

## **Joint civil society statement on the passage of the Illegal Migration Act, July 2023**

As a coalition of 290 organisations representing the human rights, migrants' rights, refugee and asylum, anti-trafficking, children's, violence against women and girls, LGBTQI+, disability rights, health, LGBTQI+, housing, racial justice, criminal justice, arts, international development, environment, democracy, pan-equality, faith, access to justice, and other sectors, we condemn the passage of the Illegal Migration Act today, and stand in solidarity with all who will be affected.

We all deserve to live safe from harm. But this senselessly cruel Act will have a devastating impact on people's lives. It turns our country's back on people seeking safety, blocking them from protection, support, and justice at a time they need it most.

In abandoning the UK's moral and legal obligations, the Act risks breaching multiple international human rights treaties including the Refugee Convention and the European Convention on Human Rights while shielding the Government from accountability. The UK Government has admitted that it cannot confirm if the Act is compatible with the UK's obligations under the European Convention on Human Rights.

The Act will force people into situations that threaten their lives – whether by placing children in detention or sending people off to countries where their lives might be at grave risk. Moreover, the Act attacks the very core of human rights, which is the principle that we all have them regardless of who we are or where we are from. In stripping the most basic rights from people seeking safety and a better life, the Act dismantles human rights protections for all of us.

Either all of us have human rights, or none of us do. While the UK Government's plans will harm those seeking safety the most, this is an attack on all of us and the values we hold dear.

The government has rushed through this law despite broad and deep opposition. But our fight is not over. As caring people, we will continue to fight for the right for people to seek safety and a better life without being forced to take dangerous journeys and without being punished for how they enter the UK. We will keep holding those in power to account for upholding the UK's international obligations. We will strive for an asylum and immigration system that treats everyone with dignity and respect. We will stand in solidarity with and fight alongside everyone who makes the UK their home and build a society that treats everyone with compassion.

### **Signatories**

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6. Eiri Ohtani, Director, Right to Remain
7. Alison Pickup, Director, Asylum Aid

8. Jess McQuail, Director, Just Fair
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10. Kyle Taylor, Founder, Fair Vote UK
11. Kerry Smith, CEO, Helen Bamber Foundation
12. Andrea Simon, Director, End Violence Against Women Coalition
13. Traci Kirkland, Head of Charity, Govan Community Project
14. Amber Bauer, CEO, forRefugees
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16. Jim McAuliffe, Chair, Lighthouse Relief
17. Robina Qureshi, Positive Action in Housing
18. Kayte Cable and Vicki Felgate, Co-founders, Big Leaf Foundation
19. Siân Summers-Rees, Chief Officer, City of Sanctuary UK
20. Christine Bacon, Co-Artistic Director, Ice and Fire Theatre
21. Mark Goldring, Director, Asylum Welcome
22. Shameem Ahmad, CEO, Public Law Project
23. Marguerite Hunter Blair, CEO, Play Scotland
24. Aderonke Apata, Founder and CEO, African Rainbow Family
25. Sarah Teather, Director, Jesuit Refugee Service UK
26. Amos Schonfield, CEO, Our Second Home
27. Emma Ginn, Director, Medical Justice
28. Mia Hassenson-Gross, Director, René Cassin
29. Katie Fennell, National Coordinator, KIND UK
30. Dr Shabna Begum and Laurence Jay, Interim Co-CEO's, Runnymede Trust
31. Stephanie Habib, Executive Team, English for Action (EFA) London
32. Anna MacDonald, Co-founder, Play for Progress
33. Dr Helen Taylor, Director, Stories and Supper
34. Anne Fox, CEO, Clinks
35. Liz Fekete, Director, Institute of Race Relations
36. Chris Jones, Director, Statewatch
37. Leila Zadeh, Executive Director, Rainbow Migration
38. Anna Jones, CEO & Co Founder, RefuAid
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40. William Gomes, Director, The William Gomes Podcast
41. Alphonsine Kabagabo, Director, Women for Refugee Women
42. Bridget Young, Director, NACCOM (No Accommodation Network)
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64. Souad Talsi MBE, Founder and Interim CEO, Al-Hasaniya Moroccan Women's Project Ltd
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67. James Wilson, Director, Detention Action
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69. Joanne MacInnes, West London Welcome
70. Kerry Scarlett, Vice-President of the Methodist Conference
71. Natasha Eeles, CEO & Founder, Bold Voices
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74. Christine Allen, Director, CAFOD
75. Catharine Walston, Chair of Core Committee, Cambridge Refugee Resettlement Campaign
76. Marissa Green, Chair of Trustees, Cambridge Convoy Refugee Action Group
77. Jayne Butler, CEO, Rape Crisis England and Wales
78. Marchu Belete & Sarah Cutler, Co-directors, Migration Exchange
79. Aké Achi, Founding Chief Executive, Migrants At Work
80. Aké Achi, CEO, Black Europeans
81. Shaminder Ubhi, Director, Ashiana Network
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84. Harriet Wistrich, Director, Centre for Women's Justice
85. Iona Taylor, Advocacy and Campaigns Lead, Positive Action in Housing
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91. Sabrina Qureshi, Founder and Coordinator, Million Women Rise Movement
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122. Chris Rose, Chair, Craven District of Sanctuary
123. Ben Gilchrist, Chief Executive, Caritas Shrewsbury
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125. Ailsa Dunn Secretary to Hay, Brecon and Talgarth Sanctuary for refugees
126. Revd Canon Helen Cameron, Moderator, Free Churches Group
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156. Jamie Balfour-Paul, Founder and Performing Magician, Magic for Smiles
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163. Sara Alsherif, Migrant Digital Justice Programme Manager, Open Rights group
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165. Martin Cosarinsky Campos, Managing Director, Breadwinners
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172. Bishop Mike Royal, General Secretary, Churches Together in England
173. Joan Hoult, CEO, Walking With in North Tyneside
174. Johannah Dyer, Chair, Bromsgrove and District Asylum Seeker Support
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177. Barbara Hungin, Chair of Trustees, Justice First
178. Programme Development Director, Railway Children

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180. Paul Hook, Director, Asylum Matters
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186. Darren Knight, Chief Executive, George House Trust
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188. Imogen McIntosh, Aid Box Community
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219. Nazek Ramadan, Migrant Voice, Director
220. Daniel Sohege, Director, Stand For All

221. Stephanie Draper, Chief Executive, Bond
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227. Salma Ravat, CEO, One Roof Leicester
228. Dr Sarah Hughes, Chief Executive, Mind
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230. Karen Parry, Chief Executive, Inclusion North
231. Christine Rose Chair of the Core Group, Craven District of Sanctuary
232. Beatrice Giaquinto, Director, Nottingham Arimathea Trust
233. Gwen Hines, Chief Executive, Save the Children
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235. Andrew Belfield, Mosaic Justice Network
236. Kamran Mallick, CEO, Disability Rights UK
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238. Liz Millman, Learning Links International CIC
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250. Jo Walby, Chief Executive Officer, Salford CVS
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265. Jonathan Senker, CEO, VoiceAbility
266. Joanna Ewart-James, Executive Director, Freedom United
267. Michael Mark, Trustee, The Cotton Tree Trust
268. Areeba Hamid, Co-Executive Director, Greenpeace UK
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271. Saqib Deshmukh, Interim Chief Executive, AYJ
272. Joseph Kiwango, Manager, Revive
273. Tufail Hussain, UK Director, Islamic Relief
274. Eleni Venaki, Director, The Comfrey Project
275. Amanda Littlewood, Refugees & Mentors CIC
276. Sabir Zazai, Chief Executive, Scottish Refugee Council
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278. Eleonora Fais, Anti-Trafficking Monitoring Group Coordinator, ATMG
279. Rev Lynn Green, General Secretary, Baptist Union of Great Britain
280. Emma Hawthorne, Chair, BIRCH
281. Simon Tyler, Executive Director, Doctors of the World UK
282. Laura, Director, Horton Community Farm
283. Phil Davis, Director, Hope Projects
284. Sally Hyman, founder and CEO, CRIBS International
285. Mark Courtice (Chair), Southampton and Winchester Visitors Group
286. Dr Patrick Roach, General Secretary, NASUWT Teachers' Union
287. Trustee, Louth Churches for Refugees
288. Jessica Davidson-Egan, Director, Refugee Welcome Homes
289. Andrew Evans, CEO, METRO Charitye
290. Nick Harborne, CEO, Refugee Support Group