Home > Immigration statistics, year ending June 2022



National statistics

How many people are detained or returned?

Updated 23 September 2022

Contents

- 1. Immigration detention
- 2. Returns
- 3. About the statistics
- 4. Data tables



© Crown copyright 2022

This publication is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. To view this licence, visit <u>nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3</u> or write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: <u>psi@nationalarchives.gov.uk</u>.

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

This publication is available at https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-statistics-year-ending-june-2022/how-many-people-are-detained-or-returned

<u>Back to 'Immigration statistics, year ending June 2022' content page</u> (https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-statistics-year-ending-june-2022).

Data on immigration detention relate to the year ending June 2022 and all comparisons are with 2019 (unless indicated otherwise), reflecting a comparison with the period prior to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Data on returns relate to the year ending March 2022, which is three months before the reporting on detention and other Immigration system data, to allow more time for returns to be recorded on the system and ensure the published figures are an accurate representation of the number of returns. All comparisons are with 2019 (unless indicated otherwise), reflecting a comparison with the period prior to the Covid-19 pandemic. See the user guide

(https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/user-guide-to-home-office-immigration-statistics--9) for more details.

On 11 March 2020, the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared the COVID-19 outbreak as a global pandemic. A range of restrictions were implemented in many parts of the world, and the first UK lockdown measures were announced on 23 March 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the UK immigration system, both in terms of restricting migrant movements to and from the UK and the impact on operational capacity.

Year ending comparisons that follow will include impacts resulting from the restrictions put in place during this period of the pandemic. All data include dependants, unless indicated otherwise.

This section contains data on:

- Individuals detained under Immigration Act powers
- Returns of people who do not have any legal right to stay in the UK

1. Immigration detention

An individual may be detained under immigration powers under certain circumstances, for example, whilst their identity is being established, where there is a risk of absconding, or in support of the return of an individual with no legal right to be in the UK. Where an individual is being detained in support of a return, detention may continue lawfully only for as long as there is a realistic prospect of removal within a reasonable time period.

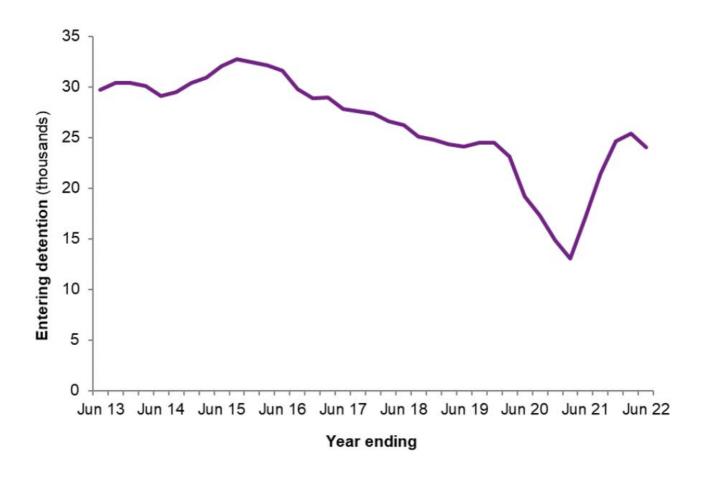
1.1 People entering immigration detention

24,004 people entered immigration detention in the year ending June 2022, this represented a small decrease of 2% compared with pre-pandemic levels in 2019. The profile of detainees and their length of detention, however, has changed. Since the pandemic, an increasing proportion of those entering detention have been small boat arrivals who have been detained in order to confirm their identity and register their asylum claim. Where an asylum claim can be considered in a

reasonable time frame, detention is maintained for return. Where it cannot, the individual should be released while their claim is considered. Prior to the pandemic the predominant use of detention was preparation for return.

