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Monique Hawkins
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The3million

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Dear Monique,

Thank you for your letter of 1 May regarding EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) automation. I have provided responses to your questions as set out below.

EUSS automation phases one and two

Q1. Clarification on the operation of phases one and two.

During the initial rollout of EUSS automation, the pre-settled status extension process (phase one) and the automated process for granting settled status (phase two) were two separate processes.

Under phase one which began in September 2023, pre-settled status extensions were applied shortly before the original pre-settled status expiry date to ensure no one's status would expire for failure to make a second application to the scheme. We aimed to apply the extension roughly six weeks before the expiry date to provide assurance to status holders that their status would not expire. However, due to various unforeseen technical or operational issues, the extension was occasionally applied closer to the expiry date.

In January 2025, the Home Office introduced a new process to automatically convert eligible pre-settled status holders to settled status, where possible, thereby removing the need for the person to make a further application to the EUSS. This is referred to as phase two of EUSS automation. Under this process, around six months after the pre-settled status extension had taken place, the individual was then considered for automatic conversion to settled status.

As a result of changes to the EUSS automation process on 9 April 2026, phase one and phase two processes were integrated. Under the new process (referred to as phase three), around six weeks before pre-settled status expiry, a case will be assessed for

settled status eligibility and will either receive a pre-settled status extension or an automated grant of settled status.

Q2. Technical details of phase one and phase two processes.

Under phase one, the cases due to expire each month were identified as requiring an extension. This identification process took place approximately six to eight weeks prior to the first expiry date in the relevant month. This was generally achieved but due to internal pressures and technical difficulties the start of the extension runs could be delayed. The pre-settled status extensions were applied shortly after the relevant cases had been identified. Once pre-settled status was extended, the status holder was notified within one to two weeks.

This process commenced in September 2023 and pre-settled status was initially extended by two years. Subsequently, a change was made so that pre-settled status due to expire from October 2024 onwards, received a five-year extension. Any cases that were previously extended by two years and again approached the expiry date of their pre-settled status were then extended by five years.

There were several changes made to the pre-settled status extension process from September 2023 to the end of its use in May 2026. The changes were implemented for several reasons including general improvements to the system and to resolve known bugs. Due to the complex nature of some cases and the data contained within multiple systems, this led to some unforeseen issues after improvements were implemented. These issues were largely minor, but some changes did lead to problems arising with small proportions of pre-settled status extensions. These were quickly resolved once identified.

As set out above, in January 2025, the Home Office introduced a new process to automatically convert eligible pre-settled status holders to settled status, where possible. Around six months after a pre-settled status extension, the individual was then considered for automatic conversion to settled status. The status holder was notified that their case was being reviewed approximately four to six weeks before the eligibility checks took place. Checks were then carried out against government-held information, such as tax and benefit data and any evidence of criminal conduct. If these checks confirmed eligibility for settled status, the individual's digital status was automatically converted to settled status and they were notified of this. If eligibility for settled status could not be confirmed, the individual retained their pre-settled status and was informed of the outcome one to two weeks after the checks had been completed.

Q3. Pre-settled status extension errors at the beginning of 2026.

Due to the resourcing implications of introducing phase three, a decision was taken not to process the extensions of pre-settled status in bulk for those status holders whose status was due to expire between February and April 2026. Instead, cases continued to receive a pre-settled status extension around six weeks before the expiry of their status.

Earlier this year a technical issue affected the information displayed in the digital status of some pre-settled status holders. The issue arose in February due to changes made to the pre-settled status extension system in preparation for the rollout of phase three. The issue only affected cases where PSS was due to expire in April this year. While the pre-settled status extensions were correctly granted, in some cases the digital status incorrectly showed the previous pre-settled status grant rather than the extension.

The issue was quickly identified, and a fix was applied on 19 March to both affected cases and future cases. Whilst the majority of cases were fixed at this stage, in April we identified that some cases were not fully updated. We have now resolved all remaining cases. The process under which this issue occurred is no longer in use and has been replaced by phase three of EUSS automation.

Q4. Publication of data on eVisa error corrections.

We expect to publish data regarding people who have used the eVisa error webform in June 2026 as part of the quarterly transparency data publication.

Q5. Action taken to resolve pre-settled status extension errors and contact those affected.

If an EUSS status holder identifies an issue with their eVisa, they can report it via the eVisa error webform and the Evisa Management Unit will take action to investigate the issue and correct any errors. Any issues that are identified by the Evisa Management Unit as affecting multiple status holders are referred to Home Office Digital for further investigation and resolution.

