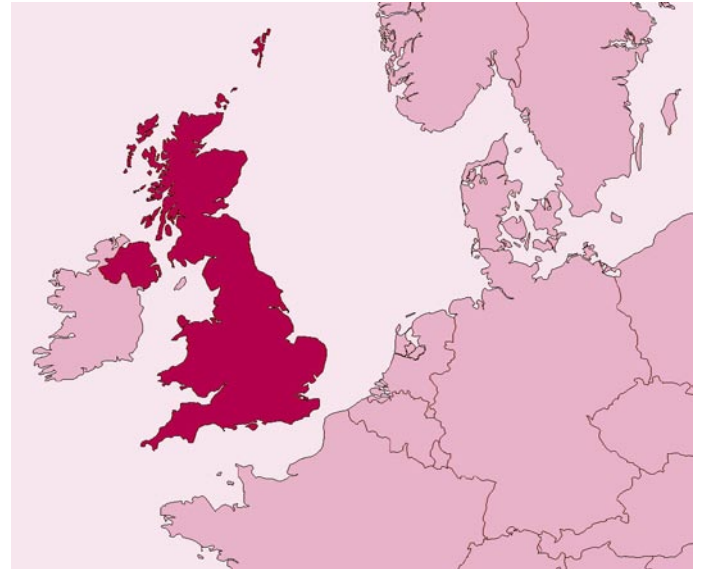


United Kingdom

The United Kingdom became a country of immigration after the Second World War, following large-scale immigration from its former colonies. Labour shortages generated by Britain's relative postwar affluence were filled by colonial workers who took advantage of privileged immigration channels created by the country's citizenship laws.¹ Until the mid-1960s, migration was a market-driven phenomenon sanctioned by an imperial citizenship regime. Migration patterns were largely stable from the early 1970s until the 1990s, with migration disproportionately made up of family reunification.

Peak periods of immigration in the postwar period have reliably occasioned public hostility, press hysteria, and party politicisation of the issue, with polls continuing to place immigration at the top of Britons' concerns.² Migrants are viewed



Background Information

Capital: London, England

Languages: English, other recognised regional languages

Area: 242,900 km²
(England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland)

Population (2005): 60,209,500

Population density (2002): 244 inhabitants per km²

Population growth (2001-2005): +1.2%

Foreign-born population as a percentage of total population (2001): 8.3%

Population comprised of minority ethnic groups (2001): 7.9%

Labour force participation rate (2006): 76.7% (OECD)

Percentage of foreign-born employees amongst gainfully employed (2005): 5.4%

Unemployment rate: 5.4% (2006), 4.7% (2005), 4.7% (2004) (OECD)

Religions (2001): Christian (72%), Muslim (3%), Hindu (1%), Sikh (0.6%), Jewish (0.5%), Buddhist (0.3%), Other (0.3%), No religion / not stated (23%)

as a problem for reasons being cited already for decades by opponents of immigration: immigrants are competitors for scarce jobs, housing, and social services, and they threaten to alter communities' character against the will of their inhabitants. To these familiar complaints, critics of immigration have added two fresh concerns: first, that immigration undermines social solidarity and thus the welfare state; and, second, that older generations of immigrants and, above all, their children are failing to identify sufficiently with Britain and British values. At the same time, the United Kingdom has Europe's most elaborate legislative and policy framework combatting racial discrimination; moreover, the government, public bodies, and the media take formal and informal measures to ensure visible representation of minorities.

Events since the mid-1990s have undermined confidence both in the ability of the country to integrate visible minorities and in the efficacy of multicultural policies in doing so. In 2001, gangs of Asian and White youth fought in England's northern cities; in July 2005, four suicide bombers who were British Muslims attacked London and four others tried; and, in October 2005, riots broke out between members of Birmingham's Black and Asian communities. These visible, mediatised events occurred against a backdrop of continuing socio-economic deprivation among some sections of the UK's visible minority population, leading high-profile figures to question multiculturalism.

Starting in the mid-1990s, transformations linked in part to policy change have occurred. Applications for asylum under

the 1951 UN convention skyrocketed in the late 1990s, increasing from an average of 35,000 per year from 1991 to 1998, and peaking at 100,000 in 2002. Restrictive measures have contributed to a sharp, steady decline since 2002, with only 26,000 asylum applications made in 2005. The reduction in applications of 24% from 2004 to 2005 is more than double the 11% average reduction across EU25 countries. Skilled migration began increasing, and by 2002 the UK was issuing record numbers of work permits - some 130,000 were issued each year from 2002 to 2005. And, since 2004, a dramatic and unprecedented increase in immigration has followed from the granting of labour market rights to A8 (2004 EU accession countries minus Malta and Cyprus) nationals.

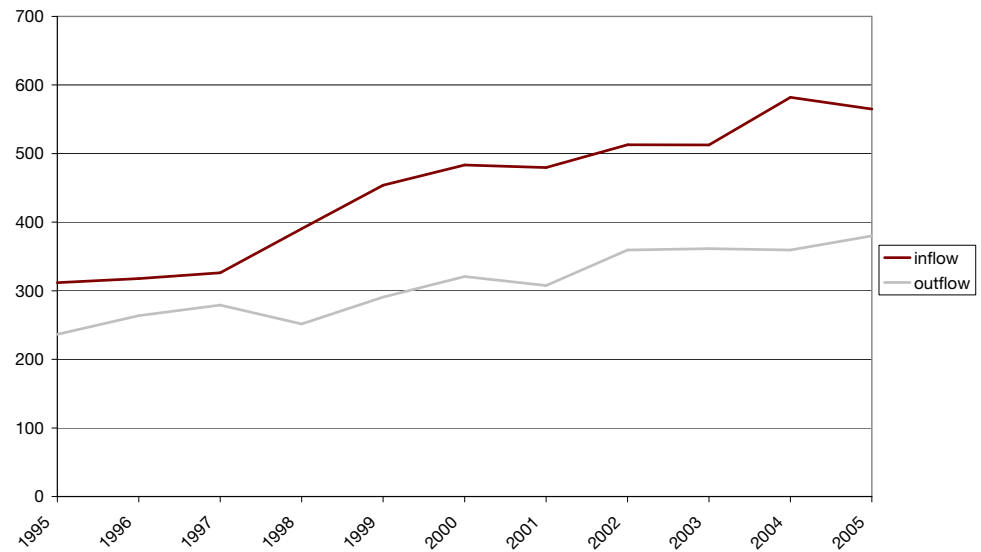
Today, the United Kingdom is receiving more immigrants than at any point in its history. These new arrivals come at a time when the UK has not fully coped with the challenges thrown up by earlier waves in postwar migration. The rest of this profile reviews that history, examines the UK's integration philosophy and practice, and considers how the country is coping with the challenge of new European migration, as well as related challenges of irregular migration and ethnicity-based inequality.