There had been a general downward trend in the number of people entering detention from the peak in 2015 where around 32,400 people entered detention to around 24,500 in 2019, as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: People entering immigration detention in the UK, year ending June 2013 to year ending June 2022



Source: Immigration detention - Det_D01 (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1098088/detention-datasets-jun-2022.xlsx)

Albanians were the most common nationality entering detention in the latest year, accounting for 22% of the total, or 5,325 entrants, 53% higher than pre-pandemic levels in 2019. The high number of Albanian nationals entering detention reflected both their prominence amongst Foreign National Offender numbers and the increasing number of Albanians who arrived in small boats in the latest quarter. Iranians were the next most common with 3,936 entering detention, more than double the number from 2019, which reflected the large numbers that arrived by small boat.

The top 10 nationalities entering detention were mainly the same nationalities as the recent clandestine arrivals to the UK via small boats (as reported in the Irregular Migration to the UK, year ending June 2022

(https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/irregular-migration-to-the-uk-year-ending-june-2022), Home Office report), emphasising the role immigration detention has played in managing these new arrivals. The majority of other nationalities, however, remained below pre-pandemic levels.

1.2 People in immigration detention

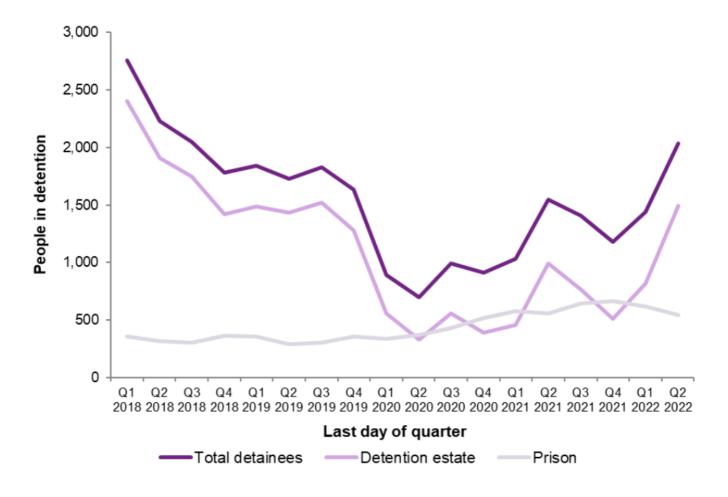
At the end of June 2022, there were 2,038 people in immigration detention (including those detained under immigration powers in prison), close to three times more than at the end of June 2020 (698) when the impact of the pandemic was most pronounced and 24% more than pre-pandemic levels at the end of December 2019 (1,637).

Figure 2 shows the number detained in the detention estate fell immediately following the pandemic but has now returned to pre-pandemic levels (1,494 at the end of June 2022 compared with 1,278 at the end of December 2019, before the pandemic).

The number of people detained in prisons under immigration powers increased from 359 before the pandemic at the end of December 2019 to 665 at the end of December 2021. This increase over the pandemic may have reflected difficulties in securing returns due to the global travel restrictions caused by the pandemic, as well as challenges around releasing some foreign national offenders (FNOs) into the community. Numbers have however started to decrease with 544 people detained in prisons under immigration powers at the end of June 2022.

The number of people in detention relate to a specific point in time and are subject to daily fluctuations. For example, if there were a large number of clandestine arrivals who had to be brought into detention just before the end of the period, the number of people in detention may be higher than if the same arrivals occurred a few days later.

Figure 2: People detained under immigration powers in the UK, by place of detention, as at the last day of the guarter, 2018 Q1 to 2022 Q2¹



Source: Immigration detention - Det_D02 (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1098088/detention-datasets-jun-2022.xlsx)

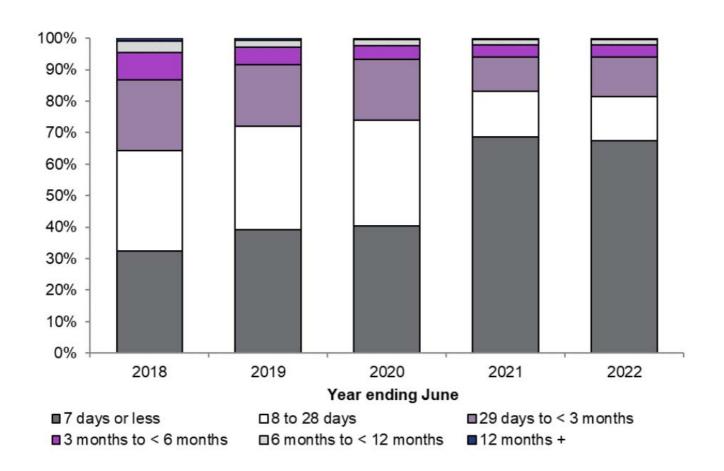
Notes:

