

SUBJECT: EU Settlement Scheme – Lift the deadline

Dear (CANDIDATE NAME),

We are writing as a coalition of charities, public sector agencies and individuals that are formed of, work with, or stand in solidarity with EU citizens and their families across the West Midlands. We are asking you to support our proposal for the Government to lift the deadline for people to apply to the Government's EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS).

All EU citizens and their non-EU family members are required to submit an application to remain in the UK via the EUSS by the 30 June 2021. Anyone who does not apply by the deadline will lose their legal status to live here and rights to employment, housing, education, welfare and healthcare and could face detention and deportation.

The EUSS is the biggest population registration exercise in British history and this, combined with the unprecedented public health crisis caused by the pandemic, means that tens of thousands are yet to hear about the scheme let alone apply for it. Research carried out by the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants (JCWI) showed that:

- 1 in 7 EU nationals employed in the care sector did not know what the EUSS was
- 1 in 3 had not heard of the EUSS prior to the survey
- 1 in 3 did not know that there is a deadline, or when that deadline is.

The Migration Observatory at Oxford found that a similar number of people, particularly marginalised EU citizens, such as older and disabled people, Roma communities, looked-after children and survivors of domestic abuse, are at risk of losing their immigration status and rights under the EUSS.

This research chimes with our experience in the West Midlands where we encounter individuals and families on a daily basis who have not yet heard about the scheme. They include key workers who have risked their lives on the frontline to help our region throughout the Covid-19 pandemic.

We are asking you to support our request that the Government should lift the deadline for applying and ensure that nobody is forced to lose their legal status to reside here, with their rights protected. The Government must also find out who is at risk of being left out, making sure that all can be assisted to obtain status. Without these actions, the current scenario paves the way for the repetition of the 'Windrush scandal.'

We look forward to hearing your thoughts on our proposals; we would be happy to meet with you to discuss further if helpful.

Yours sincerely,

Andy Hoole, Project Manager, Migration Policy and Practice

Co-signed by:

- Abbas Baig, Head of Services, The Refugee and Migrant Centre
- Afzal Hussain, Chief Officer, Witton Lodge Community Association
- Alicja Kaczmarek, Director, Polish Expats Association
- Dr Andrew Jolly, Trustee, Birmingham Community Housing Network
- Carly Jones, Chief Executive, SIFA Fireside
- Dominic Bradley, Chief Executive, Spring Housing Association
- Feizal Hajat OBE, Chair, St. Basils
- Fiona Cameron, Director, ASIRT
- Janice Nichols, Chief Executive, Citizens Advice Birmingham
- Jeremy Thompson, Manager, Restore - A Project of Birmingham Churches Together
- Judith King, Representing Walsall Members of EU in Brum
- Maureen Connolly, Chief Executive, Birmingham and Solihull Women's Aid
- Dr Peter Rookes, Secretary, Birmingham Council of Faiths
- Rachel Chiu, Director – Business Development, Spring Housing Association
- Sara Woodall, Chair, Birmingham Social Housing Partnership
- Sue Bent, CEO, Central England Law Centre
- Tom Pratt, Convener, EU in Brum
- Toni Soni, Director, Coventry Refugee and Migrant Centre
- Vicky Hines, Head of Services, Shelter - Birmingham