

The 18<sup>th</sup> November 2010 represented an important day in the House of Commons: it was the first time in a generation that Immigration was debated on the floor of the House. The motion; "That this House calls on Her Majesty's Government to act on the overwhelming public concern about the present scale of immigration by taking firm measures to reduce immigration without excluding those individuals who are genuinely essential to economic recovery, on which so much else depends" was proposed by the Cross Party Group and led by Frank Field. It was welcomed by all sides of the House as an opportunity to discuss an issue of grave importance to the electorate.

Frank Field outlined how immigration can be reduced without affecting economic recovery and how the majority of migrants were from outside the EU and therefore in our power to control.

At a time of 2.5 million unemployed and nearly 10% graduate unemployment, reducing immigration should be seen as part of a wider agenda of welfare reform, education and training to get people back into work.

The debate confirmed that this was not an argument against immigration but about the need to control numbers. Without reducing immigration the population of the UK is set to reach 70 million in 20 years and rise further to over 80 million by mid-century, creating a huge burden on the provision of education, healthcare and housing.

The debate also highlighted the need for people coming here to be able to speak English so as to allow them to participate fully in national life.

The full debate can be found at the following link:

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm101118/debtext/101118-0002.htm#10111862000001>

