

# COMPAS

## Breakfast Briefing Summary



Paolo Cardullo, Photo Competition Entry 2010

## Where is the UK going on migrant integration policy? A comparison to Europe and North America

MIPEX is a fully interactive tool and reference guide to assess, compare and improve integration policy.

The tool is produced by the British Council and the Migration Policy Group, with UK national partners Runnymede Trust and Immigration Advisory Service. With new analysis over time MIPEX can identify the changing trends in major countries of immigration. This briefing addresses the following issues: How does the UK compare to the rest of Europe and North America? How has it fallen behind on migration integration policy? How can it become a leader again? And are the UK's emerging policies on long-term settlement and acquisition to nationality "consistent with practice in other countries"<sup>1</sup>, as the government's impact assessment claims?

### What is MIPEX?

The Migration Integration Policy Index (MIPEX) measures integration policies in various countries. Until 31 May 2010 these countries included all European Union Member States plus Norway, Switzerland, Canada and the USA. The 2011 edition of MIPEX, MIPEX III, published on 28 February 2011, covers more countries (including Bulgaria, Romania and the USA) and more policies than previous editions, including education, labour market mobility, and implementation of language tests.

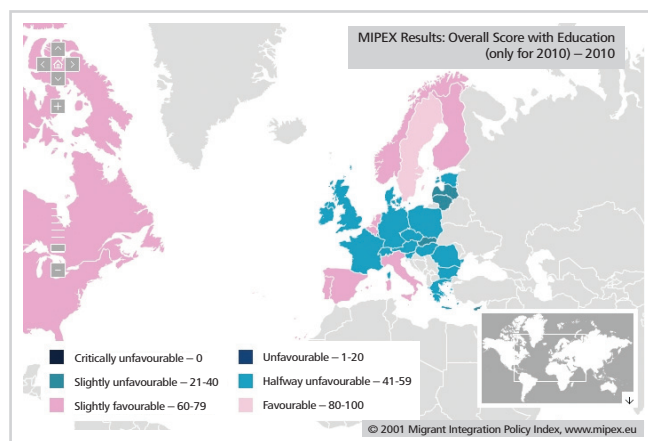
Using 148 policy indicators, it creates a rich, multi-dimensional picture of migrants' opportunities to participate in society by assessing governments' commitment to integration. Measuring policies and their implementation reveals whether all residents are guaranteed equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/documents/policyandlaw/ia/english-for-partners/ia-english-partners.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2009/11/contents>

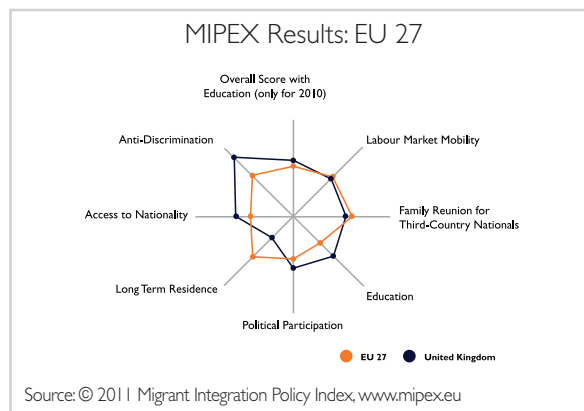
<sup>3</sup> <http://www.runnymedetrust.org/uploads/policyResponses/EarningTheRightToStay.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.mipex.eu/Canada>

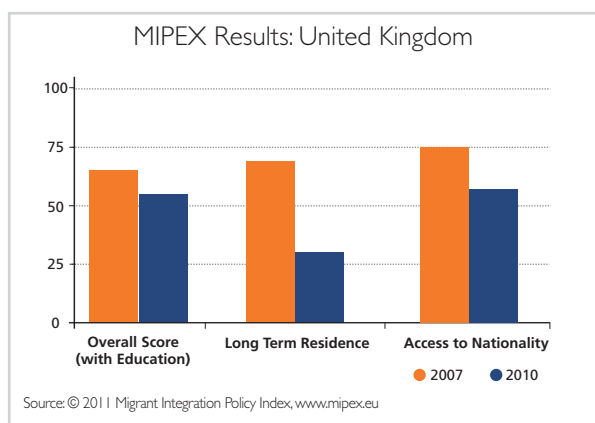


### How does the UK compare to the rest of Europe and North America?

On the eve of the May 2010 elections, MIPEX found that the recent turn in policies made conditions slightly less favourable for integration than previous policies had allowed. The UK had fallen 10-out-of-100-points since 2007's MIPEX II—a bigger fall than any other country—and out of the MIPEX Top 10 list of countries with the most favourable integration policies. While the UK remained a leader on anti-discrimination policies, other countries were catching up. The UK fell behind on long-term settlement and nationality acquisition policies. It now ranks at no. 13 in the 31 MIPEX countries.