1. The 'detention estate' comprises Immigration Removal Centres (IRC), Short-Term Holding Facilities (STHF) and Pre-departure Accommodation (PDA). It excludes those who are detained under Immigration powers in prisons – these are shown separately on the chart.

1.3 People leaving immigration detention

Figure 3 shows that an increasing proportion of people who were detained spent short periods in detention, with just over two-thirds (67%) of those who left detention in the year ending June 2022 detained for seven days or less. This proportion was substantially higher than the 39% in 2019 pre-pandemic. This change was in part due to an increasing proportion of detainees being detained for short periods on arrival to the UK before being bailed (85% of those leaving detention in the year ending June 2022 were bailed) with the most common reason being an asylum (or other) application being raised. Combined with lower numbers of returns, this has led to a smaller proportion of detainees being returned from detention; 14% (3,384) in the year ending June 2022, down from 37% (9,081) in 2019 pre-pandemic and 64% (16,577) in 2010.

Figure 3: People leaving immigration detention, by length of detention¹, year ending June 2018 to year ending June 2022



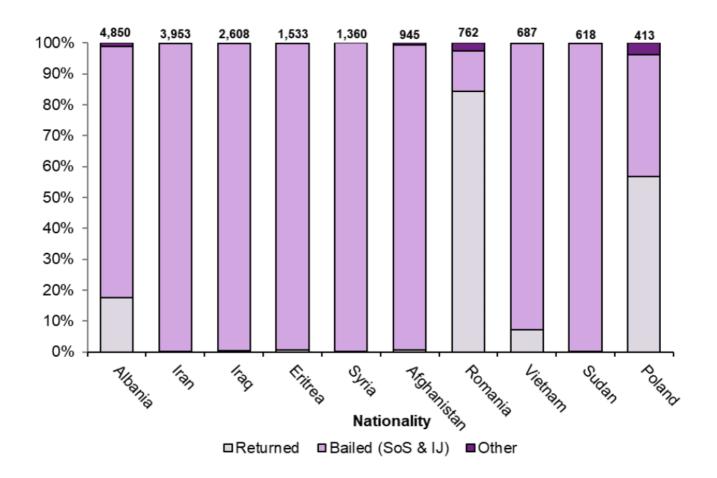
Source: Immigration detention - Det_D03 (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_d ata/file/1098088/detention-datasets-jun-2022.xlsx)

Notes:

1. < means 'less than'.

Figure 4 shows that among the top 10 nationalities leaving detention in the year ending June 2022, in most cases the individual was bailed. Of the top 10, only Albanian, Romanian and Polish nationals saw notable numbers returned to their country of origin.

Figure 4: Top 10 nationalities leaving detention by reason for leaving ^{1,2}, year ending June 2022



Source: Immigration detention - Det_D03 (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1098088/detention-datasets-jun-2022.xlsx)

Notes:

- 1. Bailed Secretary of State (SOS) & Immigration Judge (IJ).
- 2. Other reasons for leaving detention include being sectioned under the Mental Health Act, entering criminal detention, being granted leave to enter or remain in the UK, and detained in error. See the user guide user-guide-to-home-office-immigration-statistics--9) for more details.

2. Returns

The Home Office seeks to return people who do not have a legal right to stay in the UK. The different types of returns are grouped into three broad categories: enforced returns (people subject to administrative removal or deportation action which is carried out by the Home Office), voluntary returns (people who were liable to removal action or subject to immigration control but have left of their own accord, including with support from the Home Office), and port returns (people who are refused entry to the UK and have subsequently departed).

In the year ending March 2022, there were 3,231 enforced returns, 55% fewer than in 2019 pre-pandemic (7,198). The vast majority of enforced returns in the latest

year were of Foreign National Offenders (FNOs) and 51% were EU nationals.

