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**Rhetoric and Action of Immigration Policies in Britain.
The Case of Low Skilled Immigrants.**

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Table of Contents

List of Tables	3
Chapter 1 – Introduction	4
1.1 – Background and Indication of Problem	4
1.1.2 – Immigration in Europe	4
1.1.3 – The case of the United Kingdom.....	6
1.2 – Relevance and Justification	7
1.3 – Research objectives and Research Questions	9
1.3.1 – Research Question	9
1.4 – Methodology	9
Chapter 2 – The Gap Hypothesis.....	10
2.1 – The Gap between Immigration Policy and its outcomes	10
2.2 – Introduction to the Gap in Britain.....	14
2.3 – Conclusion	15
Chapter 3 – Theoretical Framework.....	17
3.1 – Immigration Theory.....	17
3.2 - Realism	17
3.3 – Domestic Politics Approach.....	18
3.4 – Economic Liberalism	19
3.5 – Marxism	20
3.6 – National Identity Approach.....	21
3.7 – Conclusion	22
Chapter 4 – Immigration in the UK	24
4.1 – Introduction to Case Study	24
4.2 – Historical Background of Immigration in the UK.....	25

4.2.1 – Unrestrictive Britain	25
4.2.2 – Immigration as an Issue	25
4.2.3 – The Zero Immigration Years	27
4.2.4 – Calls for Change.....	27
4.3 – Irregular Immigration	28
4.4 – Low Skilled Migrants.....	29
4.5 – Conclusion	34
Chapter 5 - Analysis	36
5.1 – Immigration and the Identity Issue	36
5.2 – Immigration and the State.....	37
5.3 – Free Market?.....	39
5.4 – The New Approach is not for All.....	40
5.5 – Discussion of the Gap	42
5.6 – Conclusion	44
Chapter 6 – Conclusion	45
References	48

List of Tables

- I. Unsatisfied demand for low skilled and illegal immigration
- II. Distribution of foreign workers by sector of activities
- III. Overall distribution of vacancies by occupation
- IV. The distribution of skill gaps by occupation
- V. UK Unemployment, % rates 1900-1999
- VI. UK net immigration

Chapter 1 – Introduction

1.1 – Background and Indication of Problem

International migration has become a much debated issue since the 1990s. It has moved from an internal administrative matter to a top national security issue, especially after the terrorist attacks of September 11th, 2001, in the United States.

The usual notion of a migrant is that of an unskilled person which comes from a developing country, trying to get a job in any of the developed areas of the world where they will then settle down (Augustin, 2003: 32). However, this is only one type in this category. Migrants can be high skilled or low skilled individuals, they can come both from developing as well as developed countries, they may be migrants due to family formation or reunion, and there are also those who are forced to migrate – asylum seekers and refugees – which are not to be seen as migrants.

1.1.2 – Immigration in Europe

The history of immigration in Europe has changed quite significantly in less than a century. In the post-war period countries like France, Germany, The Netherlands, Belgium, and Switzerland implemented guest worker systems with the intention to recruit temporary labour to help in the reconstruction of Europe. Economy was booming and governments made bilateral agreements with sending countries to organise the recruitment of workers. In the case of Britain, it was the colonial ties that played an important role in attracting immigrants. However, with economic recession caused by the first oil crisis in 1973, all countries, by 1974, had stopped recruiting labour migrants (Castles, 1986). Nevertheless, even though European countries were no longer promoting immigration, restriction was not really enforced and immigrants kept arriving. By this time, migrant networks had already developed. Once known as ‘chain migration’ (Castles and Miller, 1998: 25), such networks are usually based on family relations or nationality; they provide support for the newcomers thus creating a safer process for those who migrate. As Brettell argues ‘each act of migration itself creates a social structure needed to sustain it. Every new migrant reduces the cost of subsequent migration for a set of friends and relatives, and some of these people are thereby induced to migrate, which further expands the set of people with ties abroad’ (2000: 107). These social networks are a self-sustaining process; therefore, despite the fact that a more restrictive approach was put in place in the 1970s, immigration never stopped as networks replaced the link between sending and receiving countries and

helped immigrants evade immigration controls. (Castles and Miller 1998: 25-26; Geddes, 2005b: 800; Hollifield, 2000: 147).

Nevertheless, the economy never went back to its expansionist levels of the 1950s and 1960s. As migrant workers were expected to be temporarily in the receiving countries no attention was paid on how to have them integrate into the host societies. However, it is now known that what was meant to be temporary became not only permanent but new migrants kept arriving. Ethnic tensions were created and increased over time as the notion that migrants were taking away the jobs from the indigenous population spread (ILO, 2004: 30). Increasing racism and xenophobia helped the ascension of extreme right political parties at the national level in several countries in Europe. Their discourse against immigration combined with a rather distorted perception of immigration by the general public forced the political debate on immigration to follow a more restrictive path.

Despite the enormous impact caused in the host societies, it is usually argued that European countries need immigrants (Hansen, 2003: 36). Various reasons can be mentioned: local ageing population and low fertility rates creating a heavy burden for pension and social security systems as well as a decrease in human capital which eventually will reduce productivity; the possibility to look after the elderly population is ever less likely due to a shrinking household size and leading to higher costs of health care; local population with high standards of education not willing to have menial, dirty or dangerous jobs; on the other hand highly skilled immigrants can contribute with their knowledge (Geddes, 2005b; Jenny, 2001; Butz et al. 2004).

Statistics on international migration can vary to a great extent. It is estimated that the number of international migrants has grown to 191 million people (IOM, 2006) from 150 million according to Jenny (2001) whereas IOM says from 176 million migrants in the year of 2000. More than half of this population has migrated to developing countries, estimated in 59 per cent. Nevertheless, OECD countries have also experienced an increased influx of immigrants since the 1990s (Jenny, 2001:55). It is estimated that around 10 per cent of the population of more developed countries is composed of migrants (ECOSOC, 2006). Not to mention the fact that it is estimated that 15 to 20 per cent of the number of migrants worldwide are undocumented (IOM, 2005). This sheds light on the potential huge impact on host countries that have such amount of immigrants amongst their population. Job markets, political economy, culture, and welfare policies for instance will all be affected.

1.1.3 – The case of the United Kingdom

As early as 1945, considerable numbers of European workers started to be recruited by the British government due to great labour shortage especially in areas such as agriculture, coal mining, textiles, and construction (Rees, 1993: 94). The European Voluntary Worker (EVW) schemes were typical guest-worker programmes but lasted for a very short period – only 6 years – if compared to the other guest-worker systems in Europe. The schemes imposed quite restrictive conditions to the workers such as deportation in case of misbehaviour and poor health and workers were not allowed to bring any family members (only single persons were admitted to the programme). The programmes finished in 1951 mostly for the fact that the UK did not need to have an official recruiting system to attract foreign workers. It counted on the huge labour reserves firstly from Ireland and, with decolonisation, from the former colonies (Castles, 1986: 762).

These work permit schemes did not regulate citizens of the British Commonwealth. According to the British Nationality Act of 1948, they had the right to enter, settle and work in the UK. However, this right was gradually reduced as the apprehension of the local population about immigration increased steadily. In 1962, a system of employment vouchers was put in place under the Commonwealth Immigrants Act, for the citizens of the British Commonwealth. Vouchers were divided into categories of unskilled, semiskilled and specific skills or qualifications. For the first two categories vouchers were slowly removed whereas for the latter they were drastically reduced but were still being created until 1972 when the programme came to an end. The 1971 Immigration Act made it compulsory for all workers looking for jobs in the UK the possession of a work permit. A few exceptions were made for certain kinds of jobs and European Economic Community citizens (Rees, 1993: 95-97). According to Geddes, “the history of British migration policy since the 1960s could be understood as the progressive shrinking of channels for regular migration” (2005: 331). However, as already mentioned, even though States try to control the movement of people across their borders with the tightening of policies, migration networks and market dynamics play a significant role as formal State interventions (Geddes, 2005a: 330).

Even though borders are strictly controlled pull factors keep attracting foreigners to the UK. They account for 4.9 per cent of its total population (Geddes, 2005c: 4). As for the labour market, labour demand as a whole has been persistent due to low birth rates, the ageing of the local population and increased levels of education that leads to a negative attitude from the native

population towards low paid jobs which increases even more the need for such workers. According to the Institute for Public Policy Research in London in the two decades between 1979 and 1999 the numbers of jobs in the ten lowest paid positions (relative to median wage) rose 12 per cent (Farrant et al. 2006: 8). In addition, recent research carried out in London by the Queen Mary, University of London has brought attention to the fact that earlier research had estimated that the percentage of the city's elementary positions such as, for instance, labourers, postal workers, catering personnel and cleaners, were filled by migrants was as high as 46 per cent. However, this research findings shows that this figure might be higher as 90 per cent of their interviewees were people born outside the UK, which indicates a very strong dependence of low skilled labour market of London on foreign labour (Evans et al. 2005: 10).

1.2 – Relevance and Justification

A research to analyse a possible gap in immigration policies in receiving countries such as the UK is important for me due to the following reason. The tightening of immigration policies means there are less legal ways for individuals to migrate. The population in irregular situation in developed countries seems to be growing in numbers thus contributing more to the host economies. However, the fact that irregular migrants may have better prospects of employment and better living standards than in their countries of origin should not be regarded only as a positive aspect. Governments that accept such situation and do not act effectively on this issue, either by sending irregular migrants back to their home countries or by accepting them as residents, become accomplices of the creation of a group in the society that has no rights. This process is creating a new category of people in these countries, one which should be satisfied with what they managed to obtain themselves as they should not be where they are in the first place. Governments have duties to foreigners. Ignoring people in your own territory is not only an issue of ethics but also goes against what has already been agreed on the international level, such as the Geneva Convention, which states that "all persons are entitled to enjoy their human rights regardless of their legal status". Therefore if this gap that is allowing the formation of a new class of people is not intentional, then governments have to find a way to adapt their policies to the reality in order to be more effective when dealing with migration. However, if this gap is not so unintended as Cornelius and Tsuda (2004: 6) argue, this is a very concerning issue. So much has been done with the objective of granting rights to individuals and regarding every person as equal. Such an outcome of government policies means a huge step back in all that has been attained so far.

This research will focus on the UK due to its previous history on immigration. During the 1950s and 1960s the UK had hardly any strategy either to attract or restrict migration; guest worker schemes had very little influence in the influx of labour migrants making it a quite distinct process from other European countries which led some authors to argue that immigration to the UK was always unwanted, unplanned or unforeseen (Geddes, 2003: 32; Kubat, 1993: xxii). For that reason some believe that Britain should not feel responsible for those who decided to immigrate. However, immigration has had such an impact on Britain that it has caused the redefinition of its citizenship laws; while all Commonwealth citizens used to have open access to the country, many of them are now required visas, even just to transit through British airports (Rees, 1993: 97). In the 1970s the economic situation was no longer as positive as the previous decades and Britain gradually moved towards a zero immigration policy. However, such restrictive policies helped create, through the years, a great demand for labour; in such a way that for the recently policies have been made less restrictive with the implementation of schemes to attract both low and high skilled workers (Dummett, 2001: 135). Britain is so particular about the way it manages immigration that it has opted out of central EU developments in immigration such as the Schengen Agreement that deals with internal free movement of people, immigration and asylum, as it wants to maintain its own control of cross border movements (Geddes, 2003: 29/137).