Development of Immigration Policy

Until 1962, Commonwealth immigrants had, as British subjects, enjoyed unimpeded access to the United Kingdom³, and in the 1950s some 500,000 migrants, mostly young, single men, travelled to the UK. A Conservative government enacted the first immigration controls in 1962, and the Labour opposition bitterly denounced the measure as populist and racist. Two years later, the Labour government was in power, and it quickly recognised that family reunification meant that every pre-1962 migrant would bring in two to four subsequent migrants in the form of his family members. It abandoned its previous commitment to open borders and extended immigration controls in 1965.⁴ Restrictive policy continued under Labour and Conservative governments through the ensuing decades, with the target of restrictions moving from immigrants in general to asylum seekers in particular. Efforts aimed at reducing asylum applications have been, and remain, a constant.

The greatest change to immigration policy occurred in 2002 with the issuing of a White Paper setting out an ambitious and comprehensive plan for "managed migration". The break with previous policy was reiterated in support for high-skilled "economic" migration within the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act of the same year, and the Highly Skilled Migrant Program (HSMP), a scheme based on a points system like Australia's, was introduced. The HSMP has seen a series

Figure 1: International migration into and out of the UK, 1995 to 2005 (thousands)



Source: Home Office (2006)

of changes and, after a slow start, drew some 18,000 migrants to the UK in 2005. The elaboration of the points system was, along with a commitment to stronger border control, at the centre of the five-year departmental plan issued by the government in 2005.

In 2006, the points system was elaborated into a five-tiered system following public consultation about immigration system reform. Points are allocated to applicants under the new system based on skills and labour market needs. The current 80 or so separate routes of entry have been reduced as follows: the first tier is for highly-skilled migrants (the only group who do not need a job offer to qualify); the second tier covers skilled workers needed in specific sectors, such as nurses, teachers and engineers; the third tier covers low skill workers (applicants need employer sponsors); the fourth tier is for students; and the fifth tier covers working holidaymakers⁵ and professional athletes and musicians. The system is to be phased in over two years, beginning in 2008. Low-skilled migration from outside of the EU will be severely limited, on the expectation that the enlarged EU will provide sufficient workers for these jobs.

The final set of recent immigration policy changes are designed to reinforce security at the border. In 2007, the arms-length Border and Immigration Agency replaced the Immigration and Nationality Directorate, following the division of the old Home Office into two separate departments – a Ministry of Justice and a Home Office dedicated to immigration, terrorism, and crime. The 2007 UK Borders bill gives the newly-hired and/or reassigned 800 immigration officers more powers, including powers of arrest, and requires foreign nationals to provide fingerprints and digital photographs, and to carry Biometric Identity Documents. The visa system is to be revised, taking into account terrorism risk and criminal activity levels in countries of origin, as well as willingness of these countries to accept deported immigrants.

The Immigrant Population

While immigrants are often popularly thought of as minority ethnic populations, for statistical purposes, they are more narrowly described here as current residents born outside of the UK. In 2001, 4.9 million (8.3%) of the total population of the UK were born overseas, a doubling of the foreign-born proportion of the population since 1951. The largest increase in the post-war decades, of nearly 1.1 million people, occurred in the decade from 1991 to 2001. In contrast, the next largest increase occurred in the period 1961-1971, when 600,000 people were added to the population through immigration. The proportion of foreign-born residents from European countries fell from 51% in 1971 to 33% in 2001. In 2001, 53% of the foreign-born population was classified as White.⁶ The next largest groups were Indian (12%) and Pakistani (7%).

It is estimated that 0.5-1% of economic growth in the UK is contributed by migrants, though critics of immigration dispute these figures. The medical and health sector is particularly dependent on immigrants, with 31% of the doctors and 13% of the nurses working in the UK born abroad. Other sectors of immigrant concentration for which statistics are available are education (13% of teaching staff), hospitality (70% of catering jobs), and agriculture (70,000 migrant workers help in harvesting according to National Farmers Union).

Flows

Figure 1 shows total international migration into and out of the UK between 1995 and 2005. Following past patterns, employed migrants who come to the UK from more developed countries are more likely to leave again, while those from elsewhere are more likely to stay. British citizens are the largest group of emigrants, with Australia and Spain the most popular destinations. Net outflows of British citizens have increased from 17,000 in 1994 to 107,000 in 2005. At the same time, net inflows of non-British citizens increased from 127,000 in 1995 to 292,000 in 2005.

Immigration numbers can be further summarised in terms of foreign labour inflows. Foreign labour immigration has seen an enormous increase since the 2004 accession of ten countries to the EU and the granting of labour market access to the Eastern and Central European A8 countries.⁷ Table 1 summarises entries through 12 routes, including the new Worker Registration Scheme (WRS) put in place for A8 nationals, in 2005. Between 1st May 2004 and 30th September 2007 approximately 715,000 A8 nationals were registered under the WRS. Poland supplied 66% of WRS workers. Lithuanians (10%) and Slovaks (10%) were the next largest groups. The figure here likely underestimates A8 entries substantially, as self-employed entrants do not have to register under the scheme. The total of over 400,000

Table 1: Foreign labour inflows by route of entry (2005)

	Number	%
Worker Registration Scheme	194,953	48.6
Work Permits	86,191	21.5
EU and EFTA	35,200	8.8
Working Holidaymakers	20,135	5.0
Highly Skilled Migrant Programme	17,631	4.4
Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme	15,455	3.9
Domestic Servants	10,100	2.5
Other	21,250	5.3
Total	400,915	100.0

