

19 November 2008

**Coverage**

United Kingdom

**Theme**

Migration

**Issued by**

Office for National Statistics  
Government Buildings  
Cardiff Road  
Newport  
NP10 8XG

**Contacts****ONS Media Relations**

0845 604 1858

On-call 0786 790 6553

**Home Office news desk**

020 7035 3535

**DWP press office**

020 3267 5144

**Statistician**

Ann Blake 01329 444 640

Email address

ann.blake@ons.gov.uk

[www.statistics.gov.uk](http://www.statistics.gov.uk)**Next publication date**

Spring 2009

## Emigration of British citizens fell in 2007

The number of people leaving the UK for 12 months or more fell in 2007, according to new figures published today by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). An estimated 340,000 people emigrated in 2007, down from 400,000 in 2006, largely due to fewer people emigrating in the second half of 2007 compared to the same period in 2006. Over half of this reduction was as a result of fewer British citizens leaving the UK for more than a year, down from 207,000 in 2006 to 171,000 in 2007. However, in comparison to the 1990s, emigration remains high.

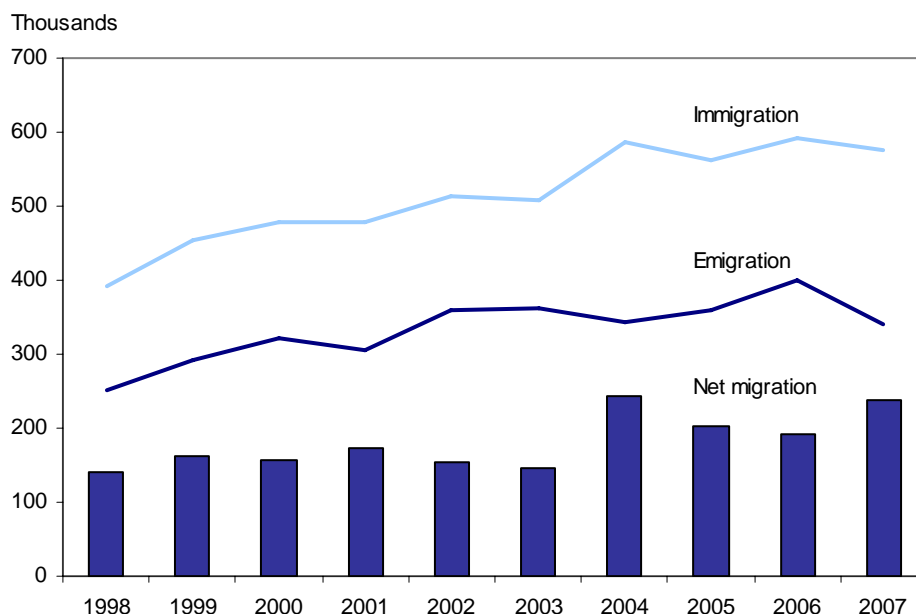
An estimated 577,000 people arrived to live in the UK for at least a year in 2007, compared with 591,000 in 2006. These figures represent a continuation of the level of immigration seen since 2004. Of all immigrants, 502,000 (87 per cent) were non-British citizens in 2007.

An estimated 96,000 Polish citizens migrated into the UK in 2007, which was the highest inflow of any individual citizenship.

Net migration, the difference between immigration and emigration, was 237,000, up 46,000 on 2006, as a result of emigration falling more than immigration. This was slightly lower than the record estimate of 244,000 in 2004. Figure 1 shows how net migration has remained high since then in comparison with earlier years.

Total International Migration (TIM) is the only official estimate of long-term migration covering flows to and from the UK (see Background Note 7).

