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**Coverage**

United Kingdom

**Theme**

Population and migration

## UK population grows to more than 60 million

Growth in the population of the United Kingdom accelerated in the year to mid-2005 to its fastest rate since the 1960s, taking the total population above 60 million for the first time, according to estimates released today by the Office for National Statistics (ONS).

The population of the United Kingdom was 60.2 million at 30 June 2005, a rise of 0.6 per cent (375,000) on a year earlier. This is the biggest annual rise in numbers since 1962 and the fastest growth rate since 1965. It compares with a rise of 0.5 per cent in the year to mid-2004, an average increase of 0.4 per cent over the five years 1999 to 2004 and 0.3 per cent in the ten years 1989 to 1999. The increased population growth in the year to mid-2005 was anticipated in the 2004-based national population projections released last year.

The main factor leading to the increase was net international migration, the difference between migration into and out of the UK. This rose from 167,000 in 2003-04 to 235,000 in 2004-05. This was the highest level since estimates of Total International Migration were first produced on the current basis in 1991. Migration into the UK was around 59,000 more than in the previous mid-year period, a rise of 11 per cent, and migration from the UK fell 8,000 (2 per cent).

The increase was mainly associated with a rise in net migration among citizens of countries that joined the European Union in May 2004. In 2004-05, the first full year of their membership, net migration of citizens from these accession countries was 74,000, compared to 10,000 in 2003-04.

In line with the United Nations recommended definition of international long term migration, the population estimates include only people arriving or leaving for periods of a year or more. They do not include short-term migrants who stay in the UK for less than a year.

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The other major factor in population increase in 2005 was natural change, the difference between numbers of births and deaths. Natural change increased from 104,000 in 2003-04 to 127,000 in 2004-05, as there were 10,000 more births and 12,000 fewer deaths in 2004-05 than in 2003-04. .

Population growth in the year to mid-2005 was fastest in Northern Ireland, at 0.8 per cent. The population of England grew by 0.7 per cent, Scotland by 0.3 per cent and Wales by 0.2 per cent. The population of England reached the 50 million mark in 2004 and is now 50.4 million. The population of Wales was 3.0 million in 2005, Scotland 5.1 million and Northern Ireland 1.7 million.

The UK population continues to age. The number of people aged 85 and over grew by 64,000 (6 per cent) in the year to 2005 to reach a record 1,176,000. This age group had increased from 873,000 in 1991 to 1,130,000 in 2001, but had fallen slightly between 2001 and 2003 (reflecting a dip in births during the first world war). The 85-and-over age group now makes up almost 2 per cent of the population. In 2005 there were 352,000 men and 824,000 women in this age group.

The working-age population (16 to 64 for men and 16 to 59 for women) increased by 304,000 (0.8 per cent), from 37.1 million to 37.4 million between 2004 and 2005. The total number above working age rose by 119,000 (1 per cent), from 11.1 million to 11.2 million.

The number of people under 16 decreased slightly from 11,646,000 to 11,598,000 (a fall of 0.4 per cent) between 2004 and 2005, having previously exceeded 12 million in the 1990s. This decrease reflects the effect of numbers of births in previous years. This group now makes up 19.3 per cent of the population (compared to 20.7 per cent in 1995). In 2005 there were 5,946,000 boys and 5,652,000 girls in this age group.

Figures released today also include local population estimates for England and Wales in mid-2005. These estimates are published for Government Office Regions (in England), Local Authorities (in England and Wales) and Strategic Health Authorities (in England), and Local Health Boards (in Wales).



At regional level, the population grew most in London (1.2 per cent) and least in the North West (0.3 per cent). Net international migration (116,000) and natural change (60,000) drove population growth for London but this was partly offset by the level of migration out of London to elsewhere in the UK (-89,000). This increase for London was in marked contrast to the previous year (at 0.6 per cent) when growth was closer to the national average (of 0.5 per cent). The increase was mainly due to lower net migration flows from London to the rest of the UK and, to a lesser extent, higher net international migration inflows.

Also released today are estimates of migration within the UK in the year to mid-2005. The number of people migrating between regions and countries of the UK declined by 4.5 per cent compared with the previous mid-year period. A similar decline was recorded for moves between local authorities.

At these reduced levels, London experienced the largest net outflow to the rest of the UK compared to other regions. In the year to mid-2005 89,000 more people moved out to other regions than moved into the region from elsewhere in the UK. This net outflow, however, was less than that a year earlier (116,000) and was the lowest since mid-2001 (69,000).

