



**Independent Monitoring Authority**  
For the Citizens' Rights Agreements

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Jenny Rathbone MS  
Chair  
Equality and Social Justice Committee

Sent via email  
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11 March 2026

Dear Jenny Rathbone,

**An Inquiry by the Independent Monitoring Authority into delays in issuing decisions on applications to the EU Settlement Scheme**

I am writing to share with the Committee the final report of the IMA's inquiry into the above matter.

The IMA safeguards the rights of EU and EEA EFTA citizens, and their family members, in the UK and Gibraltar who are protected under the EU Withdrawal Agreement and EEA EFTA Separation Agreement ('the Agreements'). We do this by monitoring UK public bodies to make sure they are implementing the rights of these citizens and by identifying any underlying issues.

If the IMA has reasonable grounds to believe that a UK public body is acting, or is proposing to act, in a way that prevents citizens from exercising relevant rights then we have the authority to carry out an inquiry into the issue.

In September 2023, the IMA launched an inquiry into delays in issuing decisions on applications to the EU Settlement Scheme. I trust that the findings are of interest to the Committee.

The IMA acknowledges that most applications to the EUSS have been processed without delay. The inquiry found evidence that some applications were subject to unreasonable delays and that there were systemic issues which contributed to this, including delays in allocating cases and pausing applications, which the IMA considers amounts to be a breach of the Agreements. The inquiry findings also recognise that the system is complex, and some more protracted applications were those which were subject to checks with other government and overseas agencies.

The IMA has made recommendations which will allow for improvements to be made to the EUSS. The Home Office is required to respond within three months to the recommendations to set out what it intends to do in respect of these recommendations. We will share their response with the Committee in the future.

Yours sincerely,

**IMA**

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Nicole Lappin

Chair  
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