**Figure 1: Total International Migration to/from the UK, 1998 - 2007**



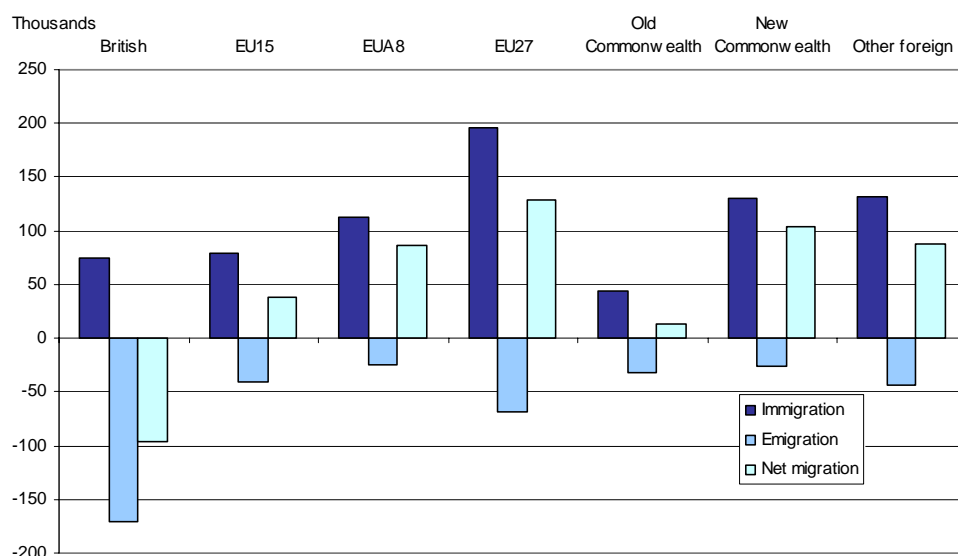
Other main features of TIM estimates in 2007 were:

- Immigration estimates for A8 (see background note 15) citizens were 112,000 in 2007 compared with 92,000 in 2006. Estimates of emigration for A8 citizens were 25,000 in 2007 compared with 22,000 in 2006.
- Immigration of Old Commonwealth (see background note 16) citizens fell from 62,000 in 2006 to 45,000 in 2007. Emigration of Old Commonwealth citizens also fell over the same period to 31,000, its lowest level since 1999.
- Australia was the most popular destination for British citizens emigrating followed by Spain and New Zealand.
- Work related reasons for migration were again the main reason given for migrating to and from the UK.
- The fall in emigration was mainly among the group intending to leave the UK for longer than four years. However, this group makes up two-thirds of all emigrants.
- London remained the most popular destination for immigrants in 2007, despite the fact that the proportion of migrants going to London fell for the ninth year running.

## Migration and citizenship

**Figure 2** shows that net immigration of EU27 citizens was 128,000 in 2007, the highest estimate of all citizenships. It was a result of continued levels of high immigration, and is the only group which showed an increase in immigration between 2006 and 2007. This would have still been the case if net migration by Bulgarian and Romanian citizens was excluded from the EU figures. Just over two thirds of this net immigration was accounted for by those of the EUA8 countries (Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia).

