



Case Study: Kamil – Journey from Exploitation to Stability

Kamil, a survivor of work exploitation, was registered on the *Back in Control* project—a support programme for individuals affected by modern slavery and labour exploitation. Although he had been living in the UK since 2010, by 2023 he still had no settled immigration status. His situation was complicated by a criminal conviction from Poland and a significant gap in documented residency and employment, particularly for the year 2018, during which he worked illegally and was not registered with a GP.

Kamil's precarious status left him vulnerable and excluded from many essential services and protections. In response, the charity took a multi-faceted approach to help him regularise his immigration status and rebuild his life.

One of the initial steps involved seeking legal advice. The ICOS charity contacted the North East Law Centre to discuss the impact of Kamil's criminal convictions on his application. At the same time, we worked intensively to gather missing documentation required for his EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) application. We contacted HMRC, the NHS, and Kamil's former employer to request evidence of his presence and work history in the UK.

When Kamil's EUSS application was rejected as invalid due to insufficient evidence, we referred him to Europaia, a specialist organisation experienced in complex immigration cases. We liaised closely with Europaia, who took over the application process and supported Kamil in preparing a new submission.

To strengthen his application, the charity staff personally visited Lloyds Bank to retrieve historical account information covering 2015–2018. Additionally, we visited Kamil's dental surgery to obtain medical records from 2018–2019, which could help demonstrate his continuous residence. The requested records were successfully retrieved.

Understanding the importance of proving Kamil's vulnerability, we prepared a personal statement from his partner and submitted a letter to his GP outlining his history of alcohol addiction and ongoing treatment for depression. We requested a formal statement from the GP confirming Kamil's health condition to support his EUSS case.

Throughout this period, we also assisted Kamil in practical matters. He was enrolled in ESOL classes with Key Subject Tuition through a referral from ICOS, enabling him to improve his English skills and better integrate into his community.

In February 2024, after prolonged effort and collaboration with Europaia, Kamil was finally granted Settled Status—a significant milestone that allowed him to access full rights in the UK.

Following this success, we helped him apply for Universal Credit (UC), ensuring the claim was backdated to the date his immigration status was granted. We supported him in navigating his online UC account, including how to report a fit note, and logged him into

his Government Gateway account to check for any outstanding tax refunds. Additionally, when Kamil moved into a new flat, we provided assistance with registering for council tax.

Thanks to the support he received, Kamil was able to resume employment, which had been paused due to his immigration uncertainty. He is now settled, financially more secure, and better integrated into society. He is also in a secure and supportive relationship with his partner, which has been an important source of stability throughout his journey. Kamil even helps to shape the Back in Control project by being a member of its Project Steering Group. The Project Steering Group (PSG) is an advisory group that includes our Back in Control clients (service users).