

Article

2011 Census analysis: Immigration Patterns of Non-UK Born Populations in England and Wales in 2011

Using historic and 2011 Census data, we look at the immigration patterns of residents who were born outside the UK. Over the past 60 years the population has become more diverse, with an increase in the number of residents who were born outside the UK, from just 4.3% in 1951 to 13% in 2011. The top 5 non-UK countries of birth in 2011 were India, Poland, Pakistan, Republic of Ireland and Germany. We also discuss the possible reasons for migration to the UK.



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Table of contents

1. [Foreword](#)
2. [Key points](#)
3. [Introduction](#)
4. [Historic perspectives on migration](#)
5. [Timeline of non-UK born population growth](#)
6. [Migrations to England and Wales pre-1991](#)
7. [Migrations to England and Wales between 1991 and 2011](#)
8. [Background notes](#)

1. Foreword

This story identifies the immigration patterns of non-UK born residents of England and Wales using 2011 and historic census data; it includes discussion of possible reasons for specific migrations.

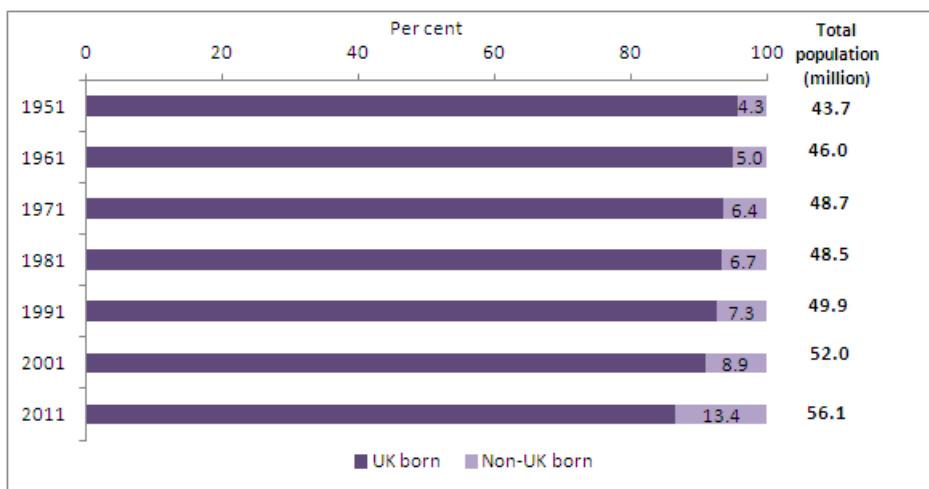
2. Key points

- In 2011, 13 per cent (7.5 million) of the resident population of England and Wales were born outside the UK, compared to 4.3 per cent (1.9 million) in 1951. While the total resident population of England and Wales increased by 28 per cent (from 43.7 million to 56.1 million) between 1951 and 2011, the non-UK born population almost quadrupled. This means that migration has contributed to just under half (45 per cent) of the total population change over the last 60 years.
- The population of England and Wales has become more diverse over the last 60 years. In 2011 the top ten non-UK countries of birth accounted for 45 per cent (3.4 million) of the total foreign born population (7.5 million), while in 1951 the top ten non-UK countries of birth represented 60 per cent (1.1 million) of the total foreign born population (1.9 million).
- Successive censuses show large increases for some main non-UK born migrant groups in particular decades: for example, the Indian-born population almost doubled between 1961 and 1971, and the Bangladeshi-born population more than doubled between 1981 and 1991.
- For each of the top five non-UK countries of birth in 2011 (India, Poland, Pakistan, Republic of Ireland and Germany) migration to the UK in substantial numbers began at different times. The Republic of Ireland had an earlier historical flow, with 38 per cent of Irish-born residents in 2011 arriving before 1961; by contrast 86 per cent of Polish-born residents arrived in 2004 or later following the accession of Poland to the European Union.
- Some migrant groups recorded in earlier censuses are more likely to have remained in the UK than others, while mortality of all groups will have been differentially affected by time of arrival and age. In the 2011 Census 98,000 Bangladeshi-born people stated that they arrived in the UK before 1991; this was 94 per cent of the number of Bangladeshi-born recorded in the 1991 Census (104,000). By contrast, for the 191,000 South-African born people recorded in the 2011 Census, 94,000 stated that they arrived in the UK before 2001; this was 71 per cent of the number of South-African born recorded in the 2001 Census (132,000).
- Underlying reasons for migrations to the UK are complex, but will include 'push' factors such as civil conflict, political instability and poverty, and 'pull' factors such as employment and education opportunities. Family and cultural links, and changes in legislation, will also affect migration to the UK.

3. Introduction

Migration is an important driver of [population change](#), currently accounting for around half of the population growth in England and Wales (natural change, that is the difference between births and deaths, accounting for the remainder). This is reflected in the increase in the proportion of the usually resident population¹ born abroad² from 4.3 per cent (1.9 million) recorded in the 1951 Census to 13 per cent (7.5 million) in the 2011 Census (see figure 1). While the total resident population of England and Wales increased by 28 per cent (from 43.7 million to 56.1 million) between 1951 and 2011, the non-UK born population³ almost quadrupled. There was a particularly marked increase in the latest inter-censal period, from 8.9 per cent (4.6 million)⁴ in 2001.

Figure 1: Proportion of resident population born abroad, England and Wales; 1951-2011



Source: Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Figure 1 uses original published Census tables in order to obtain details of non-UK born population. These tables have not been subject to revision and therefore are not consistent with revised mid-year estimates.

Migration broadly is influenced by 'push' and 'pull' factors at source and destination, including economic conditions (personal and national), pre-existing connections through family and cultural links, and political factors, both real and perceived. Cultural factors, including education and the wide use of the English language globally are also pertinent. Historic and Commonwealth ties may have influenced migrants' choice of destination country, while [legislative changes](#) in the UK may also have affected this choice. The ONS Long Term International Migration (LTIM) [time-line](#) summarises some of the key historical events and patterns since 1964, including key legislative events such as the British Nationality Act (1948).

The UK has experienced several distinct post-war immigration flows. This story uses 2011 Census data and data from earlier censuses (1951-2001). It summarises, firstly, the growing 'stocks' of non-UK born people in England and Wales reported in successive censuses over the last half-century and, secondly, analyses the 'flows' of non-UK born to this country, where possible discussing the numbers and timing of these arrivals⁵, by country of birth. A [first time users' guide \(205 Kb Pdf\)](#) explaining stocks and flows of migrants can be found on the ONS website.

