

# How can we count immigration and integration?

## Summary

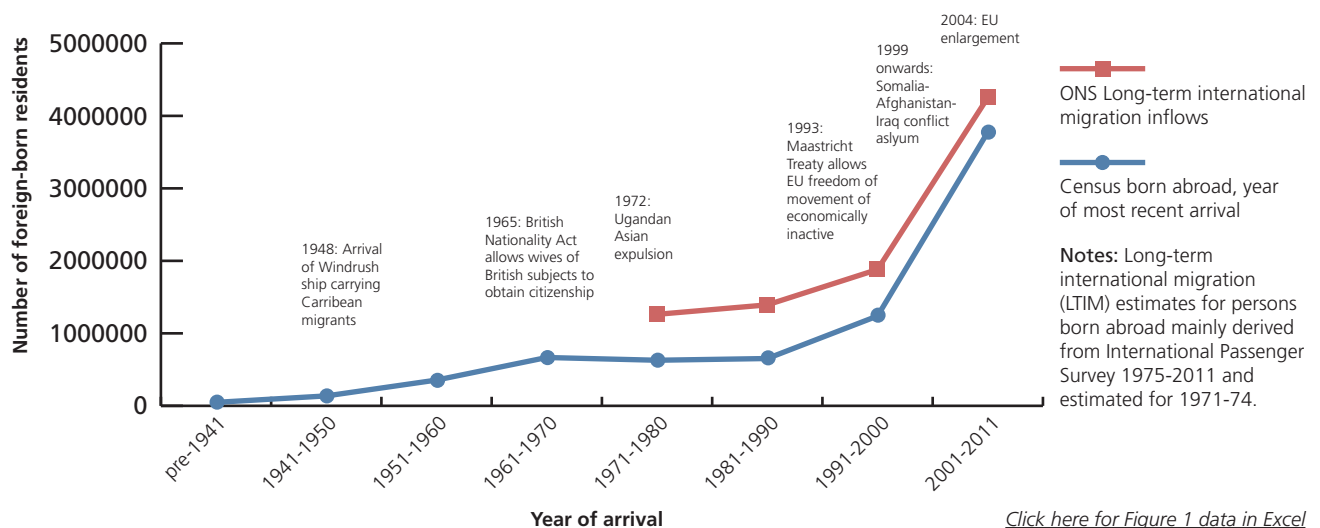
- Simply being born abroad is an unclear measure of the level of assistance required by immigrants and their offspring to integrate into the communities where they settle.
- The process of integration of immigrants is better measured directly using data available in the census for the first time in 2011. This includes national identity, passports held, main language spoken and English language proficiency.
- 13% of the population are foreign-born; 20% have an ethnic identity other than white British, 9% have a non-British national identity, 9% have a foreign passport, 8% have a foreign main language, and only 2% do not speak English well.
- A third of the population born abroad were born in other EU member states, including Ireland. The majority (54%) of those born in other EU member states were born in countries that joined the EU before 2004.
- People born abroad make up the greatest percentage of the population in London (37%). Elsewhere it is 9%.

- In the London boroughs of Newham, Westminster, Kensington & Chelsea, and Brent, people arriving from overseas since 2004 make up a quarter of their residents, and more than half of all their residents were born outside the UK.
- Half of the population born abroad arrived aged 15-29. This is a period when they are economically productive and bring knowledge and expertise to the communities where they settle.

The 2011 Census provides new information about immigration, but it must be interpreted carefully:

- The census measure exaggerates the recent increase in immigrants by excluding people born abroad in the UK who have died, or who have left the UK, and because it only counts the most recent arrival.
- So, during the last twenty years, the census estimates that 53% of all people born abroad arrived since 2004, while official measures of immigrant flows estimate that this figure is 44%.

**Figure 1.** 2011 Census England and Wales residents born abroad by year of arrival compared to ONS official immigration flows to the UK



## Introduction

Crossing a national border and going through customs with the intention to stay is the act of immigration. It may take a few minutes. However, in public policy, and especially in politics, immigration is a label that can stick for much longer. If you were an immigrant at some point, then that can be taken as an indication you will need support and advice, such as English language classes, for a period of time. For some, immigrant status, as felt by the individual and wider society, is of no importance and lasts for a very short period. For others, the status can last for life, even when naturalised, or even longer through their offspring.