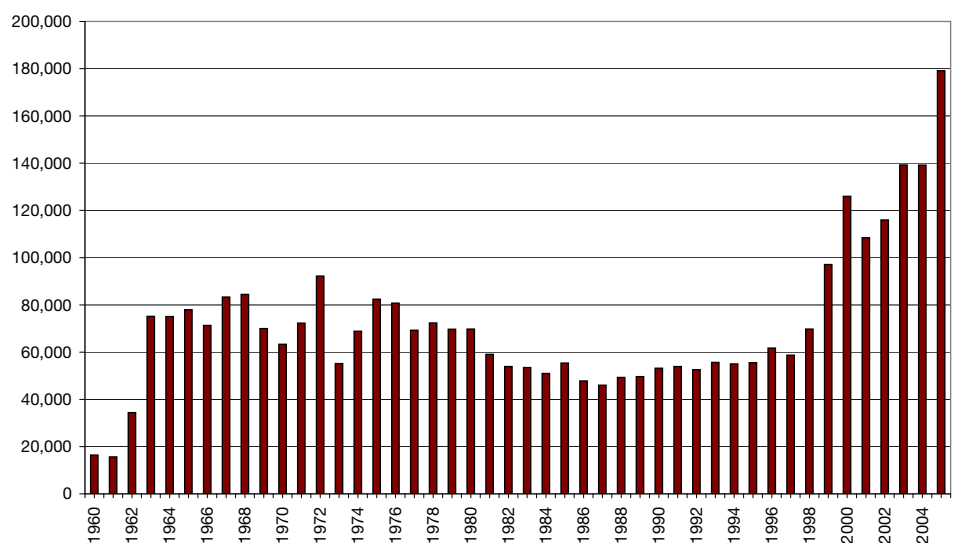
Source: ONS, Labour Market Trends, October 2006

labour immigrants in 2004-2005 was Europe's highest officially recorded figure, with the exception of Germany. For comparison, the total UK figure for 1999 was about 183,000, with 245,000 granted permits in 2002.

Workers entering through the WRS and work permit system differ in terms of skill levels, with 82% of those entering the UK from the A8 states holding lower-skilled jobs while 89% of work permit approvals are for managerial, professional or technical positions. Decline in work permit numbers in the last few years in the health and medical and hospitality sectors are almost certainly a consequence in part of the arrival of A8 citizens.⁸ Americans were issued a third of all work permits in 1995 – by 2005 their share had dropped to 11% and numbers from Canada and Russia also fell. By 2005 the largest national group obtaining work permits was Indian (34%). There were also large increases among Filipinos, South Africans and Chinese.

The Highly Skilled Migrant Programme (HSMP) has grown substantially after a slow start, with an increase in numbers of

Figure 2: Number of persons accepted for settlement per year, 1960-2005



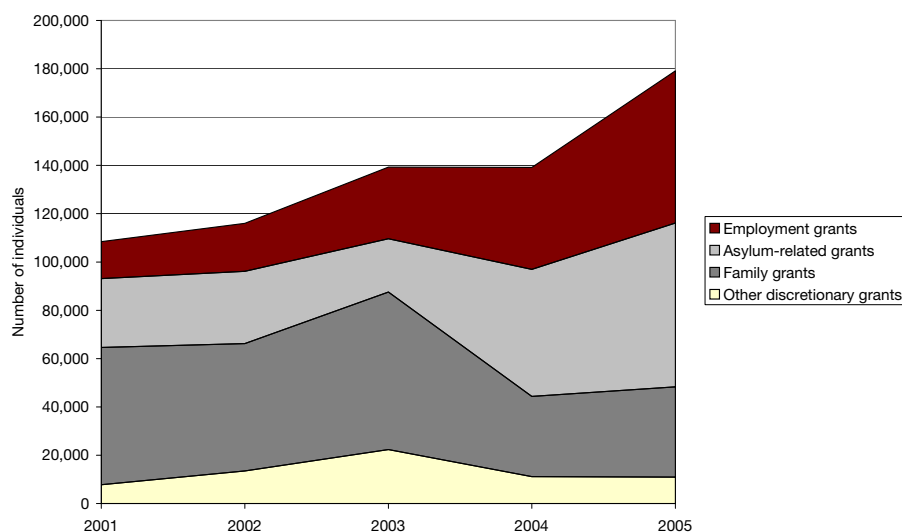
Source: Home Office (2006)

140% between 2004 and 2005. Indian and Pakistani nationals accounted for over half of these permits, with Australians, Nigerians and South Africans the next largest recipients. These five source countries together account for 70% of all HSMP permits. Over three quarters of these permits are in the medical, financial, business and IT sectors.

Grants of settlement, which record persons given leave to remain in the UK indefinitely (permanent residency), provide another useful summary of immigration trends. Figure 2 shows acceptances for settlement under all programmes from 1960 to 2005. The large increase in 2005 is the result of a clearing of backlogs, and settlement granted under the Family ILR Exercise announced in 2003, which allowed some asylum-seeking families resident for four or more years in the UK, to stay (23,000 main applicants have been awarded grants in this manner).

Settlement can be granted on arrival but also increasingly reflects adjustments to the status of those originally admitted under other programmes. Figure 3 shows grants by type. The fastest growing category is that of employment-related grants, with settlement granted after five years of employment with a work permit (increased from four years in 2006). Asylum-related grants have also grown in both absolute and relative terms, comprising 26% of grants in 2001, and 38% of grants in 2005. Family formation and reunion grants have seen the largest decline, comprising 52% of grants in 2001 and 21% in 2005.

Figure 3: Grants of settlement by category of grant, 2001-2005



Source: Home Office (2006)

Ethnic and minority populations

According to the 2001 census, 7.9% of the population self-identify as ethnic minorities. The census asks respondents to classify themselves according to five broad categories of ethnicity: these include "White", "mixed", "Asian or Asian British", "Black or Black British", "Chinese", and "Other". Finer ethnic or source country distinctions are made consistently across all of the UK areas only within the Asian and Black categories. The breakdown for the UK is shown in Table 2.

