1. Introduction

This EMN Country Factsheet provides a factual overview of the main policy developments in migration and international protection in the United Kingdom (UK) during 2016, including latest statistics.

2. International Protection including Asylum

In November, the UK made a technical change to the Immigration Rules to more clearly set out the concepts of first country of asylum and safe third country, incorporating the requirements of Articles 25 and 26 of the Directive on minimum standards on procedures in Member States for granting and withdrawing refugee status.

Also, ‘Assisted Decision Making’ has been rolled out to all units in the UK. This consists of a web-based application that ensures all elements of refugee status determination process are covered.

In 2016, the costs of appeals have been lowered to £80 without a hearing and £140 with a hearing. Asylum seekers on legal aid and/or Asylum Support are exempt from paying the appeal fee.

The Detained Fast Track (DFT) system remains suspended and will only be resumed once there is certainty that the right structures are in place to minimise any risk of unfairness.

In September, the Adults at Risk policy was introduced, putting in place additional safeguards for detainees considered ‘at risk’.

Regarding resettlement activities, the UK runs three main resettlement programmes:

- The Gateway Protection Programme (GPP). A quota-based resettlement scheme, available for refugees with considerable humanitarian or protection needs. A total of 834 people were resettled under this scheme in 2016.
- The Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme (SVPRS). This was set up in response to the humanitarian crisis in Syria and 4,369 people were resettled under this scheme in 2016.
- Vulnerable Children’s Resettlement Scheme (VCRS). In April the government announced that it was to work with UNHCR to resettle children and adults from the Middle East and North Africa Region (MENA). This scheme is specifically tailored to support vulnerable and refugee children at risk and their families.
- Circa 50 refugees from around the world are also resettled annually through the Mandate Scheme for those refugees with close ties to the UK.

3. Unaccompanied Minors and other Vulnerable Groups

In July, the Home Office (HO) and Department for Education (DfE) launched the National Transfer Scheme (NTS) for unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC). The scheme aims to facilitate a more equal allocation of UASC across local authorities in the UK whilst ensuring that their welfare is safeguarded.

Regarding the protection of unaccompanied minors, an amendment, known as the ‘Dubs amendment’ was made to S.67 of the Immigration Act 2016 requiring that the UK would relocate and support a specified number of unaccompanied refugee children from Europe.

4. Legal Migration and Mobility

In October, changes were made to UK academic progression rules to ensure that students demonstrating academic progression are allowed to extend their visa within the UK.
In April, changes to the Tier 4 provisions of the Immigration Rules took effect. There were a suite of changes including reduced maintenance requirements for post graduate doctors and dentists, and exemptions of language requirements for students coming to the UK for short term study as part of their degree in the US.

4.1. ECONOMIC MIGRATION

In March 2016, following a review by the independent Migration Advisory Committee (MAC), the UK Government announced changes to the Tier 2 shortage occupation list. The changes were introduced in two phases, the first was implemented in November 2016 and included the following changes:

- Increasing the salary requirement for the majority of new skilled workers to £25,000 (from £20,800).
- Increasing the salary requirement for short term (up to 12 months) Intra-Company Transfers to £30,000.
- New provisions for graduate trainees.

The second phase was implemented in April 2017.

4.2. FAMILY REUNIFICATION

Against the background of the passage of the Immigration Act 2016 through Parliament, on 29th July 2016 the UK published revised guidance on the Family Reunion policy. It provides further guidance to caseworkers on considering exceptional circumstances, providing that where an application fails under the Immigration Rules, caseworkers consider whether there are exceptional or compassionate reasons for granting a visa outside the Immigration Rules. The Government rejected proposed amendments to widen the criteria of the policy to include extended family members and to allow children to sponsor their parent, as this would constitute a pull factor.

4.3. MANAGING MIGRATION AND MOBILITY

The UK does not participate in visa facilitation agreements with other Member States nor in the borders and visas aspects of the Schengen acquis. Since 2007, however, those applying for visas to travel to the UK are required to provide their biometric data (digital photograph and finger scans). These are checked against a range of Home Office databases.

5. Integration

In September, the Government pledged up to £10 million over five years for a jointly funded HO and DfE programme. This enabled refugees arriving on the SVPRS and the VCRS schemes to access language tuition as support for integration into British society.

Between November 2013 and March 2016, the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) invested £8 million in a community-based English Language programme that supported over 39,800 adults isolated due to their low level of English.

On 18th January 2016, a new English language offer worth £20 million to help at least 40,000 women in the most isolated communities get the training they need was announced.

The UK also announced a 'Full Community Sponsorship' scheme in July, enabling community groups to directly support resettled families.

In August, ‘The Race Disparity Audit’ which will look into racial and ethnic disparities in public services stretching across government, was announced.