## Year of arrival of people born abroad

The 2011 Census asked people born abroad when they most recently arrived to live in the UK. The census cannot, however, measure how many people have ever arrived during past years because it excludes those who have died, or who have emigrated, and only counts the most recent arrival. Figure 1 (see page 1) shows the distribution of the foreign-born population by decade of arrival, highlighting key events associated with peaks and troughs of immigration. It also shows the official count of immigrant flows (Long-Term International Migration (LTIM) estimates) of people born abroad since 1975.

Half of the population born abroad arrived in the previous 10 years. This reflects three trends: the sharp rise in immigration during the 2000s as a result of EU enlargement in 2004, the arrival of increasing numbers of Asian and African nationals during the decade, and continued immigration flows from other countries including Ireland,

## Definitions of an 'immigrant'

There are many different ways of counting the immigrant population using the census and other datasets. In the 2011 Census, an immigrant can be defined as any of the following: a person who was born outside the UK; a person who holds a foreign passport; or a person who was resident outside the UK one year prior to the census. Data on people resident outside the UK a year before the census will be release later in 2013. To be included by any of these definitions a person must be part of the usual resident population, which excludes those who intend to stay in England and Wales for less than 12 months. This corresponds to the UN definition of a long-term international migrant: a person who moves to a country other than of their usual residence for a period of at least a year. This definition is used in the Long-term International Migration (LTIM) estimates produced by the Office for National Statistics to monitor inflows and outflows of migrants to and from the UK.

Germany and the United States<sup>ii</sup>. This rise is shown in both the Census and LTIM datasets. The difference between them widens during earlier decades. This is a result of the exclusion of immigrants who have died or emigrated in the census measure.

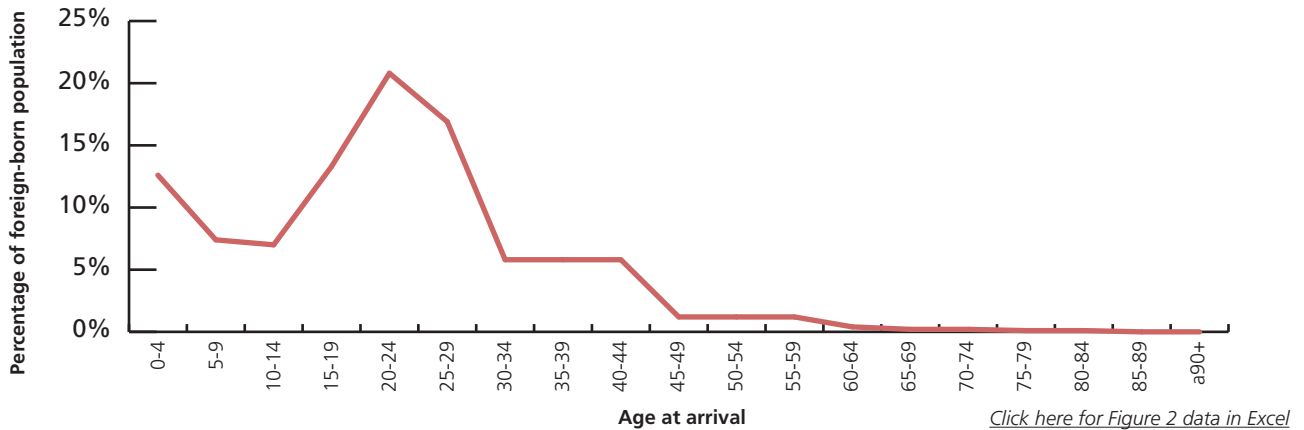
## World regions of birth for England and Wales population born abroad

In 2011, 7.5 million residents in England and Wales were born outside the UK. A third were born in other EU member states, including Poland (579k), Ireland (407k) and Germany (274k). A fifth were born in Southern Asia, including India (694k) Pakistan (482k) and Bangladesh (212k). A sixth were born in Africa, including Nigeria (191k) and South Africa (191k).

