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Border & Immigration Agency

BULGARIAN AND ROMANIAN ACCESSION STATISTICS

January – March 2007

A JOINT ONLINE REPORT WITH THE
DEPARTMENT FOR WORK AND PENSIONS

DWP Department for
Work and Pensions

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INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

On 1 January 2007 Bulgaria and Romania joined the European Union. The Government announced on 24 October 2006 that nationals of Bulgaria and Romania would be afforded gradual access to the United Kingdom's labour market. There would continue to be access for skilled workers who met the skills requirements of the United Kingdom's work permit arrangements and the Highly Skilled Migrant Programme. Access for lower skilled workers, however, would be quota limited and restricted to those accessing existing schemes (the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme and the Sectors Based Scheme) for the agricultural and food processing sectors. At the same time these low-skilled schemes would move to being restricted to Bulgarian and Romanian nationals only.

The Accession (Immigration and Worker Authorisation) Regulations 2006 give effect to this policy. These Regulations make Bulgarian and Romanian nationals taking employment in the United Kingdom after 31 December 2006 subject to a requirement to hold a work authorisation document. This requirement will be met if the individual holds:

- i) an accession worker card;
- ii) a valid work card issued in accordance with the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme;
or
- iii) a passport endorsed before 1 January 2007 where the individual has extant leave to enter or remain for the purpose of employment, for example, a work permit holder.

Other Bulgarian and Romanian nationals exercising a Treaty right in the United Kingdom may seek a registration certificate. This includes those exempt from the worker authorisation restrictions; highly skilled migrants; those with restricted access to the labour market – students, the self-employed, and self-sufficient persons; and Bulgarian and Romanian family members of main applicants.

The data in this publication are based on Management Information, are provisional and may be subject to change. The data are not National Statistics. They have been subject to data reconciliation to ensure that the outcomes recorded are accurate and consistent. A fuller explanation of the documentation that Bulgarian and Romanian nationals may obtain after 1 January 2007 and how the processes for obtaining them relate to the data set out in this report is set out at Annex A.

NOTE ON THE PUBLICATION

This report is based on provisional Management Information collected by Border and Immigration Agency systems and manual monitoring of applications for National Insurance numbers. The figures published in this report are subject to change when updated.

TECHNICAL NOTES

- All figures (other than percentages) in tables 1 to 5 are rounded to the nearest five. The figures in tables 6 and 7 are not rounded.
- † indicates 1 or 2.
- - indicates nil.
- Because of rounding, figures may not sum to the totals shown. All percentages and figures are calculated from non-rounded figures.

BULGARIAN AND ROMANIAN ACCESSION

APPLICATIONS FOR ACCESSION WORKER CARDS¹

A total of 1,115 applications for accession worker cards have been received in the first quarter of 2007, of which 815 have been approved and 190 refused. The majority of refusals relate to cases where the applicant has failed to provide evidence that the employer has obtained approval of the employment against work permit criteria.

66% of applicants are of Romanian nationality.

59% of applications are from Bulgarian and Romanian nationals seeking to show that their employment meets the criteria of the work permit scheme for skilled workers.

