

Harmonised Concepts and Questions for Social Data Sources

GSS Harmonised Principle

Migration, Country of Birth and Citizenship

About This Document and Update History

GSS Harmonised Principles

About this document

This document forms part of a series of GSS Harmonised Principles, designed to provide approved harmonised questions, definitions and outputs for a variety of social and business related topics. The use of harmonised questions, definitions and outputs will provide greater consistency for survey producers and comparability when using data.

For more information, please see the Introductory Document, available on the GSS website:

<https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/statistics/methodology-2/harmonisation/>

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This document outlines the new Harmonised approved definitions for Migration and Country of Birth and Citizenship.

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Introduction

GSS Harmonised Principle

This document outlines the approved definitions developed for 'Migration, Country of Birth and Citizenship' for use across the Government Statistical Service (GSS). This is a high profile topic area with a range of national statistics produced within this topic. These statistics have a wide range of uses, particularly to inform policy and for planning and resource allocation. Users can include central and local government, academics, business, lobby groups, charities and the general public.

These target concepts (definitions) have been developed in order to facilitate clearer and more robust comparison between data and to improve data quality.

We try to align definitions where possible however different data sources have different definitions, particularly as some are administrative data and some are survey. While each migration data source is valuable in its own right, direct like-for-like comparisons cannot be made between them, however harmonising the terminology can help make it clearer to see similarities and differences. For further information on comparing migration data sources, please see [Comparing sources of international migration, August 2017](#).

For further information please email migstatsunit@ons.gov.uk

Introduction

GSS Harmonised Principle

Contact us

For more information about Harmonisation or to join our mailing list, please visit our website at:

<https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/statistics/methodology-2/harmonisation/>

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Migration and Country of Birth: List of Target Concepts

Inputs/outputs

List of Target Concepts

ID	Concept
1	Address of usual residence
2	Country of usual residence
3	Country of birth
4	Long-term international immigrant/Long-term international emigrant
5	Short-term international immigrant/ Short-term international emigrant
6	Year and month of arrival in the UK
7	Ever lived abroad
8	Visitors
9	Visitor switchers
10	Migrant switchers
11	Returning migrants
12	Nationality
13	National Identity
14	Citizenship / Country of Citizenship
15	Citizenship at birth
16	Passports held
17	Length of stay / length of residence (Intended length of stay)
18	Reason for visit
19	Internal migrant
20	Cross-border migrant
21	Address one year ago
22	Asylum applicant
23	Refugee
24	Population turnover
25	Migration movement
26	Migration transitions

Migration and Country of Birth: Approach and Definitions

Inputs/outputs

Target Concepts	Approach and Definition
<p>1. Address of usual residence</p>	<p>A usual resident at an address is someone who is a usual resident of that country and who spends the majority of their time residing at that address.</p> <p>Each person has only one address of usual residence. In practice, the following approaches are used for difficult cases.</p> <p>i) Persons who work away from home during the week and return to the permanent or family home at the weekend should have the permanent or family home recorded as their usual residence, even if the majority of their time is spent at their 'working week' address.</p> <p>ii) For armed forces, the usual residence should be the address at which they live when working at their base. This maintains consistency with population estimates. For those with a family or permanent residence, the address (i.e. usual residence) when working at the base may be the same as the family or permanent residence, but may be different.</p> <p>iii) Usual residence for children 'shared' between parents living apart should be the address at which children spend the majority of their time. The 'tie breaker' for children divided equally between parents is where the child is at the time the population is being measured.</p> <p>iv) Students' usual address is their term-time address.</p> <p>v) If the person has already spent or expects to spend six months or more in a communal establishment then usual residence would be that communal establishment. Otherwise usual residence would be at the home address.</p> <p>vi) Sentenced prisoners are treated in the same way as others in communal establishments. However, prisoners on remand (i.e. not yet sentenced) should be treated as visitors (or resident visitors if they have no other usual residence), irrespective of how long they have been in prison on remand. Thus their usual residence will normally be their family home (unless they have no other usual residence).</p> <p>[Source: Population Definitions Working Group: Final Statement, ONS]</p>
<p>2. Country of usual residence</p>	<p>Based on the UN definition, the country in which a person has a place to live, where he or she normally spends the daily period of rest. Temporary travel abroad for purposes of recreation, holiday, visits to friends and relatives, business, medical treatment or religious pilgrimages does not change a person's country of usual residence.</p> <p>[Source: Migration Statistics First Time User Guide, Glossary and List of Products]</p>
<p>3. Country of birth</p>	<p>Country of birth is the country in which a person was born. Where country name has changed, current name of the country should be used.</p> <p>Country responses are assigned codes based on the National Statistics Country Classification.</p> <p>The grouping of countries within the classification is broadly regional, but takes into account the grouping of European Union (EU) countries. Countries in the EU are grouped into those that were EU members in March 2001, and those that became members (accession countries) between April 2001 and March 2011 as part of the EU enlargement process.</p> <p>This information is used in identifying all long-term international migrants not identified by the question 'address one year ago'.</p> <p>Combined with other statistics, this information is used to produce international and national migration statistics, which are then used to produce population projections.</p> <p>[Source: 2011 Census Variable and Classification Information - Part 3]</p>
<p>4. Long-term international</p>	<p>A person who moves to a country other than that of his or her usual residence for a period of at least a year (12 months), so that the country of destination effectively becomes his or her new country of usual residence. From the perspective of the</p>

