

# Latest developments in admin-based migration estimates and the impact of coronavirus on migration

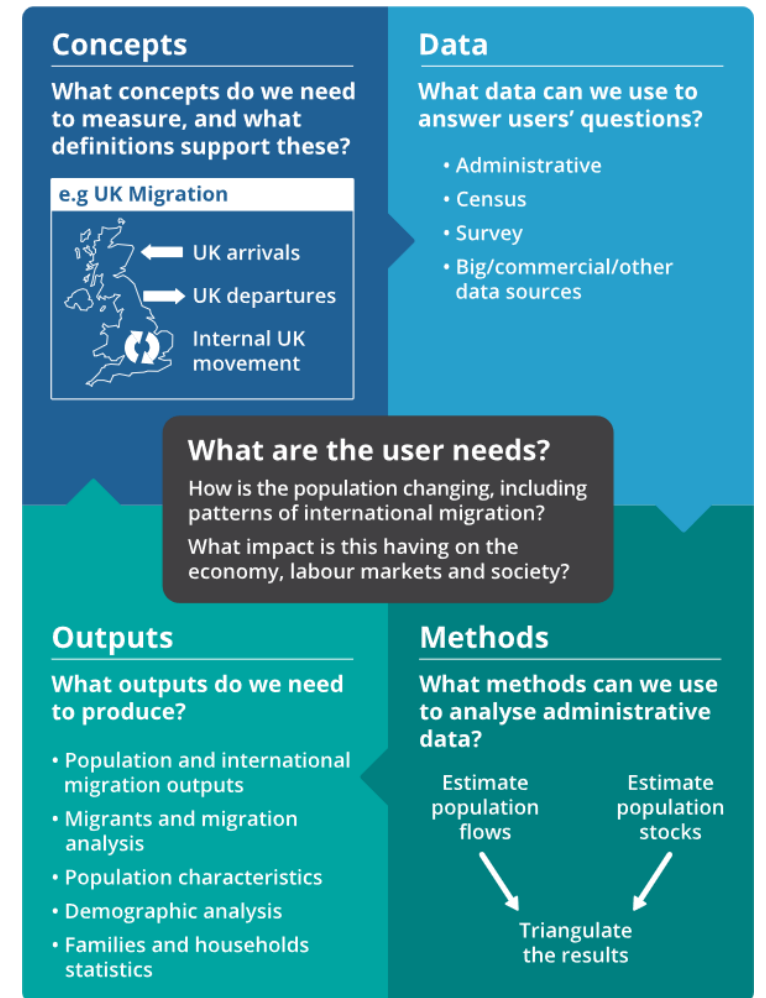
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# Introduction

Our aim: To provide the best possible statistics and insights on international migration, working across government to use a range of new and existing data sources to meet the needs of our users.