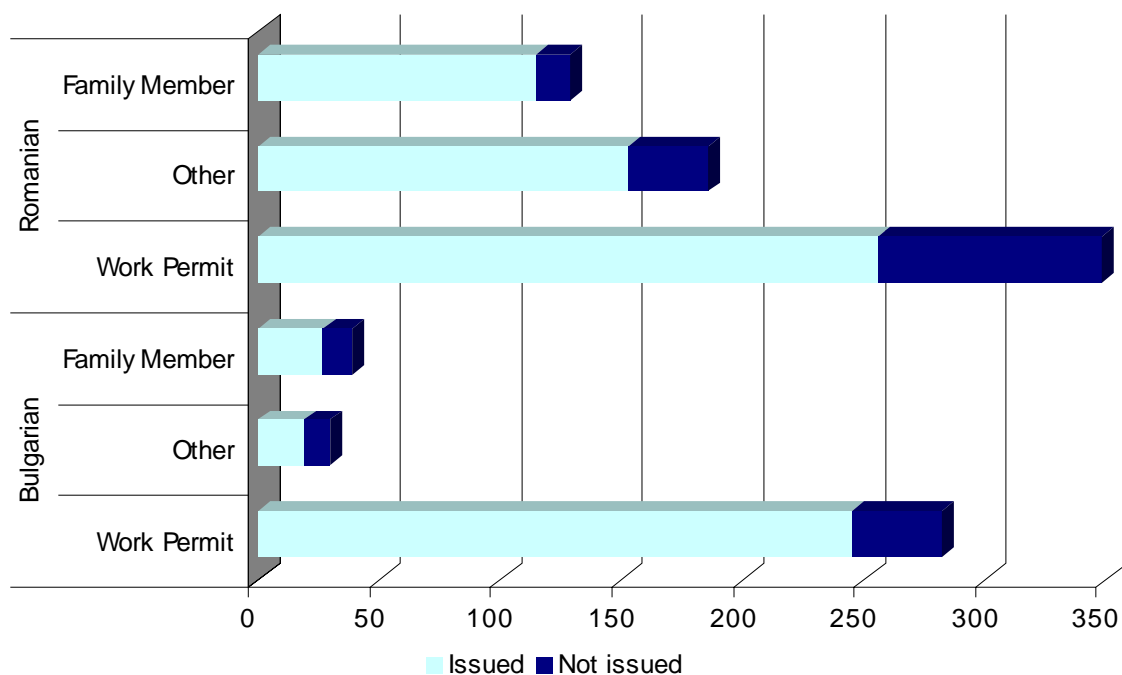


Figure 1 - Applications for accession worker cards by category, January – March 2007

The majority of applications in “other” categories are accounted for by the Sectors Based Scheme (SBS) for low skilled jobs in the food processing sector, where 210 applications² by employers (170 of which have been for Romanians) have been approved in the first quarter of 2007, compared with 190 SBS approvals² for Bulgarian and Romanian applications in the first quarter of 2006.

The data in Table 1 do not include participants on the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme (SAWS). Provisional figures indicate that the operators of the SAWS have issued 1,535 SAWS work cards to Bulgarian nationals and 890 SAWS work cards to Romanian nationals, a total of 2425 SAWS work cards as at 31 March 2007.

¹ The data for applications are recorded by the date on the application form, the standard statistical approach. However, as applications continue to be received there may be an increase in the quarterly total number of applications in subsequent reports.

² These applications from employers are not comparable with the data in Figure 1 and Table 1 which is derived from decisions on applications by **employees** for accession worker cards. The data regarding employer approvals are from decisions on applications received between 1 January and 31 March 2007 from employers for approval of employment of a Bulgarian or Romanian national in the Sectors Based Scheme.

Table 1 - Applications for accession worker cards by category, January - March 2007

Number of applications					
Bulgarian Nationals	Approved	Refused ³	Withdrawn	Outstanding	Total Received
Authorised category of employment					
Work Permit	245	35	-	10	290
Other ⁴	20	10	†	5	35
Authorised Family Members					
Family Member	25	10	†	15	55
Total	290	60	†	30	380

Romanian Nationals	Approved	Refused ³	Withdrawn	Outstanding	Total Received
Authorised category of employment					
Work Permit	255	90	†	25	375
Other ⁴	155	35	-	10	200
Authorised Family Members					
Family Member	115	10	5	35	165
Total	525	135	5	75	735

Combined total	815	190	5	100	1,115
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Note: Please see Introduction: Technical Notes.

³ The data relate to the refusal of the worker's application for an accession worker card and not the separate consideration of the employer's application for approval of the employment against the work permit criteria. See paragraph in the Note on the data above.

⁴ The "Other" category refers to applications for accession worker cards in those authorised categories of employment set out in Schedule 1 of the Accession (Immigration and Worker Authorisation) Regulations 2006, other than the work permit employment category. These include those approved under the Sectors Based Scheme, au pairs, ministers of religion, etc. It does not include those issued with work cards under the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme.

APPLICATIONS FOR REGISTRATION CERTIFICATES⁵

There have been a total of 9,305 applications for registration certificates, 5,830 (63%) of which have been submitted by Romanian nationals.

93% of decisions result in the issue of the document, indicating that the majority of applicants are able to demonstrate that they genuinely have a right of residence as claimed.

The largest proportion of these applications (40%) is for registration certificates confirming that the applicant is exercising a Treaty right as a self-employed person. 7% of these applications have been refused. The second largest group (30%) of those applying for registration certificates are those applying on the basis that they are exempt from worker authorisation requirements.

The numbers applying for a registration certificate on the basis of study are, by contrast, relatively low (4%). Very few applicants are seeking free access to the labour market on the basis that they are highly skilled (1%).

