

Consultation on changes to immigration-related Home Office statistical outputs. Summary of responses and outcomes

Background

As a result of a series of meetings with a group of key users of control of immigration data, Home Office Statistics consulted on a range of proposals designed to make data more accessible to users, at the same time as helping to ensure resources are directed to the most important topics within immigration.

The public consultation, held between 24 February 2011 and 4 May 2011, under the Code of Practice for Official Statistics, covered the following publications produced by Home Office Statistics:

- *Control of Immigration: United Kingdom Statistics* (annual publication)
- *Control of Immigration: Quarterly Statistical Summary*
- *British Citizenship Statistics* (annual publication)

The consultation proposed that in a phased development between August 2011 and February 2012 changes would be made that would ultimately lead to the release of data using the web as the main vehicle of dissemination:

- i) commentary and analysis of the data should be structured in virtual topics, be shorter and focus on key points, but provide longer term trends;
- ii) the annual and quarterly *Control of Immigration* publications, together with the *British Citizenship Statistics*, are combined to avoid duplication;
- iii) tables are presented in such a way that makes them more accessible to users, in particular listing within tables all annual data, followed by quarterly data (a draft example of this layout is available in Table 1.2 of *Control of Immigration: Quarterly Statistical Summary Q4 2010*); and a standard and full country of nationality and continent list;
- iv) the number of tables released is reduced through a combination of amalgamation and a reduction in the variables reported on; and
- v) all data (except passenger arrivals) are provided unrounded.

Questions

The consultation questions were as follows:

- Q1 Are the (proposed) structure of topics appropriate?
- Q2 Should the commentary and analysis of the data be shorter and focus on key points, but also provide longer term trends?
- Q3 Should the *Control of Immigration: United Kingdom Statistics*, *Control of Immigration: Quarterly Statistical Summary* and *British Citizenship Statistics* be combined?
- Q4 Should the table formats be presented in line with the proposals?
- Q5 Are there reasons why data, detailed, should be retained? If so, we would welcome information on the uses that you make of the data proposed to be dropped.
- Q6 Should all data (except passenger arrivals) be published unrounded? If not, please state the reasons why, including any risks of disclosure.

Dissemination

The consultation was publicised by: being referenced in the *Control of Immigration: Quarterly Statistical Summary Q1 2011* publication and on the publication web page; emailed to an official statistics forum; and emailed directly to over eighty individuals representing around fifty organisations with an interest in immigration.

Responses and outcomes

Home Office Statistics received fourteen responses from organisations and individual users. The organisations / individuals were:

- Asylum Support Appeals Project (ASAP)
- Bail for Immigration Detainees
- Bank of England
- Greater London Authority
- Immigration Law Practitioners' Association (ILPA)
- The Migration Advisory Committee
- Migration Observatory
- Migration Watch UK
- North West Regional Strategic Migration Partnership
- Office for National Statistics
- Philip Rees
- Refugee Council
- Wales Strategic Migration Partnership
- Welsh Refugee Council

The report below covers answers to the consultation, comments out of scope of the consultation and information on the use that organisations make of the immigration-related Home Office statistical outputs.

The final decisions on these proposals were taken by David Blunt, Chief Statistician in the Home Office. Jil Matheson, the National Statistician, has been briefed on the outcomes of the consultation.

Q1 Are the (proposed) structure of topics appropriate?

On this question, nine organisations were in favour of or had no objection to the structure of topics. Comments included:

- Greater London Authority believed that the proposed structure will be convenient to use.
- Migration Advisory Committee were keen to see a comparison of different sources of migration data and explanation for the differences. This will be presented, broadly, in the Work, Study and Family topics.
- Refugee Council felt the topics appeared more straightforward than the current chapter structure.

Refugee Council, Immigration Law Practitioners' Association and Bail for Immigration Detainees would have preferred more information on the structure before commenting, in particular the proposed content of the work, study and family topics.

Four organisations did not provide a view on this proposal.

Asylum Support Appeals Project (ASAP) disagreed with the structure. However, the reasoning from ASAP refers specifically to the provision of asylum support data, part of the asylum topic, and the proposed withdrawal of subsets of the data, so is covered by question 5 below.

Outcome of the consultation

The topic structure was proposed to aid navigation and accessibility for users.