This paper will also focus on low skilled immigrants in the UK. The study of this group is interesting as they are the ones most affected by Britain's national immigration and integration procedures. While low-skilled migrants continue to contribute to the national economy, they are the ones who take the burden of discriminative policies. Upon arrival to a new country, low skilled migrants are already seen as inferior in regards to their abilities, culture and the respect they receive from nationals. Due to the inconsistency of work and informality of wages, low skilled migrants are quite vulnerable to shifts in labour markets and immigration policies. Moreover, due to their financial instability, they are often faced with problems of poverty and marginalisation. From the perspective of nationals, low skilled migrants appear as a threat to the local culture and practices, availability of jobs, social system, living standards and density of the population. The misperception that low skilled migrants are "stealing our jobs" is not supported by any factual evidence (Glover et al. 2001: 37), but continues to be a fear that persists in host societies. Further, nationals often criticise the inability of low skilled migrants to integrate into the local society, while creating their own segregated living areas. The 'ghettoization' of low skilled migrant labour only creates further division and lowers the chances of integration in the host country.

My argument for this research, however, is that despite the tightness in the low skilled labour market in the UK, the government rhetoric is one of restriction. Due to various constraining forces in the society the British government has to show it has immigration under control especially for low skilled immigrants for the reasons above mentioned. This has created a gap between the restrictive intentions of immigration policies in UK with relation to low skilled migrants and the actual outcomes of such policies. The rhetoric is always for restrictions and controls; however, in reality we can see that the population on irregular situation has been slowly increasing (Farrant et al. 2006: 9) which sheds light on the unmet demand for low skilled labour.

1.3 – Research objectives and Research Questions

The objective of this research is to discuss the existence of a gap between the restrictive rhetoric and the actual outcomes of migration policies in the UK regarding specifically the category of low skilled migrants. To analyse, on the one hand, the need for low skilled migrants in the UK and, on the other, the constraints in implementing migration policies, what actors and/or factors play a role and influence this process. It will examine the policies that have been created and implemented since the post World War II years until now, discuss how effective they have been regarding unskilled labour and try to explain the reasons for this gap.

1.3.1 – Research Question

How to explain and analyse the gap between the restrictive rhetoric and outcomes of the UK immigration policies on low skilled migrants?

1.4 – Methodology

This research will be mainly exploratory making use of UK national policies on immigration and secondary data available on the topic. Statistics on low skilled migrants will also be used even though this category poses challenges when it comes to numbers due to the fact that many low skilled migrants are also undocumented thus making it very difficult to collect accurate numbers. Different theoretical approaches will be used to analyse and debate the existence of a gap between policies and their outcomes, the need for migration as well as the constraints in policy implementation that lead to a restrictive rhetoric on the issue.

Chapter 2 – The Gap Hypothesis

This chapter discusses the existence of a gap between restrictive rhetoric of immigration policies and their actual outcomes through the perspectives of various scholars. It also gives an introduction to this subject in the context of recent immigration developments in the UK.

2.1 – The Gap between Immigration Policy and its outcomes

Border controls are an institution of our contemporary world. Up to two hundred years ago individuals were free to go wherever they wanted to. Nevertheless, as Sassen explains ‘the nineteenth century nation state played a less defined role than it would with World War I in identifying and categorising “foreign” populations and in regulating their movement, entry, exit, and conditions for residence. But the nineteenth century shows us how contemporary issues in immigration policy became deeply embedded in questions of nationhood and political culture, as well as in economics and geography’ (Sassen, 1999: 51). Immigration policies have had both the intention of attracting as well as restricting immigration for different purposes and in different moments. The situation of the European countries that actively attracted immigrants or had no restrictions on entry during the 1950s changed quite dramatically within two decades. By the early 1970s they all had restrictive policies on immigration. And with official restrictions it is argued by some scholars that gaps between policy goals and outcomes started taking place. Nowadays immigration policies of EU countries have been very selective. While governments have been relaxing the entry for those individuals who can contribute to the host countries with their knowledge in competitive fields it is usually accepted that low skilled workers and refugees¹ do not have similar opportunities; their channels to migrate have been largely restricted resulting in a gap for this specific category with the presence of irregular migrants being one consequence of this gap.

But is there really a gap? There are some distinct arguments over the subject. Scholars like Cornelius et al. believe that for many labour importing countries it has become difficult to control immigration as their economies have now a structural demand for immigrant workers. He points that most developed countries ‘...are now experiencing persistent shortages of labor to fill low-skilled jobs in certain industries...’ due to various reasons (Cornelius and Tsuda, 2004: 7).

¹ Although refugees are usually regarded as not having skills, in many cases this is not true. However, they are often not allowed to use their skills as for instance their degrees may not be recognised in the host country (Hansen, 2000: 34).

Following this trend in immigration, the UK has also implemented selective policies. The recent trend brought into action by the Labour government is to attract highly skilled migrants, due to an increasing shortage of skilled professionals. To avoid a backlash, the government has been putting effort in explaining the public about the benefits that these migrants can bring. This may narrow the gap as government policies will be more in line with labour market needs. However, the author argues that shortage of low skilled labour in Britain does not seem to be as structurally embedded as in the case of highly skilled personnel (ibid. 32).

Taking a different perspective Papademetriou discusses the fact that migration happens no matter what restrictions are imposed by governments and the tighter the policies the wider the gap. It has been recognised that the complex social, economic and political issues involved in immigration make it quite difficult for policy making and implementation. Nevertheless, instead of creating feasible policies governments had increasingly high targets over the years, resulting in the 'zero immigration' policies of the early 1990s. Such policies had unattainable goals from the start which consequently led to their complete failure; creating therefore, a wider gap between intentions and results. Zero immigration policies are as unrealistic as trying to halt inflows of irregular migrants solely by applying the law as it happens nowadays (Papademetriou, 2003: 52). The reasons given by the author to such failure are that a) migration dynamics are self sustainable due to the establishment of networks that keep the process alive; moreover, technology has made travel and communication easier and more accessible which further supports the expansion of trans-national social networks (Heisler, 2000: 87); b) to attain zero immigration governments would have to make their countries completely isolated from the international system as any sort of contact with the outside world – be it economic, social, political or cultural – will create migration of some extent; and lastly c) those trying to escape unbearable situations in their own countries may try for a better life in other countries no matter what kind of restrictions governments impose on immigration. All these factors contribute to the creation of a gap of immigration policies as migration will keep taking place despite all the efforts to stop it (Papademetriou, 2003: 53).

Following the same idea on the feasibility of policies is the work of Hansen. Nevertheless, there is a distinct argument from the previous idea. The author argues that governments are fully aware of the fact that people are not to be treated as goods; however, this is a practice that is still in place especially regarding low skilled labourers. The example of unrealistic immigration policy given by the author is the schemes created by governments to attract temporary labour. It is nowadays widely known that temporary immigrants will most likely settle in the receiving

country and become permanent immigrants. This pattern has been observed amongst the immigrants that moved to Europe as what is known as guest workers² for a temporary stay since the 1950s (Hansen, 2003: 31). However, even though this is a well known fact, governments still believe they can recruit people for short periods to tackle labour shortages and send them back when economic performance is no longer so positive; or that immigrants will do the jobs that no one else is willing to do for as long as government needs them to and not look for different positions. The movement of people is not like the movement of goods. Governments can have extensive control over the inflows of capital and commodities if they are willing to; nevertheless, when hiring individuals one has to acknowledge the individual's own agency and will. As the author argues, when governments search for hands, they receive people instead (ibid. 31).

Moving further on the same argument, Hansen believes that policies on immigration have not been carefully considered which makes possible results and outcomes not to be taken into account, thus failing to achieve their primary purposes. Especially in the world post September 11th, rational and open policies are quite unlikely in the area of immigration. General apprehension over security and in this case especially over Muslim migrants may push governments towards hidden agendas (ibid. 37).

The influence of many diverse factors on immigration creates a puzzle that is difficult to solve which according to Papademetriou make governments unable to control the inflows of people into their borders. The business community is usually in favour of a more open approach as it is argued by Cornelius that shortage of labour is a fact in many of the industrialised countries. However, questions of identity and ethnicity have a negative influence on society's opinion about immigration. Accommodating such diverse views when making and implementing policies is quite a complex task. It involves various perspectives therefore governments have to be clear and objective about their immigration goals. Being even more specific, the making of immigration policies has to take into consideration aspects such as labour market demands, public expenditure, commitment to human rights conventions, internal social cohesion, national security and the promotion of international development. Thus, these different aspects with such diverse nature can and will conflict, making immigration policies have conflicting outcomes (Spencer, 2003: 4).

² Guest worker was the term used by the former West Germany government to define foreign workers recruited for a temporary period to work in that country. Such schemes were put into place through bilateral agreement between Germany and other governments to attract foreign due to the internal shortage of labour after World War II. This term is now used as a general definition to labour migrants (Dummett, 2001: 141; Hansen, 2003: 25).

Nevertheless the existence of a gap might not be a simple failure of government policy as Cornelius and Tsuda discuss. His idea is that the gap hypothesis applies to situations when 'significant and persistent gaps exist between official immigration policies and actual policy outcomes' (2004: 4). The most usual types of policy gaps occur when the policies create unintended consequences or when they are not well implemented or enforced (Cornelius and Tsuda, 2004: 4). Generally speaking, the author argues that the gap hypothesis may not be only a hypothesis as there is empirical evidence that only few immigration countries have policies that can effectively control the influx of people and do not create unwanted consequences (ibid. 5). There are several aspects that can indicate the existence of a gap in the implementation of immigration policies. Here are some examples given by the authors: in the case of immigration policies based on quotas of migrants the gap can be easily shown by the difference between the set quotas and the actual number of migrants entering the country; migrants overstaying their visa limit, different types of migrants coming in instead of the intended ones and irregular migrants all widen the gap. On the other hand, the unintended consequences might not be so unintended as governments may claim, they might be indeed fully intentional (ibid. 6).

Cornelius and Tsuda view is quite focused on the governments as the ones who formulate and implement such policies. Castles agrees that the study of migration has had a great emphasis on the State as the agent who creates, motivates and consequently regulates flows of migrants into the countries. While the author agrees with the fact that states have a tremendous influence over immigration, he further argues that official policies may differ greatly in their effectiveness. And in the case of immigration policies, he adds, 'one of the most striking impressions which emerges from a historical study of migration policies is how often they have failed to achieve their stated goals' (1998: 93).

He mentions the schemes to recruit guest workers intended to attract foreign labour to Europe for a temporary period. Nevertheless, as previously presented by the work of Hansen the result was permanent settlement for many of those who were recruited. Another example of gap is the immigration policies adopted by governments with the purpose of halting non-white flows into their borders. The picture now is that many of these countries have witnessed the emergence of different ethnic minorities (Castles and Miller, 1998: 93). In some cases the gap is between what governments declare as policy aims in controlling and restricting immigration and what actually happens: inflows of irregular migrants and no strong enforcement of the law in order to restrict entrance and avoid keeping individuals without the required documentation living in the country with the intention to fulfil internal labour demand (ibid. 94).

Finally, a negative public opinion on immigrants can be a reflection of policy gaps. If more migrants enter the country than what was intended, the local population may suspect the government is not capable of controlling the borders effectively. Therefore, there is an assumption that the wider the gap, the more the population will be against migrants in general (Cornelius and Tsuda 2004: 7). Having said that, to rely on public opinion to measure immigration policy gaps might create a false picture of the situation. Usually the general public has no concrete knowledge of immigration policies in the first place and there are frequent misperceptions about the economic and social aspects of their lives in the receiving countries. Not to mention that the public itself is a big group composed of smaller ones and each of them will have their own interests (ibid. 7).

