

Britain will struggle to handle 'catastrophic' population growth unless changes are made

By [Daily Mail Reporter](#)

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Britain will struggle to handle 'catastrophic' population growth in future unless urgent action is taken, a report has warned.

The predicted increase to 70million by 2029 will put unsustainable pressure on housing, schools and hospitals as well as natural resources such as food and water, experts said.

Current trends will see a city the size of Bristol added to the population of the UK every year for the next two decades.



The population is predicted to increase to 70million by 2029, experts have warned

But sustainable development group Forum for the Future said vast growth would cause huge rises in pollution and waste.

Its report called for urgent action to stop numbers reaching the expected highs and causing a fall in quality of life levels.

And it urged a 'rethink' of the policy of importing labour to take skilled jobs.

Director Sara Parkin warned the debate about population had been hijacked by 'extremist' groups but was a key environmental issue.

'Britons deserve a serious debate about population and politicians need to start planning now to achieve a sustainable future,' she said.

'By recognising population as a vital element in strategies to achieve low-carbon and satisfying lifestyles, politicians can reclaim the issue from the extremists.'

'Only through good leadership and sensitive long-term planning can we make sure that UK population growth falls short of today's high projections and that we are prepared to cope effectively with any growth that does happen.'

'We'll need to have more attractive and effective family planning services, and we'll also have to get the right infrastructure into the right places.

'A step change in investment, innovation - and imagination - is essential too so any rise in numbers of people does not mean a rise in CO2 emissions or a fall in quality of life.'

The report, entitled Growing Pains, called for more zero-carbon homes, better water efficiency, more renewable energy and better public transport.

It also called for an 'objective discussion' on immigration to understand its value to UK society and the economy.

Policy-makers should reclaim immigration from 'extremist' groups and not ignore it because it is controversial, it said.

The number of people in Britain shot up by more than three million under 13 years of Labour government.

Around 70 per cent of the increase was due to immigration - either directly through new arrivals or their children.

The count is now 61,398,000 - up by 3,084,200 since 1997.