



Home Office

Home Secretary

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House of Commons
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Dear Colleague,

EU SETTLEMENT SCHEME

The Minister for Immigration wrote to you in February to provide you with an update on the EU Settlement Scheme. I am pleased to confirm that on Saturday 30 March 2019, the Scheme officially opened, and we received more than 50,000 applications over the course of the weekend from EEA and Swiss citizens and their families. This brings the total number of applications to 280,000.

Citizens' rights

Securing the rights of citizens has always been the UK Government's priority in negotiations with the European Union (EU). Throughout the time we have been establishing the Scheme, I have always been clear that we want EEA and Swiss citizens and their families who have made the UK their home to stay. European citizens make a huge contribution to our economy and society; they are integral to our national culture and life. The full opening of the Scheme shows clearly our commitment to enabling them to continue living and working here just as they do now after the UK leaves the EU.

Nevertheless, I know that many European citizens who have made the UK their home are looking for certainty about their future. Whatever the outcome of the ongoing discussions about the UK's exit from the EU, the Government will ensure resident EEA and Swiss citizens can continue their lives as they do now. The Scheme offers them the security they deserve. We cannot have a situation where - in years to come - EU citizens who have built their lives here find themselves having difficulty evidencing their rights to live and work here. The online status the EU Settlement Scheme will grant them will make it quick, easy and convenient for them to demonstrate these rights at any point in the future.

Application process

The EU Settlement Scheme provides a simple and straightforward process for EEA and Swiss citizens and their family members who want to stay in the UK to get the UK immigration status they need.

My department has been working tirelessly to make the application process as user-friendly and streamlined as possible. Those applying will only need to complete three key steps – prove their identity, show that they live in the UK, and declare any criminal convictions. Applications to the Scheme are free and are made via a short online application process. Applicants can use any laptop, tablet or mobile device to apply.

A custom Identity Document Check app has been developed to allow applicants to verify their identity remotely and swiftly. The app streamlines the process, meaning that applicants do not need to send in any documents or go anywhere to prove their identity. The entire application process can be completed from the comfort of their own home.

As many of you will be aware, it is not currently possible to use the ID Document Check app to verify identity on Apple devices. I have had numerous conversations with Apple at the highest levels to ensure that everyone will be able to use the app. Together we have been working to find a solution that will allow the app to work on their devices.

I am pleased to confirm that Apple will be making the necessary changes, and the app will be working on their mobile and tablet devices by the end of the year.

Accessibility and application support

I am also acutely aware there may be citizens within your constituencies who may require reassurance and support when using a digital device to apply. Ensuring the Scheme is accessible and capable of handling a wide variety of applicant needs, with flexibility and sensitivity, is essential.

Now that the Scheme is fully open, there are different routes available for applicants to have their identity documents checked as part of their application. These include submitting identity documents by post or visiting one of our many ID document scanner locations across the country, where applicants can go in-person to receive a face-to-face identity verification service.

Beyond this, however, I am also taking particular care that adequate support is in place for the most vulnerable and at-risk citizens within our communities. We have put in place the EU Settlement Resolution Centre (SRC), a dedicated advice service, which is open daily to receive calls and emails from applicants. Information on how to contact the SRC can be found on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

Also, for those without access to a computer, or lacking skills or confidence to use one, assistance is now available at over 150 Assisted Digital locations across the UK. I have been committed to ensuring that guidance on the EU Settlement Scheme is available in all 24 official EU languages and Welsh, and I am pleased to confirm that this went live on GOV.UK on Saturday 30 March.

Later this month, we will be announcing the successful voluntary and community sector organisations that will be awarded grant funding as part of up to £9million we have made available to provide application support for the most vulnerable.

This range of measures and support services is helping to eradicate any potential barriers citizens might face when applying to the Scheme. My department and I will continue to work

with and listen to a wide variety of local organisations throughout the lifetime of the Scheme, to make sure we meet and respond to the diverse needs of all citizens.

Private and public test phases

I am pleased with all the progress my department made in getting the Scheme ready for Saturday's launch, and in delivering on the agreements we have reached with the EU, the other EEA countries and Switzerland to protect citizens' rights.

Since August last year, we have completed a series of private and public test phases to test the end to end application process, including the ID Document Check app, and to capture applicant feedback. This enabled us to make real improvements at every stage of the beta testing in time for the full launch of the Scheme.

Many of you would have already read the report on the second private beta test phase of the EU Settlement Scheme, which you can find online. To test the system at a greater scale, a public test phase of the Scheme began on 21 January 2019, and by the end of March, we had received nearly 200,000 applications in that phase alone, in addition to the 30,000 applications received in the private beta test phases.

A report on the public beta test phase will be published soon. In advance of that, I am pleased to share that more than 210,000 people have now been granted status under the Scheme. This evidences what I have consistently said: we are looking for reasons to grant people status and not refuse.

How you can support

Public information and communications have been underway since the agreement on citizens' rights was reached with the EU.

Last week, we amplified the scale of activity with the launch of a £3.5million UK-wide marketing campaign to increase awareness of the Scheme. I am pleased to report that around 6,000 sites across the UK are now host to outdoor advertising about the Scheme, including in every major city. This has been supplemented with digital advertising on catch-up TV, radio, social media and online advertising, which went live on Saturday 30 March, to coincide with the full launch of the Scheme.

The intensity and scale of marketing reflects my commitment to ensuring that all EEA and Swiss citizens across the UK understand what they need to do to secure their status.

I know that we all deeply value the contributions that EEA and Swiss citizens make to the cultural and social fabric of our country. I hope that collectively, we can all play a critical role in providing reassurance to citizens working and living in the UK, and in our constituencies, that we want them to stay.

My department will be organising a drop-in session for all MPs during this month, which I hope many of you are able to attend to learn more about the Scheme and ask questions of officials. To express your interest in attending or for more information, please email: mpengagement@homeoffice.gov.uk.

Please do direct EEA and Swiss citizens in your constituency to GOV.UK to stay informed, and encourage them to sign up to receive [EU Citizen Email Alerts](#) from the Home Office.

I greatly appreciate your continued support in promoting the EU Settlement Scheme.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Javid', with a small flourish at the end.

Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP