

Mr Kevin Foster MP

By email: Kevin.foster.mp@parliament.uk
MinisterforImmigration@homeoffice.gov.uk
CC: SUGqueries@homeoffice.gov.uk

30 April 2021

Dear Kevin Foster MP,

EU Settlement Scheme paper applications without identity documents

We have had some reports of people having a particular problem in using the [‘View and prove your immigration status’](#) service after applying without an identity document (using a paper application).

All applicants to the EU Settlement Scheme are given a Unique Application Reference (UAN) number, which is a 16 digit number in the format of xxxx-xxxx-xxxx-xxxx. For those without an identity document who apply by means of a paper application, the first eight digits of the UAN appear to be zeros.

When this cohort of people tries to use the View and prove service, they need to know to ignore the first descriptive page which says that an identity document (passport, national identity card, or biometric residence card or permit) is required. In earlier grants of status through paper applications, people were not told about this, but now they are given the following instructions in the letter that is sent to them:

If you applied without an identity document

Go to <https://www.gov.uk/view-prove-immigration-status>

Select ‘Passport’ as your identity document and enter your application reference number.

Your application reference number is in the top right-hand corner of your EU Settlement Scheme outcome letter.

However, if people enter their UAN number (in the format 0000-0000-1234-5678) into the passport field as instructed, along with their date of birth they are presented with an error message saying *‘The details entered don’t match our records’*.

It turns out that the service only works if the individual instead removes the leading zeros and dashes, and enters 12345678 into the passport field.

In one vulnerable citizen's case this led to months of anxiety as not being able to view, prove or update contact details on their status had a number of other repercussions. They did not feel able to contact the EU Settlement Resolution Centre by telephone. However they did contact the Centre using the form but were told the same instructions as in the letter.

Q1. Would arrange for the letter template to be changed to make it clear to people that they should remove the first eight zeros and remove the dashes when entering the UAN number into the passport field.

Q2. Would you also request a simple software change such that the system detects a UAN-format number having been entered, and displays an error message explaining that if the user is using a UAN-number they should remove leading zeros and dashes?

Kind regards,

Monique Hawkins
Policy and Research Officer, **the3million**