

These pressures lead to growing numbers of people seeking to come to the UK from the EU and elsewhere. But it is wrong to scapegoat immigrants for problems with housing, education, health or local authority services. These problems are the result of successive governments' policy failure, which the rest of this manifesto is designed to put right.

The Green Party believes that, in the medium to long term, we must reduce the pressures that lead to involuntary migration. We will:

- Seek through our international policies to reduce war and discourage repressive regimes that lead to the creation of refugees.
- Make a global deal on climate change a priority of our foreign policy, and help poorer countries cope with the climate change.
- Seek to promote ecologically sustainable development in the poorer parts of the world, so that there is greater equality between the richer and poorer nations.
- Promote policies in the EU that improve opportunities across the Union and refocus on social and environmental benefits, rather than economic liberalisation.

We accept that these policies will take time to work and that we must address immigration as it is here and now. Some controls on immigration will be needed for the foreseeable future; for now, we reject an open borders approach. We also reject the imposition of an arbitrary numerical cap on net migration. The latter in particular is impossible to achieve (especially given that there is no control on the numbers emigrating) and leads to many individual injustices.

Any controls must respect the following principles:

- Mutual legal obligations within the EU on freedom of movement.
- International obligations to accept refugees, whether seeking sanctuary from wars, political repression or climate change.
- Respect for the integrity of families. The arrival of a grandmother might well have no direct economic effect, but her contribution to family life may contribute hugely to our society. We would in particular
 - abolish the policy that requires a British citizen to have an income of at least £18,600 a year before their partner can come to live in the UK, which discriminates against poorer people,
 - make it much easier for adult dependants, mainly elderly parents, of British citizens to come and live here.
- No restrictions on foreign students. Foreign students contribute hugely to our education system, both financially and in terms of the wider perspectives they bring. They also take back to their home countries skills that they have learnt here that will be valuable at home and positive attitudes towards the UK. In particular we would
 - allow students to work in the UK for two years after graduation;
 - widen the Youth Mobility Scheme to allow those from poorer countries to participate.
- No priority simply for economic reasons. We would in particular aim to retain more of those trained in the UK in the health service so that we have less need to take health service workers from countries that can ill afford to lose them.

We would also:

- Review the rules for those wishing to set up or do business here to ensure they are not discriminatory against smaller businesses.
- Not simply accept people just because they are rich. The London housing market in particular has been gravely distorted by the number of rich migrants buying property, bidding up prices all along the housing chain.
- Ensure that no prospective immigrant is held in detention. As a matter of urgency, the administrative detention of children and pregnant women should cease immediately.
- Review the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002, particularly with regard to issues of access to legal advice, childcare and levels of subsistence allowance, and reintroduce Legal Aid for reasonable levels of immigration and asylum work.

In addition, once immigrants have arrived, we would:

- Assist integration by making available free or affordable English or Welsh language lessons to all new immigrants who want them, costing about £200 million a year.
- Open up ways for existing irregular migrants who have been here for three years to become legal. In particular, a legal status must be provided for people who have not succeeded in their claim for humanitarian protection but who cannot be returned to their country of origin owing to the political situation there.