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BBC - racist discrimination at work

Nathalie has been contacted by a journalist for BBC Newsline, **Natasha Sayee**, who is very keen to report on racism in the workplace.

Natasha wants to hear from anyone who would like to talk about their experience and we hope that she will come and address our next Race Group meeting (TBC). In the meantime if anyone wants to speak to her directly she can be contacted on **07711911547** or email:

Natasha.Sayee@bbc.co.uk



FACEBOOK 'UNISON NI Migrant Workers page'

has now over 175 members. Join us and share information with other UNISON BME members.



Immigration Updates

Congratulation to Flora and John from the Race Group who got their residency!

A few other Filipino families facing the same situation have been able to get their residency in the last few months and so far no one has been reported as being refused on the basis of the 6th April changes.



According to the report from NICEM on the Filipino community during the economic downturn, about 60% already got their full citizenship; we still have about 37% who still need the status.

Regarding the issue of the new income requirement for settlement, UNISON in London and JCWI are currently taking a case (the UNISON member worked in Southern Cross nursing home on a 5 year work permit and was paid £6.40 an hour. She applied for settlement and was subsequently turned down as she did not meet the income requirement). There are several other similar cases currently at appeal stage.

If you have not yet settled and work as a care / senior care worker, paid under £7.02 an hour, again, we would like to hear from you. You can contact Nathalie in the Belfast office or Susan Cueva in London s.cueva@unison.co.uk.

TIME FOR ACTION Public Services Under Threat

If you work in the Public Sector, you should have received a ballot to vote for a one-day Strike Action in October (*If you haven't received your ballot or if you have misplaced it, please ring 0845 355 0845 urgently to get a replacement ballot*)

We are urging our members to vote YES and make a stand for Public Services and for your jobs!

This one-day strike has been called in response to the employers' action on budget cuts which are deepening the crisis already experienced by many of our members.

These are worrying times for everyone with 10 000 front line jobs likely to go. We are witnessing posts not being replaced; workload increases; reduction in contractual hours; work transferred to the private sector; etc. Essential services are being destroyed and the most vulnerable in our society are the first ones to pay the price.

For migrant workers, job losses and recession also tend to bring more overt racism as well as the added threat of being forced to leave for anyone who has not yet obtained full residency.

Members do not take the decision to go on strike lightly, but **ENOUGH IS ENOUGH.**

A YES vote is a vote for hope and the voice of ordinary people can send a very strong message to our politicians and Trust Boards.

**Race
Committee –
SOG
Constitution**



The Race Group is currently set up on a very informal basis. It is time to get better organised and the group will need to agree on a constitution. A subgroup met to prepare a draft that will need to be discussed and agreed at the next meeting.

In July the LGBT Group and the Race Group co hosted a film night as part of Pride Week. The film 'Boy' was set in the Philippines and followed a poetic well-off youth who visits a gay bar one evening and finds himself smitten with one of the young dancers. **Anyone interested in getting involved in the LGBT group can contact Fidelma** f.carolan@unison.co.uk

**ICTU
Biennial
Delegate
Conference**



The ICTU conference was held from 4th July (Monday) to 6th July (Wednesday) in Killarney. This year, the overall theme of the Conference was 'A Better Fairer way'. Our UNISON delegation included several members of the Race Group who spoke in support of the motion highlighting racism in our society.

**NEXT MEETING
THURSDAY 13TH
OCTOBER
@4PM
UNISON GALWAY HOUSE
165 YORK STREET**

UNISON Immigration Advice

Free face-to-face immigration advice with a solicitor from the Law Centre every first Friday of the month. Please ring 02890270190 to book a place or email n.donnely@unison.co.uk; UNISON Direct immigration phone advice 08453550845; A **NICEM** immigration adviser is also available on 02890319666.

UNISON Members in Geneva

The UK was under scrutiny from the United Nation Human Rights Committee in August in regards to its compliance with the Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD). One of our Filipino members went along with the delegation from NICEM and a list of case studies was provided by the Race Group for the NGO counter report.



The Committee strongly criticized the UK's failure to implement the Convention. Patrick Yu commented: "Our submission focused on Traveller, Roma and Gypsy communities, and on non-EU migrant workers. The Alliance of Filipino Community in NI and the Irish Congress of Trade Union made their opening statements on the discriminatory immigration law against the settlement of Filipino nationals in the UK, and the exploitation and lack of legal protection for non-EU agency workers. Now the Committee recognises that these issues warrant special attention.[...] We want the UK government, in conjunction with the NI devolved administration, to adopt a more pro-active approach to tackling racial inequality as a matter of urgency."

Regional council meeting and motions

Regional council meeting will happen on **21st October (Friday)**. Every year the branches and self-organised groups put motions for the conference and these decisions affect the direction of the Union.

At last year's regional council the Race Group's motion addressed the need for continuing the support provided through the immigration advice line. Our second motion was about ensuring that every branch had properly trained equality reps to be fully equipped to take cases of racial discrimination. Both motions have been followed up in practice: the immigration clinics continue to operate on a monthly basis and new Equality Reps have been trained since late spring.

For this year's council, the Race Group agreed on a motion asking for support to obtain access to immigration representation through legal services and a second motion focuses on getting support to work on qualification issues, as this remains a burning subject for many migrant workers.

The sub-group will meet to look into the issue of qualification and start organising a work plan to progress these issues. Anyone interested in joining that group can contact Nathalie and come along on **Thursday 22 September 11am in UNISON, Galway house**. All are welcome to join!

USEFUL CONTACTS: UNISON Office -02890 270190; Nathalie Donnelly -07554433958, n.donnely@unison.co.uk; UNISON direct Free Immigration Advice -08453550845; NICEM -02890 238645; Citizen's Advice Bureau -02890 262527; NISCC -02890 417600; RQIA -02890 517500; UNISON www.unison.org.uk/northernireland
Please note that the next issue will be sent electronically to all members with an email address. If you haven't given us your email address / or require a hard copy please email n.donnely@unison.co.uk.