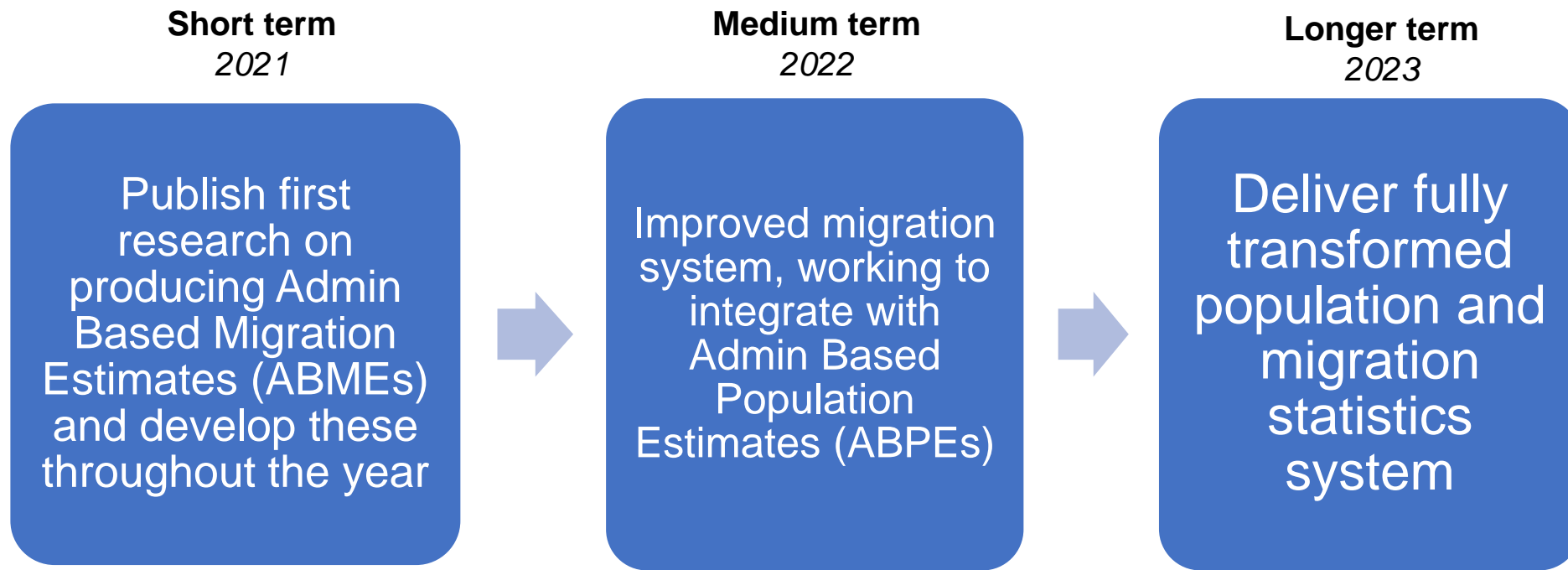
Our transformation journey aims to deliver new measures of international migration using administrative data, alongside new insights on the topic of migration.



# Transformation timeline

The impact of the coronavirus pandemic and the suspension of the International Passenger Survey (IPS) has accelerated our transformation plans to move away from IPS data towards the use of administrative data to deliver new measures of migration.

We have a set of key milestones as we move towards a transformed population and migration statistics system in 2023.



