User guide to the Home Office ‘Migrant journey: 2018 report’

Last updated: 24 May 2019
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1 Introduction

This user guide to the Home Office’s ‘Migrant Journey: 2018 report’ (formerly known as ‘Statistics on changes in migrants’ visa and leave status’) is designed to be a useful reference guide with explanatory notes on the issues and classifications which are key to the production and presentation of this release.

Statistics covered

The findings presented in this release are based on administrative data for migrants granted visas in the following four entry clearance routes to the UK:

- Family
- Work (including dependants)
- Study (including dependants)
- Dependants joining or accompanying

Further summary details on the method adopted, who is covered, and presentation is included at the beginning of the report itself.

Purpose

The ‘Migrant Journey’ provides evidence on the behaviour of migrants and is based on UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) administrative data sources. The purpose is:

- to inform understanding of the processes that migrants go through when they decide to stay in the UK or switch their status
- to help inform users (including government, Parliament, the media and the wider public)
- to support the development and monitoring of policy on settlement of migrants in the UK and permanent and temporary migration routes

The current system of immigration control is based on the Immigration Act 1971, which came into force on 1 January 1973, and subsequent amendments to the law. Policy and operational changes, as well as overall factors which influence the levels of immigration, such as the economic climate, can affect the figures. The availability and allocation of resources within the Home Office can affect the number of decisions made.

Further information on the work of the Home Office can be found in its annual report and in publications referred to in the Other sources of information on immigration and migration section of this user guide.

Where are the latest published statistics?

The latest publication, including data tables and commentary, can be found at: 
https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/migrant-journey-2018-report. There were previously eight similar reports, two of which are under the former title of ‘Statistics on changes in migrants’ visa and leave status’.

This report updates analysis from ‘Statistics on changes in migrants’ visa and leave status: 2016 published in February 2018, which reported on data up to and including the calendar year 2016. This report has been published later in the year, allowing more timely data to be included, up to and including the calendar year 2018.

The accompanying data tables have been improved. The 9 data tables in the previous report have been condensed into 2 data tables (MJ_01 for the forward analysis, and MJ_02 for the backward analysis), but present the same level of information as they did previously. The
changes have been made to enhance the accessibility of the information by reducing the number of tables, and by making the data easier to analyse and to create ‘Pivot’ tables in Excel.

**What statistics have been published previously?**


The fourth ‘Migrant journey’ report, including data tables and commentary, can be found at: [https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/migrant-journey-fourth-report](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/migrant-journey-fourth-report)


**Feedback and enquiries**

We welcome feedback on the ‘Migrant Journey’, which can be provided by email or in writing, or via the Migration Statistics User Forum:

Email: MigrationStatsEnquiries@homeoffice.gov.uk

Alternatively, write to:

The Editor, Immigration Statistics
Migration Statistics
Migration & Border Analysis
14th Floor, Lunar House
40 Wellesley Road
Croydon
CR9 2BY

**Press enquiries** should be made to:

Home Office Press Office
Peel Building
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

Tel: 020 7035 3535
2 Glossary of terms

This glossary sets out terms used in the ‘Migrant Journey’ release. It is intended to give an overview of the terms, rather than a full technical description.

If there are terms in the release that you would like to be explained in this glossary, please contact: MigrationStatsEnquiries@homeoffice.gov.uk.

Acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CID</td>
<td>Case Information Database</td>
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<tr>
<td>CRS</td>
<td>Central Reference System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSMP</td>
<td>Highly Skilled Migrant Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILR</td>
<td>indefinite leave to remain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LTR</td>
<td>leave to remain</td>
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<tr>
<td>NS</td>
<td>National Statistics</td>
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<tr>
<td>ONS</td>
<td>Office for National Statistics</td>
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<td>PBS</td>
<td>points-based system</td>
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<tr>
<td>UKVI</td>
<td>UK Visas and Immigration</td>
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</table>

Terms

Within an explanation of a term, words in bold are explained elsewhere in the glossary.

