONS\) \(440.7 Kb Pdf\)](#) – information on recent trends in migration, methods and coverage, comparisons to international migration estimates, a complete list of definitions and terms and a guide to the published tables.

[Quality and methodology information for international migration \(ONS\) \(217.6 Kb Pdf\)](#) – information on the usability and fitness for purpose of long-term international migration estimates.

[Long-term international migration estimates methodology \(ONS\) \(545.5 Kb Pdf\)](#) – a detailed methodology document for LTIM estimates, including information on current methodology and assumptions, data sources including the International Passenger Survey and changes to the methodology since 1991.

[International passenger survey: Quality information in relation to migration flows \(ONS\) \(324.8 Kb Pdf\)](#) – an overview of the quality and reliability of the International Passenger Survey (IPS) in relation to producing Long-Term International Migration estimates.

[Local area migration indicators suite \(ONS\)](#) – This is an interactive product bringing together different migration-related data sources to allow users to compare indicators of migration at local authority level. This product is updated annually in August.

[Migration theme page \(ONS\)](#) – This provides the most up to date figures and highlights the latest summaries, publications and infographics for internal and international migration.

[Population theme page \(ONS\)](#) – This provides the most up to date figures and highlights the latest summaries, publications and infographics for different components that contribute to population change, including migration.

[Overview of population statistics \(ONS\)](#) – This describes different aspects of population we measure and why. Information on how these are measured, and the statistics themselves, can be found via the links provided within the document.

[Population by country of birth and nationality \(ONS\)](#) – This short report focuses on annual and regional changes in the UK resident population by nationality and country of birth for the year ending December 2013. The product is published annually in August.

[Short-Term International Migration annual report \(ONS\)](#) – A report and tables detailing estimates of short-term migration to and from the UK for England and Wales for the year ending mid-2013. The product is published annually in May.

Quarterly releases on 21 May 2015:

1. Provisional Long-Term International Migration, year ending December 2014 (ONS)
2. Immigration Statistics January to March 2015 (Home Office)
3. National Insurance number (NINo) Allocations to Adult Overseas Nationals to March 2015 (DWP)

Annual releases on 21 May 2015:

1. [Short-Term International Migration annual report \(ONS\): Year ending mid-2013](#)

Additional useful links:

[Labour Market Statistics, May 2015 \(ONS\)](#). This includes estimates of the number of people in employment in the UK by country of birth and nationality.

[Quality of Long-Term International Migration estimates from 2001 to 2011 \(ONS\) \(1.04 Mb Pdf\)](#)

[International Migration Timeline \(ONS\)](#)

[Final Long-Term International Migration \(2013\) \(ONS\)](#)

[A Comparison of International Estimates of Long-term Migration \(ONS\)](#)

[Migrant Journey Fifth Report \(Home Office\)](#)

9. Future releases

The remaining quarterly migration release dates in 2015 are:

- Thursday 27 August
- Thursday 26 November

To be released on 27 August 2015:

- Migration Statistics Quarterly Report – August 2015
- Population by Country of Birth and Nationality report and data tables
- Local Area Migration Indicators Suite

To be released on 26 November 2015:

- Final Long-Term International Migration figures for the calendar year 2014

Planned revisions to migration statistics

In July 2015, we will be publishing a revised back-series of estimates on the population of the UK by country of birth and nationality. The revisions, covering calendar year data from 2004 to 2013, will be based on the Annual Population Survey (APS). The APS has recently been re-weighted in light of the 2011 Census results.

10. Glossary

Annual Population Survey

The Annual Population Survey (APS) is a continuous household survey, covering the UK, with the aim of providing estimates between censuses of main social and labour market variables at a local area level. The APS is not a stand-alone survey, but uses data combined from 2 waves from the main Labour Force Survey (LFS) with data collected on a local sample boost. Apart from employment and unemployment, the topics covered in the survey include housing, ethnicity, religion, health and education.

