
IMA

For the Citizens'
Rights Agreements

Strategy 2021-24



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As an organisation we are looking forward to making a difference, working where we can in partnership but not hesitating to exercise our powers when needed.

Foreword

We were established at 11pm on 31 December to make sure those European citizens and their families who are covered by the terms of the Withdrawal and Separation Agreements and live in the UK and Gibraltar can continue to live, study, and raise families here just as they had done before the UK left the EU.

As an organisation we can receive complaints from individuals who feel that public bodies are not upholding their rights. Although we do not solve individual complaints, they are important to us as they help us to build a picture of where things might be going wrong for many people.

We know that we need to quickly establish trust among the citizens whose rights we uphold; our work therefore is underpinned by our values which are to be people-centred, to listen, to be independent, impartial, and transparent.

We know that we need to work constructively with UK public bodies to better understand what is being done well and what might need improvement to give citizens confidence.

We also know that as a new organisation we must be adaptable and resilient to ensure we are delivering the best we can for the European citizens and their families who call the UK and Gibraltar home.



To deliver these aims we have identified **three key strategic objectives.**



These are:

1. To become a trusted, known, and credible organisation who can be relied upon to act with fairness, transparency, and impartiality to ensure the rights of EU and EEA EFTA citizens are upheld by public bodies.

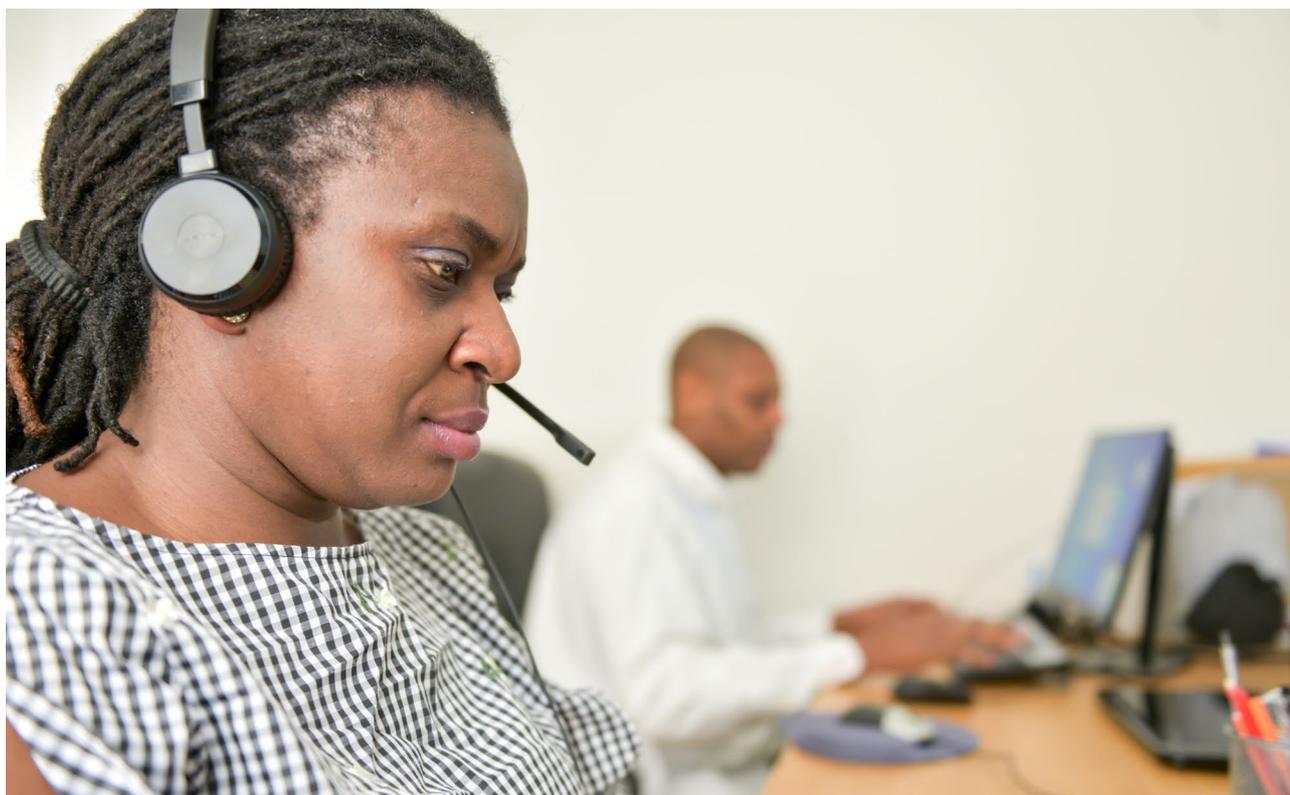
2. To develop strong partnerships to ensure the rights of EU and EEA EFTA citizens in the UK and Gibraltar are upheld by public bodies.