# Recent research and publications

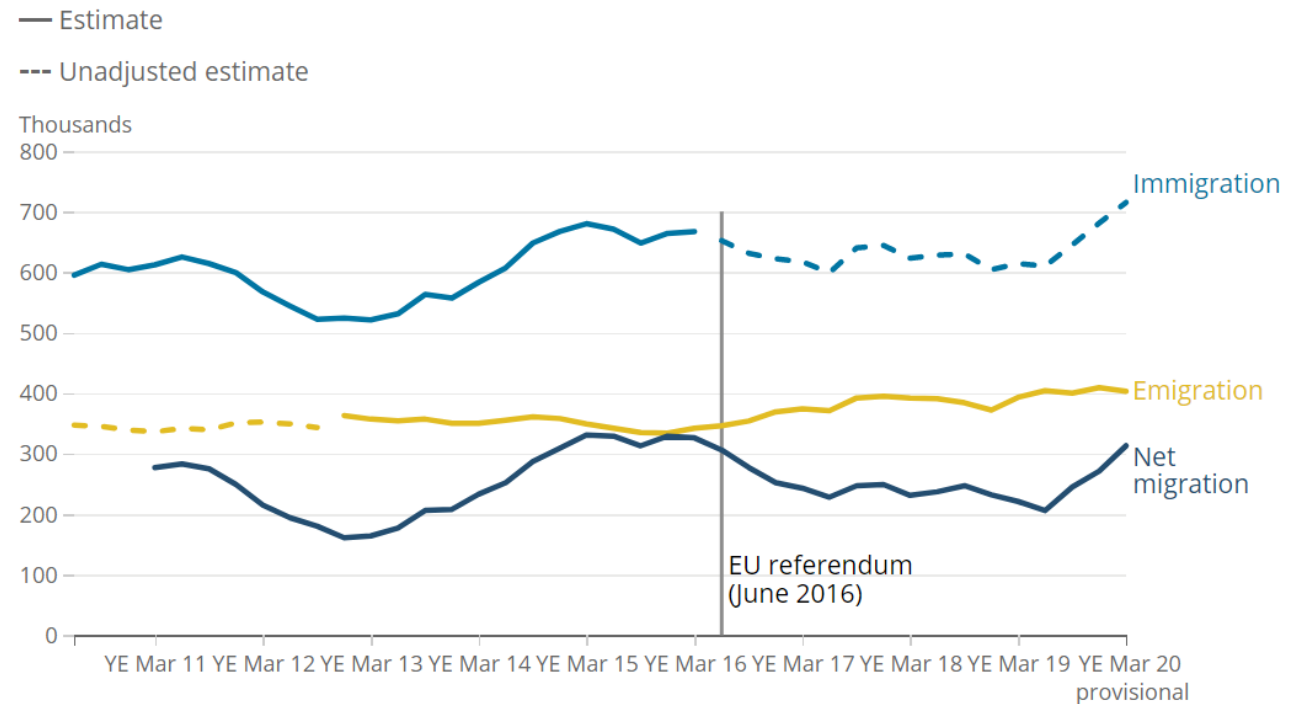
## August 2020

The [Migration Statistics Quarterly Report \(MSQR\)](#) provided the last estimates based on survey data

Indicated an increase in immigration and net migration in the year to March 2020, but not yet taking into account the impact of the coronavirus pandemic

Figure 1: Net migration has increased since 2019

Long-term international migration, UK, year ending June 2010 to year ending March 2020



