



The need to signpost European nationals for advice on settled status in the UK

The UK's decision to leave the European Union means that all EU, EEA or Swiss citizens living in Northern Ireland must now apply to have their legal status confirmed. They must apply for a new EU immigration status - 'settled' or 'pre-settled' status - in order to protect their right to continue to live, work, study or access the NHS or other services in the UK. This requirement applies to all the 88,000 (approx.) EU nationals living in NI, (unless they have already applied for British or Irish citizenship) no matter how long they have lived here. The deadline for applying is **30 June, 2021**.

The application for settled status is made online and the process of applying is relatively straightforward. Information on this is available on the Home Office website here: <https://www.gov.uk/settled-status-eu-citizens-families/applying-for-settled-status>

Advice NI and the Stronger Together Consortium offer free, independent, multilingual OISC-regulated advice over the phone and online to EU citizens who need help to apply to the EUSS. Face-to-face meetings and appointments are suspended for the moment due to the Covid-19 pandemic. However both organisations continue to offer one-to-one support & specialised legal and/or immigration advice via the telephone and internet to support vulnerable EU citizens with their EUSS applications. Help is available as follows:

<i>Organisation</i>	<i>Telephone</i>	<i>Times</i>
Advice NI		
Advice NI	FREephone: 0800 138 6545 euss@adviceni.net Webchat: adviceni.net/EUSS	Mon – Fri 10am – 4pm
Advice North West (Derry & Strabane)	FREephone: 0300 303 3650	Mon – Fri 9.30am – 12.30 & 2pm – 4pm
Community Advice Antrim & Newtownabbey	028 9036 5860	Mon, Tues & Thurs 9am – 1pm & 2pm – 4pm; Wednesday 9am – 1pm; Friday 9am – 12pm
Community Advice Armagh	028 3752 4041	Mon - Fri 9.30 – 4.30pm
Community Advice Banbridge	028 4062 2201	Mon - Fri 9.30 – 2pm
Causeway Community Advice, Coleraine	028 703 44817	Mon – Fri 9.30am – 1pm & 2pm – 4pm
Community Advice Craigavon	028 3836 1181	Mon – Fri 9.30am – 1pm
Community Advice Fermanagh	028 6632 4334	Mon – Fri 9.30am – 4.30pm
Community Advice Newry, Mourne & Down	FREephone: 0300 3030 4334	Mon – Fri 9.30am – 12.30pm

East Belfast Independent Advice Centre	028 9073 5690	Mon – Fri 9am – 5pm
East Belfast Independent Advice Centre	Drop-in clinic: 55 Templemore Avenue Belfast, BT5 4FP	Mon, Tues, Wed 9.30am - 11.30; Thursday 2pm – 3.30pm
Mid & East Antrim Community Advice	028 9600 1333	Mon – Fri 10am – 2pm
Migrant Centre NI, Derry	028 7141 4848	Mon – Fri 9am – 5pm
Migrant Centre NI, Derry	Walk-in clinic: The Old Church, Clarendon Street, Derry BT48 7ES	Wed 5pm – 8.30pm
Migrant Centre NI, Lurgan	Walk-in clinic: Unit 3, CIDO Business complex, Charles Street, Lurgan BT666HG	Wed 5.30pm – 8.30pm
Migrant Centre NI, Belfast	Walk-in clinic: Ballynafeigh Community Development Association, 283 Ormeau Road, Belfast BT73GG	Thursday 5pm – 8pm
Omagh Independent Advice Services	Walk in clinic: The Community House 2 Drumragh Avenue, Omagh BT78 1DP	Tues & Thurs 10am – 12noon & 2pm – 4pm
<i>Stronger Together consortium:</i>		
Stronger Together EUSS Support Project: frontline and specialist services	028 87750211 euss@strongertogetherni.org Info@strongertogetherni.org	Mon – Fri 9am – 5pm
<i>Stronger Together EUSS Frontline: phone, email or drop in to make an appointment</i>		
STEP Belfast	074 4941 1943 Belfast.euss@strongertogetherni.org	Mon – Fri 9am – 5pm
YMCA North Down Bangor	028 9145 4290	Mon – Fri 9am – 5pm
The Welcome Project, Lisburn	028 9266 4443	Mon – Fri 9am – 5pm
Interethnic Forum, Ballymena	028 2564 3605	Mon – Fri 9am – 5pm
Community Intercultural Programme, Portadown Craigavon	028 3839 3372	Mon – Fri 9am – 5pm
STEP Mid Ulster	028 8775 0211	Mon – Fri 9am – 5pm
Omagh Ethnic Community Support Group	028 8224 9750	Mon – Fri 9am – 5pm
North West Migrant Forum	028 7136 2184	Mon – Fri 9am – 5pm
<i>Specialist Immigration & Legal Services (by referral from frontline service & appointment only)</i>		
STEP Immigration	028 8775 0211	Mon – Fri 9am to 5pm
Children's Law Centre	028 9024 5704	Mon – Fri 9am to 5pm
Law Centre NI	Immigration and Asylum Advice line 028 9024 4401	Wednesday to Friday, 09.30 - 13.00