3. To be an effective and evolving organisation with a supportive culture which delivers for the EU and EEA EFTA citizens whose rights we help to uphold.

About this strategy

Our strategy is supported at a more detailed level by our Annual Plans which set out our aims for the organisation. It is also underpinned by our Operational Guidance which outlines our responsibilities and how we work. Our Operational Guidance includes how we will investigate complaints and issues and the processes that we follow.

It is crucial that citizens feel they can contact us when they are being treated unfairly and know we will use their evidence carefully to investigate where we think issues are affecting many people. Both the Annual Plan and the Operational Guidance give further details on our work programme and ways of working.



Setting the scene



This strategy is being developed during a period of significant challenge.

The UK, along with the rest of the world, continues to deal with the consequences of a global pandemic which has changed the way we live. The impact of Covid-19 has been far reaching and its legacy will doubtless make its mark on the years this strategy covers.

Against this backdrop, the UK has left the EU leading to adjustments to policy and practice. In the context of devolution, this means potentially different approaches being taken in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland to reflect the particular policy choices of the governments and legislatures of the different parts of the UK as well.

For the IMA this is significant. We were established to ensure the rights of EU and EEA EFTA citizens are upheld by public bodies in both the UK and Gibraltar after Brexit. This means that we need to be mindful of the different approaches taken by each country. This is uppermost in our minds in all areas of the business and we are pleased that our board contains representatives from the UK's home nations as well as Gibraltar to help us reflect this landscape.

The exit from the European Union has created uncertainty for many millions of citizens in the UK and Gibraltar who continue to seek to understand the impact this may have on their lives.



We know we have an important role to play in giving people the confidence that they can live here, working, studying, and raising their families as before by monitoring the activities of public bodies to ensure they get things right. It is crucial citizens know who we are and what we do, and this strategy helps set out how we are going to make that happen.

The Withdrawal and Separation Agreements which underpin our work, have created a new legal framework in relation to the rights of EU and EEA EFTA citizens and their families in the UK and Gibraltar. We know it is incumbent upon us to ensure that this legal framework is being interpreted correctly and we will exercise our judgement and powers to make the best interventions on behalf of these citizens where we think mistakes are being made.



We are committed to doing all we can to work in partnership with those organisations that support the most vulnerable, those that are isolated and digitally excluded to ensure they are not left behind. We will act as an extra layer and protection to help safeguard people's rights.

We know this is no easy task and we might not always get it right, but as an organisation we are committed to making a difference, recommending changes to make things better for the lives of those citizens we support living in the UK and Gibraltar.

We also know that as our own engagement with EU and EEA EFTA citizens has highlighted a lack of confidence in public bodies, it is vital we play our part in helping to address this, leading by example and working with organisations to help them to build that trust.

Delivering our strategic objectives

Objective 1

To become a trusted, known, and credible organisation who can be relied upon to act with fairness, transparency, and impartiality to ensure the rights of EU and EEA EFTA citizens are upheld by public bodies.

Objective 1: To become a trusted, known, and credible organisation who can be relied upon to act with fairness, transparency, and impartiality to ensure the rights of EU and EEA EFTA citizens are upheld by public bodies.

Success narrative

The IMA will be recognised by citizens, stakeholders and the media as credible and objective and be an important point of reference for information on the delivery of Withdrawal Agreement rights.

Our website, social media channels and publications will be widely recognised, trusted, and used as a source of reliable information on what is going right and wrong in the delivery of the Withdrawal Agreement (WA) rights for citizens.

It will be easy to access clear information which explains what we do, why and how we do it, what we find, and what we expect to happen to ensure that rights are upheld.

How will we measure success?

The use of our website continues to grow as do our social media channels.

We are regularly asked to take part in media interviews and appear at conferences and events where there is a focus on the rights of EU and EEA EFTA citizens.

The number of articles about the IMA continues to grow amplifying our voice even further.

Activity thread
Our Brand

Components of success

- Accessibility
- Transparency
- Known

What will we do to achieve this?

- **2021/2022**
We will take every opportunity to establish and raise awareness of the IMA with citizens, stakeholders and the media.
- **2022/2023**
We will make it even easier for people to access details of our work by regularly sharing updates across all our communications channels.
- **2023/2024**
We will regularly take part in events and discussions on how the rights of citizens are upheld by public bodies in the UK.

