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Changes to Application for Discretionary

Leave to Remain came into force from the 1st April 2015. The Home Office no longer gives people indefinite leave to remain in this country. They are granted a few years (usually two or so) Discretionary Leave to remain. Prior to April 1st people who were granted Discretionary leave to remain when applying for further leave to remain were not charged for the application by the Home Office. However new fees have been set from 1st April 2015 see table:

Single applicant £649.0, Adult and Dependent £1298.

Adult and 2 Dependents £1947.00

Yourself and 3 Dependant £2596.00

On top of the fees they also will have to pay £200 per person per year for New Health Charges which have been introduced (as part of the Immigration Act 2014). This may lead to families not being able to afford the fees and end up being breach of immigration rules as overstayers and eventually deported.

This is the letter which LCRM has sent to Teresa May Home Office minister.

We are very concerned to find that refugees are being charged fees and health costs before they can renew their applications to remain in this country. Some of our members have been given ten days notice to find £4950. LCRM believes the first consideration should be people's lives. The public understood the health charges were to be for so called health tourists not those settled here. Refugees work in the low paid insecure fields of work. In some families there is only one breadwinner. This policy is putting their homes and jobs at risk as well as the prospect of removal to unsafe countries and circumstances. How can the physically and mentally ill pay this money? This policy does not seem to have considered the serious implications for families and individuals who have to resort to the loan sharks or face destitution.

Our members have pointed out that they pay tax in this country.

In addition the City Council has changed the housing rules so that refugees will not be eligible when they gain their status in this country. They will have to have worked for a year which they are not allowed to do and prove that they have lived in Leicester for two years. The rules will affect other migrants and poor people such as the mentally ill as well.

By an LCRM member.

SCRAP THE AZURE CARD

GIVE CASH & THE RIGHT TO WORK

LCRM Members distributed leaflets and carried placards outside Sainburys in the town centre to raise awareness of the issues around the Azure card. We were joined by people from city of sanctuary and Leicester socialists. The azure card is given to asylum seekers who are in receipt of section 4 accommodation while waiting for a decision on their asylum claim.

Asylum seekers can only use their £36.32 on the card for food at major supermarkets such as Tesco, Asda, Morrisons or Sainsburys.

The card cannot be used to top up phones or for bus fares to appointments. John said it's especially difficult for parents when they're children are ill. ESOL providers now charge and are not accepting the card.

The value of the card has been frozen since it was introduced by the Home Office in 1999. It has not gone up with inflation. Asylum seekers say they feel like criminals when they have to hand in the card in front of people in the queue. At least two shops have refused the card locally. LCRM has complained to Sodexo who manage the card and one supermarket has apologised. Asylum seekers are not allowed to work so have no choice but to use the card. They have often fled war zones, torture or persecution.

In September 2014 Ian Duncan Smith said he was extending the card to people with gambling, drug or alcohol problems. This will stigmatise more vulnerable people. By an LCRM member

LEICESTER CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT IS RELEVANT TO THE WIDER LEICESTER

On Friday 24th July 5th 5-8pm

At TREC 5-9 Upper Brown Street Phoenix Yard

LCRM Speakers, Food, Music

All Supporters Welcome

Leicester Civil Rights Movement consists of a spectrum of individuals who are concerned with the consequences of racial injustice in Britain.

We welcome new members at our meetings which are held at The Racial Equality Centre 3rd floor 5-9 Upper Brown Street, Phoenix Yard, Leicester.

The next meeting will take place on Wednesday 22nd July 2015.

Ring Priya 0116 2532053 or Chris 0116 2219459

Mapping Immigration Controversy Project: Ten key findings from research by workers from 10 universities and 13 refugee and asylum support groups.

- 1) We found **no evidence that government communications about immigration and enforcement are based on research about ‘what works’ in managing immigration.** The only research evidence policy makers mentioned to us was privately commissioned research on managing public opinion about immigration, particularly among those worried that immigration is ‘out of control’. Yet our research suggests the tactics used on this basis can increase fear and anxiety.
- 2) **Government campaigns on immigration provoked or increased anger and fear**, among irregular migrants, regular migrants, and non-migrants, including people opposed to immigration. The latter told us they that the government campaigns were ineffective ‘threats’
- 3) For people who were the subjects of immigration campaigns (or felt under threat from them), talking about the publicity campaigns often led them to think about their own experiences of immigration enforcement and feelings of fear and anxiety. **Our research focused on communications campaigns, but participants made direct links to, for example, images of enforcement raids and their own experiences of immigration enforcement in their homes.**
- 4) **Hard-hitting government publicity on immigration seemed to provoke new waves of pro-migrant activism.** Anger and outrage was translated into online and street-based activism, including of people who had not been engaged in activism before.
- 5) Some, but not all, activism has been migrant-led, and **we identified inequalities in who felt able to take part in political debate because of real or perceived threats to their residency status as a result.**
- 6) **Traditional anti-racism campaigns are finding it hard to keep up with changes in the focus of hostility and discrimination**, for example with how to engage with the status of international students and asylum seekers.
- 7) Our local case studies demonstrated **local variations in how government campaigns were experienced, and the activism that was produced in response.** In some places migrants and activists could build on existing infrastructures for political organising. In other places such resources did not exist or had dwindled, or energies were focused on service provision for vulnerable people in an increasingly difficult funding environment.
- 8) **There is not always solidarity between people being targeted by anti-immigration campaigns.** We found several instances of hostility between different groups of migrants, often based on an

idea that their own group was ‘deserving’ of residency and status in the UK, while others were ‘undeserving’.

- 9) The different legal statuses that migrants can have is confusing, and for many people in the wider public, the distinctions between ‘illegal’ and ‘legal’, and between asylum seeker, refugee, student, worker, resident, and sometimes between migrants and ethnic minority British-born people is difficult to understand. **Many people reported harassment for being ‘illegal immigrants’ when they had settled status, or were British citizens.**
- 10) **We heard that many people had come to the UK because of ideals often promoted as ‘British values’ – such as democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs. Their experience since arrival called into doubt the existence of these values in Britain.**

We found a range of responses, from people who had uncertain migrant status, who were settled migrants with legal right to remain, who were ethnic minority and white British citizens. All of the responses were emotionally charged, most notably with **anger and fear** – both from people who were angered and scared by the Home Office campaigns, and people who were worried about migration. Some people who had not heard about the publicity before we asked their opinions found it **unbelievable that it was a government campaign** – several thought the ‘Go Home’ van had been produced by groups such as the English Defence League or the UK Independence Party, and noted how the language echoed slogans of violent racists in the 1970s. In Scotland, we frequently heard the Home Office tactics being **rejected as a Westminster imposition**, not suited to Scotland, and used to support arguments for Scottish independence campaign. The vast majority of people we spoke to in the focus groups thought that the Home Office publicity was a **political stunt** rather than an effective policy – whatever their political stance on immigration.

‘I saw so many UKBA people they were there I saw them with large dogs, blocking the entire area. I had a visa and have it now also. But I got really scared because I could see the place blocked... I got so panicked and scared that I went and sat in the wrong train... When I got on the train I started crying. I was thinking how long will I live with this fear... I started to think to myself, if I can’t move around at all, that people are blocking the way like this, and I’m so scared then perhaps suicide is better.’ *Ealing and Hounslow* www.MappingControversyProject.com

LCRM is an entirely self-funding organisation. Membership is waged £3, unwaged £1, asylum seekers 20p and groups £25. We urge all supporters to join.
Tel Priya 0116 2531053 or Chris 2219459
Please send diary dates, notices and articles to chrisgoodwin29@yahoo.com
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