**Figure 2: Total International Migration estimates for the UK by major citizenship groupings, 2007**



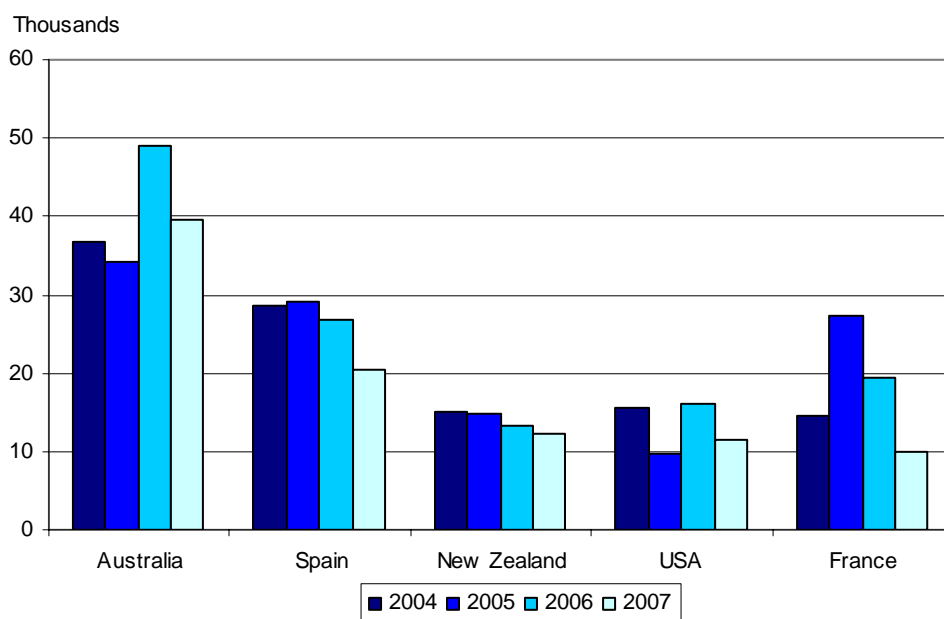
## British citizens abroad

The number of British citizens emigrating fell by 36,000 between 2006 and 2007. Australia and Spain have been the most common destinations for British emigrants since 2002, and since 2004 other popular destinations have been New Zealand, France and the USA.

**Figure 3** shows how the level of British emigration to these destinations has changed since 2004, according to the International Passenger Survey (IPS). The IPS estimates, which are the main component of TIM and allow a more detailed breakdown, show that

British emigration to these five destinations has fallen between 2006 and 2007.

**Figure 3: International Passenger Survey estimates for British emigration to selected destinations, 2004 - 2007**

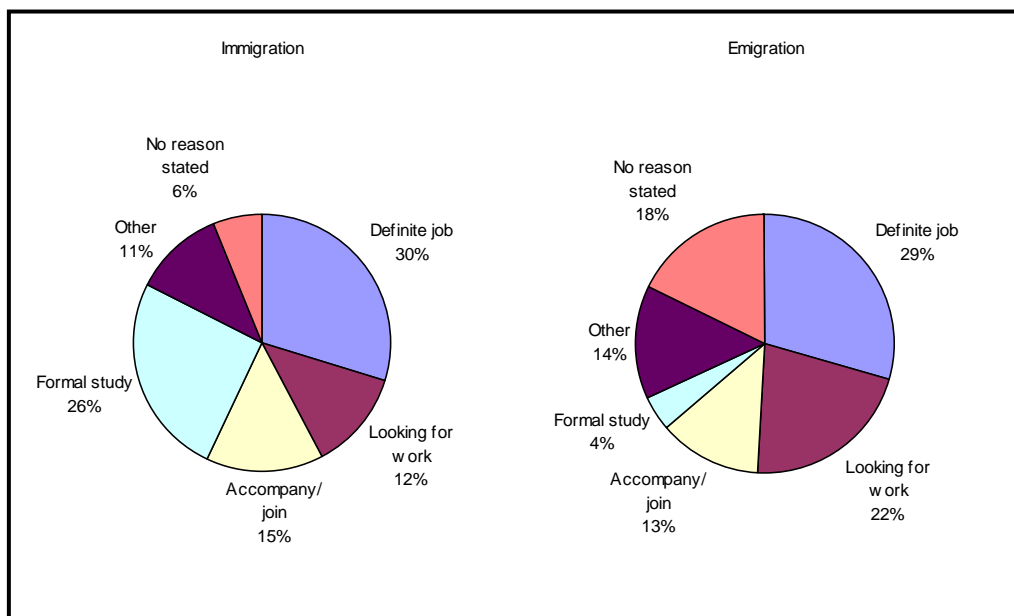


### Main reasons for migration

**Figure 4** shows the percentages of people immigrating or emigrating by their main reason for migration. Work related reasons continued to be the most reported reasons for migration in 2007, accounting for over 40 per cent of immigration and just over half of emigration.