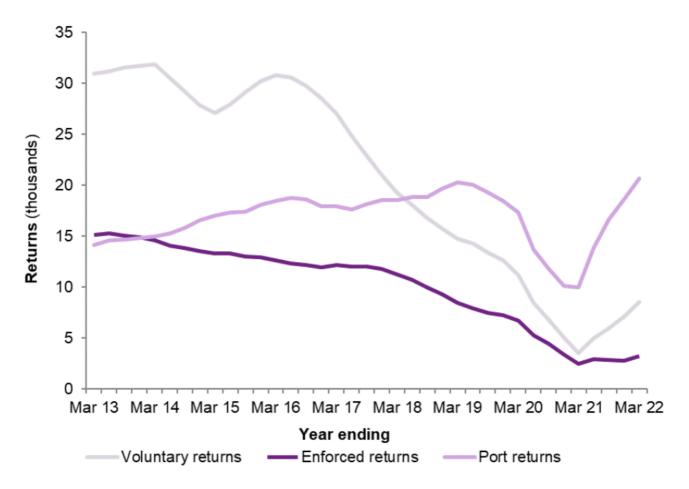
Enforced returns have been declining since the peak in 2012 with the most recent fall related to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, as Figure 5 shows. The number of enforced returns were very low during quarters that coincided with lockdowns starting in late March 2020 and early January 2021 (363 and 429). Numbers have increased to around 810 per quarter; however, this was still below the pre-pandemic levels in 2019 (which saw around 1,800 returns per quarter).

In the year ending March 2022, there were 8,485 voluntary returns. Voluntary returns have begun to increase following the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and were around 2.5 times higher than in the year ending March 2021. However, the overall voluntary returns figures were still 33% lower compared with 2019 (12,574), continuing the long-term downward trend since 2015.

There were 20,601 passengers who were refused entry at port and subsequently departed ('port returns') in the year ending March 2022. The number of port returns fell substantially in Q2 2020 as wery few passengers arrived in the UK (https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/immigration-and-border-statistics-relating-to-covid-19), with this type of return now 12% higher compared with 2019 (18,464).

The nationality make-up of port returns has changed. Prior to leaving the EU, port returns of EU nationals in 2020 accounted for 17% of all port returns; however, in the year ending March 2022 they accounted for 67%. This change was due to an increase in the number of port returns of EU nationals as well as a decrease in non-EU nationals, which fell during the pandemic and remained below prepandemic levels.

Figure 5: Returns from the UK, by type of return¹, year ending March 2013 to year ending March 2022



Source: Returns - Ret_D01 (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_d ata/file/1098089/returns-datasets-jun-2022.xlsx)

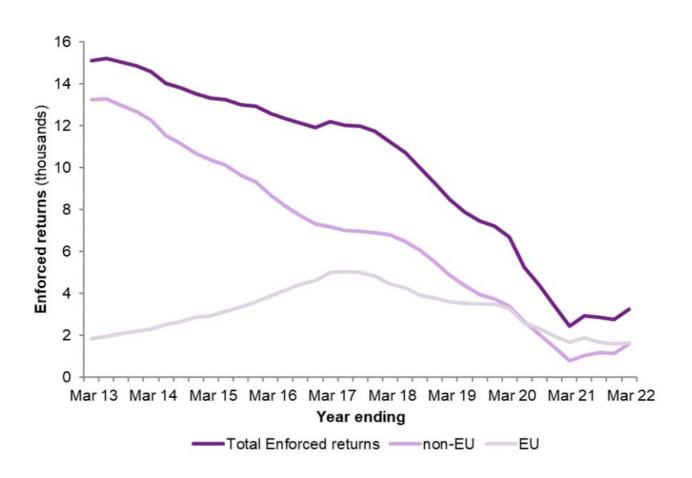
Notes:

1. 'Voluntary returns' include 'other verified returns' which are subject to upward revision (particularly for the last 12 months) as in some cases it can take time to identify people who have left the UK without informing the Home Office.