An asylum applicant is a person who either: (a) makes a request to be recognised as a refugee under the Geneva Convention on the basis that it would be contrary to the UK’s obligations under the Geneva Convention for him to be removed from or required to leave the UK; or (b) otherwise makes a request for international protection.

European Economic Area (EEA) family permit: A family permit is issued overseas to direct and extended family members of an EEA national who is in, or intends to come to, the UK to exercise free movement rights. Under the Immigration (EEA) Regulations 2006, Swiss nationals are included in the definition of EEA nationals. Family members of Swiss nationals have the same free movement rights as family members of EEA nationals.

Entry clearance takes the form of a sticker, also called a vignette, which is placed in a person’s travel document. Entry clearance can be called a visa (for visa nationals), an entry certificate (for non-visa nationals), or a family permit for family members of EEA nationals. These documents are to be taken as evidence of the holder’s eligibility to travel to the UK, and accordingly accepted as ‘entry clearances’ within the meaning of the Immigration Act 1971. The term ‘visa’ may be used as a generic term for all types of entry clearance but in Immigration Statistics, it does not refer to an entry certificate.

An entry clearance visa is a document permitting the bearer to travel to the UK and leave to enter from the date of issue. It is activated upon passing through UK immigration control. There are three categories of visa: temporary, leading to settlement and settlement. Visas are required by nationals or citizens of the countries and territorial entities listed in Appendix 1 of the Immigration Rules known as ‘visa nationals’. Nationals of countries not on this list are known as ‘non-visa nationals’. A non-visa national does not need a visa to come to the UK for less than six months, unless it is a requirement of the immigration category under which they are entering. A non-visa national coming to the UK for more than six months will need a visa.

The EEA consists of the 28 countries of the European Union, plus Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway. Nationals of the EEA and Switzerland have rights of free movement within the UK.

The European Union (EU) consists of 28 countries: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Republic of
Ireland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the UK. Croatia joined the EU28 on 1 July 2013.

**Extension of stay**, see **leave to remain** below. This is distinct from **visa**, which relates to **entry clearance** obtained prior to travel.

**Family route** is for those seeking to enter or remain in the UK on the basis of their family life with a person who is a British Citizen, is settled in the UK, or is in the UK with limited leave as a refugee or person granted humanitarian protection (and the applicant cannot seek leave to enter or remain in the UK as their family member under Part 11 of the Immigration Rules).

**Family life (10-year) route**: Partners and parents who apply in the UK and are granted **leave to remain** on a 10-year route to **settlement** on the basis of their family life where the relevant provisions in Appendix FM to the Immigration Rules (including EX.1) apply.

**Indefinite leave to remain** is a grant of **settlement** (after entry) to a non-EEA national.

**Leave to remain** is permission to stay in the UK either temporarily (limited leave to remain) or permanently (**indefinite leave to remain**). In this release, an extension of leave to remain is known as ‘**extension of stay**’ and indefinite leave to remain is known as ‘**settlement**’.

**Official Statistics** are data which are collected for the purpose of supporting government business. In the Immigration Statistics release, any data described as ‘Official Statistics’ are drawn from the Home Office’s administrative systems and have not necessarily been subject to the same detailed verification processes as those badged as National Statistics (NS). For example such figures may include:

(a) data produced internally for operational management purposes in the first instance, rather than produced solely for the published statistics;

(b) data added to the Home Office’s migration statistics publications after these were last designated as NS and prior to re-designation as NS by the UK Statistics Authority.

Under the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 framework, the designation of new statistics as ‘National Statistics’ is undertaken by the UK Statistics Authority. Hence (b) are therefore described as Official Statistics rather than NS. The UK Statistics Authority has designated the statistics within Immigration Statistics as NS, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. In previous versions of this user guide, Official Statistics have also been referred to as ‘management information’.

The **points-based system (PBS)** is the main route for non-EEA nationals working and studying in the UK. It consists of five ‘tiers’. See the definitions for the individual tiers, **Tier 1**, **Tier 2**, **Tier 3**, **Tier 4** and **Tier 5** for further information.

