

Supplementary written evidence submitted by the3million (HAR3326)

Please accept this supplementary evidence following the [oral evidence\[1\]](#) I gave to the Home Affairs Committee on 28 January 2026 for the Inquiry: *Harnessing the potential of new digital forms of identification*.

We welcome the Committee's time and attention to the learnings that the UK government can take from the eVisa scheme. An eVisa is a digital record of someone's immigration record but for ten million people it has become a mandatory form of ID when they must prove their right to work, study, live and travel in and out of the UK. As there is no physical backup for eVisa holders the experience of outages, errors or lack of access in practice results in people having no way to prove their legal status in the UK. the3million is concerned that the patterns of issues are similar to the Windrush Scandal, in that people with legal rights have no way to **prove** those rights.

I promised (in my response to Q114) to provide the Committee with a letter we sent to the Department of Innovation, Science and Technology, DWP and HMRC in August 2025. The letter raises concerns about people being excluded from UK Government online services because of the way that someone's identity is verified - through the use of the Machine Readable Zone (MRZ) of their passport. This letter is available at <https://the3million.org.uk/publication/2025082601>.

We also thought it would be helpful for the Committee to read some case studies from people who have difficulties proving their rights due to issues with their eVisas. We have included these in four annexes as follows:

Annex A: Testimonies from people unable to prove their right to work due to an issue with their eVisa. These examples address the theme of the inquiry on right-to-work checks and whether digital ID can be an effective tool for Government.

Annex B: Testimonies from people who were impacted by the design of the eVisa system relying on a functional UKVI website. These examples serve to illustrate the importance of a stable token, as mentioned in my response to Ben Maguire MP's question at Q110.

Annex C: Testimonies from people who faced challenges boarding their flight home to the UK despite having a valid and up to date eVisa. These examples illustrate the impacts of the wider use of eVisas beyond right to work checks.

Annex D: Testimonies from people who were unable to prove their immigration status because of a data error on their eVisa. We mentioned the problem of poor data quality in our response to Peter Prinsley MP's question at Q109.

Annex A: Inability to prove right to work due to eVisa problems

- *"Two weeks ago I was unable to generate a share code to provide my employer proof that I have right to work. I called the customer helpline for EU scheme and I was told it's a technical issue. Although I understand it's a technical issue it is affecting my livelihood I am unable to work. You can't work without proofing your right to work. I have been unable to work since 2 weeks ago unable to apply for a new job as I won't be able to start either. I keep being told to just wait but bills don't wait. This has had a huge impact on me mentally as well as financially. I have had to borrow money from friends. Open up credit cards just to get by. I've called the EU settlement scheme every working day these 2 weeks. No support was given no guidance. My issue was not resolved and I was not given a estimate of how long this process will take. The helpline is honestly the worst customer service I have experienced"*
- *"We called the helpline and they provided him a share code, but the error is still appearing, he is a refugee and has a BRP currently. He has lost 2 opportunities of jobs so far as they are unwilling to use the employer checking service."*
- *"Client went to work yesterday and was immediately suspended without pay on the grounds that she is not lawfully in the UK. I have talked to the employer to explain she has rights but they insist that at least for them she doesn't. I asked the employer to use the Home Office Employer checking service but client has been told they will not change their mind until her name is corrected. We don't understand how the Home Office could mix two names. The only explanation is they may have used a photo recognition and as sisters are twins and very similar to each other the Home Office system used the sister's name by mistake."*
- *"Security company (employer) says about uploaded share code: "Please note that the uploaded document is not compliant with our requirements. We do not accept share codes as a valid form of E-visa documentation. The applicant must obtain the correct E-visa, which must clearly state the following: Date of issue / Expiry date (if applicable) / Reference code. Once obtained, this document should be uploaded and added accordingly into ID Gateway."*