On 26th July 2016, the Government published a new Hate Crime Action Plan which focuses on reducing hate crime, increasing reporting and improving support for victims. The plan introduces a £2.4 million funding scheme for security measures aimed at vulnerable faith institutions, measures to tackle hate crime on public transport and in the night-time economy by providing training, raising awareness and making reporting easier.

In December 2016, the Government published a report entitled the ‘Casey Review’ which looks into how to boost integration in isolated communities.

6. External Dimension of EU Migration Policy

No policy developments were reported in 2016.

7. Irregular Migration and Return

7.1. THE FIGHT AGAINST FACILITATION OF IRREGULAR MIGRATION

A series of measures were introduced in 2016 to clamp down further on irregular migration. For example:

The UK’s support to Frontex operations in the Mediterranean was increased in 2016 with a specific focus on identifying criminal networks involved in the facilitation of migration.

The UK Immigration Act 2016 has provided border officers with additional powers to access vessels, gather evidence and arrest suspects. The use of reasonable force may be used in the exercise of such powers.

The Immigration Act 2016 also foresees the creation of a civil penalty scheme to incentivise carriers and airport operators to invest in better passenger management processes.
In November, the Registered Traveller Service (RTS) was further expanded to include passport holders from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay; Uruguay, Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Brunei, Israel and Malaysia.

The Project KRAKEN, an initiative encouraging the reporting of suspicious behaviour at sea, was refreshed in 2016, with an enhanced programme of visits to maritime communities.

The UK opted in to Council Decision (EU) 2016/551 implementing arrangements for application of Articles 4 and 6 of the Agreement between the EU and the Republic of Turkey on the readmissions of persons residing without authorisation from 1 June 2016.

7.2. RETURN OF IRREGULAR MIGRANTS

The Immigration Act 2016 aims furthermore to ensure the effectiveness of return measures by extending the existing “deport first appeal later” power to enable it to be applied in all human rights cases if removal pending appeal would not cause serious irreversible harm, or otherwise breach human rights. The Act also pleases a 72-hour time limit on the detention of pregnant women, extendable to up to a week with ministerial authorisation.

In terms of return and reintegration, the UK is confirmed as a Category A contributor to the European Reintegration Network (ERIN).

8. Actions against Trafficking in Human Beings

Between November 2015 and July 2016, under the duty to notify provision, the Government received notifications of 427 potential victims of modern slavery identified in England and Wales, who were not referred to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM).

As of March 2016, there were 19 Slavery and Trafficking Prevention and Risk Orders in place to restrict the activities of perpetrators.

In July, a new taskforce to accelerate progress in tackling slavery was announced. £33.5m development funding to prevent slavery was pledged, including an Innovation Fund to support new approaches to tackling slavery.

The Government has also committed £8.5m to transform the UK police response to this complex, multi-faceted crime.

In June, the Government announced that it would commence section 48 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and committed to the full national roll out of Independent Child Trafficking Advocates across England and Wales.

The Child Trafficking Protection Fund, launched in October 2016, will support child victims of trafficking, mainly in the UK, with two objectives: 1. providing victim support and recovery and 2. reducing vulnerability to exploitation.

Guidance on the National Referral Mechanism for victims of modern slavery aimed at Competent Authorities, frontline staff and child first responders was updated in March.

In April, the Inter-Departmental Ministerial Group (IDMG) - which acts as the National Rapporteur for the UK - agreed on the following six principles as guidance for the UK’s international approach:

- Reduce Vulnerability to Exploitation;
- Victim Support and Recovery;
- Improve Global Coordination;
- Improve Law, Legislation and Policy;
- Encourage responsible business and slavery-free supply chains;
- Improve the Evidence Base.

STATISTICAL ANNEX

The Statistical Annex provides an overview of the latest available statistics for the United Kingdom on aspects of migration and asylum (2013-2016), including residence, asylum, unaccompanied minors, irregular migration and return. Where statistics are not yet available, this is indicated in the Annex as “N/A”.

The Child Trafficking Protection Fund, launched in October 2016, will support child victims of trafficking, mainly in the UK, with two objectives: 1. providing victim support and recovery and 2. reducing vulnerability to exploitation.

