# Surge in British citizenship applications from US citizens hits record high amid political unrest



In the early months of 2025, a significant surge in applications for British citizenship from US citizens has come to light, reflecting a growing interest among Americans to relocate to the UK. With over 1,930 applications recorded in the first quarter alone, this marks the highest figure since statistics were first compiled. This represents a notable 12 per cent increase from the preceding quarter, illustrating a clear trend among US residents seeking the security and stability that they perceive in the UK.

Immigration lawyers have attributed this influx to the heightened sense of political instability within the United States, particularly following Donald Trump's re-election and his controversial tariff announcements. Many Americans are reportedly feeling a mix of “fear, frustration, and financial insecurity,” leading them to explore opportunities abroad. Ono Okeregha, director at the Immigration Advice Service, articulated this sentiment, emphasising that personal safety concerns have also catalysed this migration trend.

Progressive social and political changes in the US, under Trump's administration, appear to have created a desire among some Americans, particularly professionals and those from the LGBTQ community, to seek stability elsewhere. Claire Nilson, an immigration lawyer at Faegre Drinker Biddle and Reath LLP, noted that the current political climate has prompted citizens to assess their safety and opportunities, prompting them to look at the UK as a viable alternative.

Interestingly, this is not an isolated phenomenon. Previous data highlighted a growing wave of American immigration during Trump's first presidential term, with many individuals who relocated during that period now qualifying for indefinite leave to remain and, subsequently, citizenship. Madeleine Sumption, director of Oxford University's Migration Observatory, suggested that the political environment in the US has made it more probable for Americans to pursue British citizenship.

In addition to citizenship applications, there has also been a noticeable increase in the number of US citizens seeking study visas for undergraduate courses in the UK. The figures indicate a 9.6 per cent rise in applications in early 2025 compared to the same timeframe the previous year. Experts believe this demand is driven not only by the disillusionment with the political landscape in the US but also by the backlash against perceived liberal ideologies in major American universities, which Trump has openly critiqued.

As a broader context, the UK has also seen a record number of total citizenship applications, hitting 72,729 in the first quarter of 2025. This surge coincides with the UK government's recent announcement regarding stricter requirements for settlement, an important route to citizenship for individuals lacking familial ties to the UK. The government’s efforts to tighten immigration policies may further influence the dynamics of immigration patterns, making foreign nationals consider citizenship more urgently before potential legislative changes take effect.

Overall, the unprecedented rise in applications for British citizenship from Americans illustrates not just a migration trend but also a response to the political climate shaping their lives. As both nations navigate their respective political landscapes, the UK remains an increasingly appealing option for those in search of a safe haven and fresh opportunities.

### Reference Map

1. Paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4
2. Paragraphs 1, 2
3. Paragraph 3
4. Paragraph 4
5. Paragraph 5
6. Paragraph 5
7. Paragraph 6

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.ft.com/content/83fd1107-86ce-4acf-a791-03037c80cbb4> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.ft.com/content/83fd1107-86ce-4acf-a791-03037c80cbb4> - This article reports that US applications for British citizenship reached a record high in the first quarter of 2025, with over 1,930 applications—a 12% increase from the previous quarter. Immigration lawyers attribute this surge to political instability in the US, particularly following President Trump's tariff announcements. The article also notes a 9.6% rise in US applications for study visas during the same period, driven by growing demand for undergraduate courses. Experts suggest that the US political climate has influenced these trends, with recent legislation expanding citizenship rights to some non-resident Americans with UK-born grandparents.
3. <https://www.cnn.com/2025/03/05/europe/record-americans-uk-citizenship-trump-intl-hnk/index.html> - CNN reports that over 6,100 US citizens applied for UK citizenship in 2024, the highest number since records began in 2004. The surge coincided with President Trump's re-election, with applications increasing by 40% in the last quarter of 2024 compared to the same period in 2023. The article suggests that the political climate in the US, particularly under Trump's administration, has driven many Americans to seek stability and opportunities abroad.
4. <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/global/study-abroad/2025/03/14/record-number-us-students-apply-uk-undergraduate-degrees> - Inside Higher Ed reports a record number of US students applying for UK undergraduate degrees for the 2025–26 academic year, with 6,680 applicants—a 12% increase from the previous year. Experts suggest that the demand may have risen after Donald Trump's election in November, with UK institutions benefiting from international students being put off by the new administration. The article also notes that 15,274 US students were issued sponsored study visas in 2024, a 5% increase from 2023.
5. <https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202503/05/WS67c746bda310c240449d8994.html> - China Daily reports that US applications for UK citizenship reached a record high in 2024, with over 6,100 applications—a 26% increase from 2023. The surge is attributed to concerns over President Trump's potential return to power and changes to British tax laws. The article also notes that total UK citizenship requests hit a new high of 251,000, up 6%, according to the latest data published by the UK government.
6. <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/news/record-number-us-students-apply-uk-undergraduate-degrees> - Times Higher Education reports a record number of US students applying for UK undergraduate degrees for the 2025–26 academic year, with 6,680 applicants—a 12% increase from the previous year. Experts suggest that the demand may have risen after Donald Trump's election in November, with UK institutions benefiting from international students being put off by the new administration. The article also notes that 15,274 US students were issued sponsored study visas in 2024, a 5% increase from 2023.
7. <https://www.firstpost.com/explainers/donald-trump-americans-uk-citizenship-record-13868948.html> - Firstpost explains that over 6,100 US citizens applied for British citizenship in 2024, the highest number recorded since data collection began two decades ago—a 26% rise from 2023. Immigration lawyers link the surge to Trump's re-election and his victory in early November, with some calling the US political climate a 'very serious driver'. The article also discusses the impact of UK tax reforms on the decision to seek British citizenship.