While earlier ONS publications have summarised 2011 Census data on the [migrant populations](#) in England and Wales by [country of birth and nationality](#), and the [economic and social characteristics](#) of these groups, this story provides new analysis on the timing and extent of migration from specific countries of birth, using a more detailed breakdown by year of arrival in the period 1991-2011, and a wide range of countries of birth, including many not previously analysed. Possible underlying reasons for these migrations are also discussed. A later story will analyse the characteristics of migrant groups in England and Wales.

This analysis is relevant to those who want to improve their understanding of how historical changes in the UK's foreign born residents have contributed to the 2011 population structure of England and Wales, including:

- Policy makers
- MPs
- Journalists
- Researchers and academics
- Students
- Businesses
- Members of the general public

This publication is a joint production by ONS and the Home Office.

Notes for introduction

1. The usually resident population refers to people who live in the UK for 12 months or more, including those who have been resident for less than 12 months but intend to stay for a total period of 12 months or more. The population base for the 2011 Census was the usually resident population of England and Wales, defined as anyone who, on the night of 27 March 2011, was either (a) resident in England and Wales and who had been resident, or intended to be resident in the UK for a period of 12 months or more, or (b) resident outside the UK but had a permanent England and Wales address and intended to be outside the UK for less than a year.
2. The terms ‘born abroad’, ‘born outside the UK’, ‘foreign born’, ‘born overseas’ and ‘non-UK born’ are used interchangeably in this document.
3. Country of birth is derived from census question 9, which asks “What is your country of birth?” Country of birth (COB) cannot change over time (except as a result of international boundary changes), unlike nationality which can change. It is a measure of ‘foreign born’ people, but includes many usual residents of England and Wales born outside the UK who have subsequently become UK citizens. In addition, some people who were UK citizens at birth will be included in the non-UK born (for example, those born to parents working overseas in the armed forces).
4. Some numbers throughout this report may not sum due to rounding.
5. The length of residence and year of arrival are derived from census question 10, “If you were not born in the UK, when did you most recently arrive to live here?”. This was a new question in the 2011 Census.

10 If you were not born in the United Kingdom, when did you most recently arrive to live here?

Do not count short visits away from the UK

Month	Year		
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Question 10 excludes short visits; this is open to interpretation and not all respondents may have applied the same definition of a ‘short visit’. This may affect comparison with surveys that use the UN definition of long-term migration as a basis for determining the inflow of long-term migrants.

4. Historic perspectives on migration

The overall increase in the non-UK born population has been the result of a range of distinct migrations from a wide variety of different countries. [Previous analysis](#) has highlighted differences in arrival patterns for the 2011 population born in EU countries (pre-2004 and post-2004 Accession countries separately) and all other non-UK countries. This analysis identified the more recent arrival patterns for people from countries that have joined the EU since 2004¹. The data also showed that, while almost four in ten of the population born in older EU member states arrived before 1981, only around one in ten of those born in recent EU Accession countries arrived before 1981. These proportions compare with almost one in four of those born in the rest of the world. By contrast, eight in ten residents born in recent EU Accession countries arrived since 2001, almost half of those born in the rest of the world, and almost four in ten of those born in older EU member states.

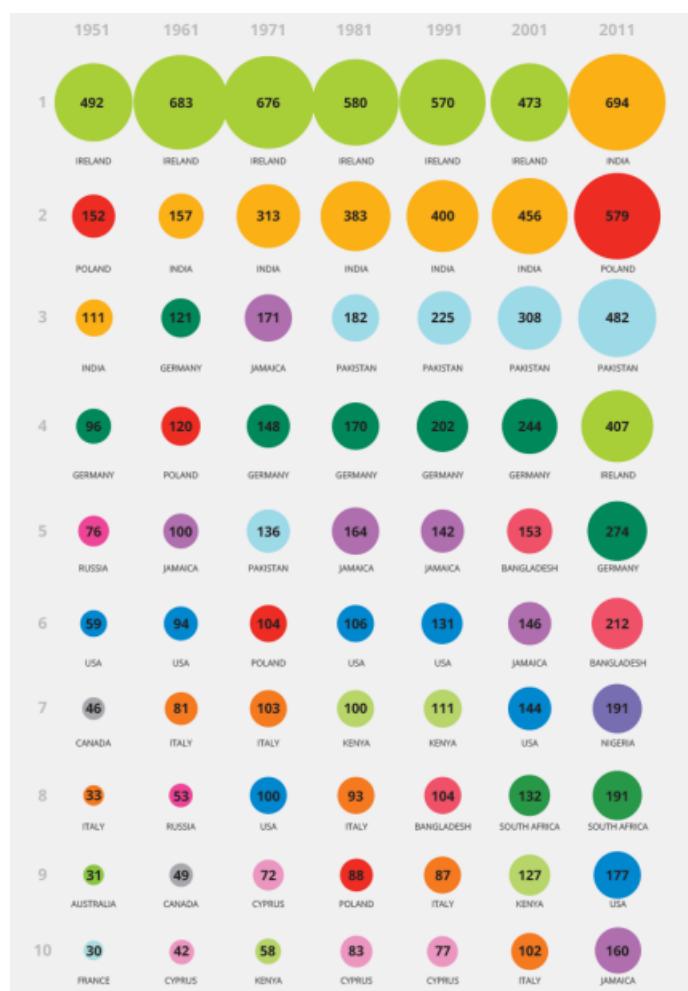
Figure 2a shows the top ten non-UK countries of birth recorded in each Census since 1951, with total numbers of non-UK born for each year in figure 2b. Key points include:

- The Republic of Ireland was the top non-UK country of birth for foreign born in each census from 1951 until 2001, but the numbers of Irish-born declined after 1961.
- In 1951, India was the third highest non-UK country of birth. The number of people born in India then increased and almost doubled between 1961 and 1971. From 1961 until 2001 Indian-born was the second highest ranking non-UK country of birth and in 2011 became the largest foreign born population.
- The Pakistani-born population saw a noticeable rise between 1961 and 1971 (and to a lesser extent 1971 to 1981), and has continued to increase since then, ranking third in 1981 and subsequent censuses.
- In 1951 Poland was the second highest non-UK country of birth; however this population did not grow again substantially until a new influx of Polish-born migrants in the period following Poland's accession to the EU before the 2011 Census, when the Polish-born were once again the second highest non-UK born group, although with a much larger number of residents.

The Jamaican-born population saw substantial rises between 1951 and 1971 before peaking in 1971.

In 1951 the top ten non-UK countries of birth represented 60 per cent (1.1 million) of the total foreign born population, compared to 45 per cent (3.4 million) in 2011 (see figure 2b). This indicated that not only had the overall numbers of non-UK born risen, but that the population of England and Wales had become more diverse.