While some issues were encountered during the previous phases of automation, they were addressed promptly and effectively and affected only a minority of those in scope of the processes. In a small number of instances where a resolution took longer to implement, we wrote to affected status holders to explain the situation and provide reassurance. As noted above, we have since discontinued the use of these processes and expect phase three of automation will deliver improved performance and outcomes.

EUSS automation phase three

Q6. Request to provide copies of phase three notification templates.

Copies of the notifications referenced below are enclosed with this letter.

Q7. Confirmation of the timing of phase three notifications.

In this phase of automation, following notification that their case is being reviewed, pre-settled status holders will either receive an automated grant of settled status or a pre-settled status extension. The sequence of these notifications is as follows:

1. Case creation notification – sent at the beginning of the automation process to inform the status holder their case is being considered for automated conversion from pre-settled status to settled status.
2. Case is then run against tax and benefit data with two possible outcomes:
 - Automated settled status grant notification – sent where the available tax and benefit data confirms eligibility for settled status; or
 - Five-year pre-settled status extension notification - sent where settled status eligibility cannot be confirmed based on tax and benefit data alone
3. Cases that received a pre-settled status extension are then bulk run against Home Office travel data¹. Three possible outcomes:

¹ Such cases will follow the 'Alternative 1' approach as set out under the 'travel data batch processing' section of your letter. Cases will only be held for six weeks before a decision is made whether to assess the case for curtailment, based on caseworker capacity. Where capacity allows a case to be picked up for consideration, new travel data checks will be run before a minded to curtail letter is sent to ensure the assessment of residence is up to date.

- Manual settled status grant notification – sent where tax and benefit and Home Office travel data confirm eligibility for settled status.
 - Minded to curtail notification – sent where tax and benefit data and Home Office travel data suggest the status holder has been absent from the UK for a significant period and is no longer eligible for EUSS status.
 - No further notification – when individual is not prioritised for curtailment consideration. They will retain their pre-settled status extension.
4. Following a 28-day response period (and any extension of time), cases that received a minded to curtail notification will be concluded. Three possible outcomes:
- Manual settled status grant notification – sent where, following the sending of the minded to curtail notification, the status holder submits further information and evidence which confirms eligibility for settled status.
 - Maintain pre-settled status notification – sent where, following the sending of the minded to curtail notification, it is accepted that the status holder did break their continuity of residence, but it is not proportionate to curtail pre-settled status.
 - Curtailed/cancelled notification – sent where the available evidence, including that provided by the status holder, confirm the eligibility requirements are no longer met and it is proportionate to curtail their pre-settled status.

Q8 and 9. Further detail on the phase three ‘trriage process’.

As set out in Q7 above, in this phase of automation, following notification that their case is being reviewed (step 1 above), pre-settled status holders will either receive an automated grant of settled status or a pre-settled status extension (step 2 above). Settled status will only be granted if we have the data to confirm eligibility. Where we do not have sufficient data to confirm eligibility, a pre-settled status extension will be issued. In line with changes made to simplify the eligibility requirements in 2025, and subject to suitability checks, settled status will now be granted when checks to confirm UK residence identify 30 months of tax and benefit data in the last 60 months.

To identify cases for possible curtailment consideration, we will prioritise reviewing the status of those who have been outside the UK for the longest periods of time. We expect this will mean that the majority of cases we initially review will have spent very little, or no, time in the UK in the last five years.

Where, following the assessment of tax and benefit data, there is insufficient residence information to show the pre-settled status holder has been resident in the UK for at least 30 months in the most recent five-year period, the case will then be bulk washed against a broad range of Home Office travel data and cases will be ordered based on the level of absences. The bulk wash takes place each morning and includes the cases that came through the automated process the previous day. It will only occur once for each case. Those with the longest absences will be prioritised for curtailment consideration. Those with the shortest absences may be assessed by a caseworker for settled status eligibility at any point, where caseworking capacity allows.

In cases prioritised for curtailment consideration, caseworkers will check the highest priority cases individually against Advance Passenger Information data to confirm the status holder’s absences are sufficient to warrant sending a minded to curtail notification. Cases will remain on the prioritisation list for six weeks. This means that due to limited caseworker capacity, those who have shorter absences are unlikely to be reviewed by a caseworker before their case falls out of the prioritisation list. Any cases not assessed by a caseworker will maintain their pre-settled status.

Where a person maintains their pre-settled status and they do not apply for settled status prior to the next expiry date of their pre-settled status, they will be re-processed through the EUSS automation process shortly before the expiry of that status.

Jessica Gavigan
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