

## Immigration and Identity Policy Working Group Remit

Liberal Democrats believe that immigration has made Britain stronger, more welcoming, and more economically prosperous. Immigration has contributed to Britain's growth and success; it has recruited workers to industries that are short of people; it has increased our cultural diversity and made our communities richer places to live and work. Furthermore, all evidence points to the fact that EU migrants contribute more to public finances than they withdraw. Much of the commentary around immigration, however, is negative and vitriolic – and culminated in an EU referendum campaign heavily skewed towards the idea of reducing or stopping immigration into the UK.

This Working Group will therefore focus on the future of immigration and asylum policy, and integration within and between communities in the United Kingdom. The group should produce practical policies to deal with changing political circumstances and the challenges posed by immigration, which are grounded in the Liberal Democrat values of liberty, equality, and community, and which will give the party an effective campaigning platform.

In addressing these issues, the group will need to take into account existing policy on immigration and identity and the changes to immigration policy necessary as a result of the vote to leave the EU. It will, in particular, build on policy paper 116 *Making Migration Work for Britain* (2014) and the conference motions *Creating Safe and Legal Routes for Refugees* (Autumn 2015) and *Local Communities Welcoming Refugees* (Autumn 2016).

In the course of its work the group should consider:

- The result of the European Referendum and how best to challenge the perceptions of and attitudes towards immigration that helped to bring about that result.
- The effect of immigration – both positive and negative – on the UK economy, businesses, employment, wages, public services, and housing.
- The different types of immigration into the UK and how they are recognised, particularly in the event of Brexit - for example whether students should be included in migration statistics in future
- The fitness for purpose of government agencies responsible for immigration policy, and how we can make the system more workable.
- The future of EU immigration to the UK – including with regards to freedom of movement, and the status and rights of EU immigrants living in the UK, and of UK migrants living in the EU.
- How to obtain UK residence and citizenship, and who should be eligible to become a UK citizen

- How best to protect immigrants against abuse and exploitation – particularly with regards to human trafficking and forced labour.
- The incidence of discrimination and hate crime against immigrants, and how best to address these problems.
- The impact of migration on community relations, culture, and national and community identities, including what it means to be British in an age of mass migration.
- How best to ensure social cohesion in communities with high levels of immigration.
- How best to help migrants learn English.
- The role of community identity for first generation, second generation, and subsequent generations of immigrants, and how to ensure a role for liberal values.
- How best to protect asylum seekers and refugees, particularly with regards to the ongoing refugee crisis.

The group will take evidence and consult widely from both within and outside the party. This evidence should inform the group's proposals, which will be presented alongside an analysis of costs and an Equalities Impact Assessment. A policy paper of no longer than 10,000 words should be produced for debate at Spring Conference 2018. Prior to that a consultative session should be held at Autumn Conference 2017, and a draft policy paper should be presented to the Federal Policy Committee by January 2018.