

Article

Quarterly update on population and migration statistics: January 2025

This is the latest article on improvements to how we estimate UK population and migration, providing an update on our progress and plans.

Contact:
Population Statistics team
pop.info@ons.gov.uk
+44 1329 444759

Release date:
31 January 2025

Next release:
To be announced

Table of contents

1. [Overview of population and migration statistics progress and plans](#)
2. [International migration](#)
3. [Admin-based population estimates](#)
4. [National population projections](#)
5. [Our plans for the next 12 months](#)
6. [How to find out more](#)
7. [Cite this article](#)

1 . Overview of population and migration statistics progress and plans

In October 2024, we published the [previous article in the quarterly update series](#), which provided an overview of upcoming publications as we make improvements.

We continue to develop our plans and engage with users of our population and migration statistics following our [Consultation on the future of population and migration statistics in England and Wales](#), and ahead of the Recommendation on the future of population and migration statistics being published in the coming months.

This article provides an update on our plans relating to population and migration statistics.

2 . International migration

On 28 November 2024, we published the most recent [Long-term international migration, LTIM estimates for year ending \(YE\) June 2024](#), which we released as [official statistics in development](#).

The next publication for YE December 2024, to be published on 22 May 2025, will also be "official statistics in development", which reflects the continuing development of our approach to estimating long-term international migration. We are working to meet the standards expected of [accredited official statistics](#) by the end of 2025, at which point we will be seeking accreditation from the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR).

We will publish a research update on 26 February 2025, which will inform users of our research to date. This includes our development of a method to estimate British national migration from Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Registrations and Population Interactions Data (RAPID), to replace the data that are no longer collected on the International Passenger Survey.

The research update will also include our methods developed from Home Office Borders and Immigration data to estimate migration of EU visa holders and EU settled status. This follows the availability of visa data for EU nationals resulting from a new visa requirement for EU nationals travelling to the UK. November's publication included experimental and provisional estimates of the non-UK-born population in England and Wales in 2023, and we are reviewing the best methods to produce these estimates in future publications.

We have had some user feedback that an additional, alternative estimate of long-term net migration that excludes international students would be helpful. In order to understand this requirement more fully, we are undertaking a user engagement exercise to identify specific areas of work that would benefit users. Please see the [questionnaire](#), which is open until 28 February 2025 for you to complete. If you would like to discuss the options set out in the questionnaire in more detail, please contact pop.info@ons.gov.uk

3 . Admin-based population estimates

As part of the [action plan publication on 28 October 2025](#), we committed to updating users on a quarterly basis on our progress.

Today we have published an article on the [criteria for moving to admin-based population estimates \(ABPEs\) as official estimates of the population](#). In the coming weeks, we also plan to publish the "Publication schedule for admin-based population and migration statistics", which provides more information on how we intend to implement the population and international migration statistics revision policy in the future.

Both of these articles provide an important overview of our plans as we work towards our ambition for ABPEs to become the official estimate of the population for England and Wales in summer 2025.

We have continued to progress work with the selected local authorities (LAs) as part of our ongoing engagement to understand the strengths and limitations of the ABPEs and the components of population change (internal and international migration). These LAs were chosen to ensure we consider different demographic characteristics, for example, student areas, urban and rural areas, and areas with transient populations, such as seasonal workers.

So far, we have worked with:

- Blackpool Borough Council
- Bristol City Council
- Ceredigion County Council
- Gwynedd Council
- Manchester City Council
- Newham London Borough Council
- Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council
- Swansea City and County Council
- Westminster City Council

This ongoing engagement has increased our understanding of local challenges and local data sources, as well as providing local authorities with the chance to gain a better understanding of our methods.

On 22 November 2024, we published our [Admin-based population estimates: local authority case studies, England and Wales, mid-2023](#). This showed that differences between the ABPEs and the official mid-year population estimates (MYEs) are small for most local authorities.

It is important for our users to understand what is causing more notable differences, so that they can have confidence in our new approach. In this article, we selected four local authorities as case studies to analyse more notable differences in the population estimates for particular age groups. User feedback plays an essential part in our ability to improve our statistics, please email any questions or feedback to pop.info@ons.gov.uk.