For the fifth successive year, the South West was the region with the highest net inflow. Just over 27,000 more people moved into the South West than moved from it. This was 83 per cent higher than the net inflow to the East, which had the next largest net gain of 15,000 people.

At local authority level in England and Wales, nine out of the top 10 largest net outflows to the rest of the UK were recorded by London boroughs. The London Borough of Newham had the highest recorded net outflow. The figure for Birmingham, ranked third, was the highest outside London.

The largest net outflow from a unitary authority was just over 3,000 (from Luton). The other unitary authorities with the largest outflows were predominantly in the South East (Slough, Southampton, Reading, Medway) and the East Midlands (Leicester, Nottingham, Derby). The measurement of migration used here is based on recorded changes in postcode between two mid-year periods and do not reflect every move between areas.



Measuring migration accurately is becoming increasingly difficult. Large numbers of people travel into and out of the UK, with patterns differing between one part of the country and another.

Globalisation and EU accession have recently led to increases in the numbers travelling. In particular, the population estimates released today are the first to include a full year of migration from the enlarged European Union, following the accession of 10 new member states in May 2004.

The 2001 Census results highlighted concerns about the difficulties in accurately measuring population and migration, ONS then set up the Improving Migration and Population Statistics project (IMPS). An update of progress on this is also published today.

ONS recognises that, given the recent changes in patterns of travel and migration, there is a need to complement current migration estimates, based on the UN definition, with estimates of short-term migrants. As part of the IMPS project, ONS is researching the feasibility of making estimates of these numbers.

ONS plans to implement the research findings as soon as is feasible. The first will be some changes in the methods used to estimate the 2006 population, to be published in 2007. These may result in consequential revisions to the figures published today. In the meantime, ONS population estimates are the best currently possible.

In the context of the IMPS project, ONS has set up an inter-departmental Task Force on Migration Statistics. This aims to identify improvements that can be made over the next two years in producing estimates of long and short-term international migrants, by extending the range of sources and methods used in making estimates. ONS expects to report to Ministers on this work in October.

**Full information available on the National Statistics website:**

<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/cci/nugget.asp?ID=6>

<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/popest>

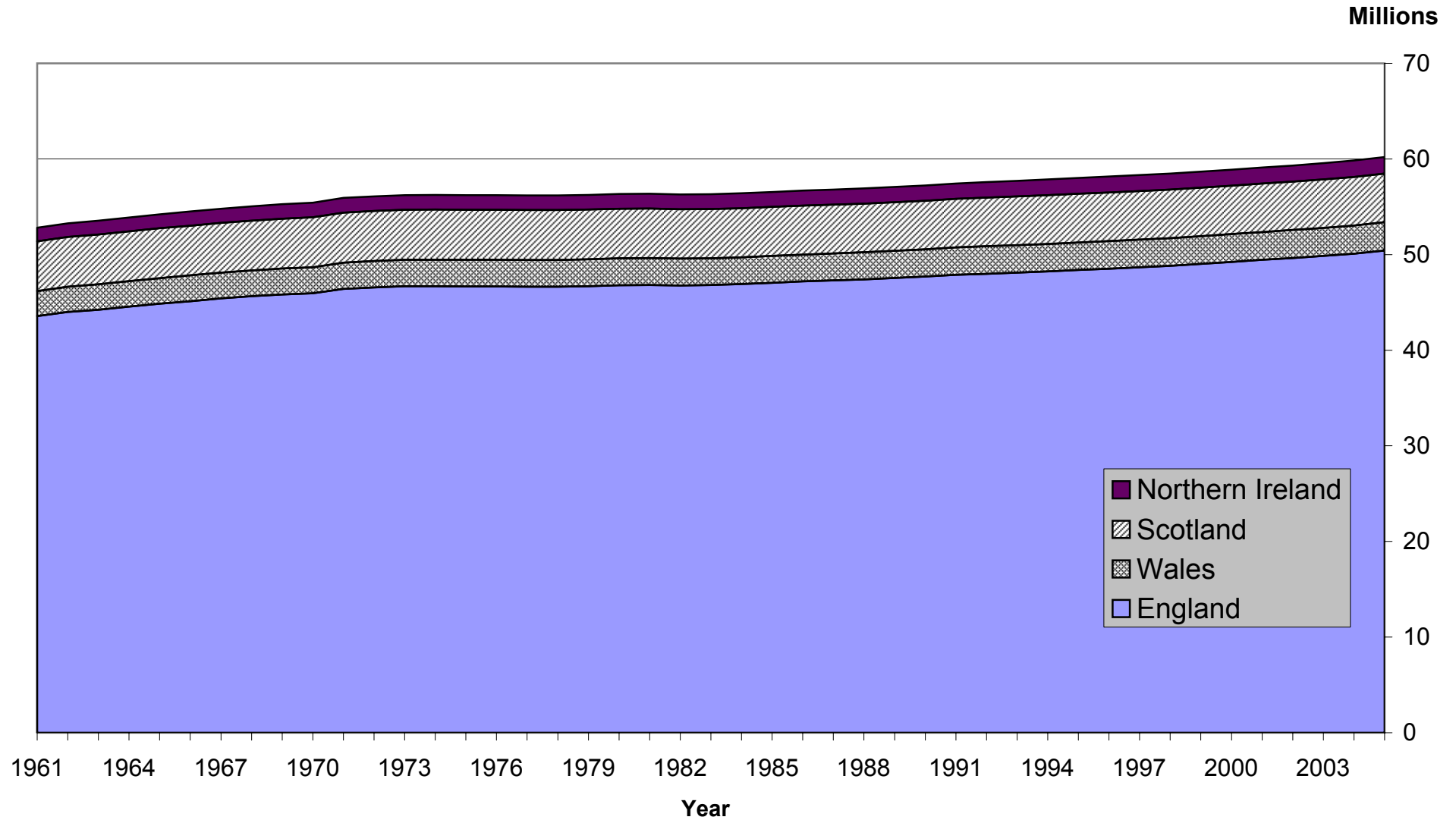
<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Product.asp?vlnk=7070>

