



# Mass Immigration

Labour's enduring  
legacy to Britain

# Chaos or conspiracy?



*“Every country must have firm control over immigration and Britain is no exception.”*

Labour election manifesto 1997

*“It didn’t just happen: the deliberate policy of ministers from late 2000 until at least February last year, when the Government introduced a points-based system, was to open up the UK to mass migration... I remember coming away from some discussions with the clear sense that the policy was intended – even if this wasn’t its main purpose – to rub the Right’s nose in diversity and render their arguments out of date. That seemed to me to be a manoeuvre too far.”*

Andrew Neather, former speech writer to Mr Blair  
(Evening Standard 23 Oct 2009).

*“People didn’t believe the authorities knew what they were doing and there’s a very good reason for that - they didn’t.”*

Phil Woolas, Immigration Minister (The Sun 21 October, 2008)



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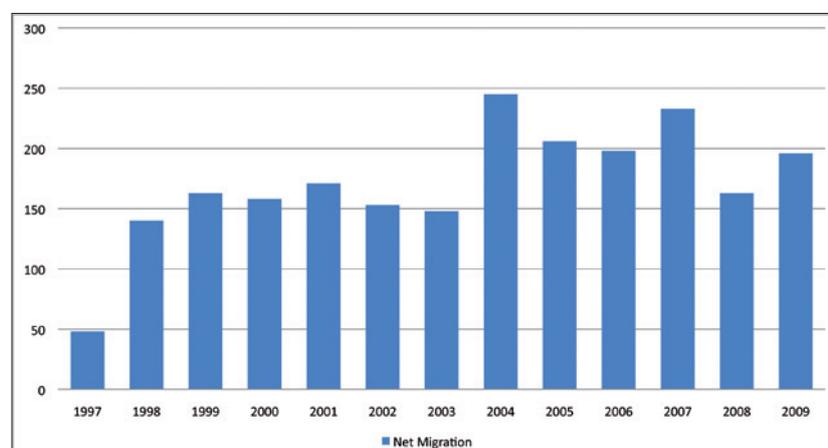
# Summary

- Net immigration quadrupled under Labour, bringing three million immigrants to Britain (three times the population of Birmingham) while one million British citizens emigrated.
- In addition there are illegal immigrants who could number almost one million.
- The economic benefit, in terms of GDP per head, was very small – whether positive or negative. 75% of the extra jobs created since 1997 went to foreign born workers.
- 92% of immigrants went to England which joined Holland as the most crowded country in Europe.
- The waiting lists for social housing in England rose by 70%. Looking ahead, 36% of projected new households will be due to immigration; that will require building about 330 new homes every working day for the next 23 years.
- Half a million children will be added to primary school rolls by 2015; a similar number will not have English as their mother tongue.
- The proportion of children born to foreign born mothers almost doubled to 25%. One academic projection suggests that, if present levels of immigration continue, the “white British” are likely to be in a minority in the UK in the late 2060s.
- The Points Based System has increased, not reduced, immigration.
- 62% of the public consider that allowing immigration to rise to unacceptable levels was Mr Blair’s greatest failure as Prime Minister. His memoirs claim that his strategy on immigration of “confess and avoid” won out at the 2005 general election.

## Net migration

Net migration quadrupled from 48,000 in 1997 to 198,000 in 2009.

Fig 1: Net Migration to the UK 1997-2009 (thousands)