2.2 – Introduction to the Gap in Britain

The discussion on the existence of a gap in Britain has some contradictory views. As previously mentioned in this chapter Cornelius and Tsuda argue that the need for low skilled workers seem not to be strong in the UK. However, even with the tightening of immigration policies implemented in the early 1970s leading to zero immigration goals in the early 1990s, the UK received between 140,000 and 170,000 newcomers each year from 1998 to 2004 (Cornelius and Tsuda, 2004: 41). Layton-Henry discusses that this has happened due to a steady increase in labour shortage which may pose a threat to public finances; the ageing of the native population; requests from employers to have more access to immigrant labour; and a greater global competition for highly skilled migrants (ibid. 31). Nevertheless, it can be argued that these numbers do not account for a majority of highly skilled workers coming into Britain. Statistics for the highly skilled programme known as HSMP show that 1,197 applications were successful in 2002, 4,891 in 2003 and 3,234 in the first semester of 2004 (Cooley, 2005: 3). Therefore it is clear that highly skilled immigration has had very little impact on the labour market in Britain, leading us to the conclusion that a great amount of the migrants in these numbers can be considered to be part of the other end of the skills spectrum. According to Cornelius and Tsuda, advanced industrial countries such as Britain 'are facing a trade-off between the sociocultural costs of admitting more foreigners – many of whom will settle permanently – and the economic costs of not importing them' (2004: 41).

The government has kept a restrictive opinion on immigration and has not promoted an open debate on this subject mostly because of public intolerance on the issue which to the eyes of the general public seems like a real gap between policy intentions and results as even though the government keeps a restrictive rhetoric in their perception migrants keep arriving. Opinions can

be very extreme leading to fairly polarised debates between those who acknowledge the benefits of immigration and those who only see its disadvantages (Cornelius and Tsuda, 2004: 31; Spencer, 2003: 5).

Even though estimates are that the percentage of undocumented population in the UK is not so large, this issue has been much debated in the media after episodes of human and labour rights violations involving Chinese individuals being smuggled into the UK (Cornelius and Tsuda, 2004: 32).

Therefore, usually policy makers have little space for discussing the real facts of immigration. As a result, decisions over immigration may be kept secret. The public is then quite oblivious of the decisions taken. Issues such as balancing the needs of employers and the needs of the local labour force, the brain drain effect on sending countries, give migrants access to public services and welfare benefits are all kept away from the public. This has a negative side effect on how the population perceives immigration: as society is not aware of policies and especially the reasoning behind them, perceptions are always that there are too many migrants and that they receive too many benefits from the governments which creates an even stronger opposition to the subject from the general public (Spencer, 2003: 5).

The tabloid media and the British public are not inclined to accept large scale immigration as there is the constant fear of overloading the welfare system as well as losing the nation's character (Cornelius and Tsuda 2004: 31). Inflows of migrants from different ethnicities are perceived by the government as a possible threat as it may lead to a hostile response from the local population creating thus ethnic conflicts. For the British government, managing race relations involves controlling immigration and reassuring the public that measures are being taken in order to address the issue and make it work for the benefit of the British economy. Compared to other European and North-American countries, British immigration policies are quite restrictive. But that does not mean that the gap between the policies and their outcomes is not there. Not only the UK has one of the largest populations of different ethnic origins among European countries, but also the number of immigrants in irregular situation has been increasing lately (ibid. 32). This issue is discussed in more detail in chapter 3.

2.3 – Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the reasons that may keep immigration policies from accomplishing their intended outcomes creating therefore a gap between their actual results and their initial intentions. Different perspectives on the issue were presented with examples of gaps to better

illustrate the matter. The end of the chapter has initiated the discussion on the existence of a gap in the UK and showed how it is difficult for the government to be more open about this issue due to negative perception on the subject by the tabloid media and the public in general specially related to low skilled immigrants as it is harder to prove their contribution to the UK.

Chapter 3 – Theoretical Framework

This chapter intends to create a theoretical framework to analyse immigration processes, which will be used in chapter 5 to analyse immigration trends in the UK. It presents several approaches with different perspectives and discusses the strong points as well as weaknesses of each of them.

3.1 – Immigration Theory

The complexity of contemporary migration is such that it is necessary to use more than just one approach or theory to understand this issue that involves economic, social, cultural and political aspects. The use of one single theoretical approach may create a bias towards the approach chosen and its presumptions as each one of them has a different focus, be it economic, social behaviour or politics. The use of several different tools to analyse migration helps to improve the debate over the issue as it is important to consider both the strengths and weaknesses of each theory in order to have a more thorough analysis (Walt, 1998: 29). It is the interaction of each of these aspects that enrich the debate over immigration.

3.2 - Realism

International relations theories can be applied to analyse the phenomenon of international migration as the latter is one of its components. Realist theory argues that the state is a rational actor and depending on its position in the international system it will have the capacity to pursue its interests (Moravcsik, 1997: 513). It is the ability of the state to implement its own agenda; its power to put its own self interested goals into practice. Realism argues that States are sovereign having thus the authority to control and protect the integrity of its territory. The concept of sovereignty comprises 'the right to regulate entry into (if not the departure of any individual from) the national territory. From this perspective, states will regulate migration according to their national interests' (Hollifield, 1992: 568-69). States are concerned with what is thought to be of national interest which is defined and then pursued by governments. In the case of a decline in population for reasons such as losses during war periods and low fertility rates it will be in the interest of the state to promote immigration as this creates vulnerabilities in the country's economic situation and defence, for instance (Meyers, 2000: 1264). Nevertheless, national interests can also influence governments to restrict immigration: it could, for example, intend to protect the ethnicity or the language and cultural values existent or the labour market (Hollifield, 1992: 569).

However, realism as an approach to the study of international migration has showed some weaknesses. First, despite having discussed immigration issues as one of its concerns, realist scholars still tend to focus on security issues, regarding social and economic matters as less important. Second, the state is seen as a rational actor which then does not explain why some scholars argue that immigration policies are neither efficient nor rational. Lastly, realists' main concern is power. However, global power relations have no influence on immigration control issues (Meyers, 2004: 9).

3.3 – Domestic Politics Approach

On the other hand, while for realist it is all about the capacity of the state, for domestic politics the main issue is State preferences. The domestic politics approach was created as an evolution from the realist paradigm. If for realists the State has the capacity to impose its ideas, some scholars started to accept the importance that domestic politics have in influencing the State (Zakaria, 1992: 177). The core idea of the domestic politics approach is that 'societal ideas, interests and institutions influence state behaviour by shaping state preferences, that is, the fundamental social purposes underlying the strategic calculations of governments' (Moravcsik, 1997: 513). The principal actors are private groups and individuals. They are usually rational and will organise themselves in order to advance their own interests within the environment's limitations: scarce resources, different opinions and stronger influence of several groups (ibid.. 516). As interests are diverse and resources are limited competition plays an important role; policy making becomes a bargain process with the various groups trying to influence parties, legislators and administrators or political parties that have been elected for representing a specific programme (Meyers, 2000: 1257-58). According to Freeman this is a usual practice in immigration politics and he calls it 'client politics' (Freeman, 1995: 886). It can however entail compromises between the various interests; nevertheless, it often happens that one or two of such pressure groups manage to capture the state and have only their own agendas put forward (Meyers, 2004: 6). The role of the state in domestic politics is not of an active player or an actor; rather it is of an institution that is being manipulated according to the influence of different coalitions (Moravcsik, 1997: 518). Interest groups composed by employers have great interest in the relaxing of immigration policies as they will improve their chances of finding the workers they need, with the right skills and for lower wages. Ethnic organisations may also try to advance pro immigration agendas. However, political parties trying to please voters, nationalists groups and some labour unions for instance have no interest in promoting immigration and will therefore try to implement all strategies in order to have tighter border controls and other means to reduce future inflows of people (Meyers, 2000: 1258). This approach shares with

Marxism the argument that labour demand and changes in the labour market and in the economy have a great influence in immigration policies (Meyers, 2004: 6).

Critics of the domestic politics approach argue that it is an approach mainly a-theoretical; most studies that have been done using domestic politics as a tool of analysis are usually empirically oriented and analyse policies of an individual country during a limited period of time (Zolberg, 1978: 242).

3.4 – Economic Liberalism

One more approach to be discussed is economic liberalism commonly known as globalisation. A contrasting view from realism, economic liberalism advances that sovereignty has been weakened by markets (Cable, 1995: 23). Hence, state borders have become porous and the international mobility of capital, commodities and ideas is perceived as the key to reduce inefficiency in the national and international economies, not to mention labour mobility (Hollifield, 1992: 572). According to Castles and Miller ‘the neoclassical model tends to treat the role of the state as an aberration which disrupts the ‘normal’ functioning of the market’ (1998: 22). Instead, if the market is left to work without any interference the forces of supply and demand will lead to economic equilibrium (Castles and Miller, 1998: 21). In the context of migration these forces are known as ‘push-pull’ factors and play a decisive role in the process. The combination of factors attracting migrants – pull factors – and those forcing them out of their countries of origin – push factors – will then result in migration or not. Some examples have been selected in the table below (Boyle et al. 1998: 67; Hollifield, 1992: 573):

Push factors	Pull factors
Decrease of national economic resources or their value	Greater employment prospects
Unemployment	Possibility of higher income
Political, religious or ethnic discrimination	More chances for education and training
Demographic growth	Political freedom

Therefore, one conclusion that can be drawn from this perspective is that migration will keep taking place in spite of any restrictions imposed by receiving countries as long as great inequalities in living conditions between countries persist. Equilibrium forces will keep working to balance supply and demand.

However, it is now recognised that any migration analysis using just push-pull factors is considered to be quite simplistic and therefore inaccurate. Firstly, push-pull factors are believed to exist both in sending as well as in receiving countries. Secondly, this approach has a strong focus on the individual's decision to migrate, in other words, one's rational behaviour when balancing the costs and benefits involved. And finally, it takes any other obstacles as deviations that should not be considered like for instance family ties in the home country, high costs of migrating, and even personal apprehension about the process (Boyle et al. 1998: 67; Castles and Miller, 1998: 20-21).

Free movement of labour is one aspect of globalisation amongst free movement of capital and commodities; however, unlike the others, apart from the movement of highly skilled personnel, labour migration has been vastly restricted by rich countries creating a great obstacle to globalisation or equilibrium forces. Nevertheless it is important to point that regardless of all the restrictions imposed, people keep finding ways to emigrate through legal or illegal ways (Cable, 1995: 30). Some will argue that these developments have made the sovereign state outdated and no longer needed. But despite such a trend governments still preserve their power on many areas, trying to manage the forces of globalisation. The importance of controlling immigration for rich countries is that this is how they can keep their higher wages from being lowered by an increase in the supply of labour. For Cable, immigration control has become one of the most important residual functions of the State (ibid. 31).

