

10 December 2020

Alice Matthews  
Head of the Single Competent Authority  
Home Office  
2 Marsham Street  
London  
SW1P 4DF

Dear Alice,

### **Victims of modern slavery and the EU Settlement Scheme**

I look forward to our next meeting on 16 December 2020. In advance of this, I wanted to write to you in relation to the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) and support for potential victims of modern slavery to apply.

The EUSS allows EU, EEA and Swiss citizens, and their non-EU family members, to be granted the immigration status that they require in order to continue living, working or studying in the UK beyond 30 June 2021. As this is a significant change to the UK's Immigration Rules, I understand that in 2019 the Home Office put in place a Vulnerability Strategy for the EUSS with £9 million of grant funding provided to 57 organisations across the UK to 'reach and give practical support to vulnerable individuals and their families'<sup>1</sup>. More widely, I am aware that there have also been a variety of campaigns<sup>2</sup> designed to raise awareness of the EUSS across EU and EEA communities living in the UK.

Last week I met with a range of colleagues from the NGO sector where concerns were raised about the risk that survivors of modern slavery would not be registering for the EUSS. Nobody at the meeting was aware of the approach that has been taken by sub-contractors within the Victim Care Contract (VCC) to raise awareness of the EUSS among their clients. Indeed, my response<sup>3</sup> to the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration's inspection on how the EUSS is working for vulnerable groups also highlighted some of the specific challenges faced by victims of modern slavery, including the difficulties experienced by those without access to identity documents and those who are unable to provide evidence of their time spent in the UK which continue to cause concern within the sector.

As we move towards the deadline for applications, I therefore wish to seek assurance that sub-contractors are actively communicating with their clients about the EUSS and that they are signposting them for the appropriate legal advice and support required to apply.

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<sup>1</sup> House of Commons (2020) [EU Settlement Scheme Briefing Paper Number 8584](#)

<sup>2</sup> UK Government (2019) [Home Office launches £1 million advertising campaign for EU Settlement Scheme](#)

<sup>3</sup> Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner (2020) [Letter to David Bolt – EU Settlement Scheme \(July 2020\)](#)

I would also like to request any data that the Home Office may hold on the following:

- the number of survivors currently in the NRM who are EU/EEA nationals;
- the number of survivors currently in the NRM who have applied to the EUSS;
- the number of survivors currently in the NRM who have been granted pre-settled status;
- the number of survivors currently in the NRM who have been granted settled status;
- the number of survivors currently in the NRM who have had their application to the EUSS refused;
- the number of survivors currently in the NRM who have had their application to the EUSS withdrawn, void or classed as invalid.

In the interests of transparency, I request that you respond in a way that enables me to publish your letter on my website.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan Yuen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Dan" being more prominent than the last name "Yuen".

**Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner**