

Civil partnership or marriage: the papers before the decision

It looks like a small step until it asks for certificates from two countries, apostilled, translated and recent. That is where most files stop.

1 · The papers to gather first

Get everything together before you start. Almost every step in this guide stops dead for one missing document, and starting again costs more than waiting a day.

- Each partner's full birth certificate, from the country of birth, apostilled and translated.
- Each partner's civil status certificate, recently issued: it is the one that most often expires during the wait.
- If either has been married before, the final divorce decree or the death certificate, apostilled and translated.
- The padrón certificate for both, and for the same address if your region requires it.
- Both valid identity documents, and the NIE of whoever holds one.

2 · The order to do things in

- 1 Choose before you start. A civil partnership and a marriage have different effects on inheritance, pensions and tax, and the procedure will not warn you.
- 2 Check which register applies: the regional register of de facto unions or the Civil Registry, depending on what you chose and where you live.
- 3 Order the foreign certificates first, and look at their expiry. Many are valid only a few months.
- 4 Have them apostilled before translating, so the sworn translation covers the apostille too.
- 5 Book the appointment and attend together, with originals and copies: at almost every register you must appear jointly.

3 · The mistakes we see again and again

- Translating first and apostilling afterwards. You pay for the translation twice.
- Producing a civil status certificate issued a year ago. Most registers want it recent.
- Assuming a civil partnership gives the same rights as a marriage. It does not, and still less outside Spain.
- Forgetting joint registration on the padrón where the region requires it. It is a substantive requirement, not one more paper.
- Taking a foreign divorce as valid without checking it is recognised in Spain. Sometimes one more step is needed.

4 · Where you can check it yourself

Official pages, checked on 22/09/2026. The administration changes its screens without warning: if something does not match, the official source wins, not this guide.

- **Sede electrónica del Ministerio de Justicia, trámites del Registro Civil**

<https://sede.mjusticia.gob.es/es/tramites>

- **Ministerio de Justicia, certificado de nacimiento**

<https://sede.mjusticia.gob.es/es/tramites/certificado-nacimiento>

- **Portal de la Generalitat Valenciana, trámites**

<https://www.gva.es/es>

- **Código Civil**

<https://www.boe.es/buscar/act.php?id=BOE-A-1889-4763>

If you would rather we did it

€199 the complete civil-partnership file, with the appointment

€249 the same, with accompaniment on the day of the appointment

We are not family lawyers and we do not draft matrimonial agreements or cohabitation pacts: those affect property and inheritance and are signed by a law firm. Nor do we choose between partnership and marriage for you: we build the file for whichever you have chosen.

A question? One message is enough

Write to us on WhatsApp at **+34 613 13 87 84** (wa.me/34613138784) and a person answers. Asking costs nothing and commits you to nothing.

Information guide, not legal or tax advice. contact@holaowners.com · holaowners.com