

Migration Statistics User Forum (16th September)

Note of break out session: What users would like from Home Office statistical releases on migration.

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This session comprised a broad discussion of participant's experiences of using Home Office Migration Statistics and suggested areas for improvement. The session was attended by a relatively small group of users but nevertheless raised some important points.

Broad areas of discussion

Transparency data and quarterly Immigration Statistics

Management information on Border Force, UK Visas and Immigration and Immigration Enforcement performance and is released as part of the Open Data strategy as [Migration Transparency data](#). There was some discussion of the desirability of Transparency data being more closely integrated with the quarterly National Statistics release, with similar presentation of trends and commentary to help users interpret the data being presented.

The change from PDF to the open ODS format was made to meet open data commitments and other changes are being considered. Another important step is to better communicate the existence of these statistics to users, including improving the accessibility of the publication.

The quarterly Immigration Statistics release tells a story and there is a useful time series. For example, the number of asylum applications appears to be high, but is relatively low compared with figures from the mid-2000s. However, one of the main drawbacks of the Transparency data was that there is currently no time series associated with it.

Home Office Migration Statistics consultation

Home Office Migration Statistics are considering a user consultation – views on the current publication and future publication plans would be very welcome, as well as views on making Transparency data more accessible.

The asylum statistics tables were discussed and users were asked if they felt these were still relevant. In particular, the monthly asylum figures are published by both Eurostat and the Home Office and this gave rise to some delays. The group did not have any strong views on this issue.

There was evidence that users were keen to get hold of exit checks data, but were cautioned that monitoring at the border in this way won't in itself provide a direct estimate of net migration. There was still work to be done considering what part of the exit checks data would be published once data became more complete.

FNOs and removals/voluntary departures

The discussion moved on to taking Foreign National Offenders out of the non-asylum removals figures. However, it was recognised that this would then make the numbers in this group very low. Figures on time served by FNOs and the numbers of those released into the community are available in the Immigration Enforcement Transparency data.

There was also interest in figures on removals back to 1997, as they appear in a Migration Observatory report. Immigration Statistics figures back to 1992 are available [here](#) – scroll to bottom of page.

Confirmed voluntary departures figures (i.e. generated as a result of data matching) are produced using Semaphore (previously termed eBorders) and these figures are set to rise as exit checks become more comprehensive. The Migrant Journey reports gave migration figures based on a cohort of migrants over 5 years.

Impact of Immigration Act 2014 on statistics

The Immigration Act 2014 is unlikely to directly affect the reporting of Immigration Statistics, but there will need to be thought as to how figures have been influenced by changes under the Act..

Archived statistics

Archived Home Office research and statistics web pages are available [here](#) and [here](#).