

Fix the UK's Digital-Only Immigration Status

Overview

By the end of 2024 the UK Government had rolled out digital-only immigration status to all migrants with status in the UK. This eVisa system fails to provide people with secure, tangible, and independently accessible proof of status. It is critically flawed, technologically unreliable, and exclusionary - leaving many unable to prove their rights.



View the3million's proposal to fix the digital status

Key Issues

- **No individually-held proof:** Status holders are not given a digital document they can save, print, or present when requested. Instead, they must access a GOV.UK platform, complete two-factor authentication, and generate a 9-character share code each time their status needs verification - a fragmented View & Prove process which is not fit for purpose.
- **Accessibility failures:** Those who are digitally excluded and vulnerable are unable to navigate the system. Sometimes the two-factor authentication codes are sent to the third parties who originally helped set up the accounts, locking people out of their own status. In areas with poor connectivity or no digital access, status becomes unreachable for everyone. This often happens at the border.
- **Data integrity concerns:** There are frequent problems with the Home Office databases. Entangled records display the wrong biodata, someone else's photograph, or the wrong status details. The Government says status cannot be 'broken, stolen, or tampered with', yet that is exactly the impact that is felt by people when their status is corrupted at the Home Office end.
- **Significant impact:** When that happens, people are left unable to take up offers of work, are refused the right to rent, cannot access education and healthcare due to the inability to prove their status - paralleling the failures seen in the Windrush scandal. At the point of travel, people are refused boarding and are prevented from coming home to the UK. Many airlines will not engage with the View & Prove process. Users are left feeling constantly insecure, and worried that their status won't be available for them to prove when needed at critical moments.

Recommendations

- **Independent review:** Launch a full, independent, review into the current form of digital only immigration status. No meaningful stakeholder consultation was undertaken before the rushed roll out, and the current iteration (still labelled as BETA) is not fit for purpose.
- **Consideration of alternatives:** Explore viable alternatives, including proposals already developed that use affordable secure QR-code-based documents akin to the NHS Covid Pass.
- **Accept liability for errors and provide compensation:** The Government currently denies all liability for when things go wrong. That has to change. People must be compensated for their losses when the system fails them.