

# Hong Kongers: who are they and where are they settling?

Working paper by Heather Rolfe and Phyllis Chan

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# Foreword

The Welcoming Committee for Hong Kongers is an independent, non-profit umbrella group housed within British Future. The Committee's work is funded by the Department for Levelling up, Housing and Communities under its Hong Kong Welcoming VCSE grant scheme.

We help coordinate efforts across the UK's nations and regions from civil society, communities, business, education and government to support Hong Kongers to settle in the UK. We bring together the welcomers and the welcomed.

We also conduct research to inform policy, share best practice and support organisations to make their voices heard. This working paper brings together evidence from the early stages of our research and policy work. Feedback, comments, suggested edits and additions would be very welcome.

# 1. Introduction

The British National (Overseas) visa route for Hong Kongers to live and work in the UK has now been open for more than a year. Latest government data shows more than 100,000 have applied, and surveys carried out in Hong Kong suggest that many more will do so and make the move in coming months and years.

While every group of migrants has its own characteristics, motivations and needs, Hong Kongers arriving either as BNOs or as asylum seekers, is unlike any that have made the UK their home before. Most come to live and work and are driven by a personal mixture of political, economic and social motivations. Almost all say they are here to stay and to build a future for themselves and their families in the UK.<sup>1</sup>

Earlier research or policy guides are of limited help in planning provision across areas of UK life, such as education, housing and jobs. Our project, delivered by British Future with the Welcoming Committee for Hong Kongers, was designed to understand their needs, at what is needed to help Hong Kongers settle and integrate and to inform policy. Some of our findings will be relevant to the needs of other new arrivals, while others will be more distinctive to Hong Kongers.

This paper takes a first step at understanding Hong Kongers' needs to settle in the UK, by looking at who they are. We look at what is known to date about characteristics including age, family profile, education level and occupation. We also look at where Hong Kongers are living in the UK.

At this point in our project, we are providing an overview rather than seeking to explain the decisions made by Hong Kongers: this will be the focus of our future papers and our final report, which will include the voices of Hong Kongers themselves. It is also important to note that our focus is on Hong Kongers arriving in the UK since January 2021 and not the estimated 100,000 Hong Kongers who came before the BN(O) route opened.

# There are many surveys using a range of methods

Data is available from a range of sources. These include internal government statistics and surveys from a range of organisations. A number of bodies working to settle and integrate Hong Kongers have carried surveys, some of these large scale involving more than a thousand respondents. There are also a number of smaller surveys which have collected

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> IFF Research, 'Survey of Hong Kong British National (Overseas) visa holders, 2021;

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/survey-of-hong-kong-british-national-overseas-visa-holders-2021

data on Hong Kongers' characteristics, plans and needs. We have looked at evidence from thirteen surveys carried out so far.

Some of the most interesting data is from surveys carried out by welcoming organisations themselves. Most of these have been hosted online and disseminated via social media and informal networks. These organisations have been able to reach Hong Kongers who would be hard to reach by using traditional survey methods. The drawback is in the extent to which samples are skewed where, for example, respondents are from a particular interest group or demographic. Some local surveys are only available in English, skewing the data in the direction of those with better English-reading skills. Many only have small datasets, of a few hundred respondents.

While many of the surveys conducted to date have their limitations in applicability of findings across Hong Kongers as a whole, or across the UK, we present the findings with these caveats in mind. As we show, findings across surveys show quite marked consistency which provides a good grounding for further research and policy analysis. This does not detract from the pressing need for better data which includes all Hong Kongers in the UK, and in the kind of detail that can really inform policy making. We explore this challenge at the end of this paper.

# 2. How many are here, and how many will come?

The Home Office collects data on in-country and out-of-country applications for the BN(O) visa, publishing figures every quarter. This includes a breakdown of 'main applicants' and dependents as well as visa grants and refusals.