There will be twelve topics in the new release – the eleven proposed, plus one on people from the European Economic Area, which provides for commentary on an area of interest that generally is not covered within other topics.

Comment on individual responses

The work, study and family topics will comment on and compare the various data available on those that come to the UK for a particular reason, including Home Office data on entry clearance visas, arrivals, extensions of stay and settlement, as well as estimates of immigration from Office for National Statistics on Long-term international migrants.

Q2 Should the commentary and analysis of the data be shorter and focus on key points, but also provide longer term trends?

Eleven organisations were in favour of this proposal or stated that they did not object and two organisations did not provide a view. One organisation stated that they disagreed with the proposal, but provided no reasoning.

Two of the organisations in favour acknowledged that they currently made no use of the commentary.

Comments included:

- Greater London Authority considered the current commentary 'rather dry' and suggested good data visualisation and a focus on new and emerging trends would provide an improvement.
- Migration Advisory Committee and Migration Watch UK welcomed the plan to include longer trends
- Refugee Council, focussing on the existing asylum chapter, agreed that the commentary was too long and repetitive. They commented that they welcome more commentary on what the figures reveal rather than just a list of comparative figures.
- Wales Strategic Migration Partnership felt that having focused key points will be more useful to the day-to-day users of the statistics.

Outcome of the consultation

This was proposed to help users to easily access the main points from the available data.

The topic briefing released in August 2011 will be shorter than in recent publications and focus on the latest trends and key points. The August 2011 release will also provide additional explanation for the change in trends, where this is available, and this will be further developed over time.

Comment on individual responses

Migration Advisory Committee specifically requested the provision of longer time series for Entry Clearance Visa statistics; at the time detailed data were only presented from 2007. Since the Q1 2011 publication in May 2011, entry clearance visas have been presented from 2005. Data quality of earlier data requires that data is not provided prior to this.

ILPA requested more explanation of the definitions of the data (i.e. what is and isn't included within the counts). A User Guide is being developed for release in August, which should improve clarity. However, we are aware that further improvements in clarifying the data for users are required, which will take time. The User Guide will be subject to further development at each quarterly release. Feedback on the User Guide will be welcomed.

BID requested clarity on what a 'key point' is; 'key points' will be comments on data that are central to the area of immigration being discussed, rather than detailed commentary on sub-sets, together with comments on areas that have seen changes in trends.

Q3 Should the *Control of Immigration: United Kingdom Statistics*, *Control of Immigration: Quarterly Statistical Summary* and *British Citizenship Statistics* be combined?

Ten organisations were in favour of this proposal or stated that they did not object; the other four did not provide a view.

Outcome of the consultation

This was proposed to reduce duplication of data and aid accessibility for users.

As there were no objections, the three publications are being combined from August 2011. The new publication will be called *Immigration Statistics*.

Comment on individual responses

Wales Strategic Migration Partnership and Office for National Statistics were both concerned that the combining of the three publications into one release would affect the timeliness or frequency of the data. The combining of the publications will have no negative affect on the timeliness or frequency. In some cases, data will now be released quarterly that had previously only been available annually. However, resource pressures do mean that Court Prosecutions data will be available three months later than previously (see question 5 below).

The response from North West Regional Strategic Migration Partnership showed that the consultation document could have been more clearly written, as their response suggested that the proposals could be interpreted as a move to only release data annually. The data currently published quarterly would continue to do so. The proposal to combine the annual and quarterly publications would only result in annual data being included within the same release as the data published quarterly.

Q4 Should the table formats be presented in line with the proposals?

Ten organisations were in favour of this proposal or stated that they did not object and three organisations did not comment. One organisation disagreed. However, this particular response refers specifically to the provision of asylum support data and the proposed withdrawal of subsets of the data, not the formatting of tables, so is covered in the asylum support proposal (question 5) below.

Refugee Council commented that the example table is a visual improvement and easier to comprehend.

Outcome of the consultation

This proposal was made in light of the Government requirement for further transparency of data, as the pre-existing tables were designed for publication within a printed release and not for further analysis by users.