Since we published our [Engagement plan](#) alongside the [Action plan](#) on 28 October 2024 we have:

- held discussions with stakeholders on how revisions will be managed in the admin-based system; this was achieved through focus groups and discussions with ONS colleagues, devolved governments, the UK Population Theme Advisory Board (UKTAB), central government departments, LAs and the Migration Statistics Expert Group
- presented and discussed the [criteria for ABPEs](#), which are published today alongside this article, with colleagues in central government departments, LAs and other public bodies
- held a Cross-Government Demographic Working Group, with further meetings planned for 2025
- in the process of convening a subgroup of the [Methodological Assurance Review Panel \(MARP\)](#) specifically focused on the [Dynamic Population Model \(DPM\)](#)
- continued to meet with devolved government colleagues through a series of regular meetings about ABPEs and engaged with a wider group of government colleagues through our Cross-government Demography and Methodology Group

4 . National population projections

On 28 January 2025, we published our [National population projections: 2022-based release](#), including [a comparison of national population projections from 1971 to 2022](#), with population estimates, births, long-term migration and deaths. These population projections take into account our [latest long-term international migration estimates](#) that were published on 28 November 2024.

On 3 February 2025 between 1:30 pm and 2:30 pm, we will hold an [online event](#) where you are able to hear from the topic experts about the latest national population projections. This webinar will provide opportunities to ask questions and hear directly from the team who produce and publish the statistics.

5 . Our plans for the next 12 months

Throughout 2025 we will expand our [series of webinars on population and migration](#). These webinars aim to support understanding of our plans and progress as well as giving opportunities to hear about our latest statistical releases. These webinars will include question and answer sessions with senior leaders, topic experts and statisticians implementing the improvements within the population and migration statistical system. These will be advertised via our [monthly newsletter](#).

Winter 2025

- As part of our continuing progress towards an admin-based system, we will publish a research update on new methodology and data sources for estimating British Nationals and EU migration on 26 February 2025.
- We are aiming to publish the "Publication schedule for admin-based population and migration statistics" on 26 February 2025; this article aims to provide more guidance on how we intend to implement the population and international migration statistics revision policy in the future.

Spring 2025

- We will set out the steps we are taking to add population characteristics to the Admin-based census, which will provide an overview of the main milestones and deliverables for this development work.
- We will provide an update on our plans to produce estimates of non-UK-born population.
- The provisional publication date for [subnational population projections: 2022 based](#) for England is 9 May 2025.
- We will provide an initial view from our user engagement questionnaire on understanding user need on additional net migration estimates, excluding international students.
- Long-term international migration estimates will be released for year ending (YE) December 2024 on 22 May 2025, with an accompanying research update on EU and British migration.
- We are aware of the user need for statistics on alternative populations such as short-term residents and daytime populations; we will continue to explore administrative data sources that could be used to measure these alternative populations.
- We will update on our progress towards admin-based population estimates (ABPEs) and plans for the mid-2024 population estimates publication.

Summer 2025

- ABPEs for England and Wales will be published; we are working to meet the standards expected of accredited official statistics for summer 2025 and, subject to meeting the acceptance criteria, plan to publish ABPEs as the official estimate of the population, for mid-2024, for the first time.

Autumn 2025

- We will aim to publish small area estimates that are consistent with estimates for local authorities and larger geographies; by summer 2025, we will provide information about which methods will be used for estimates for different geographies.
- Long-term international migration estimates will be published for YE June 2025; our intention is to move to annual methods changes, with improvements having been made in spring 2025.

6 . How to find out more

Please [sign up to our monthly newsletter](#) for updates on publications and events, including our planned new programme of webinars on population and migration statistics.

We are committed to sharing an update to this article on a quarterly basis, as development and analysis progresses. In line with best practice in continuous improvement on statistical outputs, this page supports our ongoing commitment to engage with users as we develop our outputs. We will continue to engage with our users in a range of ways, such as bilateral conversations, user engagement groups, and conferences.

User feedback plays an essential part in our ability to improve our statistics. Please email pop.info@ons.gov.uk with any questions or feedback.

7 . Cite this article

Office for National Statistics (ONS), released 31 January 2025, ONS website, article, [Quarterly update on population and migration statistics: January 2025](#)