The most recent quarterly migration statistics, announced on 24 February 2022, indicated that as of 31 December 2021, approximately 103,900 BN(O) status holders and their family members have chosen to take the UK up on this offer and applied for the BN(O) route since 31 January 2021. Of the applications made, 97,057 have been granted. Of these, 75,961 or around 4 in 5 were granted from overseas; and 21,096, were granted within the UK. Only 80 applications have been refused.

Published data is limited to information about applications themselves, with no further information shared about the individuals applying for visas.<sup>2</sup>

There is as yet no available data on the number of visa holders who are in the UK, rather than having obtained their visa but still waiting to come. Other data provides an indication of the nature of future flows of people to the UK using the BNO route. A survey in early 2021 of 1000 BN(O) status holders by the Migration Observatory at Oxford University

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Published BN(O) data is available via this link <u>How many people come to the UK each year (including</u> visitors)? - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

estimates that in early 2021 186,000 were planning to come to the UK via the BN(O) visa scheme; and a further 932,000 were considering applying.

Depending on whether intentions lead to decisions, numbers of Hong Kongers in the UK could increase substantially. The Migration Observatory's survey found time horizons to be broad, with over half of respondents planning a future move within a timescale as long as 10 years, and 8% afterwards.<sup>3</sup> The UK was the preferred destination of survey participants, favoured by a third, with Taiwan (23%), Australia (15%) the other top 3 choices.

The Migration Observatory survey provides an insight into reasons for leaving Hong Kong, with many expressing political grievances, including dissatisfaction with the police and distrust in government. However, social and economic factors also important, relating to the cost of living, work culture and property prices in Hong Kong relative to the UK. These factors are reflected in the characteristics and preferences of new arrivals.

# 3. Who are Hong Kongers in the UK?

All of the surveys collect data on personal characteristics. While these do show some consistency in terms of age groups in particular, it is important to note that this is likely to change following extension of the visa route to Hong Kongers who acquired BNO status after 1997. The extension allows those born after 1997 who have at least one BNO parent to apply independently of their parents once the extension comes into force. Previously, they could only apply as the dependant of a BNO parent.

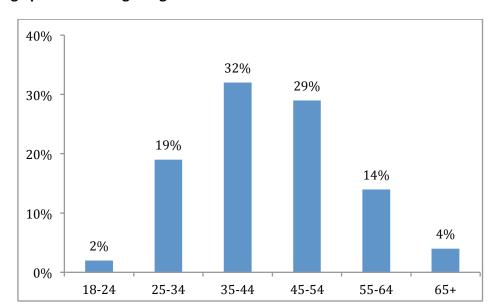
The characteristics otherwise reflect the impact on the population of both migration and a baby boom from the 1950s onwards. Around 60% of visas have been granted to a main applicant, and around 40% to visas to family dependants, defined as financially reliant on the primary 'main' applicant. The percentage of dependents with non-BNO or HKSAR identity (i.e. those not born in Hong Kong) has risen across each quarter, with over 70% in Q3 and Q4 (July to December 2021) The majority nationality in these cases was Chinese. We have no indication of how long such individuals have lived in Hong Kong.

### Age

The age of Hong Kongers in the UK is concentrated around midlife groups. As table 1 shows, the largest represented age group is that 35-44 followed by those in the 45-54 age bracket. These age groups represent those most likely to hold BN(O) citizenship themselves as they were born during the population boom of the 1960s-80s. Those aged 25-34 and 55-64 form smaller groups, though the younger group may increase following eligibility changes. Only

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Man-yee Kan, Lindsay Richards, and Peter William Walsh, Migration Observatory, Oxford 02 Dec 2021 [https://migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/resources/briefings/the-migration-intentions-of-british-nationaloverseas-status-holders-in-hong-kong/] Figure 2

4% are aged over 65, suggesting the proportion of those bringing elderly dependents (most likely born in China) is small.<sup>4</sup>



### Table 1 Age profile of Hong Kong BNO visa holders

Source: Home Office visa application databases, as at 30 September 2021

A large survey of 1264 BN(O)s in Hong Kong and the UK by UKHK Welcome Churches found around 1 in 8 were choosing to move with at least one elderly parent, with an average age of such parents being 68.5.<sup>5</sup> More than half of these respondents (55%) said they would bring just one elderly parent. These findings also indicate that the number of older new arrivals is likely to be relatively small.

