# MAC Review Finds Scrapping Graduate Visa Route has Minimal Impact on UK Net Migration



The Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) has concluded that scrapping the graduate visa route for international students would have minimal impact on reducing net migration. Professor Brian Bell, chairman of MAC, stated that recent immigration policy changes, including bans on overseas students bringing dependents and increased salary thresholds for skilled worker visas, are expected to significantly reduce the number of international graduates entering the UK workforce.

Prof. Bell noted that around 70,000 international students who graduated in 2023 might have transitioned into work routes, but estimates suggest this number may decrease to approximately 26,000 due to the new policies. Despite former immigration minister Robert Jenrick's proposal to abolish the graduate visa route, the MAC's review recommended retaining it, emphasizing that most reductions in net migration have already been achieved through recent changes.

The review found no widespread abuse of the graduate route and highlighted that many international graduates initially take on lower-paying jobs but experience improved outcomes over time. Critics argued the MAC's review had a limited scope and failed to address concerns about the graduate route and its impact on the UK workforce and academic standards.

The MAC report also criticized the government's lack of data collection and evaluation plans for the graduate route, labeling it as "extraordinary." Despite the debate, the MAC advised the government to await clearer data on the effects of recent policy changes before making further adjustments to migration policies.