3.5 – Marxism

Another perspective that can be used to analyse the phenomenon of international migration is what is known as radical approaches. Within this group we find the Marxist approach. It has a different perception of how international relations work. While realism and the domestic politics approach accept the State system as given, Marxism takes capitalism as the main drive for action (Walt, 1998: 30). The struggle for profits is the main force for the capitalists. Therefore when addressing the topic of migration the economic focus is always present. Every action taken is with the intention of maximising profits; thus according to Marxist scholars migrants play the role of an industrial reserve army that will be used when economy is growing and demanding more labour and discarded when no longer useful during economic crisis (Hollifield, 1992: 570).

Furthermore, immigrants are also useful in creating a division in the working class, through the promotion of racism encouraged by the owners of the means of production (Hollifield, 2000: 166). International labour migration is regarded as being a part of the capitalist process and the international division of labour. It is there to provide for the needs of the capitalist ruling class (Meyers, 2000: 1248).

Immigrants compose an important aspect of capitalism as they do not have the same rights as those who are citizens of the country especially if they are irregular migrants as then no rights can be claimed; hence the recruitment of migrant labour makes it possible for employers to circumvent market regulations, minimum wages, employment benefits, work place conditions and all the benefits and rights for which individuals have been advocating for long decades (Hollifield, 1992: 571) which once more helps the increase of profits. On the other hand, it is important to take into account the notion on structural inflation. If migrants were not considered as an option and wages were to be raised for the unpleasant jobs in order to attract workers, wages of employees holding higher positions would also have to be raised creating therefore a further effect through the economy that would then lead to structural inflation (Keely, 2000: 52).

Nevertheless, as the previous approaches, when Marxism is applied to immigration it is contested due to some perceived flaws. Its main weak point is its focus on economic matters leaving behind essential socio political aspects that influence migration, thus failing to explain refugee policies as well as permanent immigration policies. On the other hand, it also fails to explain restrictions on permanent immigration in many countries as during World War I even though there was an increasing demand for labour (Meyers, 2004: 8). Although Marxists argue that governments promote immigration of dissimilar ethnicities to provoke tensions between workers, in reality countries have had restrictions on accepting migrants from different ethnic origins. Furthermore, their belief in long term growth in immigration as being part of the structures of capitalism is controversial. Refugees and irregular migrants can be thought of as now being substitutes to migrant workers. However, capitalists are not likely to rely on such an option due to their supposed control of the state (ibid. 8).

3.6 – National Identity Approach

The focus of this approach is in the history and culture of each country. It is based on sociological and psychological theories and concepts like national identity, citizenship, nation building, prejudice, alienation, and social closure as well as social conflicts (Brubaker, 1992: 23). The rationale behind this approach is that the State interest in expanding or restricting

citizenship are shaped by self-understanding, culture and values shared by the nation and not by economic, demographic or military aspects. It depends on how the State was formed. Social conflicts and discussions over national identity are the main factors contributing to the formation of immigration control policies. Immigration and citizenship policies will vary according to the host countries' own conceptions of national identity or own characteristics (Meyers, 2000: 1251-1252). However, one of the most usual effects of migration in the receiving countries is indeed the formation of ethnic minorities. Thus, in periods of economic and social crisis immigration becomes a central issue for the migrants themselves, the host society as well as the State (Castles and Miller, 1998: 46).

Such conceptions of nation building and national identity can be divided in three groups. First, there is the distinction between settler societies and ethnic states. The former is created mainly by immigrants and has a more positive approach to permanent immigration whereas the latter resists the settlement of immigrants, especially of those from different ethnic groups of their own. Meissner discusses the importance for European nationals to share ethnicity and nationality in order to be part of their societies while in countries like Australia and the United States to be accepted as part of the society depends more on civic participation and one's belief in democratic values (1992: 70-71). Second, there is the difference between ethnically homogeneous and heterogeneous countries. Those who have a heterogeneous population are more liable to accept permanent immigration as their identity is not based on an ethnic ideal (Zolberg, 1981: 16). The third distinction relates to citizenship laws. Countries that work with the principle of nationality based on blood – *jus sanguinis* – are less likely to promote permanent migration. This approach to citizenship leads to the protection of the population's ethnicity. On the other hand, those countries that base citizenship law on the place of birth – *jus soli* are more likely to welcome permanent immigration (Leitner, 1995: 262).

The main flaw of this approach is the fact that although countries are supposed to have immigration policies according to their own histories, countries with different backgrounds have implemented policies that were quite alike in the same period. Moreover, this approach is quite unclear on what is a relevant social conflict or a meaningful debate over national identity (Meyers, 2004: 8).

3.7 – Conclusion

This chapter has presented several perspectives for the analysis of immigration processes: Realism, Domestic Politics, Economic Liberalism, National Identity approach, and Marxism.

Both their strengths and limitations have been discussed and shall be applied to analyse the case study further in this research.

1. The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions and activities. It emphasizes the need for transparency and accountability in financial reporting.

2. The second part of the document outlines the various methods and techniques used to collect and analyze data. It includes a detailed description of the experimental procedures and the statistical tools employed.

3. The third part of the document presents the results of the study, including a comparison of the different methods and a discussion of the implications of the findings.

4. The fourth part of the document concludes the study and provides a summary of the key findings and recommendations for future research.

5. The fifth part of the document contains a list of references and a list of figures and tables.

6. The sixth part of the document contains a list of appendices and a list of footnotes.

7. The seventh part of the document contains a list of acknowledgments and a list of contact information.

8. The eighth part of the document contains a list of abbreviations and a list of symbols.

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Chapter 4 – Immigration in the UK

The following chapter will describe the history of immigration into the UK since the post World War II years until the beginning of the twenty-first century using the most important policies implemented and briefly analysing their purposes and consequences to immigration. Later in the chapter the issue of low skilled immigrants is addressed as well as the actual government's strategy to manage the demand for this specific category.

4.1 – Introduction to Case Study

In the 1990s, labour shortages of both low and high skilled workers forced a change in the approach to immigration in the UK. The booming economy that the Conservatives left for the Labour Party in 1997 had major problems caused by the lack of workers such as lost orders and unpicked crops. According to Layton-Henry, employers then took the initiative to advocate for an expanded work permit system (Dummett, 2001: 135; Layton-Henry, 2004: 297).

Such changes both in the political discourse as well as in policies are also a result of a more positive environment with regards to immigration. The Labour government coming to power with an enormous majority in parliament in 1997 and its re-election in 2001 with a similar result had a great influence in opening a space and creating the confidence needed to reassess immigration policies (Dummett, 2001: 135-136; Layton-Henry, 2004: 298). One factor that further helped in this process was that Britain's population was at that moment widely known to be ageing and this concern was shared by the public opinion as well as by the press, even though the exact amount of migrants needed to maintain the numbers of workers, the economy working properly, and keep the pension system is not clear. As the public opinion was sensible of this fact, it was not necessary to put too much effort in arguing that immigration could work for Britain (Layton-Henry, 2004: 299). This does not mean that immigration is an easy subject though. Political debate over the issue has never ceased. During the May 2005 general elections in Britain immigration played a central role with the Conservative Party discussing the validity of the UK being part of the Geneva Convention on the Rights of Refugees. Proper immigration policy proposals were not very well accepted (Road and Sriskandarajah, 2005: 9).

4.2 – Historical Background of Immigration in the UK

4.2.1 – Unrestrictive Britain

Britain has a history of immigration. Nevertheless, it is only in the XX century that it experiences high inflows of foreigners. Straight after World War II, Britain like other European countries was under an acute shortage of labour. Not only the war had claimed many lives but also much had been destroyed during the war years which had then to be reconstructed. Help came from the now new world power, the United States in the form of the Marshall Plan in which Britain was the largest beneficiary, receiving \$2,7 billion. Such a huge investment made Britain's economy grow, by 1951 when the plan came to an end, above the level it had reached in the years before the war (Barnett, 2005). For the next 20 years, Britain would go through an exceptional period of economic expansion and prosperity. However, such investment was helped by the fact that immigration to Britain during those years was totally unrestricted for citizens of the new commonwealth³. The British nationality Act of 1948 created no restrictions for nationals of these countries (Rees, 1993: 95) which then gave the possibility for migrants from many different areas of the world to come to Britain and fill in job vacancies. Ireland was one of Britain's main suppliers of labour migrants. Even though it had withdrawn the Commonwealth in 1948, there were no restrictions for the Irish to live in Britain. Therefore, during the 1940s and 1950s a fairly large flow of migrants from Ireland arrived in the UK, being then followed by flows from the Anglophone Caribbean and South Asia (Virdee, 1999: 70). Moreover, even for those who were not part of the Commonwealth and therefore had their entry into the UK controlled, immigration was also promoted due to the severe labour shortage of the post war period as much infrastructure had to be reconstructed and the regional and international trading system were recovering (ibid. 70). Hence the majority of workers coming to the UK during this period were of unskilled manual labour, especially for industry and construction (Castles and Miller, 1998: 77).

4.2.2 – Immigration as an Issue

However, this regime started to be contested due to the growing non-white population that was settling in Britain (Geddes, 2003: 32; Rees, 1993: 96). Political conflicts over the issue and the growing dissatisfaction of the public forced the British governments to take action and change its immigration policies. Thus a series of restrictive policies were created in order to restrict the

³ New commonwealth was a term commonly used in the 1950s and 1960s when referring to the Commonwealth of Nations. It referred to the old or white commonwealth members plus the newly independent colonies from Africa and Asia that were joining the association.

arrival of new non-white migrants being the first in 1962 known as the Commonwealth Immigrants Act. With this Act, citizens of the Commonwealth that were not born in Britain, did not possess or were not included in a British passport, would need to apply for an entry voucher scheme, before entering Britain, in order to obtain the right to live within the UK borders. Even though this was a huge restriction for those who had free access to Britain, these vouchers still granted the both the right of permanent residence as well as the right to bring dependents into the country. This was the moment that Britain started to review its position over immigration which was being widely considered as too idealistic and therefore not feasible in reality (Rees, 1993: 97). This first act was then followed in 1965 by the Immigration White Paper; the Commonwealth Immigrants Act of 1968; and the Immigration Act of 1971 (ibid. 97). This last Act put the British government in total control of immigration of any foreign nationals apart from the patrials⁴, who kept their freedom from any form of control. Therefore, this act that was passed by the Conservative government placed the citizens of the independent Commonwealth countries and British subjects on the same position as all other aliens for immigration control purposes. What is more, unlike the 1962 Act, this time the vouchers were replaced by work permits that did not entitle their holders neither to permanent residence nor to bring their dependants (Layton-Henry, 2004: 302). Many saw the 1962 Act as a last chance to settle in the UK as they expected more restrictions to come. Thus, the Act had an opposite effect of what had been expected. Many migrant workers that were in the UK for a temporary period of time and those who were already settled resorted to family reunification processes increasing therefore immigration in the short term (Road and Sriskandarajah, 2005: 2).

