

Year 11 Citizenship

What immigration policy should Britain have?

There are many reasons why people may want to come and live in Britain. For example Britain is a wealthy country and because of its wealth people want to come to live in Britain so that they can earn more money and escape poverty or just seek out a better life for themselves and perhaps their family. Not only Britain's wealth attracts people but also the fact that there is no current war in Britain or persecution for political or religious beliefs so Britain can also be seen as a safe haven as people are free to believe what they want to, within reason and their political opinion isn't disregarded. Unemployment is a factor that affects a lot of countries even Britain and even though unemployment isn't very low in Britain but if you are able to get a job the pay is in most cases far higher than that of their country of origin.

The British government has to decide what kind of immigration policy we should have. There are a number of possibilities.

Firstly, the government could have an 'open border' policy. The definition of 'open border' is this -

- An open border is a border that allows unrestricted entry and exit. An open territorial border allows the unrestricted movement of persons and goods for any purpose. An open civic border allows non-members freely to acquire the rights of residence, work, and/or citizenship. So basically anyone who wants to come to Britain should be allowed to do so.

From a human right perspective this is a good thing as preventing freedom of movement is a moral violation of human rights and discriminates on the basis of nationality as humans are all equal. This also allows people to more easily move back and forth between their country of origin and new opportunities so this means that people are no longer required to be separated for long periods of time. The borders are also very expensive to run so by opening the borders would stop wasteful, very costly policing borders. This would also mean that they don't have to take time consuming processing and legal proceedings that are a result of processing refugee applications. On the other hand however the population might become too big for the government to control. This may cause large amounts of people from the third world to come to Britain until Britain ends up like their home countries as Britain will run out of resources for such a large population. An economist Milton Friedman said 'You cannot have both open borders and a welfare system.' This shows that the economy would suffer greatly and in the end this policy would have a poor outcome. Also if the borders were opened then Britain would not be able to preserve key elements of their economy. This would almost probably lead to chaos and Britain would end up in more debt as more people = more benefits and Britain is in enough debt as it is, we are helping to bail other countries out of debt we don't want to have to be bailed out ourselves.

The government might decide on a policy of 'skilled people only'. This means that only those with the right skills required by the British economy should be allowed in. The advantages of this policy are by only allowing skilled people into Britain this would benefit the economy. This could prevent the country going into recession if they create new businesses, creating more jobs. This way Britain would only accept people that they need in their economy and this wouldn't affect the population too much so there would still be enough resources for everyone. The NHS relies on skilled doctors to look after patients and treat them successfully through a good and reliable health service and many of the doctors that work in these hospitals have immigrated over to the UK and are gifted in this area and many people are grateful to them and without them the hospitals wouldn't work as well. On the other hand however the disadvantages are that people may claim that with this policy people who need desperately to immigrate into other countries for more serious reasons. For example political and religious persecution and that they are more important than just letting skilled people into the country who perhaps will make more money in a more economically developed country but they might still be fine in their country of origin not facing any threat to their personal welfare and then the country would just be allowing them in just to improve their own economy not benefiting the lives of people who are suffering and really need to immigrate to another country where they can make a better life for themselves. Other people who are already living in Britain could create protests and riots saying because Britain are just allowing skilled people and this means that they are taking all the jobs because they are more skilled than other people who are already residents in Britain.

Another possibility is to adopt a policy of 'one in, one out'. This means that the number of people coming into the country should broadly equal the number of people who leave the country. The advantages of this policy are that the population of the country wouldn't change from immigrants coming into the country instead they would come in making no difference to the population of the country. This would limit the amount of immigrants coming into the country which means that less paperwork would have to be carried out to make the migrant a proper UK citizen because there is less immigrants coming into the UK, saving a lot of money that goes into making migrants official citizens. However the problem is that far more people want to come into the country than want to leave so people who want to immigrate would have to wait a long time perhaps to get into Britain. People may also who have moved out of Britain for a particular reason may have relatives who live back in Britain so if they lose their job or reason why they moved to that other country in the first place might not exist anymore so they wish to move back to Britain in this case they wouldn't be able to very easily because they would have to wait for someone to leave Britain in order for them to return.

Finally the government could decide on a 'closed borders' policy. This means that Britain should not allow any further immigration, and as with all the other immigration policies there are advantages and disadvantages of the 'closed borders' policy. The advantages are that people in Britain could no longer claim that immigrants are taking all the jobs and this could no longer be an excuse for people not getting jobs and living off benefits. This would save thousands if not millions of pounds every year that goes into researching into migrants to see if they are suitable and are eligible to become a citizen in the UK and making them an actual citizen in the UK. It would prevent the population in the UK from getting too high because more babies are born everyday in the UK than the number of people who die everyday in the UK so the population is growing anyway so by closing the borders this means that this will prevent the population growing too dramatically and adding to the increase in population. There are so many disadvantages however to this policy, for example some people are really desperate for a better life in the UK and would try anything just to get in by closing this borders this means that they will have to carry on living in poverty and persecution. People who move away from the UK also will not be allowed back so they couldn't stay permanently where there relatives are by moving back to the UK instead they would have to either very rarely see them or pay out regularly for transport to the UK which would cost a lot of money and most people wouldn't be able to afford it.

In my opinion the best thing for the British government to do would be to use the 'one in, one out' policy. I think this would be the best idea because it doesn't interfere with the population. Even though the population of Britain is growing this can't be prevented by closed borders because by closing the borders this could cause a lot of controversy and issue. While the people who already live in Britain may have no problem with this other people outside the country would probably feel the opposite. Opening the borders would increase the population tremendously and Britain can not afford to house all these people it would not benefit the welfare of other people and this needs to be taken into mind. Allowing only skilled people into the country creates prejudice as skilled people do not need to immigrate as much as others who are in desperate need to immigrate many find themselves in life or death situations through religious and political persecution. Which lead me to feeling that the 'one in, one out' policy would be the best idea not only is this policy fair but it reduces costs as not as much paperwork needs to be carried out than if more people were let in. This will also limit the amount of immigrants that come into the country because as I put earlier there are far more people who want to come into the country than leave. However in my opinion if all the other countries were how they should be people wouldn't need to immigrate and in most cases would be happy to stay in their own country because if poverty, religious persecution and political persecution didn't exist the world would be a different place how it should be and immigration policies wouldn't be as vital, people could be safe and happy in their own country. The world will never be like that however so the government has to pay thousands of pounds if not millions on immigration. That is why Britain has to open its doors to immigrants so instead of letting them suffer, Britain can allow them to have a better life however we can't protect everyone and thousands of migrants have to be turned away. The 'one in, one out' policy allows for that because it let's a few migrants in while takes into account the welfare of others already living in Britain because if too many immigrants were allowed in the country would get more into debt and eventually food sources would slowly run out which would end up in poor welfare for the immigrants and the people already living in Britain it would benefit no one. This policy allows immigrants gradually in to settle in Britain's society. This is why I feel this policy would be the best for the British government to choose.