In 2007 149,000 people came to study in the UK for longer than a year, making up 26 per cent of all immigrants. IPS estimates show that almost three quarters of those entering the UK to study came from outside the EU.

**Figure 4: Total International Migration estimates for the main reason for migration to/from the UK, 2007**



### Areas of destination or origin within the UK

London remained the most common destination for immigrants, with 28 per cent arriving there in 2007. Taken together, London and the South East were the destinations that attracted more than 40 per cent of all international migrants in 2007.

Over 40 per cent of emigrants who left the UK in 2007 previously lived in London or the South East.

## **Annex A**

Statistics released today

### **Office for National Statistics**

1. International Migration First Release calendar year 2007  
[www.statistics.gov.uk/STATBASE/Product.asp?vlnk=15053](http://www.statistics.gov.uk/STATBASE/Product.asp?vlnk=15053)
2. Employment of Foreign Workers: Focus on Earnings  
[www.statistics.gov.uk/STATBASE/Product.asp?vlnk=15137](http://www.statistics.gov.uk/STATBASE/Product.asp?vlnk=15137)
3. A feasibility report on local area short-term immigration estimates  
[www.statistics.gov.uk/about/data/methodology/specific/population/future/imps/updates/downloads/STM\\_Local\\_Estimation.pdf](http://www.statistics.gov.uk/about/data/methodology/specific/population/future/imps/updates/downloads/STM_Local_Estimation.pdf)
4. Migration Statistics Improvement Work Programme  
November 2008 Progress Report  
[www.statistics.gov.uk/about/data/methodology/specific/population/future/imps/updates/downloads/msiwpnov.pdf](http://www.statistics.gov.uk/about/data/methodology/specific/population/future/imps/updates/downloads/msiwpnov.pdf)
5. Report on subnational population projections consultation on projection variants  
[www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Product.asp?vlnk=997](http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Product.asp?vlnk=997)
6. Inter-regional migration movements within the UK. Year to March 2008  
[www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk=10191](http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk=10191)
7. Population estimates by Nationality and Country of Birth April 2007 to March 2008  
[www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Product.asp?vlnk=15147](http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Product.asp?vlnk=15147)
8. Quarterly population estimates for English GORs and Wales, Q3 2008  
[www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Product.asp?vlnk=13523](http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Product.asp?vlnk=13523)
9. Mid-2007 Lower Layer Super Output Area & Middle Layer Super Output Area population estimates  
[www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk=14357](http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk=14357)
10. Mid-2007 Population Estimates by Marital Status  
[www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Product.asp?vlnk=15107](http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Product.asp?vlnk=15107)

### **Home Office**

11. Control of Immigration, quarterly statistical summary, Q3 2008

[www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/stats-release.html](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/stats-release.html)

12. Accession Monitoring Report to Sep 2008 (A8), UK

[www.bia.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/documents/aboutus/reports/accession\\_monitoring\\_report/](http://www.bia.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/documents/aboutus/reports/accession_monitoring_report/)

13. Bulgarian & Romanian (A2) Accession Statistics, Q3 2008, UK

[www.bia.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/documents/aboutus/reports/bulgarianromanian/](http://www.bia.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/documents/aboutus/reports/bulgarianromanian/)

### **Department for Work and Pensions**

14. National Insurance Number allocations to adult overseas nationals entering the UK, year to June 2008

[www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/tabtool.asp](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/tabtool.asp)

### **General Register Office for Scotland**

15. Centenarians in Scotland 2002-2007

[www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/statistics/population/population-estimates-for-scottish-centenarians/centenarians-in-scotland/index.html](http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/statistics/population/population-estimates-for-scottish-centenarians/centenarians-in-scotland/index.html)