Visible minorities are concentrated in England's cities,

above all in London: 57% of all African-Caribbean people live in Greater London, as do 82% of all Africans, 49% of Bangladeshis, 42% of Indians, and 29% of Pakistanis. There are also substantial visible minority concentrations in the West Midlands (including Birmingham) and in West Yorkshire (including Bradford).

Multiculturalism

Following the election of the Labour government in 1997, multiculturalism (which was never defined) became a fashionable term in the UK. Cabinet members used it frequently, the Home Office commissioned reports on and organised conferences around the topic, and ministers came back from trips to Canada with glowing words for its immigration and multicultural policy. By 2007, the term had almost become a dirty word. The major newspapers have run articles and editorials denouncing the balkanizing effects of multiculturalism, and the Home Office has placed the accent once again on integration in and loyalty to Britain. To be sure, the realisation that three out of four of the July 2005 bombers were born in Britain to relatively affluent backgrounds was a profound shock to the national psyche. The rhetorical shift began, however, well before it.

Following the 2001 Asian-White riots, the government stiffened requirements for citizenship with the goal of ensuring that naturalised migrants are better integrated. These measures were enacted or set in motion before the bombings. Even the Commission for Racial Equality, the official voice of visible minority concerns in the UK, has chimed in to the integrationist chorus. In 2004, its Black director, Trevor Phillips, secured national headlines by telling the country "multiculturalism is dead." He has since warned of a drift towards US-style segregation, and urged a greater emphasis on accentuating common Britishness. The organisation's 2004 report defines the organisation's leit-motif as an "integrated Britain where all are equal."

British multiculturalism redefined?

Do these changes mark the end of multiculturalism in the UK? On many levels, they cannot. Multiculturalism in the UK has three components. The first is the recognition of the sociological reality of Britain as a society made up of many cultures. The second is a general sense, widely if not universally shared, that multiculturalism is a "good thing." The third is the principle that becoming British does not require people to leave their previous cultural attachments and practices behind. All three of these components remain intact.

The rights of ethnic minorities to practice their religion, speak their language, join ethnicity-based associations and lobby for group-based causes are fundamental to liberal democracy, in the UK and elsewhere. It is widely viewed as illegitimate in Britain

Table 2: Population of the UK by ethnic group, 2001

Category	Total population		Minority ethnic population
	Number	%	%
White	54,153,898	92.1	n/a
Mixed	677,117	1.2	14.6
Asian or Asian British	2,331,423	4.0	50.2
Indian	1,053,411	1.8	22.7
Pakistani	747,285	1.3	16.1
Bangladeshi	283,063	0.5	6.1
Other Asian	247,664	0.4	5.3
Black or Black British	1,148,738	2.0	24.8
Black Caribbean	565,876	1.0	12.2
Black African	485,277	0.8	10.5
Black Other	97,585	0.2	2.1
Chinese	247,403	0.4	5.3
Other	230,615	0.4	5.0
<i>All minority ethnic population</i>	<i>4,635,296</i>	<i>7.9</i>	<i>100.0</i>
All population	58,789,194	100.0	n/a

Source: Office for National Statistics, 2001 Census

(in a way that it was not before the Second World War) to force a dominant culture onto minority groups. It is not at all clear what that culture would be anyway: a far-left London devotee of the capital's leather scene will share few cultural references with a deeply religious, unionist-voting Northern Irish Orangeman.⁹ All anyone else can agree is that both have the right to live their lives as long as they do not prevent others from doing the same.

While there has been a change in policymakers' emphasis and mood, with a greater accent placed on the need for a loyalty and commitment to Britain on the part of visible minorities, there has been no dramatic change in policy. There are more obligations involved in acquiring citizenship, and its acquisition is meant to reflect a meaningful attachment to Britain. That this threatens multiculturalism is doubtful; it is not at all clear that requiring citizens to speak the national language violates multicultural principles, only that denying them the right to speak their own would.

Integration Policy

The UK's diversity-accommodation framework is made up of three elements: anti-discrimination legislation, educational policy and policies for the police. All of these are in various ways race-conscious. The core was, and is, anti-discrimination legislation backed up by civil law and overseen by a prominent public body, the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE), laid against a relatively open citizenship.

Anti-discrimination policies

The core of Britain's integration policy is an anti-discrimination framework gradually developed since the 1960s, always under a Labour government.

The Race Relations Act, 1965, concentrated largely on "expressive racism", in which racial hatred is incited through the oral or written word, as opposed to "access racism", in which an ethnic group's access to public or private goods is blocked on racist grounds.¹⁰ Prohibitions on access racism were limited to public places (hotels, pubs) and did not include discrimination in employment, the banking and insurance sectors, or the private housing market.

The 1965 legislation has been extended several times in the last forty years. Following a think tank report highlighting extensive discrimination in employment and housing, the 1968 Race Relations Act extended the prohibition on discrimination to employment, housing, credit, and insurance facilities. The legislation also increased funding for the Race Relations Board and empowered it to independently investigate instances of racial discrimination. The 1976 Race Relations Bill allowed individuals to appeal directly to the civil courts or to employment tribunals, introduced the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE), and, most ambitiously, it expanded the definition of discrimination to include direct and indirect discrimination. The latter covers requirements or conditions that are formally non-discriminatory but that disproportionately penalise members of a particular racial group.

The most important change in anti-discrimination policy in decades was the Race Relations Act of 2000. Although enacted in reaction to the failings of the police service, it affected a much broader range of institutions. The legislation extended the 1976 race relations legislation to all public bodies – police, the universities, the NHS – and to all private bodies exercising public functions, with the exception of Parliament, the security services, and immigration officers. It also placed a "general duty" on public authorities to work towards the elimination of unlawful discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between people of different racial groups. The "employment duty" thus requires public employers to monitor, by racial group, staff in post and applicants for employment, training, and promotion. Organisations with 150 employees or more are to monitor by racial group staff who: receive training, benefit or suffer detriment as a result of performance assessment procedures, are involved in grievance procedures, or cease employment. These post-2000 changes amounted to an important evolution in anti-discrimination legislation. Whereas previous policies had targeted access and opportunity, the new measures are concerned with outcome. Public bodies are compelled to consider their ethnic makeup, and to question whether insufficient ethnic minority representation reflects their policies. That said, the measures only touch one part of the economy. They do not affect the private sector, and still less do they affect the ill-paid, precarious, and often undocumented sector of the job market in which migrants and visible minorities are disproportionately concentrated.

