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# Citizens' Rights Info Booklet

Information booklet for UK  
nationals living in France before 1  
January 2021

[gov.uk/livinginfrance](https://gov.uk/livinginfrance)



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## WITHDRAWAL AGREEMENT

On 31 January 2020 the UK left the European Union with a deal, known as the UK-EU Withdrawal Agreement (WA). The transition period concluded on 31 December 2020 and the UK's trading relationship with the EU is now governed by the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement signed in December 2020.

The Withdrawal Agreement is a legally binding international treaty and protects the following rights, amongst others, for UK nationals in France for as long as they remain resident:

- Right to live, work and/or study
- Right to access healthcare, benefits and education
- Right to ongoing coordination of social security systems including the lifetime protection of uprated pensions
- and the right to bring existing close family members to live with them in France.

In order to secure these rights, UK nationals must apply for a Withdrawal Agreement residency permit before 1 July 2021. You need to have your new residency permit before 1 October 2021. Before this date, you maintain the right to live in France without a residency permit, as well as the right to work and access benefits, according to Article 7, chapter IV of Decree no. 2020-1417 (19/11/2020).



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## RESIDENCY

If you were legally resident in France before 1 January 2021, you will be able to continue living here in line with the Withdrawal Agreement.

However, all **UK nationals** resident in France need to obtain a new residency permit, including:

- Those with a European carte de séjour (incl. “permanent”, or with no expiry)
- Those without a European carte de séjour
- Those in the process of applying for a second nationality
- Those married to or in a civil partnership with French/EU nationals
- Apply online for the new residency permit before 1 July 2021

If you applied for residency via the previous ‘no-deal’ website, you do not need to re-apply. Your application will be processed by the appropriate Préfecture before 1 October 2021. However, if you have moved to a different Département since applying, you must apply again.

Different rules apply to those who settled in France after 1 January 2021 – see more here: <https://uk.ambafrance.org/BREXIT-all-visa-related-provisions>



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## HEALTHCARE

If you were legally resident in France before the 1 January 2021, your rights to healthcare access are protected under the Withdrawal Agreement.

### Your Healthcare Rights under the Withdrawal Agreement

#### Workers

If you are paying directly into the French healthcare system (PUMa), you will continue to have French health insurance via your carte vitale and you can continue to use your French-issued Carte Européenne d'Assurance Maladie (CEAM) for necessary care when travelling to other EU Member States and to the UK. We strongly recommend you take out comprehensive travel insurance for travel. Find out more about travel insurance here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/foreign-travel-insurance>

#### S1 Holders

If you have a registered S1 form at your local CPAM office and were living in France before 1 January 2021, your rights to access healthcare in France will stay the same if you are either in receipt of a UK-State Pension (and/or other exportable benefits) or a cross-border worker who lives in France and commutes to work in the UK. See more here: [gov.uk/guidance/healthcare-in-france](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/healthcare-in-france)

For any questions on eligibility, or for a copy of your S1, contact Overseas Healthcare Services (NHS Business Services Authority – NHSBSA) on +44 (0) 191 218 1999. More information here: <https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad/moving-abroad/planning-your-healthcare/>

**For more on healthcare in France:** [gov.uk/guidance/healthcare-in-france](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/healthcare-in-france)

[gov.uk/livinginfrance](https://www.gov.uk/livinginfrance)



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## European Health Insurance Cards (EHIC)

UK nationals residing and/or working in the EU before 31 December 2020 continue to have life-long reciprocal healthcare rights provided they remain within the scope of the Withdrawal Agreement.

If your healthcare is funded by the UK in France, your current EHIC remains valid for necessary healthcare in other EU Member States (not the one where you live) until the expiration date on the card and so does not need to be replaced immediately. Once it has expired, it can be replaced with a new Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC) or the Withdrawal Agreement EHIC (CRA EHIC).

Under the Trade and Cooperation Agreement, current EHICs will also remain valid until the expiration date on the card for your British friends and family visiting France or other EU Member States i.e. normally resident in the UK. Once it has expired, it can be replaced with a new Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC).

**More on EHICs and GHICs:** <https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad/apply-for-a-free-uk-global-health-insurance-card-ghic/>

## Accessing the NHS

If you are a UK national and live in the EU, you should not expect to be able to use NHS services for free when visiting the UK unless you have an EHIC, Provisional replacement Certificate or S2 to show your healthcare costs are funded by the EU country in which you now live, or another exemption applies.

Some former UK residents do not have to pay for NHS treatment when visiting England. Read more about healthcare when you no longer live in the UK: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/healthcare-for-eu-and-efta-citizens-visiting-the-uk#uk-nationals-who-no-longer-live-in-the-uk>



## WORKING AND STUDYING

Any UK national living in France before 1 January 2021 has a protected right to work and study here for as long as they remain resident. You can also change status under the Withdrawal Agreement, e.g. become a worker after studying.

### **UK Professional qualifications**

Recognition decisions made before 1 January 2021 remain valid. Recognition applications submitted before 1 January 2021 will be subject to EU rules.