- *"I reported the issue twice to the Home Office eVisa technical team but so far no success. Yesterday I started my new job with the same employer where I had previously worked for almost 15 years. Today my employer has suspended me (after just 1 day) from my job on unpaid leave because I can't obtain and give them a share code for them to check my eVisa status. I don't know what to do,"*
- *"When I submitted my biometric details and date of birth on GOV.UK Prove your right to work, I was shocked to see that my image had been removed and replaced with 3 passport pictures of someone else with my details. I last used the website in XXX 2022 and there was no issue. I contacted UKVI xxxx (twice) requesting the issue be rectified only to be advised that they cannot see 3 passport pictures on their system they can see me (as I had described what I looked like). They told me that they would refer this to their Tech Team who would contact me but they couldn't provide a timeframe. I am very concerned that a Government website can ruin someone's life in this manner. The employment offer, I have had to decline as all they kept requesting was the share code and I can't provide this due to the serious issue of my missing image."*

Annex B: Inability to access eVisa when the UKVI service is down

- *"I cannot access my eVisa and produce a share code for my current status. I have tried multiple devices running on different OS like windows 11 education, macOS sequoia, iOS 18, and iOS 26. My partner has tried to access his eVisa (settled status) and he is also not able to access it and produce a share code... The whole eVisa system has caused much anxiety to me and my partner. We always fear that one day we will not be able to access the online services for one reason or another. Today, this has been proved a valid concern." (outage on 11 August 2025)*
- *"I couldn't prove the settlement status due to the government online page not working (it says planned maintenance)... I've been contacted by a recruitment agency for a temporary role and I was requested a share code. I lost the employment opportunity as the job starts tomorrow morning and the recruitment consultant couldn't get the application done on time due to missing share code." (outage on 15 February 2022)*
- *"When I log in to the website to view my status it says: Already logged in. After that an error appears with the service is currently not available... With physical proof I can show right away I have settled status and don't have to deal with the digital failures" (outage on 15 February 2022)*
- *"The proving your settled status is not working AGAIN! I logged in twice, first time it said I was already logged in then went to error, second time went straight to error. The url I am getting is: <https://view-immigration-status.service.gov.uk/error> ... I am in application for a new job, and need to share this information before interview. If I am not able to prove my status I could lose my interview slot, and the chance at the job." (outage on 25 August 2023)*
- *"I was denied boarding flight to the UK as I couldn't show my immigration status due to the digital system outage. I needed to use my national id card. Calling the helpline was useless as they couldn't do anything... It forced me to take out another flight which was much more expensive. Also there was a lot of emotional stress and sadness that I will miss last few days of school holidays with my son" (outage on 25 August 2023)*

Annex C: Challenges of traveling to the UK with an eVisa

- *"My understanding was that I only need to present a shared code at the passport control at the check in and before boarding. So I had a letter on my email which I thought would be enough. But in Cairo airport they wanted me to access to the website to show them the page with all my data. I had a local SIM card with internet but the connection was intermittent. A few times system would show an error. I was left behind the line while I was trying to sort it out. Being in a foreign country at the boarding with limited time and bad internet can cause significant troubles. I made it. But shouldn't the airports have their own systems to check these codes? I feel that every time I take a plane now I would be stressing about whether they have / don't have internet, whether I receive the access code online etc. Shouldn't you work out something totally offline"*
- *"I was flying from (home country) to the UK on a settled status. I had a national ID and the eVisa sharecode. ... When checking in at the desk, the person working the desk called and confirmed that I could indeed travel with the eVisa sharecode.. At the gate I show my ID and the share code, I am informed they need the eVisa itself as they cannot access the info via the share code. I am told the sharecode access only works in the UK. I am trying to access the eVisa (which I am still not 100% clear on what it looks like or if it's just the browser page) but the website keeps crashing. As I am starting to be in actual visual distress, the workers at the gate*

try to access the information only to tell me the share code is out of date. I had requested it the exact same day and had proof that it was meant to be valid until December. I was denied entrance to my flight.

- *“The e visa has been the single greatest pain when it comes to traveling. When I'm in a country without roaming, I have no way of accessing my visa. The airport staff doesn't seem to have any knowledge of the new travel arrangements of the Home Office, and being put in very unpleasant and stressful situations when checking in. Right now I was in (international) airport and the staff was refusing to check me in because the UKVI website was giving me a 403 error.”*
- *I'm a British citizen writing together with my partner (non-UK) citizen living in the UK on a skilled worker visa since XXXX. We found ourselves in an unpleasant situation with an XXXX flight home...We were due to fly home...and passed through security and were in line to board the flight, when we reached the desk the flight attendant informed us that due to a communication from the UK govt a week ago the check in code my partner had printed out was insufficient and we needed to log on to the uk govt website to check in and prove her right to enter the UK, despite repeated attempts on three different phones we were unable to access this website, getting a message "there is a problem with this service, please try again later", meaning that nothing could be done, we had to watch our flight leave without us, return to the friend's house we had been staying with, and booked another flight home the following day with associated costs and a missed day of work for my partner. While I didn't have the same barrier to getting on the flight I needed to stay as well due to my partner being in an unfamiliar country for the first time and being unable to carry her bag long distances due to recovering from a neck hernia. From what I've found online this seems to be a recurring problem, ...when we have the printed document there with us seems unfair and unworkable, at least we would have appreciated being able to board our flight and fix our situation with immigration over in the UK, we happened to be fortunate in being able to return to stay with our friends here but if we'd had to try and source accommodation or if (my partner 's) Schengen visa had been closer to expiry this could have been even more unpleasant and makes us nervous about future travel.*

Annex D: Inability to prove status due to data errors on eVisa

- *“my account was merged with another woman who has same name and DoB as me. I have been unable to access my Evisa at any point over the last 4 years. I have ILR”*
- *“Like many others, if I login and scroll down to 'identity document', my passport is gone and there's someone else's BRP with an Indian nationality. I'm concerned for the breach.”*
- *“Our client's expiry date was correct, but that was it! The photo, the BRP numbers the contact details were that a different person. The client is pregnant, and was moving home as a result of a no fault conviction. This was extremely stressful for them, and caused massive concern. Bad experience HO - chatbot unhelpful, couldn't get through on helpline, had to go through Business Helpdesk, cc'ing complaints and other status holder's legal advisor into everything. Took 2 months to fix.”*
- *My status now it shows that I have pre-settlement status and my son has nothing! NOTHING! How is that even possible? We have full status for more than 3 years. His status is supposed to be the same as mine! But no, both statuses are completely different, and I have no idea why. His status has been picked up at the Border Force ones we came back from holidays, and ever since then, he has had nothing but trouble when entering the UK. I still can't figure out what's causing the issue and why it has changed after 9 years in this country. I am very worried as this could potentially impact his naturalisation, as I have applied for him in January but also while travelling. I don't want to risk any further complications, and I cannot provide to student finance a share code that is not mine as it would be considered fraudulent. I sent them the PDF letter with settlement status, but then I sent a share code with a pre-settlement status, this would not make sense! It's important to be honest and provide accurate information when dealing with student finance. In the last 5 weeks I have been calling the Home Office but I haven't received any news, not even an email that someone its dealing with my issue.”*
- *“I created my eVisa in XXXX, and it showed the correct details. However, the system did not allow me to link my passport to my eVisa. I reported this issue to the UKVI in XXXX and they logged it as a technical issue to be resolved. But UKVI then made a significant error - they added my passport to a different person's profile instead of mine, and my own details disappeared. They did not inform me of this error, and I found out on my own when checking my eVisa.I reported this error to them in March 2025 and asked them to fix it. They again logged the error and said they would. Now, my eVisa shows the other person's name, photo and visa status, but has my date of birth and passport attached to it.I cannot see my name, photo and visa status, and I do not know who has access to this information....I have cancelled trips abroad as I don't want to risk being denied boarding when returning to the UK. I want to apply for a new job, but am choosing not to right now as I know there is a high possibility of experiencing problems during the recruitment process due to being unable to prove my immigration status. I would also need to apply for a new place to rent, which is similarly difficult to do. The situation is extremely distressing for me and it is a source of great anxiety in my life. I feel very helpless.”*

[1] <https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/17082/pdf/> - starting from Q94

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