**Private life**: grant of **leave to remain** in the UK because the person has established a private life in the UK. In order to be eligible to apply for leave to remain on the basis of private life in the UK, the applicant must have resided continuously in the UK for at least 20 years or be able to demonstrate that there are very significant obstacles to their integration in the country to which they would return. For young people aged between 18 and 24 the applicant must have resided continuously in the UK for at least half of their life, and for children aged under 18, the applicant must have resided continuously in the UK for at least 7 years and show that it would not be reasonable to expect them to leave the UK. Applicants can only apply for this route from within the UK.

**Refugee** is defined, by the 1951 United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and 1967 Protocol (the ‘Refugee Convention’), as being a person who, owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of their nationality or habitual residence, where stateless and who is unable or, owing to such a fear, is unwilling to
avail themselves of the protection of that country. Recognition of refugee status by the UK is a pre-requisite to a grant of asylum in the country.

**Settlement** is a grant of indefinite leave to enter (on arrival) or **indefinite leave to remain** (after entry) to a non-EEA national.

**Students** are non-EEA nationals travelling to the UK primarily or solely for the purpose of study.

The **student visitor** 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 which is 11 months). Short-term students (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. They are distinct from students arriving on **Tier 4** visas, though some such visas may be a short duration.

**Tier 1** of the PBS: For high-value individuals who will contribute to growth and productivity.

**Tier 2** of the PBS: For skilled workers from outside the EEA with a skilled job offer to fill gaps in the UK labour force.

**Tier 3** of the PBS: For limited numbers of low-skilled workers needed to fill specific temporary labour shortages (this has never been implemented).

**Tier 4** of the PBS: Students.

**Tier 5** of the PBS: Youth mobility and temporary workers: people allowed to work in the UK for a limited period of time to satisfy primarily non-economic objectives.

**Visa:** see **Entry clearance**.

A **visa national** is: a national of a country listed as requiring a visa for any type of entry to the UK; a stateless person; a holder of a non-national travel document unless issued by the UK; or a holder of a passport issued by an authority that is not recognised in the UK. Visa nationals must obtain **entry clearance** before travelling to the UK, except in certain circumstances, unless they are returning residents or those with permission to stay who are returning after a temporary absence.
3 Conventions

Rounding

Data are provided unrounded. This is to promote transparency and allow users to exploit the data further.

However, caution should be taken when comparing small differences between time periods. While care is taken in collecting and collating all the information obtained, the figures are subject to the inaccuracies inherent in any large recording system and are not necessarily accurate to the last digit. There are a range of different types of errors possible, such as those resulting from recording errors or misclassifications.

Percentages are rounded to the nearest per cent using the round-half-away-from-zero method.

The round-half-away-from-zero method has been used so that in the borderline case where the fraction of the percentage is exactly 0.5, the rounded figure is equal to y + 0.5 if y is positive, and y - 0.5 if y is negative. For example, 23.5% is rounded to 24%, and -23.5% is rounded to -24%.

Where percentages are rounded, they may not total 100% because they have been rounded independently.

Use of symbols

The following symbols have been used in the tables:

z Not applicable
: Not available
0 Nil

Using the data: filtering of tables

Several of the tables accompanying the report include filters (buttons in the cells at the top of columns) to allow users to select which part of the data they wish to view.

To use the filters, click on the button and select the item you want to see from the list presented. The icon within the button changes colour and/or shape to indicate a filter has been selected for that column.

To undo or change the selection, click on the button again and select another item from the list presented. More than one column can be filtered at the same time.

The colour and form of the icon shown in the filter button may differ according to the software being used to view the table. Filtering may not be possible when viewed on some mobile devices.