<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/imps>

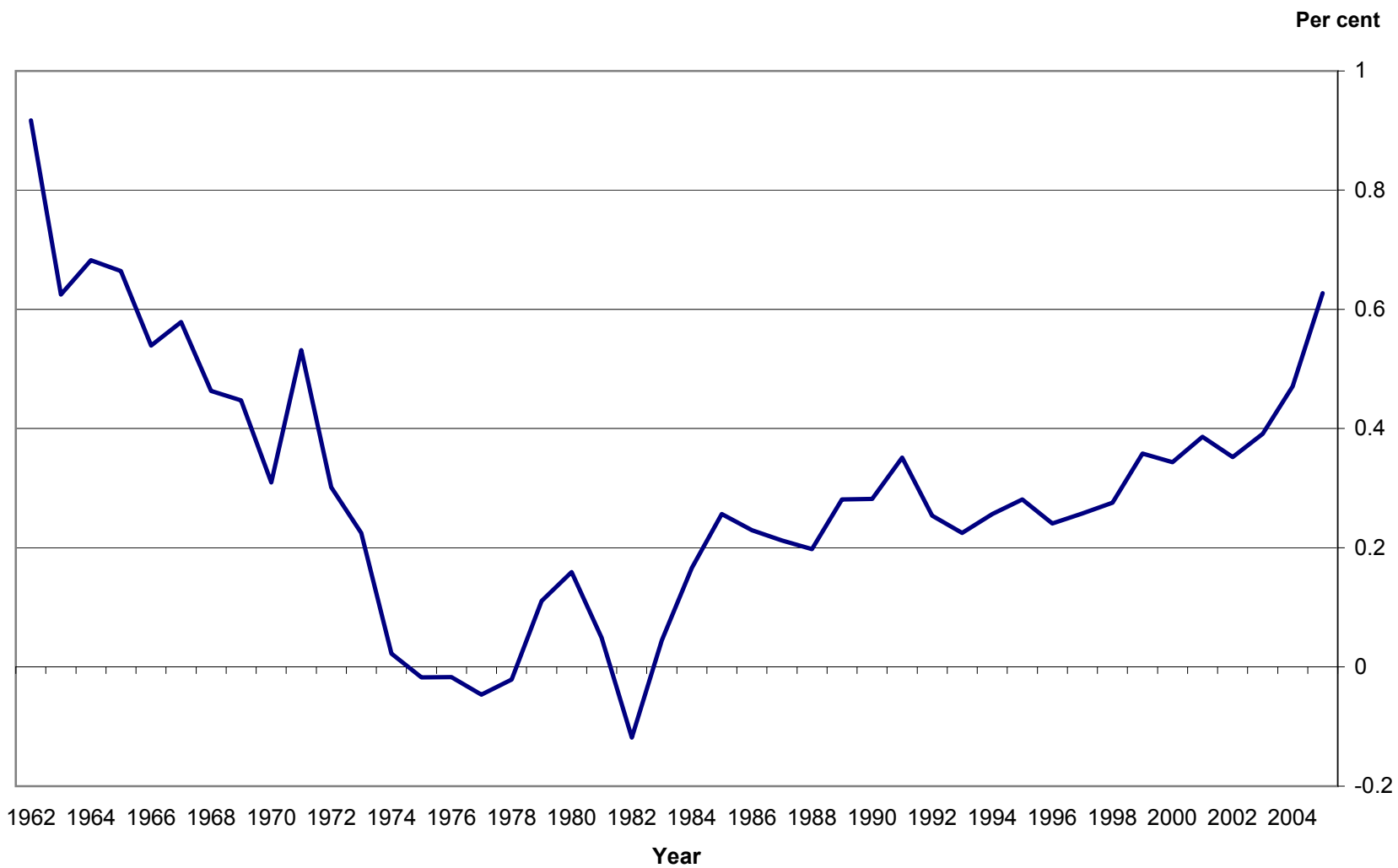
## BACKGROUND NOTES

1. Mid-2005 population estimates for Scotland were released by the General Register Office for Scotland (GROS) on 27 April 2006 and can be found at: [www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/statistics/library/recently-published-population-estimates/index.html](http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/statistics/library/recently-published-population-estimates/index.html)
2. Mid-2005 population estimates for Northern Ireland were released by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency on 24 July 2006 and can be found at: [www.nisra.gov.uk/statistics/financeandpersonnel/DMB/datavault.html](http://www.nisra.gov.uk/statistics/financeandpersonnel/DMB/datavault.html)
3. 'Other changes' at the UK level includes changes in the population due to changes in the number of armed forces (both foreign and home) and their dependants resident in the UK.
4. Tables containing figures for natural change and 'migration and other changes' components are included in the set of population tables published by each country.
5. The international migration estimates used are for the period mid-2004 to mid-2005. International migration estimates for the calendar year 2004 were published on 20 April 2006. The International Migration First Release for 2005 will be published in November 2006.
6. Total International Migration includes all civilian migration flows to and from all countries outside the UK. It is based mainly on data from the International Passenger Survey (IPS). It also includes adjustments for (i) those whose intended length of stay changes so that their migrant status changes; (ii) asylum seekers and their dependents not identified by the IPS; and (iii) flows between the UK and the Republic of Ireland.
7. Details of the policy governing the release of new data are available from the press office.
8. **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. © Crown copyright 2006.

Population of the United Kingdom by country, 1961-2005



Annual rate of increase in UK population, 1962-2005