Education policies

The quality of school attended has a decisive impact on visible minorities' integration and life chances. For historical reasons, the education system has tended to replicate rather than remove race-based differences in educational outcomes. This is mainly because access to good schools is generally gained by living within a particular catchment area¹¹ or by paying very high tuition fees.

This is of particular concern to visible minorities, as those with the worst school results – Pakistanis and Bangladeshis – tend to live in areas with the worst schools. Although causality is difficult to establish, there can be little doubt that their fairly dreadful school results cannot be separated from the quality of inner city schools.

Against this background of class- and (partially) race-based structural inequality, the government enacted two reforms to education policy. Beginning in the year following the 2001 riots, the Home Office made citizenship education a mandatory part of the national curriculum. As is so often the case in British discussions of citizenship, the concept is never defined, and even at their most advanced the lessons are vague and often at best tangentially related to citizenship. Teachers are given no detailed instructions or training, and the National Curriculum has not been changed to make multicultural Britain a core history or social studies subject. The result is that teachers who have no particular knowledge of Britain's ethnic makeup, the history of British multiculturalism, or contemporary politics are instructed to teach a highly sensitive and complex subject. An ICM poll of students in early 2005 revealed that more than half of UK students could neither define citizenship nor offer examples of what they had learned.¹²

The introduction of citizenship training was largely uncontroversial. The same cannot be said of another New Labour initiative: expanding faith-based schools. Religious schools are nothing new in the UK; there are approximately 7,000 Christian schools receiving state funding. By contrast, only five of some 110 full-time Muslim schools in the UK receive state funding, a result described by the House of Lords as "institutionally racist." The government's response to this has been to propose funding for Muslim schools. The argument is that Muslim students' relatively poor exam results reflect a failure of the educational system to attend to their particular needs. The hope is that Muslim schools will provide an environment in which Muslim students may excel.

Policies on policing

The behaviour of the police, particularly the London Metropolitan Police, towards visible minorities has long been a source of controversy, particularly the practice of stopping and searching suspected criminals without providing reasons or pressing charges. The power dates to the nineteenth century. Visible minorities are to a disproportionate degree the target of the policy; according to Home Office statistics, Black people were in 2001–2002 eight times more likely than White people to be stopped and searched.¹³

The most significant developments in police-minority relations occurred in the wake of the Stephen Lawrence affair, following the Metropolitan Police Service's bungled investigation

into the racist murder of a Black Londoner, Stephen Lawrence. Following years of pressure from Lawrence's parents, an inquiry into the police handling of the investigation in was announced in July 1997. It reported in early 1999.

The inquiry's report led to a number of administrative changes in police policy, though no revolution. An end to stop and search was never on the agenda, but the police agreed to a phased implementation of the report's recommendation that the reasons, outcome, and self-defined identity of the person stopped, be recorded by the police. The MPs also created a Minority Members Network for visible minority police officers, provided race-awareness training for officers, and cracked down on the use of racist language within the police force. In handling racist crime, the police now define a racist crime as one perceived by the victim or by any other person as racist. At the same time, the Crown Prosecution Service removed the possibility for prosecutors to plea-bargain away racist crimes in exchange for a guilty plea to another crime. It is too soon to judge whether these efforts have improved relations with the police. These relations came under renewed strain on July 22nd, 2005, after police gunned down an unarmed and innocent Brazilian, Jean Charles de Menezes, who had been mistaken for a suicide bomber.

Religion and Diversity

The United Kingdom - particularly England - is in the curious position of having an established Church while being among the most secular societies in the Western world. Religion was a non-issue throughout much of the postwar period. This situation changed drastically in 1989, when Salman Rushdie published *The Satanic Verses*. The publication led the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini of Iran to issue a fatwa sentencing the author to death. The fatwa made international headlines, but of greater local interest was the reaction of British Muslims: large demonstrations against Rushdie in Trafalgar square, replete with an effigy of Rushdie with a slashed throat, and copies of the book burned in northern England.

Since the September 11th, 2001 attacks on the United States and the July 7th, 2005 bombings in London, the traditional preoccupation in the United Kingdom with categories of race has been partially transcended by a concern with religion, particularly Islam. These attacks were followed by an increase in racially motivated violence, and by a general climate of suspicion of and hostility towards Muslims. In confronting it, Muslims enjoyed civil law protections as visible minorities; when denied an apartment, job, or access to public services, they had recourse to the Race Relations Act. But here they were protected as a racial rather than religious group. They also enjoyed protection under more recent legislation. Thus, when Mark Norwood, a British National Party activist, displayed in his flat window a poster with the words "Islam out of Britain" next to a photograph of the burning World Trade Centre, he was tried and convicted under a 2001 amendment to the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act.¹⁴

Despite these provisions, what Muslims lacked were the criminal law sanctions which were specifically designed to

address religiously motivated crimes. To change this, the government adopted the Racial and Religious Hatred Bill, which for the first time made religions hatred a criminal offence. When it was first introduced to Parliament in early 2005, the legislation was much broader: it criminalised speech, publication, or performance which was “likely to stir up racial or religious hatred.” Intellectuals and artists argued that bill itself was misconceived and likely to deter artists, writers, and film-makers from risking offensive portrayals of Islam or other religions.¹⁵ As a backdrop to these arguments, in December 2004, a Birmingham theatre cancelled a play portraying sex abuse and murder in a temple following violent Sikh protests.¹⁶ In the face of these criticisms, the bill was withdrawn and re-introduced, setting a much higher bar for prosecution. For instance, racial hatred has to be intentional and prosecution can only be initiated by the British government, not by aggrieved individuals.