Citizenship

This is the term used in the International Passenger Survey (IPS) to define the country for which a migrant is a passport holder. This refers specifically to the passport being used to enter or leave the UK at the time of interview. It does not refer to any other passport(s) which migrants of multiple nationality may hold. More generally a British citizen as described in IPS statistics includes those with UK nationality usually through a connection with the UK: birth, adoption, descent, registration, or naturalisation. British nationals have the right of abode in the UK.

Commonwealth (ONS statistical grouping)

The Commonwealth statistical grouping consists of countries of the old Commonwealth and the new Commonwealth (see below).

Confidence interval

This is the range within which the true value of a population parameter lies with known probability. For example the 95% confidence interval represents the range in which, over many repeats of the sample under the same conditions, we would expect the confidence interval to contain the true value 95 times out of 100. Equivalently, we can say that there would be a 1 in 20 chance that the true value would lie outside of the range of the 95% confidence interval. The uppermost and lowermost values of the confidence interval are termed "confidence limits".

European Economic Area (EEA)

The EEA consists of the 28 countries of the EU (see below), plus Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway. Swiss nationals are treated as EEA nationals for immigration purposes.

European Union (EU)

The EU consists of 28 countries: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Ireland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom. Croatia joined the EU in July 2013 – data with a reference period after that date will include Croatia within the EU grouping. Estimates for the EU quoted in this bulletin and accompanying tables exclude British citizens, who are reported as a separate group.

European Union (EU) Accession Countries

The accession countries are those that joined the EU in 2004 or later. 10 joined in 2004 (the EU8, plus Cyprus and Malta), 2 joined in 2007 (the EU2) and Croatia joined in 2013.

EU2

The EU2 (formerly known as the A2) are the 2 countries that joined the EU on 1 January 2007: Bulgaria and Romania. Between 2007 and 2013, EU2 nationals had certain restrictions placed on them; in the first 12 months of stay, working Bulgarian and Romanian nationals were generally required to hold an accession worker card or apply for 1 of 2 lower-skilled quota schemes. Other Bulgarian and Romanian nationals could apply for a registration certificate, giving proof of a right to live in the UK. These restrictions were lifted on 1 January 2014.

EU8

The EU8 (formerly known as the A8) are the 8 central and eastern European countries that joined the EU on 1 May 2004: Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia. The EU8 does not include the 2 other countries that joined on that date: Cyprus and Malta. EU8 nationals previously had restrictions on their rights to work and were required to register under the worker registration scheme, but these restrictions were lifted from 1 May 2011.

EU15

The EU15 consists of Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Republic of Ireland, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom. However, EU15 statistics exclude the United Kingdom.

International Passenger Survey (IPS)

The International Passenger Survey (IPS) is a survey of a random sample of passengers entering and leaving the UK by air, sea or the Channel Tunnel. Between 700,000 and 800,000 people are interviewed on the IPS each year. Of those interviewed, approximately 4,000 to 5,000 people each year are identified as long-term international migrants.

Long-Term International Migration (LTIM)

Long-Term International Migration (LTIM) estimates are produced by combining migration data from the IPS, Home Office data on asylum seekers (including non-asylum enforced removals adjustment), migration to and from Northern Ireland (from the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency) and adjustments for visitor switchers and migrant switchers.

Migrant

We use the [UN recommended](#) definition of a long-term international migrant: "A person who moves to a country other than that of his or her usual residence for a period of at least a year (12 months), so that the country of destination effectively becomes his or her new country of usual residence."

This is the definition used to calculate net migration, and is also used for the UK usually resident population estimate series. This definition does not necessarily coincide with those used by other organisations.

National Insurance number (NINo)

National Insurance numbers are issued to non-UK nationals immigrating for work. The number of NINos will include people who are coming to the UK for short periods or temporary purposes, as well as long-term migrants. The figures are based on recorded registration date on the national insurance recording and pay as you earn system (NPS), ie after the NINo application process has been completed. This may be a number of weeks or months (and in some cases years) after arriving in the UK.