Most tables will be reformatted to the new layout. In most tables blank rows and columns have been removed to aid further analysis by users. However, the decision has been taken to show most quarterly tables without an annual total and provide a separate annual table. This is so that, as further quarters of data are added, they do not grow too large and

to provide tables without excessive duplication. The tables that include quarterly data are denoted with a suffix of “.q” within the table numbers.

Comment on individual responses

Migration Observatory requested that tables listing countries of nationality should be uninterrupted by region totals. From August, countries will be listed fully and alphabetically with region totals at the top of the list. The table will present each year in turn and will be designed to filter – either for total numbers or specific countries / world regions.

Migration Watch requested that table formats should be consistent where possible, in particular the same categories for visas and arrivals. As far as possible, Migration Statistics are working towards consistent categories. However, the systems for recording the data have grown organically, sometimes in different government departments and this means that not all categories are currently able to be recorded or published in the same way. Migration Statistics are involved with future UK Border Agency IT developments, working to ensure that systems are built which provide quality statistical information.

Q5 Are there reasons why data, detailed, should be retained?

Four organisations agreed with the proposals to drop all data listed in the proposal. Two organisations offered no view, one of these providing the reasoning that none of the proposed reductions or amalgamations affected the data they used.

Refugee Council, which disagreed with some of the proposals, acknowledged the need to simplify data and tables.

Migration Watch UK only agreed with the proposals if they were deemed to be necessary.

Further details on where organisations disagreed with proposal are below.

Outcome of the consultation

The proposal related to the cessation of seven data sets, largely relating to asylum. The proposals to cease publication of some asylum-related data were made in the context of: the fact that 43 different asylum tables were previously published in August each year; lower levels of asylum applications compared to 2002; and reduced resources following a restructuring of Home Office Statistics.

Following the responses, detailed below, it was decided to continue to publish four of these. However, it has been decided to cease production on detailed data relating to:

- post-decision reviews and resulting ‘overall decisions (year of outcome)’ on asylum applications;
- specific tabulations of asylum support applications (e.g. the size of family supported); and
- appeals on after-entry non-asylum cases and asylum appeals at upper tribunal and Judicial Review.

It was also decided to publish data on defendants proceeded against for offences under Immigration Acts in November rather than August of each year. Further details on each of the seven proposals are below.

Comment on individual responses

Philip Rees requested that links would be provided to alternative sources of the data, if they should no longer be available. Where possible, these will be included in the User Guide.

(a) Asylum applications by age and sex for dependants

This proposal was to stop the publication of asylum applications by age and sex for dependants, retaining the table on asylum applications by age and sex for main applicants and directing users to the data provided to and available from EUROSTAT for further information. Four organisations commented; all disagreed with the proposal:

- Migration Observatory made use of these data in briefing and felt they were important to continue to publish as they can have policy and research implications.
- Wales Strategic Migration Partnership stated that these data are necessary for forward planning of services and found the EUROSTAT website poor for accessibility.
- Immigration Law Practitioners' Association believed the proposal to publish disaggregated data on the EUROSTAT website and not on the Home Office website not in accordance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics and they stated the data are relevant for those providing a service to asylum seekers. If data were only to be available via the EUROSTAT website, they felt that Home Office should continue to analyse the information and include links to the relevant tables.
- Greater London Authority felt that data should be retained so that there is one consistent source.

Outcome of the consultation

This proposal was made in light of increasing resource demands on a smaller team of people. However, given the arguments made, it was decided that Migration Statistics should publish two tables on asylum applications by age and sex; one showing main applicants and the second showing main applicants and dependants. As the data are unrounded, users can subtract one from the other to obtain dependant applications.

As the asylum topic covers a wide range of data and briefing will concentrate on key points, data on dependants will not be commented upon widely unless there are significant changes to trends.

(b) Post-decision reviews on asylum applications

Numbers of post-decision reviews are published within an annual table.

Two organisations commented on the proposals; both disagreed. Wales Strategic Migration Partnership disagreed on the basis that the data are necessary / desirable for independent monitoring of UKBA processes and level of legal aid provision.

Immigration Law Practitioners' Association appear to have mis-interpreted the reference to data supplied to and available from EUROSTAT and commented that Home Office should continue to analyse and provide links to any data published by EUROSTAT. Rather the reference was made to other more comprehensive data being available from EUROSTAT, not the exact data that were proposed to cease.

