

The government needs to work out the costs of providing for migrants

Now the government wants to control legal migration it needs to calculate the costs of new legal migrants into low paid jobs to taxpayers. The government now we are out of the EU can make legal migration any amount it likes, from the 750,000 it was at its peak to zero. Every legal migrant needs a permit from government. Government allows large numbers of low paid workers and students to come.

The Treasury wrongly thinks this boosts our financial position. It is true it adds to GDP but it also adds substantially to public spending and may reduce GDP per capita. The Treasury/OBR model once again is misleading and encourages bad policy.

As I have argued before every migrant needs housing, healthcare, utility capacity, roadspace and other public services. My forecast of £250,000 for the capital set up costs and early years free services still stands. Ministers should get an up to date government figure and feed it into OBR models.

Students pay more to the universities which makes sense for their costs. It does not necessarily work for the state if they bring dependants who qualify for free public services and subsidised housing.

Government also needs to take account of associated costs and problems. 750,000 extra people need a lot of housing. Even where they can afford their own it places considerable upwards pressure on rents which in turn increases general housing benefit costs. It makes it more difficult for those already legally settled here to obtain and afford a home of their own. More pressure on the NHS makes it difficult to get waiting lists down. Inviting in more staff for the NHS also creates more demand for NHS staff.

UK communities are full of people who warmly welcome refugees, invited Ukrainians into their homes after the invasion and accept the need for some economic migrants. Many people also think 650,000 a year is far too many, creating strains on public services, housing, infrastructure and community abilities to welcome and adapt.

President Biden expelled more than 1 million illegal migrants from the Mexican border last year. France is sending illegals back to Italy. Various EU countries are considering ways of cutting migration. The EU is working on a system of quotas and requirements for member states to take their share of the many entering the EU.