## BACKGROUND NOTES

1. Total International Migration (TIM) estimates for 2007 are currently available broken down by citizenship, reason for migration and area of destination or origin within the UK.  
<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Product.asp?vlnk=15053>  
  
The International Passenger Survey (IPS) estimates for 2007, which are the main component of TIM and allow a more detailed breakdown, are also available. <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Product.asp?vlnk=15054>  
  
Migration publications, including frequently asked questions, are available from the National Statistics website, at this link:  
<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Product.asp?vlnk=507>
2. **National Statistics** are produced to high professional standards set out in the National Statistics Code of Practice. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs. They are produced free from any political interference.
3. A long-term international migrant is defined as someone who changes his or her country of usual residence for a period of at least a year, so that the country of destination becomes the country of usual residence.
4. This release does not cover short-term migrants, i.e. those who are resident in the UK for less than 12 months. Experimental statistics on short-term migration into England and Wales for mid-2005 were released on 29 September 2008. See: <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/pdfdir/mig0908.pdf>  
  
A feasibility report on local area short-term immigration estimates has been published today at:  
<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/about/data/methodology/specific/population/future/imps/updates/default.asp>
5. Total International Migration (TIM) estimates are only available from 1991 onwards and so TIM is not comparable before this time.
6. There is no single, all-inclusive system in place to measure movements of population into or out of the UK. Therefore it is necessary to use a combination of data from different sources in order to produce estimates of long-term Total International Migration (TIM). None of the data sources used, while offering the best data currently available, are specifically designed to capture information solely on international migration. TIM is the most comprehensive estimate of long-term migration. However, some detailed analyses, such as those for individual countries, can only be done using the International Passenger Survey (IPS) (see Background Note 8).
7. TIM includes all civilian migration flows to and from countries outside the UK, and is derived from several data sources:



- The International Passenger Survey (IPS). This is the principal source of data on the number of migrants entering and leaving the country. It is a continuous voluntary sample survey conducted by ONS that covers the principal air, sea and Channel Tunnel routes between the UK and the rest of the world. It is based on respondents' intended length of stay and includes questions on age, sex, marital status, citizenship and country of last or next residence. It is subject to margins of error since the data are derived from a sample survey. The IPS alone enables detailed analysis of the characteristics of people entering and leaving the UK to be produced that can not be produced for TIM. Further adjustments are made to produce TIM using IPS data for visitor and migrant switchers (people who change their intentions and, therefore, their migratory status).
  - Irish Quarterly National Household Survey and the National Health Service Central Register. These are used to estimate migration of all citizens between the UK and the Irish Republic.
  - Home Office data. This is used for making adjustments to TIM for asylum seekers and their dependants that are not captured by the IPS (see Background Note 15).
8. All data are estimates and are rounded to the nearest 1000.
  9. The difference between immigration (inflow) and emigration (outflow) is net migration (net flow). If there are more people entering the UK to live for at least 12 months than are leaving then there is net immigration. Conversely, if there are more people leaving the UK for at least 12 months than there are arriving then there is net emigration.
  10. Details of the most recent enhancements to the international migration estimation methodology used in this release can be found here:  
<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Product.asp?vlnk=14834>  
  
The impact of these changes for the variables citizenship, reason for migration and UK countries and English regions can be found on the National Statistics website at the following link:  
[http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme\\_population/Impact\\_of\\_changes\\_to\\_TIM.pdf](http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_population/Impact_of_changes_to_TIM.pdf)
  11. The current international migration methodology was produced by the Improving Migration and Population Statistics (IMPS) project. IMPS Updates are available here:  
<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/about/data/methodology/specific/population/future/imps/updates/default.asp>
  12. In 2006, ONS set up an inter-departmental Task Force on migration statistics to advise on timely improvements that could be made to estimates of migration and migrant populations in the UK, both nationally and at the local level. Further information is available here:  
<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk=14731>