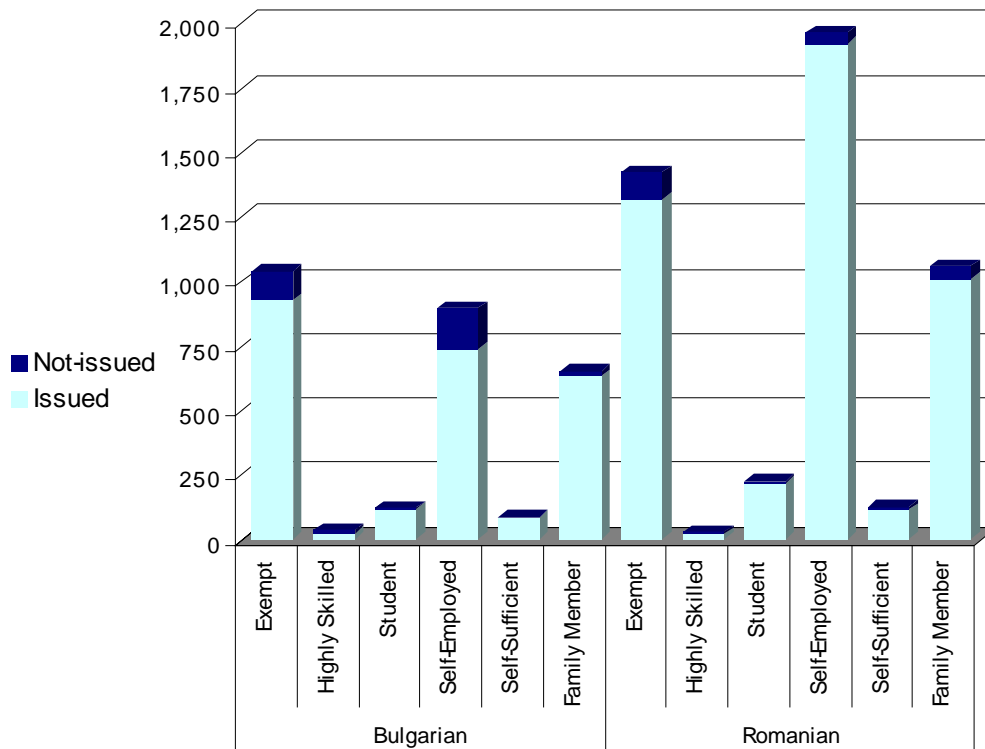


Figure 2 – Applications for registration certificates by category, January – March 2007

⁵ The data for applications are recorded by the date on the application form, the standard statistical approach. However, as applications continue to be received there may be an increase in the quarterly total number of applications in subsequent reports.

Table 2 Applications for registration certificates by category, January - March 2007

						Number of applications
Bulgarian Nationals	Approved	Refused ⁶	Withdrawn	Outstanding	Total Received	
No restriction on access to the labour market						
Exempt	925	110	5	125	1,165	
Highly Skilled	25	10	-	5	35	
Restricted access to the labour market						
Student	115	5	-	15	135	
Self-Employed	735	155	5	360	1,260	
Self-Sufficient	85	†	-	10	100	
Registration certificate as a family member⁷						
Family Members	630	15	5	125	775	
Total	2,520	295	10	640	3,470	
Romanian Nationals	Approved	Refused ⁶	Withdrawn	Outstanding	Total Received	
No restriction on access to the labour market						
Exempt	1,315	100	5	175	1,595	
Highly Skilled	20	10	-	5	35	
Restricted access to the labour market						
Student	215	10	†	45	270	
Self-Employed	1,920	35	5	495	2,460	
Self-Sufficient	115	10	†	25	150	
Registration certificate as a family member⁷						
Family Members	1,005	45	5	265	1,325	
Total	4,595	205	20	1,010	5,830	
Combined total	7,120	500	35	1,650	9,305	

Note: Please see Introduction: Technical Notes.

⁶ The data relate to the refusal of the worker's application for a Registration Certificate which is made directly to the Border and Immigration Agency and does not include any application from an employer. See paragraph in the Note on the data above.

⁷ The data in this table relate only to applicants, including family members, that are nationals of Bulgaria and Romania. It is possible for third country nationals to qualify for the issuance of EU residence documentation on the basis of their relationship to a Bulgarian or Romanian national exercising a Treaty right. Such documents have been issued to 30 third country nationals on this basis in the first quarter of 2007.