immigrant/Long-term international emigrant	<p>country of departure the person will be a long-term emigrant and from that of the country of arrival the person will be a long-term immigrant. [Source: United Nations Statistics Division]</p> <p>This is the definition used to calculate net migration and is also used for the UK usually resident population estimate series. This definition does not necessarily coincide with those used by other organisations.</p> <p>For survey based estimates this is based on declared traveller intentions.</p>
5. Short-term international immigrant/Short-term international emigrant	<p>There is no single harmonised definition of a short term migrant. Short-Term International Migration (STIM) estimates for England and Wales are available on the basis of three definitions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United Nations (UN) definition of a short-term migrant – “a person who moves to a country other than that of his or her usual residence for a period of at least 3 months but less than a year (12 months), except in cases where the movement to that country is for purposes of recreation, holiday, visits to friends or relatives, business, medical treatment or religious pilgrimage” • 3 to 12 months – all reasons for migration, this includes the UN definition and the categories “Work (other)” and “Other” • 1 to 12 months – all reasons for migration, this includes the above but for 1 to 12 months. As such this definition captures more visits made for holidays and to visit family and friends <p>To be included as a short-term international immigrant to England and Wales under any of these definitions, a person arriving must have been usually resident outside the UK for 12 months or more (these tend to be foreign citizens, but can include British citizens). Similarly, a short-term international emigrant from England and Wales must have been usually resident in the UK for 12 months or more prior to leaving (these tend to be British citizens, but can include foreign citizens).</p> <p>[Source: Short-Term International Migration for England and Wales, May 2017]</p>
6. Year and month of arrival in the UK	<p>The year of arrival in the UK is derived from the date that a person last (or first) arrived to live in the UK. Short visits away from the UK are not counted in determining the date that a person arrived. (In the 2011 Census year of arrival was only applicable to usual residents who were not born in the UK. It did not include usual residents born in the UK who have emigrated and since returned; these are recorded in the category 'born in the UK'.)</p> <p>[Source: 2011 Census Variable and Classification Information - Part 4]</p>
7. Ever lived abroad	<p>'Ever lived abroad' is defined as ever having a country of usual residence other than the UK. Residence is defined in point 2.</p> <p>[Source: Population Estimates Unit, ONS]</p>
8. Visitor	<p>For the purposes of population and migration statistics an overseas visitor means a person who, being permanently resident in a country outside the United Kingdom, visits the UK for a period of less than 12 months. UK citizens resident overseas for 12 months or more coming home on leave are included in this category. Visits abroad are visits for a period of less than 12 months by people permanently resident in the UK (who may be of foreign nationality).</p> <p>[Sources: Travel Trends 2015: Appendix A]</p>
9. Visitor switchers	<p>A visitor switcher to the UK is someone who:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i) Had a country of usual residence other than the UK; ii) Entered the UK with the intention of not living here for 12 months or more (thus not satisfying the criteria for a usual resident of the UK); iii) Stays in the UK for 12 months or more (thus satisfying the criteria for a usual resident of the UK). <p>Conversely, a visitor switcher from the UK is someone who:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i) Was a usual resident of the UK;

