

Mid-2007 Short-term Migration Estimates for England and Wales

February 2009

1. Introduction

1.1 Estimates of short-term migration, visits made for longer than a few weeks but less than a year, were first published in October 2007. This report includes the latest estimates in this series, referring to the year to mid-2007, based on the International Passenger Survey (IPS). As with previous releases, the estimates refer to flows to and from England & Wales as well as the average stock of short-term migrants present in or absent from England & Wales.

1.2 Currently published as experimental statistics, ONS are committed to a programme of developing the estimates with the aim of attaining National Statistics status. This programme of work has already seen the publication of:

- A new method for calculating standard errors around the stock estimates.
- A reconciliation exercise between combined estimates of long and short-term migration from the IPS and counts of migrants from administrative sources.
- An assessment of the feasibility of producing short-term migration estimates at local area level.

1.3 Further refinement of the series is concentrated on improving timeliness and geographical coverage. Estimates for the year to mid-2007 are the first to make use of provisional IPS data and so are being published eight months ahead of when equivalent estimates have been published previously. A more detailed discussion on the use of provisional data is provided in Appendix A. Local area short-term migration estimates are planned to be published later in 2009.

2. Short-term Migration Flow Estimates

2.1 Within this section estimates for the period from 1st July 2006 to 30th June 2007 are referred to simply as “mid-2007”. Estimates of short-term visits in mid-2007 are presented in the tables below. Alongside the estimates are the associated standard errors¹ expressed as a percentage. Any estimate from the IPS with a standard error greater than 25% should be treated with caution as they are subject to a high level of uncertainty.

Table 1: In-flow of overseas residents into England and Wales staying 3-12 months by reason for visit (in thousands)

Reason for visit	In-flow				mid-2007
	mid-2004	mid-2005	mid-2006	mid-2007	SE (%)
Employment	59	90	108	76	14
Study	78	70	82	76	12
Employment or Study	138	160	190	152	9
Other	157	175	184	139	8
All Reasons	295	335	374	291	6

Table 2: In-flow of overseas residents into England and Wales staying 1-12 months by reason for visit (in thousands)

Reason for visit	In-flow				mid-2007
	mid-2004	mid-2005	mid-2006	mid-2007	SE (%)
Employment	113	175	208	175	10
Study	218	193	222	199	8
Employment or Study	331	368	429	374	6
Other	791	878	1,008	960	4
All Reasons	1,122	1,246	1,437	1,334	3

2.2 Overall, the estimates show that the number of overseas residents entering England and Wales for short-term moves of both 3-12 and 1-12 months has decreased between mid-2006 and mid-2007. This can be seen across all the reason for visit categories.

¹ The standard error is an indication of the accuracy of an estimate and how much a sample estimate is likely to differ from the true value because of random effects.

2.3 The largest decrease is to the number of short-term migrants for employment staying 3-12 months, which has fallen by 30 per cent during the period (from 108,000 to 76,000). The number of visits for 1-12 months for employment has also decreased (by 16 per cent), however, this is largely driven by the decrease in 3-12 month stays.

2.4 These falls in employment related short-term migration are of particular interest as previously the estimates have shown large annual increases. Further analysis of the data indicates a 33 per cent decrease in the number of workers staying for 3-12 months from the A8 countries that joined the EU in 2004. This decrease is important as more than half of all short-term employment migration is from A8 countries.

2.5 By contrast, the number of long-term migrant workers from A8 countries increased by 32 per cent between calendar years 2006 and 2007 to 82,000². Considering long and short-term migration estimates in conjunction suggests that over the period to mid-2007 there was a tendency for A8 migrant workers to stay for longer periods than they had done previously. It is noted that the number of moves made for 1-3 months has remained relatively stable indicating that these very short moves are still being made, with the change relating to fewer migrants coming for 3-12 months and more migrants coming for longer than 12 months.

2.6 The Worker Registration Scheme (WRS) covers A8 migrant workers staying longer than one month who are not self-employed. The WRS increased by 9 per cent between mid-2006 and mid-2007 (from 210,000 to 229,000)³. This increase is comparable to combined ONS estimates of long and short-term employment migration from A8 countries.