Outcome of the consultation

Post-decision reviews data and other data only published in *Control of Immigration: Statistics 2009* Table 2.1 (overall decisions and total grants), previously National Statistics, will be withdrawn from the publication.

This is for a range of reasons, including: the resource requirement when only 3 to 5 per cent of asylum decisions are currently subject to post-decision review; issues with data quality and the definition of “post-decision reviews” and “overall decisions”; and the likelihood of confusing users given that the data do not cover all possible outcomes.

Migration Statistics will consider alternatives that provide improved data quality and coverage of the whole asylum decision process.

(c) Asylum support

This proposal was to cease publication of applications for asylum support, while continuing to publish numbers in receipt of support.

Five organisations commented on the proposals; all disagreed. Specific reasons were:

- Refugee Council use the basic application data, in particular for rate of application and processing broken down by type of support.
- Asylum Support Appeals Project requested basic data, commentary and analysis on: the numbers receiving and applying for Section 95 and Section 4 support; the breakdown between individuals and family groups receiving/applying for support; and the numbers receiving subsistence-only support/in dispersed accommodation/in initial accommodation. They reported that a wide range of data users required these to inform service provision and resource allocation (e.g. helping gauge future demand for legal advice / representation); and Asylum Support Appeals Project reported that they use the data to compare / corroborate with front line evidence.
- Wales Strategic Migration Partnership use the data on applications by support type and family size to contribute to forward planning.

The organisations also confirmed the need for ongoing publication of numbers in receipt of support:

- Refugee Council stated the importance of having information in the public domain on the trends of the number of cases on Section 95 or on Section 4
- North West Regional Strategic Migration Partnership welcomed the ongoing publication of these figures.
- Immigration Law Practitioners' Association stated that these data were used to help monitor the work of UKBA in providing support to those who require it and not having individuals on support long-term.

Outcome of the consultation

This proposal was made in light of increasing resource demands on a smaller team of people.

It has therefore been decided to withdraw some of the more detailed disaggregations of the asylum support applications data, previously published as National Statistics, specifically: the split of applications into first, repeat, change of circumstance applications and error re-instatements; the size of the family supported; number of dependants counted on applications; and asylum support terminations. However, given the reported need for basic data on asylum support applications, data will continue to be disaggregated by type of application and whether family or single adult. These will be available by country of nationality.

In addition, consideration of the publication of data disaggregating those in receipt of support by local authority and nationality is being made.

The response highlighted that references to 'support by local authority' can be misinterpreted as being where the local authority supports the asylum seeker, rather than relating to those granted central government support by location. Migration Statistics will ensure that references to local authority are clearer.

(d) Detained fast track

It was proposed to cease publication of data relating to asylum cases processed in the detained fast track (DFT) system. Four organisations responded to this proposal and all disagreed:

- Refugee Council disagreed with the implication in the consultation that the numbers in DFT are no longer reflective of the work of UKBA. Refugee Council stance is that DFT is a highly controversial procedure and while used it is important as a matter of public record to know how many cases are passing through the system, how many are removed from the procedure, the outcomes of the remaining cases and just how long they are detained both before and after any substantive decision.
- Bail for Immigration Detainees argued that they and others retained a large interest in the DFT and did not feel there was a significant enough overlap between those in the DFT and those subject to Non-suspensive appeals to make the DFT statistics unnecessary. They also felt for transparency reasons that decisions arising from DFT on asylum decisions be published.
- Wales Strategic Migration Partnership commented that independent monitoring of UKBA processes is essential and in the public interest, e.g. to monitor the implementation / compliance with equality legislation.
- Immigration Law Practitioners' Association required transparency in the DFT system (numbers of persons, their profile and outcomes) due to the proportion of asylum claims that are dealt with by the DFT and to monitor the difference in the proportion of positive outcomes from those processed outside the process.

Outcome of the consultation

Having reviewed the consultation responses, Migration Statistics have decided to continue publication. Numbers in the two centres for detained fast track will continue to be published.

(e) Asylum removals and voluntary departures

It was proposed to cease publication of the disaggregation of asylum removals by main applicant and dependant. Three organisations responded to this proposal and all disagreed.

