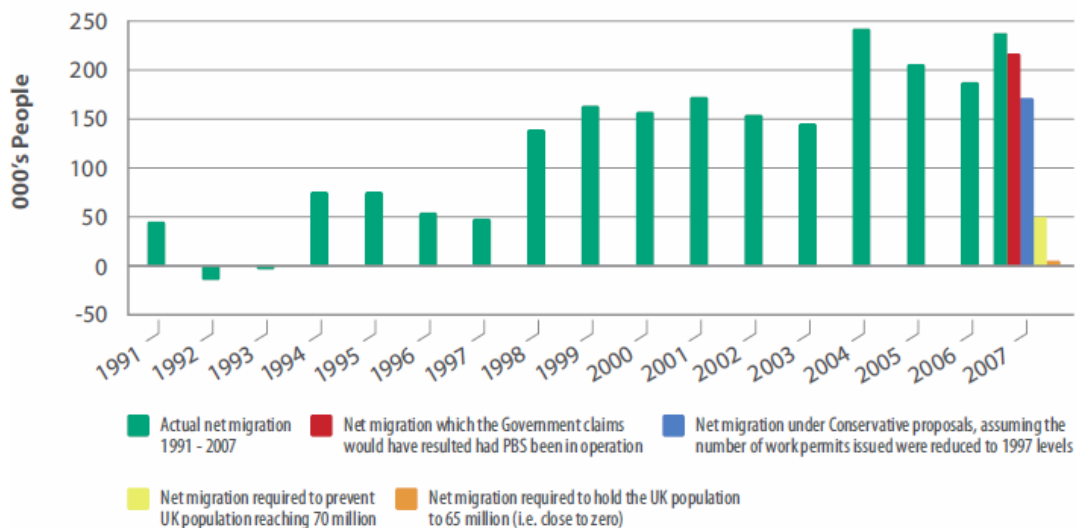




## Neither Labour nor Conservatives will stop the population hitting 70m

- *To stop the UK's population hitting 70 million, net migration – the number who settle here minus those who leave – would need to be reduced by 75% from the present level of 237,000 a year.*
- *To hold our population at 65million we need to bring net migration down close to zero.*
- *On the basis of the parties' current policies, Labour would cut net immigration by about 8 %, the Conservatives by 27%.*

Net Migration



Source: ONS, TIM UK area, 1997-2007 (<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/STATBASE/Product.asp?vlnk=15053>).

1. The UK population is officially forecast to increase from the present 61 million to 70 million in 2028. 70 per cent of that increase - nearly seven million people – will be due to immigration.

2. To stay below 70 million, net migration – all those who come here, minus those who leave – must be reduced from 237,000 (2007) to 50,000 a year *and* held there. The reduction required is shown in the bar chart above. To hold the population of the UK at 65 million (compared to the present 61million) we need to bring net migration close to zero.

## **Conservative Policy**

3. The main plank of Conservative Party policy is to introduce an annual cap on the number of people given work permits. Yet this, in itself, will be completely inadequate to stop the population hitting 70 million, as explained below.
4. In 2007 the number of work permits issued was 130,000. This included extensions, changes in employment and permits granted to those already in the UK<sup>1</sup>.
5. Approximately one dependant is admitted for every two newly arrived work permit holder (based on 2006 figures<sup>2</sup>). So 65,000 should be added to the 130,000, giving a total of 195,000.
6. Of those, only half can be expected to settle in the UK<sup>3</sup> (i.e. 97,500). In other words, work permit holders would, over time, add 97,500 to net migration (see graph at Appendix A).
7. By way of comparison, in 1997 43,000 work permits were issued. Add dependants (21,000) and the total is 64,000<sup>4</sup>. Again, assuming half of those settled, those on work permits added 32,000 to net migration.
8. Thus, even if the Conservative Party planned a very low cap such as a return to the 1997 level of work permits, the reduction in those settling would be 65,500 (97,500 minus 32,000).
9. Over time, this would reduce net migration from 237,000 (in 2007) to 171,500. But this falls far short of the reduction to 50,000 a year required if the population of the UK is not to hit 70 million let alone be held at 65 million.

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<sup>1</sup> MAC, September 2008: “Skilled, Shortage, Sensible”. Table 2.3

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

<sup>3</sup> Control of immigration Statistics, Table 2.5 and 5.4

<sup>4</sup> Ibid

10. Furthermore, David Cameron has said that he wants net migration to be reduced to “the sort of figure it was in the 80s and 90s” (BBC Radio 5 Live, 15<sup>th</sup> February 2009). Overall net immigration in the 1980s averaged about 17,000 a year. The average for 1990-97 was 45,000. Therefore his policy fails to meet his own objective.

