



Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office

FCDO Citizens' Rights Secretariat Meeting

On Tuesday 20 April, our Chair, Sue Wilson took part in a meeting with representatives of the FCDO (Citizens' Rights department), British Embassy staff from Madrid and Paris and representatives of citizens' rights groups across the EU.

Groups from Spain, France, Portugal, Austria, Germany, Italy and the Czech Republic took part in an hour-long webinar, covering current Brexit-related issues. In particular, there was much discussion over the misrepresentation by the media of recent events involving British residents of the EU, especially in relation to travel restrictions and the 90-day rule. In addition, the FCDO were keen to receive feedback on the quality and quantity of information provided via the government website. You can read the Living In guide for Spain [here](#).

To date, there have been over Embassy 900 outreach events across the EU, providing information and advice to UK nationals in Europe. Additional support across 12 EU countries is being provided by the UK National Support Fund (UKNSF), which has received UK government funding of £4 million.

In Spain, in the last year alone, 22,000 Brits have registered for the first time, even with the issues presented by Covid. Since the 2016 referendum, there have been 90,000 new registrations by British residents.

The Embassy are working with the Spanish authorities to provide more information in English. They were keen to provide reassurance that Spain will not deport any British citizens that have made Spain their home. However, they did point out that any non-residents overstaying their allowed 90 days should now be making arrangements to apply for residency or to leave Spain. The Embassy Facebook page – [Brits in Spain](#) – now has 70,000 followers and has hosted 10 live events, giving advice and answering questions, over the past year.

Sue Wilson commented, "It was very encouraging to meet with officials from the FCDO and have the opportunity to share our concerns and offer some constructive criticism. The British Embassy in Madrid have always been helpful, communicative and extremely knowledgeable and it's good to know that the FCDO share their willingness to listen to our concerns and act in our best interests. I intend to stay in direct contact with them to ensure our rights and concerns are at the forefront of their thinking and actions".