13. Details of the method used to produce international migration estimates can be found at the link:  
[http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme\\_population/Methodology\\_for\\_Revised\\_International\\_Migration\\_Estimates.doc](http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_population/Methodology_for_Revised_International_Migration_Estimates.doc)
14. The Home Office supplies data on asylum seekers and their dependants covering applications, refusals, removals, appeals and withdrawals. Only those asylum seekers estimated to be resident for a year or more are counted as international migrants. Therefore, the adjustments for asylum seekers will differ from Home Office asylum seeker statistics. Further detail on these statistics can be found at:  
<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration-asylum-stats.html>
15. The eight EU Accession countries (A8) are the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia. The twelve EU Accession countries are the A8 countries plus Malta and Cyprus and the two new member states, Bulgaria and Romania admitted to the EU in January 2007.
16. The citizenship groupings in this first release are defined as:
  - Up to and including 2003, European Union estimates are only shown for the EU15 (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, the Irish Republic, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and Sweden). Between 2004 and 2006, European Union estimates are shown for the EU25 which includes the above countries plus the A8 group and Cyprus and Malta. For 2007 European Union estimates are shown for the EU27, which is the EU25 plus Bulgaria and Romania. British citizens are excluded from all EU groupings and are shown separately.
  - The Old Commonwealth includes Australia, Canada, New Zealand and South Africa.
  - The New Commonwealth includes all other Commonwealth countries. From 2004 the New Commonwealth excludes Malta and Cyprus.
  - Other Foreign includes all countries not covered by the other groupings.
17. From 2004 onwards, 'work related' reasons for migration are defined as those with a 'definite job to go to' and those 'looking for work'.

### Basic Quality Information

1. A Summary Quality Report for this release can be found at:  
<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/about/data/methodology/quality/Qualitysocialstats.asp>
2. Common pitfalls in interpreting Total International Migration Estimates: TIM estimates are based mainly on International Passenger Survey data and expectations of accuracy and reliability of sample surveys are often too high. The statistics contained in this release are estimates that are subject to margins of error due to sampling variability inherent in all sample

surveys. TIM also incorporates assumptions to estimate aspects of long-term international migration that are difficult to measure directly, for example, visitors to the UK who intend to stay for less than a year, but in fact, stay longer (i.e. visitor switchers). Such assumptions are based on statistical judgements and provide a more comprehensive set of estimates. However, there is inevitably some level of uncertainty associated with these assumptions. Therefore, care should be taken when interpreting an estimate and especially when comparing year on year changes. Notable differences where the estimates are made up of a large number of observations can often be said to be statistically significant. However, differences based on a smaller number of observations may be within a margin of error, where such differences may not be statistically significant. That is, they may be a consequence of these margins of error rather than the real differences. Trends or patterns occurring over a number of years often provide a better picture than changes occurring in any one particular year.

3. Coherence: TIM estimates may vary from other migration related statistics such as those on Home Office Control of Immigration, A8 migrants from the Worker Registration Scheme (WRS), and National Insurance Numbers (NINO) issued to foreign nationals. These differences can largely be explained in terms of different definitions and coverage. TIM covers all migrants regardless of their reason for visit while these administrative sources may exclude certain types of migrants such as dependants (in the case of WRS and NINO). Unlike TIM, these other data sources do not capture outflows. Most importantly, TIM excludes all those who stay in the UK for less than a year while these other sources do not capture data on length of stay.
4. Accuracy: The data in this release are based on statistical samples, and as such, are subject to sampling variability. As a guide, the standard error for an estimate of 1,000 migrants is typically around 40 per cent, while that for an estimate of 40,000 migrants reduces to around 10 per cent. However, the structure of the sample is such that estimates based on the sampling of passengers on certain routes have much larger standard errors associated with them. Currently, standard errors are only available for IPS estimates.

Key IPS estimate	Estimate (thousands)	Standard error
2007 Inflow	527	3.8 per cent
2007 Outflow	318	4.3 per cent