### **Family structure**

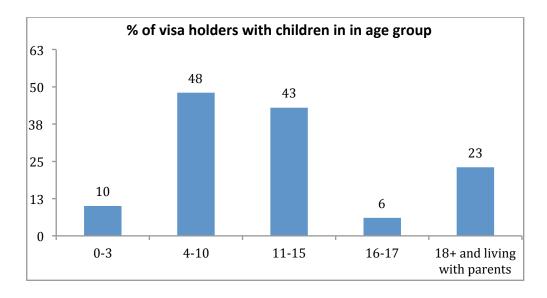
Almost three quarters of Hong Kongers in the UK (72%) are married. Many are in young families. A survey by IFF for the Home Office found that 60% of visa-holders have one or more child, with the majority of children aged under 15. A 'preferred destination' survey of 720 respondents by Hong Kongers in Britain found more than half (53%) have children at school age, with 1.6 children the average family size.

Another survey of BNO visa holders in the UK and Hong Kong, by UKHK found that more than half (54%) of respondents' children (aged 0-21) were of primary school age and over a

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> IFF Research (See Table 1 on the link above)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> UKHK, '2021 UKHK HKers Settlement Survey Report' (October 2021)

quarter (27%) would be at secondary school. One in eight (13%) were in the early years age bracket. However, as noted earlier, this may change following the widening of the scheme since February 2022.<sup>6</sup>



Source: Home Office / IFF Research survey of Hong Kong BN(O) visa holders, April/May and August/September 2021

It is not uncommon for some migrants to arrive before their family, though in the case of Hong Kongers, this does not seem to be usual so far. A survey conducted by the South East Migration Partnership found that, while 80% had arrived in the region with their family, 10% said family members would be joining later (a further 10% said they would not be joining them).<sup>7</sup> This is similar to findings from the UKUC survey which found 85% had arrived with partners and other family members.

Another notable feature of Hong Kongers in the UK, identified in surveys, is that almost half are Christian, with the majority of these of Protestant faiths. A small proportion are Buddhist. However, the relatively high proportion identifying as Christian may reflect the strength and reach of church networks associated with some of the surveys rather than prevalence.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> 'UK expands eligibility for Hong Kong visa offer', *Reuters* 24 Feb 2022 [<u>https://www.reuters.com/world/uk-expands-eligibility-hong-kong-visa-offer-2022-02-24/]</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> South East Strategic Migration Partnership, 'SESPM - HK BN(O) Survey in South East England' (28 Mar 2022)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup>Hong Kong Umbrella Community, 'Hong Kong BN(O) Status Holders' Characteristics (2021)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> UKHK, '2021 UKHK HKers Settlement Survey Report' (October 2021)

# 4. Where are they living?

Previous groups of migrants have often shown distinct patterns of settlement in areas of the UK, for example East Asians in Leicester, Bangladeshis in East London and Sri Lankans in Harrow and Tooting. An existing community, along with word of mouth played a role in these, and other, cases. In contrast, Eastern European migrants, showed much less locational concentration, with job offers from employers and agencies driving initial location, and subsequent mobility. As we show later, Hong Kongers are generally arriving in the UK without jobs, planning to apply once settled. Work does not therefore seem a primary consideration in location decisions, though it is undoubtedly a factor.

