



# Statistical News Release: Immigration Statistics

**30 November 2017**

*Immigration Statistics, July to September 2017*

Home Office's *Immigration Statistics July to September 2017* release provides the latest figures on those subject to immigration control. All data below relate to the year ending September 2017 and all comparisons are with year ending September 2016, unless stated otherwise.

The Immigration Statistics release provides information on Home Office's operation of immigration control and related processes, including the work of UK Border Force, UK Visas and Immigration, and Immigration Enforcement. Official statistics on long-term immigration, emigration and net migration are published separately by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) at

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration>

Figures on performance against service standards and processing times are published separately at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/migration-transparency-data>

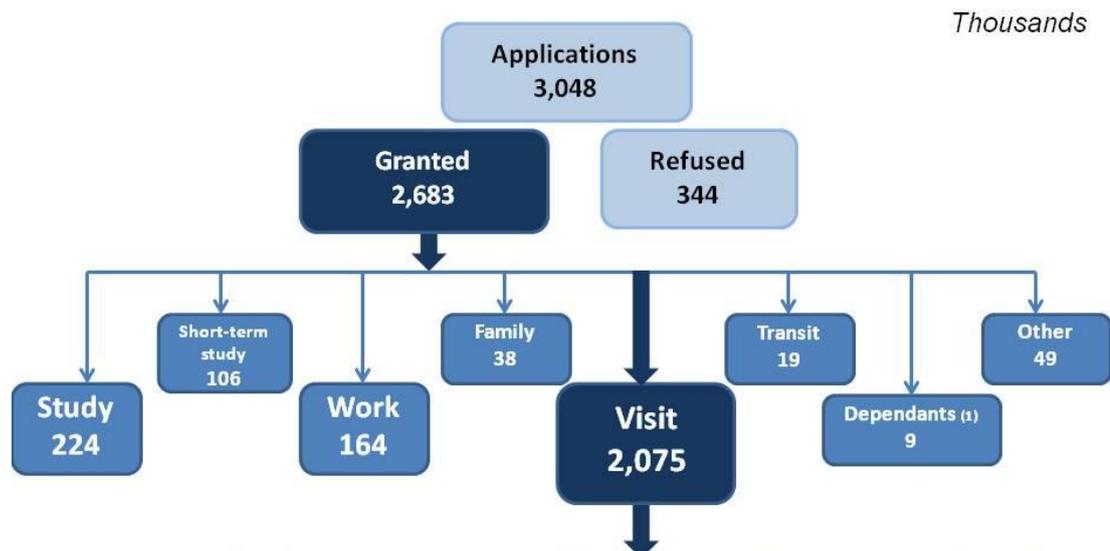
Home Office's migration research is published at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/migration-research-and-analysis>

## Summary of latest statistics

### How many people come to the UK each year?

There were 134.3 million passenger arrivals in the year ending September 2017, including returning UK residents – a record number and an increase of 6.2 million compared to the year ending September 2016. This increase was divided between 3.5 million (+3% to 115.8 million) more arrivals by British, other European Economic Area (EEA) and Swiss nationals and 2.7 million by non-EEA nationals (+17% to 18.5 million). These numbers represent the number of occasions when a person entered the UK, not the number of distinct individuals.

## Visas, year ending September 2017, thousands



Top 5 visitor visa nationalities (thousands) and proportion of total

China	543	26%	} Top 2 nationalities account for 47% of all visit visas
India	428	21%	
Russia	125	6%	
Saudi Arabia	103	5%	
Turkey	93	4%	
Other	783	38%	

### Chart notes

Source: Home Office, *Immigration Statistics* July to September 2017 Visas table vi 01 q and Visas table vi 06 q o.

## Why do people come to the UK?

### Visit

In 2016, the number of non-EEA visitor arrivals increased by 0.7 million (7%) to 10.1 million. Over a quarter (26%) of all non-EEA visitor arrivals were United States (US) nationals.

Many nationalities, including US nationals, do not normally require a visa to visit the UK. Consequently the number of Visitor visas granted is much lower than the total number of arrivals. Over 2.6 million visas were granted in the year ending September 2017 and, of these, over 2 million (77%) were to visit.

There were 199,777 (11%) more Visitor visas granted in the year ending September 2017. There were notable increases in Visitor visas granted to Chinese nationals, up by 92,034 (20%) to 542,875 (excluding Hong Kong), and Indian nationals, up 42,123 (11%) to 427,737, and together these two nationalities accounted for almost half (47%) of all visit visas granted.