## Population Estimates: Components of population change for United Kingdom 2001-2004 and 2004-2005

### Constituent countries; government office regions in England

Area	Components of change 2001-2004, (annual average figure)					Components of change 2004-2005					Mid-2005 Population
	Mid-2001 Population	Live births	Deaths	Net migration & other changes	Total change	Mid-2004 Population	Live births	Deaths	Net migration & other changes	Total change	
<b>UNITED KINGDOM</b>	<b>59113.5</b>	<b>684.0</b>	<b>603.1</b>	<b>159.3</b>	<b>240.3</b>	<b>59,834.3</b>	<b>717.5</b>	<b>590.6</b>	<b>248.3</b>	<b>375.1</b>	<b>60,209.5</b>
<b>GREAT BRITAIN</b>	<b>57424.2</b>	<b>662.4</b>	<b>588.6</b>	<b>159.5</b>	<b>233.3</b>	<b>58,124.0</b>	<b>695.0</b>	<b>576.2</b>	<b>242.3</b>	<b>361.1</b>	<b>58,485.0</b>
<b>ENGLAND AND WALES</b>	<b>52360.0</b>	<b>610.1</b>	<b>530.9</b>	<b>149.3</b>	<b>228.5</b>	<b>53,045.6</b>	<b>640.8</b>	<b>519.7</b>	<b>223.6</b>	<b>344.7</b>	<b>53,390.2</b>
<b>ENGLAND</b>	<b>49449.7</b>	<b>579.3</b>	<b>497.8</b>	<b>133.0</b>	<b>214.5</b>	<b>50,093.1</b>	<b>608.3</b>	<b>486.9</b>	<b>217.1</b>	<b>338.5</b>	<b>50,431.7</b>
North East	2540.1	26.7	28.3	3.3	1.7	2,545.1	27.8	27.9	13.3	13.2	2558.3
North West	6773.0	76.7	74.5	15.8	18.1	6,827.2	81.5	72.5	10.1	19.1	6846.2
Yorkshire and the Humber	4976.6	57.1	52.6	16.2	20.7	5,038.8	60.4	51.4	16.2	25.1	5063.9
East Midlands	4189.6	46.1	42.9	26.9	30.0	4,279.7	48.3	42.4	20.7	26.6	4306.3
West Midlands	5280.7	62.6	54.5	9.6	17.8	5,334.0	65.9	53.7	19.2	31.4	5365.4
East of England	5400.5	61.5	53.6	22.4	30.3	5,491.3	64.1	53.1	39.4	50.3	5541.6
London	7322.4	108.1	57.1	-15.6	35.4	7,428.6	114.6	54.2	28.7	89.1	7517.7
South East	8023.4	90.1	79.4	18.2	28.9	8,110.2	93.1	77.9	38.9	54.0	8164.2
South West	4943.4	50.3	54.8	36.1	31.6	5,038.2	52.6	53.7	30.6	29.6	5067.8
<b>WALES</b>	<b>2910.2</b>	<b>30.9</b>	<b>33.1</b>	<b>16.3</b>	<b>14.1</b>	<b>2,952.5</b>	<b>32.5</b>	<b>32.8</b>	<b>6.4</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>2958.6</b>
<b>SCOTLAND</b>	<b>5064.2</b>	<b>52.2</b>	<b>57.7</b>	<b>10.3</b>	<b>4.7</b>	<b>5,078.4</b>	<b>54.3</b>	<b>56.5</b>	<b>18.7</b>	<b>16.4</b>	<b>5094.8</b>
<b>NORTHERN IRELAND</b>	<b>1689</b>	<b>21.7</b>	<b>14.4</b>	<b>-0.2</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>1,710.3</b>	<b>22.4</b>	<b>14.4</b>	<b>6.0</b>	<b>14.1</b>	<b>1,724</b>

