

A UK borders and crime policy

Vote Leave did not highlight borders and immigration policy during the campaign, aware of how it would be wrongly caricatured by Remain. Nonetheless others did regularly raise the issue, and many Leave voters liked the idea of controlling numbers of migrants welcomed to the UK once we had left the EU. The general idea of a points based economic migrant policy where the UK decided how many people to invite and which skill sets would be most welcome gained general support amongst the Leave majority. There was a strong feeling that the EU economic model of allowing many people in to take low paid jobs in the UK keeping downwards pressure on wages was a bad one.

Most of us agreed that the UK should continue once out to offer refuge to those fleeing danger from evil regimes along with other advanced countries, doing our bit to alleviate these ills. Unfinished business from our time in the EU is the persistence of people trafficking and smuggling across the Channel. The old routes using lorries across the narrow straits are now better controlled, only for the trade to develop more reliance on small boats.

The government is putting in a points based system and is out to limit low skills and no skills migration from the safe countries of the EU, something we were not allowed to do as members pledged to free movement. It is important this policy is not damaged by frequent abuse of the sea route by economic migrants arriving without permission. Their lives are placed at risk by the business organisers of unsafe boat trips who violate our migration laws but also break EU laws over sea voyage safety and regulation, over taxation of business profits, and standards of employment.

Ministers have made clear their wish to stop this evil trade in people. Border Force say they will not turn back the small boats to France to show this is a futile trade in the way Australia stopped it for safety reasons. In which case it is surely a fair challenge to Border Force to ask them how they do intend to stop it if they do not like the Minister's instruction. It is their job to close down these illegal acts, to protect the lives of the trafficked and to enforce the law on both sides of the Channel against unsafe and illegal travel.

A big Brexit win can be higher wages for low skilled jobs with fewer economic migrants and more investment to help workers recruited locally.