Throughout the 1970s immigration was still seen as a political issue. The expulsion of Asians from Uganda in 1972 increased the negative opinion about immigration which thus led to stronger pressure to keep non-white inflows to a minimum. In the late 1970s both the Conservative as well as the Labour Party had committed themselves to create a new Nationality Act. Since the previous decade, both parties supported tough immigration policies, while in government or not (Howard, 1993: 108). This was mainly due to the fear of losing votes. It was widely believed that immigration was a sensitive issue for the population one which could play a decisive role during elections (Layton-Henry, 2004: 313). The reasoning behind this new act was that revising how British nationality was defined would make immigration policies more coherent and non-racist. With this intention the concept of British citizenship was narrowed to

⁴ Patrials are individuals who possess close links with the UK either by birth or descent (Rees, 1993: 97).

the extent that former British subjects had no longer the right to immigrate to the UK (Cornelius and Tsuda, 2004: 31). It was accepted by international law that a sovereign State would favour its own citizens over foreigners so narrowing the concept of citizenship would be the easiest way to diminish the imperial obligations that Britain still had; furthermore, it would be less likely for this new immigration law to be considered racist. By this time, Britain's imperial interests were fading and being shadowed by the entrance into the European Community. The British Nationality Act of 1981 was therefore a turning point in Britain's foreign relations making clear the new directions it was taking (Henry-Layton, 2004: 306). This Act was the very first accomplishment of the Conservative Party that came to power in 1979. It had committed itself during the elections to reformulate British immigration laws and had very concrete propositions in this area whereas for every other policy areas propositions were rather vague.

4.2.3 – The Zero Immigration Years

During the 1980s the Conservative government's propaganda on immigration control was that it was supposed to be 'firm and fair'. According to Layton-Henry it was indeed firm; however, it would only be seen as fair for those who were against arrivals from the New Commonwealth. Firm in the sense that its outcomes were more effective than those of the previous government; numbers of new arrivals decreased and those who were in irregular situation were more actively tracked by the government. Nevertheless, it was not fair for spouses, dependants and refugees that had previously had the right to enter Britain. In the course of the same decade, the number of refugees applying for asylum grew dramatically (Layton-Henry, 2004: 306). Facing this new situation, in order to strengthen its zero-immigration policies, the government decided on implementing two new strategies: one was the imposition of entry visas for many nationalities, all of them Britain's previous colonies; and the other was the adoption of the 1987 Act which is known as Carrier's Liability – airlines and shipping companies would now have to make sure that all their passengers had all the required documents in order to enter the UK, otherwise a fine of £1,000 would be applied to the carrier (Dummett, 2001: 125-126).

4.2.4 – Calls for Change

However, during the 1990s a slow change started to happen with relation to immigration in the UK. Calls for a less restrictive law started to be heard. Publications such as *The Economist* and *The Times* had articles urging the government to revise its position over the issue. It was claimed that immigration was a national interest and therefore should work for the domestic economy. Moreover, Britain should not allow for the loss of million pounds' worth of unpicked strawberries and cherries due to a shortage of people to work in harvests. Policies were regarded

as 'absurd'; therefore they had to be changed. In 1997, after a long period in opposition, the Labour Party was again in power. During the elections, its leaders tried as hard as possible to lessen the effect of immigration policies as an electoral issue and during its first term immigration control was still tough despite the calls for revision of immigration laws (Layton-Henry, 2004: 313). Nevertheless, slowly and cautiously its approach to immigration changed from what it previously used to be. Its discourse was now about the economic contribution that immigration could bring to the British economy due to labour demand especially in London and the southeast of the country (Kleinman, 2003: 34/67). In a white paper published in 1998 about how toughly immigration had been managed in the previous years, by the then Home Secretary Jack Straw, one of the Labour Party's principles was announced, which was to have a policy of fair, fast and firm immigration control, even though there were no details over how this would be done (Layton-Henry, 2004: 316). One issue that is usually mentioned in public discourses to support immigration and fairly accepted by the public opinion is the fact that the British society is ageing. Projections by the UK National Statistics show that the population in the UK is expected to have an annual average growth rate of 0.42 per cent over the next 25 years which is fairly below replacement levels. As a consequence, between 2004 and 2031 the population over sixty five years of age is expected to increase from 16 per cent of the total population to 23 per cent. Therefore, the ratios of people on working age to support those who are retired will fall from 3.33 to 2.62 by 2031, imposing as a result a heavy economic burden on those who are part of the labour market and on government finances (ONS, 2006a). According to Layton-Henry, even though the fact that an ageing population has an impact in the pension system and in the labour market is not very well understood by the general public, it is generally assumed that the old population needs to be taken care of which will happen through pensions that are paid, health and social care. And this will come from those who are in working age which leads to a more positive approach to immigration even though this is not the only solution and will not solve the problem unless combined with other measures (Layton-Henry, 2004: 317).

4.3 – Irregular Immigration

It is estimated that the number of migrants in irregular situation in the UK has never been high. It is assumed by the authorities that most of them entered Britain by regular means and overstayed their visas. However, the situation has been changing since the late 1990s. Economy is again strong resulting in an increasing demand for labour especially in areas such as London and the south-east of England. This has attracted smugglers and the number of people caught trying to escape border controls has raised quite dramatically. In 1990, according to Layton-Henry this number was 3,300 while in 2000 it had already reached 47,000. In a report by

Migration Watch UK, the argument is that half of this amount per year – about 25,000 individuals – would still be an underestimation of the actual figures as for instance at the Port of Dover only one out of a hundred lorries is inspected (2002). While it can be argued that such numbers have been increasing due to a higher effectiveness of searching methods it also partly suggests that immigration through irregular ways is on the rise (Layton-Henry, 2004: 324). The first estimate on the number of irregular migrants was published by the Home Office in 2005; the median estimate is of 430,000 with numbers ranging from 310,000 as a minimum to 570,000 at the maximum (Farrant et al. 2006: 9), out of a total population of 60,2 million (ONS, 2006c). People working on irregular conditions are assumed to be in the lower wage and skills spectrum of the economy and with a high demand for labour, for example, cleaning, catering, hospitality as well as seasonal agricultural work and construction (Farrant et al. 2006: 3).

4.4 – Low Skilled Migrants

The now growing economy of the UK has created such a demand for labour that has changed the approach to immigration used by the British government. Not only employer organisations but also the public sector has given support to immigration to some extent. It has been recognised by the Home Secretary in 2003 that people who work in the UK in irregular situation are of much need to the service sector (Sriskandarajah, 2004: 19). According to the deputy director of the Confederation of British Industry migrant workers have an important role in filling the skills and labour shortages in certain sectors of the economy (Layton-Henry 2004: 330).

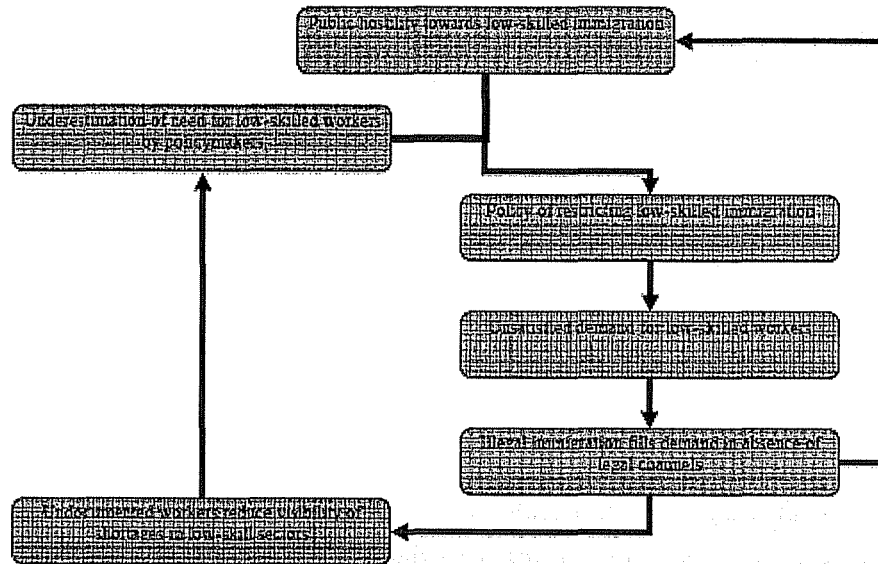
A great share of low skilled positions is filled by migrant workers. With the native population of Europe having higher levels of education and training it becomes an irony the fact that countries like the Britain have introduced schemes to attract highly skilled foreigners while settled migrants in the low skilled occupations are steadily reaching the retirement age (Clarke et al. 2004: 88).

Indeed, there are not many legal ways for low skilled migrants to enter the country. Two schemes are designed for temporary low skilled workers: the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme – SAWS – and the Sectors Based Scheme – SBS (Barber et al. 2005: 6; Home Office, 2006b; Sriskandarajah, 2004: 9). The former has been in place for a long time whereas the latter was launched in 2003 to recruit labour for hospitality, catering and food manufacturing industries. The SAWS had an increase in the number of permits from the mid 1990s. From 1993 to 1996 the scheme recruited between 4,000 to 5,000 workers every year, reaching 9,000 to 10,000 between 1997 and 2000 picking at 25,000 work permits in 2004 (LSC, 2006: 67).

Nevertheless, with the accession of 10 new countries to the European Union the number of permits granted has been reduced by 35% to 16,250 as Britain expects now to attract low skilled workers from within the EU (LSC, 2006: 67; Sriskandarajah, 2004: 9). Nevertheless, the reliance of the British government in attracting labour from this area may not be a good strategy as not only the standards of living will improve in these countries as a result of EU policy requirements therefore making migration less of an option but also these countries will undergo a serious ageing process just like the EU-15 countries are experiencing now (Munz, 2004: 19; Pearce and Sriskandarajah, 2005). As for the SBS, in 2003 7,808 permits were granted under this programme not having reached the quota of 20,000. In 2004 with 10,916 approvals the hospitality quota was met (Clarke et al. 2004: 53; Cooley et al. 2005: 4). Even though it is a fairly recent scheme, the government is already gradually reducing it, no longer having quotas for the hospitality sector. The Working Holidaymakers Scheme is one more option for low skilled workers although it is restricted to Commonwealth citizens and is intended for those whose main purpose is to spend holidays in the UK and work is only to maintain themselves through their stay (Levinson, 2005: 1) but in 2005 the scheme was modified to prevent it from being used as a legal way for economic migrants (Ensor, 2005: 7). Nonetheless, this is the scheme that attracts more foreigners having admitted between 35,000 and 46,000 each year during the period of 1999 to 2003 (Cooley et al. 2005: 4).

In the case the UK decides to cut even more the legal ways for low skilled third country workers, economic difficulties may arise. Having an unmet labour demand this might create a vicious cycle filled by irregular labour as shown in the table below (ibid. 29):

I. Unsatisfied demand for low-skilled workers and illegal immigration



Source: Cooley et al. (2005) pp.30, IPPR.

Nevertheless, even though there is some support from the government this is not always openly expressed and the discourse is not uniform. The British government still feels that immigration can be a sensitive issue and keeps using a tough rhetoric to draw away attention from the more liberal policies it has implemented. The need for those who possess important skills is usually recognised but that refers to highly skilled professionals (Cornelius and Tsuda, 2004: 19). There is a real apprehension from the government over what the tabloid media might say as they generally make harsh criticisms about immigration and it is argued that 'tough rhetoric goes hand in hand with practical liberal policies' (Layton-Henry, 2004: 331). While there is a clear political intention to manage migration in a more positive way, for instance, the 2001 white paper 'Secure Borders, Safe Heaven: Integration with Diversity in Modern Britain' which tries to create an integrated policy to deal with immigration, integration and citizenship all together, the discourse on immigration remains restricted even with favourable political and economic conditions. It is generally believed that this is an issue that can easily mobilise voters therefore a tough political rhetoric is needed to appease criticisms from the general public (Layton-Henry, 2004: 332).

Farrant et al. argue that during the past decade there has been an increasing demand in the lower paid positions. Despite the outsourcing trend many low paid jobs are not transferable such as hotel industry, cleaning and construction for example. Moreover, while some low paid

jobs may disappear, there has been an increasing demand for labour in healthcare and personal services (2006: 22).

