



Home Office

Statistical News Release: Immigration Statistics

21 May 2015

Immigration Statistics, January – March 2015

Home Office's *Immigration Statistics January - March 2015* release, published today, provides the latest figures on those subject to immigration control. All data below relate to the year ending March 2015 and all comparisons are with the year ending March 2014, unless indicated otherwise.

Estimates of the numbers of non-EU nationals migrating long-term to the UK, by reason for [migration](#), are published by the Office for National Statistics, and available on their website.

Key points from the latest release

Admissions and refusals at port

The total number of journeys increased by 6% to a record 118.4 million in the year ending March 2015 (+6.2million). The increase was accounted for by 5.5 million more journeys by British, other EEA and Swiss nationals (up 6%) and 0.7 million more journeys by non-EEA nationals (up 5%).

The number of passengers refused entry at port rose by 11% to 18,373 in the year ending March 2015 (+1,803).

Work

The ONS estimates of the numbers of non-EU nationals migrating to the UK for work (excluding dependants) fell from a previous peak of 113,000 in the calendar year 2004 to 42,000 in the year ending June 2013. It has risen to 68,000 in the calendar year 2014, a 55% (+24,000) statistically significant increase compared with calendar year 2013. Over the same period long-term (1 year or more) work-related visas granted to main applicants also rose, by 13% (+7,687) to 67,061.

Including dependants and short term visas, there were **171,043 work-related visas granted** in the year ending March 2015, up 9% (**+14,720**) compared with the previous year. The increase was largely accounted for by 13% higher skilled work visas (+10,648) and 26% higher Youth mobility visas (+5,268).

Study

The ONS estimates of the numbers of non-EU nationals migrating to the UK to study (excluding dependants) fell from a previous peak of 196,000 in the year ending September 2011 to 121,000 in the year ending June 2014. The numbers then increased to 135,000 in the year ending December 2014 (11% higher or +13,000 compared with year ending December 2013, though not statistically significant). In the year ending December 2014, long term (1 year or more) study-related visas granted (main applicants) rose 1% to 142,547.

Study-related visas (excluding student visitors) granted fell slightly to 216,466 in the year ending March 2015 (-1%; -2,442), with 1% and 11% falls respectively for visa applications (main applicants) sponsored by universities and by the further education sector.

Family

The ONS estimates of the numbers of non-EU nationals migrating to the UK to accompany or join others fell from a peak of 74,000 in the year ending December 2006 to 35,000 in the year ending June 2013. The numbers have since increased to 52,000 in the year ending December 2014, (16% higher or +7,000 compared with year ending December 2013, though not statistically significant). However, those arriving to accompany or join are not directly comparable with visa categories.

In the year ending March 2015, 34,713 family-related **visas** were granted, slightly lower (-1%) than the previous 12 months. There was a 1% increase in the number of visas granted to all other dependants (excluding visitor visas) joining or accompanying migrants in the UK (77,658).

Refusals accounted for 36% of decisions on family-related **visa applications** in the year ending March 2015, compared with 26% in the previous 12 months.

Asylum

There were 25,020 **asylum applications** (main applicants) in the year ending 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).

In the year ending March 2015, the largest number of asylum applications (main applicants) 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.

The UK had the fifth highest number (31,400) of asylum applications **within the EU** in 2014. In 2014, four EU countries received more asylum applicants than the UK – Germany (166,800), Sweden (81,300), France (63,100) and Italy (56,300).

Visitors

In the year ending March 2015, there were 2% fewer visitor visas granted at around 1.85 million, after excluding Omani, Qatari and United Arab Emirates (UAE) nationals who were able to visit the UK without a visa from 1 January 2014, following the introduction of the Electronic Visa Waiver scheme.

There were notable increases in visitor visa grants for Chinese (+31,080 or +10%, excluding Hong Kong), and Indian (+12,869 or +4%) nationals, and large falls for Russian (-57,340 or -27%) and Ukrainian (-6,724 or -18%) nationals.

The latest data on non-EEA visitors arriving at the UK border, including those who do not need a visa, showed a 9% increase (0.7 million) to 8.8 million for the year ending June 2014, compared with the year ending June 2013.

Other points to note

Student visitors

There were 263,000 student visitor admissions in the calendar year 2013, much higher than student visitor visas granted (77,601 over the same period), largely accounted for by 'non-visa nationalities' (including the United States and Brazil). Such nationals do not need to obtain a visa to come to the UK as a student visitor for up to 6 months.

The number of student visitor visas granted fell by 13% (-10,592) to 68,794 in the year ending March 2015, after previously doubling from 37,703 in 2009 to 77,601 in 2013.

Extensions

Grants of extensions fell by 42,758 (-15%), with 28,645 fewer study-related grants and 20,138 fewer work-related grants. The fall in work-related extensions was largely due to 14,940 fewer Tier 1 General grants as this category has been closed to new entrants and 4,508 fewer grants for Tier 2 skilled workers. By contrast family-related grants increased by 1,542 with a 2,860 increase in grants for partners and a 1,298 fall for the Family Life (10 year route).

Looking at individuals' previous category, 140,342 (78%) of the 179,033 extensions granted in 2014 (main applicants) allowed the individual to stay within their original broad category, with the other 22% having switched categories. An estimated 74,761 former students (main applicants) were granted extensions in 2014, compared with 112,432 for 2013. Of the former students, 7,043 were granted extensions for work in 2014 (mainly Tier 2 skilled work), compared with 6,238 in 2013.

Removals

Enforced removals from the UK decreased by 3% to 12,498 in the year ending March 2015 compared with the previous year (12,889).

The number of passengers refused entry at port and who subsequently departed has increased by 12% in the year ending March 2015, to 16,255 from 14,548 for the previous year. While the figure is lower than that in 2004 (36,167), the number refused entry at port and subsequently departing has been increasing slowly since 2012.

Further and more detailed analysis can be found in the Immigration Statistics, January - March 2015.

Notes to editors

1. *Immigration Statistics, January – March 2015* is available via the UK National Statistics publication hub website and the Home Office statistics web pages <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/home-office/series/immigration-statistics-quarterly-release>.
2. This release is published as part of a coordinated release of migration and population products. Today sees the release of the following publications:

Office for National Statistics (ONS)

- *Migration Statistics Quarterly Report (Jointly with Home Office, DWP and National Records of Scotland)*
- *Provisional Long-term International Migration (latest quarterly)*

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.ons.gov.uk/ons/taxonomy/index.html?nscl=Migration>

Department for Work & Pensions (DWP)

- *National Insurance Number (NINO) Allocations to Adult Overseas Nationals to December 2014*

3. The UK Statistics Authority has assessed Immigration Statistics against the Code of Practice for Official Statistics, and confirmed designation as National Statistics. More information can be found at report 177 on the UK Statistics Authority website <<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/assessment/assessment-reports/>>.
4. For **all press enquiries regarding the Home Office Immigration Statistics release**, please contact the Home Office Press Office who will liaise with the Home Office Statistics team.

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, or email to MigrationStatsEnquiries@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

Press enquiries regarding ONS publications should be directed to the ONS Press Office.

5. The Home Office Responsible Statistician is Chris Kershaw.