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The Economic Case for Mass Immigration Is “Collapsing,” Says Matthew Goodwin

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Political scientist and commentator Matthew Goodwin has reignited debate over immigration policy, claiming the long-standing economic case for mass immigration is no longer holding up. In a series of posts on X (formerly Twitter) and in a detailed article on his Substack, Goodwin argues that current immigration levels are harming Britain’s economic productivity, depressing wages for lower-income workers, and placing unsustainable strain on public services.

Goodwin's central claim is that mass immigration, particularly of low-skilled workers, is not delivering the economic benefits it was once assumed to provide. He points to key indicators such as stagnating GDP per capita and productivity rates, alongside soaring net migration figures, to argue that Britain is effectively importing greater demand without corresponding gains in output or living standards. In one post, he notes that despite record levels of immigration, productivity has remained flat and real wages have barely moved for much of the British workforce.

"Immigration is justified by its supposed positive economic impact," he wrote. "But productivity and wages have been stagnant for a decade as cheap labour has flooded low-wage sectors." According to Goodwin, this trend has eroded the economic prospects of domestic workers, especially those in construction, care work, hospitality, and logistics sectors that have become increasingly reliant on foreign labour.

In his article titled "*The Economic Case for Mass Immigration is COLLAPSING*," Goodwin calls out politicians and policymakers who continue to defend high immigration levels on economic grounds. He argues that while immigration may increase overall GDP, it does not necessarily improve GDP per capita or average living standards. In his view, the additional tax revenues brought in by migrants are outweighed by the rising costs of housing, healthcare, schooling, and welfare.

Think tanks such as Migration Watch UK support Goodwin's position, stating that current immigration trends contribute to wage suppression, worsen housing shortages, and overstretch public infrastructure. They argue that the government's failure to control net migration, despite repeated pledges, has left the country with limited capacity to absorb new arrivals without negative social and economic consequences.

Critics of Goodwin's position argue that immigration is still a net benefit, particularly when migrants fill key labour shortages or start businesses that boost local economies. Some economists point out that aging populations in Western countries create a need for a younger, often migrant, workforce. However, Goodwin and others contend that this view ignores deeper structural issues, such as productivity stagnation, which cannot be fixed through high-volume migration alone.

While his critics accuse him of stoking division, Goodwin maintains that his conclusions are grounded in publicly available data and economic trends. He argues it is no longer

“controversial” to suggest that the current model of mass immigration is failing to deliver for working- and middle-class Britons.

As the debate intensifies, Goodwin’s commentary is gaining traction among those who feel the economic and social impacts of mass immigration have been ignored or downplayed. Whether policymakers respond remains to be seen, but the economic case for mass immigration is under greater scrutiny than ever before.