We have included some scenarios below to help people realise how seriously people could be affected if they do nothing.

Beatrice

Beatrice has lived in Northern Ireland for over 25 years. She is a Danish national who met and married an Irish man when she was a student. "I've lived most of my life in Northern Ireland; my children were born here" she says. "I don't think this EUSS requirement to register applies to me." Thinking that the requirement to apply for settled status applies only to recently arrived EU 'migrants', she takes no steps to register for settled status. In August 2021, Beatrice is diagnosed with cancer. Her doctor wants to organise hospital treatment. As a preliminary step, she is asked to demonstrate that she is lawfully in the UK and entitled to free use of NHS services. She is unable to do this as she has not gained 'settled status'; she is told that she is not entitled to free treatment but must pay for it.

Paolo

Paolo is a Lithuanian national who has lived in Northern Ireland for the last five years; he works in a food factory whenever the work is available. He has limited English and is unaware of the need to apply for the new immigration status for EU nationals. In September 2021, his boss tells him there is a vacancy for a supervisor in the factory and encourages him to apply. As part of the application, Paolo must demonstrate that he is lawfully in the UK and entitled to work here. He is unable to do so and loses both this opportunity and his intermittent employment at the factory.

Roman

Roman is a Romanian national living in Belfast for over 10 years. A friend helped him complete his application to the EU Settlement Scheme. As he has been working in a car wash for cash payments, his DWP tax and National Insurance records are incomplete. He can show he has lived in the UK for at least one year, but doesn't have the documentary evidence to prove he has been continuously resident here for at least five years. He decides to apply to 'pre-settled status' as it is easier to prove that he is currently in the UK. In 2025, Roman's pre-settled status expires, and because he did not apply for settled status instead, he no longer has a legal right to live, work, access health or other services in the UK.

Olivia

Olivia is a Bulgarian national who has lived in Northern Ireland for seven years. Having been advised she was entitled to 'permanent residence' under EU law (as previously existed), she made an application to the Home Office, and has an official document to prove that she has 'permanent residence'. Thinking that she is protected by this document, Olivia does not apply for settled status under the new EU settlement scheme. As a result, she has no legal right to live, work, access health or other services in the UK.

EMBRACE is grateful to Free Movement <https://www.freemovement.org.uk> and Advice NI <https://www.adviceni.net/eu-settlement-scheme> for the provision of the scenarios.

EMBRACE is a group of Christians from different denominations who have come together to help churches to make this a more welcoming place for people from other countries and ethnic backgrounds. Our work aspires to reflect compassion, respect, love, hospitality and justice; values based on the Gospel and the biblical mandate to cherish each person as an individual created by God. The values are also informed by prayer and an openness to changing realities, so that the group can aspire to be a prophetic voice.