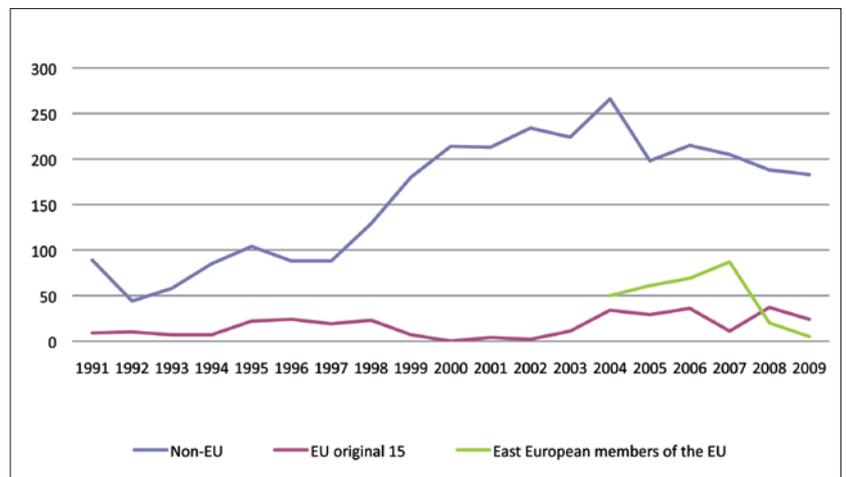


Source: ONS LTIM data

# Sources of migration

Under Labour 3.2 million foreign citizens arrived in Britain, about 80% from outside the EU, whilst nearly one million (941,000) British citizens left. The immigration figures show 300,000 from the new EU member states although the Labour Force Statistics (which include those here for less than a year) give about 500,000. Net immigration from the EU15 was 300,000 over the same period. Illegal immigration is additional – estimated at between 600,000 and 1.1 million<sup>1</sup>. Foreign immigrants continue to arrive at almost one per minute – the overwhelming majority from outside the EU, as illustrated (fig.2) in the graph above.

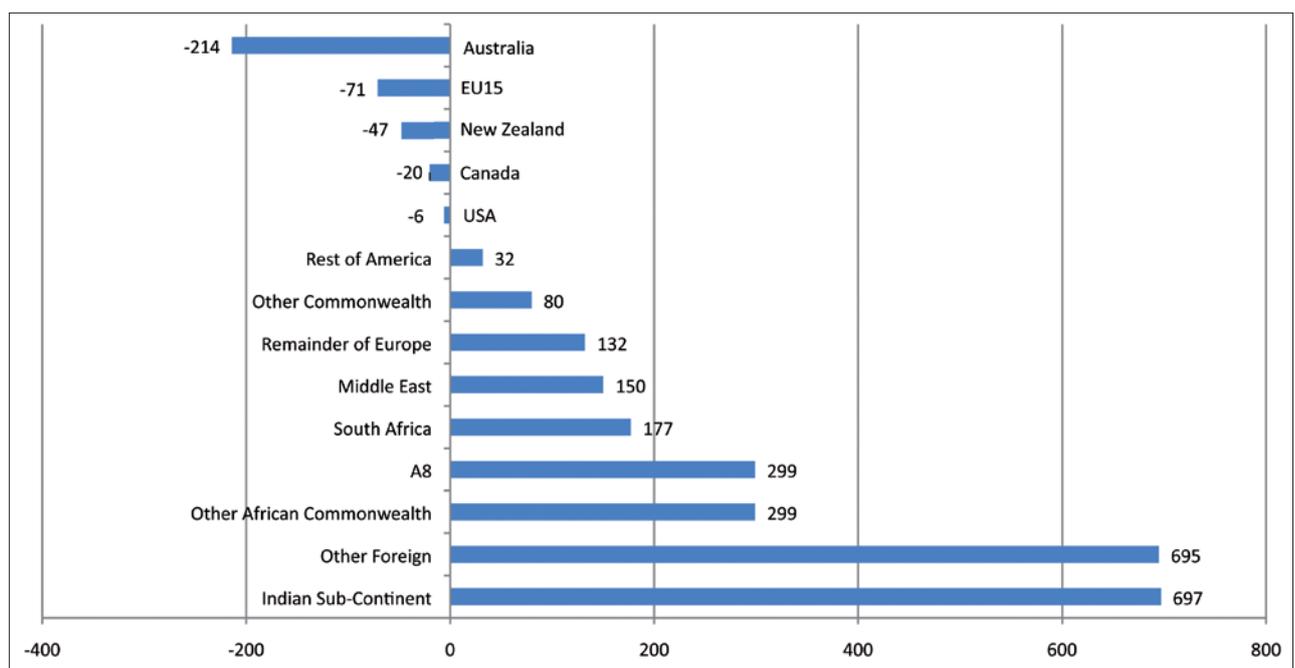
**Fig. 2: Sources of Net migration (thousands)**



Source: ONS and Home Office statistics

The bar chart below (fig.3) gives a broad picture of the source countries of immigration and those countries to which there is a net outflow. The outflow to the EU15, Australia and New Zealand reflects the main destinations of British emigrants.