The longer-term fall in returns was due to a number of factors, including tighter screening of passengers prior to travel and changes in visa processes and regimes. The majority of enforced returns occurred from detention. As reported in the Home Office research 'Issues raised by people facing return in immigration detention' (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/issues-raised-by-people-facing-return-in-immigration-detention/issues-raised-by-people-facing-return-in-immigration-detention), (Home Office, 2021), 73% of people detained within the UK following immigration offences in 2019 were recorded as having raised one or more 'issues' that may have prevented their return. These issues included raising an asylum claim, legal challenge, or a claim to be a potential victim of modern slavery or human trafficking.

Figure 6 shows that between 2016 and 2019, enforced returns of both EU and non-EU nationals declined (continuing the longer-term trend for non-EU nationals since 2012). Enforced returns of both EU and non-EU nationals continued to fall following the COVID-19 pandemic. However, returns of non-EU nationals have risen in the year ending March 2022, to a similar level as returns of EU nationals.

Figure 6: Enforced returns from the UK, for EU and non-EU nationals, year ending March 2013 to year ending March 2022



Source: Returns - Ret D01

(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_d ata/file/1098089/returns-datasets-jun-2022.xlsx)

The top four nationalities for enforced returns were all European (three from the EU) and accounted for around two thirds of enforced returns in the year ending March 2022 – these were nationals of Albania (29%), Romania (20%), Poland (9%), and Lithuania (7%).

Three of these four nationalities (except Albania, which saw a slight increase), and the vast majority of other nationalities, saw decreases in enforced returns in the year ending March 2022, compared with pre-pandemic in 2019.

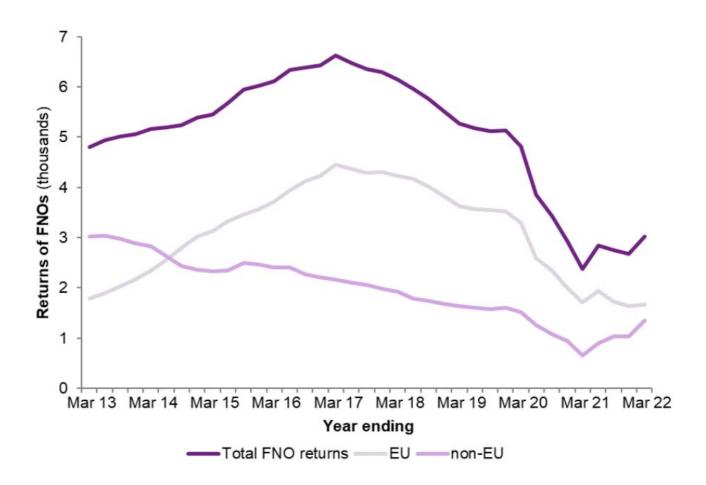
2.1 Returns of foreign national offenders (FNOs)

In the year ending March 2022, there were 3,025 FNOs returned from the UK, of which 55% were EU nationals (1,673) and 45% were non-EU nationals (1,352). FNO figures are a subset of the total returns figures and in the year ending March 2022 constituted the vast majority of enforced returns and 26% of enforced and voluntary returns combined.

This figure of 3,025 FNO returns was 41% lower than in 2019 (5,128). Figure 7 shows that, whilst non-EU FNO returns have started to increase following the

COVID-19 pandemic, FNO returns have shown an overall downward trend since 2016, following a steady increase before this, with the majority of FNOs returned being from the EU in every year since 2014.

Figure 7: Returns of FNOs¹ from the UK, for EU and non-EU nationals, year ending March 2013 to year ending March 2022



Source: Returns - Ret D03

(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1098089/returns-datasets-jun-2022.xlsx)

Notes:

1. An FNO is someone who is not a British citizen and is, or was, convicted in the UK of any criminal offence, or convicted abroad for a serious criminal offence.

2.2 Asylum related returns

Asylum related returns accounted for only 3% of total returns in the year ending March 2022.

In the year ending March 2022, there were 824 returns of people who had previously claimed asylum in the UK (see section 3.2 below for the definition of an asylum-related return). This was 75% fewer than in 2019 (3,332). This continued a downward trend since 2010, when there were 10,663 asylum-related returns. This sharp fall over the decade differed from non-asylum related returns.