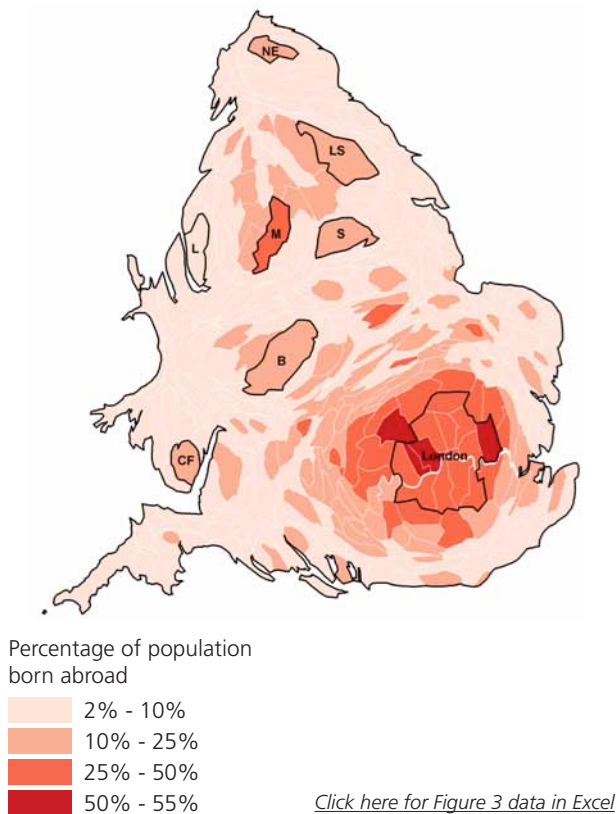
World region of birth	thousands	percent
Southern Asia	1628	21.7%
EU Member countries pre-2004	1329	17.7%
EU Accession countries post-2004	1114	14.8%
Eastern and South Africa	786	10.5%
Central and Western Africa	397	5.3%
South-East Asia	334	4.5%
Central and Eastern Asia	330	4.4%
Middle East	295	3.9%
Rest of Europe	279	3.7%
Central and North America	264	3.5%
The Caribbean	264	3.5%
Antarctica and Oceania	183	2.4%
South America	145	1.9%
North and other Africa	129	1.7%
Channel Islands and Isle of Man	26	0.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7505</b>	

[Click here for world region and country of birth data in Excel](#)

**Figure 2.** Foreign-born population in England and Wales by age at arrival in the UK, 2011



**Figure 3.** The foreign-born population in Local Authority Districts in England and Wales, 2011



**Notes:** The map is a population cartogram where each local authority district is shown approximately proportional in size to its resident population<sup>iii</sup>. The highlighted areas are intended to act as reference points: Inner London and other principal cities: Manchester (M), Liverpool (L), Sheffield (S), Newcastle upon Tyne (NE), Birmingham (B), Leeds (LS), and Cardiff (CF). For a more detailed key of each local authority district click [here](#).

## Age at arrival of population born abroad

Half of the persons born abroad arrived in the UK when they were between the ages of 15-29 (see Figure 2). Therefore, most came during the most economically productive stage of their life when they were less likely to be dependent on state provisions of health and education. Less than one-in-twenty of the population born abroad arrived after the age of 45.

