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scoping study  
summary paper

# Work on migration: future directions

A summary for the round table at  
Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation UK

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## 1. Introduction

The Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation has commissioned MigrationWork CIC to provide advice and scoping on migration, to inform their grants programmes in the UK. This brief paper summarises our conclusions so far. It is written to inform the round table on 29th June 2010, which aims to deepen and broaden our understanding of two themes emerging from the project to date, both potentially of interest but needing further exploration.

We emphasise that the paper is very much work in progress. Attached at Appendix 1 is a short review of the statistical evidence, carried out for the project by MigrationWork team member Marian Mackintosh, which participants may find it useful.

## 2. Drivers of migration - global and UK

Key changes which can induce or reduce international mobility, or shape its composition, work at these levels:

- Economic and environmental
- International political/security
- Development in countries of origin
- Cultural
- Policy and regulation

### Economic and environmental

Complex changes now under way in the world economy clearly have major implications for migration - but there is little agreement about these impacts. The **economic recession**, for example, may increase movements as disparities between economies emerge, but may also reduce mobility as people “hunker down” rather than take the risk of moving. Within the UK, most predict a slowing of migration into the UK from abroad (and the return of some migrants) following the economic downturn, but return migration of UK nationals could rise as they find survival in other countries more difficult.

**Climate change** produces similarly contradictory judgements. Academics suggest generally that “eco-migration” has to be seen as part of wider trends in migration - often indistinguishable from economic migration or seeking asylum, since climate change is likely to lead to economic and political instability. Most however agree that, like other economic and forced migration, “eco-migration” will take place largely within the areas affected.

Economic and environmental drivers, are however also linked in complex ways. Dorling, who links this to work on “peak population” (see below), posits that high growth increases global inequalities which increases migratory pressures, both economic and forced (by resource wars). But degradation and inequality associated with high growth could arguably encourage emigration of richer citizens.

An alternative scenario would be that measures to mitigate climate change move ‘developed’ economies towards low growth, reducing inequalities and pressures to emigrate. Indeed, such trends could be strengthened for the UK by the longer-term impact of severe recession and long-term fiscal retrenchment, low growth and decline in its economic position relative to other countries that could become major destinations for migrants, including the emerging BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India, China) nations.

## International political/security

The general reduction in the numbers seeking asylum in Europe have been attributed both to international developments (particularly in Iraq and Afghanistan, but also even in Somalia) and to the success of more restrictive immigration policies and practices. No-one in the field suggests that wars or repressive regimes will stop, and there are mixed views on how effective further restrictions on asylum may be. While recent experience suggests they may curb asylum applications, this may simply mean - if pressures to flee danger are intense - that more refugees appear as irregular migrants in European countries.

## Developments in countries of origin

Apart from the economic and environmental changes reviewed above, population developments worldwide are significant both as drivers themselves and also indicators of other drivers and trends. The UN predicts that the world population will peak at 2050 and then start to decline for the first time since the mediaeval era. European fertility probably peaked a century ago: this is essentially related to the availability of contraception and the empowerment of women. This has led to below-replacement fertility and consequent ageing of the European population with the young concentrated in the global South.

The prediction of 'peak population' points to an important global trend: the impact on migration patterns of greater economic and social independence for women, together with widely-available contraception. China and India are good examples. The emergence of women as primary migrants, the change in gender relations, the consequent global care chains, the greater "value" of young and healthy potential migrants may all become or remain drivers in migration over the next decades.

Return and circular migration may also contribute to the weakening of family links as family members are "left behind", while creating yet more complex diasporas. (An interesting example of this is the recent much reported European Court of Justice case which involved Ms. Ibrahim, the Somali ex-wife of a Danish national who had moved to the UK under EU rules with her children. The Court agreed that they had a right to reside in the UK for the children to complete their education)

## Culture

Migration affects and is affected by culture, and is sometimes seen as one of the vectors or agents of a globalisation process often blamed for the

homogenisation of culture. The linkages created by diaspora, however, are also sometimes credited with increasing awareness worldwide of other cultures. Migrants' own relationships to the cultures from which they come take on new complexity as they settle and create new generations. A study of South Asian women illustrated the way subjective issues like identity and belonging may become more salient or difficult as migrant communities converge with the majority population on housing and other material dimensions. These subjective issues may however be hard to separate from wider issues of racism and Islamophobia.

