# Labour Shadow Cabinet Members Advocate for Apprenticeship Levy Reform and Skills Training in East Putney Meeting



On Sunday, Labour's shadow home secretary Yvette Cooper and shadow education secretary Bridget Phillipson met with apprentices from gas distribution company SGN in East Putney, London. They discussed Labour's intention to reform the apprenticeship levy to address the skills gap and reduce migration.

Cooper indicated that fixing the "broken" migration system involves enabling domestic skills to replace the need for overseas recruitment. She highlighted that net migration has tripled in the last five years, marked by significant increases in work-related migration and visas. The party plans to link overseas recruitment to specific training and workforce plans.

Phillipson emphasized Labour's goal of creating a "golden age of lifelong learning" by transforming the apprenticeship levy into a growth and skills levy. This is expected to provide more training opportunities for both young people and adult learners. Labour proposes creating "Skills England" to focus on skills and workforce plans, aiming to create 150,000 new training opportunities by allowing a 3% flexibility within the levy.

Both Cooper and Phillipson resisted setting specific migration targets, criticizing previous Conservative targets that were unmet. They stressed a focus on providing stronger domestic training to reduce dependence on immigration for filling skills gaps.