- Immigration Law Practitioners' Association opposed the proposal as they would want to see the relationship between asylum in-take, decision/appeal outcomes and removals.
- Wales Strategic Migration Partnership felt that it was needed for independent monitoring including compliance to equality legislation.

In the responses references were also made to using the data for monitoring the family removal program and distinguishing the proportion of removals that are families.

Outcome of the consultation

This proposal was made in light of increasing resource demands on a smaller team of people. After further consideration it was decided that the positive resource impact of ceasing publication would be small and it was decided to retain.

The User Guide, being released in August, will include a note that it would be incorrect to make any inference from the data published on main applicants and dependants what proportion of removals are families and should not be used for the purpose of considering family removals.

(f) Court proceedings

Four organisations commented on proposals to cease publication of court proceedings relating to immigration offences; two disagreed, while the other two only agreed on the basis that the data would still be available:

- Refugee Council believe that clear detailed public information should continue to be available about the number of proceedings relating to immigration offences each year, in which court and under which power. As Ministry of Justice do not regularly publish to this level of detail, they asked for continued publication.
- Wales Strategic Migration Partnership wanted the data for independent monitoring of UKBA and felt it were in the public interest
- Immigration Law Practitioners' Association and Bail for Immigration Detainees wanted the data available from either Home Office or Ministry of Justice and requested that Home Office should still analyse information, and maintain links to relevant tables.

Outcome of the consultation

This proposal was made in light of increasing resource demands on a smaller team of people; the data source being a different government department; and the processing time required by both departments in order to publish.

Following consideration of the responses, it has been agreed by Ministry of Justice and Home Office that Home Office should continue to publish with the same detail, but this should be in November in response to resource constraints.

As the briefing will concentrate on key points, court proceedings data will not generally be commented upon unless there are significant changes. The table will be published alongside the detention tables.

(g) Appeals

The proposal was to stop publishing appeals data provided by Tribunals Service Immigration and Asylum. The proposal referred to sourcing asylum appeals data from UK Border Agency databases.

This would mean that annual Tables 5.1, 5.3, 5.4, covering outcomes of appeals determinations by broad category, asylum appeals beyond the first-tier tribunal and Judicial Reviews would no longer be published.

Four organisations commented on this proposal. Some of the comments showed that the proposal was not as clearly defined as it might have been.

- Refugee Council disagreed with this proposal on the basis that there would no longer be asylum appeals data by nationality. There was no inclination from

Migration Statistics to drop asylum appeals by nationality and it is planned to continue to publish these data quarterly having just developed new data sourced from the UKBA CID database. This was not entirely clear from the consultation document, so was a reasonable comment to make. There was no apparent dissent against dropping Tables 5.1, 5.3 or 5.4.

- Wales Strategic Migration Partnership disagreed on the basis that independent monitoring of UKBA processes is essential and in the public interest, for example to monitor the implementation/compliance with Equality legislation.
- Immigration Law Practitioners' Association (ILPA) and Bail for Immigration Detainees agreed with the proposal, but had concerns that any disaggregations that are available now might not be available in the future. ILPA requested that Home Office should still analyse information, and maintain links to relevant tables.

Outcome of the consultation

This proposal was made in light of the availability of data on asylum and entry clearance visa appeals from UK Border Agency sources, which in 2009 made up around 85 per cent of appeals on immigration and asylum; and that Tribunals Service publish their own data, at different time periods to Home Office.

The main concerns of the four organisations centred on the tables published quarterly on asylum appeals at First-Tier Tribunal, which will continue to be published. Tables 5.1, 5.3 and 5.4 of the *Control of Immigration: Statistics 2009* will not be updated and will be withdrawn.

Links will be provided in the User Guide to alternative data published:

Table 5.1 and 5.3: <http://www.justice.gov.uk/publications/statistics-and-data/tribunals/index.htm> for quarterly and annual statistics

Table 5.4: <http://www.justice.gov.uk/publications/statistics-and-data/courts-and-sentencing/judicial-annual.htm>

Q6 Should all data (except passenger arrivals) be published unrounded?

Ten organisations were in favour of this proposal; the other four organisations did not provide a view.

