



Home Office

## Border & Immigration Agency

# KEY FACTS AND FIGURES

## JUNE 2007

Building an immigration system which is fair, effective, transparent and trusted

### THE BORDER AND IMMIGRATION AGENCY

Our four strategic objectives are to:

- Strengthen our borders
- Fast-track asylum decisions
- Ensure and enforce compliance with our immigration laws
- Boost Britain's economy

### THE CONTEXT

Since the 1960's, the global movement of people has more than doubled. By 2020, another 1 billion people will join the labour market in the developing world.

We need to take action to strengthen and modernise our borders and immigration system.

We want to realise the many benefits of migration - economic, social and cultural - and operate successfully in the global economy. This is essential to the UK's continued prosperity.

But we must also protect public services against abuse, and tackle the damage caused by people traffickers and illegal working.

The public must be confident that only those people the UK needs are able to come here and those who wish to abuse the rules will be stopped before they travel.

We will continue to welcome visitors, people with the skills the UK needs and the international students who make such an important financial contribution to our education system.

We will offer protection - as we have always prided ourselves in doing - to those fleeing persecution.

But we have learnt from the experience of Australia and their points system, and the US and their border security. There will be clear selection criteria to work or study here and tough checks to get into the UK.

Those who abide by the rules will find the new system quicker, simpler and more transparent. Those who break the rules will not be able to access our benefits and will be removed. This is an immigration system that is fair and effective.

### DELIVERING OUR STRATEGY

**We are putting in place tougher checks abroad - and we'll only allow in the people that Britain needs**

- In the last 10 years we've turned down over 2 million people who didn't qualify for a visa.
- Anyone who does need a visa - three quarters of the world's population - will have their fingerprints taken when they apply.
- We've added extra checks on passengers overseas, to stop illegal immigrants before they even get on the plane, boat or train.
- We're bringing in an Australian style system to govern who we do let in to work or study.

**We'll count everyone in and out of Britain and our border forces will have enhanced powers**

- We've tripled the number of immigration officers and will be putting them in uniform - so you'll see a much stronger presence guarding the border.
- Our immigration officers at the border will have extra powers to combat immigration crime and track down the criminals who bring in three quarters of all illegal immigrants.

**We're doubling the budget for immigration policing, and bringing in compulsory biometric ID for foreign nationals**

- We remove an immigration offender every 9 minutes.
- For the first time ever we're removing more failed asylum seekers than are making unfounded applications.
- ID cards will be compulsory for foreign nationals, to stop fraudulent access to benefits and public services.

**We'll target businesses and traffickers who exploit illegal working**

- There are tough new laws to tackle gang-masters who exploit illegal migrant workers.
- Employers who cheat the system by using illegal labour will face much bigger fines - and be named and shamed.
- Anyone caught working illegally will risk being fined and losing their wages, as well as being deported.

## We'll bring in those we do need to support our economy

- Low skilled migration from outside the EU has been ended.
- Our new rules will help employers and universities bring in the brightest and the best, who can make a significant contribution to Britain - and we'll work alongside them to make that happen.

## The Border and Immigration Agency will deliver an improved immigration system

- We're creating a new kind of organisation to manage and enforce the system properly.
- The new Agency will be more open, more accountable, and regionally managed so you'll know what's going on where you live.
- A new independent committee will give expert advice on who we need to bring to the UK - and a powerful new inspectorate will ensure Parliament and the public know what's going on.

## Action Overseas

- In 2005 our global UKvisas network handled over 2.5m visa applications, around **460,000 of these were turned down** because they failed our checks.
- UKvisas now collects biometric data in 72 countries. So far we have enrolled over 385,000 biometrics and have **matched over 4,000 fingerprints in connection with previous immigration matters**. By 2008, we will take the biometrics of all visa applicants.
- **Asylum** applications are now at their **lowest level since 1993**. The fall has been dramatic from over 80,000 asylum claims in 2000 to around 23,500 in 2006.
- **By 2009** a new **points-based system** will strengthen and simplify the rules for work or study in the UK. Only people with the skills we need will be able to come here.
- **Low skilled migration from outside Europe has been ended** and there are strict limits on workers from Romania and Bulgaria so we can monitor the impact on the UK.

## Securing the Border

- **e-Borders**, for the first time, enables us to track people in and out of the country and ensure border checks on individuals are performed before they travel to the UK.

Semaphore, an operational prototype for e-Borders, has already generated nearly 12,000 alerts and over 1,000 arrests.

- **IRIS, based on iris recognition**, is being trialled as a quick and secure way for trusted travellers to clear immigration. Over **88,000 passengers** have enrolled to date.
- Over the last five years, our international network of airline liaison officers have **stopped nearly 180,000 people boarding planes** without proper documents - around two jumbo jets a week.
- Last year we **stopped 15,000 people crossing the Channel illegally**.
- For the same period, at our **juxtaposed controls in France and Belgium over 6,000 people were refused entry**.

## Increased Enforcement in the UK

- We will **double our frontline enforcement and compliance capacity** by April 2009.
- In 2006, we **removed 16,250 failed asylum seekers** (including voluntary returns) - more than the number of unfounded claims made.
- Someone whose asylum claim has failed is now removed or leaves voluntarily every half hour, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.
- In 2005 we **enforced the removal of over 12,000 non-asylum immigration offenders**, more than ever before.
- We **removed over 2,700 Foreign National Prisoners** between April 2006 and March 2007. We're continuing to make significant progress and removed 1,000 FNPs in the first three months of 2007 alone.

## Tackling Traffickers and Illegal Working

- In 2006, we carried out **over 5,200 illegal working operations**, 3,125 immigration offenders were arrested as a result.
- Between August 2005 and May 2007 **66 bogus colleges** were removed from the DfES approved list.

## Economic benefits of Migration

- Last year, **people from overseas spent a record £14.2bn in the UK**, the tourism industry alone employs 1.4m people.
- **Foreign students contribute an estimated £5bn annually** to the UK economy.

- Around one in four work permits were issued for people to work in **health or medicine**, one in six were issued for **IT** workers.
- From April 2008, a new **Migration Advisory Committee** of independent experts will advise on where the economy needs immigration and where it doesn't to ensure we get the best deal for the UK.

## A More Effective Organisation

- From April 2007, UK immigration has been managed by a new shadow Agency with more **autonomy** and **strict obligations** to meet published targets.
- We are already **dealing with 80% of asylum cases within 2 months**, in 1997 it took an average of 22 months.
- From April 2006 to end of March 2007, a **record 1.4 million immigration decisions** were made across all work areas with improved service standards and quality.
- A **new inspectorate** will provide an independent and transparent assessment of how the Agency is doing and where we need to improve.
- By Summer 2007, we will have **6 Regional Directors** with real authority to deliver more joined-up operations across the UK.

**This document is for Border and Immigration Agency managers for use as a reference guide to key information about the strategy.**

Border and Immigration Agency Communications Unit  
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