

**keyword:** moving to spain

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**Title tag:** Moving to Spain 101 – A Complete Guide for Non-EU Citizens

**Metadescription:** What are the requirements for moving to Spain as a non-European citizen? Legal documents; cost; language proficiency; translations and more.

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## Spanish long stay visas for periods longer than 90 days

If you wish to stay in Spain for longer than 90 days, you will need a long stay visa (*visado de larga duración*). There are different long stay visas, depending on why you want them, but basically the process of applying for one and its length of validity is similar. Here are four of the more common Spanish long stay visa types:

- Long stay non-lucrative visa, *visado nonlucrativo* (not for work, just for living in Spain, e.g. retirement);
- Long stay tourist visa;
- Long stay work visa;
- Long stay study visa.

A long stay visa is for 12 months stay for the purpose stated. You can then extend the visa for another 12 months and then again for a further 12 to 24 months. After you have been living in Spain for 5 years, you're ready to begin the process of moving to Spain permanently, by applying for a permanent residence visa. This is valid for 5 years at a time and can be renewed at the end of this period at a Spanish police station.

All long stay visas must be applied for in your own country. You will need the relevant application form and attend a Spanish consulate or embassy for an interview where your application and documents will be reviewed. [The documents](#) depend on the type of visa but the main ones common to all visa categories are listed below. All documents must be in Spanish or translated into Spanish by a [sworn Spanish translator](#).

## Moving to Spain: Registering yourself as a resident of Spain

One of the more confusing requirements in Spain is the number of extra official things you have to do after settling down in the country, even if you arrive with a long stay visa. For a start, you need to register yourself at the *Padron* office at your nearest town hall (*ayuntamiento*) and receive a "*certificado de empadronamiento*." This registration is something that everyone in Spain does, including Spanish and other E.U. citizens.

With the certificate you will also get a personal foreign identification number (*número de identidad de extranjero*, or NIE ). The NIE is a unique identification number that is used for things like Spanish tax, financial transactions, etc.

You also need to apply for your foreigner's identification card (*tarjeta de identificación de extranjero* or TIE) at the nearest Foreign Citizens' Office (*Oficina de Extranjería*) or police station (*Comisaría*). This is a plastic card with your photo on it and is the foreigners' equivalent of the Spanish i.d. card, which all Spanish citizens have. The full list of [documents](#) and [translation requirements](#) for these extra formalities is given below.

## **Moving to Spain for Retirement**

To retire in Spain, you will need to have a non lucrative visa as explained above. This is a 1year visa that you can extend 1 year at a time until you have been living in Spain for more than 5 years when you can then apply for a permanent residence visa, valid for 5 years at a time.

## **How can I apply for Spanish citizenship?**

You may be able to apply for Spanish citizenship if you have been living in Spain for more than 10 years. The benefit of Spanish citizenship is that you have all the rights of free travel within the E.U. You are also able to have the benefit of the same rights as any other Spanish citizen. The disadvantage, compared to just being a permanent resident, is that Spain does not recognize dual nationality, so you would have to renounce your birth citizenship and all that entails. This wouldn't be a decision to take lightly if you still have a lot of family in your old home. Spanish citizenship is also dependent on you having a [good, working knowledge](#) of the Spanish language and Spanish culture and laws.

## **Documents required for Spanish residence applications**

All documents that are not in Spanish already must be translated into Spanish by a [sworn translator](#) certified by the Spanish government.

## **Documents needed for a *certificado de empadronamiento***

- Proof of address, e.g. a utility bill, rental contract, deed of purchase, etc.
- Passport; plus a copy of the passport ID pages
- Completed application form (obtainable at the Padron office)

## **Documents needed for a NIE/TIE (identification number and foreigners' identification card)**

- Appointment confirmation (sent to your email)
- Proof of enrolment in a school
- Passport and a photocopy
- A photocopy of your Spanish long term visa and entrance stamp
- 3 passport-size photos, white background, not older than 3 months
- Your *Certificado de Empadronamiento*; (see above)
- A copy of the completed application form EX-17

- A copy of the tax form 790 Code 012
- Receipt of paying the tax fee

### ***Documents needed for a Schengen visa***

- Visa application form. Fully completed and signed.
- Two recently taken photos must be attached.
- A valid passport.
- Round trip reservation or itinerary.
- Travel insurance policy.
- Proof of accommodation.
- Proof of financial means. Bank account statement – that shows you have enough money in your account for the trip. The statement shall be no older than 3 months.
- Sponsorship Letter
- Proof of paid visa fee;
- all documents to be accompanied by a [sworn translation](#) if not in Spanish.

### ***Documents needed for a Spanish long stay visa***

- Completed Application form;
- Passport
- 2x passport photos;
- Proof of sufficient financial income or assets for duration of stay;
- Proof of Spanish health insurance;
- Proof of fee paid;
- Doctor's certificate to show you have no underlying serious health conditions;
- Criminal record check;
- Proof of employment/ educational course depending on type of visa;
- Other documents dependent on exact type applied for.
- All documents to be accompanied by a [sworn translation](#) if not in Spanish.

### ***Documents needed for Spanish citizenship applications by naturalisation:***

- A completed application form;
- Your passport, valid for at least 6 more months;
- 3 passport sized photos;
- NIE number (if applying while living in Spain);
- Copy of your permanent residence visa;
- Application fee;
- Proof of Spanish health insurance;
- Proof of 10 years or more residency in Spain;
- Criminal record clearance certificate from your own country;
- Spanish criminal record clearance certificate issued by the *Registro Central de Penado* within the last 90 days;
- Proof of competency in Spanish language, up to CEFR-A2 level;
- A CCSE exam certificate, showing familiarity with Spanish culture and laws.

- all documents to be accompanied by a [sworn translation](#) if not in Spanish.

### **Translation requirements for Schengen visas, Spanish long stay visas and citizenship**

It is essential to ensure all documents needed for Spanish visas and citizenship applications are translated into Spanish before submission. Professionally translated documents mean there will be less confusion and opportunity for miscommunication. When you get your documents translated, make sure that they are also classified as "[sworn translations](#)" so that they are authentic. This latter is a compulsory prerequisite for all Spanish long stay and citizenship applications.

### **Sworn Spanish translations**

It is a requirement of the Spanish government that all documents submitted at any stage of a residence visa or citizenship application are in Spanish as noted above. Any document in English or any other language must first be translated by a sworn Spanish translator who is certified by the Spanish government. Each translation must be accompanied by an Apostille as validated by the Hague Convention.