# New insights on migration

October 2020

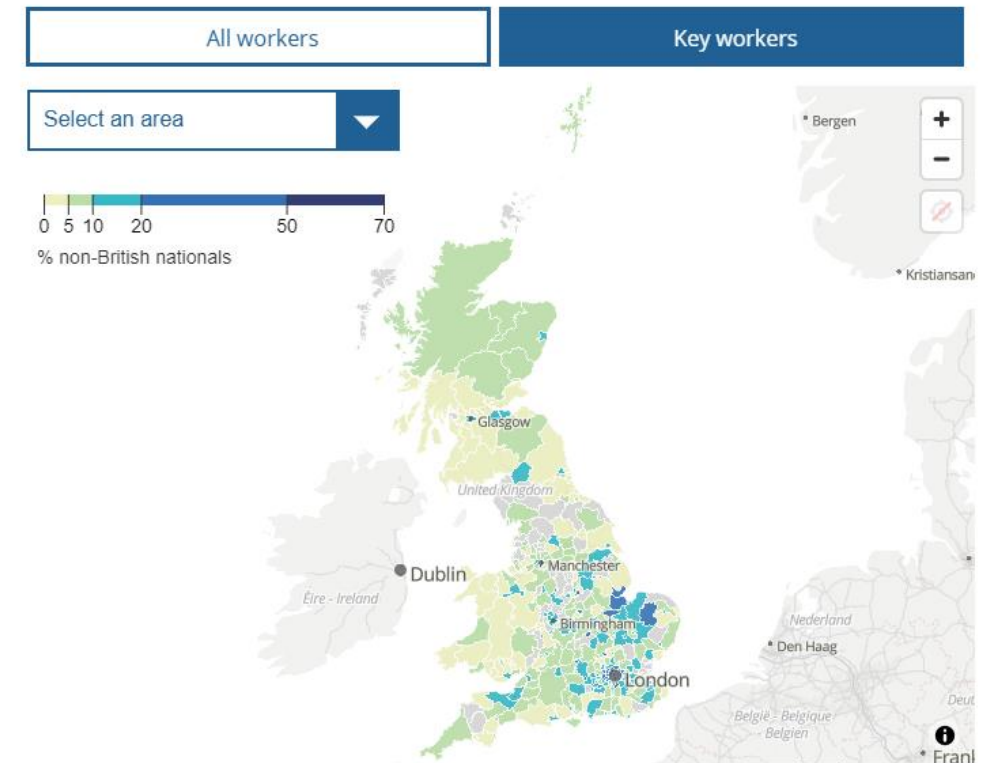
## Coronavirus and non-UK key workers

Insights on non-British nationals and non-UK-born in the workforce between 2017 and 2019, including those who could be considered as key workers in the response to the coronavirus pandemic.

- Key workers by local area
- Key workers in different occupation groups
- Key workers in health and social care

Figure 2: Explore the proportion of the UK workforce and key workers who are non-British nationals in your local area

Proportion of workforce who are non-British nationals by local authority and workforce type



Source: Office for National Statistics - Annual Population Survey three-year-pooled dataset (2017 to 2019)

# Impact of pandemic

November 2020

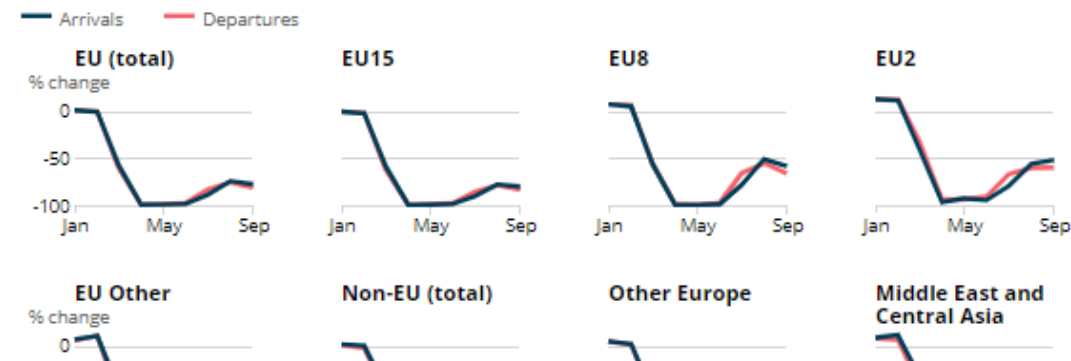
## International migration and mobility: what's changed since the coronavirus pandemic

Showed:

- since the start of coronavirus pandemic we have seen substantial decreases in passengers travelling internationally.
- a fall in the number of visa applications issued for work and study to non-EU nationals and the number of National Insurance numbers registered to non-British nationals

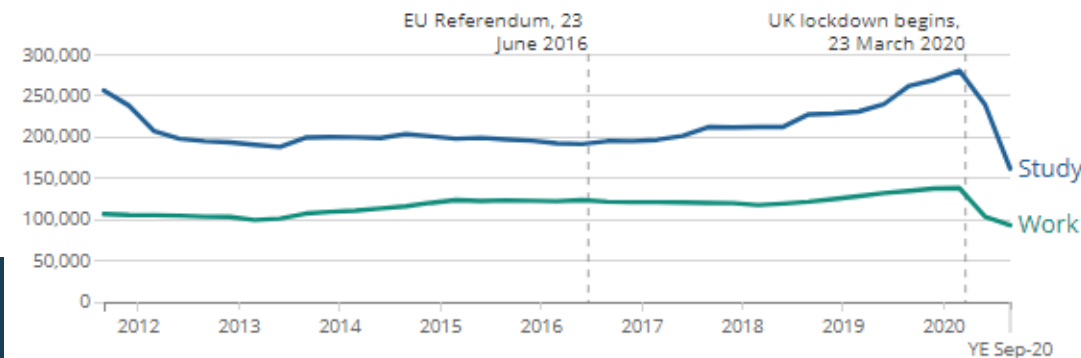
2. There was widespread decline in international travel to and from the UK because of worldwide travel restrictions