2.7 The term in-flow refers to short-term migration visits made by individuals who are usually resident outside the UK. Out-flow refers to short-term migration visits by individuals who are usually resident in the UK. Return moves of individuals who have been in the UK as short-term migrants are not counted as out-flows. For this reason in-flow and out-flow will not balance as they refer to different migration streams.

² Estimates of long-term migrant workers from A8 countries are not available on a mid-year basis.

³ It is noted that between calendar years 2006 and 2007 the WRS shows a decrease in A8 employment migration. The Accession Monitoring Report states that this began in quarter 4 of 2007.

Table 3: Out-flow of England and Wales residents for 3-12 months by reason for visit (in thousands)

Reason for visit	Out-flow				mid-2007
	mid-2004	mid-2005	mid-2006	mid-2007	SE (%)
Employment	28	24	39	43	21
Study	11	9	11	15	30
Employment or Study	39	33	50	58	17
Other	370	358	368	375	6
All Reasons	409	391	418	433	6

Table 4: Out-flow of England and Wales residents for 1-12 months by reason for visit (in thousands)

Reason for visit	Out-flow				mid-2007
	mid-2004	mid-2005	mid-2006	mid-2007	SE (%)
Employment	64	46	79	67	16
Study	28	35	28	38	22
Employment or Study	92	81	107	104	13
Other	2,136	2,319	2,412	2,481	2
All Reasons	2,227	2,399	2,519	2,586	2

2.8 Table 4 shows that when considering all reasons for visit there are more England and Wales residents making short-term visits abroad than short term migrants overseas entering England and Wales.

2.9 Out-flow of short-term migrants from England and Wales has increased between mid-2006 and mid-2007. Short-term emigration for all reasons increased by 4 per cent for stays lasting 1-12 months and 3 per cent for stays lasting 3 to 12 months. This is the fourth consecutive annual increase in the 1 to 12 month estimate and the third consecutive annual increase in the 3-12 month estimate.

2.10 Outflows lasting 1-12 months that were made for employment reasons decreased by 15 per cent between mid-2006 and mid-2007 whilst the equivalent number of moves lasting 3-12 months increased by 10 per cent in the same time period. However, no clear trend in these figures can be identified in the available time series from mid-2004.

3. Short-term Migration Stock Estimates

3.1 The stock refers to the average population present in an area over a specified period, whereas a flow is the number of visits made in a given period. Flows are not equal to stocks over a 12 month period for short-term migration as many of those who enter leave before the end of the year. The stock over a specified period is generally lower than the flows over the same period.

3.2 The stock of short-term migrants in England and Wales is referred to as 'in-stock' whereas the stock of England and Wales residents temporarily out of the country is referred to as 'out-stock'.

Table 5: In-stock of short-term migrants staying 3-12 months in England and Wales by reason for visit (in thousands) with mean length of stay (in months)

Reason for visit	In-stock				mid-2007	
	mid-2004	mid-2005	mid-2006	mid-2007	Mean Length of Stay	In-stock SE (%)
Employment	20	36	48	35	5.5	13
Study	34	30	33	31	5.1	12
Employment or Study	54	67	81	66	5.3	9
Other	62	67	69	59	4.8	8
All Reasons	116	134	149	125	5.1	6

Table 6: In-stock of short-term migrants staying 1-12 months in England and Wales by reason for visit (in thousands) with mean length of stay (in months)

Reason for visit	In-stock				mid-2007	
	mid-2004	mid-2005	mid-2006	mid-2007	Mean Length of Stay	In-stock SE (%)
Employment	28	50	64	54	3.8	9
Study	54	52	54	51	3.2	9
Employment or Study	82	102	117	105	3.5	6
Other	147	157	174	173	2.2	4
All Reasons	229	259	291	278	2.6	3

Table 7: Out-stock of short-term migrants overseas for 3-12 months by reason for visit (in thousands) with mean length of stay (in months)

