



British Embassy  
Rome



# A message from Jill Morris

## A MESSAGE FROM JILL MORRIS, HER MAJESTY'S AMBASSADOR

### British Embassy Rome

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Welcome to the latest edition of my newsletter for British nationals living in Italy. Ahead of the December Europe Council, I would like to update you on recent developments in the negotiations for the UK's departure from the European Union.

The UK and the EU had further productive discussions on citizens' rights during the most recent negotiating round in November. **Safeguarding the status of EU citizens in the UK, and UK nationals in the EU, is our priority in this first phase of negotiations.** As always, the UK has focused on providing certainty for citizens as quickly as possible.

The UK published a [policy paper](#) setting out further **details on the administrative procedures** for the settled status scheme. This provides further reassurance on the process - as requested by the EU. The paper demonstrates that our **settled status scheme will be streamlined, digital, and cost no more than applying for a UK passport in the UK.** For those who already have EU permanent residence documents, the process will be streamlined even further.

Our discussions are now narrowing to the few outstanding - albeit important - issues. While there remain differences on the issues of family reunion and the export of benefits, we have been clear that we are willing to consider what further reassurance we can provide to existing families of EU residents in the U.K. - even if they are not currently living together in the UK.

There remain some areas, also, where we are still seeking further movement from the EU.

1. We are disappointed that the Commission has continued to be opposed to protecting the **right of citizens to vote** - we will therefore pursue alternative arrangements on this.
2. Similarly, with **mutual recognition of professional qualifications**, the Commission continues to take a restrictive view on the ability for UK nationals to have their qualifications recognised, and therefore continue with their established line of work.

3. **Onward movement for British citizens currently living in the EU27.** The UK offer of settled status for life, in return for rights relating to free movement for UK nationals (already exercising them), is still on the table. The EU has not taken a final decision on whether it will accept this.

We will not be publishing a revised version of the table comparing EU and UK positions on citizens' rights. Instead, we will continue to work hard internally, and with the Commission, to resolve the small number of remaining issues. Nonetheless, you can find the [latest version](#) on our website, which shows that we are 'green', i.e. in agreement, on the majority of issues.

There are now key choices for the Commission and the UK as to the final shape of the agreement on citizens' rights. The **UK is still aiming for an ambitious and comprehensive agreement if flexibility and creativity can be demonstrated.** The alternative is a narrower, and less ambitious final agreement, which would also push a range of issues into discussions about the UK's future relationship with the European Union.

We will continue to work towards finalising the citizens' rights chapter of the Withdrawal Agreement, and deliver our shared objective of providing swift reassurance to EU citizens in the UK and UK nationals in the EU.

The Withdrawal Agreement will determine the UK-EU relationship for decades to come. We will remain the **EU's closest neighbour and partner**, as well as a major global power in terms of global security and the economy.

In Florence, the Prime Minister set out a bold vision for our **future economic partnership** with the EU. The UK wants a partnership with the EU that covers trade, security, law enforcement and criminal justice cooperation, rather than merely adopting a model already enjoyed by other countries. We hope that the Commission's next mandate will be developed in that spirit - with flexibility and a focus on our shared vision for the future.

Following my meetings with many British Nationals - in Rome, Florence, Milan, Venice and Genoa - we have kept colleagues in London informed of your views and concerns. And I have raised specific issues with the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Ken O'Flaherty, British Deputy Ambassador to Italy, will be hosting an event for British nationals in Naples, on Friday 1 December. In the meantime, you can engage with us via our social media platforms: [@JillMorrisFCO](#) and [@ukinitaly](#). We look forward to hearing from you!

Best regards,

*Jill Morris CMG*

Her Majesty's Ambassador to Italy