APPLICANT PROFILE

AGE AND GENDER OF APPLICANTS

Of those who applied in Q1 2007 50% of registered workers were aged 25-34. 43% of Bulgarians were 25-34 compared to 53% of Romanians, whereas 20% of Bulgarian applicants were aged 35-44 to 17% of Romanians.

In January to March 2007 53% of applicants were male and 47% of applicants were female. However, there were equal proportions of male and female Bulgarian applicants, whereas 55% of Romanian applicants were male and 45% were female.

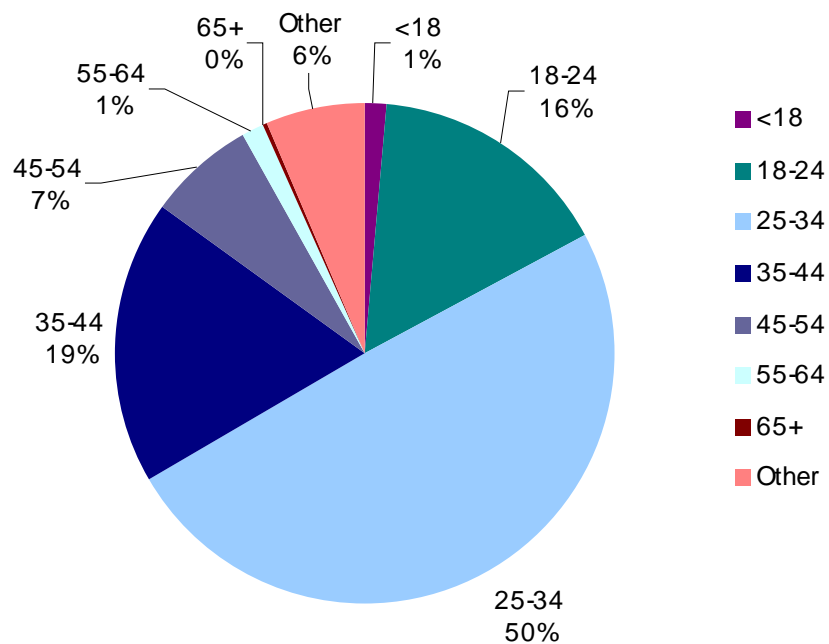


Figure 3 – Age of applicants, January – March 2007

SECTORS AND OCCUPATIONS IN WHICH APPROVED WORK PERMIT APPLICANTS ARE EMPLOYED^{8,9}

Where Bulgarian and Romanian nationals apply for accession worker cards in the work permit or Sectors Based Scheme category, their employers must first apply for a letter of approval under the work permit arrangements. The following data are derived from outcomes of such applications by employers; refers only to applications from employers; and provides limited detail on the sectoral and occupational distribution of approvals under the work permit arrangements.

