



THE ROLE OF MIGRANTS RIGHTS IN IMMIGRATION POLICY

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Outline

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INTRODUCTION: MIGRANTS RIGHTS NETWORK (MRN)

- Emerged as a learning experience – support for migrants rights came from a small group of specialist lawyers – interested mainly in strengthening advocacy in the area.
- Supplemented in the 1990s as refugees were being disbursed across the UK and as a result support organisations began emerging.
- MRN was set up to centralise the big debates around policy.
- Our position: migration policy is better where the rights of migrants is acknowledged across borders, rather than controlled and removed when immigrants are no longer desirable.
- Our work includes policy analysis, advocacy, innovations, networking, and parliamentary support.



WHY IS THE UK INCREASINGLY TURNING AGAINST THE IDEA OF MIGRANTS HAVING RIGHTS?

- Marked by the days after the Second World War and migration from the Commonwealth (Caribbean and East Africa) who regard themselves as British.
- Migrants faced racism and discrimination although laws existed that prevented discrimination in housing and employment, which gave newly arrived migrants a starting point.
- Trades Unions protected workers
- Right to vote and the power to influence local government, services, and schools.
- Case for migrants rights a vital tool for integration outcomes in this period.



WHY IS THE UK INCREASINGLY TURNING AGAINST THE IDEA OF MIGRANTS HAVING RIGHTS? CONTD..

- 80s & 90s turbulence in Europe
- Refugee movements in the early 1990s
- Labour market: rights free-zone, increased deregulation of labour market, trades unions powers reduced, ending of 'Fordist' rights to protection over social welfare and job security.
- Political mood in Europe and the extension of rights model after collapse of dictatorships across the continent, plus faith in legal system.
- Politicians increasingly turning against rights entailed in legal system. Attempt to do fundamental damage to human rights.



COALITION GOVERNMENT'S NET MIGRATION TARGET

- Net migration target of 'tens of thousands' and 'good immigration, not mass immigration';
- With these objectives in mind, the Government has been reviewing all immigration categories and routes to permanent settlement, and gradually introducing changes to their eligibility criteria and associated conditions.
- Some visa categories have been completely closed to new applicants, but new categories have been created for highly skilled/high value migrants.
- Selective criteria for entry.
- Targets: asylum seekers, international students, family reunions, inter-company transfers, and EU Freedom of Movement.



GO HOME OR FACE ARREST 2013



- The advertising vans drove around six London boroughs where it is thought a lot of illegal immigrants live.
- 11 people left after seeing the "go home" advert vans, the Home Office assessment shows.
- The operation ceased after government was taken to court.



UK'S IMMIGRATION BILL 2013

- Citizenship stripping;
- Quicker removals of persons who do not have leave to enter/remain;
- Reduction in right of appeal;
- Restrictions to accessing housing, health, finance, driving license, and work;
- Sham marriages and civil partnerships;
- Miscellaneous: Embarkation checks, exit checks, increased fees,



CONCLUSIONS

- Refugees: Individual right to asylum is becoming extinct.
- Third Country Nationals: rights are being reduced, high visa fees, long term settlement, & family reunion.
- EU Freedom of Movement: serious attempt by UK to remove this right.



Thank you

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