

[Ten reasons why the Left should like the ASI, 8: Immigration](#) [1]

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The Left, traditionally supportive of immigration, should admire the ASI's stance in consistently arguing that the UK benefits by welcoming immigrants to our shores.

ASI writers have consistently pointed to the benefits that immigrants bring to the UK. Their skills help generate economic activity and augment output and wealth-creation. This is more obviously true of those with qualifications and a degree of expertise in some professional field such as medicine or finance, but it is also true of those with more modest skills. As long as immigrants have a command of English, some education, a willingness to work and a readiness to respect our culture and values, they can make a positive contribution. Their willingness to take on demanding jobs at relatively low wages benefits the population by enabling UK goods and services to be more widely available and to be produced more cheaply.

But migrants make more than an economic contribution. Over the centuries successive waves of immigrants have been absorbed into British culture and have enriched it by their contribution. From Flemish weavers and Huguenot glass-makers to Italian ice-cream manufacturers and more recently the celebrated Polish plumbers, they have made a cultural as well as an economic contribution.

Obviously any would-be immigrants not prepared to work and to integrate into our culture come into a different category, but the majority of our immigrants, and certainly most of those from other European countries, are not like that. They want to work and get ahead, and can make a contribution to our society. The degree of immigration matters, as does its concentration in certain areas, in that it should be within our ability to cope with the extra demands resulting from their arrival. But these are problems that can be solved, and in no wise affect the principle that immigrants should be welcomed.

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