



## CENTRE FOR CROSS BORDER STUDIES

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Alex Maskey MLA  
Chairperson, Social Development Committee  
Parliament Buildings  
Ballymiscaw, Stormont,  
Belfast BT4 3XX  
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Dear Mr Maskey, MLA

In response to the **Welfare Reform** public consultation I would appreciate if you consider our recommendation that information relating to the processing of cross border claims for Universal Credit be clearly outlined in policy documents and working guidelines for the relevant staff responsible for processing claims.

According to EU regulations the social security rights of cross border workers frequently depends on their country of last employment and only occasionally their country of residence. Therefore specific consideration should be given to:

- Claims from cross border workers, living North and working South ( e.g. real time HMRC information will not apply as cross border workers are required to submit tax returns once per year)
- Claims from cross border workers, living South and working North (e.g. currently cross border applications for Child Tax Credits regularly take in excess of 18 months)
- Claims from Northern Ireland residents moving South across the border (e.g. exporting Universal Credit)
- Claims from Southern residents moving into Northern Ireland (e.g. clear guidelines regarding entitlement to Universal Credit)

It is our experience that cross border claims for benefits and tax credits are subject to cumbersome red-tape and frequently result in lengthy and unnecessary delays for applicants and their families. We request that due consideration is given to significantly improving the application process for cross border applicants.

If you need any further information or clarification on any point please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely,

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