

Meeting of the CPG on Migration

Topic: Right to Work

Date: Tuesday 21 May 2024

Location: Committee Room 2, with the option to join remotely via Microsoft Teams

MSP attending:

Paul Sweeney MSP

Bob Doris MSP

Maggie Chapman MSP

Non-MSP attendance:

ARTconnects

Asylum Matters

British Red Cross

East Kilbride Integration Network

Forth Valley Welcome

Freedom From Torture

Friends of Scottish Settlers

GLADAN

Human Rights Consortium Scotland

Individual, University of Edinburgh

Individual, University of Stirling

LGBT Health and Wellbeing

Maryhill Integration Network

Refugees for Justice

Scottish Faiths Action for Refugees

Survivors of Human Trafficking in Scotland

UNISON Union Scotland

VOICES Network-British Red Cross

And others

Discussions

1. Mary Brandon | Lift the Ban Team, Asylum Matters

Mary provided an overview of the Lift the Ban coalition. In 2018 people came together to introduce the Lift the Ban coalition, with 180k signatures for a petition shared with the UK government. Mary provided an update on the current statistics of the cost for not having employment for asylum seekers and the benefit to the UK economy if the right to work was provided.

Mary highlighted the new resources and engaging various businesses to gather support and discuss the importance of the right to work.

2. Jennifer McCarey | Social Care Lead, UNISON Scotland

Jennifer highlighted their work and experiences of witnessing those who work on social care, by the private sector and charitable sector. Discussing migrant workers after Covid-19, for residential rates rose from 10% to 39%. Jennifer mentioned migrant workers post covid- workers from India/Philippines, safety nets for the workforce and the fair work on social care.

Pointing out the role of private contractors for payment, residential care, and destitution experienced by some migrant workers over christmas.

Further mentioned the need for employment services to support asylum seekers transition into care sector and employment sector.

3. Lived experienced speaker

Speaker highlighted the impact on mental health, and children of people seeking asylum. Pointing out, 'not to be a consumer, but a producer', the role of providing the right to work is key for integration, belonging, having a dignified life and building a future.

Other comments from the floor included exploring examples of other countries providing the right to work, having the right to work creates 'essense of belonging to this country' and importance of 'right to work under fair and dignified conditions'. Some participants also highlighted the difficulties of finding a job after leave to remain and experiencing further barriers.

Action Points

- Circulate information for the special Cpg on Migration meeting 20 June to mark World Refugee Day
- To find more information about the right to work pilot in Scotland
- Submit parliamentary questions regarding the criteria assessed by the Care Inspectorate in care homes and whether this criteria could be extended to consider working conditions. (ES)

- Contact CPG on Human Trafficking re migrant workers and where SG should be targeting any intervention. (ES)
- Circulate details of R4J Park Inn documentary screening