There is little national data on precisely where Hong Kongers are settling in the UK: most has been collected at regional level. However, a small number of national surveys provide a picture of Hong Kongers' preferences pre-departure. A survey specifically on regional preference conducted by Hong Kongers in Britain in June 2021 found 94% gave England as their preferred UK nation of settlement. <sup>9</sup> The top five localities, excluding Greater London, were other large cities, including Manchester, Birmingham, and Bristol. The Migration Observatory survey also found London a preferred destination, of 42% of respondents, with Manchester second with 12%.

Hong Kongers who were considering a later move showed more interest in the devolved nations, with 12% interested in Scotland, 7% in Wales, and 6% in Northern Ireland. These increases may be due to greater exposure to information among potential migrants and suggest that efforts on the part of devolved nations to raise awareness of their offer could be effective.

### **Evidence from the regions**

SMPs have collected qualitative evidence which they shared at our WC4HK/British Future seminar on data in March. As they continue to do so, their quantitative and qualitative data is likely to be valuable in knowing where Hong Kongers are settling, and why.

London has been a destination for previous arrivals from Hong Kong, but there are no sizeable settled communities. In any case, Hong Kongers appear to be attracted to very different localities to those which have attracted migrants in the past.

The Greater London Authority has gained a partial picture of locations of settlement from council tax registration, among other methods. It has estimated numbers across the Greater London areas at 2,000-4,000. Settlers are concentrated in South West London including in the boroughs of Kingston, Sutton and Richmond. Sutton has been a particularly popular

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Hongkongers in Britain, 'Where will Hongkongers stay in Britain? Survey Report on Hong Kong BN(O) Arrivals' Preferred Destinations', Jun 2021 [https://www.hongkongers.org.uk/bno-destinations]

choice, with an estimated 700-800 having settled there. Numbers are thought to be much smaller in outside of South West London, and minimal in the East.

The popularity of specific South West London locations as the destination for Hong Kongers has been viewed with some interest. It is usually explained with reference to three factors: the presence of very good state schools, often Grammars; relatively affordable housing in comparison with more central London locations; proximity to central London for commuting to work; lower crime rates and a more affluent feel.

Other locations in South East England are proving to be popular among Hong Kongers. A survey by the South East Strategic Migration Partnership found concentrations of respondents in locations including Southampton, Tunbridge Wells, Guildford, Brighton and Reading. The survey also found that more than two-thirds (69%) were planning to stay where they had settled, though more than a quarter said they were uncertain. This suggests that the mobility of Hong Kongers is unlikely to result in high population turnover in neighbourhoods and schools.

In contrast, some other locations report relatively small numbers. Based on previous patterns of inward migration, the West Midlands was expecting high numbers, particularly in Birmingham and Wolverhampton, but report receiving only a few hundred Hong Kongers. However, locations outside of the conurbation, in particular Solihull reports around 1,000 newcomers from Hong Kong, gleaned from school admissions data. This might be explained by consideration of the factors referred to earlier – schools, housing, low crime and commuting opportunities.

Strategic Migration Partnerships in other areas of the UK similarly report favoured spots as those which offer this combination of features. Some notable locations include Trafford and Warrington in the North West. A number of SMPs have ongoing surveys, or other means of data collection to track patterns of settlement in their regions.

It is thought that some You tubers have been influential in the decisions of some Hong Kongers, by familiarising those intending to move with particular localities that might best meet their needs. The influence of social media, and YouTube in particular, on decisions about where to settle in a host country has not been noted before. An unpublished survey by the South West Strategic Migration Partnership found that only 13% of Hong Kongers who were settling in the region were doing so on the basis of knowledge of the region. They were influenced by information about schools, accommodation and crime/security.

### Accommodation as a key factor

Finding accommodation is reported to be a top priority for many Hong Kongers: research by a consortium of stakeholder organisations in London found almost three-quarters of

respondents saying it was the most difficult issue they experienced. <sup>10</sup> There is currently very little data on the housing status of Hong Kongers settling in the UK. A number of small scale surveys find a different balance between buyers and renters, possibly reflecting length of time in the UK.