**Fig. 3: Net Migration by Country of Last or Next Residence - The Labour Years 1997-2009**



Source: ONS LTIM data 1997-2008 and IPS data 2009

<sup>1</sup> Migrationwatch Briefing Paper 11.22 <http://www.migrationwatchuk.org/briefingPaper/document/190>

# Scale of migration

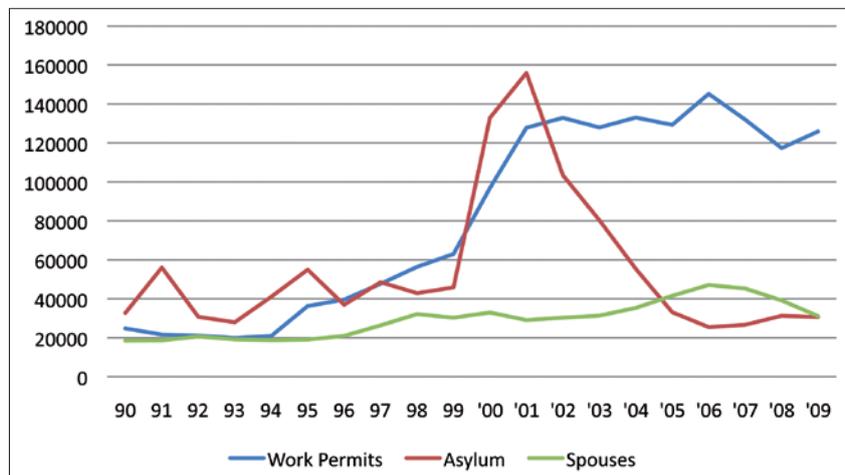
*“It is no exaggeration to say that immigration under New Labour has changed the face of the country.”* IPPR

Immigration under Labour is certainly the largest ever in numerical terms and the largest in relation to population since the Saxon invasions over a thousand years ago. The only two subsequent immigrations – the Huguenots in the 17th century and the Jews in the 19th and 20th centuries were minor by comparison with recent inflows. As for the Asians who were obliged to leave East Africa in the 1970s and who are often quoted as a successful community, they were 27,000 spread over two years. Net foreign immigration over the past five years has averaged 24,000 **a month**.

## Reasons for migration

Asylum applications were brought down but work permits were trebled.

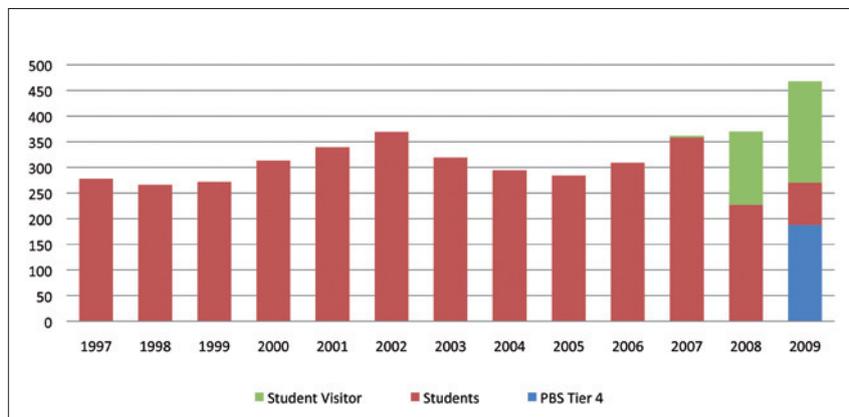
**Fig 4: Number of admissions of non-EU migrants by reason, excluding students**



Source: Official ONS and Home Office statistics

Students, including student visitors, rose sharply - notably in the last five years.

**Fig 5: Leave to enter as a Student (thousands)**



Source: Home Office statistics

# Economic 'Benefit'

The Labour government frequently claimed that immigration added £6 billion a year to GDP. They also claimed that it can keep down inflationary pressures in the labour market (i.e. wages) and bring innovation<sup>3</sup>.

