

BALANCED **MIGRATION**



MPs call for action on immigration as unemployment rises in London and the South East

12 November 2008

- Regional jobless total up to 500,000
- 490 thousand National Insurance numbers given to foreign nationals across the region

Commenting on today's unemployment figures, which showed that unemployment in London and the South East rose by 36,000 between July and September, the Co-Chairmen of the Cross Party Group on Balanced Migration, Frank Field MP and Nicholas Soames MP, called on the Government to toughen up immigration controls so that unemployed Britons have as many opportunities as possible to get back to work.

It comes as new research shows that, each year, tens of thousands of people from outside the European Union are allowed into Britain without a job to go to. Thousands more get jobs that have never been advertised in the UK at all. 75,000 immigrants a year fall into these two categories.

Furthermore, since 2003, 490 thousand National Insurance numbers were issued to foreign nationals in London and the South East alone. While some of these workers may have returned to their home countries, this shows the impact that uncontrolled, large-scale immigration has had on the labour force.

The two MPs said:

“Today, families in London and the South East are looking to the Government to protect their jobs. After a decade which has seen record levels of immigration to the UK, the new Immigration Minister has promised that “it’s going to get harder” to get into this country. Now is his chance to prove it. He should stop people coming here from outside the EU without a job to go to. And he should ensure that jobs are advertised properly in the UK first. In today’s economic crisis, British unemployed deserve a level playing field as they compete for jobs. At present, they have not got one. Will the Government act – or simply stand on the sidelines?”

Notes to editors:

1. The Rt Hon Frank Field MP and The Hon Nicholas Soames MP are Co-Chairmen of the Cross Party Group on Balanced Migration. The Group's Vice-Chairmen are Lord (Bill) Jordan CBE (former President of the Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union) and Daniel Kawczynski MP (Conservative, Shrewsbury & Atcham). Other members include Tobias Ellwood MP, Roger Godsiff MP, David Taylor MP, Lord Ahmed, Lord Carey (former Archbishop of Canterbury) Baroness Cox, Field Marshal Lord Inge KG, GCB, PC, DL and Lord Skidelsky. Further members will be announced in due course.
2. According to the Government's statistics:
 - Immigration will add 7 million to our population by 2031, equivalent to adding seven cities the size of Birmingham.
 - In 2009, England is expected to become the most crowded country in Europe, overtaking Holland.
 - For the next 20 years we will have to build a house every six minutes for new immigrants.
 - The annual benefit of immigration, on the Government's own calculation, is 62 pence per head, per week.
3. The House of Lords Select Committee on Economic Affairs issued a ground-breaking report on the economic impact of immigration in April which called for "a reasoned indicative target range for net immigration" around which policies should be adjusted. The Cross Party Group believes that this indicative target should be Balanced Migration. In its report, the Committee also stated that: "We have found no evidence for the argument, made by the Government, business and many others, that net immigration - immigration minus emigration - generates significant economic benefits for the existing UK population."
4. Balanced Migration would seek to bring the number of immigrants into line with the number of emigrants. The main change would be to limit the number of non-EU citizens who are given the right to settle permanently in the UK. Under these proposals, there would be no fundamental change to arrangements governing asylum; foreign students coming to the UK; genuine marriages; and the new Points Based System although some aspects will need to be tightened up. Non-EU citizens would be able to work here for up to four years, after which they would be expected to leave. Permanent settlement would be subject to a small annual limit with applicants selected by a further points system. Balanced Migration, once achieved, would mean that new household formation would be reduced by about a third, and the population of England, now nearly 51 million, would stabilise at about 56 million by mid century; by contrast, at present levels of immigration it will be 68 million in 2056 and the population of the UK will be 78 million while still rising sharply.
5. "Balanced Migration – A new approach to controlling immigration" is available to download at www.frankfield.co.uk and www.nicholassoames.org.uk