Specific comments in favour of the proposal were:

- Migration Advisory Committee and Migration Observatory believed it would slightly improve the quality of further analysis and calculations on the published data.
- Refugee Council commented that they did not find the data previously represented by a * (representing 1 or 2 cases) to be particularly helpful.
- Wales Strategic Partnership commented that rounding can distort the picture.
- Office for National Statistics commented that this would mean that the data were published in line with EUROSTAT and approved that the proposal aimed to keep passenger arrival data rounded..

Three organisations agreed with the proposal but were cautious about disclosure and accuracy:

- Immigration Law Practitioners' Association had concerns on disclosure if complex data sets are provided and suggested that disclosure issues on small numbers could be addressed by providing data over a longer period to increase the size of the data set.

- Bail for Immigration Detainees commented that care must be taken that multiple pieces of information on unrounded data sets should not be presented together, as this could lead to individuals being identified.
- Migration Watch UK commented that data should only be provided unrounded if data is considered to be sufficiently accurate.

Outcome of the consultation

This proposal was made in light of the Government requirement for further transparency of data. Data had been provided unrounded after the introduction of a new database around 2002 in case of inaccuracies in that new system and also in case of disclosure. As the database has now been in existence for a number of years the accuracy of the data is felt to have improved somewhat.

No respondees considered that any of the established datasets to lead to possible disclosure. EUROSTAT, the European statistical organisation publish data unrounded, including those data provided by Home Office, and the numbers of children entering detention have been published unrounded since October 2010, without reports of disclosure.

Current tables will be presented unrounded, except for:

- data on passenger arrivals; sampling methods are used to provide counts of completed landing cards and therefore these data are rounded;
- data on grants of settlement to Commonwealth citizens and foreign nationals prior to 2003 due to unrounded data not being available; and
- data on asylum applications received by other countries.

As tables and datasets are developed in the future, due consideration will always be given to the risk of disclosure and accuracy and decisions on whether to provide unrounded or rounded.

Requests and comments out of scope of the consultation

Ten organisations provided requests or comments that are considered, by Migration Statistics, to be out of the scope of the consultation. These will be considered, taking account of resource constraints, for taking forward in our future work programme.

These are listed below to provide a full record. In a few cases, a response has been made in the below documentation. Other requests and comments will be considered in due course.

Within the requests, any opinions expressed are those of the requestor and not the Home Office.

General

(i) Migration Observatory stated that it would be useful to have data from past years re-organised into a consistent set of categories, in particular long-time series for entry clearance visas and arrivals.

Work is underway on this. Entry clearance visas are now provided from 2005 and arrivals from 2007. Over the years there have been changing rules and priorities and the data use different sources; it can therefore be difficult to present the various data consistently, as well as reflect the latest demands.

(ii) Migration Observatory request consideration is made to the *Migration Observatory Report on Top Ten problems with evidence base on migration issues*.

(iii) ILPA repeated the need for more cohort data as recommended in the Nationals Statistics Quarterly Review Series Report 46.

(iv) The MAC encouraged further analytical work on the volume of discrepancies between different sources of migration data (e.g. entry clearance visa statistics vs. border entry statistics)

(v) The MAC reported that they would find useful official data on the lengths of endorsement of different categories of migrant visa applications and those entering the UK. In particular, separating out entry clearance visas issued and border entries for one year and over, and those for less than one year, would aid the interpretation of how recent changes to the intra-company transfer route are affecting migration flows.

New visa endorsements allow for issues of intra-company transfer visas to be recorded as short or long term and Migration Statistics have planned to publish this split within the new format of table. However due to the burden of processing the landing cards, there are no plans to split arrivals data in this way.

Regarding the length of visa / stay across all endorsements: previous analysis has shown that the completion and processing of landing cards does not allow passenger arrivals data to be published by length of admission to the quality required for publication, particularly as any length of time is completed by the passenger; however it may be possible to provide management information on the length of visa, subject to quality assurance to ascertain whether the data is of the appropriate accuracy and usefulness.

(vi) The MAC reported concern regarding the online accessibility and presentation of the immigration data, referring to the data as difficult to locate without prior knowledge of the

precise name of the publication and the location at which it is stored. They suggested a change of name to better reflect the content; a dedicated webpage; and links to all historical outputs.

The Home Office website has been relaunched since the MAC's comments, which should address some of the MAC's suggestions. We hope that users will be able to find the latest data much more easily following this and the launch of the new web-based structure of the release.