An important driver of UK policy has been the fear of tensions arising within communities dealing with the unprecedented high levels of migration. Perceived cultural differences or misunderstanding may, it is argued, contribute to them. Cause and effect have of course often been confused: poorer areas tend to be where poorer migrants arrive, and the lack of resources gets blamed on people who are simply a further indicator of deprivation. A good example was Margaret Hodge's 2007 claim that migrants had "jumped the queue" for council accommodation in Barking and Dagenham, later found to refer simply to migrant households paying extortionate rents for ex-council flats that had been sold off, creating the lengthy queues. Certainly, tensions have been identified, but may result as much from the age and gender mix of some new migrant cohorts - for instance, the arrival of many young men with no local family ties - as from any cultural difference.

Within the UK there is a growing debate about what culture means, especially as increasing ethnic diversity meets other types of affiliation (for example to religion, sexual orientation or place) and it becomes clear that most people "belong" to several communities. This has pointed up how culturally-specific many interventions have become, aimed at identified minorities rather than at addressing disadvantage or exclusion more generally. The UK, unlike some other European countries, has tended to focus on training service providers about specific "cultures" or communities, rather than developing generic skills in responding flexibly to new users. This becomes less viable as the number of "new cultures rises, and with it the number of cultures potentially represented by one individual. Meanwhile there are real concerns that service providers' limited response to cultural differences may be impeding the settlement of some migrants or even putting them at risk, for example in relation to child protection and domestic violence.

## Policy and regulation

Europe has seen a sustained drive towards increasingly restrictive rules on immigration, making the business of immigration more complex and tending to increase the likelihood of irregularity. EU institutions have, however, also shown some commitment to promoting the integration of both European and third country migrants, backed by substantial funding. There is also an interest in relations with countries of origin, which encompasses both the concern with return and dealing better with the links between migration and development.

An interesting UK development of interest is the new legislative initiative on “good relations”, directly relevant to the issues of cultural understanding raised above. The Equality and Human Rights Commission was given the responsibility to *‘build mutual respect between groups based on understanding and valuing of diversity, and on shared respect for equality and human rights’* in 2006 and the Equalities Act will impose such a duty on all public authorities in the UK. The duty, derived from a similar one in Northern Ireland, is presented as moving on from previous duties that focus specifically on race, nationality and religion (equalities, for example, and community cohesion) to encompass newer ideas about how people who may be part of many communities can live well and respectfully together.

### 3. Trends in the UK

The drivers described above have resulted in changes within the UK that have, in turn, produced responses in patterns of migration. The following trends are likely to emerge over the next five years: the statistical appendix gives more detail on some of these trends.

#### Scale

UK net migration has averaged between 150,000 and 200,000 per year in the last decade, with a net loss of UK citizens and a net gain of non-UK citizens. Immigration is difficult to predict because it depends heavily on government policy and economic factors. A 2005 analysis showed that the UK was gaining in population due to both net immigration and natural increase (births less deaths). In this it resembled 15 other EU member states and some neighbouring countries including Norway, Switzerland and Turkey.

Government population predictions, however, are questioned sharply by some academics. Projections are based on levels of immigration for preceding years which recently have been relatively high, seeming to show the UK locked into rapid population growth. The risk of exaggerating the impact of immigration is compounded by the fact that population estimates between Censuses consistently underestimate emigration.

Migrants are increasingly widespread around the UK, with 72% of them in 2008 outside London. Half of all migrants in that year were aged 25 to 44. Increasing “churn” (that is the gross numbers of people leaving and arriving in an area) and the greater “spread” of migrants pose real challenges for many communities.

#### Reasons for migration and composition

**Work** remains the most reported reason for immigration (38%) and also for emigration. Study accounts for 30% of immigrant arrivals and family migration for 17% (2008 data). Europe is the UK's largest source of immigrants, but more European migrants leave the UK (including, recently, those from eastern European accession countries) and fewer New Commonwealth migrants leave.

**Asylum applications** have fallen from their high in the first years of the last decade, and now are at 5 – 6,000 per quarter, of whom 40% are from Africa. There is an average of one dependant for every five main applicants. Within Europe, the UK receives 13% of all asylum applications, but is 13th in terms of numbers per head of population, and has been in this median position for some time.

**Family migration** remains significant, especially when it is borne in mind that the figures for work and asylum migration also include many dependants and that we have no reliable national data on European family migration. Hard information on this form of migration is, however, in short supply and policy rarely focuses on it except as an immediate response to perceived problems: for instance raising the marriage age, rules on recourse to public funds, floating the idea that spouses of work migrants be barred from working, language tests for prospective spouses. The creation of stratified family rights, including restrictions on access to services like childcare subsidies and ESOL tends to affect women more than men, and can also contribute to abuses such as trafficking within families and domestic violence.

## **Settlement and conditions of life in the UK**

The particular history of migration into the UK has spread a huge range of migrants across the country, leaving parts of which are now home to the most diverse populations in Europe. While government policies (such as dispersal of asylum seekers) have been important in creating some of these mixes, they have also often been the product of chance, choice or an untrammelled market. For example, Fijians arrive in Wiltshire through the armed forces; 200 Polish agency workers find themselves “dumped” in Accrington; 42 nationalities work in an ice cream factory in north Yorkshire.

Stratification also affects migrants, and their ability to settle or engage. Stringent conditions imposed on work migrants, including those from EU accession countries, create suspicion when they exercise rights and an unwillingness to have contact with “the authorities”. This is exacerbated for those who become irregular migrants (which can sometimes be an incremental, almost unconscious process). Families and communities of such migrants are also affected, even if they themselves have permission to be in the UK.

“The places that lost out most in recent years in terms of wealth, health, population influx and now (un)employment were those in the north and in inner cities,” as Dorling points out, and are the areas where poorer new arrivals, including migrants, are now concentrated. It has, as noted above, been easy to portray migrants as in some way causing the stresses in these areas rather than being symptomatic of them. Shared problems can of course bring people together to act in joint interest on these local issues, but there are real difficulties in making this happen. New migrants may not want to stay in the UK for the long term; or may have been placed in areas where they have no intention of settling; or may anyway not be allowed to consider

a long term stay in the UK. Besides, many are under pressure to work long hours. Developing cultural understanding between even the most excluded migrants and their communities is possible, as has been shown by Music in Detention, but it presents challenges. They are explored further below.

## Policy responses

The **UK government** has begun to improve the coordination of its own work on migration, after a long period when national policy seemed to be driven mainly by political and media pressures with little regard for effects on the lives of local communities. The following are major examples:

A stated commitment to managed migration - using a points-based system supposedly geared to the UK's economic needs - has been presented as a response to concern over migration among settled populations, as has the coalition government's pledge to cap work based migration from outside the EU.

The establishment of Regional Migration Partnerships, involving local service providers, the voluntary sector and others, has allowed some areas to develop a strategic and coordinated approach to migration. However this has not been the case in all, and there is continuing concern at the lack of reliable planning information. Some partnerships also run local programmes of asylum support and accommodation or services to support and integrate migrants (such as those funded by the EU or the UK Migration Impact Fund whose future is now in question).

Legislation continues to be passed at a rapid rate, with an Immigration Bill that fell before the election promising a major step towards simplification of the law - though not covering important areas such as welfare and benefits. Minor differences, for example over quotas for work migrants, do not conceal wide cross-party agreement on the fundamentals of immigration policy. Emerging differences on Europe (as much between coalition partners as between government and opposition) may however extend into policy approaches to free movement.

As noted above, the **EHRC** has moved from working on individual equalities strands within which migrants got clumsily subsumed into race, to good relations, which clearly has wide implications for the integration of migrants.

**Local government**, however, is where many of these issues get played out. Many authorities have been faced with a pace of change they find alarming and few resources with which to respond. Local communities have proved

surprisingly resilient and local councils often inventive, but generally they feel uninformed and ill equipped. One informant asked “how can we develop knowledge and practice that equips us to deal with the whole process of change, rather than with particular groups (or crises)?”. He emphasised the need, not only to improve the data available to councils but also to develop the links and “antennae” which can help them to triangulate it with what is happening in communities, schools, colleges, workplaces and other shared spaces. The question posed now is the priority to be given to this at a time of extensive cuts.

**Academics and researchers** have also highlighted both the limitations in UK migration data, and the lack of capacity to analyse available data regularly and consistently. However the impending launch of a comprehensive resource (Migration Observatory) at Oxford University should go some way to providing such accessible analysis.