However, the only major investigation in Britain, conducted by the House of Lords Select Committee on Economic Affairs came to very different conclusions<sup>4</sup>:

*Immigration has become highly significant to the UK economy: immigrants comprise 12% of the total workforce—and a much higher proportion in London. However, 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.*

*Overall GDP, which the Government has persistently emphasised, is an irrelevant and misleading criterion for assessing the economic impacts of immigration on the UK. The total size of an economy is not an index of prosperity. (Abstract: page 1)*

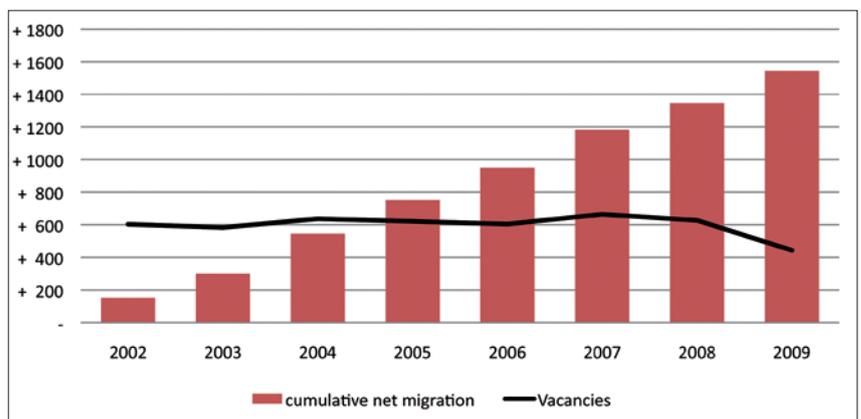
*The overall conclusion from existing evidence is that immigration has very small impacts on GDP per capita, whether these impacts are positive or negative. This conclusion is in line with findings of studies of the economic impacts of immigration in other countries including the US (para 66).*

*The available evidence suggests that immigration has had a small negative impact on the lowest-paid workers in the UK, and a small positive impact on the earnings of higher-paid workers (para 77).*

# Vacancies

The government also claimed that immigration was needed to fill 600,000 vacancies<sup>5</sup>. This was false; it was a version of the well known “lump of labour” fallacy which asserts that there are a fixed number of jobs in an economy. As the graph opposite shows, net migration of over 1.5 million from 2002-9 had very little effect on vacancies which remained almost unchanged until the recession struck.

Fig 6: Number of Vacancies against Net Migration 2002 - 2009 (thousands)



Source: ONS Labour Force Survey and LTIM data

3 Government reply to the House of Lords Committee on Economic Affairs Cm 4714 June 2008 para 2.9

<http://www.official-documents.gov.uk/document/cm74/7414/7414.pdf>

4 The Economic Impact of Immigration <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200708/ldselect/ldeconaf/ldeconaf.htm>

5 E.g. Tony Blair's speech to the CBI on 27th April 2004 as quoted in para 99 of the House of Lords Report <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200708/ldselect/ldeconaf/82/8207.htm#a15>

## Employment

The number of people in work, aged 16 and over increased by 2.29 million between Q4 1997 and Q4 2009 but 1.7m of the increase, or nearly 75%, was accounted for by the foreign born<sup>6</sup>.

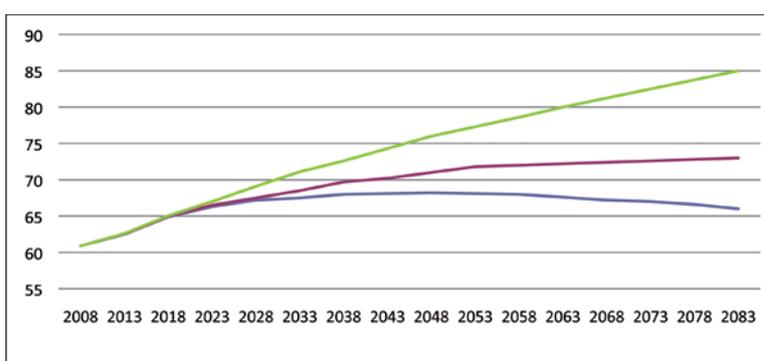
The figures for those of working age were more striking. Between Q2 1997 and Q2 2010 about 1.84m of the 2.1m on extra jobs went to the foreign-born - that is 87.8%<sup>7</sup>.

Meanwhile youth unemployment in the UK which had been steady between 2000 and 2004 rose significantly from 2005 and now stands at nearly one million (over 20%)<sup>8</sup>.

