

Statistical News Release: Control of Immigration

26 May 2011

Control of Immigration: Quarterly statistical summary, Q1 2011

The latest quarterly National Statistics publication on control of immigration in the United Kingdom is released today (26 May 2011). The quarterly publication provides the latest provisional figures up to the end of March 2011.

The publication, produced by Migration Statistics within Home Office Statistics, contains data on border control, asylum, removals and voluntary departures and managed migration. The bulletin contains both National Statistics and management information.

Key points from the latest release include:

- Comparing the year to March 2011 with a year earlier, the overall number of entry clearance visas issued increased by 9 per cent from 2.016 million to 2.202 million. This shows an increase in the number of people intending to travel who require a visa to enter the UK.
- The number of decisions¹ on applications to vary conditions of leave to remain fell by 5 per cent in the year to March 2011 (378,010) on a year earlier (398,805). Of the total decisions in the year to March 2011, 18 per cent (69,670) were refusals compared with 17 per cent (67,990) on a year earlier and 8 per cent (32,225) in the year to March 2009.

Visitors

- The number of visitor visas issued in the year to March 2011 was 1.564 million, an increase of 13 per cent on a year earlier (1.381 million). This shows a return to levels of visitor visas last seen in early 2007.

Employment

- The number of employment-related entry clearance visas issued in the year to March 2011 was 161,815, an increase of 6 per cent compared to the year to March 2010 (152,995). This follows a relatively stable period of visas issued between the year to December 2005 (243,465) and the year to March 2007 (247,210) and a period of general decrease until the year to March 2010.
- Employment-related grants of an extension of leave to remain fell by 21 per cent from 158,370 in the year to March 2010 to 124,805 in the year to March 2011, continuing the decrease from 196,280 in the year to March 2009.

Study

- The number of entry clearance visas issued for the purposes of study, including Tier 4 (students) and student visitors, in the year to March 2011 was 346,245, a decrease of 2 per cent on a year earlier (352,085). The recent decline follows a broadly increasing trend in study-related visas issued within a 12 month period between the year to December 2005 (207,420) and a peak in the year to June 2010 (362,060).
- There was an 8 per cent increase in grants of extensions of leave to remain relating to study (up from 130,360 in the year to March 2010 to 140,520 in the year to March

¹ Excludes settlement and asylum cases.

2011). This follows a decrease of 17 per cent in the year to March 2009 (130,355) compared with the year to March 2008 (157,775).

Asylum

- The number of applications for asylum, excluding dependants, was 11 per cent higher in Q1 2011 (4,845) compared with Q1 2010 (4,355). This represents the first quarter since Q2 2009 for which the number of applications is higher than the quarter a year earlier.

Removals and voluntary departures

- In Q1 2011, 14,225 persons were removed or departed voluntarily from the UK, 5 per cent lower than in Q1 2010 (15,040) – and down 21 per cent compared to the peak of 18,080 in Q3 2008. Changes can be mainly accounted for by the significantly lower number of non-asylum cases refused entry at port and subsequently removed.

Detention

- 10 children entered detention, held solely under Immigration Act powers in Q1 2011, compared to 229 in Q1 2010². The decrease follows an announcement by the Government in December 2010 to end the detention of children in the UK for immigration purposes.

British citizenship

- Comparing the last 12 months with a year earlier, applications for British citizenship rose by 6 per cent, from 194,915 to 206,180, the highest 12 month total since 2005.
- The number of persons granted British citizenship in the UK fell by 1 per cent to 195,410 in the year to March 2011 compared to a year earlier. Grants of British citizenship have shown a broadly rising trend since 2007, increasing from 151,805 in the year to March 2007 to 197,845 in the year to March 2010.

Further key points and analyses can be found in the *Control of Immigration: Quarterly Statistical Summary, Q1 2011*.

² These figures have been left unrounded in line with the previously published monthly children entering detention statistics.

Notes to editors

1. *Control of Immigration: Quarterly statistical summary, Q1 2011* is available online on the UK National Statistics publication hub website and the Home Office science, research and statistics webpages <http://homeoffice.gov.uk/science-research/research-statistics/migration/migration-statistics1/> .
2. **Consultation:** Home Office Statistics consulted with users in the last quarterly publication. The consultation closed on 4 May 2011. Full consideration of the comments and suggestions received are being undertaken. A report on the responses and the subsequent outcomes will be published ahead of the next publication on 25 August 2011. The aim will be to implement further changes in a phased period from August 2011.
3. The number of entry clearance visas issued (“out of country”) under PBS is an indicator of the level of immigration for employment or study of non-EEA nationals; although it shows intention to travel, rather than entry to the UK, data are available on a more timely basis than admissions of passengers given leave to enter. Entry to the UK may be any time during the period the visa is valid. The number of grants of an extension (“in country”) under PBS is an indicator of changes in the length of stay in the UK for these migrants.

Entry clearance visas issued and grants of an extension of leave to remain should not be summed as they are indicators of different aspects of migration. Also, individuals could be counted in both if the issue and grant occurs within the same year.

4. This bulletin is published as part of a coordinated release of migration and population products. Today the Office for National Statistics, Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and National Records of Scotland (NRS) publish the following publications:

Office for National Statistics (ONS)

- *Migration Statistics Quarterly Report (Jointly with Home Office, DWP and National Records of Scotland)*
- *Provisional International Passenger Survey (IPS) estimates of long-term international migration*
- *Provisional Long-term International Migration*
- *Population by country of birth and nationality from the Annual Population Survey*
- *Local area migration indicators*
- *Internal migration within the UK*
- *Migration Statistics Improvement Programme: Quarterly Update*
- *Foreign workers and the skill level of their jobs (Article)*

Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)

- *National Insurance Number (NINo) Allocations to Adult Overseas Nationals*

National Records of Scotland (NRS)

- *Population by country of birth and nationality from the Annual Population Survey (for Scottish council areas)*

The Migration Statistics Quarterly Report summarises the regular quarterly migration and related data published by the Home Office, DWP, ONS and NRS and is available at <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Product.asp?vlnk=15230>

5. For **all press enquiries regarding the Home Office Control of Immigration quarterly publication**, please contact the Home Office Press Office who will liaise with Home Office Statistics.

Newsdesk: **020 7035 3535**

Please note that the press office deals with enquiries from the media only. Members of the public should phone Public Enquiries 020 7035 4848.

Press enquiries regarding ONS, DWP or NRS publications should be directed to the appropriate department's Press Office.