Revisions to data

The data contained in the report are revised every year. It is not possible to evaluate whether any future revisions will be upward or downward, however the reasons for revisions are likely to include:

- late reporting of cases – a small proportion of cases are not included when the statistics are produced
• the results of data-cleansing exercises, such as data identified that cannot be included when the statistics are calculated because of missing or invalid values, or the identification of duplicates in the data

Factors affecting the statistics

Immigration Rules, which are laid before Parliament by the Home Secretary, govern the entry and refusal of entry of passengers into the UK, the conditions of stay in the UK, the variation of such conditions following entry, settlement, and the deportation or removal of individuals.

Immigration Rules are stated in ‘Statement of changes to the Immigration Rules’ HC395, which took effect from 1 October 1994. This consolidated previous rule changes, although there have been changes to the rules since 1994. Some of these changes have affected the statistics and the most important changes are given in the ‘Policy and legislative changes timeline’ published alongside the report.

Strengths, limitations and data quality

Below are some general strengths and limitations of the ‘Migrant Journey’.

Strengths of the data provided:

• Very detailed information based on administrative sources providing exact counts by detailed nationality.
• Possible to see how changes to the UK’s immigration control system have directly impacted the numbers, which are used to directly monitor that system.

Limitations of the data provided:

• Home Office data are not as suitable as ONS data for understanding overall trends in all UK immigration, emigration and net migration.
• Home Office data generally relate to those subject to immigration control, rather than all immigration including by UK and other EU nationals; therefore, for analysis of total immigration, ONS data are more appropriate (https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration).
• Home Office data do not provide information on emigration.

Official Statistics and National Statistics

Official Statistics are data which are collected for the purpose of supporting government business and are drawn from the Home Office’s administrative systems. They have not necessarily been subject to the same detailed verification processes as those badged as NS. The data contained in the report are Official Statistics.

Information about the policy context

A summary of the UK government's immigration and asylum policy, plans and measures introduced has been published by the House of Commons library.


Further information about UK government policy, including links to the Home Office website, is given in the ‘Other sources of information’ section.
4 Methodology

Change in methodology (including in previous editions)

This report carries over the methodological changes that were introduced as part of the ‘Statistics on changes in migrants’ visa and leave status: 2015’ report.

The methodology was enhanced in the ‘Statistics on changes in migrants’ visa and leave status: 2015’ report. These reflected changes in the matching procedures adopted in linking together immigration histories. However, the numbers and messages in the data were broadly consistent with previous Migrant Journey analyses (up to and including the sixth report), with family and skilled work visas most likely to lead to settlement after 5 years, and study and temporary work routes less likely.

Previously matching was based on the internal links generated within the in-country casework system that is used to process application for leave from migrants already in the UK. Visa applications were matched to the in-country casework system. The linkage system was enhanced to also link together visas for a migrant, whether or not they have made an application for further leave while resident. Additionally, biometric information collected from 2008 onwards is used to link visas and in-country leave, which further enhances the accuracy of the data matching.

An effect of the enhanced linking is that whenever a migrant applies for a visit visa and subsequently applies for a non-visit visa (e.g. to study) a link is made. Following the old methodology, this would mark a ‘journey’ as commencing with a visit visa (which could be a short holiday or preparatory visit) and not with the non-visit visa that actually granted residence. Given that visit visas do not confer residency rights (and their period of validity do not generally reflect periods of stay in the UK), visit visas were removed from the analysis in order to provide a better indication of the original purpose for entering the UK that might subsequently lead to residence.

The effect of the change in methodology is also to link up more periods of leave into ‘journeys’, particularly including linking periods of leave where a migrant has repeatedly applied for visas out of country rather than having requested any extensions of visas in country. This had a particular effect of boosting the percentages with valid leave after 5 years for those who originally arrived on work visas, which is not too surprising as one might expect a pattern of some visas being issued out of country for a specific spell of employment without subsequent extensions of leave in country being granted.

The new methodology generally indicates the same patterns but provides a better indication of the migrant status over time as it is based on better systems of data matching.

Although the new process was changed to exclude visitor arrivals, results from earlier sweeps of this study indicate that the percentage of those arriving on visit visas that were found to have valid leave 5 years later was very low.