Sources: Office for National Statistics, General Register Office for Scotland, Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency.

#### Notes:

1. Net migration and other changes includes changes in the population due to international migration and changes in the number of armed forces (both foreign and home) and their dependants resident in the UK.
2. Figures may not add due to rounding

**Total International Migration<sup>1</sup>:  
Citizenship, 2003-04 and 2004-05**

**United Kingdom**  
*thousands*

	All citizenships	British	Non-British	European Union <sup>2,3</sup> 25	European Union <sup>2</sup> 15	European Union A10 <sup>4</sup>	Commonwealth			Other foreign <sup>6</sup>
							All	Old	New <sup>5</sup>	
<b>Inflow</b>										
2003-04	528.4	93.1	435.3	79.6	64.1	21.9	197	72.1	124.8	158.7
2004-05 <sup>7</sup>	587.7	86.5	501.3	131.4	52.7	78.7	210.5	75.8	134.7	159.4
<b>Outflow</b>										
2003-04	361.2	200.9	160.2	40.7	37.4	12.2	58	40	18.1	61.5
2004-05 <sup>7</sup>	353.1	200.6	152.5	42.8	38.1	4.4	61	37.2	23.8	48.7
<b>Balance</b>										
2003-04	+167.2	-107.8	+275.0	+38.8	+26.7	+9.7	+138.9	+32.2	+106.8	+97.3
2004-05 <sup>7</sup>	+234.7	-114.2	+348.8	+88.6	+14.6	+74.3	+149.5	+38.6	+110.9	+110.6

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1 Based mainly on data from the International Passenger Survey. Includes adjustments for (1) those whose intended length of stay changes so that their migrant status changes; (2) asylum seekers and their dependants not identified by the IPS; and (3) flows between the UK and the Republic of Ireland.

2 European Union 15 consists of Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, the Irish Republic, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and Sweden. European Union 25 consists of EU15 plus the 10 accession countries. European Union A2 consists of Malta and Cyprus. European Union A8 consists of the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia. Any longer term assessment of the impact of EU enlargement on UK migration will need to take into account that any subsequent impact of the 10 accession countries on migration outflows will not feed through until future years. These countries are included in the EU25 definition for the whole of 2004, irrespective of whether migration occurred before or after accession on 1 May.

3 The EU25 estimate for 2003-04 comprises EU15 for the second half of 2003, EU25 for the first half of 2004.

4 The A10 estimates for the second half of 2003 are also included in the New Commonwealth and Other Foreign columns.

5 For 2004 onwards, the New Commonwealth excludes Malta and Cyprus, these are included for the second half of 2003.

6 For 2004 onwards, Other foreign excludes the eight Central and Eastern European member states that joined the EU in May 2004. These are included for the second half of 2003.

7 The 2004-05 migration estimates include provisional data for the first half of 2005.