

Minutes of the OBR labour market and migration advisory panel

23 January 2024

Attending:

Panel members: Arun Advani, Tera Allas, Allan Manning, Rachel Ngai, Jonathan Portes and Madeleine Sumption.

Budget Responsibility Committee: Richard Hughes, Tom Josephs and Prof. David Miles CBE.
Staff of the OBR

1. Welcome and introduction

This meeting of labour market and migration advisory panel was convened to discuss migration issues that OBR will consider in preparation for the Spring Statement.

2. Outlook for migration

OBR staff presented the latest ONS migration data and how it compared to our forecasts from March and November 2023. OBR staff also presented estimates from the Home Office on the impact of measures outlined in the Legal Migration statement in the House of Commons on 4 December 2023.

3. Discussion

Members discussed the outlook for net migration in the absence of any policies, and the expected impact of recently announced policies. Members noted the stay rates of migrants, particularly for students and care workers, as an important consideration for forecasting migration.

Members observed the ONS was due to publish updated net migration projections shortly after the meeting. Members noted the OBR previously used the ONS medium-term net migration projection of 245,000 as the end point of our five-year forecast.

Members discussed the short-term outlook for migration, and what would be a plausible transition path from recent outturn levels to a medium-term anchor.

Members also considered the fiscal impact of migration. It was noted this remains highly uncertain, likely differs over time and depends on the composition of migration.