Researchers are also beginning to respond to calls for work on more complex identities, and to move from the “bipolar” understanding of migration (just its beginning and end) to look at it as a dynamic and continuing process, that may include return. Recent EU programmes have developed more knowledge about how gender and family issues intersect with migration across Europe. Examples are the International Centre for Migration Policy Development comparative programme on Civic Stratification, Gender and Family Migration Policies in Europe, and the GEMMA (Gender and Migration) programme. This has, in turn, highlighted again the way peoples’ lived experience transcends bureaucratic categories. The JRF Immigration and Inclusion programme picked up this theme, commissioning work on the rhythms and realities of lives in areas of new migration.

**Policy analysts** continue to grapple with the problem of asylum and the associated support system (see, for example, the Centre for Social Justice), the comparative merits of different European approaches to integration and related areas, the public debate about the allocation of social housing and the need for a variety of new immigration paradigms. These range from the overtly restrictionist and sometimes alarmist approach of Migration Watch, together with the Balanced Migration group in Parliament, through analysis of the recession and consequent needs, on to some attempts to develop new migration agendas.

**Third sector organisations** deal with migration in many contexts, but few take national public stances on it. HACT, the Housing Action Charitable Trust convenes a national Housing and Migration Network supported by the

JRF and Metropolitan Housing Trust, which is in the early stages of its work but includes people from all housing sectors, such as Homeless Link which has been very active in looking for solutions to the problems of homeless accession state nationals. The major national agencies, however, have a refugee focus (Refugee Council, Refugee Action and their Scottish and Welsh counterparts), although some, like the Evelyn Oldfield Unit have added migrants to their brief.

There is a similar profile in the **community sector**. Awareness of the “refugee community sector” is not matched by that accorded to migrants, although many organisations catering for migrants more broadly have flourished for some time and more are being set up. The Migrants Rights Network was set up to coordinate the activities of migrant organisations and help give them a national voice. London Citizens has been remarkably successful in mobilising some migrant communities, specifically on campaigns for regularisation and for a London Living Wage. It is acknowledged, however, that many new migrants have not been keen to become organised in traditional community groups, and are more likely to identify with faith communities and even semi-commercial projects like websites and help bureaux.

## 4. Themes for further exploration

The MigrationWork team continue to research, interview and explore the field, but we have identified two areas where we want to go beyond individual interviews and literature searches, principally because

- there is less available research specifically on these areas;
- they tend to “cross over” between different fields; and
- we may learn more by applying insights from one area to another

The round table on 29th June has thus been built around these areas.

### **Transnationality, transience and belonging**

Today more than ever before, migrants’ lives span the cultures and the national space of both origin and destination countries – and often, of several countries in between. A range of actors, from the internet and cheap flights to increasingly restrictive immigration rules, both enable and require migrants in the 21st century to lead their lives **transnationally**.

Academic interest in this issue is well established. At the policy level, both UK Government and the EU have addressed aspects of transnationality in examining (for a mixture of policy motives) the relationship between migrant, country of origin and destination state. EU priorities for instance include work on migrant remittances, working with diaspora groups, and promoting circular migration.

Yet relatively little practical work has been done in the UK to explore what the fact of living ‘transnationally’ means for migrants, and to see how this profound change in global relationships can be developed to yield the fullest possible benefit for them and communities around them.

Meanwhile, with research beginning to look at transnationality, many practitioners and policy-makers have been more concerned with **transience** - the difficulty of planning for it, working with it, or even the scope for reducing it. Often at local level transience is seen as a problem on the assumption that it is equivalent to “not belonging” which is taken to mean a lack of commitment or involvement. This is compounded by the interaction between migration and deprivation within the UK, as noted above: many transient migrants (like other highly mobile groups) will be poor, moving in and out of areas that already face the loss of public space and institutions, increasing isolation, and decline of community organisations.

Looking beyond research categories and requirements of service provision, into the lives lived by migrants, we also must reflect on the effects of transience on younger migrants and children. This has been highlighted

recently by developments in European case law establishing that children of migrant workers should have the option of completing their education in one country. For them, issues of belonging are often very complex, involving the effects not only of movement but also of the mixing of cultures and backgrounds in families, schools and communities - overlaid by intergenerational relations which may often be difficult.

## **Role of cultural activities in changing minds on migration**

Cultural understanding has been part of the work of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation for many years, and other funders, including the statutory sector, have promoted a range of cultural activities, often as one-off events (Refugee Week, festivals, “international days” in schools and so on). While some are of the “show and tell” variety, others may be new things that would not have been created unless the different cultures had come together in the locality – whether art, music, or different ways of acting together to tackle local problems.