Nationality

Nationality is often used interchangeably with citizenship, and some datasets refer to "nationals" of a country rather than "citizens". Different datasets have different ways of establishing someone's nationality. The APS, which underlies the population estimates by nationality, simply asks people "what is your nationality?" However, the IPS, NINo and entry clearance visa data are based on people's passports. For asylum statistics the nationality is as stated on the "Case Information Database". This will usually be based on documentary evidence, but sometimes asylum seekers arrive in the UK without any such documentation.

New Commonwealth (ONS Statistical Grouping)

The new Commonwealth statistical grouping consists of African Commonwealth countries (Botswana, Cameroon, The Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe), Indian subcontinent countries (Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka), and other Commonwealth countries in the Asian, Caribbean, and Oceania regions.

It also includes British Dependent Territories and British Overseas citizens. Up to and including 2003, Malta and Cyprus are included in the new Commonwealth grouping. From 2004, the year of accession, they are included in the EU. Malta and Cyprus are members of both the Commonwealth and the EU from May 2004 onwards. However, for estimation purposes they have only been included in the EU grouping for 2004 onwards.

Rwanda was admitted to the Commonwealth in November 2009, but the definition for this statistical grouping has remained unchanged. Zimbabwe and The Gambia withdrew from the Commonwealth in 2003 and 2013 respectively, but again the definition for this grouping has remained unchanged.

New country groupings

We introduced new country groupings in 2014. These are only available for IPS estimates, not LTIM. A listing of which countries are in each of the old and new groups [is available \(371.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#).

Old Commonwealth (ONS Statistical Grouping)

The old Commonwealth statistical grouping consists of four countries: Australia, Canada, New Zealand and South Africa.

Points Based System (PBS)

The PBS is a rationalisation of immigration control processes for people coming into the UK for the purposes of work or study who are not EEA or Swiss nationals. Entries are classed into five tiers. Tier 1 is for high value individuals such as investors and entrepreneurs. Tier 2 is for skilled workers with a job offer. Tier 3 is low skilled workers – this entry route was never opened and is currently suspended. Tier 4 is for students and tier 5 is for youth mobility and temporary workers.

Statistical significance

The International Passenger Survey interviews a sample of passengers passing through ports within the UK. As with all sample surveys, the estimates produced from them are based upon one of a number of different samples that could have been drawn at that point in time. This means that there is a degree of variability around the estimates produced. This variability sometimes may present misleading changes in figures as a result of the random selection of those included in the sample. If a change or a difference between estimates is described as “statistically significant”, it means that statistical tests have been carried out to reject the possibility that the change has occurred by chance. Therefore statistically significant changes are very likely to reflect real changes in migration patterns.

Student visitor

The student visitor visa category provides for those people who wish to come to the UK as a visitor and undertake a short period of study which will be completed within the period of their leave (maximum 6 months unless applying under the concession for English language courses – 11 months). Short-term students (that is those studying on courses of 6 months’ duration or less) who do not intend to work part-time or undertake a paid or unpaid work placement as part of their course can also apply within this category.

Study

Estimates for study refer only to migrants arriving to or leaving the UK for formal study.

11. Background notes

1. The Migration Statistics Quarterly Report is produced in partnership with the [Home Office](#) and the Department for [Work and Pensions](#) (DWP).

2. Terms and conditions

A National Statistics publication

National Statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the [Code of Practice for Official Statistics](#). They are produced free from any political interference. The [United Kingdom Statistics Authority](#) has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the [Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007](#) and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics

Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:

- meet identified user needs
- are well explained and readily accessible
- are produced according to sound methods
- are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest

Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed.

3. A list of those with [Pre-release access](#) to the MSQR and associated migration products is available.
4. Details of the policy governing the release of new data are available by visiting www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/code-of-practice/index.html or from the Media Relations Office email: media.relations@ons.gsi.gov.uk

These National Statistics are produced to high professional standards and released according to the arrangements approved by the UK Statistics Authority.