

# Open Letter from the Foreign Secretary to UK nationals living in Spain

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In less than a month, the will of the British people will be delivered and the United Kingdom will leave the European Union. This, of course, will be a time of transition. But for those living in Spain, I want to assure you that as Foreign Secretary, I am working to ensure that your rights and access to services remain as strong as ever.

From Madrid to Malaga, and Barcelona to Benidorm, 300,000 Britons have made Spain their home. No matter the terms of our departure from the EU, you will continue to be able to live and work in Spain.

But to make sure your daily needs are met, there are some steps you must take to get ready for Brexit on 31 October. You'll need to register for residency, check your healthcare cover, verify your passport validity online and exchange your UK driving licence for a Spanish one. To check the specific actions you need to take, and stay up to date, go to the Living in Spain Guide at [gov.uk/livinginspain](https://www.gov.uk/livinginspain)

In Government, we are doing our bit to get ready for Brexit, too. We are making sure that on 1 November, every British national living in Spain can go on living, working, studying and accessing healthcare.

We are working with the Spanish authorities to make processes as smooth and straightforward as possible, whether you're applying for residency or a new driving licence.

And we are working with the Spanish National Health System, SNS, to ensure that tourists, students and European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) holders will be able to access healthcare in the same way until at least 31 December 2020.

We are working hard to reach a deal with the EU. But even if the UK leaves without a deal, the UK and Spain have each taken steps to ensure you will be able to continue accessing healthcare in Spain, exactly as you do now, until at least 31 December 2020 if you are an S1 form holder.

Of course, every circumstance is unique. And we know that some British people might need some extra support during this transition.

We want to support those who may find it harder to complete all the paperwork – like pensioners or disabled people, those living in remote areas, and those needing assistance with language translation or interpretation. The Foreign Office has allocated an extra £3 million for charities and other voluntary organisations to help these people keep their rights and access to services in the EU.

You should be checking in regularly with the Embassy in Madrid or local consulates in Alicante, Barcelona, Ibiza, Las Palmas, Malaga, Palma de Mallorca, Santa Cruz de Tenerife, for information on upcoming local 'question and answer' sessions, town hall meetings and information stands in supermarkets and on high streets.

And by now, you should also be seeing one of the largest information campaigns in British history, which launched with advice in newspapers and on billboards, encouraging people across the UK and Europe to Get Ready for Brexit.

This is an exciting time, but also one of unprecedented change. We're getting ready for Brexit on 31 October, and I would urge you to do the same.

### **Further information**