

Home Secretary asks independent migration experts to advise on future salary thresholds

The Home Secretary Sajid Javid has today (Monday 24 June) asked the Migration Advisory Committee to review and advise on salary thresholds for the future immigration system, which will start to take effect from 2021.

The Migration Advisory Committee previously recommended that we should retain the existing minimum salary thresholds in the future immigration system, which includes paying experienced workers at least £30,000, and new entrants (including recent graduates) at least £20,800.

The Home Secretary has asked the Migration Advisory Committee to consider how future salary thresholds should be calculated, the levels of salary thresholds, whether there is a case for regional salary thresholds for different parts of the UK, and whether there should be exceptions to salary thresholds, for example because they've newly started the occupation or because they work in an occupation in shortage.

Home Secretary Sajid Javid said:

It's vital the new immigration system continues to attract talented people to grow our economy and support business while controlling our borders.

These proposals are the biggest change to our immigration system in a generation, so it's right that we consider all of the evidence before finalising them.

That's why I've asked independent experts to review the evidence on salary thresholds. It's crucial the new immigration system works in the best interests of the whole of the UK.

After publishing plans for the new skills-based immigration system in December 2018, the government has embarked on a year-long engagement programme with business and employers up and down the UK.

In the white paper, the government said it would engage with businesses and employers on the salary threshold. Since then, the Home Office has held over 100 events across the UK, engaging 1,500 stakeholders representing businesses and employers. It has also set up five advisory groups to deepen engagement between government and industry.

The new immigration system will mark the end of free movement and introduce a new route for skilled workers which favours experience and talent over nationality.

It already includes measures designed to support business, such as:

- removing the cap on skilled worker numbers
- speeding up processing times for work visas
- scrapping resident labour market tests
- widening the skills thresholds so that anyone with the equivalent of A levels can apply under the new skilled workers route

To help organisations adjust to the new system, as a transitional measure, there will be a temporary work route allowing workers from some countries to come for a year and work, open to all skill levels.

The Migration Advisory Committee is expected to report back by January 2020 when the government will consider all the evidence before finalising plans. The new immigration system will be phased in from 2021.