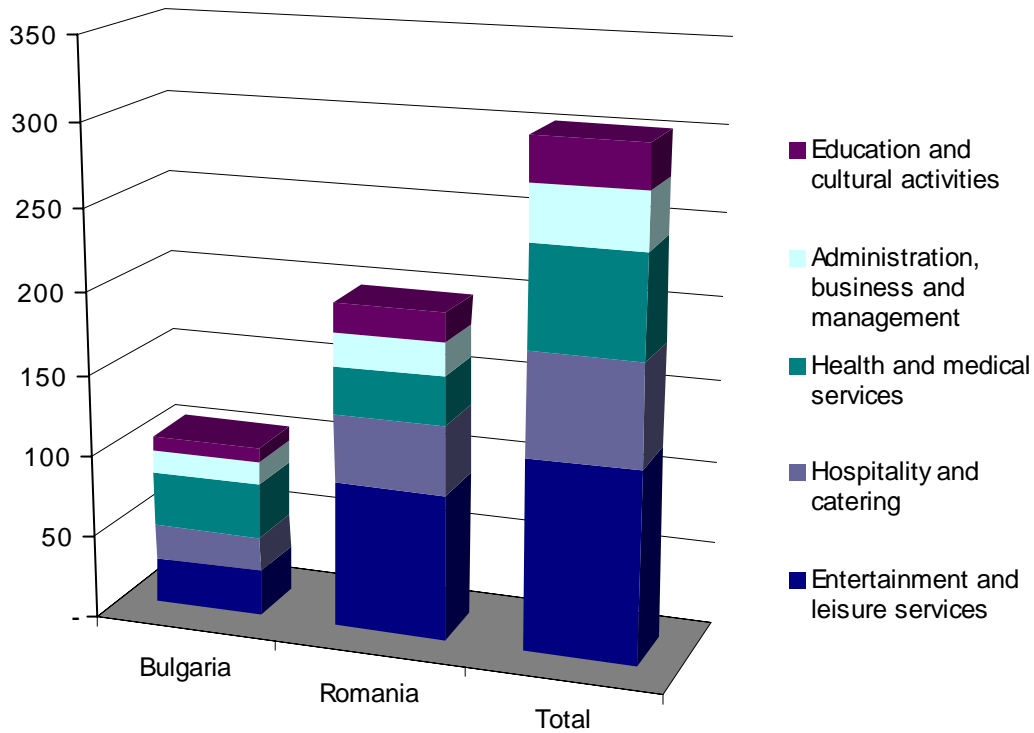


Figure 4 – Top 5 sectors of employers of approved work permit applicants, January – March 2007

The most significant sectors for the employment of skilled Bulgarian and Romanian workers are entertainment and leisure services (28%), hospitality and catering (15%) and health and medical services (15%). This is the case for both nationalities.

⁸ The number of approvals will not precisely correspond with numbers of applications for accession worker cards in the work permit category because a period of time may intervene between approval of the employer's application and the individual applying for an accession worker card.

⁹ The data in this section do not provide a full picture of the sectoral and occupational distribution of Bulgarian and Romanian nationals taking employment in the United Kingdom – solely those seeking access to the labour market through the work permit arrangements where access to the labour market is considered against labour market criteria.

Table 3 – Sectors of employers of approved work permits by applicant’s nationality, January – March 2007¹⁰

Number of approvals against work permit criteria

Sector	Bulgaria	Romania	Total
Entertainment and leisure services	30	90	115
Hospitality and catering	20	40	65
Health and medical services	35	30	60
Administration, business and management	15	20	35
Education and cultural activities	10	20	25
Financial services	15	5	20
Manufacturing	5	15	20
Computer services	5	10	15
Retail and related services	†	10	10
Agriculture	10	-	10
Government	-	10	10
Construction and land services	†	5	10
Sport	†	†	5
Extraction industries	†	†	5
Telecommunications	-	5	5
Real estate and property services	†	-	†
Utilities – gas, electricity and water	-	†	†
Law-related services	-	†	†
Transport	-	†	†
Total	145	265	410

Note: Please see Introduction: Technical Notes.

¹⁰ As pointed out in the Note on the Data, the data in this table do not derive from decisions on applications for accession worker cards but from decisions on applications received between 1 January and 31 March 2007 from employers for approval of the employment against the work permit criteria. The number of approvals of such applications in Q1 2007 compares with 930 such approvals in the same period in Q1 2006.

Table 4 – Top ten occupations of approved work permits, by applicant's nationality January – March 2007¹¹

		Number of approvals against work permit criteria	
Occupation	Bulgaria	Occupation	Romania
Senior carer	25	Circus artiste	40
Chef	15	Chef	30
Circus artiste	15	Musician	25
Other managerial related occupation	10	Senior carer	25
Other financial occupation	10	Other engineering occupation	20
Researcher	5	Other managerial related occupation	20
Other IT occupation	5	Researcher	20
Other education/cultural occupation	5	Other hotel and catering occupation	10
Musician	5	Other IT occupation	10
Other agricultural occupation	5	Social worker	10
Total top ten	100	Total top ten	205
Other occupations / not stated	45	Other occupations / not stated	60

Note: Please see Introduction: Technical Notes

¹¹ As pointed out in the Note on the Data, the data in this table do not derive from decisions on applications for accession worker cards but from decisions between 1 January and 31 March 2007 on applications from employers for approval of the employment against the work permit criteria.

GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYERS OF APPROVED WORK PERMIT AND SECTORS BASED SCHEME APPLICANTS^{12,13,14}

Where Bulgarian and Romanian nationals apply for accession worker cards in the work permit or Sectors Based Scheme category, their employers must first apply for a letter of approval. The following data are derived from outcomes of such applications by employers; refers only to applications from employers; and provides limited detail on the regional distribution of approvals under the work permit arrangements. These data also include approvals under the Sectors Based Scheme sector.

The single highest proportion (21%) of nationals of Bulgaria and Romania in the work permit and Sectors Based Scheme category are in the North West. 77% of applications by employers for Bulgarian and Romanian workers on the Sectors Based Scheme have been issued permits for low-skilled work in the food-processing sector.