Percentage change compared with a year ago in monthly air passenger volume between airports in the UK and airports in regions of the world, by direction, January to September, 2020



4. There was a fall in work and study visas granted for non-EU nationals since the coronavirus pandemic

Entry clearance visas issued for work and study, UK, year ending September 2011 to year ending September 2020



Source: Home Office entry clearance visas issued, table Vis\_D02

# Population by country of birth and nationality

January 2021

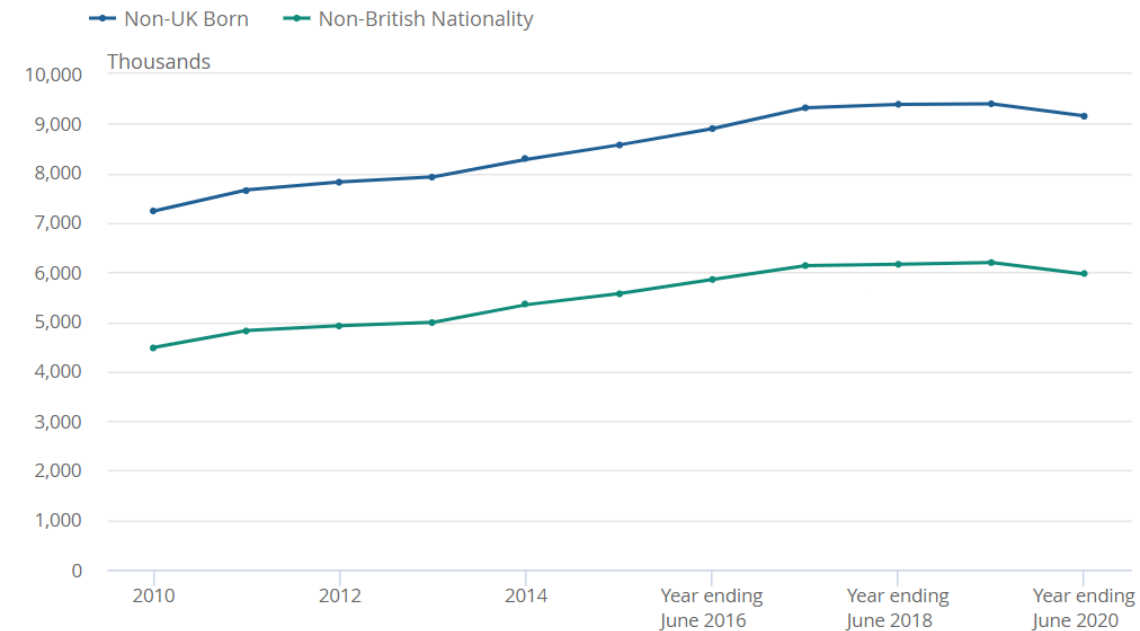
[Population of the UK by country of birth and nationality](#) – year ending June 2020

Estimates based on data from Annual Population Survey (APS) and Labour Force Survey (LFS) which have been impacted by coronavirus pandemic.

For mid-2020, these indicated falls in both the non-British and non-UK born populations, largely driven by reductions in EU8 and EU2 populations

Figure 1: Non-UK born and non-British populations declined in the year ending June 2020 following a period of relative stability since 2017

Estimates of the non-UK-born and non-British resident population of the UK, 2010 to year ending June 2020



# Admin-Based Migration Estimates

Through our transformation work we have been making iterative progress towards the use of administrative data to deliver new Admin-Based Migration Estimates (ABMEs)

This work is currently focused on using the best possible data sources we have available for measuring long-term international migration which are:

- DWP RAPID data
- Home Office visas and border data (Exit Checks)

A research report providing an update on our progress is expected to be published in February 2021.

In the longer term though we will be building in more datasets and working towards our aim of having a linked and integrated system by 2023.