Citizenship

Until very recently, the United Kingdom provided liberal access to citizenship. Though viewed as inclusionary today, citizenship by birth – *jus soli* – has its origins in feudalism (what’s born within the realm of the Lord belongs to the Lord) and imperialism. From the early 17th century, anyone born within the realm of the British monarch was a subject of that monarch, and British-subject status was the basis of British nationality right up to 1981. This basic principle was carried over into the age of empire, and all those born within the British Empire were British subjects who enjoyed, in theory, full rights within the UK. This system was reaffirmed in 1948, and it meant that the 500,000 non-White British subjects who entered the UK before 1962 did so not as immigrants but as citizens. The UK ended pure *jus soli* (which now exists nowhere in Europe) in 1981, but there has otherwise been a high degree of continuity in citizenship policy. All those born in the UK to permanent residents, citizens, or recognised refugees are citizens at birth. Others may naturalise after three years of marriage to a UK citizen or after five years of residence in the UK. Dual citizenship is fully accepted.

Approximately 61% of the foreign-born population resident in the UK for six or more years in 2005 had taken up British citizenship.

A US-style citizenship ceremony with an oath of allegiance to the Queen and the UK was introduced in 2004. Since 2005, prospective citizens have had to pass a citizenship test¹⁷ assessing the applicant’s knowledge of British history and culture, as well as an English-language proficiency test. However, if the applicant’s language ability is low, language classes may be taken instead. In 2007, the requirements were extended to those who apply for permanent residence.

In April 2007, fees for adjustments to status (along with fees for visas and work permits) were raised significantly. The price of permanent residency, previously available after four years to those on work permits, raised to five years in 2006, was increased from 335 to 750 pounds. Naturalisation, or citizenship, formerly costing 200 pounds, was raised to 575.

The citizenship file is not yet closed, and further change cannot be ruled out. For instance, Gordon Brown announced in March 2007 that upon taking over as Prime Minister, he would institute a probationary period of “temporary citizenship”, in which migrants would have to prove their allegiance to Britain and their desire to integrate by completing a period of community service.

Refuge and Asylum

British refugee policy is governed by the United Nations convention relating to the status of refugees and its 1967 protocol, which the UK has signed. Until the late 1980s, the UK was not a popular destination for asylum seekers. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) statistics, in 1988 only 5,700 people lodged applications for asylum. This situation changed in the 1990s: applications rose sharply, reaching a peak of almost 100,000 in 2000, and the UK overtook Germany as the most popular destination for asylum seekers. Migration once again rose to the top of the political agenda, and the tabloids led a demonic campaign against “scrounging” asylum-seekers.

In response to this pressure, the UK adopted a range of measures designed to deter asylum seekers, including reduced social benefits, time limits for lodging applications, the declaring of British airports to be international zones¹⁸, reduced appeal rights, and the fast-tracking of claims deemed “manifestly unfounded.” The UK also participates in European efforts to harmonise asylum policy, including the Dublin conventions requiring asylum seekers to apply for refugee status in the first EU state they reach. In recent years, the number of asylum applications has fallen dramatically. In 2006 applications were at their lowest level since 1993 and most initial decisions were made within two months of application. Of the applications made in 2005, only 31% resulted in some form of positive action: grants of asylum (8%), Humanitarian Protection or Discretionary Leave (12%), or allowed appeals (12%).

Irregular Migration

In 2005 the issue of irregular migrants made headlines when David Roberts, Head of Removals at the Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND) provoked an uproar by admitting that he did not have the “faintest idea” how many illegal immigrants were in the UK.¹⁹ The Home Office quickly released an estimate of approximately 500,000. Other organisations cite a higher figure, to upwards of 800,000.

In 2007, Home Secretary John Reid tabled proposals designed to make life difficult for those illegally in the country, and reiterated the government’s commitment to “throwing out” as many as possible. The punitive rhetoric and targeting of “foreigners” who “steal our benefits”²⁰ provoked alternative proposals.

Increases in deportation of irregular migrants in 2005 (15,685 people) and 2006 (18,235) encountered growing civil society resistance, including calls for regularisation of some 500,000 illegal residents and anti-deportation activism supported by the

National Coalition of Anti-Deportation Campaigns (NCADC). Although the government has unequivocally rejected any talk of amnesty so far, as of May 2007 65 Labour party backbenchers led by Jon Cruddas had signed a motion lending their support to the Strangers Into Citizens regularisation proposal²¹ put forward by a coalition of faith and community organisations.

The Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR), Labour backbenchers and the advocacy organisation Strangers Into Citizens have argued that the only economically viable policy option is the granting of amnesty for undocumented, employed migrants who have not committed a criminal offence. This would bring these workers onto national registers for security purposes, and produce somewhere around one billion pounds in tax revenue. It is asserted that the costs of removal of 500,000 migrants, estimated at 4.7 billion pounds, is not a realistic option, given a current deportation budget of 270m pounds and total removals in 2006 of around 18,000. Since deportation efforts will inevitably leave many illegal migrants in place, other arguments have stressed the short-sightedness and injustice of denial of health and education services to a large and vulnerable segment of the population.

The government's efforts include controls such as increases in border security and the controversial introduction of biometric identity cards, envisioned as useful not only in the policing of borders, but also in fighting identity fraud in access to employment and social services. However the plan to make national identity cards compulsory for both citizens and residents has been met with opposition. Debate has also centred on the importance of labour market regulation, with critics highlighting the contradiction inherent in the government's commitment to "flexible" labour markets, while at the same time promising to clamp down on illegal hiring.

