



Home Office

**UK Border
Agency**

KEY FACTS AND FIGURES

NOVEMBER 2009

Working together to protect the public

The UK Border Agency was established in April 2008 to create a strong new force at the border by bringing together immigration, customs and visa checks to strengthen the UK Border. We want the UK to stay open and attractive for both business and visitors, but at the same time we are determined to deliver a system of border control which is among the strongest in the world.

Our purpose is to secure our borders and control migration for the benefit of our country. We will do this by delivering three strategic objectives:

- We will protect our border and our national interests
- We will tackle border tax fraud, smuggling and immigration crime
- We will implement fast and fair decisions

The new agency is equipped to protect our border in the 21st Century. We have a budget of more than £2bn and 25,000 staff, including more than 9,000 warranted customs and immigration officers. They work in local communities, at the border and in 135 countries around the world.

WE WILL STRENGTHEN OUR BORDER

Delivering our strategy

- We will secure our border using our single border force.
- We will use new technology to screen high risk individuals and goods.
- We will use fingerprint checks to stop illegal immigration.
- We will facilitate trade and travel that benefits the UK.
- We have a new border force with the strongest customs and immigration powers.

Facts and figures

- Since January this year, we have searched over 723,000 freight vehicles to check for illegal migrants, and we have stopped over 22,900 individual attempts to cross the channel illegally.
- We are extending the number of visitors who require visas, and since December 2007, 100% of visas have been fingerprint based. We have enrolled over 5 million sets of fingerprints, detecting thousands of false identities.
- So far we have issued 90,000 identity cards to foreign nationals, exceeding our target by 15,000, a month ahead of schedule.
- We have completed the installation of facial recognition gates in 10 terminals.
- We continue to work with the French Government to build on our joint operations to further reduce the number of illegal immigrants attempting to cross the border to the UK. In Calais, this will see state-of-the-art technology boosting searches of vehicles and goods heading for Britain.

WE WILL CONTROL THE NUMBERS COMING TO THE UK TO MAXIMISE BENEFITS FOR BRITAIN

Delivering our strategy

- Migration has brought us economic benefits but we need to control it carefully as there can be impacts on public services and communities.
- We have introduced a flexible Points Based System to ensure non-EEA migrants have the skills we need. With these changes and better enforcement around illegal immigration and illegal working we expect to see a fall in the number of migrants coming here.
- Protectionism is not the answer; a flexible immigration system rather than an arbitrary cap is better for British business and the British economy.
- In hard times we are using the flexible Points Based System to ensure we have the right mix of skills, and have recently increased the requirements of highly skilled migrants.
- We will listen to independent advice on how to fill skills gaps.
- We will boost the skills of the UK workforce to get the jobs of the future and drive economic growth.
- We will offer resident workers a fair chance at applying for jobs.
- We will attract the best talent to the UK by keeping the UK's position as a global leader in international education.
- We will stop the automatic right to stay; newcomers must earn their citizenship by speaking English, paying taxes and obeying the law.
- We will protect genuine refugees, but remove those who come to the UK for economic reasons and clog up our asylum system.

Facts and figures

- In 2008 net migration, as measured by the International Passenger Survey, fell to 118,000 from 209,000 in 2007, the lowest since the eight accession countries joined the EU in 2004. This represents a reduction of 90,000 in net migration to the UK.
- The introduction of the points-based system has radically improved our ability to respond quickly to changing economic circumstances. This year we have:
 - Strengthened the Resident Labour Market Test (RLMT) for Tier 2 skilled jobs, so that employers must advertise jobs to resident workers through JobCentre Plus before they can bring in a worker from outside Europe; and,
 - Tightened new criteria against which highly skilled migrants seeking entry to the UK are judged, by raising the qualifications and salary level required for Tier 1 of the PBS to a Masters degree and a minimum salary of £20,000.
- We have also announced that in 2010 we will:
 - Increase the resident labour market test to 4 weeks; and,
 - Raise the minimum salary level for a skilled worker under Tier 2 from £17,000 to £20,000.
- In December 2008 we successfully met our target to conclude 60% of new asylum cases within 6 months.
- Asylum intake is less than a third of the level when it peaked in 2002 (84,130).
- The UK Border Agency is continuing to address older asylum cases with more than 220,000 cases concluded to the end of September 2009. This is an increase of more than 22,000 since the end of May.
- Migrants from the A8 accession countries have paid more in taxes than they've received in benefits and public services each year since 2004. In 2008/09, contribution to tax revenues exceeded expenditure by a ratio of 1.37.

WE WILL COUNT PEOPLE IN AND OUT OF THE COUNTRY

Delivering our strategy

- We will use electronic controls to count people in and out at the border.
- e-Borders will improve the security, efficiency and effectiveness of the border. It will:
 - keep out or monitor individuals that could cause harm to the UK;
 - be capable of processing increasing numbers of travellers;
 - make legitimate travel easier, along with use of other technology such as biometric passports, iris and facial recognition systems; and,
 - count people in and out of the country.
- We will make life hard for anyone who overstays and get stricter at deporting those who don't play by the rules.
- We will include safeguards for the law-abiding majority.

