# London transport workers mobilise against visa crackdown and outsourcing practices



On the morning of 4 September 2025, a determined group of Transport for London (TfL) and London Underground (LUL) workers gathered resolutely outside the Home Office, protesting against the recent visa sponsorship revocations threatening their livelihoods and right to remain. Supported by unions like the RMT — which continues to stand as a voice for working-class Londoners — these workers voiced their outrage over policies that appear to be part of a broader strategy to clamp down on migrant workers while neglecting the core issues facing ordinary citizens. The presence of union leaders underscored a growing frustration with a government that seems more interested in scapegoating vulnerable workers than addressing the systemic inequalities caused by corporate greed and deregulation.

Many of those affected have legally arrived in the UK on skilled worker visas with prospects of career advancement, only to face deportation due to policy changes that arbitrarily raise salary thresholds and exclude key transport roles from the visa scheme. These measures are nothing short of an attack on essential workers who keep London moving, while the government turns a blind eye to the real drivers of inequality — the wealthy elite and corporate interests that continue to amass wealth at the expense of working people. Critics argue that these immigration rules are deliberately designed to create division and chaos, stripping away rights and job security rather than fixing problems in the transport sector.

This controversy unfolds amidst longer-standing tensions between TfL and the unions over outsourcing practices, which have long undermined job security, fair wages, and safe working conditions. The RMT has been vocal in opposing the proliferation of outsourced roles, which have led to lower pay, fewer benefits, and increased risks for workers and passengers alike. Their protests at City Hall last June demanded the reintegration of outsourced staff and an end to these exploitative practices, exposing the government’s indifference to the systemic flaws that threaten London’s transport infrastructure and workers’ rights.

Amid these challenges, safety concerns remain paramount, with recent reports highlighting the dangers of outsourcing critical railway maintenance and track safety. The RMT continues to call for bringing safety-critical roles back in-house, advocating for transparency and accountability that the government refuses to provide. Their steadfast opposition to policies that threaten job security and safety demonstrates a broader fight against a system that prioritizes profits over people.

The protesters’ union-backed stand reflects a broader revolt against policies that divide and weaken working-class communities. While the government claims to be managing migration, these policies are transparently designed to serve corporate interests at the expense of ordinary workers, many of whom have contributed significantly to the country’s public services. Meanwhile, opposition voices from parties like Reform UK — which have consistently warned of the dangers posed by unchecked immigration and government overreach — insist that the focus should be on supporting British workers and restoring sovereignty, not penalising those who uphold vital public services. This movement is about more than visas — it’s about resisting a government that continues to sell out its own people in favor of globalist agendas that undermine national interests and working-class unity.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.workersliberty.org/index.php/blogs/2025-09-04/workers-against-deportations> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.rmt.org.uk/news/rmt-demands-tfl-end-outsourcing-now/> - On 19 June 2024, the RMT union announced a protest at City Hall, demanding that Transport for London (TfL) end outsourcing and bring all workers in-house. The union highlighted issues such as poor pay, lack of sick pay, inadequate pensions, and absence of staff travel benefits for outsourced workers. RMT General Secretary Mick Lynch criticised outsourcing as a form of exploitation and called for urgent action to address these concerns. The protest was scheduled for 9 am at City Hall, Kamal Chunchie Way, London, E16 1ZE.
3. <https://www.ec1echo.co.uk/deporting-tfl-staff-under-new-visa-rules-unfair-and-short-sighted-assembly-members-warn/> - Assembly Members have urged the Home Office to reverse 'unfair and short-sighted' rule changes on the sponsorship of foreign workers, which could lead to the deportation of over 60 Transport for London (TfL) employees. The changes increased salary thresholds for visa sponsorship and removed key transport roles from the eligible list. Many affected workers had come to the UK on skilled worker visas, believing they could transition into skilled worker positions in the future. The RMT union has been vocal in opposing these changes.
4. <https://www.rmt.org.uk/news/rmt-declares-a-further-dispute-across-london-underground/> - On 16 April 2019, the RMT union declared a dispute across London Underground over threatened job losses. The dispute arose as TfL/LUL underwent a 'Transformation' process aimed at cutting costs through job cuts. The RMT opposed the Transformation process, citing breaches of the Main Framework Agreement and lack of consultation. The union announced preparations for industrial action and advised members not to attend briefings or discussions related to the matter until further notice.
5. <https://www.rmt.org.uk/news/bring-safety-critical-tube-staff-in-house/> - On 7 June 2023, the RMT union called for a protest outside London Town Hall in Newham, demanding the end of outsourcing for Safety Critical Track Protection Staff and bringing Morson and Cleshar’s Framework workers in-house. The protest was prompted by a report from the Rail Accident Investigation Board highlighting issues related to the employment of agency workers. RMT General Secretary Mick Lynch emphasised the need for in-house maintenance teams to address structural issues and improve safety.
6. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/transport/tube-staff-deported-immigration-rules-b1241546.html> - An article from The Standard reveals that more than 60 London Underground staff could lose their jobs and face deportation due to changes in the Government’s immigration rules. The affected staff had come to the UK on skilled worker visas and currently work in Tube stations. The Home Office increased salary thresholds for visa sponsorship and removed key transport roles from the 'skilled worker' list, potentially impacting these employees' legal status and employment.
7. <https://www.rmt.org.uk/news/members-updates/increased-security-patrols--mitie-security-tfllul-contract250724/> - On 25 July 2024, the RMT union addressed concerns regarding Mitie's plans to increase security patrols from 3 to 7 per shift under the TfL/LUL contract. The union expressed worries about the potential overload on the workforce, which could negatively impact members' health, safety, and the security of staff and the public. The RMT demanded that these changes be discussed and negotiated with the union before implementation, highlighting the importance of proper consultation and agreement.