Objective 1: To become a trusted, known, and credible organisation who can be relied upon to act with fairness, transparency, and impartiality to ensure the rights of EU and EEA EFTA citizens are upheld by public bodies.

Success narrative

It will be clear how we have used intelligence collected, and reported to us, to make decisions on when and how to use our powers.

Stakeholders and public bodies will agree that there is a clear rationale for how we have prioritised our actions even if they do not agree with our priorities.

How will we measure success?

We will take action to resolve general and systemic issues facing EU and EEA EFTA citizens and their family members.

Activity thread
Our Actions

Components of success

- Visible
- Proportionate
- Evidence-based

What will we do to achieve this?

- **2021/2022**
We will develop relationships and information flows with our stakeholders including public bodies, independent organisations and citizens to enhance our timely understanding of problems that may be encountered by citizens. We will consider and respond to all complaints received through our website.
- **2022/2023**
We will use our growing expertise to inform the developing interpretation of citizens’ rights under the Agreement, identifying opportunities to use our litigation powers in key legal cases.
- **2023/2024**
We will continue to respond to emerging intelligence to ensure we are using our powers in the most appropriate way to uphold the rights of citizens.

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Success narrative

Stakeholders and public bodies will acknowledge that we have used our powers in a manner best intended to support improvement even if this is not always successful. Public bodies will listen actively to our observations and respond positively to our recommendations.

How will we measure success?

We will ensure our actions are clear and transparent so stakeholders and public bodies understand how our functions are being exercised which will be highlighted by publishing our recommendations.

What will we do to achieve this?

- 2021/2022**
We will set out how the IMA will use its' powers in our Operational Guidance, providing clarity on the approach we will take including the principles that will underpin our work.
- 2022/2023**
We will continue to review the contents of our Operational Guidance on a regular basis.
- 2023/2024**
We will highlight where public bodies have made improvements and assess if progress has been made in upholding the rights of EU and EEA EFTA citizens.

Activity thread
Our Impact

Components of success

- Timely
- Listened to
- Supporting improvement

Delivering our strategic objectives

Objective 2

To work in partnership to ensure the rights of EU and EEA EFTA citizens in the UK and Gibraltar are upheld by public bodies.

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Success narrative

Citizens with relevant rights will understand what the IMA has been set up to do and where it can, and cannot, help.

Volunteers to citizens' panel will exceed the available number of placements and panel members will actively support the IMA in testing its priorities and understanding.

The information presented by the IMA will be regarded as relevant, informative, and easy to understand.

How will we measure success?

Onward recruitment to the citizens' panel continues to result in numbers in excess of those we need.

Survey of citizens' show there is greater understanding of the rights we uphold and that they are easily able to access what we do and raise issues with us.

Feedback and engagement from our citizens' panel via annual surveys and meeting feedback is constructive and positive and helps shape the work we do.

What will we do to achieve this?

- **2021/2022**
We will directly engage with citizens to ensure their voices are heard and they understand what we do.
- **2022/2023**
Our Annual Plan and Report will be shaped by our engagement with citizens.
- **2023/2024**
We will review how we present our information to ensure it is easily accessible.

Activity thread
With Citizens

Components of success

- Aware
- Engaged
- Supportive

Objective 2: To work in partnership to ensure the rights of EU and EEA EFTA citizens in the UK and Gibraltar are upheld by public bodies.

Success narrative

Stakeholders and Partners will understand what the IMA has been set up to do and where it can, and cannot, help.

Those bodies supporting citizens will be confident that information shared with the IMA will be protected and used.

Those bodies also monitoring public bodies in this area will be confident that they are working with the IMA in a complementary and collegiate way to achieve the best outcomes for citizens.

How will we measure success?

Prioritisation of stakeholder engagement being informed by comprehensive and current intelligence.

Strong engagement with the Legal Sector, including academics and practitioners, to ensure that those advising citizens are fully aware of the IMA's role.

Regular participation in events to promote the role and work of the IMA.

What will we do to achieve this?

- **2021/2022**
A regular programme of stakeholder engagement will be established.
- **2022/2023**
We will adapt our stakeholder engagement to reflect the developing picture of where citizens are encountering difficulties in securing their rights.
- **2023/2024**
We will continue to explore opportunities to achieve better outcomes for citizens.

Activity thread
With Stakeholders

Components of success

- Aware
- Collaborative
- Trusting

Objective 2: To work in partnership to ensure the rights of EU and EEA EFTA citizens in the UK and Gibraltar are upheld by public bodies.

