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Dear Monique,

Thank you for your emails of 10 January 2024 and 30 January 2024 about issues with UKVI accounts listing all linked identity documents. Please accept my apologies for the delay in responding to your emails.

We always welcome feedback on how we can improve our services and I have addressed your specific questions below.

Responses to questions raised in the letter dated 10 January 2024:

Q1. If the information given in the update portal shows no linked identity documents (or a missing identity document that had previously been linked) in their “Personal details” section, does that mean that an eGate would not be able to find that person’s immigration status when they present the identity document that they use to log in to View & Prove? If so, does that mean they would be redirected to a Border Force officer?

Thank you for raising this issue. No, the issue you have raised with the list of linked identity documents that is now available in the UKVI account is related to some bespoke business logic that we applied. This logic aims to reduce the risk of invalid identity documents appearing in the list and causing confusion e.g. a passport number provided by an applicant in an application which contained a typo and was subsequently corrected. On investigation, the business logic we have applied is overly restrictive and is excluding some passports and national identity cards that were submitted as part of an EU Settlement application, particularly those made prior to September 2020. These identity documents are linked to the applicant’s account and immigration status and would be

recognised at the UK border, including through the e-passport gates.

There is work underway to correct this issue and include the missing documents in the list of linked identity documents in the account.

Q2. If the information given in the update portal shows no linked identity documents (or a missing identity document that had previously been linked) in their “Personal details” section, does that mean that a Border Force official would not be able to see that person’s immigration status by scanning their travel document? If so, does that mean they would be temporarily detained while investigations are carried out?

No, the issue described in response to the question above does not impact the UK border process and the customer would not experience any delays at the Border as a result of this issue. It relates to bespoke business logic that is specific to the list of documents that appears in the account. There is work underway to correct this issue and ensure that a complete list is available in the account.

There is a separate scenario where a passport or national identity card does not appear in the list of linked documents because the customer has not told us about that passport or identity card, either through an application or an update process. In this scenario, it is important that the customer follows the link to add their new document to their account prior to travel.

If the customer has any concerns at all about the accuracy of the list of linked documents, then they are encouraged to contact the Resolution Centre. If the customer has not linked identity documents to their account, either via an application or via the ‘Update My Details’ service, they may be delayed at the border when entering the UK.

Q3. What are the potential reason(s) for an identity document not to be displayed in someone’s “Personal details” section of the update portal, despite having been granted status on the basis of that document, or that document having been previously linked to their UKVI account?

The issue relates to some bespoke business logic that we applied to try and reduce the risk of invalid identity documents appearing in the list and causing confusion, e.g. a passport number provided by an applicant in an application which contained a typo and was subsequently corrected. This logic is too restrictive, resulting in some genuine documents which are linked to the customer’s account not appearing in the list. This logic is unique to the linked documents list functionality available in the account and does not impact travel or crossing the UK border.

Q4. Is there a workaround available for individuals to link an identity document to their account, without receiving the error “We could not update your identity document because the details you entered are already on our system.”?

We are working to correct the issue, so no workaround is required. The reason customers are getting that specific error is because the document they are trying to add is already linked to their UKVI account. It just is not appearing in the list of linked documents for the reasons outlined in response to the questions above.

We are working to update the content on this page to provide more context and explanation for users, including what to do if they believe the list contains an error.

Q5. Are there any automated corrections planned to address this problem, or do individuals have to contact the EU Settlement Resolution Centre to have this fixed?

- a) **If automated, when is this automated correction planned to take place?**
- b) **If individuals have to contact the EU Settlement Resolution Centre, how long will they need to wait after reporting in order to have their UKVI account corrected?**

Yes, work is underway to address the issue as soon as possible, we will confirm timescales very shortly. We understand what is causing it and how to correct the issue and there is no need for customers to contact the Resolution Centre.

Q6. How many UKVI accounts does this affect? What proportion of all UKVI accounts does this represent?

We do not have a figure; however, this issue is likely to affect the majority of passports or national identity cards that were submitted with EUSS applications before September 2020.

Responses to the questions raised in the letter dated 30 January 2024:

A persistent problem in accessing the update functionality

Q1. How long has the Home Office been aware of this problem?

The issues which have been affecting customers have been known since January 2024.

Q2. When did this problem first arise?

The new functionality went live on 12 December 2023 as part of the continuous improvement of the UKVI account. The problem is specific to business logic that was implemented for the list of documents in the Customer Account and is unique to this functionality.

Q3. Does this problem affect everyone who attempts to link identity documents to their UKVI account, or only a subset of people? If only a subset, how many UKVI accounts are affected by this problem?

This does not affect everyone with a UKVI account. We do not have a figure of how many customers are affected, however it is likely to affect the majority of passports or national identity cards that were submitted with EUSS applications before September 2020.

Q4. What has caused this problem?

As mentioned above, the problem has occurred due to the bespoke business logic that we applied. This logic is too restrictive, resulting in some genuine documents not appearing in the list. This logic is unique to the linked documents list functionality available in the account and does not impact travel or crossing the UK border.

Q5. When does the Home Office believe this problem will be fixed?

There is work underway to correct this issue and include the missing documents in the list of linked identity documents in the account.

