

Jane Hutt AS/MS  
Gweinidog Cyfiawnder Cymdeithasol a'r Prif Chwip  
Minister for Social Justice and Chief Whip



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Jenny Rathbone MS  
Chair, Equality and Social Justice Committee  
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12 June 2023

Dear Jenny

Thank you for your letter of 17 May and for sharing the Committee's latest monitoring report.

I note the questions you have raised within your correspondence in relation to support for the Roma community, and I provide a response to those questions below:

### **Advice and support for the Roma community in relation to EUSS**

Although EUSS applications continue to decline, the Welsh Government acknowledges that there will inevitably still be EU citizens in Wales requiring on going assistance with either late applications, refusals, appeals and/or joining family member applications. With this in mind the Welsh Government has recently announced a further package of support to ensure that advice services continue for at least the next 12 months.

We have worked collaboratively with stakeholders to decide how to make best use of the funds available and we remain focussed on supporting *all* vulnerable and hard to reach groups, including those within the Roma community.

Whilst TGP Cymru is not funded by Welsh Government to provide EUSS Advice Services, the Welsh Government does fund the TGP Cymru Travelling Ahead project to deliver advice and advocacy support to Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities. This funding currently runs until 31 July 2023. However, we are looking at options to continue the current provision and commission a revised service provision from 2024 to ensure an advocacy service provision for Gypsy, Roma and Travellers is attainable and accessible.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

In addition, Settled, currently funded until March 2024, is registered to give immigration advice at OISC Level 3 and will continue to support individuals from all backgrounds. Settled has a small staff team of coordinators and lawyers, and a network of 70+ dedicated volunteers based throughout the UK, who speak over 20 European languages, including Romanes for its dedicated Roma service. Settled also manage interactive Facebook groups in a range of languages with multilingual information available on their website.

If TGP Cymru have any complex queries requiring immigration advice above Level 1 OISC, these can be referred to Settled who will assist. However, we are aware that Settled and TGP have recently submitted a joint application for the UK Government EUSS grant funding and pending the outcome of the grant application, the Roma community in Wales could be supported jointly by these two organisations in respect of EUSS and associated rights.

### **Ethnicity of EU citizens receiving support**

The UK Government does not publish information on the ethnicity of EU citizens who have applied to the EU Settlement Scheme and our grant funded organisations are not required to record the ethnicity of the clients they assist to apply to the EU Settlement Scheme.

The EUSS Co-ordination Group offers an opportunity to raise concerns around the EU Settlement Scheme and with a lack of statistical data the Welsh Government does rely on the advice providers to inform us about particular vulnerabilities. We have asked TGP Cymru to provide data on the number of individuals in the Roma community who may still need support so that we can ensure that there is sufficient support available. We await that information. With this in mind we will work with stakeholders from the EUSS Co-ordination meeting to draw on anecdotal information.

I hope this response provides detail and clarity on the points you have raised and reassures the Committee that the Welsh Government is doing its utmost to uphold its promise to support EU, EEA and Swiss citizens who wish to remain here in Wales and to facilitate them with their settlement here in Wales.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jane Hutt". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line above the first few letters.

**Jane Hutt AS/MS**

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