The government responded to such concerns in May 2007 by proposing stiff employer sanctions of up to 100,000 pounds per head for hiring of illegal workers, and the proposed allocation of an extra 10-20 million pounds a year to be spent on a 1,200 member force of compliance officers. An equality impact assessment that was released at the same time as the proposal warned of the potential for racial discrimination, as lazy employers may hedge their bets by restricting employment to those that "appear" British. Others question the reach of the proposals. It is pointed out, for instance, that the gangmasters' law passed after the death of 19 Chinese cockle-pickers in 2004 covers agriculture, only one of many sectors in which illegal employment is widespread.²² And the record on previous efforts does not inspire great confidence. Only nine successful prosecutions of illegal employment of migrants occurred between 1998 and 2003. An increase in efforts in 2004 resulted in slightly over 1,000 "successful operations" against employers in that year, but prosecutions were carried out in only 21 cases.²³

Current Issues and Future Challenges

Accession-related migration and migration control

The very large inflows of A8 nationals into the UK were unexpected. The government had predicted that some 15,000 mi-

grants would enter annually after May 2004, somewhat short of the 715,000 who actually did so between 1st May 2004 and 30th September 2007 (although some of these were likely already in the UK illegally). Although government officials and the leaders of Britain's largest corporations have, for the most part, remained steadfastly celebratory about this influx, concerns have been raised about the ability of poorer areas to absorb the new arrivals.²⁴

While the planned opening of labour markets to A8 workers in other EU countries may reduce the flows in coming years, it is also clear that the long-term impact of this immigration is an open question. The handy assumption that young, strong labourers will gratefully work and then go away has, of course, proved itself grievously false before. The UK's assumption that integration difficulties are primarily tied to race could be in for a test as the expectations and ambitions of skilled, underemployed A8 workers grow. Nor can an increase in the entry of workers' dependents be ruled out, barring dramatic improvement in the economies of Poland and other source countries.

While the government had understandably declined to make predictions about new entries as a result of the January 2007 EU27 expansion, the very low wage rates in Bulgaria and Romania led some to predict flows even larger than those from the A8 countries. Interestingly, while the largest corporations' spokespersons threw their support behind a continued "open-door" policy²⁵, other business organisations, such as the Confederation of British Industry (the largest employers' group), the British Chambers of Commerce, and even the National Farmers' Union and the British Hospitality Association urged caution and a "pause for reflection" on the grounds that social cohesion was threatened. Rising unemployment and pressures on local communities in terms of providing housing and schools were cited.²⁶

The government's last-minute decision, in December 2006, was to allow Bulgarian and Romanian immigrants to work only within the existing work permit system, allowing them access to 20,000 low skill jobs within the agricultural and fish, meat and mushroom processing industries (though "self-employed" Bulgarian and Romanian workers have open access). The plan is to reassess the situation annually, and to open labour markets gradually while monitoring effects. Figures released in May 2007 show that 10,400 Bulgarian and Romanian workers had entered under work permit schemes in the first three months of the year, a number that does not include self-employed workers.²⁷

In general, net immigration figures in the early years of the millennium were three times that of the early 1990s (175,000 per year vs. 58,000 per year, averaged over three years). These numbers are considerably higher than they were in the 1960s, when immigration became a national crisis leading to a sharp public reaction against it. Experience in other European countries suggests that public opinion turns decisively against immigration in the context of large-scale arrivals and a perception that the government has lost control of its borders (as occurred in Germany from 1989-1993). The UK government will need to redouble its efforts to convince the British public of immigration merits, and will have to make efforts to ensure that immigration numbers are stabilised, perhaps at a lower level. As large numbers of immigrants are EU citizens, the government has less

scope for action that it did in the 1970s, when it implemented what has been called the world's only successful zero-immigration policy.²⁸

Integration Outcomes

Since the 1991 census, the National Office of Statistics has recorded visible minority unemployment and income levels and educational attainments. Overall, the visible minority unemployment rate has remained double that of the White population. Unemployment rates are highest among the Bangladeshi community, at 38%, or over nine times the national rate of 4.1% (2001-2002 figures). The Pakistani and Black communities (both African and Caribbean) also suffer from high unemployment. Only the Chinese and Indian communities enjoy unemployment levels similar to that of the White population.

With the exception of Indian (who earn slightly more on average than White men) and Chinese men, visible minorities earn poorer wages than Whites. The reasons for Indian and Chinese success are unclear. It is possible that cultural attributes – specifically an emphasis on educational success – explain the difference, but this explanation is speculative. Women of all ethnic backgrounds, including White, earn less than men. A broad range of studies have confirmed these patterns of race-based disadvantage.²⁹

These economic outcomes do not correlate perfectly with educational achievement. In the tertiary sector, Black students start at the age of five at the same broad level as the national average. By the age of 10, they have fallen behind, particularly in mathematics, and far fewer Black students secure five GCSEs (General Certificate of Secondary Education, broadly equivalent to the North American high school diploma) than the average student.³⁰ Indian students, by contrast, achieve results above the national average, particularly in their GCSEs. At the university level, the results are overall more positive. For entry to university, Indian, Pakistani, and Afro-Caribbean women exceed the national average, as do Indian, Pakistani, and Bangladeshi men.³¹ They are, however, disproportionately placed at the least prestigious universities: 70% of Afro-Caribbean men and 60% of Indian, Pakistani, and Bangladeshi students study at universities that were former polytechnics (technical schools or community colleges), compared to 35% of the overall population.³² These institutions do consistently poorer than older universities in placing job candidates. Finally, within these averages there is substantial polarisation: Bangladeshi and Pakistani students are overrepresented both among university entrants and among 16-year-olds with the worst qualifications.

Separate studies have concluded that Pakistanis and Bangladeshis (and particularly Pakistani and Bangladeshi women) pay the highest “ethnic penalty” (disparities in income beyond those that reflect differences in qualifications and experience), while Indians, and particularly Indian men, pay the lowest.³³ Black men and women fall between these two groups. The literature is, however, less clear on why they pay this penalty. Scholars have suggested that discrimination in hiring and promotion practices³⁴ accounts for the distinction. It is certainly plausible that discrimination partially accounts for higher unemployment and lower wages among visible minorities, but this explanation cannot easily account for variance in ethnic

minority performance. It is not obvious why one group of South Asians (Bangladeshis) would pay a higher ethnic penalty than another (Indians).

The ethnic penalty might largely be a linguistic (and thus educational) penalty. This explains the common concern with language within civic integration policies: the failure to speak the national language fluently sharply limits economic opportunity in the post-industrial European economy.