Q6. How likely is this problem to reoccur in future, and what steps has the Home

Office taken to prevent this from reoccurring?

We are always looking to enhance the UKVI account offering and welcome feedback and suggestions for improvements. Allowing customers to see a list of travel documents linked to their account, which you raised in June 2021, required the Home Office to apply a level of business logic in the interest of data accuracy. This business logic was needed to ensure documents which had been added with erroneous data, for example a typo when using the 'Update my details' service, were not displayed to the customer, causing unnecessary confusion. On this occasion, the business logic has since been found to be too restrictive, leading to some documents not being displayed. We are working to amend the business logic without displaying erroneous data to the customer.

Home Office helplines giving incorrect information

Q7. Is specific training provided to the Settlement Resolution Centre and UKVI Contact Centre in advance of new functionality being rolled out?

Yes, the level of training varies based on the complexity of the change.

Q8. Was training provided to the Settlement Resolution Centre and UKVI Contact Centre in advance of this particular new functionality (UKVI account displaying all linked identity documents)?

Prior to the enhancements going live, the Resolution Centre was provided with a training pack to ensure call centre agents were aware of the changes and able to report any issues. A follow up news brief was also issued to inform when the functionality had gone live. Several early life support calls were held with the Resolution Centre to monitor if any issues were reported via this channel.

Issues for people with more than one nationality

Q9. In the case above, the Home Office was informed about both the applicant's nationalities at the time of applying to the EU Settlement Scheme. However, the UKVI account now only knows about one of those nationalities. Therefore, we ask, irrespective of whether additional identity documents were actually linked to someone's UKVI account:

- a) What is the reason for nationalities that were named as part of the EUSS application process, being lost from someone's UKVI account?**

Thank you for raising this issue with us. The nationalities submitted as part of any EUSS application have not been 'lost'. Only one nationality can be displayed via the account, the nationality associated to the most recently linked document is displayed.

In how many cases have individuals' nationalities (that were named as part of the EUSS application process) been lost from their UKVI account?

We do not have a figure of how many customers are affected.

- b) Can the Home Office use its datasets to automatically reinstate any missing nationalities from people's UKVI accounts, and if so will they do so and when will this be done?**

The account displays one nationality only and therefore no data has been 'lost'. Whilst we

are aware dual nationals accounts will only display one nationality, this is not something we currently have scheduled to change.

Q10. Is the Home Office able to manually correct such UKVI accounts, to restore knowledge of a nationality previously linked to the account? If so, what should affected citizens do in order to get such a correction? If not, why is this not possible?

No correction is required as the data relating to another nationality a customer owns has not been lost. A customer can link a document to their account via the 'Update my details' service if it has not already been linked. In some exceptional circumstances, a customer may be required to supply their document for verification. If the customer has linked the document they wish to use for travel to their account, this will not impact their ability to travel or cross the UK border. Should a dual national be concerned about the nationality displayed within their account, they are first invited to link the document associated with the nationality they wish to be displayed, to their account. Should the customer face any difficulties in linking the document and therefore updating the nationality displayed, they should contact the Resolution Centre.

Q11. Can the Home Office confirm that if such a UKVI account were to be corrected, then the "Add a new identity document" screen would list all the individual's nationalities, and someone could add new identity documents without being required to send their documents in the post?

We are looking into the feasibility of this and are working through how we might deliver such functionality as part of our ongoing continuous improvement activity. For multiple reasons including, but not limited to, customer experience, we look to deliver enhancements to the 'Update My Details' service which do not require a customer to post an identity document to us. However, in some instances, this is necessary from an identity security perspective.

Issues where the name in the Machine Readable Zone (MRZ) of their document does not match the name shown in the Visual Inspection Zone (VIZ) of their document

Q12. When will the customer experience (for updating a UKVI account to reflect VIZ information) be improved, as promised in the Home Office letter to us of November 2022?

You previously wrote to Kevin Foster MP, former Minister for Safe and Legal Migration on 12 May 2022, regarding the process for changing or adding names to a person's digital status documentation, to match the person's name in the visual inspection zone (VIZ) of their passport rather than the name recorded in the machine readable zone (MRZ). As per the response of 18 November 2022, there is currently an interim solution in place. However, significant progress has been made towards delivering the strategic solution, which we will endeavour to have in place by the end of this year.

Q13. Regarding this improved experience, will this address each of the following:

a) not having to post an identity document to the Home Office;

We look to deliver enhancements to the 'Update My Details' service which do not require a customer to post an identity document to us. However, in some instances, this is necessary from an identity security perspective.

b) the information being displayed in a more understandable format than all

capitals in a single line;

Thank you for raising this, we always welcome feedback. We will look to see if there is a way to make this more user friendly.

c) being available not just for married name purposes, but also to address truncation, diacritical marks and transliteration of Cyrillic and Arabic scripts?

As a matter of policy, we do not allow text other than LATIN characters, without diacritical comments other than hyphens and apostrophes. We use the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) standards to transliterate non-Latin characters into Latin ones. This follows the approach used for UK Passports.

Q14. When new functionality is made available to improve the customer experience, will the Home Office contact all digital status holders to make them aware of this new functionality?

We will look to announce any changes and enhancements to our online services on GOV.UK.

eVisas Policy team

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