## Population

The rate of growth of the UK population almost doubled from 2.5% in the decade of the 1990s to 4.9% in 2000/09, largely due to immigration. If immigration continues at roughly present levels, the population of the UK is officially projected to reach 70 million in 20 years time; 68% of the increase will be due to immigration. It will continue to grow indefinitely unless net immigration can be reduced to 40,000 a year or less.

Fig 7: ONS Population Projections (millions)



Source: ONS Population Projections

England (not the UK) is already, with Holland, the most crowded country in Europe (apart from Malta).

## Housing

The waiting list for social housing in England was stable at about 1 million from 1997 to 2001; it then rose by 70% to 1.76m in 2009<sup>9</sup>. Immigration now accounts for 36% of projected new household formation<sup>10</sup>. This will require building about 330 homes every working day for the next 23 years.

## Schools

Immigration since 1998 has added half a million to the number of primary school places needed over the next five years to 2015<sup>11</sup>.

In the period 1998-2010 the proportion of children in primary schools in England for whom English was not the mother tongue nearly doubled to 16%, or over 1/2 million out of 3.2 million children<sup>12</sup>.

6 H of C Library note 2010/5/58 – EPAS of 3 June 2010 addressed to James Clappison MP, quoting ONS Labour Force Survey microdata

7 Letter from DG of ONS to James Clappison MP of Oct 2010

8 Unemployment by age, Office National Statistics <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/product.asp?vink=8272>

9 DCLG Local Authority Housing Statistics 2008-9

10 DCLG 2008 based household projections <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/statistics/pdf/1780763.pdf>

11 Migrationwatch Briefing Paper 2.4 <http://www.migrationwatch.org/briefingPaper/document/204>

12 Migrationwatch Briefing Paper 2.7 <http://www.migrationwatch.org/briefingPaper/document/210>

# Society



The percentage of children born to foreign mothers in England and Wales increased from 14.3% in 1999 to 24.7% in 2009<sup>13</sup>.

According to research by Professor Coleman, of Oxford University, if immigration continues at roughly present levels, the “white British” are likely to become a minority in Britain in the late 2060s<sup>14</sup>.

## The Points Based System

The Labour government claimed that that Points Based System (PBS) was bringing immigration under control and that net immigration was already falling. In fact student numbers grew rapidly by 43,000 in its first year of operation and, despite the worst recession in a generation, work permits only fell by 27,000 (30%)<sup>15</sup>. A survey of UKBA front line border staff found that 71% felt that it had made the border less secure<sup>16</sup>.

## Public Opinion

In February 2010 the Department for Communities and Local Government published its “Citizenship Survey”. This was a major exercise based on a sample of 10,000 adults in England and Wales and an additional sample of 5,000 adults from minority ethnic groups. It found that 77% thought that immigration should be reduced, including 53% of all ethnic minority groups and that only 5% thought it should be increased. 51% thought it should be reduced “by a lot”, including 25% of all ethnic groups.

This divergence between public opinion and Labour government policy on immigration has been described as one reason for growing public distrust in the political process<sup>17</sup> and, for a minority, the rejection of mainstream political parties<sup>18</sup>.

An opinion poll in August 2010 found that 62% believed that allowing immigration to rise to unacceptable levels was Mr Blair’s greatest failure as Prime Minister. 56% named taking part in the Iraq war<sup>19</sup>. His memoirs, which run to 690 pages contain only one page on immigration in which he describes his strategy for handling it at the 2005 election: “Because our position was sophisticated enough – a sort of ‘confess and avoid’, as the lawyers say – we won out<sup>20</sup>.”

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13 ONS Births in England and Wales by parents country of birth 2009 <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/pdfdir/births0810.pdf>

14 Population and Development Review 36, 3, pages 441 - 486, 2010, summarised in Prospect 177, November 2010.

15 Migrationwatch Briefing Paper 3.13 <http://www.migrationwatchuk.org/briefingPaper/3.13>

16 Home Office Research Report 49 <http://rds.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs11/horr49c.pdf>

17 Policy Network <http://www.policy-network.net/publications/3889/Cause-for-concern?-The-impact-of-immigration-on-political-trust>

18 ANTIs, a publication by Nothing British

19 YouGov poll for The Sun 31 Aug 2010

20 “Tony Blair A journey” page 524