

British Born, Bred, and Registered: An update to my citizenship story

Dear Reader,

A Home Office letter arrived. Usually, this would fill me with dread. Fear. Anxiety.

Today, it read: 'I am pleased to tell you that your application for British citizenship has been approved'. I read again, and again, just to be sure.

“Approved”

Some time ago, [I told you a story](#) about a girl who discovered that she may not be as British as she'd always believed. She was heart-broken:

“But I was born here?”

It's only fair I write to you again to tell you that, with special thanks to the [Project for the Registration of Children as British Citizens \(PRCBC\)](#), I am now a British citizen.

The citizenship ceremony was short and sweet. I looked around the room and saw stories similar to mine in the eyes of budding citizens who were just as relieved to be there as I was. Here, we affirmed our commitment to continue behaving as we always had, caring for our neighbours and our homes.

Then, they read out my name and I received my registration certificate.

And just like that, I am British.

To be honest, I felt numb. And that's how it stayed for a while. Nothing had physically changed. A UK flag didn't sprout from the earth next to me. My voice and face remained the same as they had always been.

Oddly, the first feeling I experienced was grief. It bubbled beneath the surface and when I finally let myself feel it, it hit me like a wave.

“I would have thought you'd be happy!”

Of course. I am overjoyed. Grateful. Overwhelmed. Excited, ecstatic, relieved. But I also needed to grieve the moments I lost to this long and tumultuous legal question. Grieve the several years I lost to the fear, anxiety, and discomfort I felt as I experienced such uncertainty. I will continue to feel its effects for some time.

I needed to experience the guilt, too. Not everyone with my background will receive their certificate. Some have yet to make the same discovery I did, while others may have committed [offences](#) – the battle they face is more challenging than my own.

The next feeling I experienced was gratitude. The kind of gratitude that makes you feel deeply lucky to have such special people around you. The kind of gratitude that keeps you in disbelief that you managed to achieve what you needed.

Firstly, my gratitude is to PRCBC. They have changed my life. By generously supporting me, they have given me so many opportunities: to vote, to belong, to feel safe, to travel freely, to access healthcare and welfare services should I need them, and ultimately, to call the UK my home. Just as it had always been.

Secondly, my gratitude is to my loved ones. To the dear friends who offered their help. To the wonderful people who held me as I cried, fearing barriers and deportation. To everyone who took action when I asked – that's you, dear Reader.

I am so grateful to all of you.

The fight is not yet over.

Not until children and young people born and raised in Britain are able to access their [citizenship rights – without barriers](#).

For now, I can rest with the knowledge that I am home.

Thank you, Reader, and I hope to hear from you soon.

Warmest,

Alicia, November 2019

For PRCBC and Hogan Lovells joint leaflet:

<https://prcbc.files.wordpress.com/2019/04/leaflet-british-citizens-rights-of-children-born-to-eaaswiss-nationals-.pdf>

For PRCBC, Hogan Lovells and PositiveNegative joint comic:

<https://prcbc.files.wordpress.com/2019/05/belonging-british-citizenship-rights-of-children-on-eaa-and-swiss-nationals.pdf>