By contrast, those in the next most significant region, London (17%), have mostly been issued work permits for skilled employment.

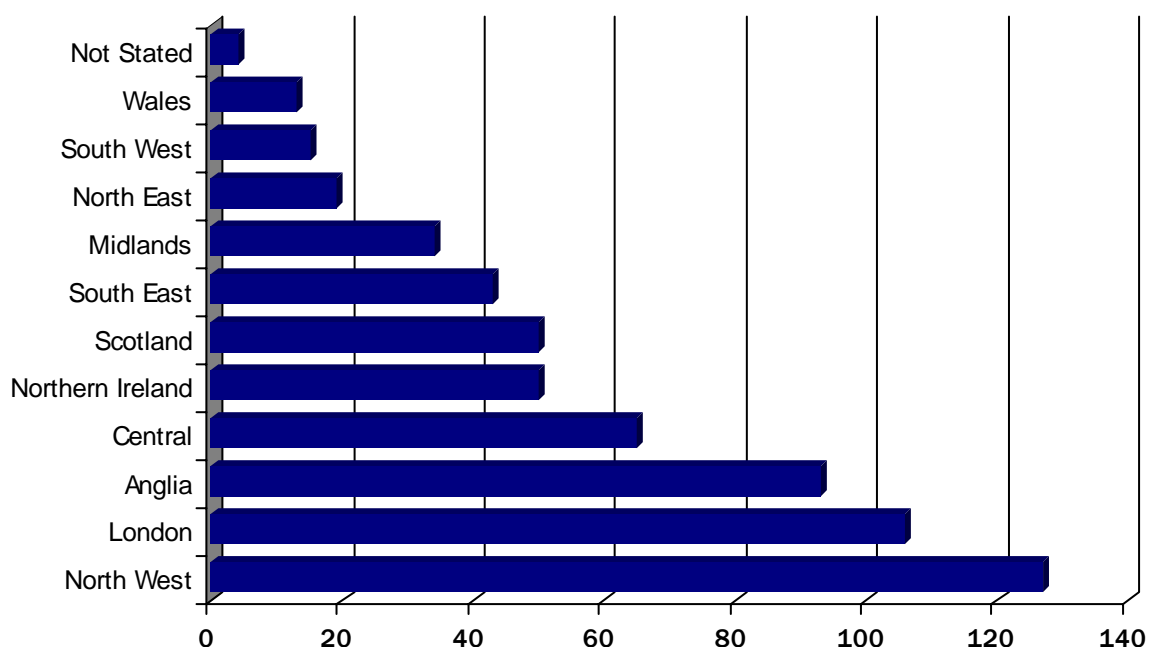


Figure 5 – Geographical distribution of employers of approved work permit and Sectors Based Scheme applicants, January – March 2007

¹² Regions are based on the applicant's employer's postcode, where supplied. Regions are defined according to the Post Office's Postal Address Book regions.

¹³ The number of approvals will not precisely correspond with numbers of applications for accession worker cards in the work permit category because a period of time may intervene between approval of the employer's application and the individual applying for an accession worker card.

¹⁴ The data in this section do not provide a full picture of the regional distribution of Bulgarian and Romanian nationals taking employment in the United Kingdom – solely those seeking access to the labour market through the work permit arrangements where access to the labour market is considered against labour market criteria.

Table 5 – Geographical distribution of employers of approved work permit and Sectors Based Scheme applicants, January – March 2007¹⁵

	Number of approvals against work permit criteria		Total
	Work permits	Sectors Based Scheme	
North West	30	95	125
London	105	-	105
Anglia	75	20	95
Central	60	5	65
Northern Ireland	15	35	50
Scotland	20	30	50
South East	20	25	45
Midlands	35	-	35
North East	20	-	20
South West	15	-	15
Wales	15	-	15
Not Stated	5	-	5
Total	410	210	620

Note: Please see Introduction: Technical Notes

¹⁵ As pointed out in the Note on the Data, the data in this table do not derive from decisions on applications for accession worker cards but from decisions between 1 January and 31 March 2007 on applications from employers for approval of the employment against the work permit criteria or in the Sectors Based Scheme.

NATIONAL INSURANCE ALLOCATIONS

NATIONAL INSURANCE NUMBERS ALLOCATED AND PURPOSE OF ALLOCATION

Between January and March 2007, the total number of National Insurance Number applications from Bulgarian and Romanian nationals stood at an overall total of just under 4,500.