Reducing this ethnic penalty remains a central challenge for policy-making. Steps should be taken to ensure that wage gaps between certain visible minorities and Whites be erased. Both research and the Indian/Pakistani contrasts suggest that language and education are as important, if not more so, than racism.

Additionally, the particular concern about the ethnic penalty is nested in a broader, post-Thatcher concern about social inequality in Britain in general. Income inequality has grown massively in the UK since 1979, and the growth has been blunted but not reversed under post-1997 Labour governments. Ethnic minorities are thus affected by inequality twice over: because of national and race-based trends. There is currently much debate about whether large numbers of unskilled migrants are lowering wages of some of the UK's poorest workers, thus leading to still further inequality for minorities and the majority population alike.

Second-generation radicalisation

The UK's greatest short- and medium-term challenge concerns integration, particularly at the second-generation. Several public opinion polls have uncovered high degrees of alienation and a high propensity for radicalisation relative to other European countries. There is no consensus on the causes of this development; London's indulgence of extremist imams, the UK's war on Iraq, and the predominance of Pakistanis among UK Muslims have all been cited as causes. The government has responded largely with rhetoric – encouraging Muslims to turn their backs on extremism and asking Muslim parents to watch their children – rather than concrete policy proposals. Those that have been put forward – such as state funding for Muslim schools – are bitterly contested.

Conclusion

Three of the challenges discussed above – second-generation radicalisation, the ethnic penalty, and inequality – relate not to current immigrants but to the knock-on effects of past waves of migrants. It is an open question whether the integration and economic challenges generated by those migrants related to their particular characteristics (and to the response to their arrival), or whether they are raised by any large-scale migration in Europe. Given the UK's current experiment in mass immigration, time will tell.

Endnotes

- ¹ See Hansen (2000).
- ² Ipsos MORI (2007). "April Political Monitor." <http://www.ipsos-mori.com/polls/2007/mpm070425.shtml>
- ³ See Hansen (2000).
- ⁴ See Hansen (2000).
- ⁵ Under the Working Holidaymaker Scheme, persons aged 17 to 30 from Commonwealth countries and British Overseas Territories can come to the United Kingdom for an extended holiday of up to two years; they are entitled to work for up to 12 months within this two-year period.
- ⁶ See section on ethnic and minority populations for an explanation of the ethnic categories applied in UK statistics.
- ⁷ That is, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia.
- ⁸ Because numbers are so high among WRS workers, even the small proportion found in higher-skill work amounts to a large absolute number. See Salt and Millar (2006): 348-9.
- ⁹ An Orangeman is a member of the Protestant Orange order, which is associated with a puritan moral outlook and anti-Catholicism. Unionism in this context refers to strong support in Northern Ireland for remaining within the United Kingdom and hostility to Irish nationalism.
- ¹⁰ See Bleich (2003).
- ¹¹ In 2003, estate agents estimated that access to a good state school added EUR 69,000 to the price of a house. For particular schools, the figure can be closer to EUR 220,000, or double the price of an average UK house.
- ¹² See Curtis (2005).
- ¹³ See Home Office (2003).
- ¹⁴ See Ash (2005).
- ¹⁵ See Ash (2005).
- ¹⁶ "Theatre Ends Play in Sikh Protest." BBC News, 24th September 2004. http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/west_midlands/4112105.stm
- ¹⁷ For a discussion of integration courses and tests in the Netherlands, France, Germany and the United Kingdom, see Joppke, C. (2007): "Do Obligatory Civic Integration Courses for Immigrants in Western Europe further Integration?" focus Migration Policy Brief No. 8. http://www.focus-migration.de/Do_Obligatory_Civic.2562.0.html?&L=1
- ¹⁸ By declaring airports to be international zones – and not UK territory – access to asylum is reduced, as passengers arriving at the airports cannot claim asylum in the UK if they are not on UK territory.
- ¹⁹ Ford, R. "Officials haven't faintest idea." Times Online, 17th May 2006. <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/uk/article719671.ece>
- ²⁰ "Reid targets illegal immigrants." BBC News, 7th March 2006. http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/6424377.stm
- ²¹ "A call for 'regularisation' for some illegal immigrants in the UK." workpermit.com, 9th May 2007. <http://www.workpermit.com/news/2007-05-09/uk/strangers-into-citizens-regularisation-rally.htm>
- ²² On 5th February 2004, 19 Chinese labourers, presumably under the control of gangs who smuggle Chinese migrants, drowned while racking for cockles off the coast of Lancashire. Apparently they were unable to read the signs warning of quicksands and rising tides, nor were they warned about the dangers by their supervisors. For a critique of the legislation passed in the wake of the incident, see Toynbee, P. "Phoney policies only backfire." The Guardian, 4th May, 2007. <http://politics.guardian.co.uk/comment/story/0,,2072236,00.html>
- ²³ See Ruhs (2006).
- ²⁴ For a further discussion of EU expansion and the free movement of workers, see also Heinen, M. and Pegels, A. (2006): "EU Expansion and the Free Movement of Workers: Do Continued Restrictions Make Sense for Germany?" focus Migration Policy Brief No. 4. http://www.focus-migration.de/EU_Expansion_and_the.1201.0.html?&L=1
- ²⁵ "UK Home Office announces illegal immigration crackdown." workpermit.com, 21st November 2006. http://www.workpermit.com/news/2006_11_21/uk/renewed_illegal_immigration_crackdown.htm
- ²⁶ "UK industry welcomes immigration curbs." workpermit.com, 26th October 2006. http://www.workpermit.com/news/2006_10_26/uk/no_open_doors_romania_bulgaria.htm
- ²⁷ "Asylum seeker deportations drop." The Guardian, 22nd May 2007. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uklatest/story/0,-6652297,00.html>
- ²⁸ See Layton-Henry (1994).
- ²⁹ See Berthoud (2000).
- ³⁰ See Parekh (2000).
- ³¹ See Parekh (2000).
- ³² See Parekh (2000).
- ³³ See Carmichael and Woods (2000); Berthoud (2000).
- ³⁴ See Carmichael and Woods (2000); Berthoud (2000).

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