

Migration Impacts Reduction Fund

Urgent funding is required to help reduce the impact of migration on public services. There was a Migrant Impacts Fund launched in 2009 to provide new funding support to local communities that needed it most financed by a levy on immigration application fees. The Fund distributed about £70m over two years, but it was scrapped within months by the coalition government after the 2010 general election.

The problem is the **pressures on public services from migration-related impact has continued**, but without funding support.

A small levy of £25 on immigration fees could raise an extra £11.7m to raise new funding to provide necessary services without increasing costs for taxpayers while improving public services for all. This funding could support English language training, extra support teachers, public transport and improving emergency services.

“ The purpose of the migration impacts fund was to alleviate the impacts of immigration on local public services . . . In the light of the overall fiscal position the government concluded that it was not a priority funding stream.

Baroness Hanham CBE (Conservative), junior communities minister (2010)

“ The Migration Impacts Reduction Fund restarts this invaluable self-funded programme that benefits local communities at no cost to hardworking taxpayers. It is time for the government to act.

Professor Thom Brooks, Durham University



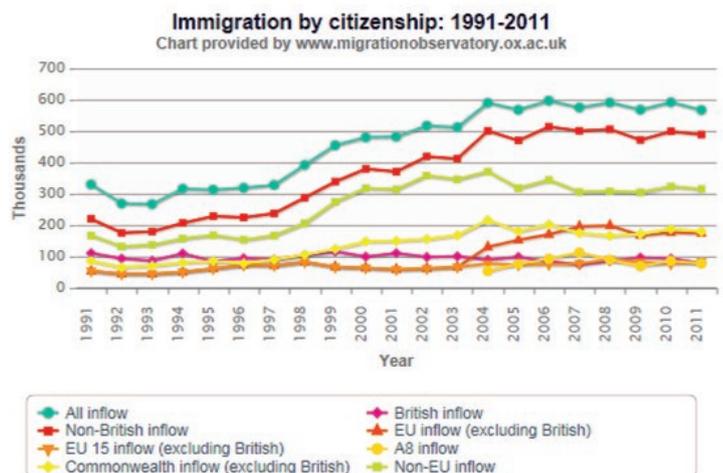
‘A small levy on application fees creating a Migration Impacts Reduction Fund could raise £11.7m of new funding to provide urgent support without increasing costs for taxpayers and improving public services for all.’

Professor Thom Brooks

Why a Migration Impacts Reduction Fund?

Prime Minister Gordon Brown’s government launched the original Migration Impacts Fund in 2009. Income was created through a £50 levy on immigration application fees. The Fund supported the provision of about £70m over two years used to provide **English language training, extra support teachers and improve emergency services**. The coalition government scrapped the Fund in 2010 and diverted the extra income generated to other spending programmes.

The pressure on local communities and local services has not gone away. There is an urgent need for a new programme that can provide the funding support that used to be offered.



Source: Office for National Statistics. Long-Term International Migration (LTIM)

A new Migration Impacts Reduction Fund could raise over £11.7m by introducing a £25 levy on immigration applications. This funding would be spent as grants distributed in a competitive process to the areas it is needed most supporting public services, such as **education, health, public transport and voluntary community programmes**. There is no cost to the taxpayer and no funding would come from the EU.

Where will the money come from?

- The average number of citizenship applications between 2006-10 was 169,373. A £25 fee on each application would raise £4,234,325 on average per year. Applications have increased in recent years and this would lead to additional support for the fund. The higher number of applications in 2012 (194,344) would contribute an extra £625,275.
- Over 300,000 non-EU citizens have migrated to the UK each year since 2000. This has also been much higher with 322,000 in 2010 and 314,000 in 2011. A £25 levy on the 300,000 citizenship applications would raise £7,500,000 plus another £350,000 if there were 314k applications (as in 2011).
- The £25 application fee for both citizenship applications and visa applications by non-EU citizens would raise at least £11.7m each year from these sources alone.

Source: The Migration Observatory (<http://www.migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/>)

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Recent publications include:

Brooks, Thom (2012). ‘The British Citizenship Test: The Case for Reform’, *The Political Quarterly* 83: 560-566.

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