Application volumes relate to all Bulgarian and Romanian nationals making applications, including those who were resident in the UK prior to accession.

98.3% of National Insurance Numbers were allocated for employment purposes, 1.1% for benefit purposes and 0.6% for tax credit purposes.

64% of applications were from Romanian nationals and 36% from Bulgarian nationals.

60.5% of applicants were male and 39.5% were female. 77.2% of applicants were aged 18-34 years old.

Table 6 – National Insurance Numbers allocated and refused, January – March 2007

	Total Allocated	Allocated for employment purposes ¹⁶	Allocated for benefit purposes	Allocated for tax credit purposes	Total Refused
Total	3,985	3,918	44	23	487

¹⁶ Includes self-employment

NATIONAL INSURANCE NUMBER APPLICATIONS BY REGION

Table 7 – National Insurance Numbers allocated and refused by region, January – March 2007¹⁷

Region	Total
London	2,817
East Midlands	380
South East	312
Scotland	177
North West	159
East of England	143
West Midlands	135
Yorks & Humber	103
South West	84
North East	48
Wales	38
Fast-track ¹⁸	76
TOTAL	4,472

¹⁷ Jobcentre Plus is currently divided into the eleven regions shown. A customer's postcode determines to which region s/he is allocated.

¹⁸ Fast-track applications relate to highly skilled / specialist employment only. Specific regions are unknown.

ANNEX A

NOTE ON THE A2 SCHEME

Data on accession worker card applications

1. The data in this report include statistics relating to applications for accession worker cards since 1 January 2007. Applications for accession worker cards can be approved only in respect of a number of specified categories of employment set out in Schedule 1 of the Regulations. These categories of employment replicate categories of employment that were available to Bulgarian and Romanian nationals prior to accession, as the standstill clause in the Accession Treaty requires. They include categories of employment accessed through the work permit arrangements but also categories of employment which, under the Immigration Rules, sit outside the work permit arrangements (for example, au pairs, ministers of religion and overseas government employees).

2. It should be noted that the application process for obtaining an accession worker card depends on the category of employment. Applications for an accession worker card are made by the individual worker. However three of the authorised categories of employment (the work permit category, the Sectors Based Scheme and the Training and Work Experience Scheme) require the employer to make an initial application for approval of the employment by the Border and Immigration Agency against labour market criteria. If the employment is approved, the employer is issued with a letter of approval. The worker is then required to submit this letter of approval in support of their application for an accession worker card.

3. This means there are two sources of data relevant to accession worker card issuance: the database on which decisions on the issuance of accession worker cards is held and the separate database on which decisions on employers' applications for approval of the employment against the work permit criteria is held. In this report, data relating to the number of accession worker cards issued in each authorised category of employment and the nationality, age and gender of the individuals to which they have been issued are derived from the database on which the issue of accession worker cards is recorded. It is not, however, currently possible to extract data relating to the regional distribution of applicants from this database. Data relating to sector, occupation and region, however, can be extracted from Border and Immigration Agency management information relating to the issuance of letters of approval to employers' applications under the work permit category, the Sectors Based Scheme and the Training and Work Experience Scheme. These data are included in this report. This means that the sectoral, occupational and regional data set out in pages 9 to 12 of this report relate only to those Bulgarian and Romanian nationals who are subject to worker authorisation requirements and have had their employment approved under the work permit arrangements. The data do not provide a picture of the sectoral, occupational or regional distribution of those who are not subject to worker authorisation requirements.

Data on accession worker card applications for authorised family members

4. Table 1 includes data on applications for accession worker cards in respect of authorised family members. If a Bulgarian or Romanian national is subject to work authorisation requirements if they wish to take employment, then their family members are also required to obtain an accession worker card if they similarly wish to take employment. These applications are not, however, subject to a skills test or resident labour market test. This arrangement effectively replicates the position prior to accession in which the dependant spouse of a work permit holder would be given leave to enter or remain that was not subject to a condition restricting access to the labour market.

