

A new migration policy

Amber Rudd told us there would be a government White Paper on a new migration policy for the UK during the first winter after the Brexit vote. Iain Duncan Smith did a lot of work on what one could look like and sent it to her. 2 years on from the decision to leave we still await the government's proposals. We are told they are coming soon. I would like them to be ready for our exit on 29 March 2019, the date the PM has promised again for us to leave in accordance with the legislation now passed.

Iain's ideas revolve around the current government policy of bringing net migration down to tens of thousands from the quarter of million level that has been common in recent years. That should not cause the PM problems as she has defended this target and repeated it in the 2017 election. He proposes in line with the official Leave campaign that the new policy should not give preference to people from the EU over people from the rest of the world. There should be common criteria for assessing eligibility.

Students coming to study at recognised universities and Colleges should be free to come. Anyone with their own means should be welcome. Anyone with high level qualifications or with skills we are short of should be permitted. Anyone coming to visit, to travel, to be a tourist would of course be welcome. The new controls would operate on anyone coming from the EU as well as elsewhere who wanted to come to look for a job or take up a low paid job, who would need benefit top ups and social housing. The UK would of course continue to offer asylum where appropriate.

We want a policy which is good for the UK economy and fair to all from around the world. We want people who come to settle here to have access to good affordable housing and decently paid employment. We also want that for all those already here and born here, at a time when lower wages have been kept down and when housing in many areas is in short supply. The sooner we have a fair and sensible migration policy, the sooner we can get on top of the housing and pay issues.