Success narrative

Public bodies will understand the extent of the role of the IMA and how they will work.

Public bodies will be confident to share information with the IMA in line with relevant agreements.

Public bodies will listen actively to our observations and respond positively to our recommendations.

How will we measure success?

Public bodies actively participate in focus groups.

IMA used a sounding board for public authorities to drive their own improvement.

Survey shows that public bodies understand the remit of the IMA.

Activity thread
With Public Bodies

Components of success

- Listening
- Responding
- Learning

What will we do to achieve this?

2021/2022
MOUs will be signed with public bodies so there is common understanding of how we will work together.

We will identify opportunities for early case resolution to address systemic failings where appropriate. We will conduct independent and timely inquiries to identify systemic failings from information gathered and / or from complaints received.

2022/2023
We will continue to use intelligence and / or complaints to investigate and understand potential systemic issues, and to explore opportunities to achieve better outcomes for citizens.

2023/2024
We will continue to raise awareness with public bodies of their role in ensuring the rights of EU and EEA EFTA citizens are upheld and be proactive in sharing best practice and lessons learned.

Delivering our strategic objectives

Objective 3

To be an agile and evolving organisation with a supportive culture which delivers for the EU and EEA EFTA citizens whose rights we help to uphold.

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Success narrative

The IMA supports its staff to achieve professional standards and accreditation in all of its activities.

The IMA is considered an exemplar in the provision of training and development and staff feel supported to achieve their personal and professional goals.

The IMA is recognised as having a positive culture which encourages innovation, avoids blame, and uses mistakes as opportunities for learning.

How will we measure success?

On-going review of personal development plans.

Regular use of success stories and lessons learnt.

Review of actual use vs planned use of learning and development budget.

Review of compliance with performance management framework.

Activity thread
Learning

Components of success

- Professional
- Supportive
- Accountable

What will we do to achieve this?

2021/2022

We will define our learning and development offer and roll out our performance and development model.

Define and approve relevant supporting policies and procedures.

2022/2023

We will continue to improve professional standards/ qualifications over IMA work and develop how we share insights for example through case studies and learning and development opportunities.

2023/2024

We will reconsider our skills framework and consider learning passports for key roles.

Objective 3: To be an agile and evolving organisation with a supportive culture which delivers for the EU and EEA EFTA citizens whose rights we help to uphold.

Success narrative

Staff feel that they have a personal stake in the organisation and are able to influence the way in which things are done.

Staff report a sense of personal pride that they work for the organisation and a commitment to the IMA's goals.

The IMA is recognised as an organisation that embraces flexible working as a way for staff to achieve work-life balance whilst still delivering a quality service for citizens.

How will we measure success?

Regular review of themes coming from staff – from people surveys to those raised by our people forum, team meetings or 121s.

Scrutiny by HR and Remuneration Committee.

Our values and behaviour are embedded across the IMA.

We have delivered on our action plan arising from our first people survey.

What will we do to achieve this?

2021/2022

We will establish a people forum, undertake our first people survey and create an engaging and informative intranet.

2022/2023

We will improve diversity, equality of opportunity and inclusion and develop our workforce strategy further with an emphasis on sustainable working environment and build flexibility for the future.

2023/2024

Consider working towards recognised standards such as Investing in People (IIP).

Activity thread
Engaging

Components of success

- Involved
- Flexible
- Committed

Objective 3: To be an agile and evolving organisation with a supportive culture which delivers for the EU and EEA EFTA citizens whose rights we help to uphold.

Success narrative

The Board of the IMA provides confident and competent support and challenge to the organisation. Board members are ambassadors for the work of the IMA and ensure that the organisation upholds the public service principles in all it does.

Staff feel that they have the tools needed to do their jobs and technology is used effectively to support organisational processes.

The IMA uses its resources (time, money, information) wisely to achieve maximum impact and value-for-money.

How will we measure success?

Internal and external reviews – including National Audit Office and Government Internal Audit Authority.

Scrutiny by IMA’s HR and Remuneration Committee

We are aware of our staff resources in all areas and have identified roles and skills needed for the future.

Activity thread
Well run

Components of success

- Well governed
- Technology enabled
- Appropriately resourced

What will we do to achieve this?

2021/2022

We will roll out our Board development programme and complete a Board effectiveness review and our first Governance Statement for our annual report and accounts.

2022/2023

We will improve our risk management and management assurance arrangements, our management information and continue to focus on stringent financial controls.

Continued focus in stringent financial controls.

2023/2024

Improve records and corporate data management.



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