



Amnesty UK – Children’s Human Rights Network

The Price of Citizenship?

An estimated 120,000 children living in the UK have neither British citizenship nor immigration permission to be here. More than half of them were born here and many are entitled to register as British. However the government charges them £1,012 to apply, making a £626 profit on each application – the actual processing cost is £386.

These children, in particular many of those born in the UK, have a right to register as British citizens under the British Nationality Act 1981. Practically however many are prevented from registering because they simply cannot afford the fee. There is no waiver for the fee for children whose families cannot afford to pay, and no provision for applications without payment of the fee for children in local authority care.

Nationality is recognised as an important element of an individual’s identity. Without being able to access their right to British citizenship, children may miss out on opportunities such as funding for higher education, a British passport, or the right to vote. They are also put at risk because without this citizenship they remain subject to immigration rules and powers.

The Home Office should be giving primary consideration to the best interests of the child when developing policies that concern them, and should ensure children can access the citizenship to which they are entitled.

Amnesty International Children’s Human Rights Network together with the Project for the Registration of Children as British Citizens is calling for:

- Removal of the profit-making aspect of the fee, charging no more than the cost of processing
- Introduction of a power for officials to waive the fee for those who cannot afford to pay
- No fee for children who are assisted by local authorities

Citizenship isn’t a privilege, it’s a right.

Take Action

Please sign the petition calling on the Immigration Minister to remove the profit-making aspect of the fee, introduce a fee waiver and charge no fee for children assisted by local authorities.

If you would like to get more involved with this campaign please contact the Children’s Human Rights Network at childrensnetwork@amnesty.org.uk.