
Ed Humpherson, Director General for Regulation

Simon Palmer
Director of Home Office Analysis and Insight, Home Office
(by email)

06 April 2022

Dear Simon,

Transparency of statistics related to small boat crossings

I am writing about the public use of statistics on small boat crossings which are not already included as part of an existing publication or ad-hoc release.

There have been reports in the media, including [the BBC](#), [the Times](#) and [the Daily Mail](#), about the number of crossings made across the channel in recent days, quoting the Home Office as the source of figures. The release of figures on migrant crossings does not meet our expectations, as set out in our statement on [data transparency](#). These figures should be published in an accessible form, with context and sources clearly explained. Making the statistics equally accessible to all supports the public's confidence in the data and decisions made by government.

I have [previously written](#) to the Home Office about this issue. It is good that the Department has begun to publish official statistics on this topic, with the [first of these having been published](#) in February 2022. Further releases of these data have also been [pre-announced](#) by the Home Office for May 2022, August 2022 and November 2022. However, it is disappointing that outside of this regular release, migrant crossing data also continues to be released in a way that is not equally accessible to all.

Given the continued interest in and use of these data, we would urge the Home Office to consider whether a more frequent release of data on this topic would better meet user need. Additionally, where unpublished data are referred to unexpectedly, this information should be published as soon as possible after any statement has been made with any limitations clearly set out. This is an issue that has also arisen in relation to the use of unpublished data on false documents in a [Home Office news statement](#), which we understand you are looking into.

I am copying this letter to Jon Simmons (Head of Protection, Irregular Migration and Asylum Analysis and Migration Statistics) and Amy Baxter (Acting Head of Profession for Statistics).

Yours sincerely



Ed Humpherson
Director General for Regulation