

Becoming resident: four doors and only one order

Foreigners' register, padrón, healthcare and tax. They open in an order, and doing it backwards costs months.

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.

- A valid passport or identity document, and your NIE if you already have one.
- Proof of where you will live: the deed, the tenancy agreement, or the owner's authorisation with their document.
- Proof of means: pension, payslip, bank statements or a certificate from your bank, depending on your case.
- Proof of healthcare cover: European card, S1 form, special agreement or private policy.
- For those coming from outside the EU, the relevant visa or authorisation, and the 790 fee paid.
- Recent photographs in the format the office asks for, and the right form: EX-18 for the EU registration certificate, EX-17 for the TIE.

2 · The order to do things in

- 1 Place yourself first: EU or EEA citizen, or from outside. The two routes share neither form nor office.
- 2 If you are an EU citizen staying more than three months, register in the Central Register of Foreigners. You are given a certificate carrying your NIE, on green paper, which is not a card.
- 3 If you are from outside the EU, the TIE is applied for after the authorisation or visa, within the period you are given, and involves fingerprints.
- 4 Get on the padrón at your town hall as soon as you have somewhere to live: nearly everything else hangs off it.
- 5 With the padrón, apply for your region's health card.
- 6 Look at the tax calendar for the year you become resident, and at your home country's: that is the point where an adviser is worth it, and we will say so.

3 · The mistakes we see again and again

- Thinking the green EU certificate is a residence card. It is not, and some procedures expressly ask for the TIE.

- Getting on the padrón last. It is the other way round: the padrón is the key to healthcare, to school places and to the licence exchange.
- Assuming that becoming resident changes nothing for tax. It changes, and in both countries at once.
- Going to the wrong office. EU registration and the TIE are not handled in the same place in every province.
- Letting your home driving licence lapse. A deadline starts running from the day you acquire normal residence.

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.

- **Real Decreto 240/2007, entrada y residencia de ciudadanos de la UE y del EEE**

<https://www.boe.es/buscar/act.php?id=BOE-A-2007-4184>

- **Real Decreto 557/2011, Reglamento de la Ley Orgánica 4/2000**

<https://www.boe.es/buscar/act.php?id=BOE-A-2011-7703>

- **Policía Nacional, trámites de extranjería**

https://sede.policia.gob.es/portalCiudadano/_es/tramites_extranjeria.php

- **Cita previa de extranjería**

<https://sede.administracionespublicas.gob.es/pagina/index/directorio/icpplus>

- **Ley 7/1985, padrón municipal**

<https://www.boe.es/buscar/act.php?id=BOE-A-1985-5392>

If you would rather we did it

€249 the full file, the appointment and the calendar of what follows

€149 the file and the route ruling only

We build your file, lodge it and follow it to the end, for a step you have already decided to take. We do not litigate: if your case comes from a refusal, an irregular stay or an arraigo, that is a law firm's work and we say so on day one.

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.

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