3. About the statistics

3.1 Immigration detention

The statistics in this section show the number of entries into, and departures from, detention for those held solely under immigration powers. One individual may enter or leave detention multiple times in a given period and will therefore have been counted multiple times in the statistics. Statistics on foreign nationals held in prison for criminal offences are published by the Ministry of Justice in 'Offender management statistics quarterly' (https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/offender-management-statistics-quarterly).

The detention estate comprises immigration removal centres (IRC), short-term holding facilities (STHF) and pre-departure accommodation (PDA).

Data on those entering detention, by place of detention, relate to the place of initial detention. An individual who moves from one part of the detention estate to another will not have been counted as entering any subsequent place of detention. The data, therefore, do not show the total number of people who entered each part of the detention estate.

Data on those in detention relate to those in detention on the last day of the quarter and are therefore subject to daily fluctuations and can depend on how many people entered detention just before the end of the period.

Data on those leaving detention, by place of detention, relate to the place of detention immediately prior to being released. An individual who moves from one part of the detention estate to another has not been counted as leaving each part of the detention estate. The data, therefore, do not show the total number of people who left each part of the detention estate.

From July 2017, data on detention of immigration detainees in prisons are included in the immigration detention figures. Previously, individuals who were detained in prison would have been recorded in the data upon entering the detention estate through an IRC, STHF or PDA; now they are recorded upon entering immigration detention within prison. As a result, the length of detention of those entering prison prior to July 2017 will be recorded from the point at which they entered an IRC, STHF or PDA. Time spent in prison under immigration powers prior to entering an IRC, STHF or PDA is not included in the length of detention figures prior to July 2017.

For those entering detention from July 2017, the length of detention will include time spent in prison under immigration powers prior to entering an IRC, STHF or PDA. Data from 2017 Q3 onwards are therefore not directly comparable with earlier data. Further details of these changes can be found in the <u>user guide</u> (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/user-guide-to-home-office-immigration-statistics--9).

Following the introduction of the new Immigration Bail in Schedule 10 of the Immigration Bill 2016, the reason for leaving detention 'Bailed (SoS)' replaced the existing powers of 'granted temporary admission/release' from 15 January 2018, and 'Bailed (Immigration Judge)' replaced Bailed' to differentiate from 'Bailed (SoS)'. See the <u>user guide (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/user-guide-to-home-office-immigration-statistics--9)</u> for more details of this change.

Data on the number of children entering detention is subject to change. This will be as a result of further evidence of an individual's age coming to light, such as an age assessment.

Data on deaths in detention include any death of an individual while detained under immigration powers in an IRC, STHF, PDA, under escort, or after leaving detention if the death was as a result of an incident occurring while detained or where there is some credible information that the death might have resulted from their period of detention and the Home Office has been informed. The annual data for 2021 are included in table Det_05b in the Detention summary tables (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1098047/detention-summary-jun-2022-tables.ods). Further details can be found in the user-guide (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/user-guide-to-home-office-immigration-statistics--9).

3.2 Returns

Data on returns are published a quarter behind to allow more time for returns (particularly 'other verified returns') to be entered on the system prior to publication, ensuring that the published data are an accurate representation of the number of returns. We routinely revise the previous eight quarters of data as part of each quarterly release. Therefore, data for the most recent 8 quarters should be considered provisional. Further details on the revisions can be found in the returns section of the <u>user guide (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/user-guide-to-home-office-immigration-statistics--9)</u>.

The statistics in this section show the number of returns from the UK. One individual may have been returned more than once in a given period and, if that was the case, would be counted more than once in the statistics.

