



HOUSE OF COMMONS

Nadhim Zahawi
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Children and Families

By email

5 October 2018

Re: Settled Status fees for Roma children in the Statement of Intent

Dear Minister,

As Co-Chairs of the APPG on Gypsies, Travellers and Roma we are writing to you regarding the fees imposed on children in applications for Settled Status proposed in the EU Settlement Scheme Statement of Intent (SOI). We are particularly concerned about the implications of these fees for Roma children living in the UK.

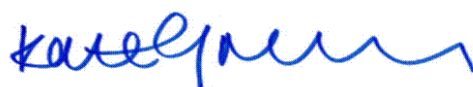
We note that, "*The application fee will be £65 (the same as the current fee for a permanent residence document) for a person aged 16 or over. The fee for those aged under 16 will be £32.50.*" [SOI, 4.6].

We would like to raise the question of why the SOI defines children as "under the age of 21" [6.6] for the purposes of the Settlement Scheme, yet imposes 100% fees on those children from the age of 16. The Children Act 1989 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified by the UK, both define a child as a person under the age of 18. Roma children and families in the UK already face significant economic disadvantage; we are extremely concerned that Roma families with children aged 16 and 17 will be unjustly financially disadvantaged by treating these children as adults with regard to application fees.

We hope, as Minister for Children and Families, you share this concern and can work with the Immigration Minister to address this and call for the same fee to be applied to all children, consistent with domestic and international law definitions. In addition, since young people under 21 are defined as children within the Settlement Scheme, we ask that consideration be given to extending the 50% fee to up to the age of 21.

We look forward to your response on this important matter.

Regards,

Handwritten signature of Janet Whitaker in black ink.Handwritten signature of Kate Green in blue ink.

Baroness Janet Whitaker and Kate Green MP
Co-Chairs, All-Party Parliamentary Group for Gypsies Roma and Travellers