# Admin-Based Migration Estimates

- Data Source: RAPID

# RAPID: Registration And Population Interaction Dataset

Single coherent view of citizens' interactions across DWP/ HMRC systems including;

- Benefits
- Employment
- Self employment
- Pensions
- In-work benefits

# RAPID: Registration And Population Interaction Dataset

Migrants can be identified from the Migrant Worker Scan (MWS) which contains information on all overseas nationals who register and are allocated a National Insurance Number.

We can then use information from the DWP/ HMRC systems to identify signs of “activity” and infer migrant flows based on when that activity commenced (indicating arrival into the UK) and when it ends (indicating departure out of the UK).

RAPID data is available for tax years 2010/11 to 2019/20.

UK nationals and those under the age of 16 are not included in our analysis at this stage.

# RAPID: Registration And Population Interaction Dataset

The coverage of RAPID is extensive for most migrant groups due to the wide range of data sources included. Covers everyone with a National Insurance Number therefore will include migrants from both EU and non-EU countries.

However there are some populations less well covered due to the nature of their interactions (or lack of interactions) with these systems.

For example migrants who come to the UK to study.

- Migrants who come to the UK to study and do not work alongside their studies or only work short-term will not have long-term interactions in RAPID and therefore would not be identified as long-term migrants.

# RAPID: Registration And Population Interaction Dataset

Up to now estimates of international migration have been based on the International Passenger Survey (IPS) which interviewed migrants to record how long they were intending to remain in or out of the UK in the next 12 months.

Administrative data on the other hand is retrospective, that is, they tell us about actual activity that has already happened. As administrative data is based on actual behaviour there will be time lags before we can use these sources to identify long-term arrivals to the UK.

Migrants may not register for public services immediately and consequently, will not be present in the administrative data until they do. We also need to wait for arrivals or departures to be active or inactive in the data sources for long enough to be considered a long-term migrant (as stated in the UN definition).

# RAPID: Registration And Population Interaction Dataset

Due to the coverage of students and the time-lags present to assess whether arrivals are long-term we will need to make adjustments to the data to ensure the estimates have the best coverage possible.

These adjustments can be made using alternative administrative sources and bringing together previous research;

- The Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) publish a lot of data on students arriving into the UK to study.
- ONS has previously published research which linked HESA and PAYE data together to assess the proportion of undergraduate students who worked alongside their studies.

# Admin-Based Migration Estimates

- Data Source: Exit Checks

# Home Office Exit Checks dataset

The Home Office Exit Checks programme was designed for operational purposes in order to check compliance with visa conditions for non-EU nationals.

ONS are looking at this data to identify how it can be used for statistical purposes to measure migration flows as it provides a more direct measure of movement, linking UK entries/exits to visa information

It includes linked information on:

- Dates people entered and left the country (passenger information and passport swipes at the border) and therefore time spent in UK
- Length and types of visas held



# Home Office Exit Checks dataset

## Immigration

Building on the “First Arrival-Last Departure” method for estimating long-term international immigration using Exit Checks set out in our report [Exploring international migration concepts and definitions with Home Office administrative data](#) published in February 2020

This is the method that most closely approximates the UN definition of a long-term migrant (i.e. measuring people staying for at least 12 months).

## Emigration

Next steps include looking to develop an analogous approach to measure this concept

# Home Office Exit Checks dataset

Points to note for current coverage of this admin source:

- Exit Checks data only covers Non-EU nationals requiring a visa to stay in the UK
- Time series available for this research covers period 2015/16 to 2018/19
  - Definition of long-term migrant means need to follow people in the data for a year to see what they actually do restricts number of time points for which estimates can be calculated.
  - Looking at methods for producing provisional estimates for latest time point, based on visa data, trends and expected behaviour

# Summary

We will be continuing to work with our partners across government to provide early insight and analysis on changes in international migration.

This includes continuing development of our ABMEs and we will be updating regularly as we continue to build these and bring in further data sources.

We welcome all feedback on our transformation programme – users are at the heart of what we do.