Available data suggests that many will have bought, or be in the process of buying property rather than renting long term. The Settlement Survey carried out by UKHK found that more than two thirds of respondents said they were likely to buy a home within the next two years.

While the assets of Hong Kongers will vary considerably, some have a significant amount of wealth at their disposal, with over 82% having over £100,000 total household assets, and 34% with over £500,000.<sup>11</sup> This gives many Hong Kongers some degree of choice in where they live and the accommodation they buy.

# 5. Levels of education

Surveys consistently find that Hong Kong BNO visa holders are more highly educated than average to the populations of Hong Kong and of the UK. This reflects both motivations to leave Hong Kong and having financial and social capital to do so. A survey by Migration Observatory of Hong Kongers' migration intentions found only 5% of 'movers' (thinking of moving to the UK or elsewhere) had an education of junior secondary level or below, compared to more than a third (34%) of stayers.

The government-commissioned IFF survey and the work and employment survey by Hong Kongers in Britain found that over two thirds (69%) of BN(O)s have degree-level qualifications or higher.<sup>12</sup> HKUC's survey split tertiary education into three categories: diploma/associate's degree, tertiary, and masters' or above.<sup>13</sup> Of all graduates, 39% held degrees and 22% had a higher degree. Only 5% had not reached a higher secondary level.

Some data is available on English language educational level, although much of this is through self-assessment and may under-state proficiency. HKUC's survey found 78% of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Hongkongers in Britain, Hackney Chinese Community Services (HCCS), and Hong Kong Assistance and Resettlement Community (HKARC), 'Briefing on Housing Situation of Hong Kong BN(O)s Arriving in the UK', Apr 2021 [https://www.hongkongers.org.uk/bno-housing]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> UKHK, '2021 UKHK HKers Settlement Survey Report' (October 2021)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Home Office, 'Survey of Hong Kong British National (Overseas) visa holders, 2021', 31 Jan 2022 [https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/survey-of-hong-kong-british-national-overseas-visa-holders-2021/hong-kong-bno-survey-results-accessible-version]

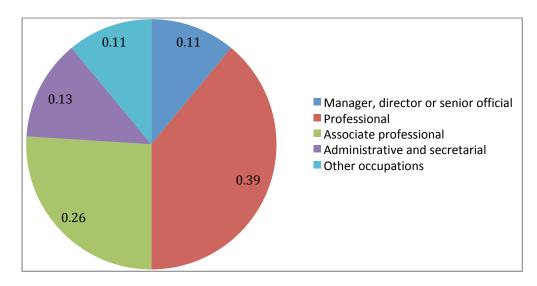
<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> HKUC, 'Hong Kong BN(O) Status Holders Characteristics - Hong Kong Umbrella Community', unpublished.

respondents were educated at least partly in English during secondary education and almost half (47%) received tertiary education in English.

# 6. Where are they working?

The employment intentions of Hong Kongers have been included in a number of surveys. As we described earlier, there are indications that while employment prospects are likely to be a factor for some Hong Kongers in moving to the UK, this is not necessarily for better financial reward, at least in the short term: Migration Observatory's survey of prospective movers, found that earning potential was not a pull factor, and most expect a pay cut. This is a realistic expectation, at least initially, with a survey by HKUC finding 16% in elementary occupations, compared to 3% in Hong Kong. The challenge for policy is to ensure that this downward mobility and underutilisation of Hong Kongers' qualifications and experience is short-lived.

A survey of recent arrivals on work and employment by Hong Kongers in Britain found twothirds had over eleven years' worth of work experience, and over half had an equivalent annual income of over £36,000 per annum in Hong Kong. The largest occupational group was that of professionals, or associate professionals. As shown in figure 1, 65% of respondents to the IFF/Home Office survey had held positions at this level in Hong Kong, and a further 13% had held managerial or senior posts.



