

# UK Net Migration Halves, But Immigration Experts Warn of Economic Fallout

*Leading immigration law firm urges policy rethink, warning that cutting skilled migrants and students harms UK growth and future workforce.*

LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM, May 27, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Garth Coates Solicitors](https://www.einpresswire.com/author/garth-coates), a leading [UK immigration](#) law firm, has responded to the Government's announcement that net migration has fallen by almost 50% in 2024, warning that the headline figure obscures the real cost to the UK's economy, education sector, and global reputation.



According to the most recent data, net migration dropped from over 700,000 to 431,000 last year, driven largely by restrictive new immigration rules targeting international students, skilled workers, and their dependants. While the Government heralds this as a major political success, experts at Garth Coates Solicitors say the consequences of these measures are “profoundly short-sighted.”

“This is not just a reduction in numbers; it’s a reduction in opportunity, innovation, and economic resilience,” said [Mr Garth Coates](#), Principal Partner and Senior Solicitor. “We fully support efforts to stop the abuse of immigration and benefit systems. But punishing compliant, highly skilled individuals and international students risks undermining the very fabric of our economic future.”

## Education Sector Hit Hard

International student numbers have fallen sharply due to tightened visa conditions and restrictions on post-study work. This decline is expected to cost the UK not only in lost tuition fees but in broader economic activity.

Each long-term international student contributes an estimated £150,000 to the UK economy through tuition, accommodation, food, transport, and local services. Garth Coates Solicitors warns that these students deliver more to the UK economy than many traditional investor routes and are essential to the sustainability of higher education and English language colleges.

### Entrepreneurs and Investors Deterred

Alongside students, global businesspeople and entrepreneurs have been caught in the policy crossfire. New thresholds and extended settlement periods have made the UK less attractive to founders looking to establish or expand in Britain.

“These individuals bring investment, create jobs, pay taxes, and build global brands from British soil,” said Ms Michele Martin, Partner and Senior Solicitor. “To exclude them in the name of political optics is economically damaging.”

### Labour Shortages in Essential Sectors

The impact is particularly acute in the UK’s service economy. Sectors such as hospitality, healthcare, logistics, and retail are experiencing persistent labour shortages, with many employers unable to recruit suitable candidates locally.

Following Brexit, the departure of EU nationals created a vacuum that has not been filled. New rules have made it increasingly difficult for employers to legally hire workers from abroad, even in roles that are clearly suffering shortages.

“Businesses are desperate for staff,” said Ms Leqa Al Habib, Partner and Senior Solicitor. “Yet current immigration policy offers no realistic solution. The UK’s service economy is being asked to function without the workers it needs to survive.”

### Call for Balanced Reform

Garth Coates Solicitors supports a robust, fair, and rules-based UK immigration system. However, the firm emphasises that reducing migration without tackling underlying domestic workforce issues—particularly long-term benefit dependency—will only deepen economic stagnation.

At any one time, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) is making benefit and pension payments to over 20 million people. The main benefit for working-age individuals—Universal Credit—was being received by 6.3 million people as of January 2024. These figures point to a structural challenge in activating the UK’s domestic labour force.

“If we are serious about activating the domestic labour force, benefit reform must go hand-in-hand with immigration reform,” said Mr Celemet Yener, Partner and Senior Solicitor. “Blaming

immigration is a distraction from a far more complex problem rooted in our own workforce readiness and welfare structure.”

#### About Garth Coates Solicitors

Garth Coates Solicitors is one of the UK’s most respected immigration law firms, known for its expert handling of complex cases involving international students, skilled workers, entrepreneurs, and human rights. With a commitment to excellence and client-focused legal solutions, the firm advocates for a fair and economically intelligent approach to UK immigration law.

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