Cultural activity is too often seen as a ‘quick win’, on the assumption that it promotes migration as a positive but challenging experience for all involved, allowing us all to learn and feel we have gained something from migration. In practice however the effect of one-off activities is usually quite short term. Some promotions in the field of culture may even be counter-productive if they are perceived as “preaching”. Above all, work at this intercultural level cannot in itself be a substitute for action to address wider socio-economic inequality and tensions that may divide migrant and non-migrant.

Work in the area of culture is potentially a powerful tool in promoting good relations, provided it can be sustained and is complemented by broader activity on other aspects of community life. The new cultural forms that emerge from the best work are also a potent demonstration of how migration can help society to innovate and change for the better. For a funder, the question will be how to specify and develop work which can fulfill that potential.

## Appendix 1: Migration data and trends

This review of the statistical evidence on migration was commissioned as part of the scoping.

### **Q: What are the major migration trends in the UK over the past decade?**

Overall levels of migration (see Figures 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3)

More people enter the UK than leave each year. Between 2000 and 2005 long-term net migration, including asylum seekers, averaged about 150,000 each year. After that it rose to around 200,000 a year, but in the past two years it has fallen.

*Source: Migration stats 2008 Published 11/2009 National Statistics*

It is difficult to predict long term changes as these levels are so influenced by government policy.

There is a net loss of British citizens from the UK each year, whereas there is a net gain of non-British citizens.

*Migration Statistics Quarterly Report: November 2009*

### **Q: Why do people come?**

**Work** related reasons continued to be the most reported reason for migration in 2008 accounting for 38 per cent of immigrants and just over half of emigrants. *Source: Migration stats 2008 Published 11/2009 National Statistics*

Numbers applying for the Workers Registration Scheme have fallen significantly during 2009 – down by about a third on 2008 figures. This is mainly due to falls in applicants from Poland and to a lesser extent Slovakia.

*Source: Control of Immigration: quarterly statistical summary, UK July-Sept 2009*

Applications from Romanian and Bulgarian nationals for accession worker cards are also down, but the number of people entering as seasonal workers is stable or increasing.

*Source: Control of Immigration: quarterly statistical summary, UK July-Sept 2009*

Formal study was the next most common reason for immigrants – 30% of immigrants but only 5% of emigrants. In 2008 the percentage of immigrants arriving for formal study overtook those with a definite job to go to (25 per cent).

*Source: Migration stats 2008 Published 11/2009 National Statistics*

The period from July to September 2009 saw an increase in the number of student visas granted.

International Passenger Survey (IPS) estimates show that more than half of all migrants arriving for formal study were citizens of an Asian country.

Source: Migration stats 2008 Published 11/2009 National Statistics

Around one in six migrants came to accompany or join someone.

Source: Migration stats 2008 Published 11/2009 National Statistics

Figure 1.1: IPS long-term international migration estimates, UK, 2000–2009

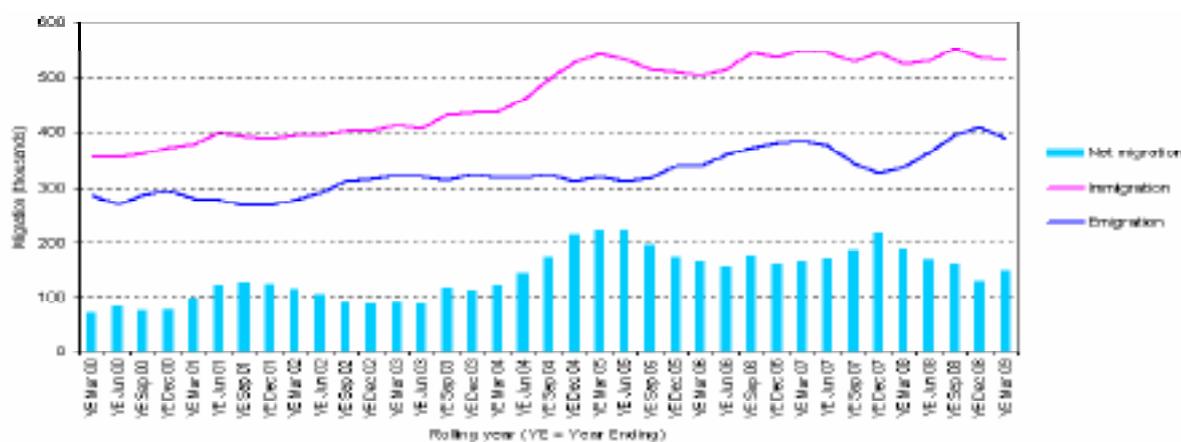


Figure 1.2: IPS long-term international migration estimates of British citizens, UK, 2000–2009

