



Driving Licences

- Anyone that registered as required in 2020, yet had their application refused as their TIE was dated 2021, will be able to acquire a new licence. The authorities have been instructed that all TIE's, regardless of the date, must be accepted. Those affected will either be contacted directly by their local DGT office in the next 2 weeks or will be required to make a further appointment to complete the exchange process. For these people only, the deadline for completion of the exchange – without the need to take a Spanish driving test – will be extended to the end of 2021.
- If you failed to register with the DGT prior to the end of 2020 as required, there is no change to the deadline. Your UK driving licence is only valid until the 30 June 2021. However, discussions between the British and Spanish authorities are still ongoing. In order to keep updated with any new developments, we recommend you sign up for direct email alerts from the Embassy [here](#)



Travel

- If you are planning to travel, or are expecting visitors from the UK, the Embassy recommend you check in to their Travel advice regularly to keep up to date:
 - Check out the Foreign Travel Advice for Spain [here](#)
 - Travel advice for the EU, Switzerland, Norway, Iceland & Liechtenstein [here](#)
 - Entry requirements for Spain [here](#)
 - Spanish Ministry of Interior advice on 'letter of invitation' [here](#)
 - Spanish ministry of Interior advice on entry requirements and conditions [here](#)

- There has been considerable confusion following media coverage of the carta de invitación. The Embassy confirmed that this is an EU-wide rule for all third-country nationals & has been in place for many years. It is up to each EU member state to decide on what checks they wish to put in place for visitors. The carta de invitación is **not an obligatory document** required to prove the length of/reason for a visitor's stay.
- It is entirely at the discretion of individual border authorities as to what they will ask visitors or what border checks will be put in place. All visitors need to be prepared to answer the following questions should they be asked:
 - What is the nature of your stay?
 - How long are you staying for & do you have a return ticket?
 - Do you have sufficient funds to finance your trip? - (holding a credit card enough)
 - Where will you be staying?
- The carta de invitación is merely **one of the options** that proves where a visitor intends to stay. To date, the Embassy are unaware of any cases - despite a recent increase in the number of UK arrivals – of anyone experiencing problems at border control for not providing a carta de invitación. Should you be aware of anyone experiencing such issues, they would be very keen to know about it.



Residency

- Both the Spanish & the British authorities are encouraging all those with the old green residency documentation or card to switch to the new TIE, though there is no obligation to do so – your Withdrawal Agreement (WA) rights are exactly the same. The benefits of switching are:
 - the durability of the card
 - having photo ID - recognisable across the EU
 - your WA rights are visible, so hence easier for other EU countries to recognise/easier to travel in general
- Extra resources have been put in place in some areas – notably in the Alicante province – to deal with the backlog. It is not necessary, where you have the choice, to go to the nearest police station in your province, so if you are able to travel a bit further, you may find it easier to get an appointment. Your nearest office may have a backlog, but your second nearest may have nobody waiting at all.



27 May 2021

'Votes for life' for British citizens living in Spain

- British citizens who have moved abroad will be given 'votes for life' as the UK Government scraps the arbitrary 15-year limit on the voting rights
- New measures announced today will also make it easier for overseas electors to remain registered to vote for longer.
- Together, these changes will empower more British citizens living overseas to participate in the UK's democracy.

New measures announced in the Queen's Speech will make it easier for British citizens who have moved abroad to participate in British democracy.

Decisions made in the UK Parliament on foreign policy, defence, immigration, pensions and trade deals affect British citizens who live overseas. It is therefore right that they have a say in UK Parliamentary General Elections.

Today the Government is setting out further detail on plans to scrap the arbitrary rule that prevents British citizens from voting in General Elections if they have lived abroad for more than 15 years.

The changes, which will form part of the Elections Bill, will also include measures to enable overseas electors to stay registered to vote for longer, with an absent voting arrangement in place.

HMA Hugh Elliott, said:

"In an increasingly connected world, most British citizens living in Spain retain deep ties to the United Kingdom. Many still have family there, worked there for many years, and some have even fought for our country.

"They deserve to have their voices heard in Parliament, no matter where they live, and I am delighted that UK Nationals living in Spain will now be able to participate in our democracy."

The proposals fulfil a manifesto commitment to deliver 'votes for life', extending the voting franchise for UK Parliamentary General Elections to all British citizens living overseas who have been previously registered or previously resident in the UK. These changes will come into effect in time for the next scheduled General Election in 2024.

In addition, new rules will mean overseas electors can stay registered for longer, including with an absent voting arrangement in place, requiring them to renew their registration details once every three years, rather than annually.

Electors will be able to reapply for a postal vote or refresh their proxy vote at the same time as renewing their voter registration, streamlining the process and helping to ensure overseas electors have appropriate voting arrangements in place ahead of an election.

The Government's wider Elections Bill will also: improve access to voting for electors with disabilities; prevent foreign interference by hostile actors; tackle electoral fraud by post, proxy, in polling stations or through intimidation and undue influence; and increase transparency and accountability within our elections. Further announcements will be made on its measures ahead of the Bill's introduction.

UK Nationals living in Spain can also vote in local municipal elections in Spain once they have been resident here for more than three years. For further information visit gov.uk/livinginspain.