



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

### **British Embassy Rome**

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At the start of 2020, I want to provide an update on Brexit and citizens' rights for those of you living in Italy.

### **UK election**

The Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, has referred to the election result as an "overwhelming mandate to get Brexit done". The government is now seeking to pass the Withdrawal Agreement Bill so that the UK can leave the EU on 31 January 2020.

### **What does leaving the EU at the end of this month mean for you?**

When the UK leaves the EU on 31 January, **very little will change immediately**. That's because the UK will enter straight into a transition period, called the "implementation period," lasting until 31 December 2020. For example, you will still be able to enter and exit Italy and access healthcare, including healthcare for tourists visiting Italy, in the same way as you do now.

During this implementation period, the UK and the EU will negotiate the trade deal and associated agreements which will form the basis of the future relationship. The future relationship negotiations will also address topics like future healthcare and social security arrangements for new UK nationals arriving in Italy from January 2021; recognition of UK driving licences after January 2021; and access to higher education in the UK. We will keep you updated as discussions progress.

### **The Withdrawal Agreement and your rights in Italy**

If you are a UK national legally resident in Italy by the end of the implementation period - on or before 31 December 2020 - **your rights and those of your family will be protected under the Withdrawal Agreement**. Your current rights to residency, healthcare and social security will be fully protected for as long as you remain within scope of the Withdrawal Agreement. One of the ways to remain in scope is to remain resident in Italy. This includes those who access healthcare in Italy using an S1 form as a pensioner (and whose healthcare is paid for by the UK). In addition, aggregation rules for pensions, including uprating, will be protected for your lifetime, as will your right to bring existing close family members to live with you in Italy in the future. These rights are lifelong for you and your family for as long as you remain in scope of the Withdrawal Agreement.

### **Italy's implementation of the Withdrawal Agreement**

On 23 December, the Italian government updated its [website](#) on Brexit. The information available includes an updated section on citizens' rights as well as a [slide pack](#) on the UK's exit from the EU. On the website, the Italian government underlines that freedom of movement rights will remain during the implementation period (until 31 December 2020). They state that they will provide more information this month on the new residency document that UK nationals will need to obtain after

Brexit. This document will act as confirmation that you were resident before 31 December 2020 and will become available from February this year. UK nationals will have until at least 30 June 2021 to obtain this document. Importantly, the website confirms that Italy has chosen a “declaratory” procedure to obtain the new document. This means that anyone who meets the conditions will be automatically covered by the Withdrawal Agreement rather than needing to make a separate application to obtain those rights.

We do not yet know all the practical details relating to how the Italian government will implement the Withdrawal Agreement, and therefore what actions you will need to take in the coming months. We remain in close contact with them and will keep you updated as soon as we receive details.

### **What should I be doing now?**

You do not need to take any action immediately. The implementation period lasting until 31 December 2020 means that your rights in Italy will remain largely the same after 31 January. And the Withdrawal Agreement provides lifelong rights for those legally resident in Italy by 31 December 2020 for as long as you remain in scope. If you have not yet registered as a resident, you should do so in good time before the end of the implementation period. You should also exchange your driving licence before the end of the year, if you have not already done so. There will be further actions to take during 2020, including obtaining the new residency document. But there are no urgent or immediate actions you should be taking now.

### **What rights will I lose after 31 January?**

If you are resident in Italy, your rights will largely remain the same both during the transition period and afterwards, protected by the Withdrawal Agreement. However, there are some specific rights that will be impacted. Your right to vote in Italian local elections or in the European elections will be lost immediately after the UK leaves the EU on 31 January. We will continue to engage with the Italian government on a future arrangement which will see the right to vote in local elections maintained. After the end of the implementation period, your right to onward freedom of movement (the right to move to another EU member state and to carry your current rights with you) may potentially be lost. But future mobility rights are subject to the next phase of negotiations with the EU.

### **Where can I learn more?**

Our [Living in Italy](#) page has recently been updated with information on the Withdrawal Agreement. We will be keeping these pages up-to-date as we learn more about Italy’s implementation of the agreement and the practical steps you will need to take this year. You can also find a [new page](#) on [gov.uk](#) which provides information across a range of issues for those living in the EU.

And my team and I will continue to meet UK nationals living in Italy at our public events. All events will be announced on our website [here](#). We already have events planned for Rome, Pavia, Milan and Genoa in the coming weeks. Lastly, you can follow us on Facebook and Twitter as well as my own [@JillMorrisFCO](#) for further updates.

Best regards,

Jill Morris CMG

Her Majesty’s Ambassador to Italy