Figure 2a: Top ten non-UK countries of birth for the resident population in England and Wales; 1951-2011

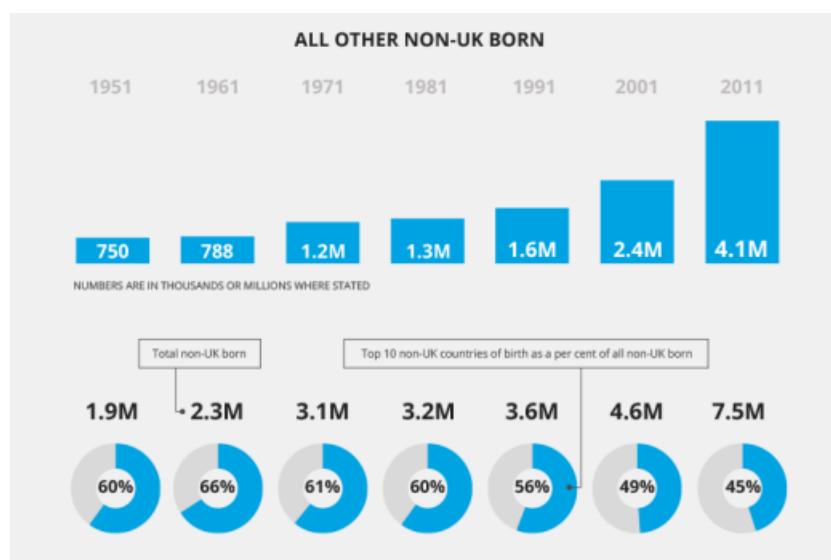


Source: 1951-2011 Censuses, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Numbers are in thousands or millions (M) where stated.
2. Census 2011 table QS213EW, Census 2001 table SO15, Census 1991 table L07, and 1981-1951 country of birth (birthplace) tables were used to produce figures 2a and 2b.

Figure 2b: Non-UK born population of England and Wales 1951-2011; top ten countries and all other non-UK born; 1951-2011



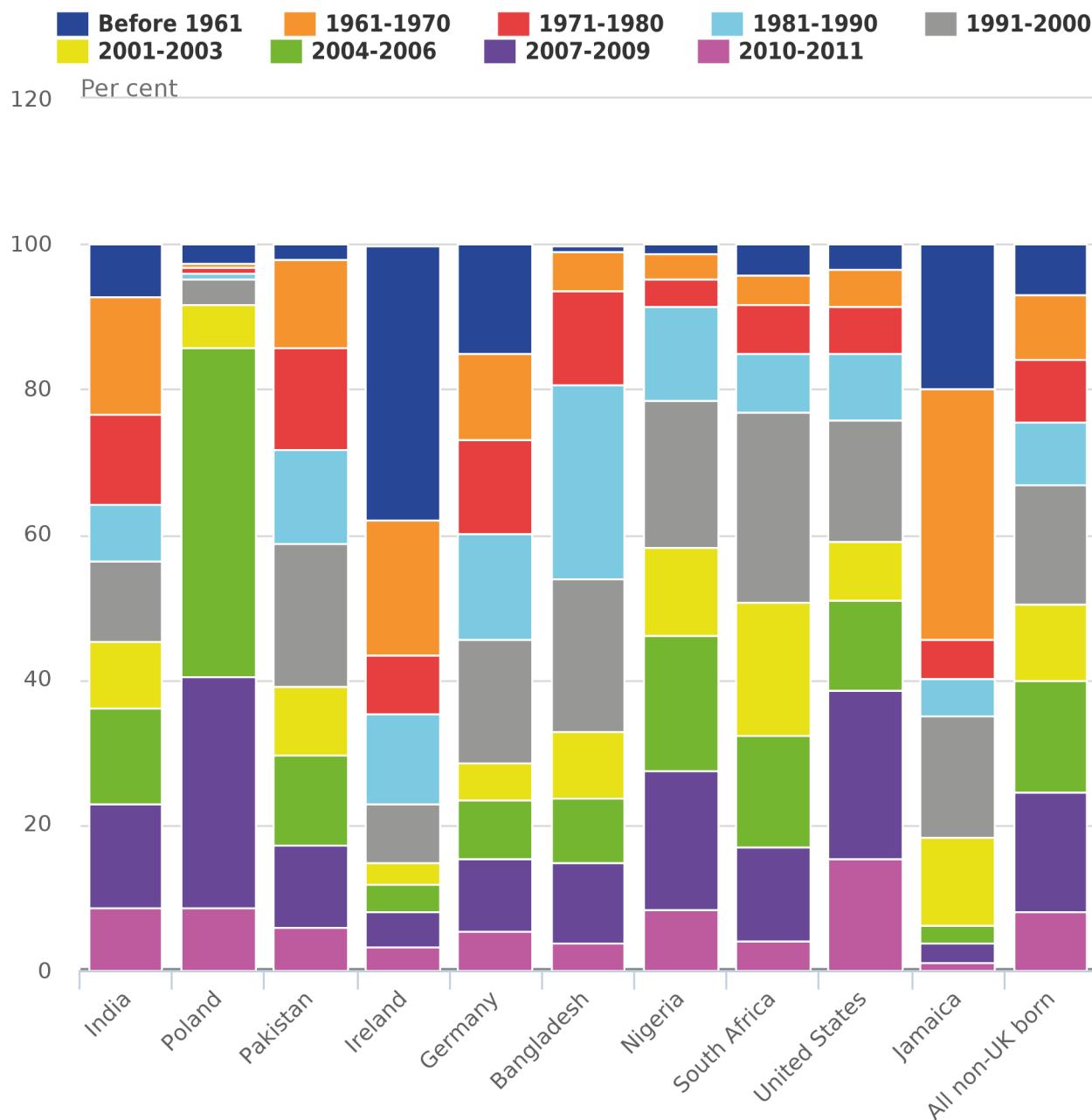
Source: 1951-2011 Censuses, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Numbers are in thousands or millions (M) where stated.
2. Census 2011 table QS213EW, Census 2001 table SO15, Census 1991 table L07, and 1981-1951 country of birth (birthplace) tables were used to produce figures 2a and 2b.

In the 2011 Census a question on year of most recent arrival² for all non-UK born usual residents was asked for the first time. Distributions by years of arrival are shown in figure 3 for the top ten non-UK countries of birth. A bar is also shown for all non-UK born.

Figure 3: Top ten non-UK countries of birth of usual residents in England and Wales in 2011 by year of arrival



Source: Office for National Statistics

Notes:

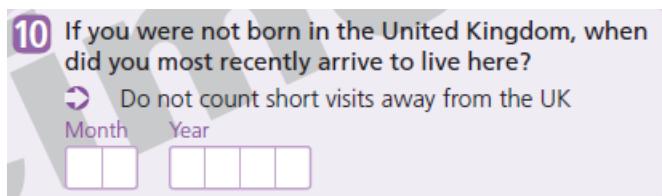
- Census 2011 table DC2804EW was used to produce figure 3.

Half (50 per cent or 3.7 million) of the non-UK born usually resident population of England and Wales at the time of the 2011 Census had lived in the UK for ten years or more (i.e. arrived before 2001). Around one quarter of the foreign born (26 per cent or 1.9 million) had lived in the UK for 5-10 years (i.e. arrived between 2001 and 2006), and almost a quarter (24 per cent or 1.8 million) had lived in the UK less than five years (i.e. since 2007).

Looking at the periods when the largest numbers of foreign born residents in 2011 arrived in the UK, figure 3 shows that Irish-born³ were the earliest arrival group (before 1961), followed by Jamaican-born and Indian-born (1960s), Pakistani-born (1960s and 1970s) and then Bangladeshi-born (1980s). Later arrivals included the South African-born (1990s) and Nigerian-born (1990s and 2000s), followed by the Polish-born (2004-2011). German-born were more evenly distributed across all decades, reflecting the fact that many were the children of UK service personnel stationed in Germany. US-born were concentrated in 2001-2011 (59 per cent).

Notes for historic perspectives on migration

1. These countries were: Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia, along with Cyprus and Malta in May 2004; Bulgaria and Romania in January 2007 and Croatia in June 2013.
2. The length of residence and year of arrival are derived from census question 10, "If you were not born in the UK, when did you most recently arrive to live here?". This was a new question in the 2011 Census.



10 If you were not born in the United Kingdom, when did you most recently arrive to live here?
Do not count short visits away from the UK
Month Year

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Question 10 excludes short visits; this is open to interpretation and not all respondents may have applied the same definition of a 'short visit'. This may affect comparison with surveys that use the UN definition of long-term migration as a basis for determining the inflow of long-term migrants.

3. Country of birth is derived from census question 9, which asks "What is your country of birth?" Country of birth (COB) cannot change over time (except as a result of international boundary changes), unlike nationality which can change. It is a measure of 'foreign born' people, but includes many usual residents of England and Wales born outside the UK who have subsequently become UK citizens. In addition, some people who were UK citizens at birth even though non-UK born (for example, to parents working overseas in the armed forces) will be included.

5. Timeline of non-UK born population growth

While large and significant migration movements have been identified using historic census data, and data from the 2011 Census on year of most recent arrival¹, there are many smaller flows that can be identified using more detailed country breakdown and year of arrival data for residents recorded in the 2011 Census. However, these flows can only be identified for the population who were still resident in England and Wales in 2011, and figures will not therefore account for the total immigration in a given period as some people may have emigrated or died.

The year of most recent arrival is also not necessarily the same as year of first arrival, so there may be some under-estimation of length of residence for foreign born groups who return home on a regular basis. Additionally, responses to the year of most recent arrival question¹ were self defined, so some people, even though they may have been abroad for less than a year, may have recorded their re-arrival as date of most recent arrival, again biasing the findings towards more recent years.

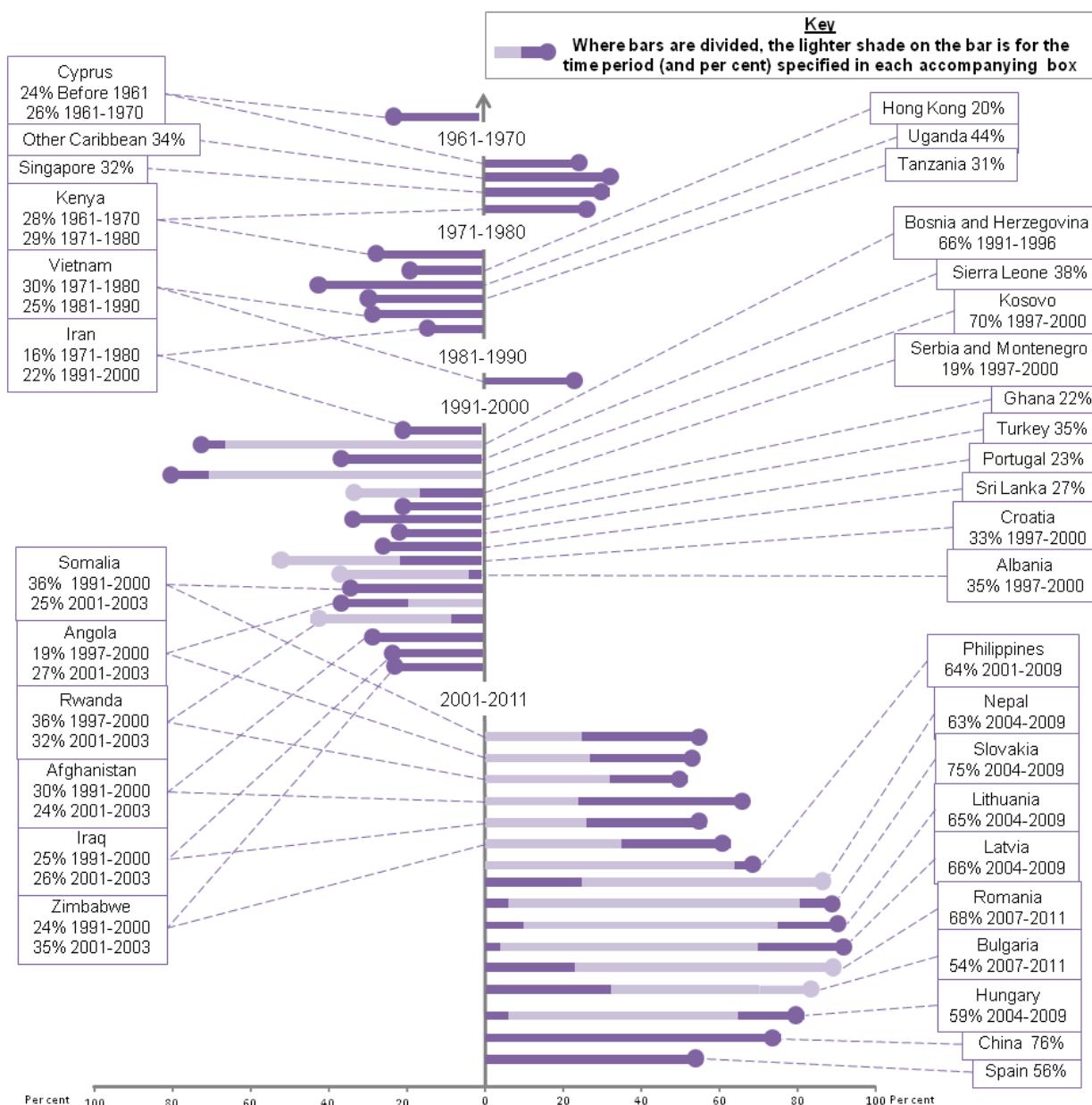
While historic censuses² show the growth in the non-UK born populations, the 2011 Census provides a picture of the year of arrival for those foreign born who were resident in 2011. Some migration groups from earlier censuses are more likely to have remained in the UK than others, while mortality of all groups will have been differentially affected by both time of arrival and age at arrival. However, these two sources can be combined to provide an indication of 'survivorship', that is, the population remaining in 2011 from previous inflows.

