

The Editor
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Sir

Population projections are not predictions, as Matilda Davies ('What Britain must do to cope with the coming surge in immigration') tells us – and they are not infallible. But the article rather treats the latest ONS figures as though they were, and a basis for far-reaching policy. She points to existing problems, where for example most of the additional households formed in the UK are headed by immigrants. But immigration can only moderate 'Britain's ageing population, not solve it. With so many people of working age economically inactive the reserves of labour are close to hand.

Employers – and some journalists – reach instinctively to abroad like a comfort blanket. Decades of high immigration have gone hand in hand with negligible economic growth. Despite 0.6 % population increase almost entirely from immigration, per capita income is not just stalled but is actually negative.

The projected growth is not inevitable. Mostly a consequence of government action - or inaction, it can be changed by government action. At the stroke of a pen government has already made panicky changes to reduce flows by 300,000. Care and health are special cases. But our sluggish private sector will never take training, investment and productivity seriously until faced with a squeeze on labour.

Two huge trends have passed by discussion of migration - the artificial intelligence revolution, which may mean we are already importing future unemployment on a large scale, and the irresponsibility of expanding population in a high consumption country. Climate change will enforce population retrenchment, and with this growth we can forget about current net zero targets and environmental protection,

If these projections are allowed to drift into reality the British people will face a more cramped and uncomfortable future, in which they are likely to become the minority. Unlike Mr Javid, some think this matters. Misguided policy and an indifferent elite risk turning Britain from a society into merely a geographical expression.

Yours faithfully
David Coleman
Emeritus Professor of Demography, University of Oxford