

Get Involved: Pray



EMBRACE Prayer Group

June 2015

Divided Families

It is almost three years since new rules on spousal immigration came into force. From July 2012 a UK citizen sponsoring the entry of their non-EU spouse, for example from America or India, has to be earning at least £18,600. This rises to £22,400 for families with a child and by a further £2,400 for each additional child. When this was challenged in court the judge said that it was not unlawful but was 'so onerous in effect as to be an unjustified and disproportionate interference with a genuine spousal relationship'. 47% of people working in the UK today earn less than the amount required to bring a foreign husband or wife here. The rule affects people in Northern Ireland even more than elsewhere because our average incomes are lower.

The rules are very strict and many families are unexpectedly refused. As a result, many UK citizens are living here without their partner. Some have children who rarely or never see their non-UK mum or dad.

Facts:

- According to the Government's own estimate this rule affects over 17,000 families each year
- £18,600 is over £5,000 more than someone working full-time earning the National Minimum Wage receives

source: migrantsrights.org.uk

You can watch some stories at: <https://vimeo.com/125339496>

This month we give thanks for:

- Friends and others who support families in such difficult circumstances
- The enduring nature of family love

We pray for:

- Policy makers who create immigration law
- Families who are separated by the rules – especially children who are separated from one parent and from their siblings
- Greater understanding by the general public about how people are affected by immigration issues