'Survivorship' percentages are therefore a net result of both subsequent emigration and/or mortality. These are calculated using the resident population estimated in each census (in figure 2a) and the resident population in the 2011 Census reporting a year of arrival¹ (see figure 3) before each respective census. Historical stocks, year of arrival and 'survivorship' can all be used to identify a timeline of migrant groups' arrival in England and Wales.

Figure 4 provides a timeline for peaks in arrivals over the last half century for non-UK countries of birth ranked 11-30 in the 2011 Census, including countries not covered in figure 2a (countries ranked 1-10 are shown in figure 3). Figure 4 also includes former Yugoslav³ countries of birth with populations in England and Wales of more than 4,000, and EU Accession countries⁴ with the largest populations in England and Wales. Both the break up of former Yugoslavia in the 1990s and expansion of the EU since 2004 were significant political events affecting a large group of countries. In addition, a selection of other countries of birth are included with peaks in their arrival patterns that may be related to specific historic events. For example, 30 per cent of Afghan-born residents in 2011 arrived in the UK in the decade 1991-2000; this was related to the political situation and conflict in Afghanistan. Figure 4 is not, however, a comprehensive overview of all countries of birth.

The percentages stated on the figure represent the proportion of **those resident in 2011** from each country of birth arriving in the period specified. Inevitably, this means that there is a skew towards more recent arrivals, since people who arrived at an earlier period are more likely to have died or emigrated.

Figure 4: Arrival timeline for a selected range of non-UK countries of birth in 2011 in England and Wales over the last half century and the proportion of each population resident in 2011 arriving in a particular time period



Source: Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. This figure includes non-UK countries of birth ranked 11-30 in the 2011 Census, including countries not covered in figure 2a. It also includes former Yugoslav(3) countries of birth with populations in England and Wales of more than 4,000 and EU Accession countries(4) with the largest populations in England and Wales. In addition, a selection of other countries of birth are included with peaks in their arrival patterns that may be related to specific historic events. The migrations highlighted are not a comprehensive list as some migrations from specific countries of birth have not been included in order to protect the confidentiality of information provided by individual Census respondents. These relate to those countries with very small counts.
2. The length of a bar represents the proportion of 2011 resident population from the specified country of birth that arrived within the specified decade. The bars alternate to left and right by time period. Some countries represented in the 1991-2000 and 2001-2011 decades are further broken down into smaller year of arrival groupings to reflect arrival peaks; in these cases the lighter shaded bar areas represent peak arrival periods discussed in the text and in the accompanying boxes on the figure. For example, 92 per cent of all Lithuanian-born residents in 2011 in England and Wales arrived in the decade 2001-11; this is shown by the full bar. However 65 per cent of all Lithuanian-born arrived in the peak period 2004-2009; this is shown by the lighter coloured portion of the bar.
3. Census 2011 tables CT0161 and DC2804EW were used to produce figure 4. Census table CT0161 - Passports held by year of arrival in the UK by country of birth. The periods for year of arrival are by decades for pre-1991 and then the decade 1991-2000 is broken down to 1991-93, 1994-6 and 1997-2000. The period 2001-2011 is broken down into 2001-03, 2004-06, 2007-09 and 2010-11.

Notes for timeline of non-UK born population growth

1. The length of residence and year of arrival are derived from census question 10, "If you were not born in the UK, when did you most recently arrive to live here?". This was a new question in the 2011 Census.

10 If you were not born in the United Kingdom, when did you most recently arrive to live here?
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Question 10 excludes short visits; this is open to interpretation and not all respondents may have applied the same definition of a 'short visit'. This may affect comparison with surveys that use the UN definition of long-term migration as a basis for determining the inflow of long-term migrants.

2. The historical census data from 1951-2011 will be based on those resident at each census; the date of each census has varied, for example in 2011 it was 27th March. The year of arrival data is based on calendar year.
3. Former Yugoslav countries are Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro and Slovenia.
4. These countries were: Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia, along with Cyprus and Malta in May 2004; Bulgaria and Romania in January 2007 and Croatia in June 2013.

6. Migrations to England and Wales pre-1991

This section and the next discuss peaks within recent decades for specific countries in figures 2a, 3 and 4, addressing some of the underlying reasons for these increases. Some people will have come to the UK for economic reasons, whether for a specified employment opportunity or to escape poverty, and others will have come as partners or to join family members. Some people born abroad will be returning British citizens who have long standing familial connections with the UK. [Formal study](#) was also one of the most important reasons for immigration to the UK. For other migrant groups described below, the role of conflict in their home region and political instability have clearly been important drivers; many of these will be reflected in [asylum statistics](#). Reasons for immigration to the UK have changed over time. The UK's early post war immigration was chiefly driven by decolonization and Commonwealth links, while in later years it has reflected wider global trends whereby new migrants are increasingly a cross section of those on the move in Europe and beyond.

The analysis focuses on people recorded as being born abroad and how these numbers help illustrate the different periods of arrival for people born in different countries. However, this does not take into account that many born overseas will have become UK citizens since arriving; nor does it reflect subsequent generations who were born in the UK. Therefore, the numbers quoted may not be indicative of the total number of people resident in the UK now whose families came from other parts of the globe.

Pre-1951

In the 1951 Census of England and Wales there were 492,000 Irish-born residents, accounting for more than a quarter (26 per cent) of all foreign born residents. Migration of Irish-born to Great Britain stretches back to the famine of the 1840s in Ireland and was associated with rapid industrialisation in Great Britain throughout the nineteenth century.

Those born in Poland were the second highest ranking non-UK born group in 1951, accounting for 8.0 per cent (152,000) of all foreign born residents; this was the result of an influx of Polish migrants during and after the Second World War, mainly former service personnel who had fled Poland in 1939 and were reluctant to return after 1945. Only 13 per cent of Polish-born residents in 1961 remained resident in 2011. Of the 152,000 Polish-born in 1951, 106,000 (70 per cent) were male. Only three per cent of the 579,000 Polish-born residents in 2011 had arrived before 1961; therefore most of the post war Polish-born arrivals had either died or left the UK by the time of the new migration flows which followed Poland's accession to the EU.