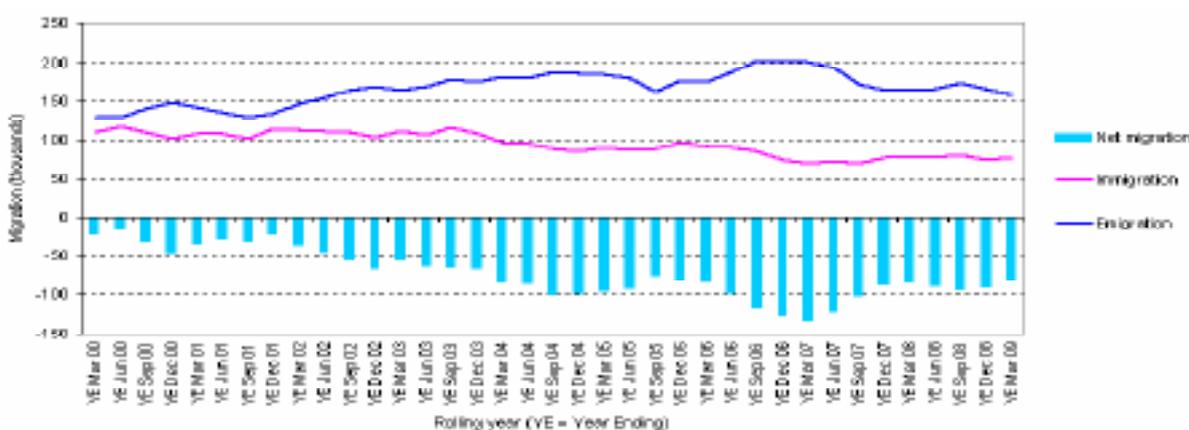
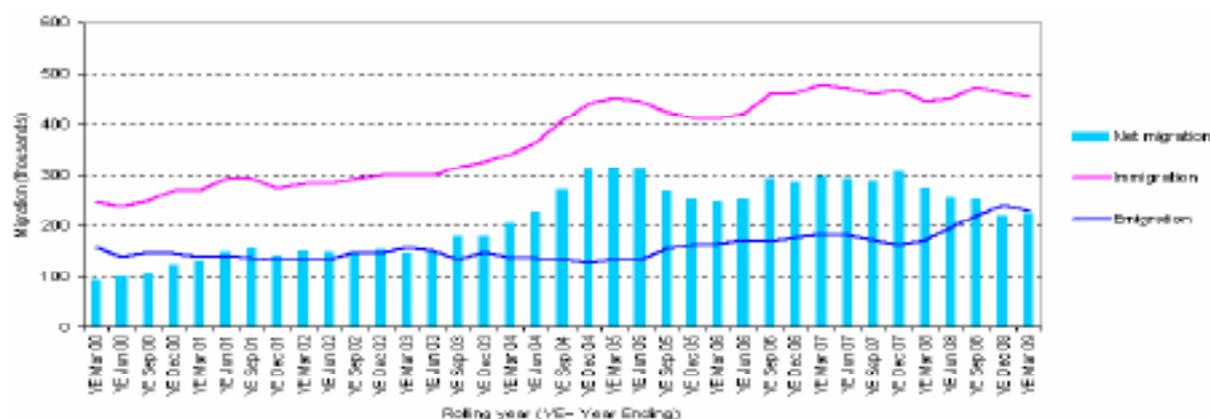


Figure 1.3 : IPS long-term international migration estimates of non-British citizens, UK, 2000–2009



1. ONS, *International Passenger Survey (IPS) estimates of long-term international migration Data for YE Mar 09 are provisional. There may be small differences when the final IPS estimates are published in November 2010*

2. All estimates now include migration between the UK and the Republic of Ireland and may differ from previously published estimates. Estimates for 2008 have been revised and are now based on final IPS data

**Asylum** applications between 2000 and 2004 were double those from 2005 onwards. In 2008, 40% of all applications, excluding dependants, in 2008 were from African nationals, 37% were nationals from Asia and Oceania, 19% were from Middle Eastern nationals, 3% were from European nationals and 2% were from the Americas nationals.