Guidance on the National Referral Mechanism for victims of modern slavery aimed at Competent Authorities, frontline staff and child first responders was updated in March.
1. INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION AND ASYLUM

Figure 1: Asylum applications as a share of the total population in United Kingdom, EU average and EU high and low (2013-2016)

Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_asyappctza), data extracted 17/04/2017

Figure 2: Number of asylum applications and as a share of the total number of applications in the EU (2013-2016)

Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_asyappctza), data extracted 17/04/2017

Table 1: Asylum applications: Top five third-country nationalities (2013–2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Pakistan</th>
<th>Iran</th>
<th>Sri Lanka</th>
<th>Syria</th>
<th>Albania</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>4,725</td>
<td>3,075</td>
<td>2,310</td>
<td>2,030</td>
<td>1,670</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>3,990</td>
<td>3,280</td>
<td>2,500</td>
<td>2,410</td>
<td>1,890</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>3,740</td>
<td>3,730</td>
<td>3,300</td>
<td>3,020</td>
<td>2,850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>3,765</td>
<td>3,695</td>
<td>3,160</td>
<td>2,250</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_asyappctza), data extracted 17/04/2017
Figure 3: Asylum applications: Top five third-country nationalities as a share of EU total per given nationality (2016)

Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_asyappctza), data extracted 17/04/2017
Note: the figure reads as: The United Kingdom received 4,830 asylum applications from Iran or 11.69% of all asylum applications lodged by Iran in EU in 2016.

Table 2: Asylum applications - First instance decisions by outcome (2013-2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total decisions</th>
<th>Positive decisions</th>
<th>Of which:</th>
<th>Refugee status</th>
<th>Subsidiary protection</th>
<th>Humanitarian reasons</th>
<th>Negative decisions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>22,445</td>
<td>8,550</td>
<td>7,525</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>960</td>
<td>13,895</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>25,815</td>
<td>10,120</td>
<td>9,000</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>1,010</td>
<td>15,695</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>38,070</td>
<td>13,950</td>
<td>12,175</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>1,650</td>
<td>24,155</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>30,915</td>
<td>9,935</td>
<td>8,410</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>1,315</td>
<td>20,980</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_asydcfsta), data extracted 02/08/2017

Figures 4-7: Asylum applications - First instance decisions by outcome (2013-2016)

Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_asydcfsta), data extracted 02/08/2017

Figure 8: Negative decision rate for the top five nationalities of applicants at the first instance in comparison with EU for the same given nationality (2016)

Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_asydcfsta), data extracted 02/08/2017
2. UNACCOMPANIED MINORS

Table 3: Unaccompanied minors (2013-2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unaccompanied minors (total)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unaccompanied minor asylum applicants</td>
<td>1,265</td>
<td>1,945</td>
<td>3,255</td>
<td>3,175</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Eurostat Asylum applicants considered to be unaccompanied minors by citizenship, age and sex Annual data (rounded) (migr_asyunaa), data extracted 17/04/2017; EMN NCPs

3. LEGAL MIGRATION AND MOBILITY

Figure 11: First residence permits, by reason (2013-2016)

Source: Eurostat (migr_resfirst), data extracted 17/04/2017; EMN NCPs

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3 The UK does not have a residence permit database but provides estimates of third country nationals who are granted permission to stay in the UK. These estimates are derived from National Statistics data on passengers given leave to enter and supplemented with other management information such as visas issued and asylum granted.
Table 4: First residence permits: Top five third-country nationalities (2013–2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>India</th>
<th>United States</th>
<th>China (incl. Hong Kong)</th>
<th>India</th>
<th>United States</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>139,875</td>
<td>136,202</td>
<td>73,878</td>
<td>72,691</td>
<td>19,479</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>136,202</td>
<td>139,875</td>
<td>80,724</td>
<td>71,651</td>
<td>21,630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>201,040</td>
<td>201,040</td>
<td>80,724</td>
<td>71,651</td>
<td>21,630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>183,867</td>
<td>183,867</td>
<td>103,248</td>
<td>74,889</td>
<td>22,937</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_resfirst), data extracted 17/04/2017

Figure 12: Resident population of third-country nationals as a share of total population in the United Kingdom EU average, EU high and low (2013-2016)

Table 5: Number of third-country nationals refused entry at external borders (2013–2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Refused entry at external borders</th>
<th>Found to be illegally present</th>
<th>Ordered to leave</th>
<th>Returned following an order to leave</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>14,910</td>
<td>57,415</td>
<td>57,415</td>
<td>54,960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>15,905</td>
<td>65,365</td>
<td>65,365</td>
<td>49,920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>14,950</td>
<td>70,020</td>
<td>70,020</td>
<td>51,765</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>14,480</td>
<td>59,895</td>
<td>59,895</td>
<td>44,955</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_eirfs)(migr_eipre)(migr_eiord),(migr_eirtn) data extracted 17/04/2017

Table 6: Third-country nationals returned (2013-2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Returned as part of forced return measures</th>
<th>Returned voluntarily</th>
<th>Returned through an Assisted Voluntary Return Programme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>9,965</td>
<td>32,310</td>
<td>4,625</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>8,963</td>
<td>23,535</td>
<td>2,403</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>8,281</td>
<td>26,186</td>
<td>1,633</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>12,193</td>
<td>24,202</td>
<td>1,331</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: EMN NCP

5. SECURING EUROPE’S EXTERNAL BORDERS

Since UK is not part of the Schengen area, no statistics are available under this section.