## How has the UK fallen behind?



The 2009 Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Act<sup>2</sup>, due to come into force in 2011, was responsible for a 30-point-drop on Long-Term Residence and a 16-point-drop on Access to Nationality. This was because of the long and confusing path to 'earned citizenship' proposed in the 2009 Act by the previous government – with a lengthening of the time taken to become a British citizen, a probationary period prior to full citizenship, and tighter restrictions along the path to naturalisation.

The May 2010 elections cut short further plans for secondary legislation on this points-based citizenship system. At the time, a MIPEX prospective assessment commissioned by MIPEX partner Runnymede Trust found that this system would be the most onerous and complicated in Europe<sup>3</sup>. Despite claims that a citizenship points-system was similar to policies in France, America, and most other countries, MIPEX found that these policies were actually closer to the UK's previous policies. Many of the conditions in the points-system would have gone way off the MIPEX scale, so far were these ideas from the practices in nearly all other countries. No other country aims to control the actual number of people progressing to citizenship.

On 5 November 2010, the new government announced its intention not to implement earned citizenship, calling it "too complicated, bureaucratic, and, in the end, ineffective."

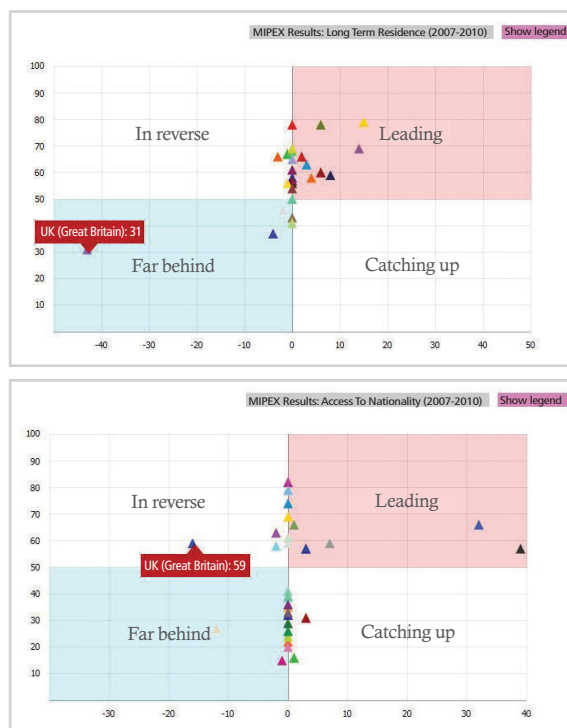
### Further reading:

MIPEX III: <http://www.mipex.eu/>

MIPEX UK country profile: <http://www.mipex.eu/uk>

Thomas Huddleston "Will new UK family reunion policies cap migration or fight exclusion?" 17 April 2011  
<http://www.mipex.eu/blog/will-new-uk-family-reunion-policies-cap-migration-or-fight-exclusion>

Thomas Huddleston "No to 'Earned citizenship': UK Government wants new legislation, but what direction?" 28 February 2011  
<http://www.mipex.eu/blog/no-to-%E2%80%98earned-citizenship%E2%80%99-uk-government-wants-new-legislation-but-what-direction>



## How can the UK become a leader again?

Although the 2009 Act remains on the books, the pre-2009 rules for Indefinite Leave to Remain and Naturalisation remain in place and, for now, applicants' prospects of long-term settlement and citizenship have returned to a situation much like that described in MIPEX II. Most significantly, the UK continues to set slightly favourable conditions for the integration of permanently settled immigrants and future British citizens. On Access to Nationality, the UK would now score like Canada; MIPEX rates the Canadian path to citizenship as one of the most clear and professional.<sup>4</sup>

Government wants new legislation covering the migrant's experience from arrival through to citizenship but so far lacks direction and plans consultations in the coming months. The MIPEX comparative data and trends on policies in the UK and other countries can be used to promote integration through new national policies on indefinite leave to remain and naturalisation. Policy-makers and stakeholders can and should take the opportunity presented by robust international comparison to strengthen UK policy in these areas to facilitate migrant integration.

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COMPAS Breakfast Briefings present topical, cutting edge research on migration and migration related issues. This research is made accessible every month to an audience of policy makers and other research users.

Thumbnails - First page: 'England from the sky', Nora Danielson, Photo Competition Entry 2008. Second page: 'Life in Motion', Agnieszka Rydzik, Photo Competition Entry 2010