



## What does new Home Office research on the Migrant Journey tell us about migration to the UK?

The Migrant Journey was first published in Autumn 2010, with a further report in Summer 2011, providing for the first time an analysis of how non-EU migrants coming to the United Kingdom under various categories of visa (work, study, family) differ in their passage through the immigration system, in their propensities to switch categories, the length of time they remain and the proportions who go on to achieve settlement.

The Family Migration evidence pack was published in Summer 2011 and compiled a variety of evidence from various sources, including further analysis of the Migrant Journey. It has helped inform the 2011 consultation on family migration and the recent Migration Advisory Committee report on the family.

The Migrant Journey provides an analysis of administrative data extracted from UK Border Agency databases. It presents findings relating to the main non-visit visa routes covered by government policy and the Immigration Rules: family; (work leading to permanent settlement); work (not leading to settlement); study; and other routes.

Data on grants of entry clearance (visas) were matched to data on grants of further leave to remain to provide details of all types of leave granted to a migrant from the point they received entry clearance, until they were granted settlement or their last recorded leave expired.

A forward analysis looked at the cohort of approximately 550,000 migrants granted entry clearance in 2004 and mapped their status at the end of each year to 2009. The backwards-view analysis reports on just under 180,000 migrants granted settlement in 2009 and traces their records back through the immigration system. The second report provided additional information on the migration patterns exhibited by different nationalities. Additionally, the Second Report included a case-file analysis of 219 students and 435 family cases to answer specific questions about these migrants.

This research has been recognised as innovative, providing a richer understanding of migrant behaviour which has helped inform policy debates on the current proposals for changes to the immigration rules.

### Findings

*Proportion of migrants in 2004 cohort granted non-visit visas under the main entry routes still in the UK after five years*

Route	Migrants in 2004 cohort granted non-visit visas	Proportion of migrants still in the UK after five years	Proportion of migrants achieving settlement after five years
Family	63,400	63%	55%
Work (leading to citizenship)	105,880	40%	29%
Work (not leading to citizenship)	94,540	11%	3%
Study	185,600	21%	3%

### Family route

The family route comprises migrants entering the UK as a relative of someone who is a British citizen or settled in the UK. These can include: husbands, wives, civil partners, fiancé/es, proposed civil partners, or unmarried or same sex partners. Approximately 63 per cent of migrants who entered the UK via the family route in 2004 were still in the immigration system five years later.



## Work (leading to settlement) route

This route comprises mainly highly skilled workers or those who came to the UK under the previous HSMP or Work Permit scheme (105,880 people in 2004 or approximately 19 per cent of all migrants granted non-visit visas). 40 per cent of migrants in this route were still in the immigration system at the end of 2009, and almost three-quarters of these had obtained settlement.

## Study route

In 2004, approximately 185,600 non-visit visas were issued to migrants coming to the UK to study. Migrants in this route made up just over a third of all those issued non-visit visas in 2004. After five years almost 80 per cent no longer had valid leave to remain. Those who remained in the UK legally moved into the work (leading to citizenship) route, were still students, or switched into the family route (for marriage). Only 3 per cent of these students had obtained settlement after five years.

## Paths to settlement

Unsurprisingly, the largest proportion of those granted settlement in 2009 had entered the UK via the skilled work and family routes. Approximately 34 per cent of those granted settlement in 2009 came via the family route and 32 per cent arrived for skilled or shortage work. 13 per cent of those granted settlement had originally entered the UK as students (excluding student visitors) and subsequently switched into a work or family visa; more students switched to the work route than the family route.

A significant proportion (15%) who achieved settlement in 2009 initially entered directly through the settlement route. This group comprises migrants granted indefinite leave to enter before they came to the UK, and a number of migrants who may have entered the UK before current databases were in place and therefore their initial visa record could not be identified (in this cohort, this was particularly common amongst Nigerian migrants).

Amongst the top five nationalities achieving settlement in 2009, migrants from India and the Philippines tended to favour the skilled work route, whilst most migrants from Bangladesh and Pakistan initially came to the UK via the family route.

In contrast only one in ten Australian migrants in the family route applied for and were granted settlement over the same period.

There are many possible explanations for why migrants from some countries appear to favour particular immigration routes. In the case of the family route, some British citizens or settled migrants are more likely to marry a spouse who lives abroad, based on shared cultural practices or traditions. In addition, historical ties, particularly to Commonwealth countries, mean that established migrant communities make it more attractive for others to come to the UK and stay permanently.

A separate case file analysis of a sample of 435 migrants granted visas for entry as a spouse of a British citizen/settled person looked at the immigration statuses of UK sponsors, whether migrants had married abroad and how long the couple waited after their marriage before applying to come to the UK. In most cases (91%) migrants were married to a British citizen, although 29 per cent were marrying a person who had been born abroad but subsequently acquired British citizenship. The vast majority of marriages (84%) took place in the migrant's home country (that is, outside of the UK). Migrants most commonly waited less than a year between getting married and applying for a visa on the basis of their relationship.

### The Migrant Journey is available from:

- <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/science-research-statistics/research-statistics/immigration-asylum-research/horr43/> (**1<sup>st</sup> report**)
- <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/science-research-statistics/research-statistics/immigration-asylum-research/horr57/> (**2<sup>nd</sup> report**)

## Family migration: evidence and analysis

The Home Office has also published a compendia of additional evidence on family migration to the UK to accompany the government's Family Migration consultation. This report brings together previously published statistics, new information from the UK Border Agency, and some additional data and analysis on specific questions relating to family migration.

### The family migration evidence pack is available from:

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/science-research-statistics/research-statistics/immigration-asylum-research/occ94/>

### About the speaker:

*The Migrant Journey research and Family Migration Evidence Pack were produced and published by the Home Office. Jon Simmons is the Director for Migration and Border Analysis in the Home Office Science Directorate.*

### Top five nationalities for settlement in 2009 by the dominant initial route of entry

	Number granted settlement in 2009	Dominant entry clearance routes	Proportion of migrants achieving settlement after five years
Indian	37,390	Work (leading to settlement)	55%
Pakistani	22,180	Family	60%
Filipino	9,980	Work (leading to settlement)	59%
Nigerian	9,730	Settlement	42%
Bangladeshi	8,510	Family	55%

Based on 172,600 migrants who entered the UK from 2000 onwards. Data quality and completeness of records mean that records prior to 2000 are less reliable.



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