Facts and figures

- e-Borders has screened 112 million passenger movements so far, resulting in over 4,000 arrests, and significant counter-terrorist interventions.
- 67,980 people were removed or departed voluntarily from the UK in 2008 – a 7% increase on 2007 (63,365).
- We are expanding our detention capacity to increase our removals further. Brook House (a 426 bed centre near Gatwick) opened in March 2009.

WE WILL TARGET CRIMINALS

Delivering our strategy

- We will stop known criminals and other high-risk individuals from coming to the UK.
- We will strengthen our ability to stop drugs, weapons and illegal goods at the border.
- We will use immigration and customs powers to target law-breakers.
- We will continue to deport record numbers of foreign criminals.
- We will be tougher on European criminals removing those who cause harm to our communities.

Facts and figures

- We deported a record numbers of foreign prisoners in 2008 - nearly 5,400.
- We have reduced the threshold of consideration for automatic deportation to all foreign criminals convicted of a crime who receive sentences of 12 months or more.
- Our Immigration Crime Teams helped prosecute in excess of 2,600 offenders involved in people smuggling and other immigrations crimes.
- Since January this year, we have seized in excess of 356 million smuggled cigarettes - representing a potential loss of more than £69 million in tax revenue.
- During the same period, technology used in customs checks at ports has helped in the seizure of illegal drugs worth over £157 million.

WE WILL ENSURE FAIRNESS AND MINIMISE LOCAL IMPACTS

Delivering our strategy

- We will take tough action against rogue employers who knowingly hire illegal workers or exploit vulnerable workers.
- We will control access to benefits or social housing for migrants.
- We will deploy new Local Immigration Teams to track down the most harmful illegal immigrants and to respond to local concerns.
- We will continue to provide fair funding to reduce pressure on housing, health, schools and policing.
- We will make migrants pay into a £35 million pound fund to help manage the transitional impacts of migration.

Facts and figures

- Local Immigration Teams are being established to serve communities in the UK. By December 2011 there will be a team serving every community in the country.
- Over 2,200 of the world's most vulnerable refugees have been resettled through our Gateway Protection Programme. The programme is operated in conjunction with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and our local authority partners.
- Migrants can have a positive impact on public services through employment in public sector occupations, for example the OECD in 2007, estimated that 33% of doctors working in the UK health service in 2005 were trained overseas.
- Migrants from the A8 accession countries are 60% less likely than the native population to receive benefits and are 58% less likely to live in social housing. When these results are adjusted for demographic factors, such as age, gender, education and dependent children, accession migrants are still 13% less likely to claim benefits and 28% less likely to live in social housing.

OUR 10-POINT DELIVERY PLAN

The UK Border Agency's has announced 10 wide-ranging milestones for 2009 help ensure that we meet our ongoing commitment to further strengthen the border, count people in and out of the country and target criminals. Building on work already being done by the agency to strengthen the United Kingdom's immigration controls, the ten milestones to be met are:

1. **March 2009** - Open a new immigration removal centre to help remove immigration offenders.
2. **April 2009** - Use our Points Based System to ensure that migration matches the country's needs in hard times.
3. **April 2009** - Start charging migrants to create a multimillion-pound fund to reduce the impacts of migration on local services.
4. **April 2009** - Introduce new technology to help detect drugs and other illegal goods.
5. **May 2009** - Be tougher on European criminals, removing European nationals who cause harm to our communities.
6. **July 2009** - Start tough new visa controls, which will cover five countries.
7. **August 2009** - Have completed delivery of new facial recognition technology in 10 terminals, giving British passengers a faster, secure route through the border.
8. **November 2009** - Issue 75,000 compulsory identity cards to foreign nationals.
9. **December 2009** - Hit target to screen 120 million passengers entering and leaving the United Kingdom against security watch-lists, and introduce a new high-tech security centre.
10. **December 2009** - Deport a record number of foreign prisoners.

We have met the first seven milestones, and the eighth ahead of schedule.

NEW LEGISLATION

The Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Act 2009 received Royal Assent on 21 July.

Key measures will:

- Bring customs powers and functions at the border into the UK Border Agency;
- Create the framework for a new path to citizenship, ensuring citizenship is reserved for those who earn the right to stay;
- Provide a number of other changes to nationality law, including a new route to enable the children of foreign and Commonwealth members of the armed forces, and children born abroad to British mothers before 7 February 1961, to register as British Citizens;
- Enable students' study to be linked to the particular institution in the UK which sponsors them under the Points Based System;
- Extends powers to take fingerprints of foreign criminals, and extends powers of detention by immigration officers at ports to Scotland;
- Allow for the transfer of 'fresh claims' judicial review applications to the Upper Tribunal, which is part of the new, unified tribunal system;
- Introduce a new duty on the UK Border Agency to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in its work; and,
- Strengthen the law on people trafficking.

The provisions relating to the Common Travel Area which were included in the Bill when it was introduced to Parliament are not part of the Act. The Government remains committed to reform of the Common Travel Area and is now reviewing how best to take this policy forward.

The figures contained in this leaflet are based on both National Statistics and management information, which is subject to change.

Please see www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/aboutus/ourwork for further information, including sources for all the statistics contained in this leaflet.

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