Data on registration certificate applications

5. Table 2 of this report includes data on applications for registration certificate applications submitted by Bulgarian and Romanian nationals. These are applications for a document confirming that the holder is exercising a Treaty right in the United Kingdom and are issued in accordance with the Immigration (European Economic Area) Regulations 2006. The data in this report record applications for registration certificates falling into the following three categories:

i) Unrestricted access to the labour market

Bulgarian and Romanian nationals will be exempt from work authorisation requirements if they are exercising a Treaty right and fall into one the following categories:

- they have leave to enter under the Immigration Act 1971 and that leave does not place any restrictions on taking employment in the United Kingdom (for example, they were given leave to remain prior to Accession as the spouse of a British citizen or as the dependant of a work permit holder);
- they have been working with permission, and without interruption, in the United Kingdom for a period of 12 months ending on or after 31 December 2006 (for example, they were already present in the United Kingdom as a work permit holder or in some other category that confers permission to take employment);
- they are providing services in the United Kingdom on behalf of an employer established elsewhere in the European Economic Area (EEA);
- they are also a citizen of the United Kingdom or another EEA state, other than Bulgaria or Romania, or Switzerland;
- they are the family member of a EEA national exercising a Treaty right in the United Kingdom (except if you are the family member of a Bulgarian or Romanian national who is subject to work authorisation requirements) or the spouse or civil partner of a British citizen or person with settlement in the United Kingdom.

It should be noted that a person falling into one of the above categories and wishing to work in the United Kingdom is automatically exempt from worker authorisation requirements and does not need to obtain a registration certificate confirming that he or she has free access to the labour market. Consequently, the data set out in this report should not be interpreted as being a reliable indicator of the number of Bulgarian and Romanian nationals exempt from worker authorisation requirements. The data simply represent those that choose to apply.

Bulgarian and Romanian nationals may also establish an exemption from the requirement to obtain work authorisation if they can demonstrate that they are highly skilled within the meaning of the Regulations i.e. they meet the criteria of the Highly Skilled Migrant Programme or they have been awarded qualifications at the required level at an institution in the United Kingdom.

ii) Restricted access to the labour market

Nationals of Bulgaria and Romania have a right of residence if they are exercising a Treaty right as a student, self-employed person or self-sufficient person. They would, however, be subject to work authorisation if they were to commence employment¹⁹. A registration certificate issued to a person falling into one of these categories will not confer access to the labour market. Again, it should be noted that a person exercising a Treaty right in one of these categories is not required to obtain a registration certificate. The data in this report should not therefore be interpreted as putting a figure to the number of, for example,

¹⁹ Those exercising a Treaty right as a student are able to do so without obtaining documentation from the Border and Immigration Agency. However, if they wish to undertake work alongside their studies – 20 hours per week during term-time or full-time during vacations – then they must first obtain a Registration Certificate confirming that they are studying at an approved educational establishment. The level of work permitted mirrors the situation of students from Bulgaria and Romania prior to accession.

Bulgarian and Romanian students in the United Kingdom.

However, it should also be noted that while Bulgarian and Romanian students may engage in part-time employment during term time, full-time employment during vacations or where the employment is part of a course of vocational training, they may only do so if they obtain a registration certificate confirming that they are exercising a Treaty right as a student by virtue of study at an educational establishment on the Department for Education and Skills' Register of Education and Training Providers. In practice, this means there will be an incentive for students to obtain such documentation with the consequence that numbers of applications will be a strong indicator of student numbers over time.

iii) Family members

The family members of those falling into categories (i) and (ii) may obtain documentation confirming their right to reside as the family member of a Bulgarian or Romanian national exercising a Treaty right. If they are the family member of a Bulgarian or Romanian national exempt from worker authorisation requirements they too will be issued a registration certificate (if they are an EEA national) conferring free access to the labour market. If they are the family member of a Bulgarian and Romanian national subject to worker authorisation requirements, they too will be subject to worker authorisation and will need, if they wish to work, to obtain an accession worker card as an authorised family member (see paragraph 4 above).

Other comments

6. The data set out below relate to applications for documentation and therefore should be interpreted as a record of numbers of applications, not necessarily people. A person subject to worker authorisation who changes employment will need to apply for a new accession worker card. Likewise, a person who obtains a registration certificate on the basis of self-employment but who subsequently seeks to take employment will need to obtain an accession worker card. Over the longer term, those who are subject to work authorisation requirements but subsequently become exempt from the requirement as a consequence of 12 months' legal and continuous employment may apply for a registration certificate confirming free access to the labour market.

7. **The figures in this report are provisional management information and subject to change. The data in this publication have been subject to data reconciliation to ensure that the outcomes recorded are accurate and consistent.** The data in sections 1 to 3 in this report are based on the application date, the standard statistical approach. There will be cases in which there is a delay between the date when the forms are filled in or posted and the date when the applications are received by the Border and Immigration Agency. The data in sections 4 to 6 are based on the date a decision was made on the application, for applications received after 1st January 2007.