Reason for visit	Out-stock				mid-2007	
	mid-2004	mid-2005	mid-2006	mid-2007	Mean Length of Stay	Out-stock SE (%)
Employment	13	11	16	21	5.7	19
Study	5	3	5	7	6.1	27
Employment or Study	19	14	20	27	5.8	16
Other	155	150	157	154	5.2	6
All Reasons	173	164	177	182	5.3	6

Table 8: Out-stock of short-term migrants overseas for 1-12 months by reason for visit (in thousands) with mean length of stay (in months)

Reason for visit	Out-stock				mid-2007	
	mid-2004	mid-2005	mid-2006	mid-2007	Mean Length of Stay	Out-stock SE (%)
Employment	18	14	22	25	4.3	16
Study	8	7	7	9	3.5	21
Employment or Study	26	21	29	34	4.1	13
Other	380	401	425	424	2.3	3
All Reasons	406	422	454	458	2.4	3

3.3 In general, the stock estimates follow the same broad trends as exhibited by the flow estimates. However, in contrast to the equivalent out-flow data there was an increase between mid-2006 and mid-2007 in the out-stock estimates for employment moves lasting 1-12 months. This is possibly due to the increase in the mean length of stay between mid-2006 and mid-2007.

3.4 The standard errors show that there is a similar level of uncertainty around the stock estimates when compared to the equivalent flow estimates.

4. Next Steps

4.1 As noted in the introduction to this paper, ONS are continuing to develop these experimental estimates. Priorities for this development are the production of local area estimates and further improvement of timeliness. Local area level estimates are planned to be published later in 2009.

References

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6. UK Border Agency, DWP, HMRC, CLG (2008) Accession Monitoring Report May 2004 – September 2008, available at:
http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/documents/aboutus/reports/accession_monitoring_report/

Appendix A

A.1 The International Passenger Survey (IPS) uses a complex design to ensure that resulting estimates are nationally representative. At the end of each calendar year it is necessary to adjust some of the provisional weights assigned to each contact to ensure that they are representative of the whole twelve month period. These resulting 'final' weights are used as the basis for long-term migration estimates which are published and feed into the mid-year population estimates. Final weights are also used for short-term migration estimates.

A.2 Waiting until the end of the calendar year for final weights to be assigned introduces a delay in when final mid-year to mid-year migration estimates can be produced. As part of the programme of work to improve migration statistics, ONS have been assessing how provisional IPS data might be used to indicate changes in long-term migration trends before final weights are available. Beginning in May 2009, a national level indication of long-term migration will be available on a rolling annual basis, updated quarterly using provisional IPS data.

A.3 Timeliness is a particular issue for estimates of short-term migration, mid-2006 estimates were not published until September 2008. In addition to the issue of final weights, the timeliness of short-term migration estimates is affected by being based on interviews taken at the end of each visitors stay rather than at the beginning of their stay as for long-term migration estimation. In the case of the mid-2006 estimates it was not possible to produce an estimate until IPS data up to mid-2007 had been processed as people entering at the end of June 2006 may leave as late as June 2007 and still be a short-term migrant. Although only data up to mid-2007 was required, it was necessary for data to be collected and processed for the whole calendar year before weights could be finalised.

A.4 Initial research on the affect of using provisional IPS data was undertaken on data from 2006. This showed that the change from provisional to final data had a small impact. In order to calculate mid-2007 short-term migration estimates, provisional data are only required for two of the eight quarters of data that are used. These are the first two quarters of 2008, covering only individuals who had stayed for longer than six months and entered in the first two quarters of 2007. Therefore only a small proportion of the estimate is subject to any effect from using provisional data. Given the effect on the estimates is likely to be small, provisional data for the first two quarters of 2008 is used in the mid-2007 estimates published for the first time in this paper. This has resulted in estimates being available eight

months before they would have been had final data been used. ONS will report on the difference made by using provisional data when final weights become available.

A.5 ONS plan to look at how the timeliness of short-term migration estimates can be further improved by comparing IPS data on migrants intentions with that currently used on responses at the end of visit. Initial work has shown how complex this is given that individuals change their intentions after they have arrived, i.e. individuals may leave after less than a month or stay longer than 12 months. This work is further complicated by the fact that it is not possible to link individual's intentions with their actual behaviour because of the sample based nature of the IPS.