



GRAHAM EVANS MP

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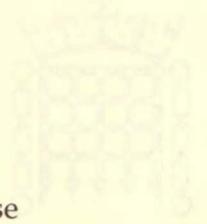
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Chairman
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The Leader of the Opposition Ed Miliband MP and the shadow Home Secretary Yvette Cooper MP have recently made public remarks about UK immigration policy. Mr Miliband, in an article in the *Sun on Sunday* newspaper on 10 March, wrote 'the reality is net migration is coming down because more British citizens are leaving and fewer British citizens are coming home'. In an interview on the 'Today' programme on BBC Radio 4 on 7 March Ms Cooper said: '...although they've had a reduction in net migration over the last two years, two thirds of it is actually British citizens, it's actually accounted for by more Brits leaving the country and fewer Brits coming home again'. In her speech to the Institute of Public Policy Research later that day she said:

Astonishingly two thirds of the drop in net migration is actually British citizens. And it seems a large proportion of the rest is students. Net migration has gone down by 72,000 since the election. Yet that includes a 27,000 increase in Brits leaving the country. And a 20,000 drop in the number of Brits coming back home. Meanwhile student immigration dropped by 38,000. Yet foreign students bring in investment and jobs to our country - a total of £8bn a year. And few think the answer to Britain's immigration challenges is to persuade more Brits to go away.

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The independent fact-checking organisation 'Full Fact' has examined these remarks here: <http://fullfact.org/factchecks/emigration-28808> . Full Fact raises a concern with Ms Cooper's statement:

Though the House of Commons Library states that the fall in net migration of British nationals was *equal to* almost two thirds of the total, it's worth bearing in mind this is not the same as saying that two thirds of the fall is *accounted for* by this change, as Ms Cooper concluded.

In its recent publication of migration statistics on 28 February ONS stated that '515,000 people immigrated to the UK in the year ending June 2012, which is significantly lower than the 589,000 who migrated the previous year. This decrease has caused the fall in net migration'.

Given the importance of clarity and factual accuracy in the public debate on immigration I am writing to ask you to investigate the claims that Mr Miliband and Ms Cooper have made regarding the fall in net migration to the UK. Can you confirm whether or not i) the assertion that 'two thirds of the drop in net migration is actually British citizens' is correct and ii) the fall in net migration into the UK since June 2010 is a result primarily of a fall in immigration to the UK, as the ONS says?

I look forward to your response.

Graham Evans MP