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English language requirements for partner visas sends message that people of colour are not welcome here

The Federal Budget this week revealed shocking changes to the partner visa requirements with a **mandatory English proficiency test if the partner is from a non-English speaking background.**

Racial and economic justice advocacy organisation Democracy in Colour is appalled by the new requirements for an English language test for both the partner overseas and the sponsor if they are from a non-English speaking background.

Democracy in Colour's Co-Director Neha Madhok says, "The Morrison Government has decided that only a certain type of person is worthy to come to Australia, and that anyone who doesn't fit the mould is not welcome. It's not even thinly veiled anymore, it's just outright racist discrimination.

"The changes revealed in the Federal Budget sends Australia back decades as the Government attempts to reestablish a White Australia. Immigrant Minister Alan Tudge is telling the international community that, unless you are white, wealthy, and from an English speaking background, don't even think about coming here.

"The cost of a partner visa is already astronomical and costs thousands of dollars. Adding an English language test on top of that makes it almost impossible for people of colour and people from working class backgrounds to obtain a visa to join their partners in Australia.

"To add further salt to the wound, Morrison's Government wants sponsors from non-English speaking backgrounds to take language tests too, even though they are already legally entitled to live in this country.

"Minister Tudge should just come out and say that people of colour aren't seen for our basic humanity. For this Government, people of colour are just cash cows as international students paying astronomical university fees, and as migrants working in exploitative conditions.

"This English proficiency test must not go ahead. It's time for the Federal Government to recognise that this country is built off the back of Indigenous people and migrants from all backgrounds. If that's too hard of a pill for Minister Tudge to swallow, then we need to seriously ask who this Government represents," says Neha Madhok.

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Democracy in Colour is a national racial and economic justice organisation led by people of colour. It runs campaigns that tackle structural racism and build the power of people of colour to shape the critical issues that affect our lives.