# GB News showdown reveals rising public frustration over immigration and government response



A recent on-air confrontation on GB News has brought the sensitive topic of immigration back into the spotlight, illustrating a deep national divide in opinion and highlighting the government's current challenges in addressing public concerns. During a segment, hosted by Michelle Dewberry, tensions flared between presenter Matt Goodwin and political commentator Fahima Mohamed as they debated Britain's escalating migrant crisis and the government's response.

Goodwin asserted that immigration ranks as the foremost issue for British voters, a claim supported by recent polling data. According to Ipsos, December 2023 saw a marked increase in public concern, with 29% of respondents now identifying immigration as a significant problem—the highest figure since 2017. This sentiment is particularly pronounced among Conservative supporters, 52% of whom are anxious about rising immigration figures, reflecting an intensified focus on immigration in political discussions and electoral strategies.

Goodwin accused Labour leader Sir Keir Starmer of pandering to what he described as a "mad, extreme fringe" by prioritising immigration in recent policy communications. He argued that many voters simply want to see a reduction in immigration numbers, suggesting that tackling this issue could free up substantial resources for public services, such as healthcare, which he claims could benefit from the estimated £15 billion cost of accommodating migrants.

Conversely, Fahima Mohamed challenged this perspective, arguing that immigration cannot be viewed in isolation from broader national issues. She stressed that equating migrants with criminality is unjust and pointed out the complex factors contributing to their circumstances. By framing the discussion as a singular focus on immigration, she suggested that the conversation neglects other pressing economic and social issues that the country faces.

Recent data further complicates the narrative around public attitudes toward immigration. As of April 2023, 52% of the British population expressed a desire to reduce immigration numbers, with an accompanying spectrum of opinions; 33% viewed immigration negatively, while 31% saw it positively. This divided sentiment captures the nuanced and evolving discourse surrounding immigration in the UK, where many citizens desire to maintain a level of openness while simultaneously advocating for tighter controls.

Underlying the public anxiety is a growing dissatisfaction with how the government has managed immigration. A March 2024 study revealed that a substantial 69% of the public felt dissatisfied with current policies, particularly regarding the effectiveness of measures to prevent Channel crossings—a significant focus of government discussions. Nearly half of those surveyed attributed their dissatisfaction to the perceived inadequacy of the government's response to surging numbers.

The ongoing dialogue around immigration reflects not only immediate policy concerns but also broader societal anxieties shaped by economic pressures, such as rising inflation. These elements converge to create a complex landscape where public opinions on immigration are influenced by personal experiences and media narratives. The discussion on GB News serves as a microcosm of this wider debate, showcasing the tensions between differing political viewpoints and the urgent call for effective solutions that resonate with a diverse electorate.

As Britain grapples with these pressing issues, it is clear that the conversation about immigration will remain a critical barometer of public sentiment and political strategy in the coming months. Addressing this multifaceted topic requires not only a recognition of the varied public opinions but also a commitment to balanced policies that reflect the complexities of modern Britain.

### Reference Map

1. Lead article: entire article
2. Articles 2, 3: public opinion statistics on immigration concerns
3. Articles 4, 5, 6: views on immigration as a significant issue and public dissatisfaction
4. Article 7: nuances in public opinion regarding immigration policies

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/2056457/fantasy-land-moment-gb-news> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.ipsos.com/en-uk/ipsos-issues-index-december-2023> - In December 2023, Ipsos reported that 29% of Britons considered immigration a significant issue, marking a seven-point increase from November and the highest level since April 2017. Concern was notably higher among Conservative supporters (52%) compared to Labour supporters (21%). This surge in concern coincided with rising inflation, which also became a major public issue. The data underscores the growing prominence of immigration in public discourse, reflecting heightened public sensitivity to the topic.
3. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2024/01/26/rishi-sunak-latest-news-immigration-poll-labour-green-deal/> - A January 2024 poll by Ipsos revealed that 29% of the British public viewed immigration as an important issue, a seven-point increase from the previous month and the highest since April 2017. The concern was particularly pronounced among Conservative supporters (52%). This trend highlights the escalating political significance of immigration, influencing policy discussions and electoral strategies, especially in the context of Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's efforts to address public apprehensions.
4. <https://migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/resources/briefings/uk-public-opinion-toward-immigration-overall-attitudes-and-level-of-concern/> - As of April 2023, the Migration Observatory reported that 52% of the British public believed immigration numbers should be reduced. Public opinion was divided, with 33% viewing immigration as 'bad' or 'very bad' and 31% as 'good' or 'very good'. This indicates a complex and evolving public sentiment toward immigration, reflecting both concerns about its impact and recognition of its benefits.
5. <https://www.britishfuture.org/new-attitudes-tracker-2024/> - In March 2024, British Future and Ipsos published data showing that 69% of the public were dissatisfied with the government's handling of immigration, the highest level since before the EU referendum. The primary reasons for dissatisfaction included insufficient action to stop Channel crossings (54%) and high immigration numbers (51%). This dissatisfaction underscores the public's demand for more effective immigration policies and management.
6. <https://www.sociology.ox.ac.uk/article/changing-opinions-to-immigration-in-the-uk> - Research co-authored by Oxford University's Department of Sociology, published in October 2023, indicated that as of April 2023, 52% of people thought that immigration numbers should be reduced. Public opinion was divided, with 33% viewing immigration as 'bad' or 'very bad' and 31% as 'good' or 'very good'. This highlights the polarized nature of public sentiment on immigration in the UK.
7. <https://www.csmonitor.com/World/Europe/2023/0726/Britons-favor-controlled-openness-over-closed-door-as-immigration-soars> - A July 2023 article from the Christian Science Monitor discussed the UK's record-high immigration rates and the public's preference for 'controlled openness' over closed-door policies. Despite rising immigration numbers, many Britons support a balanced approach that allows immigration while maintaining control, reflecting a nuanced public opinion on the issue.