

## Continuous residence

### Why does continuous residence matter?

In order to qualify for Settled Status, you must have lived in the UK continuously for 5 years, meaning that you were resident in the UK before 31 December 2020 and, during this 5-year time, have not been absent from the UK for more than 6 months in total (in a single period of absence or more than one) in any given 12-month period. This includes where you have previously been granted Pre-settled Status.

If you hold Pre-settled status and break your continuous residence, you may not be able to apply to Settled Status.

**The Pre-settled status entitles the EEA nationals and their family members to reside in the UK for up to 5 years from the date it is acquired. Anyone with pre-settled status will be able to apply for settled status once they reach 5 years of continuous residence. You must apply to Settled Status before your Pre-settled status expires, as this is not automatic.**

However, the EUSS allows for one single absence up to 12 months for an important reason, including serious illness and study.