

Statistical bulletin

Long-term international migrants, UK: 2017

The final official UK long-term international migration statistics for 2017, by a number of variables including citizenship, reason for migration, age, sex, country of birth, occupation and country of next or last residence.



Contact:
Ann Blake
migstatsunit@ons.gov.uk
+44 (0)1329 444097

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1 . Other migration outputs in this release

As part of our ongoing work to improve bulletins, commentary on other international migration outputs released today (29 November 2018) can be found on the following pages:

- [Migration Statistics Quarterly Report, UK: November 2018](#)
- [Population of the UK by country of birth and nationality: July 2017 to June 2018](#)

2 . Analysis of long-term international migration

More people have been moving to the UK than leaving every year since 1994

Figure 1: Long-Term International Migration to and from the UK, 1964 to 2017

[Download the data](#)

Source: [Office for National Statistics, Long-Term International Migration and International Passenger Survey \(Table 2.00\)](#)

Our final annual Long-Term International Migration (LTIM), International Passenger Survey (IPS) and methodology tables for 2017 are published today (29 November 2018) (39 tables). Most of the tables contain information on migration by a number of other variables besides citizenship and reason for migration, for example, by age, sex, country of birth, occupation and country of next or last residence. Data on migration to and from individual countries are found in our 4-series tables.

These data are final tables for 2017. The latest provisional long-term international migration estimates are published quarterly in the [Migration Statistics Quarterly Report](#).

Net migration to the UK has been continually positive since 1994, with more people moving to the UK than leaving every year since, although for British citizens net migration has been negative since 1986 (Figure 1) ([Table 2.00](#)).

The largest inflows of immigrants to the UK were from ([Table 3.20abc](#)):

- China (57,000)
- India (48,000)
- Romania (48,000)
- USA (32,000)
- Australia (30,000)

For the first time since 1995, Australia was replaced as the most common destination to move to from the UK. [Table 3.20abc](#) shows that the largest outflows of emigrants from the UK were to:

- Spain (29,000)
- Australia (26,000)
- Poland (24,000)
- USA (20,000)
- Germany (17,000)

3 . Long-term international migration data

Office for National Statistics long-term international migration statistics are estimated based on two main sources:

- the International Passenger Survey (IPS), which captures migration intentions
- Long-Term International Migration (LTIM) estimates, which are based on IPS data, but with adjustments made for migrants not included in the survey, such as asylum seekers

[International migration – table of contents](#)

Dataset | Released on 29 November 2018

The table of contents provides links to all annual tables on long-term international migration including:

- Methodology tables (1-series)
- Long-Term International Migration (LTIM) tables (2-series)
- International Passenger Survey (IPS) tables (3-series)
- International Passenger Survey (IPS) tables for individual countries (4-series)

4 . Glossary

Long-term international migrant

Office for National Statistics (ONS) migration statistics use the [UN recommended definition of a long-term international migrant](#): “A person who moves to a country other than that of his or her usual residence for a period of at least a year (12 months), so that the country of destination effectively becomes his or her new country of usual residence.”

EU citizenship groups

EU estimates exclude British citizens. Citizens of countries who were EU members prior to 2004, for example, France, Germany and Spain, are termed the EU15; Central and Eastern European countries who joined the EU in 2004, for example, Poland, are the EU8; EU2 comprises Bulgaria and Romania, who became EU members in 2007.

Full details of ONS terms and definitions can be found in the [International Migration – terms, definitions and frequently asked questions](#).

5 . Measuring these data

Office for National Statistics (ONS) publish International Passenger Survey (IPS) and Long-Term International Migration (LTIM) estimates.

The [Migration statistics first time user guide](#) describe these data and the [Long-Term International Migration \(LTIM\) estimates methodology](#) details the method used to calculate LTIM.

All of the LTIM and IPS estimate changes discussed in the release are statistically significant at the 95% confidence level unless specifically stated otherwise.

For more detailed information on our migration statistics methodology please see [International migration methodology](#).

The Government Statistical Service migration statistics transformation plan is working [towards putting administrative data at the core of international migration statistics](#). In December 2018, ONS will publish their findings from the feasibility research on using linked administrative data to provide international migration flows and will be seeking feedback on user needs across the international migration evidence base.

6 . Strengths and limitations

The International Passenger Survey (IPS) and the Long-Term International Migration (LTIM) estimates are currently the only sources of data to provide both long-term immigration and emigration and so net migration estimates for the UK.

The IPS is a sample survey and as such provides estimates. When the estimates are broken down beyond the headline figures they are subject to greater levels of uncertainty.

The accuracy of long-term migration estimates

Surveys gather information from a sample of people from a population. It's not possible to ask every person travelling in and out of the country to fill out a survey. This means we have to estimate total changes, which can be affected by the group of people we sample. We use confidence intervals to measure uncertainty around the estimate. Users are advised to be cautious when making inferences from estimates with relatively large confidence intervals.

The [Migration statistics first time user guide](#) summarises the reliability of the long-term international migration estimates. For further information on confidence intervals, the accuracy of these statistics, comparing different data sources and the difference between provisional and final figures, please see [International migration methodology](#).

Quality and methodology

The [Long-Term International Migration Quality and Methodology Information report](#) contains important information on:

- the strengths and limitations of the data and how it compares with related data
- uses and users of the data
- how the output was created
- the quality of the output including the accuracy of the data

For more detailed information on our migration statistics methodology please see [International migration methodology](#).

7 . More about migration

[Building our understanding of the migration evidence](#)

Bulletin section | Released on 16 July 2018

An update of the Migration Statistics Transformation Programme for July 2018.

[Migration statistics transformation update: May 2018](#)

Article | Released on 24 May 2018

An update of the Migration Statistics Transformation Programme for May 2018.

[Report on international migration data sources: July 2018](#)

Article | Released on 16 July 2018

An update on our migration statistics transformation plans, our recent analysis of Home Office administrative data, in collaboration with Home Office experts and our International Passenger Survey (IPS) data assurance review.

8 . You may also be interested in

[Office for National Statistics International migration articles](#)

All ONS articles relating to international migration.

[Local area migration indicators. UK](#)

Dataset | Released on 23 August 2018

Spreadsheet bringing together different migration-related data sources at local authority level.