In line with the change in method that excluded visit visas, the intention was to also exclude unsponsored Short-term study visas, this being a category that cannot be extended in-country and has similar characteristics to a visit visa (they normally have validity up to 6 months, though in some cases 11 months). In generating figures for the ‘Statistics on changes in migrants’ visa and leave status: 2016’ report it was discovered that inadvertently, in some years, a small number of grants Short-term study visas had been included in the published analysis. This did not have any significant impact on results and these have since been excluded from later reports.
Change in methodology for categorising work visas

Reports in this series, prior to the ‘Statistics on changes in migrants’ visa and leave status: 2016’ report, have classified work categories as ‘Skilled work (with a potential path to settlement)’ or ‘Work (not leading to settlement)’.

Until April 2010, most high value and skilled workers (Tiers 1 and 2 of the points-based system) were eligible for settlement after five years in the UK. Persons entering under the UK Ancestry or Domestic Workers routes were also able to apply for settlement after five years working in the UK.

Changes to the Immigration Rules starting from April 2010 have removed the settlement rights for some Tier 2 migrants, domestic workers, and private servants in diplomatic households who come under the Tier 5 Temporary worker – international agreement category. Similarly, prior to the introduction of the PBS with shorter visas, many high-skilled workers obtained 5-year visas and therefore had a direct route to settlement without the need to obtain in-country extensions.

In light of these changes, which significantly altered the nature of migrants ‘with a potential path to settlement’, and for greater consistency with quarterly Immigration Statistics, the classifications used in this report (and the previous one, ‘Statistics on changes in migrants’ visa and leave status: 2015’) for those granted Work visas now provide a closer alignment to the more clearly defined Work categories (Tier 1, Tier 2, Tier 5 and Other work) used in the published Immigration Statistics series.

However, it should also be recognised that Tiers do change over time. For example, the Tier 1 – General route was closed to new applicants for entry clearance from December 2010, and the new Tier 1 – Graduate entrepreneurs route was introduced from April 2012.

Data source

The statistics were extracted from two of the Home Office’s databases.

- **Case Information Database (CID)** – data on extensions of stay within the UK.

  CID was introduced in 2000 as the Asylum Case Information Database (ACID). It was then expanded in 2002 to cover non-asylum extensions of stay, settlement and British citizenship casework. Finally, systems dealing with port and enforcement casework were added in 2003. No records of migrants issued an extension of stay in the UK before 2000 were transferred to the CID. This means that the database did not contain complete case histories until 2004, and hence this is the earliest point for which the analysis in this report could be undertaken.

- **Central Reference System (CRS)** – data on grants of entry clearance (visas issued).

  CRS was introduced in 2002 and is used to collect details of entry clearance applications in diplomatic missions abroad.

Data from the two databases were combined to produce a record of migrants’ activity in the UK immigration system from the initial point of entry until they were granted settlement or their last record of leave expired.

Methods

The report includes two types of analyses:

- a forward-view analysis
- a backward-view analysis
**Forward-view analysis**

The forward-view analysis looks at the cohort of migrants granted entry clearance in each year from 2004 to 2013. The analysis maps migrants’ immigration statuses at the end of each year to identify whether they had valid permission to remain in the UK or whether they had changed their category of leave. It should be noted that a valid visa does not confirm that a migrant is still in the UK at that point, as it is possible that they may have left prior to the visa expiring. Where a migrant has an expired visa there are four possible outcomes, which are:

- the migrant has left the UK
- the migrant is still in the UK (as an overstayer)
- the migrant has made an application for further leave to remain (LTR) that has not yet been processed, although for the period covered here the number in this final category will be small
- the migrant never travelled to the UK (the visa was not used)

The published data tables also contain information on migrants granted entry clearance in 2014, 2015 and 2016.