The table below shows the share of low skilled migrant workers in the UK:

II. Distribution of foreign workers by sector of activities (percentage)

	Agri- culture	Mining and Industry	Construc- tion	Wholesale and retail trade	Hotel and catering	Education	Health and community services	Domestic work	Adminis- tration	Other services
United Kingdom	0.3	13.8	5.1	11.6	9.9	8.3	20.2	1.6	4.2	25.1

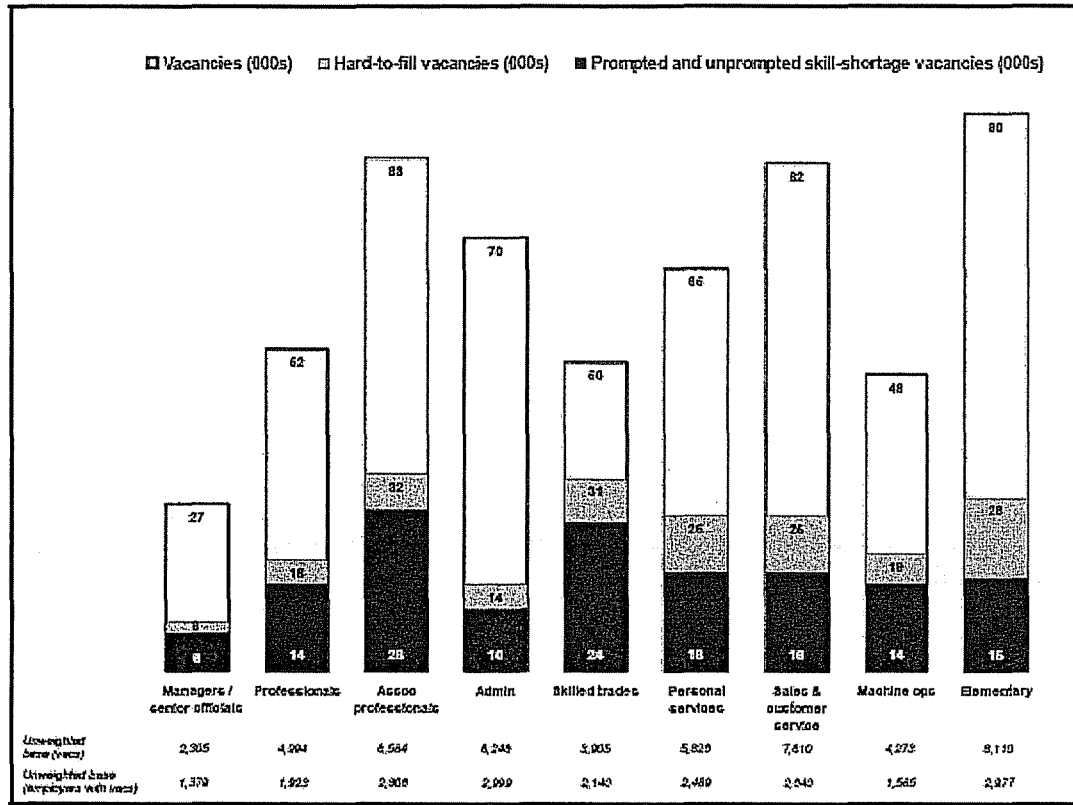
Source: Clarke, J.; J. Salt and P. Wanner (2004) 'International Labour Migration'. Strasbourg, Council of Europe Publishing.

According to a survey conducted in 2005 amongst 1,300 employers in the UK, 27% of the interviewees stated they had the intention of recruiting foreign labour, being the main reasons for that a shortage of workers with the desired experience (59 per cent) and desired skills (56 per cent). Among the interviewed employers, 19% were seeking for manual workers and 5% were looking for unskilled workers (LSC, 2006: 66).

While the media can be very critic about immigration, there is hardly any evidence of a negative impact labour migrants might have had on wages and unemployment so far, this being acknowledged by recent research. Taking from this, it can be argued that this is partly because new immigrants might not be constantly competing as native workers for the same jobs, as for instance they might be willing to fill unattractive vacancies with a low pay. It can also be argued that instead of competing for positions which already have a high native labour supply, they may be filling positions to which skills are short in supply in the existing labour market (ibid. 69).

The table below shows the vacancies and recruitment problems across the spectrum of occupations.

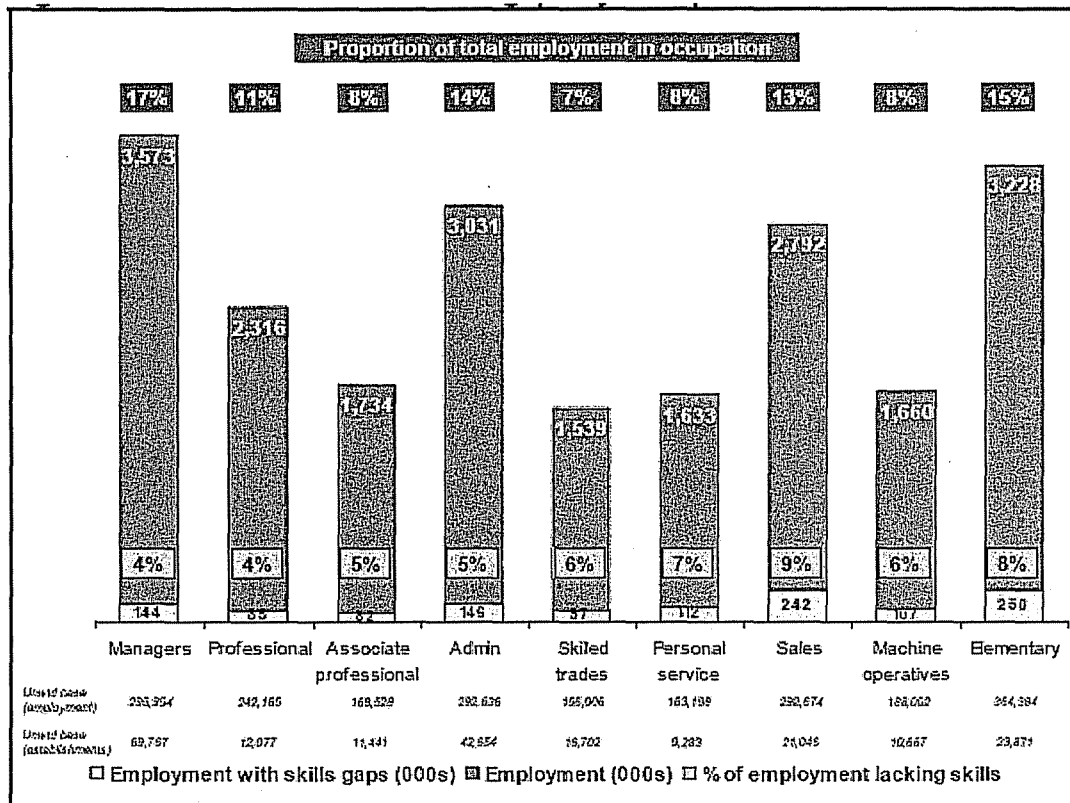
III. Overall distribution of vacancies by occupation.



Source: LSC, 2006.

The next table highlights the skill gaps of employees that affect the different occupations. Proportionally, skill gaps were highest reported in sales and customer service, being closely followed by elementary occupations. This is quite surprising as such occupations require a relatively modest level of skills. The usual assumption the skill gaps are usually seen in the highly skilled positions is then contradicted by the evidence shown in the table below (ibid. 108).

IV. The distribution of skill gaps by occupation



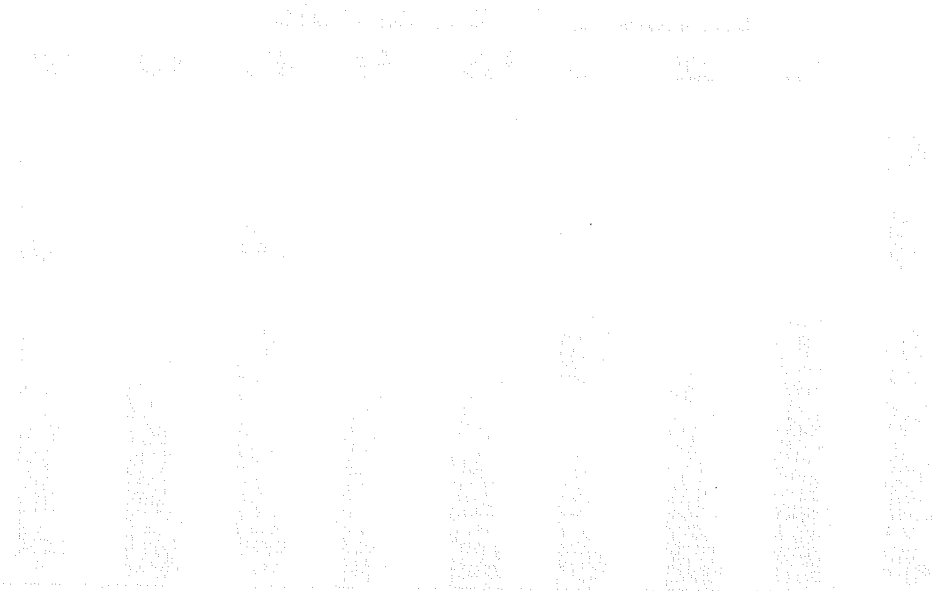
Source: LSC 2006.

A survey carried out by the Chartered Institute of Building in 2005 shows that, amongst its members, a total of 79 per cent had difficulties while hiring workers in the years of 2004 and 2005 and 91 per cent already predicted some extent of skills shortage in the coming years. Due to the London Olympics in 2012 there is an apprehension among constructors that the amount of building work in that area will be so high that not only there will be a drain of skilled construction workers in other areas such as Northern Ireland and Scotland but also the cost of labour will increase dramatically (Farrant et al. 2006: 23).

4.5 – Conclusion

This chapter has shown how Britain went from a completely open approach to immigration to years of zero immigration rhetoric and the policies used in this process. It further discussed how during the last decade, despite the labour market tightness for both high and low skilled workers policies and rhetoric have been more positive only for high skilled personnel as it is easier to explain the benefits they can bring to Britain. It also shed light on the demand for low skilled

workers and how the restrictive approach used towards them has had an effect on irregular immigration.



The chart illustrates the percentage of irregular immigrants in various countries from 1990 to 2000. The countries are listed on the x-axis: Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Korea, and the UK. The y-axis represents the percentage, ranging from 0 to 100. The bars show a general upward trend for most countries, with the UK showing the highest percentage in 2000.

Chapter 5 - Analysis

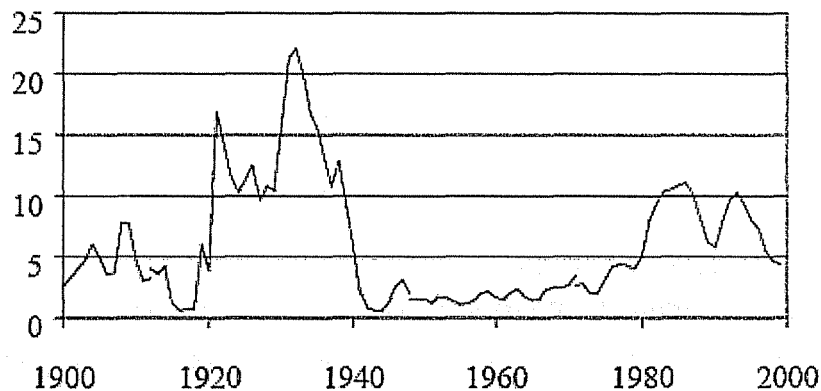
This chapter will analyse how the theories and approaches previously discussed can explain the gap between the political rhetoric and the outcomes of the British immigration policies on the segment of low skilled migrants.