The Home Office seeks to return people who do not have a legal right to stay in the UK. This includes people who:

- enter, or attempt to enter, the UK illegally (including people entering clandestinely and by means of deception on entry)
- are subject to deportation action; for example, due to a serious criminal conviction
- overstay their period of legal right to remain in the UK
- · breach their conditions of leave
- have been refused asylum

The term 'deportations' refers to a legally-defined subset of returns, which are enforced either following a criminal conviction, or when it is judged that a person's removal from the UK is conducive to the public good. The published statistics refer to enforced returns which include deportations, as well as cases where a person has breached UK immigration laws, and those removed under other administrative and illegal entry powers that have declined to leave voluntarily. Figures on deportations, which are a subset of enforced returns, are not separately available.

Data on voluntary returns are subject to upward revision, so comparisons over time should be made with caution. In some cases, individuals who have been told to leave the UK will not notify the Home Office of their departure from the UK. In such cases, it can take some time for the Home Office to become aware of such a departure and update the system. As a result, data for more recent periods will initially undercount the total number of returns. 'Other verified returns' are particularly affected by this.

Asylum-related returns relate to cases where there has been an asylum claim at some stage prior to the return. This will include asylum seekers whose asylum claims have been refused and who have exhausted any rights of appeal, those returned under third-country provisions, as well as those granted asylum/protection but removed for other reasons (such as criminality).

In the 'Immigration detention' (https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/returns-and-detention-datasets#immigration-detention) tables, the number of people 'returned' under 'reason for leaving detention' includes people who were refused entry at port in the UK who were subsequently detained and then departed the UK. However, in the 'Returns' (https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/returns-and-detention-datasets#returns) tables, the number of returns from detention do not include those people, and so will be lower.

Prior to the UK leaving the EU, certain individuals applying for international protection (asylum) could be returned from the UK to the relevant EU member state that was deemed responsible for examining the application, under the Dublin Regulation (https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/asylum/examination-ofapplicants en). Data on returns, and requests for transfer out of the UK under the Dublin Regulation, by article and country of transfer, are available from the Asylum data tables (https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/immigration-statisticsdata-tables-year-ending-june-2022#asylum-and-resettlement). Strengthened inadmissibility rules came into effect on 1 January 2021, following the UK's departure from the EU. Data on cases dealt with under the inadmissibility rules, for January 2021 to June 2022, can be found in the How many people do we grant asylum or protection to? (https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-statisticsyear-ending-june-2022/how-many-people-do-we-grant-asylum-or-protection-to) section. Further details on the Dublin Regulation and inadmissibility rules are set out in the user guide (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/user-guide-to-home-officeimmigration-statistics--9).

Prior to the UK leaving the EU, nationals from the EU could be returned for abusing or not exercising Treaty rights or deported on public policy grounds (such as criminality).

<u>Eurostat (https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/migration-asylum/managed-migration/database)</u> publishes a range of enforcement data from EU member states. These data can be used to make international comparisons.

3.3 Windrush Scheme

The Windrush generation refers to people from Caribbean countries who were invited by the British government between 1948 and 1971 to migrate to the UK as it faced a labour shortage due to the destruction caused by World War II. Not all of these migrants have documentation confirming their immigration status and, therefore, some may have been dealt with under immigration powers.

Data relating to the Windrush compensation scheme are published as part of the Home Office <u>Transparency data (https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/migration-transparency-data)</u>.

4. Data tables

Data referred to here can be found in the following tables:

- Immigration detention summary tables
 (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1098047/detention-summary-jun-2022-tables.ods)
- <u>Detailed immigration detention datasets (https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/returns-and-detention-datasets#immigration-detention)</u>
- Returns summary tables (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment data/file/1098046/returns-summary-jun-2022-tables.ods)
- <u>Detailed returns datasets (https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/returns-and-detention-datasets#returns)</u>

We welcome your feedback

If you have any comments or suggestions for the development of this report, please provide feedback by emailing

<u>MigrationStatsEnquiries@homeoffice.gov.uk</u>. Please include the words 'PUBLICATION FEEDBACK' in the subject of your email.

We're always looking to improve the accessibility of our documents. If you find any problems or have any feedback relating to accessibility, please email us.

See section 7 of the 'About this release'

(https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-statistics-year-ending-june-2022/about-this-release) section for more details.

↑ Back to top

OGL

All content is available under the <u>Open Government Licence</u> <u>v3.0</u>, except where otherwise stated