**Backward-view analysis**

The backward-view analysis reports on cohorts of migrants granted settlement in each year from 2009 to 2018, tracing their records back through the immigration system to identify their initial entry clearance route and year of entry. The data provide information on migrants from the point they received clearance to enter the UK, until they leave the immigration system or are granted settlement.

Migration to the UK via non-visit visa routes is mainly managed through the PBS – see *Glossary of terms*.

The underlying data used to calculate the number of migrants granted settlement is derived from a different administrative source than the published settlement figures in the quarterly ‘Immigration Statistics’ release, so figures are not identical. This is thought to largely relate to small number of cases for immediate settlement being derived from visa data as opposed to admissions data, with the latter being lower.

**Background and changes in legislation and policy affecting the statistics**

The PBS was introduced in 2008 and consists of five ‘tiers’. Three of these (Tiers 1, 2 and 5) relate to permission to work. Tier 1 provides a route for high-value workers; its phased implementation took place between February 2008 and June 2008, replacing the Highly Skilled Migrant Programme (HSMP), which also led to settlement. Subsequent changes are:

- Tier 1 General route was closed to new ‘out-of-country’ entry clearance visa applicants from 23 December 2010 and to those applying inside the UK to switch from most categories from 6 April 2011
- a new Tier 1 route (Exceptional Talent) was introduced from 9 August 2011
- Tier 1 Post-study route was closed to new applicants from 6 April 2012
- a new Tier 1 Graduate entrepreneur category was introduced from 6 April 2012
- continuing routes for Tier 1 are: Entrepreneurs, Investors, Graduate entrepreneurs, and Exceptional Talent

Tiers 2 and 5 were implemented in November 2008. Tier 2 replaced the Work Permit scheme and provides a route for skilled non-EEA nationals with sponsorship from a UK employer to
come to live and work in the UK. The Work Permit scheme granted skilled migrants LTR in the UK in order to work in a skilled occupation. Tier 5 is for temporary workers and youth mobility, providing a route for those coming to the UK for primarily non-economic reasons. The additional tier (Tier 3) relates to unskilled workers and has never been implemented.

From 6 April 2012, Tier 2 skilled workers are allowed to stay in the UK for a maximum of 6 years if they are not granted permission to stay in the UK permanently. After 6 years they will have to depart the UK or switch into a different category. Tier 2 policy guidance https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/791035/Tier_2_Policy_Guidance_03_2019.pdf states that those who depart the UK will not normally be able to reapply to return to the UK under Tier 2 for 12 months.

Tier 4 was implemented in March 2009 and provides a route for students to study with an approved education provider. Subsequent changes include a limit to the overall time that can be spent on a student visa. Further details are available from:

- https://www.gov.uk/tier-4-general-visa

The Tier 4 Doctorate Extension was introduced on 6 April 2013.

Other non-visit visa categories outside of the PBS allow migrants to come to the UK for family reunion (through marriage and migration of dependent children) or to obtain settlement (indefinite LTR).

In this analysis, the ‘family route’ is made up of those coming to join or accompany family members who are British citizens or settled people. This includes fiancé(e)s, proposed civil partners, spouses, civil partners, or unmarried or same-sex partners, children and elderly relatives. Data from 2012 also include those seeking to enter or remain in the UK on the basis of their family life with a person with limited leave as a refugee or person granted humanitarian protection (and the applicant cannot seek leave to enter or remain in the UK as their family member under Part 11 of the Immigration Rules).

Following a consultation on family migration, a number of changes to the Immigration Rules came into effect on 9 July 2012. The changes included:

- introduction of a maintenance and accommodation threshold of £18,600 (with higher levels for also sponsoring non-EEA dependent children)
- extending from 2 years to 5 years the minimum probationary period before non-EEA spouses and partners can apply for settlement in the UK
- abolishing immediate settlement for the migrant spouses and partner where a couple have been living together overseas for at least 4 years, and requiring them to complete a 5-year probationary period
- introduction of a genuineness test for relationships
- allowing adult and elderly dependants to settle in the UK only where they can demonstrate that, as a result of age, illness or disability, they require a level of long-term personal care that can only be provided by a relative in the UK, and requiring them to apply from overseas rather than switch in the UK from another category, for example as a visitor

The new Immigration Rules also balance the rights of the individual with the public interest in controlling immigration and protecting the public, with requirements defining the basis on which a person can enter or remain in the UK on the basis of their family or private life.

