

Minister of State for Children and Families

By email

30 August 2018

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

Dear Minister,

We write to you as a group of organisations who work to campaign for migrant rights and children's rights in the UK. We are concerned about the fees imposed on children in applications for Settled Status proposed in the EU Settlement Scheme Statement of Intent (SOI).

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. We are extremely concerned that 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,

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Director
Friends, Families and Travellers

Alison Garnham
Chief Executive
Child Poverty Action Group

Jabeer Butt
Chief Executive
Race Equality Foundation

Carolyn Willow
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Article 39

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