



Home Office

Home Secretary

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Matt Wrack
General Secretary, Fire Brigades Union
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CTS Reference: M2875/18
Your Reference: MW/sll

11 SEP 2018

Dear Mr Wrack,

Thank you for your letter to the Prime Minister dated 26 February regarding the rights of EU citizens following the UK's withdrawal from the European Union (EU). I am extremely sorry for the unacceptable delay in my response.

We value immensely the vital services that the UK fire and rescue services and their employees provide, and fully acknowledge that EU citizens closely connected to the service are concerned about their status in the UK following the UK's withdrawal from the EU. The Government has been clear since the start of negotiations with the EU that protecting the rights of EU citizens, together with the rights of UK nationals living in EU countries, was our first priority.

We have now reached an agreement with the EU on citizens' rights that will protect those EU citizens who are resident in the UK by the end of the implementation period on 31 December 2020. Family members living lawfully in the UK with a qualifying EU citizen at this point are also protected.

We will introduce the EU Settlement Scheme under UK immigration law for EU citizens and their family members covered by the Withdrawal Agreement. Those who have already had five years of continuous residence in the UK will be eligible to apply for settled status. Others will be able to remain in the UK to build up five years' continuous residence.

The new system will be streamlined, user-friendly and will draw on existing government data to minimise the burden on applicants to provide documentary evidence. The scheme is being implemented on a phased basis and will be fully open by 30 March 2019. However, people will have until 30 June 2021 to apply.

EU citizens and their family members who would like to find out more about the new UK settled status and be informed when they can apply for it can sign up for email updates at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/status-of-eu-nationals-in-the-uk-what-you-need-to-know>.

On 24 July, we also launched a new communications toolkit, which is the start of the package of support for employers, local authorities and community groups on the Scheme. Employers in the UK are now able to give EU citizens practical advice on how to apply with the help of this toolkit. Further toolkits are planned for community groups and local authorities and these toolkits will be kept updated to reflect the latest information. The employer toolkit can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/eu-settlement-scheme-employer-toolkit>

Whilst the agreement with the EU does not cover the citizens of the non-EU European Economic Area states (Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway) and Switzerland, we have been clear that we want to secure a similar deal for citizens of these states living in the UK and for UK nationals living there.

Talks with all four states are progressing and pending final agreement being reached with each on the detail of the arrangements, the Government intends that the EU Settlement Scheme will be open to other EEA citizens and Swiss citizens (and their family members) on a similar basis as for EU citizens.



A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'S' followed by a series of loops and a final downward stroke.

Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP