



19 April 2021

Monique Hawkins

the3million
9 Bath Buildings
Bristol
BS6 5PT

Dear Ms Hawkins,

Thank you for your letters of 31 March and 15 April regarding the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS).

We have always emphasised EEA citizens living in the UK are our friends, family and neighbours and we want them to stay. The EUSS is the best approach to protecting their rights under the Citizens' Rights Agreements. It provides EEA citizens, plus their family members, with clarity about what they need to apply for and by when, along with the secure evidence of their status they need.

The EUSS makes it easy for resident EEA citizens and their family members to obtain the UK immigration status they need in order to remain here permanently, with the same rights to work, study, rent accommodation and access benefits and services as they had before we left the EU. This status is underpinned in UK law by the European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Act 2020, which protects the rights here of EEA citizens in line with the Citizens' Rights Agreements.

The latest published statistics to 31 March 2021 show over 5.3 million applications to the EUSS have now been received. Over 4.9 million applications have been concluded, with over 4.7 million grants of status under the EUSS having been made. EEA citizens, and their family members, who were resident in the UK by 31 December 2020 and who make an application to the EUSS by 30 June 2021, will have their existing rights protected, pending the outcome of that application.

From 1 July 2021, those who applied before the deadline, and whose application (or any appeal) has yet to be determined, will have the same entitlement to work, study, rent accommodation and access benefits and services as they did before the grace period ended on 30 June 2021.

EEA citizens will no longer be able to use their passport or national identity card to evidence their right to work or rent from 1 July 2021. Therefore those with an outstanding application under the EUSS, submitted by 30 June 2021, will be able to use their Certificate of Application, which is issued automatically once a valid application has been made, as proof of that right, pending the outcome of the application. The Home Office

employer/landlord checking service will also confirm an application was made by 30 June 2021.

We will be updating our guidance and communicating with employers and landlords in the coming weeks to ensure they are clear on the process.

We have continued to receive and process many thousands of applications a day under the EUSS throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Support continues to be available to those who need it when making their application. Information about processing times for applications is published on Gov.uk and can be found here:

[EU Settlement Scheme: application processing times - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/eu-settlement-scheme-application-processing-times)

While, by 31 March 2021, we had concluded almost 94 per cent of all applications received, some applications do take longer to process. For example, this may be the case if we need to request more information from the applicant or if they have a relevant criminal record or a prosecution is pending.

It is not right to compare a person's long-term immigration status in the UK, together with the entitlements associated with this, with measures which may be put in place to demonstrate a person's COVID-19 status over the course of the current global pandemic.

Our approach is part of a wider process of developing a border and immigration system which is 'digital by default' for all migrants. Physical and paper-based products, which can be lost, stolen or tampered with, will increasingly be replaced with accessible, easy-to-use online and digital services, so we have no plans to alter it by providing EEA citizens with physical proof of their EUSS status.

We acknowledge the move away from physical documents to digital status represents a change which individuals and service providers may take time to get used to. This is why it is being rolled out incrementally and with support available to help individuals use their new status.

With my very best wishes.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Foster', with a large flourish at the end.

Kevin Foster MP
Minister for Future Borders and Immigration