In addition, the name of the publication is being changed to *Immigration Statistics*.

(vii) Philip Rees requested more radical and innovative improvement of the source data on immigration and emigration in consultation with ONS, especially the opportunities that e-borders presents and ensure that statistical requirements are built into e-Borders. Philip Rees commented on the work that needs to be done in Part 2 of *Migration Statistics: The Way Ahead*.

(viii) Philip Rees requested that all datasets are provided as excel tables and links are provided to these tables from the commentary / charts.

This request will be included in the new release.

Before entry

(ix) ILPA repeated the need for further information on decision making by entry clearance officers at British embassy posts or juxtaposed controls.

(x) Migration Watch requested a distinction between temporary visas and those leading to settlement.

The distinction is presented where the recorded information allow.

(xi) Migration Watch requested that entry clearance data be published at lowest available level.

Admissions

(xii) Migration Watch requested a distinction between temporary visas and those leading to settlement.

The distinction is presented where the burden of processing the information allow.

Extensions

(xiii) Migration Watch requested differentiation of whether an applicant is applying in the same category as previous permission or switching from another category. They stated that due to the policy changes on the Post-Study Work Route it was important that the number of people switching in-country from Tier 4 to Tier 2 is available and transparent.

(xiv) Migration Watch requested that extensions data should be published at lowest available level.

Settlement

(xv) Migration Observatory requested further information about the “other discretionary” category of settlement grants, following recent increases, e.g. how many cases come from the asylum backlog and what were bases for grants.

(xvi) ILPA repeated the request for data on those living and working in the UK for extended periods who are not counted as ‘Settled’, by age, gender and nationality.

Asylum

(xvii) Refugee Council and Welsh Refugee Council repeated previous requests for asylum statistics data by country / region. Wales Strategic Migration Partnership also requested these data. They provided reasoning (including planning and delivery of service provision at devolved, local authority and non-governmental levels, correctly informing the public, and monitoring the relative performance and decision making of the regional UKBA teams). Welsh Refugee Council provided a list of the data that they require to cover these needs.

Welsh Refugee Council stated that they were disappointed that the questions for consultation did not include a question about disaggregating data regionally to reflect the situation in the devolved nations and they requested an update on previous requests.

Although UK Border Agency have regional teams, this does not equate with informative regional data. There is not currently the resource to develop these statistics in the short-term, although work will be undertaken to update the understanding of the data quality issues. The request will be reviewed regularly with regard to capacity to develop. The emphasis of the consultation was improving the presentation and ease of use without increasing resource requirements, and therefore did not include consulting on new datasets.

(xviii) Refugee Council repeated their previous request for further use of cohort data disaggregated by process (Detained Fast Track, Early Legal Advice Pilot, and NAM) and by region.

(xix) Refugee Council requested data on the number of asylum support applications refused.

(xx) Immigration Law Practitioners' Association (ILPA) repeated the request that in data disaggregated by age, cases where age is disputed should be clearly identified. They also pointed out the UN Committee on the Rights of the child's recommendation to provide the number of children seeking asylum including those who age is disputed.

Migration Statistics publish two relevant tables: Asylum applications from main applicants and dependants, by age, sex and country of nationality; and Age disputed asylum applications, by country of nationality

(xxi) Immigration Law Practitioners' Association (ILPA) repeated that Article 4(1) of Regulation 862/2007 requires statistics on the numbers of applications that have been withdrawn and that statistics should identify the reasons for withdrawal (for example because they leave the UK).

The UK provide EUROSTAT with total withdrawn cases, but further work is required to disaggregate the data by type of withdrawal.

(xxii) ILPA repeated the request for data on judicial review applications that were withdrawn by the Secretary of State. However, Home Office Statistics have ceased to publish Judicial Review data.

Detention

(xxiii) Refugee Council and ILPA requested that detention data should include immigration detainees in prisons. Both requested length of detention in prisons. ILPA requested that data include time spent in prisons post-sentence under immigration powers (though excluding time spent in prison cells under immigration powers). BID also requested that data should be collected and published on the number of post-sentence foreign nationals held in the prison estate.

Published detention statistics currently exclude detainees in police cells and Prison Service establishments as reliable data have not been available for these individuals since March 2006.