## **Labour Policy**

11. The main plank of the Government’s policy is a Points Based System for work permits which they describe as “tough” and “Australian style”. It is neither. The Australians start with a limit and issue permits within it. There are no limits to the government’s scheme. Indeed the Government’s own calculation is that it will only reduce immigration by about 8%, a fall from 237,000 (2007) to 217,000<sup>5</sup>.

12. On top of this,

- a. the Government has set up “juxtaposed” immigration controls in France and Belgium. These are causing a build up of migrants living rough in Calais and elsewhere but it is far from certain that they are being prevented from crossing the Channel illegally
- b. an electronic system to record the arrival and departure of passengers to and from the UK is being introduced. However, it will not be possible to match arrivals and departures until 2012.
- c. The Government has now proposed a further points system to limit the number of work permit holders who are allowed to settle permanently in Britain. This is a potentially valuable reform but the details are not yet clear.

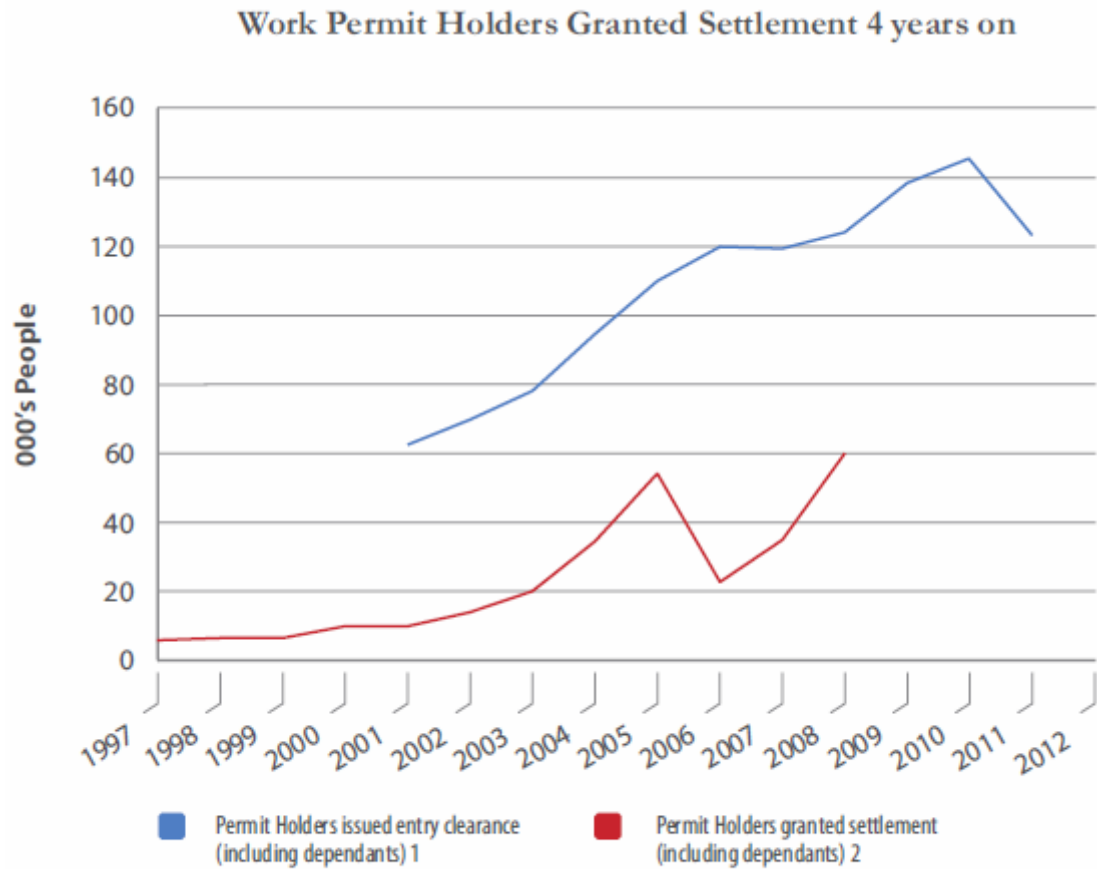
13. A recession will have only a temporary effect as demonstrated in Migrationwatch [Briefing paper 1.21](#) of October 2008 and confirmed by Policy Network paper “On the move? Labour migration in times of recession” issued on 7 July 2009.

12 July 2009

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<sup>5</sup> UKBA Press Release 5 Jan 2009 text and Notes to Editors. Note 4

## Appendix A



Sources: 1) Control of immigration statistics Table 2.5 2) Control of immigration statistics Table 5.4

The graph above shows the number of work permits issued, and number of work permit holders who were granted settlement.

The dip in applications for settlement is because the period of qualification was extended in April 2006 from 4 years to 5. The top line (blue) has been advanced four years to illustrate roughly how many of the cohort decided to seek settlement.