There is an average of one dependant for every five main applicants.

Asylum applications have been steady over past few years – between 5,000 and 6,000 each quarter (apart from high figure of 8,300 at beginning of 2009).

### Q: Where do people come from?

Migration from Europe is now the largest source of the UK's migrants, closely followed by the New and Old Commonwealth countries combined.

Source: *Migration stats 2008 Published 11/2009 National Statistics*

However, many European migrants leave each year meaning that net migration from Europe is lower than for the New Commonwealth where emigration levels are low. Just over half of those leaving were from A8

countries, 40 per cent from EU153 countries, with the remainder citizens of other EU27 countries.

Source: *Migration stats 2008 Published 11/2009 National Statistics*

In 2008, net migration of EU citizens was at its lowest since A8 accession. The main reason for this is the high level of A8 migrants leaving the UK.

Migration stats 2008 Published 11/2009 National Statistics

## Q: Where do people go to?

72% of migrants in 2008 had destinations in the UK other than London.

Migration stats 2008 Published 11/2009 National Statistics

## Age

International Passenger Survey (IPS) estimates showed that in 2008 half of all people entering the UK were aged 25-44 years

Source: *Migration stats 2008 Published 11/2009 National Statistics*

## Q: How has the recession influenced migration patterns?

Two recent studies have looked at the effect of the recession on migration. The first concludes that the recession is likely to lower net migration. The second concludes that net-migration will be more stable as fewer British people will leave and more will return to the UK from abroad.

A recent study by the Department for Communities and Local Government states that

*“The UK has been affected relatively severely by the recent global economic crisis. The analysis finds that by 2015, the recession could result in net migration to the UK being some 50,000 lower than in the no recession case. The number of migrants arriving in the UK from Accession 8 (A8) countries is likely to fall the most, although migrants from source countries such as India and the US are also expected to respond relatively quickly to changing economic conditions in their home countries compared to the UK. The empirical evidence suggests that migrants from other parts of the world will be less responsive to the changing economic climate.”*

Another study (On the move? Labour migration in times of recession. What can we learn from the past? By Janet Dobson, Alan Latham and John Salt) states:

*“immigration tends to fall when unemployment rises but only for a limited period, after which it picks up again often before an improvement in the country’s employment situation. Meanwhile, outflows of migrants also tend to fall after an*

*initial rise when those who always intended to return do so. Past recessions have seen increasing numbers of British citizens returning to the UK from abroad, with fewer leaving. As a result, total net immigration is likely to remain more stable than most people think over the course of the current economic downturn. These trends cast doubt on the validity of "buffer theory," which posits that migrants return home when the economy of a country contracts, thereby freeing up jobs for the non-immigrant population."*

## Immigration across Europe

John Salt has done an interesting analysis of how immigration affects the populations of European countries:

1. Population loss owing to both natural decrease and net emigration: Estonia, Georgia, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, Romania, Ukraine.
2. Population loss owing to natural decrease more than offsetting migration gain: Belarus, Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary, Serbia and Montenegro.
3. Population loss owing to net emigration offsetting natural increase: Armenia, Armenia, FYROM.
4. Population gain owing to both natural increase and net immigration: Andorra, Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Greece, Ireland, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, San Marino, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and the UK.
5. Population gain owing to natural increase more than offsetting migration loss: Albania, Azerbaijan, Iceland.
6. Population gain owing to net immigration more than offsetting natural decrease: Czech Republic, Germany, Italy, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia.

*Source: (Salt, J. 2005 Current Trends in International Migration in Europe. Council of Europe)*

## Asylum in Europe

Including dependants, asylum applications to countries within the EU27 increased by 6 per cent in 2008 from 228,200 to 241,300. France received more asylum applications than any other European Union country in 2008 (15 per cent of the total EU27) followed by the UK (13 per cent of the total EU27). Italy was 3rd highest (13 per cent of the total EU27). However, when the relative size of domestic populations is taken into account, the UK ranks 13th amongst European Union countries in terms of asylum seekers per head of population. Countries heading this list are Malta, Norway, Sweden and Cyprus.

Early figures for 2009 show similar overall levels of asylum applications in Europe for 2009 as 2008.

*Marian Mackintosh  
Feb 2010*