	<p>ii) Entered another country with the intention of not living there for 12 months or more; iii) Stays in that country for 12 months or more.</p> <p>[Source: Population Estimates Unit, ONS]</p>
10. Migrant switchers	<p>A migrant switcher to the UK is someone who: i) Had a country of usual residence other than the UK; ii) Entered the UK with the intention of living here for 12 months or more (thus satisfying the criteria for a usual resident of the UK); iii) Leaves the UK before the 12 months are completed, without the intention of making the UK their country of usual residence. Conversely, a migrant switcher from the UK is someone who: i) Was a usual resident of the UK; ii) Entered another country with the intention of living there for 12 months or more; iii) Returns to the UK before the 12 months are completed, without the intention of making the other country their country of usual residence.</p> <p>[Source: Population Estimates Unit, ONS]</p>
11. Returning Migrants	<p>A returning migrant to the UK is an international migrant arriving in the UK having been a usual resident outside of the UK but who had in the past been a usual resident of the UK.</p> <p>[Source: Population Estimates Unit, ONS]</p>
12. National Identity	<p><i>National identity</i> is a measure of <i>self-identity</i>, reflecting the subjective nature of <i>national identity</i>. A question on <i>national identity</i> allows a person to express a preference as to which country or countries, nation or nations that they feel most affiliated to.</p> <p>[Source: Ethnic Group, National Identity and Religion, ONS]</p>
13. Nationality	<p>Nationality is often used interchangeably with citizenship, and some datasets, refer to 'nationals' of a country rather than 'citizens'. Different datasets have different ways of establishing someone's nationality. The Annual Population Survey, which underlies the population estimates by nationality, simply asks people 'what is your nationality?' However, the IPS, National Insurance numbers (NINOs) (from Department for Work and Pensions data) and entry clearance visa data are based on people's passports. For asylum statistics, the nationality is as stated on the 'Case Information Database'. This will usually be based on documentary evidence, but sometimes asylum seekers arrive in the UK without any such documentation.</p> <p>[Source: User Guide to Home Office Immigration Statistics, Home Office]</p>
14. Citizenship / Country of citizenship	<p>When measured at the point of migration to/from UK, country of citizenship is normally measured based on the country for which a migrant is a passport holder. This refers specifically to the passport being used to enter / leave the UK. There may be exceptions for example where individuals are dual nationals or where individuals are using alternative documentation for travel purposes.</p> <p>Individuals can obtain UK citizenship via a range of routes. Details are provided in the User Guide to Home Office Immigration Statistics.</p> <p>"This is the term used in the International Passenger Survey (IPS) to define the country for which a migrant is a passport holder. This refers specifically to the passport being used to enter or leave the UK at the time of interview. It does not refer to any other passport(s) which migrants of multiple nationalities may hold. More generally a British citizen as described in IPS statistics includes those with UK nationality usually through a connection with the UK: birth, adoption, descent, registration, or naturalisation. British nationals have the right of abode in the UK."</p> <p>[Source: Migration Statistics First Time User Guide, Glossary and List of Products]</p>
15. Citizenship at birth	<p>An individual is almost certain to acquire a British citizenship at birth status if they were born before 1st January 1983 in the UK or a qualifying territory (most British Overseas Territories before 1st January 1983).</p>