### Occupational status of Hong Kongers before arriving in the UK

Source: Home Office / IFF Research survey of Hong Kong BN(O) visa holders, April/May and August/September 2021

A recent survey commissioned by the South East Migration Partnership has found a similar picture, with the top occupations in professional and associate professional sectors of accountancy banking and finance, business consultancy, IT and media and teaching and

education. Only 12% had been self-employed. However, surveys may under-count the presence of people with non-professional skills, for example working in trades: it is likely that their level of English and participation in surveys is smaller.

Hong Kongers are not necessarily looking to continue their previous occupations in the UK: over 80% of respondents to the survey by Hong Kongers in Britain said they were open to moving to other sectors, and a survey by HUK found that half were planning to change sectors or had already done so. This may be a result of early job-search experience and changes in expectations. It is also likely to reflect a willingness to take entry level jobs in order to gain general work experience and income.

For some, waiting may not be a matter of choice: there is evidence that Hong Kongers experience difficulties in gaining employment, which include the necessary level of English: HKUC's survey, which found 54% of respondents were unemployed, identified a number of barriers. In addition to English, they include recognition and transferability of skills and qualifications.

It is also likely that other, more basic barriers exist, for example delays in getting a National Insurance Number. This should not be a barrier in practice, since there is no legal requirement to hold one to work, and visa holders have access to a government document stating they can work in the UK. Nevertheless, some Hong Kongers may see it as a necessary step towards entering work: the employment survey by Hong Kongers in Britain found that a significant number have struggled to obtain numbers, either at the application stage or waiting beyond the stated period.<sup>14</sup>

Across the world, opportunities to work from home have increased significantly since the onset of the coronavirus pandemic in 2021. There are reports from stakeholder organisations that some Hong Kongers, who were working from home before they left, have continued to do so in the UK. Research is needed on the extent of this practice, and how long it will continue.

There is also evidence that some Hong Kongers are interested in starting a new business in the UK. A survey by the South East Migration Partnership found 12% intend to start their own business, with particular interest in retail and sales. A higher level of interest is found in other surveys – probably reflecting differences in wording. UKHK has found that more than 4 in 10 are considering starting a business. While some may already have experience of setting up a business, most will not and only 8% were confident of their ability to do so successfully.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Julian Chan, Jason Chao, Dr R. Yeung, 'Survey Report on Work and Employment for Recently Arrived Hongkongers in the UK' Oct 2021 [https://www.hongkongers.org.uk/employment-survey]

# 7. Official data sources

We have used relatively little official data in compiling this report. We described the limitations of data on the number of visa holders, and that data on arrivals would be more useful than visas issued. More granular detail on the characteristics of BN(O) visa holders arriving in the UK would be valuable: this could include age, accompanying children and older dependants. Any other data captured would also be of value.

There are other sources of data of potential value in understanding more about who and where Hong Kongers are in the UK, in particular the school census and National Insurance Numbers. Some adaptations might be made to these sources to make them more useful to work on settlement and integration.

### **School census**

The school census, carried out at various points during the school year collects data on children at UK state schools. Data is collected on ethnicity, and Hong Kong Chinese is included as a category though not BNO specifically. This is potentially valuable in identifying the number of children, and estimating the number of families both across the UK and by locality and region.

The accuracy of the data derived from the school census relies on school administrators recording ethnicity accurately, rather than choosing the broader 'Chinese' category. Independent schools submit aggregated data at a school level but this does not include pupil ethnicity. Consequently, equivalent information to the school census is not available for the independent sector, which may account for a reasonable proportion of pupils of Hong Kong origin.

Another source of schools data is school registration applications. These have to include location of previous school and can therefore identify pupils who have newly arrived. Surname data has also been used and is considered feasible since the most common surnames in Hong Kong are distinct, in particular from those most common in China. School registration data has therefore been used in some areas of the UK to estimate numbers, presumably through application to the local authority, but is not coordinated across the country. This is in principle a very valuable resource, at least in identifying localities of initial settlement.