India was the third highest ranking non-UK country of birth in 1951, accounting for 5.9 per cent (111,000) of all foreign born. Many of these were the children of British service personnel born in India before Independence in 1947.

German and Russian-born ranked fourth and fifth respectively in 1951, representing 5.1 per cent (96,000) and 4.1 per cent (76,000) of the foreign born population of England and Wales in that year. Many of the German-born were political refugees who had fled to Britain in the 1930s, while others were the spouses of British servicemen stationed in Germany after 1945. Those born in 'Russia' (the term used in the 1951 Census tables to denote the USSR) may have included political refugees, former prisoners of war and those from non-Russian ethnic groups (including those from territories formally incorporated into the USSR only after the Second World War) who did not wish to return to the post-war Soviet Union.

Canadian-born, Australian-born and French-born residents were among the top ten non-UK countries of birth in early post-war censuses, but subsequently did not rank as highly.

1951-1961

Between 1951 and 1961 the Irish-born population increased by 39 per cent to 683,000; since 1961 the numbers of those born in the Republic of Ireland have reduced at each successive census, though Irish-born residents featured continually in the top five non-UK countries of birth between 1951 and 2011. Of the key non-UK countries of birth represented in the population of England and Wales in 1961, fewer than a quarter of Irish-born were still resident in England and Wales in 2011; therefore over three quarters had either emigrated, perhaps returning to Ireland, or died. Nonetheless, 38 per cent of all Irish born residents of England and Wales in 2011 had arrived before 1961.

The Jamaican-born population increased from 6,000 to 100,000 between 1951 and 1961, a more than sixteen fold increase. In 1961, the total Caribbean born population in England and Wales was 172,000; therefore Jamaican-born represented more than half of the total Caribbean-born population at that time. The inflow of Jamaican-born continued into the 1960s, with their number increasing another 71 per cent between 1961 and 1971 to reach a peak of 171,000 in 1971. After that, numbers declined to 146,000 in 2001, before increasing again to 160,000 in 2011. Only 32 per cent of Jamaican-born residents in 1961 remained resident in 2011; many of these arrived as young children who accompanied their parents to the UK in the 1950s.

It is difficult to obtain a consistent figure for those born in other Caribbean countries and territories across successive censuses owing to definitional changes in categorisation for this broad region. However, for 2011 the numbers born in Caribbean countries (excluding Jamaica) sum to around 104,000¹; of these, 22,000 (21 per cent) arrived before 1961. The main reasons for emigration from the Caribbean nations to the UK were economic, both 'push' and 'pull', while subsequently migration to join relatives or others from the same Caribbean islands was also pertinent.

In 1961 Cyprus entered the top ten non-UK countries of birth with 42,000 Cypriot-born residents recorded in England and Wales; this number increased in the subsequent censuses, peaking at 83,000 in 1981. Many Cypriots fled the island following the outbreak of civil war in 1955, which continued through to 1964, despite gaining independence from the UK in 1960. There was a further phase of migration following the 1974 civil war; migration statistics identified that 20,000 Greek Cypriots subsequently entered the UK. As Cyprus was a Commonwealth country, many emigrating Cypriots chose to come to the UK.

Italian-born residents featured in the top ten non-UK countries of birth in each census from 1951 to 2001. Numbers of Italian-born more than doubled between 1951 and 1961, before reaching a peak of 103,000 in 1971.

1961-1971

Indian-born residents consistently accounted for a large proportion of the total foreign born population in all post-1945 censuses; the largest inter-censal percentage increase for this group was between 1961 (157,000) and 1971 (313,000) when the Indian-born population almost doubled. By 1971 the Indian-born population represented 10 per cent of all foreign born residents in England and Wales. The proportion of foreign born who were born in India in 2011 was 9.2 per cent.

The Pakistani-born population more than quadrupled during the 1960s, from 31,000 in 1961 to 136,000 in 1971, becoming the fifth highest ranking non-UK country of birth in 1971. This increase in the Pakistani-born population during the 1960s may partly relate to the war with India in 1965, and the 'pull' of employment in the UK. The Pakistani-born population of England and Wales continued to grow and ranked highly right through to the 2011 Census, where they comprised 6.4 per cent of the foreign born population in England and Wales.

About half of both Indian-born and Pakistani-born residents in England and Wales in 1971 were still resident in 2011; these high proportions reflect the migration of people of young working ages and their children from the Indian sub-continent in the 1960s. Twenty three per cent of Indian-born and 14 per cent of Pakistani-born resident in England and Wales in 2011 arrived before 1971. These relatively low percentages reflect the continued migration from these countries following the initial 1960s waves.

The Kenyan-born population in England and Wales began to increase during the 1960s, rising from 6,000 in 1961 to 58,000 in 1971; many of these migrants were East African Asians (descendants of migrants from the Indian sub-continent who had settled in East Africa during the British colonial administration) who had experienced discrimination in Kenya. This Kenyan-born population rose still further in the 1970s, reaching 100,000 in 1981. Sixty per cent of Kenyan-born residents in 2011 arrived before 1981; this was 82 per cent (83,000) of the 100,000 Kenyan born population recorded in the 1981 Census.

Those born in Singapore recorded in the 2011 Census (39,000) also showed a peak in arrivals during the 1960s, with 32 per cent of Singaporean-born arriving in that decade. This is likely to be related to the move towards Singapore's full independence from Britain in 1963 and secession from the Malaysian Confederation in 1965. Commonwealth links may have also influenced Singaporean migration to Britain.

1971-1981

The 1981 Census identified increases in migrants from other African Commonwealth (or former Commonwealth) countries:

- Ugandan-born increased by 270 per cent (from 12,000 to 45,000) between 1971 and 1981, owing to the forced expulsion of Ugandan-born Asians by the Amin regime in 1972; 44 per cent of the 60,000 Ugandan-born residents in 2011 arrived during the 1970s.
- There was also a notable arrival of Tanzanian-born residents in the 1970s: 31 per cent of the 35,000 Tanzanian-born residents in 2011 arrived during the decade 1971-1980. Part of the explanation for this may lie in the disruption caused in East Africa by the Ugandan crisis, and disruptions to food supplies as a result of droughts and famines in this period.
- Zimbabwean-born residents increased by 109 per cent (from 7,000 to 15,000) over the same period owing to protracted instability during the Zimbabwean independence war of the 1970s.