5.1 – Immigration and the Identity Issue

As mentioned in chapter 3 immigration policies were steadily restricted since the 1960s. Since the 1950s labour migration had accounted for the bulk of immigration to the UK with the purpose of reconstructing the damages of the war. During this period immigration had strictly economic purposes as labour market was very tight and workers were needed in order to put the economy back on its tracks (Geddes, 2003: 17). However, slowly all channels for immigration were closed until reaching in the 1980s policies that aimed at zero immigration. Nevertheless, it is important to note that net immigration was never a fact in the UK until the mid 1980s. In spite of the fact that immigration levels were fairly high and stable, the number of residents leaving the UK to reside abroad had always been higher than of those entering the country (Road, 2005: 2). Thus, in spite of the fact that net emigration was a reality in Britain until the 1980s, the legal means for entry of foreigners with the intention to live in the UK was being ever more reduced. Therefore, if net immigration was never a fact during the 1960s and 1970s why limit so much the entry of immigrants? One way to explain this situation is to look into the question of race. Numbers show that between 1951 and 1961 there was a significant increase of population of different ethnicity in Britain: West-Indians went from 15,200 to 181,800; Indians and Pakistanis from 35,800 to 106,300 and East Asians from 12,000 to 29,600 (Rees 1993: 96). It is acknowledged by different authors such as Rees (1993: 96-97), Virdee (1999: 72), Layton-Henry (2004: 301) Dummett (2001: 94) and Geddes (2003: 30) that policies such as the Commonwealth Immigrants Act of 1962 – the first restrictive policy since World War II; the Immigration White Paper of 1965; the Commonwealth Immigrants Act of 1968 and the Immigration Act of 1971 all had the purpose to decrease immigration of different ethnic origins. It can be argued that during this time labour market demands were not being taken into consideration nor there was any concern to abide by the existent human rights conventions. The most important factor playing a role in this period was the attempt to keep internal ethnic cohesion. Even though Britain had experienced inflows of different populations throughout the centuries they were all white populations which created a quite homogeneous society in terms of ethnicity. Therefore, the inflows of non-white individuals were perceived as a threat to the British culture. Their identity was being put at risk as migrants do not only bring their skin

colours but also their own norms and values, their languages, religions and habits. Geddes explains how the race riots in the late 1950s helped to transform immigration on to a political issue. Such riots were in fact attacks perpetrated by white youths and neo-fascist groups on immigrants in several regions of the country. These actions motivated the discussion of immigration at the national level (2003: 33). It is nevertheless possible to argue that the first oil shock in 1973 had a considerable negative impact in the British economy as experienced by other European countries that then stopped actively importing migrant labour. It can be said that the admission of more workers into the country would only mean higher unemployment rates. However, from the graph below it is clear that the unemployment rate was not only quite stable but also fairly low during the 1960s and 1970s. Therefore this economic approach can not be taken as the reason why policies were being so tightened. The Race Relations Acts⁵ in Britain have had as one of their pillars the restriction of immigration that was perceived as unwanted during the 1960s: from Africa, Asia and the Caribbean (Geddes, 2003: 30).

V. UK Unemployment, % rates 1900-1999



Source: A Century of Change: Trends in UK statistics since 1900

5.2 – Immigration and the State

The question of the role of the State in immigration in the UK gives room for much debate. It is argued by Geddes that the British government has played a decisive part in implementing all the restrictive policies since the 1960s. According to the author, the executive branch has had such a dominant role that the making and implementation of very restrictive immigration policies was

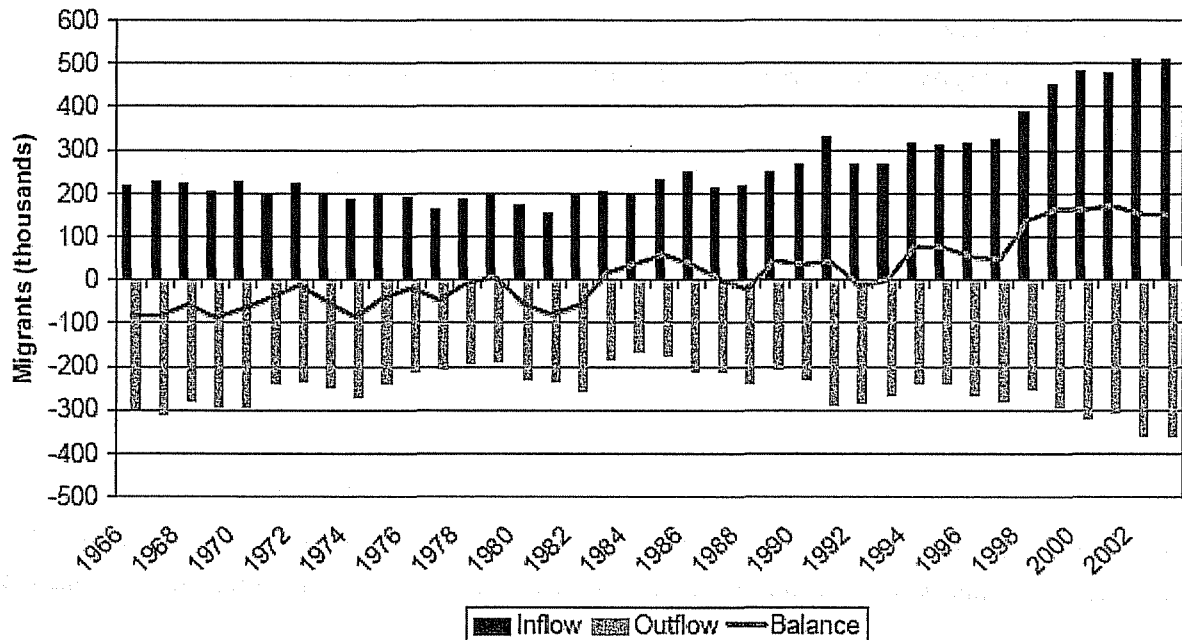
⁵ Race Relations Acts have been created and implemented since 1965 in the UK as an effort to combat racism in society (<http://www.anti-racism.supanet.com/uk/rra76.htm>).

never difficult despite any possible opposition. Moreover, this fact further explains the unwillingness of the British government to give away its powers to the EU institutions to control immigration issues under the Treaty of Amsterdam (Geddes, 2003: 30). This approach completely disregards the importance of domestic politics which consists of the interaction of interest groups with the government and the influence they might have over policies. It also does not base its assumptions on the liberal ideas of international cooperation and building supranational organisations such as the EU. It rather focuses on the sovereignty of the state and its capacity to pursue its goals based on its national interests. In this case the government was willing to restrict immigration and it was able to create and implement the legislations it needed in order to achieve this goal.

On the other hand, Joppke discusses that immigration policies in liberal States such as Britain are highly influenced by various small interest groups with high stakes in immigration trying to maximise its gains to the most. The costs and benefits are then 'distributed' among the winners and losers of this battle and he argues that those who benefit from immigration usually have greater incentives to organise themselves like employers and pro-migrant advocacy groups while those who bear the costs are less organised and he cites the general public as an example. As a consequence of this battleground what dictates policies is known as 'client politics': interest groups having close relationships with the government with the intention to advance their own issues. The author argues that it is not a matter of declining sovereignty; he does believe that governments have even increased their capacity to control inflows of foreigners. It is not globalisation that is reducing the capacity of the State to act; but rather it is a choice of the State to self-limit its own capacities for domestic reasons. Hence as employers and pro-migrant groups are more likely to win the battle the result is more expansive immigration policies (Joppke, 1998: 270). Nevertheless, in the case of the UK, the policies themselves were indeed restrictive regarding low skilled migrants starting from the 1960s hence not reflecting any influence of pro-migrant groups.

Both the previous two arguments can be contested in the sense that in spite of the fact that policies have been fairly restrictive immigration never stopped taking place or even came close to this. Restrictive policies co-existed with immigration flows ever since they were first created in 1962. As can be noted on the graph below inflows of foreigners were quite regular until the 1980s having a significant increase in the 1990s.

VI. UK Net Immigration



Source: Cooley et al. (2005) pp.2, IPPR.

So, although from a realist perspective it is argued that the state has had an important position in advancing its national interests and in this case national interest mean restricting immigration, how can we explain the fact that inflows of people never decreased? Or in the case of the domestic politics approach where clientelism takes place how is it possible to explain various groups influencing a pro-migration approach if controls were steadily made tougher?

That is where the gap between a rhetoric of restriction and action becomes visible. Although policies have been considered to be quite restrictive the outcomes were never what they intended.

5.3 – Free Market?

During the 1980s and beginning of the 1990s the economic situation changed in Britain. Unemployment rates reached figures just above 10% for the first time in 40 years (see graph section 5.1). This was the period when restrictions were made the toughest (Layton-Henry, 2004: 303)– even though they were still quite in line with the restrictive trend of previous governments (Howard, 1993: 108) – by the new Conservative government that came to power in

1979 and there remained for the next 18 years. During this period there is a sharp contrast between the neo-liberal economic policies that were strictly implemented by Thatcher and the further restrictions imposed on immigration. Immigration during her government was known to be 'firm but fair' (Layton-Henry, 2004: 303). Although a free market approach would entail the free movement of people restrictions were made harder: many of the former colonies would have now visa regimes imposed on them not to mention the Carrier's Liability Act which can be seen as an outsourcing of governments duties to international carriers with the exception that not only the latter do not get paid for it but instead can be fined for transporting passenger with the wrong documentation (Dummett, 2004: 307). The question that remains is how to justify all these restrictions within the framework of the free market approach. Not only that but also the outcomes of these policies: continued immigration. If the market is there to regulate supply and demand why then intervene in the movement of people? Push-pull factors could be applied to give a simple answer to this question. It could have been considered by the Conservative government that push factors were very strong in Britain in comparison with usual sending countries even if their economy was not as prosperous as before – higher prospects of employment, higher wages, a safer environment to live, just to mention a few. Hence according to this view there would be too many individuals willing to migrate to the UK and until the market managed to regulate the movement of people there would have been an invasion of immigrants (Geddes, 2003: 16). Therefore strict controls would be needed in order to avoid this from happening. Nevertheless, if one looks into the results of such approach – continued immigration – in terms of figures (see graph previous section), the justification presented does not seem to give an appropriate explanation. If market forces were not to be trusted and the government had to intervene in order to control immigration then it can be argued that either the government was also not to be trusted – as immigration kept taking place – or it had hidden intentions bringing back the issue of a gap hypothesis.

