

# [News story: Expat voting rights treaty secured with Spain](#)

The treaty signed by Robin Walker MP and Minister Marco Aguiriano, today (21 January 2019) means that British citizens living in Spain and Spanish citizens in the UK can continue to participate in local elections in the future.

The treaty contains transitional provisions, ensuring that UK nationals who are registered to vote in the upcoming local elections in Spain this May, will continue to be able to do so in any Brexit scenario. Guidance on how to ensure you are registered can be found on the Spanish government website.

In future, UK nationals will need to have resided in Spain for three years to exercise their rights under this treaty. The criteria of Spanish nationals to vote in local elections in the UK will remain the same.

We welcome this significant treaty that reaffirms the importance of the relationship between the UK and Spain, underlines our shared commitment to democracy, and most importantly enables these citizens to continue to determine who represents them in the country they reside in.

We continue to explore similar bilateral treaties to secure these rights for British citizens across the EU and we are approaching all EU Member States on this subject.

To provide certainty while we pursue these agreements, we do not anticipate making any changes to the current primary legislative framework for candidacy and voting rights of EU citizens living in the UK in the immediate future.

It is our intent that all eligible EU citizens living in the UK will be able to vote in local elections in England and Northern Ireland this May. Those who are nominated and elected at or before these local elections will also be permitted to serve their full term in office.

Brexit Minister Robin Walker said: "I'm very pleased to have signed such an important treaty with one of our closest neighbours which maintains people's ability to exercise their democratic rights, by standing and voting in local elections.

This adds a further guarantee to the rights of UK nationals in Spain, and Spanish citizens in the UK, in any scenario.

## **LINKS TO OTHER USEFUL INFO:**

[Living in Spain guide](#)

[Types of election, referendums, and who can vote](#)