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## TOWNSWOMEN SURVEY: HUGE CONCERN ABOUT IMMIGRATION AND POPULATION OF 70 MILLION

**90% very worried about population of 70 million**  
**Deep concern about cultural identity and impact on services**  
**Five times the number of responses normally seen**

A ground-breaking questionnaire in *Townswoman*, the publication for members of the Townswomen's Guild, has prompted what the organisation says is a "staggering" number of responses – some five times more than they normally receive for their questionnaires. The respondents were overwhelmingly worried about immigration and its impact on population. Almost 90 per cent were very worried about a potential population of 70 million (which is projected by the ONS).

Regarding the level of immigration, only 17 per cent agreed with the Cross-Party Group on Balanced Migration's call for net migration to be reduced to 50,000 a year in order to prevent the population reaching 70 million by 2029 (net migration was 163,000 in 2008 and 233,000 in 2007). Nearly 80 per cent sought a *much greater* reduction: 50.4 per cent wanted no net migration and 28.5 per cent wanted no immigration at all.

Respondents were also deeply concerned about the **wider impact of immigration** on life in the UK. 95 per cent felt that current levels of immigration are hurting the **environment**. Nearly two thirds (64 per cent) felt that a population of 70 million would cause a vast decrease in the quality of living, with another third expecting at least some decrease.

On **cultural identity** 95 per cent think current immigration levels will cause us to lose our national identity to some degree (83% strongly agree and a further 12 per cent somewhat agree).

On **public services** 82 per cent strongly agreed and 14 per cent somewhat agreed that current immigration levels are putting increased pressure schools and hospitals.

65 per cent feel strongly that current levels of immigration are making **community relations** more difficult, with 29 percent somewhat agreeing.

Respondents also gave credence to the recent arguments made in *The Times* by Cross-Party Group member Lord Carey: 77 per cent strongly agreed that one cannot criticise immigration levels without being branded a racist, even if the argument behind the concern is valid.

Frank Field MP and Nicholas Soames MP, Co-Chairmen of the Cross-Party Group on Balanced Migration said:

“This questionnaire provides crystal clear evidence that ordinary women up and down the land are hugely concerned about the impact of immigration. The political parties would be foolish not to heed this groundswell of concern as they write their manifestos.”

### **Notes to editors**

1) For media enquiries please contact Patrick White in the Office of Rt Hon Frank Field MP, on 0207 219 6636.

2) The questionnaire was contained in the Autumn 2009 edition of Townswoman and has a circulation of 34,000.

There were 1,427 responses. This is almost five times the usual number.

The questionnaire was a voluntary survey, not an opinion poll.

Townswoman published the results in their January- March 2010 edition.

3) Townswomen's Guilds, formed when women first won the right to vote with the aim of educating women about good citizenship, is the UK's second largest women's organisation and remains a powerful lobby on national and regional issues.

There are 840 Guilds throughout England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and the Isle of Man.

For further information about Townswomen's Guilds or to find details of your nearest guild contact 0121 326 0400 or visit [www.townswomen.org.uk](http://www.townswomen.org.uk).

4) The Rt Hon Frank Field MP and The Hon Nicholas Soames MP are Co-Chairmen of the Cross Party Group on Balanced Migration. The Group's Vice-Chairmen are Lord (Bill) Jordan CBE (former President of the Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union) and Daniel Kawczynski MP (Conservative, Shrewsbury & Atcham).

5) On 6 January, the Cross-Party Group issued its Declaration on Population. Please click [here](#) to read it.

6) For more information, please visit [www.balancedmigration.com](http://www.balancedmigration.com).