It is not possible to separately identify migrants issued a visa under the family Immigration Rules implemented on 9 July 2012.
The ‘asylum route’ is another way that migrants can enter the UK and achieve settlement. The number of settlement grants issued to migrants granted asylum fell from 67,810 in 2005 to 30,655 in 2006. By the end of 2009, there were 3,110 migrants granted settlement in the asylum route. This decrease is partly due to changes to asylum policy in 2005. Prior to August 2005, those granted asylum were immediately entitled settlement. Migrants who are granted asylum after that date are entitled to receive 5 years’ temporary permission to stay after which they can apply for settlement. However, a large part of the decrease in asylum cases leading to settlement is due to the fall in numbers of people seeking and being granted asylum during this period. In 2009, there were 24,487 asylum applications from main applicants, compared with a peak of 84,132 in 2002. The analysis excludes asylum seekers without an initial visa record from the cohort in order to focus on regular migrants who are managed through the UK’s immigration system.

Data matching

For the purposes of the report, each migrant’s journey through the immigration system was tracked from the original visa category granted to them, through all the grants of entry clearance visas or extensions of stay and settlement records on the Home Office databases. The data collected for each migrant consisted of the type of leave granted (‘route’), the grant issue date and the expiry date. These details were put in chronological order using the grant issue date, with the type of leave granted (usually a visa) denoting the initial route of entry. This chronological ordering showed when and how each individual entered the immigration system, and the date of expiry of their last recorded extension or change of leave.

There are a number of visas which act as a catch-all for dependants – these are included within ‘Dependants joining/accompanying’ visa endorsements. In previous reports these endorsements were mapped according to the immigration route of the next leave granted in the journey. Where there was no grant of further leave in the journey, a default mapping of ‘Family’ was applied. To improve the alignment of the analysis with other immigration publications, this was changed for the ‘Fifth Migrant Journey’ report, so that endorsements are now shown as a separate category ‘Dependant joining or accompanying’ rather than mapped according to the immigration route of the next grant of leave in the journey. If the elapsed time between consecutive visas is longer than 12 months, the journey is separated into two separate journeys.

Dependants joining or accompanying are dependants who have been issued a visa on the basis of their relationship with another migrant, who is not a settled person or British citizen and may have been issued a visa for any reason (e.g. work, study, family, etc). Dependents are allocated an entry clearance category according to the circumstances of their application. Within the PBS, a child or partner will be recorded as a dependant under the tier of the main applicant, unless he/she has applied for and been granted a PBS visa in their own right, when they will be included as a main applicant. Outside of the PBS, many visas for dependants are specific to the visa for the main applicant. However, there are a number of visas which act as a catch-all for dependants who have been issued a visa on the basis of their relationship with another migrant, who is not a settled person or British citizen – these are included within ‘Dependants joining/accompanying’ and may have been issued a visa for any reason (e.g. work, study, family, etc).
5 Other sources of information on immigration and migration

Research Reports on immigration control are published by Home Office Science as reports and occasional papers: [https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/home-office/series/migration-research-and-analysis](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/home-office/series/migration-research-and-analysis)


The dates of future editions of Immigration Statistics are pre-announced and can be found via the UK National Statistics Publication Hub: [https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/announcements](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/announcements)

6 List of tables

This section provides a list of the tables published in the ‘Migrant Journey’.

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<td>MJ_01</td>
<td>End-of-year category and immigration status of all applicants issued a visa by year of initial grant, category of initial visa, and country of nationality</td>
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<tr>
<td>MJ_02</td>
<td>Migrants granted settlement by year of settlement grant, initial leave category, and country of nationality</td>
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