

20.11.17

16 Deputy C.S. Alves of the Minister for Home Affairs regarding applications for Settled Status (OQ.342/2020):

Further to recent media reports that approximately 6,000 people have not yet applied for settled status, will the Minister advise what, if anything, is being done to contact and encourage these individuals to submit their applications?

The Connétable of St. Clement (The Minister for Home Affairs):

When the settlement scheme was planned back in 2018, the figures available were not definitive and came from a number of different sources. A number of 20,000 has been published as the approximate number of E.U. (European Union) nationals in the Island. However, there is no way to determine how many of these have remained in the Island, how many have dual nationality or children born in the Island who may be eligible for British nationality. So the figure of 6,000 has been published but it could be considerably less than that. There is no way that we can really know. But following the drop off in applications during the lockdown period, we are now seeing applications back up to about 500 a month.

[11:45]

As to what we are doing to encourage more people, over the last 2 years we promoted this scheme through engagement with various charities, churches, Chamber of Commerce, the Honorary Consuls, and representative groups from industry, agriculture, hospitality, health, education, Children's Services, and groups from the retail, construction and finance sectors. These consultations, these initiatives, will continue through to next year as applications can still be made up to 30th June 2021. We will be filming today a proposed social media campaign as well.

4.16.1 Deputy C.S. Alves:

Can the Minister state what the potential consequences will be if people do not submit their applications on time?

The Connétable of St. Clement:

There is this grace period of 6 months until 30th June next year. Subsequently, anyone who does not have settled status granted or has not made application for settled status will be in the Island illegally. Any cases found will be treated on a case-by-case basis as sympathetically as possible.

4.16.2 Deputy I. Gardiner:

Would the Minister confirm if the letters were posted to the registered addresses for the remaining 6,000 people who did not apply and, if not, would it be done?

The Connétable of St. Clement:

No. As I explained in my opening comments to Deputy Alves' question, we do not know who these individuals are. There has never been any need for us to know and we do not know if 20,000 is an accurate number. It could well be a lot less than that. We cannot send letters to people that we do not know.

4.16.3 Deputy C.S. Alves:

Has any of this data of those that have applied been shared with the Consuls and vice-versa in a bid to possibly contact individuals that may have not applied yet?

The Connétable of St. Clement:

We have had a very close and positive relationship with the Honorary Consuls over the last 2 years and they have been very helpful in identifying individuals who need to apply and continue to do so.