## Geographical residential distribution of people born abroad in England and Wales

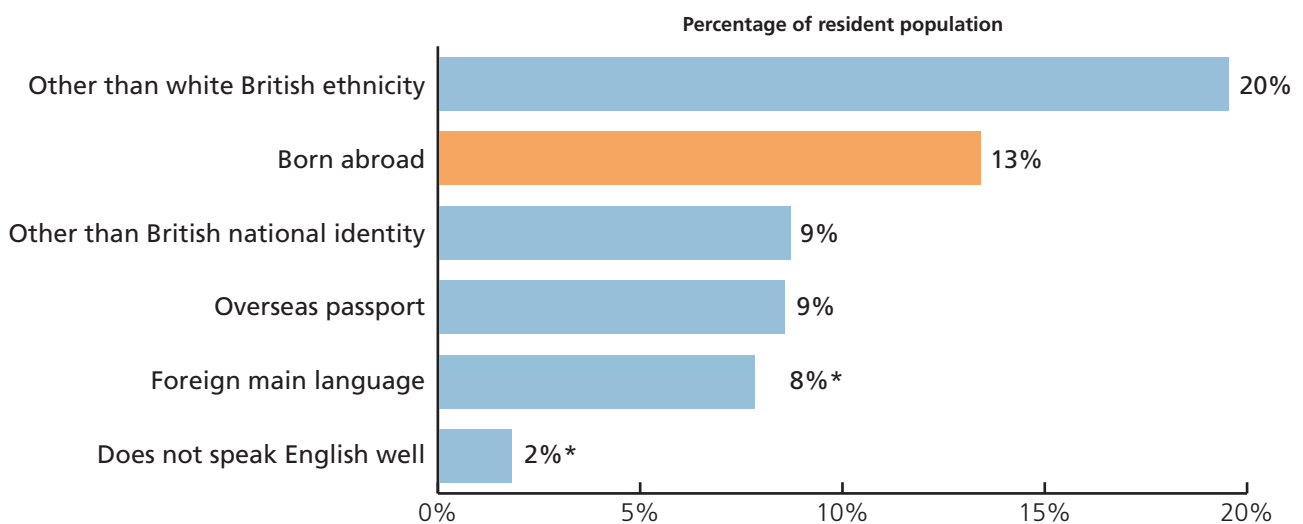
Parts of London are gateways for immigrants to other parts of the capital and the rest of the UK. This is shown by Figure 3 which maps the concentration of the population born abroad as a proportion of all residents in a local authority district in England and Wales. The population born overseas adds the greatest percentage to the population in London and, in particular, the boroughs of Brent, Kensington & Chelsea, Newham, and Westminster where those born outside the UK account for half of all residents. In these same London boroughs, the population born abroad arriving since 2004 make up more than a quarter of their residents which is considerably higher than any other part of London or the rest of England and Wales.

## Alternative measures of immigrant integration

In policy debates, immigration is a proxy not only for being 'born outside the UK' but also for other concepts such as 'not belonging', 'with family origins outside the UK' and 'requiring services to help integrate'. These concepts are measured by combinations of language, citizenship, national identity and ethnicity better than by birthplace. Figure 4 shows that if policymakers are concerned that too many UK residents do not speak English (or Welsh in Wales) as their main language, are not able to speak English

well, are not naturalised or do not hold a strong identity to Britain then we should not attribute these statements to all people born abroad. 13% of the population were born abroad compared with 2% that do not speak English well, 8% that do not speak English as their main language, 9% that are foreign nationals, 9% that have a foreign national identity and 20% that have an other than white British ethnic identity. This means that many residents in England and Wales born abroad speak English as their main language, have British citizenship and feel a British identity, which confirms findings from other research<sup>iv v</sup>.

**Figure 4.** Comparing measures of 'foreign identity' in England and Wales, 2011



Notes: Base resident population, 56,075,912.

\*Base includes resident population aged 3 and above – 53,961,451.

[Click here for Figure 4 data in Excel](#)

<sup>i</sup> See ONS website <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/taxonomy/index.html?nsl=Long-term+Migrants>

<sup>ii</sup> Blinder, B. (2012) Settlement in the UK, <http://www.migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/briefings/settlement-uk>

<sup>iii</sup> Dorling, D., & Thomas, B. (2011) *Bankrupt Britain: An Atlas of Social Change*, Bristol: Policy Press.

<sup>iv</sup> Nandi, A. & Platt, L., 2012. How diverse in the UK. In S. McFall, ed. *Understanding Society: Findings 2012*. Colchester: Institute for Social and Economic Research, University of Essex, pp. 13–14.

<sup>v</sup> Manning, A. & Roy, S., 2010. Culture clash or culture club? National identity in Britain. *The Economic Journal*, 120(2), pp.F72–F100.

Sources: 2011 Census (Crown Copyright) and Long-Term International Migration 1975-2011 Table 3.04, ONS. Map base for this Briefing kindly provided by Bethan Thomas.

This briefing is one in a series, *The Dynamics of Diversity: evidence from the 2011 Census*.

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