



Call for simpler routes to regularisation for undocumented migrants

Dear Yvette Cooper

We are writing to you, as a group of charities and organisations, to call for a regularisation of undocumented individuals' statuses. This is particularly important in light of recent policy announcements for increasing returns, and in combatting the exploitation of migrant workers in the UK. Now is the right time, with this new government, to look at a new way forward.

Policies of regularisation are not uncommon, and overwhelmingly shown to not only provide more security and safety for those who were previously undocumented, but also for the country implementing them as a whole.

Studies in Europe, such as the small-scale [Operation Papyrus](#) in Geneva to the [REGINA Project](#), have consistently found that, while there is no "one-size fits all answer for different countries, policies of regularisation of undocumented individual's statuses are overwhelmingly a preferential, and cost effective, policy measure.

This was particularly emphasised during the COVID pandemic, where countries such as [Italy](#) and [Portugal](#) enacted time limited regularisation policies which increased employment, especially in the healthcare sector, and showed marked positive impacts on the country as a whole. Even now [Spain](#) is pushing forward on a plan to regularise the status of 500,000 undocumented migrants.

We recognise the complexity of the situation, however, it must also be recognised that the majority of individuals who become undocumented do so through no fault of their own. Recent policy changes with regards to increases in visa costs have added to the burden on many, coupled with a significant lack of information for migrants in general on how to apply for a visa waiver. Errors on forms, or lack of communication, including letters from the Home Office being sent to the wrong addresses common issues which can lead to people becoming undocumented.

People can be left in limbo for many years, having become undocumented for a myriad of different reasons, some down to policy, some down to issues in their country of origin, some down to a long-running culture of denial in asylum claims, some based on exploitation, all leading to the same outcome. Once this happens the routes back into regular status can be incredibly hard, with multiple obstacles preventing people being able to regain their status.

Many undocumented individuals have built lives here over a number of years, some for decades, they have families, friends and are part of our communities. Being undocumented puts them at increased risk of exploitation, and of mental and physical stress. These are situations which this government could change with a policy of regularisation, which would also cost less than policies of detention and deportation, and boost economic growth through increasing the number of people, who are already here, being able to contribute more to the economy.

As seen elsewhere, policies of regularisation go far beyond the immediate impact on individuals, and help create a stronger, more cohesive, countries, particularly by allowing individuals to engage more with their communities, which reduces tensions overall.

We the undersigned are calling on the government to pursue policies of regularisation, to change the conditions which leave many vulnerable to exploitation and lacking access to rights:

African French Speaking Community Support



African Global Voices Ltd U.K.
Anti-Slavery International
Asylum Matters
Baobab
Birmingham Asylum & Refuge Association
Birmingham City of Sanctuary
Birmingham Trades Union Council ("BTUC")
Blueprint
Brighton and Hove Stand Up to Racism
Bristol Hospitality Network
CARAG
CARAS
Care4Calais
CARIS Haringey
CAST- Communities and Sanctuary Seekers Together
Centrala
City of Sanctuary Sheffield
City of Sanctuary UK
Community
Conversation Over Borders
Coventry Against Racism
Craftworks
Doctors of the World UK
Doncaster Conversation Club
Educational Learning Support Hub
Entraide
European Drom CIC
forRefugees
Freedom United
Greater Manchester Immigration Aid Unit
Green New Deal Rising
Haringey Migrant Support Centre
Haringey Welcome
Homes for All
Hope Projects
Imkaan
Indian Workers' Association GB
Islington Homes for All
JPIC Links
Kanlungan Filipino Consortium
Latinas in Warwickshire
LCFM
Leicester City of Sanctuary



Luton Roma Trust
MARAG - Midlands Asylum & Refuge Action Group
Maryhill Integration Network
Middle Eastern Women and Society Organisation-
MEWSO
Migrant Democracy Project
MSKNB
No-Deportations
NW London Stand Up to Racism
Out in Cov
Padendere Community Sewing Group (On The Nest)
PERN Legal and Info
Positive Action in Housing
Quaker Asylum and Refugee Network - QARN
RAMFEL
Reclaim The Sea
Refugee Support Group (Berkshire)
Refugee, asylum Seeker and Migrant Action
Regularisation
Rethinking Security
Roma Support Group
Safe Passage International
Samphire
Scottish Detainee Visitors
Sing for Change community choir
Sistersnotstrangers@gmail.com
SJOG Hospiteller Services
South London Refugee Association
Southeast and east Asian Women's Association
Southeast and East Asian Centre (SEEAC)
Stand Up To Racism Birmingham
SWP
The William Gomes Podcast
the3million
Ubuntu Women Shelter
Union Romani Voice
Voices in Exile
VVIDY (Voice of Voiceless Immigration Detainees-
Yorkshire)
Waling_waling Org.
West Yorkshire Destitute Asylum Network (WYDAN)
Work Rights Centre

With a further 61 signatures from individuals, including those affected by being undocumented.