The UK's exit from the EU does not affect recognition of academic qualifications (Bachelor, Master, PhD degrees).

There are additional provisions on professional qualification recognition after 1 January 2021 in the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement.

## PENSIONS & BENEFITS

Under the Withdrawal Agreement, you can carry on receiving any UK benefits you already receive in France for as long as you carry on living here, and continue to meet all other eligibility requirements.

The UK State Pension will continue to be paid to all those eligible. If you were living in France before 1 January 2021, your UK State Pension will continue to be uprated for as long as you live here, including if you begin to claim your pension on or after 1 January 2021.

Past and future contributions to EU, EFTA and UK state pension schemes will be equally protected for life, for as long as you live in France.

For information on private pensions and banking, please contact your pension provider or bank.



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## TRAVEL AND PASSPORTS

You should carry your residence permit (EU permit or Withdrawal Agreement permit) as well as your valid passport when you travel. If you have applied but not yet received your permit, carry your certificate of application. You will have received this as an email.

If you have not yet applied for a residence permit, you should carry evidence that you are resident in France. This could include a tenancy agreement, property rental receipts, or gas or electricity bills in your name dating from 2020.

If you cannot show that you are resident in France, you may be asked additional questions at the border to enter the Schengen area, and your passport may be stamped on entry and exit. This will not affect your rights in France.

You must have at least 6 months left on an adult or child passport to travel to most countries in Europe (not including Ireland). This requirement does not apply if you are in scope of the Withdrawal Agreement and are travelling to France or within the Schengen Area.

You can continue to renew your British passport by applying online (see [gov.uk/livinginfrance](https://www.gov.uk/livinginfrance)). The UK and France both recognise dual nationality.



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## RETURNING TO THE UK

UK nationals can return to the UK to settle at any point in time by virtue of their UK citizenship. You will be able to access free NHS healthcare if you can show that you have returned to the UK to live and have an intention to stay there (e.g. proof of residency).

Close family members of UK nationals (including spouses, partners, parents and grandparents) who are moving to the UK with you from the EU, will be able to do so without a visa until 29 March 2022. They will be able to apply to the EU Settlement Scheme upon arrival to secure their residency rights. Those moving to the UK after 29 March 2022 will need to meet the new immigration rules.

EU nationals independently moving to the UK from 1 January 2021 need to meet the new immigration rules.

**For more information:** [gov.uk/guidance/returning-to-the-uk](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/returning-to-the-uk)





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## FAMILY REUNIFICATION

If you were legally resident in France before 1 January 2021, you can be joined by close and current family members\* (and future born or adopted children) of whatever nationality at any time in the future, for as long as you remain resident. They will also need to apply for a residency permit in line with the Withdrawal Agreement.

Step-parents and step-children may be able to join you in some circumstances, otherwise extended family and future spouses will need to meet immigration rules for non-Europeans if they wish to join you in France.

\*Close family members includes spouses or registered partners, durable partners, dependent children and grandchildren and dependent parents and grandparents.

## VOTING

Voting Rights are not covered by the Withdrawal Agreement. Since 1 February 2020, UK nationals in France are no longer eligible to vote or stand in elections in France, or European Parliament elections.



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## DRIVING LICENCES

Mutual recognition of driving licences is not covered by the Withdrawal Agreement. However, you can continue to drive on your UK licence in France during 2021. The future treatment and exchange process for driving licences from 1 January 2021 is under discussion between the British and French governments.

For more information visit <https://www.gov.uk/driving-abroad>

## PET PASSPORTS

If you have a pet passport issued by France or another EU member state, you can use it to travel with your pet to Great Britain and elsewhere in the EU. See more <https://www.gov.uk/bring-pet-to-great-britain>

A GB-issued EU pet passport is not valid for travel to the EU or Northern Ireland. You should speak to your vet before you travel to get the necessary pet travel documents and ensure you are compliant with the EU Pet Travel Regulations.

See more: <https://www.gov.uk/taking-your-pet-abroad/travelling-to-an-eu-country-or-northern-ireland>

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## Keep in touch:

**Twitter:** @BritishinFrance  
@UKinFrance

**Facebook:** @ukinfrance

**Newsletter:** [www.gov.uk/government/publications/voisins-voices-a-newsletter-for-the-british-community-in-france](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/voisins-voices-a-newsletter-for-the-british-community-in-france)

## Apply for residency in France:

<https://contacts-demarches.interieur.gouv.fr/brexit/brexit-residence-permit-application/>

## Read the French government's guidance for UK nationals (in English):

[www.brexit.gouv.fr/sites/brexit/accueil/vous-etes-britannique-en.html](http://www.brexit.gouv.fr/sites/brexit/accueil/vous-etes-britannique-en.html)

## Living in Europe

**Pages:** <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/living-in-europe>



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## **British Embassy Paris**

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Paris Cedex 08

75383 Paris

France

## **Telephone**

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**The information in this leaflet is correct as at the 1st March 2021**

**See the latest at [gov.uk/livinginfrance](https://www.gov.uk/livinginfrance)**