	<p>For those born after 1st January 1983, citizenship at birth is acquired if at the time of their birth one of the parents is either a British citizen or is legally settled in the UK (Indefinite Leave to Remain).</p> <p>Individuals can obtain UK citizenship via a range of routes. Details are provided in the User Guide to Home Office Immigration Statistics</p> <p>[Source: Confirmation of British Nationality Status, Home Office]</p>
16. Passports held	<p>'Passports held' classifies whether a person holds a passport(s) regardless of the issuing country.</p> <p>People are asked to indicate whether they held no passport, a UK passport, an Irish passport or a passport from another country. If, from another country they are asked to write in the name of the passport issuing country.</p> <p>In the 2011 Census people are classified by passport held, those who hold a United Kingdom and/or Irish passport, and any other type of passport, will appear in each applicable category.</p> <p>[Source: 2011 Census Variable and Classification Information - Part 3]</p>
17. Length of stay / length of residence (intended length of stay)	<p>Length of stay for UK residents covers the time spent in a destination country, including the journey outside the UK, whilst for overseas residents it refers to the time spent within the UK. This information is then used in deriving the Medium stay (3-6 months), Long stay (6 but under 12 months) and Migrants (over 12 months).</p> <p>This definition is that included in the IPS Interviewer Instructions (p41)</p> <p>Source: IPS Interviewer Instructions</p>
18. Reason for visit	<p>This is the main reason given by someone for their journey to a country.</p> <p>Derived from IPS Interviewer Instructions (p47)</p>
19. Internal migrant	<p>An internal migrant is someone who has an address of usual residence in the UK who changes their usual residence to another address within the UK.</p> <p>[Source: Population Estimates Unit, ONS]</p>
20. Cross-border migrant	<p>A cross-border migrant is someone who makes a migration movement from one country in the UK to another country in the UK.</p> <p>[Source: Population Estimates Unit, ONS]</p>
21. Address one year ago	<p>For most people, the address one year ago will be the permanent or family home that they were living in one year ago.</p> <p>However, if an individual did not have a usual address one year ago, for example those sleeping rough, then the name of the town in which they were staying should be recorded.</p> <p>For babies/children under one year ago the; the information is not collected.</p> <p>The address one year ago information is also used in identifying both internal and international migration.</p> <p>[Source: 2011 Census Variable and Classification Information - Part 3]</p>
22. Asylum applicant	<p>An asylum applicant is a person who either: (a) makes a request to be recognised as a refugee under the Geneva Convention on the basis that it would be contrary to the UK's obligations under the Geneva Convention for him to be removed from or required to leave the UK, or (b) otherwise makes a request for international protection.</p> <p>[Source: Home Office: User Guide to Home Office Immigration Statistics]</p>
23. Refugee	<p>A refugee is defined, by the 1951 United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and 1967 Protocol (the 'Refugee Convention'), as being a person who, owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of their nationality (or habitual residence, where stateless) and who is unable or, owing to such a fear, is unwilling to avail themselves of the protection of that country. Recognition of refugee status is a pre-requisite to the grant of refugee leave in the UK.</p>

	[Source: Home Office: User Guide to Home Office Immigration Statistics]
24. Population turnover	<p>Population turnover over a period $t_1 \rightarrow t_2$ is defined as $(c+d)/e$ Where c is the internal migration flow from the area to elsewhere in the UK, and d is the internal migration flow to the area from elsewhere in the UK; and e is the usually resident population at t_2. [This is the definition used in the MSOA Population Turnover Rates, and is described as the turnover rate at time t_2. A similar approach to b) is used in the Migration Indicators; except that rates are quoted for both internal migration flows and international migration flows, and that the rate is described as the turnover rate for $t_1+1/2 \rightarrow t_2+1/2$.</p> <p>[Source: Population Estimates Unit, ONS]</p>
25. Migration movement	<p>A migration movement between two areas is defined as the event of a usual resident of an area A changes their usual residence to area B.</p> <p>[Source: Population Estimates Unit, ONS]</p>
26. Migration transitions	<p>A migration transition between two areas is defined as where a usual resident of an area A at time t_1 is a usual resident of area B at time t_2.</p> <p>Illustration of difference between migration movement and migration transition.</p> <p>A lives in Portsmouth in June 2011 and moves to Southampton in January 2012, staying there till July 2012.-> 1 movement; 1 transition B lives in Portsmouth in June 2011 and moves to Southampton in January 2012, before emigrating in March 2012->1 movement to Southampton+1 movement overseas; 1 transition (Portsmouth-Overseas). C is born in September 2011 and is usually resident in Portsmouth; before moving to Southampton in January 2012 and remaining there till July 2012 -> 1 movement, 0 transitions</p> <p>[Source: Population Estimates Unit, ONS]</p>