### Work

There were 54,697 Tier 2 Skilled work-sponsored visa applications in the year ending September 2017, lower than year ending September 2016 (56,551). This included a 24% increase (1,176 more visas) in the Human health and social work activities sector, which is likely to reflect the addition of nurses to the government's shortage occupation list in November 2015. The largest fall was in applications for the Information and Communication sector (-1,509; -6%).

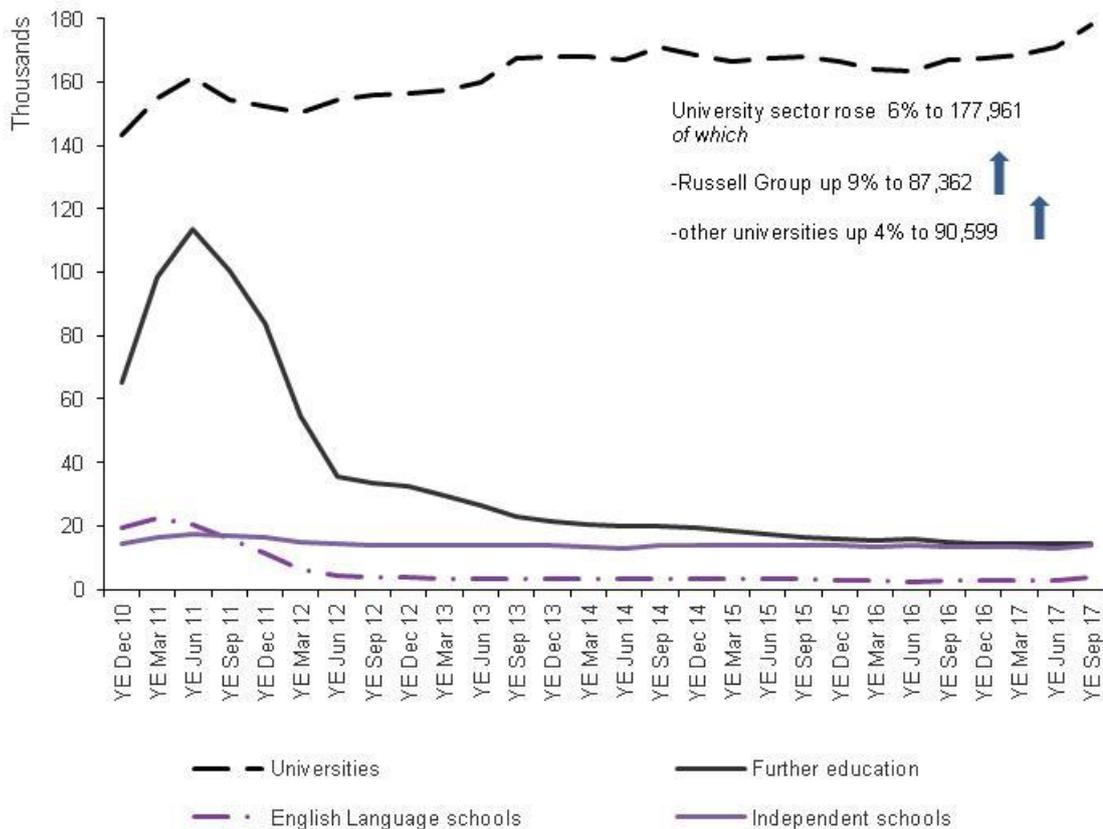
Including dependants, there were 93,700 Tier 2 Skilled work visas granted in the year ending September 2017, a similar level to the previous year (93,913) and 41,652 Tier 5 Youth mobility and temporary visas granted, down 346 (1%).

## Study

Aside from visitors, the most common visa granted was for study (8% of all visas granted, and 37% of non-visit visas). In the year ending September 2017, there were 224,392 study-related visas granted (excluding the Short-term student category formerly known as Student visitors), an increase of 8% (16,942).

Over the same period, the number of University-sponsored study visa applications (main applicants) rose 6% to 177,961. Within the University sector there was a 9% increase for Russell Group universities to 87,362. There were increases for the Independent school (3% to 13,787) and English Language school (34% to 3,755) sectors; however, the Further education sector fell (-4% to 14,278). Most of the fall in the Further education sector's sponsored visa applications since the peak in mid-2011 was accounted for by licences which have since been revoked.

## Study-related sponsored visa applications by sector



### Chart notes

Source: Home Office, Immigration Statistics July to September 2017, Sponsorship table cs 09 q.

'Universities' relate to UK-based higher education institutions.

'Further education' relates to tertiary, further education or other colleges.

