

# Communicating migration statistics in a changing context



## Challenges and strategies in the UK

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UNECE-Eurostat work session on migration statistics

## Background

- We are transforming the way we produce UK migration statistics, making ever greater use of administrative data.
- We aim to meet growing user needs, in a rapidly changing policy context.

Office for National Statistics

### Concepts

What concepts do we need to measure, and what definitions support these?

e.g UK Migration



### Data

What data can we use to answer users' questions?

- Administrative
- Census
- Survey
- Big/commercial/other data sources

### What are the user needs?

How is the population changing, including patterns of international migration?  
What impact is this having on the economy, labour markets and society?

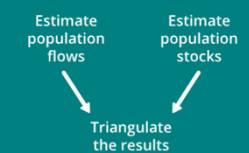
### Outputs

What outputs do we need to produce?

- Population and international migration outputs
- Migrants and migration analysis
- Population characteristics
- Demographic analysis
- Families and households statistics

### Methods

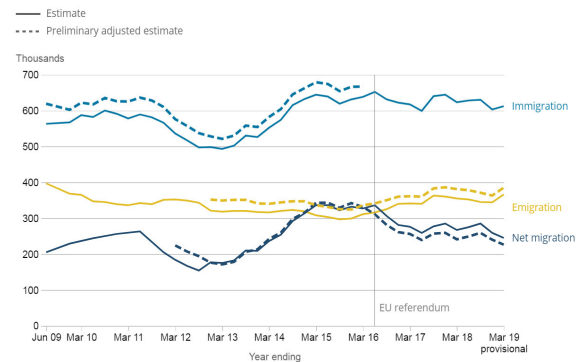
What methods can we use to analyse administrative data?



## Our latest progress

- We have been embedding more administrative data in our regular migration flow statistics
- In August, we made further progress and applied a preliminary adjustment using new sources
- We have reclassified to 'Experimental Statistics' to signal a period of development and innovation

Long-term international migration, UK, year ending June 2009 to year ending March 2019



Source: Office for National Statistics – Long-Term International Migration (LTIM), LTIM with preliminary adjustments based on DWP and Home Office data

**Notes:**

1. Preliminary adjusted estimates are shown as dashed lines on the chart.

# Why communication matters

## Effective communication is vital to achieving our ambition

- **Understanding what users need**
  - As we make changes, we need to bring users along with us on the journey
  - With migration policy likely to change in parallel, we need to be responsive to new needs for evidence
- **Telling a story through our statistics**
  - In a changing society and policy context, our statistics should support decision-making and inform debate
  - We need to present analysis in a meaningful and insightful way

## How are we doing this?

### Our strategy is to:

Regularly publish research and methods as we develop them

Engage with our users and stakeholders, seeking regular feedback

Use our research findings, the best available data and methods, and the feedback from users to make decisions about which improvements to make each year

Implement changes to our statistics when and where appropriate, clearly communicating these changes to users in advance of making them

# Engaging users and gathering feedback

## Research engagement report

- **Collecting feedback to support our transformation**
  - What migration statistics are used for, what they would like to see, types of outputs that are valuable
- **Reaching out to different groups**
  - Stakeholder mapping
  - Dedicated meetings, hosted webinars, roadshows and round table events
  - Social media, blogs
- **You said, we did...**
  - Published an official response so there's a feedback loop

## Collaboration with stakeholders

### Government Statistical Service Migration Steering Group

-Bringing together government departments e.g. Home Office, DWP

### Migration Expert Group

- Feeding in academic and research expertise on migration

### Migration Statistics User Forum

- Feedback and sharing with local government, think tanks, researchers

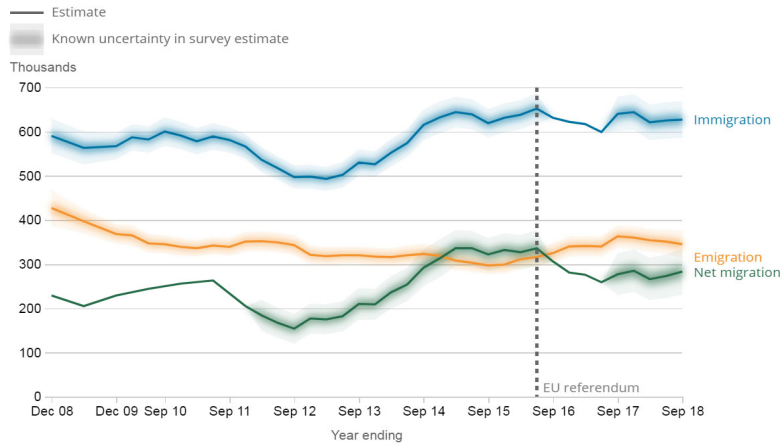
### UK Population Theme Advisory Group

- Feeding in academic and research expertise on population and demography

# Presentation and visualisation

# Displaying uncertainty

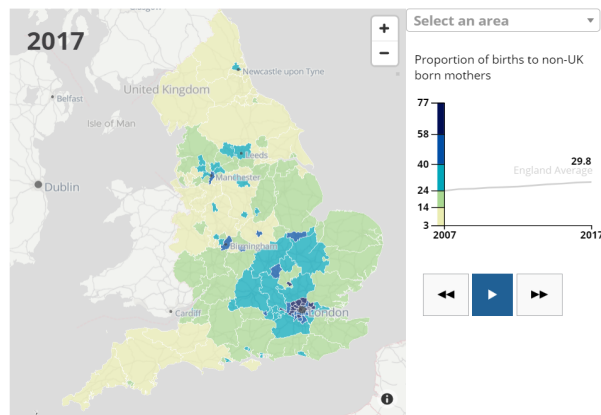
Long-term international migration, UK, year ending December 2008 to year ending December 2018



Source: Office for National Statistics - Long-Term International Migration

# Interactive tools

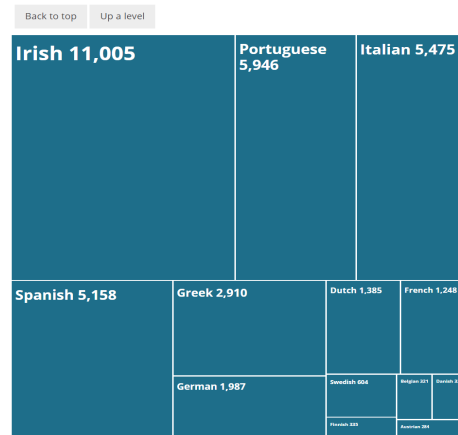
Proportion of births to non-UK born mothers, England, 2007 to 2017



Source: Office for National Statistics - Birth registrations

NHS HCHS healthcare staff working in Trusts and CCGs by nationality, England, March 2019

Total: 913,789



Source: NHS Digital - NHS Workforce Statistics

# Future plans and challenges

## Communicating change

- As we progress with our transformation, a main challenge is continuing to communicate effectively so that users understand the changes we make (and why)
- Migration statistics continue to be high profile and there is a focus in the media and public domain
- Users have asked what changes mean for the quality of our statistics and the impact on the story they tell

## Our next steps and priorities

- Communicating “one version of the truth” in the context of iteratively refining our methods
- Displaying uncertainty in a multi-source world and ensuring users can interpret the trends
- Telling the story of how we are making more and better use of administrative data, and what this means
- Continuing to strengthen engagement with stakeholders and key partners e.g. Office for Statistics Regulation

# Questions and Discussion