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Economic Benefits of Mass Immigration Facing Growing Scrutiny, Says Political Analyst

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Political analyst Matthew Goodwin has reignited debate over U.S. and U.K. immigration policies, asserting that the economic rationale behind mass immigration is no longer supported by key data. Goodwin, a professor of politics and author, argues that high immigration levels are no longer delivering the promised gains in productivity and wages, particularly for working-class citizens.

In a detailed article on his Substack and a series of posts on X (formerly Twitter), Goodwin states that mass immigration, especially of low-skilled workers, is not yielding the benefits once assumed. He cites stagnant Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita, weak productivity growth, and wage suppression across key sectors to support his position. “The economy is absorbing more people,” he wrote, “but it isn’t producing proportionally better outcomes for the people already here.”

Goodwin explains that while immigration may increase overall GDP, this does not necessarily translate into improved living standards. In his view, productivity and real wage growth have failed to keep pace with record-high immigration levels, particularly since 2010. He points to sectors such as construction, transportation, care services, and hospitality, where employers often rely on lower-wage foreign labor, resulting in limited opportunities for wage increases among domestic workers.

“Immigration is frequently defended as an economic positive,” he wrote, “but over the last decade, productivity has flatlined and real wages have remained stuck. That’s not the outcome anyone promised.” He adds that when immigration drives up population without matching output, the result is growing pressure on infrastructure, housing, and wages, with minimal gain for the average worker.

Think tanks such as Migration Watch UK have echoed Goodwin’s concerns, stating that high immigration is linked to housing shortages, overburdened services, and suppressed wages in low-income areas. They argue that while migration can address labor shortages, excessive levels create strains that undermine its supposed benefits.

Critics of Goodwin’s analysis argue that immigration still plays a vital role in supporting aging workforces and filling essential job vacancies. Some economists believe that younger, foreign-born workers contribute tax revenue and bolster consumer demand. However, Goodwin and others maintain that this perspective overlooks structural economic issues. “You can’t fix productivity with immigration alone,” he states. “Relying on a constant influx of labor to boost GDP is a short-term solution to a long-term problem.”

While some have accused Goodwin of fueling division, he insists his conclusions are evidence-based. “The numbers speak for themselves,” he said. “This isn’t about ideology, it’s about whether the current model is working for ordinary people.”

As policymakers face increasing pressure to reevaluate immigration frameworks, Goodwin's commentary is resonating with voters and commentators who believe the conversation around immigration has lacked transparency. Whether it leads to a policy shift remains uncertain, but the economic case for high-volume immigration is now facing more serious scrutiny than ever before.