### **National Insurance Numbers**

As noted earlier, Hong Kongers do not need a National Insurance number to start work initially, but will do so soon after. Nationality fields include a range of Hong Kong categories, though not specifically BN(O).

To be useful in understanding where Hong Kongers are settling in the UK, this data needs to record location in the UK where the NINO was applied for and issued. This is collected by the Department for work and pensions but does not have a separate category for Hong Kong BN(O) visa holders.

In terms of location, the DWP does not collect postcode data, but uses google analytics to identify location where people allow cookies. The two drawbacks with this approach is that applicants may move location after applying and settle somewhere else in the UK; the second is that, given personal and political concerns, a reasonable proportion of Hong Kongers may not allow cookies on government, or other websites. This granular data is then aggregated to regional level, so that more detailed location analysis is not possible.

An interactive map produced by DWP allows for searches by local authority area showing breakdown into EU15, EU8, EU2, Asia and Rest of World categories but not specific countries. <sup>15</sup>

### **Other official data sources**

It is also important to note that collection of data on use of services, as a means of assessing the size of communities, and their needs, is less applicable to Hong Kongers than to other groups because they have no recourse to public funds (NRPF). This means there is no official data on circumstances including unemployment, or assistance with housing.

A further consideration about data collected on Hong Kong BN(O) visa holders, is that by no means all Hong Kongers who wishing to leave the country and to settle in the UK will come via this route. Some will have come as asylum seekers and others will come by routes including visas for study, work and the youth mobility scheme. Information on Hong Kongers can therefore be accessed through data on these schemes published by the Home Office. <sup>16</sup>

# 8. Some future challenges for policy research

We have described how the numerous surveys by organisations working for Hong Kongers, including the Hong Kong Umbrella Community, UKHK and Hong Kongers in Britain, have helped to build up a picture of characteristics, behaviours and needs, alongside research by the Migration Observatory and IFF (for the Home Office). Strategic Migration Partnerships

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Department for Work and Pensions, National Insurance Numbers Registered to Adult Overseas Nationals, year to March 2019: https://dwp-

stats.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Viewer/index.html?appid=e449d3f2bd5e4e55aebc6154f69de07a] <sup>16</sup> Home Office, 'Why do people come to the UK to work (3 March 2022)

https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-statistics-year-ending-march-2021/why-do-people-come-to-the-uk-to-work

are also collecting data which usefully adds to this picture, and can helpfully pick up regional variation. Qualitative research is also needed to add depth and explanation to the growing body of survey evidence.

The existence of multiple surveys is helpful, though it is important that the sample is well understood, including any inherent biases, for example in social class or motivation for coming to the UK. People who are less connected to social and community networks, and who do not use social media, are harder to reach, as are those who cannot complete survey forms in English. Excluding these groups from surveys can skew findings and overlook the needs of groups such as older people. Stakeholder organisations are aware of the need to engage these and other groups through representative groups and not to rely on online methods and social media.

A further issue which applies to Hong Kongers more than most other groups of new arrivals, is concerns about confidentiality of data. These issues have been addressed by some stakeholder organisations, for example UKUC, through gaining trust among Hong Kongers in their networks. This has involved using a range of methods and channels of communication to guarantee participation, including for those with traumatic experiences of leaving Hong Kong and being separated from family members.

The situation of Hong Kongers in the UK is changing quickly: many BNO visa holders are currently sorting out their initial settlement needs and trying to establish new lives. Circumstances and priorities will evolve over time. In understanding the needs of individuals and communities for settlement and integration, it is important that these are tracked over the course of several years. Longitudinal surveys involving, as far as possible, the same cohort, therefore have particular value.

The Welcoming Committee for Hong Kongers is an independent, non-profit umbrella group for all those who care about the integration of new arrivals from Hong Kong.

We help coordinate efforts across the UK's nations and regions from civil society, communities, business, education and government to support Hong Kongers to settle in the UK. We also conduct research to inform policy, share best practice and support organisations to make their voices heard.

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