Over half (55 per cent) of Vietnamese-born residents in 2011 (29,000) arrived during the 1970s and 1980s, following the end of the Vietnam War in 1975. Subsequent arrivals were a result of the Vietnam-China war of 1979-80; many of these were ethnic Chinese 'boat people'.

Hong Kong was under British Governance until 1997, when it became a Special Administrative Region (SAR) of China. Preceding this change, the UK reclassified Hong Kong from a British Crown colony to a dependent territory (1983); in 1984 an agreement was signed to transfer sovereignty to China in 1997. These events, and close historical ties to the UK, may explain the arrivals in 1971-80 and 1991-2000 (20 per cent and 16 per cent of Hong Kong-born residents of England and Wales in 2011 respectively).

The Iranian revolution, resulting in the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran in 1979, is likely to be a key reason for a peak in arrivals from Iran in the late 1970s: 16 per cent of the 82,000 Iranian-born residents in 2011 arrived in the 1970s.

1981-1991

The 1991 Census recorded 104,000 Bangladeshi-born, compared to 48,000 in 1981 (a rise of 118 per cent). This wave mainly followed the Bangladeshi war of independence in 1971 and subsequent military coup (1975) and will also have been influenced by the poverty and instability in the country in the 1980s and earlier. The increase in Bangladeshi-born continued in the 1990s, rising a further 47 per cent to 153,000 in the period 1991-2001. In the 2011 Census, 98,000 Bangladeshi-born people stated that they arrived in the UK before 1991; this was 94 per cent of the number of Bangladeshi-born recorded in the 1991 Census (104,000). This suggests that Bangladeshi-born who arrived before 1991 generally remained in the UK and that many of them were young people of working age at arrival.

Notes for migrations to England and Wales pre-1991

1. These figures exclude Guyana which in 2011 was categorised as being part of South America and not the Caribbean.

7. Migrations to England and Wales between 1991 and 2011

1991-2001

South African-born have long been an important immigrant group in England and Wales. Before the 1990s many South Africans had left during the Apartheid era; after majority rule was established in 1994 the numbers of South African-born in the UK continued to rise: up 108 per cent from 64,000 in 1991 to 132,000 in 2001. Of the 191,000 South-African born people recorded in the 2011 Census, 94,000 stated that they arrived in the UK before 2001; this was 71 per cent of the South-African born recorded in the 2001 Census (132,000). South African-born was the eighth highest ranking non-UK country of birth in the censuses of both 2001 and 2011.

A second wave of Zimbabwean-born migrants arrived after 1991 as a result of political repression and ethnic discrimination, with Zimbabwean born residents in England and Wales rising by 136 per cent in the decade 1991-2001 and a further 151 per cent in the decade 2001-2011. Asylum applications¹ from Zimbabwe nationals increased from 1,700 between 1992-2000² to 30,300 during 2001-2011.

There were a large number of residents in the 2011 Census stating a year of arrival during the 1990s, covering a number of separate and concentrated arrival events from individual countries. Many of these occurred as a result of civil conflicts. For example:

- Of the 28,000 Kosovar-born residents in 2011, 70 per cent arrived during the period 1997-2000³. This peak is associated with the war in Kosovo (1997-1999); this is likely to have been responsible for the high number of Albanian-born residents arriving in the same period, since the conflict affected neighbouring Albania: of the 13,000 Albanian-born residents in 2011, 35 per cent (5,000), arrived during the period 1997-2000.
- In 2011 there were 73,000 Iraqi-born residents in England and Wales; 25 per cent of these arrived in the period 1991-2000 following the First Gulf War (1991) and 26 per cent (19,000)⁴ arrived in the period 2001-2003 at the time of the Second Gulf War (2003). This peak early in the last decade is apparent in asylum statistics, where applications from Iraqi nationals totalled 25,300 between 2001-2003¹,⁵.
- Of the 63,000 Afghan-born residents in 2011, 30 per cent (18,900) arrived during the period 1991-2000. Many of these residents fled the country during the Taliban regime of the 1990s, culminating in the NATO-led intervention of 2001. There were 15,400 asylum applications from Afghan nationals during the decade 1991-2000. A further 24 per cent (15,100) arrived during 2001-2003 following the downfall of the Taliban. This is also reflected in asylum statistics, where applications from Afghan nationals totalled 18,400 during this three year period (exceeding the previous decade's total).
- In 2011 there were 101,000 Somali-born residents in England and Wales. Many of these (36 per cent) arrived during the 1990s following the Somali civil war in 1991. As the civil war continued, Somali-born residents continued to emigrate, with a further 25 per cent (25,700) of residents in 2011 arriving during 2001-2003. Asylum applications from Somali nationals totalled 32,100 between 1991-2000, and 18,000 between 2001-2003.
- The Sri Lankan civil war began in 1983 and did not conclude until 2009. While numbers of arrivals started to increase during the 1980s, the peak was during the 1990s when 27 per cent (35,000) of the 127,000 Sri Lankan-born residents in 2011 arrived. Between 1991 and 2001 there were 30,400 asylum applications from Sri Lankan nationals suggesting that many of the arrivals in this period were related to the civil war.
- A second peak of Iranian-born can be seen in the 1990s when 22 per cent of Iranian-born residents in 2011 arrived following the end of the Iran-Iraq war (1980-90).
- There were 23,000 residents of England and Wales born in Sierra Leone in 2011. Of these, 38 per cent arrived during the period 1991-2000, coinciding with the civil war in Sierra Leone which began in 1991 and ended in 2002.
- Of the 4,000 Rwandan-born residents in 2011, 36 per cent arrived between 1997 and 2000 and 32 per cent between 2001 and 2003. This peak in migration followed the beginning of the Rwandan civil war in 1990 and ensuing genocide in that country.
- Some 46 per cent of the 14,000 Angolan-born residents in 2011 arrived in the period 1997-2003. Many of these are likely to have left Angola due to the civil war which began following independence in 1975 and did not end until 2002.
- The break up of the former Yugoslavia after 1992 resulted in a number of conflicts in the Balkan region. This included the Bosnian war (1992-95) which resulted in a peak in arrivals in 1991-1996, accounting for 66 per cent of the 8,000 Bosnian-born residents in England and Wales in 2011. Of the 8,000 Croatian-born residents in 2011, 33 per cent arrived in the period 1997-2000; 19 per cent of the 9,000 residents born in Serbia and Montenegro arrived in the same period.

A period of political unrest and subsequent economic decline may explain the number of arrivals of Ghanaian-born residents in 1981-1990 (18 per cent), with a peak in 1991-2000 of 22 per cent.

Portugal joined the European Union in 1986, allowing free movement of Portuguese citizens to the UK. This political change may explain the large proportion of Portuguese-born residents in 2011 (23 per cent) who arrived during the decade 1991-2000.

