

22 June 2020

Dear Consular Corps members,

I write to update you on the latest development in our *Stay in Scotland* campaign: the publication of our fact sheets explaining EU citizens' rights in Scotland.

EU citizens and their families make outstanding contributions to our country, culture and economy. They greatly enrich our communities as friends, family and neighbours. It is our priority as a government that Scotland remains a welcoming place for those who chose to make it their home.

The COVID-19 pandemic is the biggest challenge we have faced in our lifetimes, and has exacerbated the plight of the most marginalised people in our communities. To reduce the impact of the pandemic on EU citizens, we must expand existing provisions. While immigration is currently reserved to the UK Government, our powers to assist EU citizens are limited. However our commitment to doing all we can to support and protect all those living in Scotland is absolute.

Regrettably, EU citizens and their non-UK citizen family members must apply to the UK Government's EU Settlement Scheme to retain the right to live, work and study in Scotland. The position of the Scottish Government is that the Scheme should be declaratory and people should receive physical proof of their status to remain. We continue to make these points in the strongest terms to the UK Government.

In the meantime we are committed to reducing any additional challenges faced during the pandemic to secure their status and protect their rights.

Scottish Ministers, special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See [www.lobbying.scot](http://www.lobbying.scot)

Our *Stay in Scotland* campaign celebrates the valuable contributions of EU citizens and provides practical and tangible support to help them. This includes:

- **Citizens' Rights Project** – EU Settlement Scheme events and information
- **Settled** - network of volunteers across Scotland
- **Citizens Advice Scotland** - EU citizens Advice and Support Service helpline and Solicitor Referral Service.

In addition to this existing work, we commissioned JustRight Scotland, a legal centre for justice and human rights, to develop a suite of information resources for EU citizens. This guidance explains their rights to vote, work and access healthcare, education, housing and benefits. I am pleased to inform you these are now available in English, Polish, Romanian, Lithuanian, Spanish and Italian and can be accessed [here](#). These languages were chosen as representing nationalities with the highest estimated numbers of EU nationals in Scotland. Further translations can be considered in the future.

In light of the devastating impacts of the pandemic, many within your communities, I hope that these resources will help EU citizens understand their rights and further sources of support. I would be grateful if you could share these resources with your networks so as many people as possible will benefit from them.

I very much value the relationship between the Corps and the Scottish Government. Please know my door is open to you to discuss how we can continue working together to ensure EU citizens can stay in Scotland.

Best regards,



**BEN MACPHERSON**

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