

Chair of the UK Statistics Authority, Sir Andrew Dilnot CBE

Graham Evans MP
House of Commons
LONDON
SW1A 0AA

19 June 2013

Dear Mr Evans

NET MIGRATION

Thank you for your letter dated 5 April about various statements that have been made in respect of net migration and the part that is accounted for by British citizens. I am sorry for the delay in responding; as my office advised yours, we did not receive the original until 30 May.

Most of the statements to which you refer relate to comparisons between the year to June 2012 and the year to June 2010. When looking at net migration over this period it is important to bear in mind that British citizens are included in both immigration and emigration estimates and that net migration is the difference between the totals. This can get confusing, so we have set out in the table below the most relevant figures.

Long-term international migration by citizenship, UK (Thousands)

	Year to June 2010	Year to June 2012 ^P
British citizens		
Immigration	96	76
Emigration	-128	-155
Net migration	-33	-79
Non-British citizens		
Immigration	487	439
Emigration	-219	-197
Net migration	268	242
Overall		
Immigration	582	515
Emigration	-347	-352
Net migration	235	163

Source: ONS Migration Statistics Quarterly Report (MSQR), February 2013¹, 'Table 1'
P = provisional

¹ <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/migration1/migration-statistics-quarterly-report/february-2013/msqr-feb13.html#tab-Migration-Statistics-Quarterly-Report--February-2013>

You will see that immigration of both British and non-British citizens are estimated to have fallen. Estimated emigration of British citizens rose, whilst emigration of non-British citizens fell. In net terms, emigration of British citizens rose whilst immigration of non-British citizens fell. It is also important to note that all these figures are estimates and have substantial margins of uncertainty around them.

Overall net migration is estimated to have fallen by 72,000 from 235,000 to 163,000. Net emigration of British citizens rose by 46,000 and there was also a fall in net immigration of non-British citizens of 26,000. This shows that the change in net migration of British citizens represents 64 per cent of the total change in net migration.

The second point you asked about was a statement that 'the fall in net migration into the UK since June 2010 is a result primarily of a fall in immigration to the UK'. This is not, we think, a direct quote from the ONS publication but is an acceptable statement in itself. Total estimated emigration changed little over this period (347,000 in the earlier year and 352,000 in the more recent one) but total immigration is estimated to have fallen from 582,000 to 515,000.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew Dilnot". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'A' and 'D'.

Sir Andrew Dilnot CBE