5.4 – The New Approach is not for All

In the end of the 1990s the Labour Party went back to power after nearly two decades. Its ideas had been reformulated into what was called the 'Third Way'. This was an attempt to implement a new approach to govern Britain, something different from what had been happening during the previous decades: neither the neo-liberal approach nor the European social democracy. The new Labour tried to combine a modernisation of the Welfare state with the strengthening of the British workforce to compete in the global economy (Newman, 2001: 1). With this whole new approach there was also some change in the approach to immigration, however only for highly skilled immigrants (Layton-Henry, 2004: 339). The economy had left its recessive days in the

past, unemployment rate had already been declining since 1993 when it nearly reached 11% to stabilise around 5% since 2000 until the current year of 2006 (ONS, 2006b: 11). A new scheme was created with the intention to attract highly skilled people to work in Britain. The reasoning behind this small opening was mainly economic. Not from a Marxist economic perspective though, where the import of labour has the purpose of guaranteeing a labour reserve army with the purpose of lowering wages. Even though highly skilled workers may help increase the profits of the capitalists, this will not happen through the lowering of wages; instead such professionals have quite competitive salaries. The profits may be generated by the knowledge they bring with them. It is the global economic competition that has forced Britain to open more legal ways to attract highly skilled personnel from all over the world to strengthen its position on information technology industry and research and development, for instance. Therefore, despite the fact that the public opinion and the tabloid media have generally a negative perception about immigration the government has adopted a less restrictive approach towards highly skilled migrants as it can be argued it is part of the national interest to do so. Once more a realist approach can be applied to explain immigration trends in the UK. It is not only part of the national interest but they also have the capacity to implement this policy change.

Nevertheless, going back to the focus of this research, it can also be argued that it should be part of the national interest to open more legal ways to low skilled immigration. As showed in chapter 3 there is an actual need for labour on the lower end of the skills spectrum due to previously discussed factors such as low fertility rates, ageing of the population, unwillingness of locals to take low paid jobs, and so forth (Geddes, 2005b). This need is also attested by the low but growing number of immigrants in irregular situation currently in the UK which is a hint to the unmet demand on the low skilled labour market (Farrant et al. 2006: 9).

With the accession of ten new members to the EU in 2004 the UK now wants to curb low skilled immigration of third country nationals. The government is expecting to meet its low skill labour needs with EU nationals from these new countries. However, as previously mentioned these countries not only are going to have higher living standards as they have to attain EU standard goals but also they already have the same problems of ageing population and low birth rates (Pearce et al. 2005). Therefore emigration from these countries will be less likely in the near future. If Britain keeps relying on that it might have future problems. Not to mention the fact that it has already restricted employment for Romania and Bulgaria, the new countries that are to join the EU in 2007 (Home Office, 2006a).

So, how to explain this gap that has existed since Britain started to impose restrictions on immigrants?

5.5 – Discussion of the Gap

The first point to be stressed, but which has already been mentioned is the fact that ideas of economic liberalism never played a role in Britain with the exception of the period from 1948 to 1962. During this period market forces did play its role in immigration. Britain has such a small recruitment scheme to attract immigrants that it can hardly be argued that it was interfering in the process. Moreover, there were no restrictions on immigration in general. Therefore market forces were the one balancing the British labour market demand for low skilled immigrants – the bulk of immigration in that period – and supply of unskilled workers for all over. However, those were the only days where economic liberalism was a fact regarding immigration. Starting on 1962, controls on labour immigration were steadily implemented; in the days of free market rhetoric during the 1980s immigration was very restricted and government's goal was to have zero immigration. Therefore, it is clear how government interference on immigration had highly disruptive effects in the market forces. Despite the fact that the zero immigration rhetoric is no longer existent, the government keeps a restrictive approach to low skilled immigration hence the idea of economic liberalism does not apply to the case study. Such controls implemented in order to differentiate between wanted and unwanted forms of immigration have been called by Geddes the 'liberal paradox' of open markets and relatively closed states (2003: 20).

From that it is possible to notice how the State has had an important role in controlling low skilled immigration in Britain which takes us to analyse the case study using the realist approach. It has been acknowledged by Geddes that throughout the decades the British government has taken immigration as one of the central domestic political issues. It has been very active in finding its way to put forward tough policies as well as keeping the issue on its own hands and not ceding its controls to be managed by any EU body (2003: 30). However, as already mentioned the fact that there is a growing number of immigrants in irregular situation in the UK shows how low skilled immigration is not being effectively controlled. Therefore, my argument is the following: the rhetoric of restrictive immigration policies can be analysed through the lenses of realism. It is in the national interest to protect the jobs of the local population, for instance, hence the government has been advancing all these restrictive policies in order to accomplish this goal. Nevertheless, when it comes to action realism is no longer able to explain what happens in reality. No matter how restrictive the policies are, low skilled migrants keep arriving in Britain through legal or illegal means. And once they are in, Britain

tolerates their presence as it does not have a strong control on people within the country. Its strategy is to have a stricter control in the borders due to its insular position (Geddes, 2005d: 734; Wiener, 1999: 450-51). Therefore it can be argued that a Marxist approach would be more suitable to explain the actual situation. The 'industrial reserve army' of labour will be willing to work for lower wages than the locals, for longer hours – usually low skilled permits are of a temporary nature therefore workers may be willing to work longer hours in order to increase their earnings during that short period – and for less welfare benefits. Hence employers can have lower costs, be more competitive in the market and will achieve higher profits. It can be argued that despite having a low unemployment rate since 2000, there are still locals who are unemployed and should therefore be given the chance instead of using migrant labourers. However, labour in the UK is not very mobile, difficulties such as transport and child care also have an influence, not to mention the fact that low skilled positions can be dangerous, not well paid and have no status in that society thus not being attractive for locals (Kleinman, 2003: 67). This is the picture for low skilled migrants that are legally in the country. However, those who are in irregular situation and are being tolerated by the government can provide employers with even higher profits as all their rights can be completely ignored: no minimum wages, no benefits, bad working conditions, no rights.

On the other hand, the domestic politics approach can also explain immigration policies on low skilled immigrants from a similar perspective. According to this approach, governments are influenced by pressure groups to act in a certain way, what Freeman calls client politics. He also believes that in all Liberal Democracies including the UK this is the usual way in which immigration politics are done (1995: 886). Therefore, applying it to the case study, there are those who advocate for immigration like employers or ethnic organisations for example and those who are against new arrivals such as the general public. However, the government has to find a way to balance the demands from both sides: employers have an important role in the economic situation of the country; on the other hand, if society is in general against immigration, especially against low skilled immigration as it is easier to realise the benefits that highly skilled immigrants may bring, the government can see itself in a very difficult position, especially during elections. Therefore, the government tries to appease the public opinion over this issue for the fear of hostility and also of the ascension of far right party and groups with a restrictive rhetoric on immigration. Highly skilled are welcome as they bring their knowledge while low skilled have to be restricted. Anyone is able to do this kind of job therefore why import labour for that? Nevertheless, despite the restrictive rhetoric, it has to meet the demand of employers that are in need of labour. To accomplish that, some schemes to attract low skilled

labour have been implemented but also the existence of irregular immigrants is tolerated through no regular internal checks and no enforcement of fines on employers that hire individuals who do not have the right to reside and/or work in the UK. At the same time, the fact that the UK intends to meet its demand for low skilled labour only with workers from the ten new EU countries can be interpreted as an attempt to decrease non-white immigration to the minimum in order to appease racist groups.

5.6 – Conclusion

This chapter has tried to explain the existence of a gap between the rhetoric and the outcomes of immigration policies for low skilled immigrants in the UK using the theoretical approaches presented in chapter 3.

Chapter 6 – Conclusion

This research has analysed and tried to explain immigration policy trends looking at Britain since the post-war years as case study. Britain has a particular history of immigration where colonial ties played a more important role than the active recruitment that took place in other European countries. It has focused specifically in the category of low skilled immigrants as they are more vulnerable, segregated and said to be unwanted labour. This is in spite of the labour market tightness, low birth rates, higher education levels among the native population and the host society common aversion to the dirty and dangerous jobs classified as low skilled.

My hypothesis in this research has been that there is a gap between what immigration policies intend to accomplish and the actual outcomes of these policies. Since 1962 when the first restrictions were put in place the British government has had a very restrictive approach to immigration. Nevertheless, inflows of low skilled labour have never been completely halted, not even during the days of 'zero immigration' rhetoric. The estimate number of immigrants on irregular situation in Britain is not too high but has been slowly increasing and can be argued to be one example of this gap. Therefore, this creates a gap between restrictive policy rhetoric and reality. My intention with this research has been to discuss this hypothesis and to analyse and explain the reasons for this gap, for which my research question is: 'How to explain and analyse the gap between the restrictive rhetoric and the outcomes of the UK immigration policies on low skilled migrants?'

The research starts with a discussion on whether there exists a gap between policy goals and outcomes or not. It brings different perspectives from several authors who have tried to explain the causes for such a gap. It is also discussed how immigration policy gaps may not be unintentional, as governments may have hidden agendas due to a negative public opinion on immigration for instance.

Then, in chapter 3 I present various theoretical approaches that can be applied for the study of immigration. Their main arguments, strengths and weaknesses are discussed with the intention to create a framework in which the case study will be analysed.

Further in chapter 4, I describe the history of immigration in Britain since the post-war years when British citizenship was for all citizens of the Commonwealth and there were not any restrictions on those willing to settle in the UK and how labour migrants played an important role in the reconstruction of Britain after World War II. Nevertheless, a restrictive approach

started to be implemented during the 1960s when citizenship laws were changed to limit new inflows. In the following decades, policies were made more restrictive until Britain reached the 'zero immigration' years in the 1980s. Moreover, it shows the changes implemented by the New Labour in the past years. The government has had a more open approach to immigration however, only for highly skilled immigrants.

Finally in chapter 6 the theories and approaches previously presented are used as a tool to analyse and try to explain the gap between the stated intentions of immigration policies and their actual outcomes. I discuss how market forces played an important role during the post-war years as not only there were no restrictions but also there was hardly any active recruitment by the government. Therefore market forces were not under the influence of any external forces being therefore able to balance the supply and demand of low skilled labour. Nevertheless, this was the only period when economic liberalism influenced immigration to the UK. Not even in the 1980s when the Conservative government.

The first restrictions came in the 1960s and can be explained by the National Identity approach. There were no economic reasons to restrict immigration and until the 1980s there was no net immigration in Britain. Therefore, the change in citizenship law to restrict immigration shows how the non-white population that came to Britain caused a great impact to the British society. The non-white immigrants were perceived as a threat to the host society's values and culture in such a way that influenced the government to implement a restrictive approach to immigration.

At last, for the past 3 decades the gap between restrictive immigration policies and their outcomes can be explained in two ways. The first is through the Realist and Marxist approach. The realist approach explains the restrictive rhetoric on immigration towards low skilled immigrants. The rhetoric is that it is the national interest of the State to protect its society from an invasion of immigrants, protect the labour market and their culture and values, amongst other reasons. That is why restrictive policies are implemented. However, it has been acknowledged that the number of irregular immigrants has been increasing in Britain despite its restrictive immigration policies. Therefore, the Marxist approach comes to explain the action of the government. A less restrictive action guarantees cheap labour for British employers therefore helping the competitiveness of various sectors of the British economy.

The other approach that can explain the gap in immigration policies is Domestic Politics approach. According to this approach immigration politics and policies are made through a bargain process; pressure groups try to advance their interests so the government can take their

side. In this case, for the restrictive rhetoric the British government is trying to please the public opinion that generally has a negative perception on immigration especially of low skilled. Not to mention the far right groups and parties that must also be appeased. On the other hand, there are employers influencing the government to meet their low skilled labour demands and also to have access to cheaper labour. And this is the influence that is seen in the outcomes of such policies.

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