In the year ending June 2017, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) estimates that there were 95,000 non-EU long-term immigrants coming to study and who had an intention to remain a year or more, a 16% fall (-18,000), but this is not statistically significant. The comparable number of study visas issued rose by 5% to 143,735.

## Family reasons

The combined total number of family-related visas granted, including European Economic Area (EEA) Family permits granted to non-EEA nationals, and visas granted to dependants of other visa holders (excluding visitors) fell by 5,669 (4%) to 130,054 in the year ending September 2017.

## How many people do we grant asylum or protection to?

In the year ending September 2017, there were 15,618 grants of asylum, alternative forms of protection and resettlement, compared with 15,433 in the previous year. This comprised of:

- 8,147 grants of asylum to main applicants and dependants (down 9%)

- 1,123 grants of alternative form of protection to main applicants and their dependants (down 29%)
- 6,348 people provided with protection and support under a resettlement scheme (up 30%)

The number of asylum applications in the UK from main applicants decreased by 21% to 26,617 in the year ending September 2017.

There were 924 grants of asylum, or an alternative form of protection, to Syrian nationals (including dependants) at initial decision in the year ending September 2017.

An additional 4,980 Syrian nationals were granted humanitarian protection under the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme (VPRS). Since this scheme began in 2014, a total of 9,394 people have been resettled.

## How many people continue their stay in the UK?

There were 220,295 decisions on applications to change or extend an existing visa in the year ending September 2017, 19,158 or 8% fewer decisions than the previous year. Of the 220,295 decisions, 92% were grants (201,787) and 8% (18,508) were refusals.

There were 60,106 people granted permission to stay permanently in the year ending September 2017, 5% or 2,969 fewer than the previous year. The number of grants is low relative to the peak in the year ending September 2010 (241,586).

In the year ending September 2017, 168,198 documents certifying permanent residence and permanent residence cards were issued to EEA nationals and non-EEA family members. This is the highest recorded annual figure and more than 4 times the figure for the previous 12 months (37,555).

Total applications for British citizenship fell by 4,893 (3%) to 137,286 in the year to September 2017 compared to the previous year, and 41% (94,976) lower than the peak in 2013 (232,262). Applications made by non-European Union (EU) nationals fell by 21,983 to 104,430, and applications by EU nationals more than doubled (+108%) to 32,856.

## How many people are detained or returned?

An individual may be held and remain in immigration detention for a variety of reasons, including reasons within and outside the control of the Home Office. In addition, the Home Office seeks to return people who do not have any legal right to stay in the UK.

In the year ending September 2017, 27,565 people entered detention (of which 813 entered through prisons). This was a decrease of 7% compared with the previous year (29,758).

Over the same period, there was an 8% decrease in those leaving detention (from 30,210 to 27,809).

As at the end of September 2017, excluding those in prison, there were 3,125 people in detention, a 4% increase on the number recorded at the end of September 2016 (2,998). A further 330 detainees were held in prisons.

The proportion of detainees being returned or voluntarily departing the UK on leaving detention increased from 46% in year ending September 2016 to 48% in the year ending September 2017.

The total number of enforced returns from the UK, including those not directly from detention, decreased by 1% to 12,560 in the year ending September 2017 compared with 12,707 in the previous year. This includes 10,397 enforced removals and 2,163 other returns from detention. In the same period, there were 20,691 voluntary returns (excluding returns from detention).

Of the 12,560 enforced returns in year ending September 2017, there were 2,373 enforced returns of people who had previously sought asylum, down 15% from the previous year (2,792).

In the year ending September 2017, provisional data show that 5,990 Foreign National Offenders (FNOs) were returned compared to 6,134 in the previous year. This number reached a peak of 6,346 in the year ending March 2017.

# Notes to editors

1. *Immigration Statistics, July to August 2017* is available on Gov.UK:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/home-office/series/immigration-statistics-quarterly-release>.
  2. This release is published as part of a coordinated release of migration products. These related products are also published today:  
*Office for National Statistics (ONS) Migration Statistics Quarterly Report (Jointly with Home Office and Department for Work and Pensions)*
  3. For **all press enquiries regarding the Home Office *Immigration Statistics* release**, please contact the Home Office Press Office who will liaise with the Home Office Migration Statistics team.  
Newsdesk: **020 7035 3535**  
Please note that the press office deals with enquiries from the media only. Members of the public should phone Public Enquiries 020 7035 4848, or email to [MigrationStatsEnquiries@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:MigrationStatsEnquiries@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk)
- Press enquiries regarding ONS** publications should be directed to the ONS Press Office.
4. The Home Office Responsible Statistician is Chris Kershaw.