Over a third (35 per cent) of Turkish-born residents also arrived during 1991-2000; this may be related to the poor economy in Turkey during the 1990s.

2001-2011

Half of all foreign born residents in 2011 stated that their year of arrival was during the period 2001-2011; these countries of birth were different from earlier migration groups. Many of the most recent arrivals may be students and temporary workers who will subsequently return to their country of birth.

The largest increase during 2001-2011 was for the Polish-born population, with almost a ten-fold increase from 58,000 to 579,000. This was the result of Poland joining the European Union in May 2004 along with a number of other central-Eastern European countries⁶. This was a second wave of Polish immigration following earlier arrivals after the Second World War and enumerated in the 1951 Census. Other countries in the EU continued to place restrictions on migration from the EU Accession countries⁶ until 2011, which helped to make the UK (along with the Republic of Ireland and Sweden, who also did not impose restrictions) more attractive from 2004.

In addition to Poland, peaks in year of arrival can also be seen for residents born in other countries that joined the EU in 2004 and 2007. In 2011 there were 29,000 Hungarian-born (59 per cent), 36,000 Latvian-born (66 per cent), 63,000 Lithuanian-born (65 per cent) and 43,000 Slovakian-born (75 per cent), who arrived in the six year period following EU Accession (2004-2009). In addition, 68 per cent of the 80,000 Romanian-born residents and 54 per cent of the 46,000 Bulgarian-born residents arrived following Romanian and Bulgarian accession to the EU in January 2007, although transitional controls on these countries will not be lifted until 01 January 2014.

One of the largest percentage increases for country of birth in this decade was for Nigerian-born, rising from 87,000 in 2001 to 191,000 in 2011, with most of this increase due to arrivals in the period 2004-2009. Reasons are complex, but may include the restoration of democracy in 1999, civil conflict, the economic opportunities afforded by migration to the UK and the rapid population growth in Nigeria leading to a larger pool of potential migrants.

Clear peaks in immigration during the first decade of the current century can be seen from a number of countries, relating closely to key political changes. In 2011 there were 50,000 Nepalese-born residents: there is a clear peak in arrivals during 2004-09 (63 per cent). Changes in UK legislation during 2007-2009 permitting greater residency and pension rights to former Ghurkha soldiers and their families are likely to be the main reason for this peak in arrivals; however the inflow of Nepalese-born residents may also in part relate to the long civil war in Nepal during the same decade.

Another group whose arrivals peaked over the last decade were those born in the Philippines: of the 123,000 resident in 2011, 64 per cent arrived in the period 2001-2009. Much of this migration may have been fuelled by economic uncertainty in the Philippines.

A peak in arrivals of Spanish-born residents (20 per cent) can be seen in the period 2007-09. This is most likely to be related to the economic crisis which resulted in the collapse of property and construction industries in Spain.

Chinese-born residents more than doubled from 22,000 to 48,000 during the period 1991-2001. There was a further marked increase to 152,000 in 2011, with China ranking eleventh highest for non-UK countries of birth in 2011. This was the second largest absolute increase in the decade 2001-2011 for individually named countries, behind only Poland. For the Chinese-born, 76 per cent of residents in 2011 arrived during the decade 2001-2011. This includes 29 per cent of Chinese-born residents who arrived in the period 2010-2011, reflecting the high proportion of students aged 16 and over within the Chinese-born population (45 per cent). This is supported by [other data sources](#), such as Home Office statistics on study visas and the International Passenger Survey (IPS).

Notes for migrations to England and Wales between 1991 and 2011

1. Asylum statistics are available by nationality from 2001-2012 in the 2013 immigration statistics. Publications covering arrival years prior to this are available through the national archives website.
2. Asylum applications for Zimbabwe nationals are not reported prior to 1992.
3. Year of arrival data for the two most recent decades 1991-2000 and 2001-2011 are further sub-divided in Census table CT0161 into smaller sub-periods; however the table does not provide arrival data for individual years owing to disclosure issues and to protect the confidentiality of information provided by individual Census respondents. These relate to those countries with very small counts.
4. Some numbers throughout this report may not sum due to rounding.
5. Not all asylum seekers are granted refugee status. There may be cases where asylum applications exceed the arrival figures reported in the Census 2011. This is likely to be attributable to the fact that some of those who claimed asylum would have left the country prior to the 2011 Census,
6. These countries were: Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia, along with Cyprus and Malta in May 2004; Bulgaria and Romania in January 2007 and Croatia in June 2013.

8. Background notes

1. Univariate 2011 Census data are available via the [Neighbourhood Statistics](#) website. Relevant table numbers are provided in all download files within this publication. Multivariate data are available via the [Nomis](#) website.
2. Further information on future releases is available online in the [2011 Census Prospectus](#).
3. ONS has ensured that the data collected meet users' needs via an extensive [2011 Census outputs consultation](#) process in order to ensure that the 2011 Census outputs will be of increased use in the planning of housing, education, health and transport services in future years.
4. ONS is responsible for carrying out the census in England and Wales. Simultaneous but separate censuses took place in Scotland and Northern Ireland. These were run by the National Records of Scotland (NRS) and the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) respectively.
5. A person's place of usual residence is in most cases the address at which they stay the majority of the time. For many people this will be their permanent or family home. If a member of the services did not have a permanent or family address at which they are usually resident, they were recorded as usually resident at their base address.
6. All key terms used in this publication are explained in the [2011 Census glossary](#). Information on the [2011 Census geography products for England and Wales](#) is also available.
7. All census population estimates were extensively quality assured, using other national and local sources of information for comparison and review by a series of quality assurance panels. An extensive range of [quality assurance, evaluation and methodology](#) papers were published alongside the first release in July 2012 and have been updated in this release, including a [Quality and Methodology \(QMI\) document](#).
8. The census developed the coverage assessment and adjustment methodology to address the problem of undercounting. It was used for both usual residents and short-term residents. The coverage assessment and adjustment methodology involved the use of standard statistical techniques, similar to those used by many other countries, for measuring the level of undercount in the census and providing an assessment of characteristics of individuals and households. ONS adjusted the 2011 Census counts to include estimates of people and households not counted.
9. The 2011 Census achieved its overall target response rate of 94 per cent of the usually resident population of England and Wales, and over 80 per cent in all local and unitary authorities. The population estimate for England and Wales of 56.1 million is estimated with 95 per cent confidence to be accurate to within +/- 85,000 (0.15 per cent).

10. Details of the policy governing the release of new data are available by visiting www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/code-of-practice/index.html or from the Media Relations Office email: media.relations@ons.gsi.gov.uk