(xxiv) ILPA repeated the request for data on total number of those leaving detention during the year, broken down by reasons for leaving detention.

These data are available from published tables.

(xxv) Refugee Council requested data on cumulative length of detention (over multiple occasions).

(xxvi) BID requested that data on length of time in immigration detention should have more time groupings, particularly split '24 months +'

(xxvii) BID requested data on numbers of children detained, length of detention, outcome of detention at Tinsley House; Short Term Holding Facilities, including the Pre-Departure Accommodation; juvenile secure estate, HM Prison Mother and Baby units; and Police cells to monitor the UKBA's implementation of their duty under s55 of the Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Act to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Much of the data requested are available, although it excludes Prison and Police cells – see xxiii above. Work is underway to provide data on numbers in Pre-Departure Accommodation, in time for the first relevant reporting month.

(xxviii) BID requested numbers of families separated for the purposes of immigration detention where the child is placed in care, length of separation, age of children and outcome; number of families separated when the main applicant is removed from the UK; and numbers of families separated for the purposes of immigration detention where the child is left in the care of the second parent.

Removals and Voluntary Departures

(xxix) ILPA repeated the request for data disaggregated between enforced removals and voluntary departures. ILPA quoted Hansard HL report 10 March 2009 Col 1147 which stated that under FOI this disaggregation has been provided.

Migration Statistics will seek this FOI answer in order to comment.

(xxx) Migration Watch requested removals and voluntary departures data by nationality and their status e.g.

- no visa record/clandestine entry,
- overstayed and category (e.g. student, visitor etc) or
- in breach of their visa conditions
- foreign national prisoners

(xxxix) ILPA repeated the need for better data on who is being deported / removed, the countries to which they are removed with reference to age, gender and nationality and the application type, split by accompanied and unaccompanied children.

(xxxvii) ILPA repeated the need for data, by age, gender and nationality of those removed under Dublin II; characteristics of those removed in conjunction with European partners; and children who are subject to 3rd country removals.

Other

(xxxviii) BID referred to ICIUKBA recommendation that UKBA publish data on the family removals process. UKBA have agreed with the recommendation.

(xxxiv) ILPA requested detailed information on the background, characteristics and skills of immigrants and refugees, including longitudinal surveys of immigrants and immigrant contributions: ILPA point to the information recorded on asylum screening forms and visa application forms could provide insight into profiles of applicants.

This is out of scope of the work of Migration Statistics, but will be forwarded to the appropriate team within Home Office.

(xxxv) ILPA repeated the request for more information on trafficking for sexual and domestic labour purposes; suggesting that social services and private fostering data could be used for information.

This is out of scope of the work of Migration Statistics, but will be forwarded to the appropriate team within Home Office.

(xxxvi) ILPA repeated the need for analysis of cases where applicants are unrepresented and unassisted, in order to ascertain whether outcomes are atypical.

Uses of the Home Office immigration statistics

The responses to the consultation included evidence of the use made of the immigration statistics published by Home Office, these include:

Greater London Authority

“Staff in both the Intelligence Unit and the Health and Communities Unit at the GLA make significant use of the Home Office statistics on immigration for a number of analyses and policy development, including supporting the London Strategic Migration Partnership.”

Migration Advisory Committee

“The Migration Advisory Committee is a regular user of the Home Office’s statistical outputs and these data are vital in supporting its advice to the Government. In particular, the MAC draws extensively on entry clearance visas issued, by immigration category; passengers given leave to enter, by immigration category; managed migration statistics on grants of further leave to remain; settlement (indefinite leave to remain) and citizenship statistics; and A8 and A2 accession statistics.”

Refugee Council

Refugee Council reported that they value publication of immigration statistics and regard them as an essential part of the transparency and openness of management of UKBA. Refugee Council use data on detained fast-track process for monitoring

Asylum Support Appeals Project

ASAP use asylum and asylum support data to monitor the impact and effectiveness of Home Office policies and procedures; inform service provision and resource allocation (e.g. future demand for legal advice / representation); and compare / corroborate with front line evidence.

Wales Strategic Migration Partnership

Wales Strategic Migration Partnership use data for planning of services within local areas.

Immigration Law Practitioners’ Association

ILPA use data within information dissemination to members; for evidence-based research and opinion.