

Home Office response to 2015 consultation with users of Immigration Statistics

From 26th February to 14th May 2015, users of the quarterly Immigration Statistics release were asked to provide feedback and suggestions for improvement. The survey was also designed to enable us to assess how well the release meets the needs of our users, and to consult users on proposed changes to the publication.

The survey (Annex A) was answered by 19 respondents, mainly from the public sector, and universities and schools. All areas of the publication and sets of data tables in the release were made use of, in particular the Work, Study and Family cross-cutting topics. The statistics were used to provide briefings and further analysis for policymakers, in the media and for the general public, as well as for internal updates and training.

All respondents were content for the updates to be published quarterly or less frequently, and the majority felt that the length of topic briefs and the level of detail provided in tables were about right. Improved clarity and better summarising of the data were common themes for suggested improvements.

The majority of respondents felt confident in accessing the Immigration Statistics release, but only half said they found it easy to locate the data they needed on the GOV.UK website. Comments indicated that some users initially had difficulty navigating the website and sometimes needed to provide help to colleagues less familiar with the site.

In response to this consultation, the Migration Statistics team in the Home Office has initiated work to make the Immigration Statistics web pages more user friendly, including looking into alternative web-based formats. In response to user feedback, the number of filters on table columns will be increased to improve the ease of data navigation and provide further breakdowns of the data where possible. We will also consider potential topics suggested for future analysis.

Respondents were content with the proposal to provide a link to monthly data on asylum applications on the Eurostat website rather than duplicating publication of this data on GOV.UK. Therefore, separate publication of the monthly tables will end from July 2015. Figures will continue to be published quarterly in the Home Office Immigration statistics release, and the monthly asylum applications will continue to be published on the Eurostat website.

Respondents were content with the proposal to cease publication of Table vi_07 (visa appeals by country of issuing post), given that the Ministry of Justice already separately publishes statistics on entry clearance visa appeal outcomes in the regular Tribunal Statistics. Hence Table vi_07 will no longer be published.

**Migration and Border Analysis
July 2015**

ANNEX A: SURVEY QUESTIONS

1. Which audience best describes you?

Options: Home Office, Other government department, Other public sector, Think tank, Media, Private sector, Voluntary sector, University/school, General public, Other (please specify)

2. Which of the following regular topic briefings covered by the quarterly Immigration Statistics do you make use of?

Options: Work (cross-cutting topic), Study (cross-cutting topic), Family (cross-cutting topic), Visas, Admissions, Asylum, Extensions of stay, Settlement, Citizenship, Detention, Removals and voluntary departures

Please also indicate what the statistics are mainly used for. For example, if you use the statistics to provide briefing and further analysis to others, it would be helpful to know what the actual end use is or who this is for.

3. If you do use the topic briefs, how frequently would you like updates?

Options: Annual, Six monthly, Quarterly, Other (please specify)

4. Would you consider the length of the topic briefs to be:

Options: Too long, Too short, About right?

5. How could we make the topic briefs easier to use (ways we could make more accessible, better structure, etc)?

6. Do you have any other comments or suggestions for possible changes to the regular topic briefs?

7. Which of the following data tables covered by the quarterly Immigration Statistics do you make use of?

Options: Sponsorship, Entry clearance visas, Admissions, Asylum, Extensions of stay, Settlement, Citizenship, Detention, Removals and voluntary departures, European Economic Area

Please also indicate what the statistics are mainly used for. For example, if you use the statistics to provide briefing and further analysis to others, it would be helpful to know what the actual end use is or who this is for.

8. If you do use the data tables, how frequently would you like updates?

Options: Annually, Six monthly, Quarterly, Other (please specify)

9. Is the amount of detail shown in the tables:

Options: Too much, Too little, About right?

10. In order to improve usability and make it easier to navigate these data tables, we propose to increase the number of filters on table columns where possible. Are you content with this change?

Options: Yes, No, Don't know

Please let us know if you have any comments.

11. Do you have any other comments or suggestions for possible changes to the tables?

12. Do you feel confident using the GOV.UK website to access the Immigration Statistics release?

Options: Yes, No

13. Can you find the data you need easily on the GOV.UK website?

Options: Yes, No

14. Do you use the User Guide to Immigration Statistics?

Options: Yes, No

15. How could we improve the User Guide to Immigration Statistics?

16. The publication also includes short statistical articles intended to provide a range of more detailed analysis that cannot be included quarterly. The list of articles produced so far is given below. Please indicate whether you were aware of these articles previously

Options: Yes or No for each of three articles - Entry clearance visas by length, Extensions of stay by previous category, Foreign National Offenders in detention and leaving detention

17. Have you found these articles useful?

Options: Yes, No, Never heard of them

18. If you have read these articles, do you have any thoughts for how they could be improved?

19. Subject to data availability, what topics would you wish to see covered by possible future short articles?

20. What new data, or breakdowns of existing data, would you like to see included in the release?

21. Monthly data on asylum applications and asylum cases pending are provided to Eurostat in accordance with European legislation. Eurostat publish these data on their website alongside data from other EU member states. Do you make use of this or other monthly immigration data that we publish?

Options: Yes, No

22. The definition of figures published by Eurostat differs slightly from the definition of National Statistics published in the quarterly Immigration Statistics. A summary of the figures published by Eurostat are also published on the GOV.UK website on a monthly basis. To reduce duplication, we plan to stop additionally publishing on the GOV.UK website and instead provide a link to the Eurostat pages. This will help reduce possible confusion caused by multiple publication of the same data and potentially allow for more timely provision of monthly data in between quarterly releases. The existing data will continue to be published and available online. Are you content with this approach? Please let us know if you have any comments.

23. We currently publish data on appeals received and appeal outcomes on entry clearance visas by country of issuing post (Table vi_07). Data on such subsequent appeal outcomes are already incorporated in the main entry clearance visas tables showing grants and refusals. The level of appeals allowed is relatively low (6,936 in 2014) compared with the level of visas granted (2,449,351) or refused (311,716) so does not materially affect the overall picture provided on visa outcomes. In addition, the Ministry of Justice also publishes total statistics on entry clearance visa appeal outcomes in the regular Tribunal Statistics:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/tribunals-statistics>

Consequently it is planned that Table vi_07 providing the outcomes by issuing post will no longer be published. Are you content with this approach? Please let us know if you have any comments.