



A MESSAGE FROM JILL MORRIS, HER MAJESTY'S AMBASSADOR British Embassy Rome

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To British Nationals in Italy,

The UK has left the EU with a Deal – a formal Exit Treaty, referred to as the Withdrawal Agreement, and has just entered negotiations with the EU over the future relationship. I would like to update you on what this means for British Nationals living in Italy, including new details on how Italy is implementing the Withdrawal Agreement.

The Withdrawal Agreement sets out the terms of the UK's withdrawal from the EU and includes a deal on citizens' rights. Whatever takes place this year regarding our negotiations with the EU, the Withdrawal Agreement is complete and will remain unchanged – and that includes the citizens' rights that are enshrined within it.

Your rights under the Withdrawal Agreement

When the UK left the EU on 31 January, very little changed immediately. That's because the UK entered straight into a transition period lasting until 31 December. During this period, although the UK is no longer in the EU, EU rules continue to apply. These include freedom of movement rules and rules governing healthcare and benefits.

If you are a UK national legally resident in Italy by the end of the transition period - so on or before 31 December - your rights will remain largely as they are now and will be protected. This includes the right to residency, healthcare, social security and pensions. These rights are protected for life for as long as you remain a legal resident in Italy.

The Withdrawal Agreement also protects the rights of your current family members as well as children born to you in the future. You will also have the right to bring existing close family members to live with you at any time in the future and they will themselves be protected by the Withdrawal Agreement. Again, these rights are lifelong for you and your family for as long as you remain a legal resident in Italy.

The new Withdrawal Agreement 'attestazione'

The Italian government has confirmed that all UK nationals registered with their local comune by the end of this year will be covered by the Withdrawal Agreement. The Italian government is using a declaratory approach which means that just by being registered, these lifelong rights will fall automatically to you rather than you having to apply for them.

On 11 February, the Italian Ministry of Interior issued a circular to all comuni. This provided details of a new attestazione – a one page document - which is available to UK nationals who already hold residency status here or will hold it by the end of this year. This new document further proves your status under the Withdrawal Agreement.

We are waiting for more details from the Italian government about this new document – such as whether it is mandatory for UK nationals to obtain it and what kind of documents you need to take along with you to the comune when requesting it. We will keep you updated as soon as we receive more information. **Our advice is that there is no need to rush to obtain this document.** The transition period means EU laws continue to apply until 31 December. **There is time to obtain this document and we would advise that you wait for further clarification until you request it.**

Actions to take this year

There are other actions you can take this year. **If you have not yet registered as a resident with your local comune, you should do so in good time before the end of this year.** Only those registered with their local comune will be protected by the Withdrawal Agreement. You are likely to need to request the new attestazione from your comune as well – but we await further details about this. You should also **check your healthcare access and consider registering with your local ASL if you are eligible.** And you should **exchange your UK driving licence for an Italian one** if you have not already done so – again at some point before the end of the year.

Overseas voting rights

I want to provide an update on voting rights of UK nationals in Italy. As a UK national your right to vote in local Italian and European elections as well as to stand as a candidate is not protected by the Withdrawal Agreement. So you no longer have this right. If you have lived outside of the UK for 15 years or more you no longer have the right to vote in UK elections. We understand that many people feel strongly about the loss of voting rights in both countries. Last month the Prime Minister wrote to Mr Harry Shindler, a UK national resident in Italy who has long campaigned on the 15 year rule. The Prime Minister recognised that most British citizens overseas retain deep ties to the United Kingdom and confirmed his commitment to overturning this rule and reiterated that the UK government will be making an announcement on its plans to deliver votes for life in due course.

Staying up to date on citizens' rights

Please ensure you stay up to date with the latest news, by signing up for email alerts on the Living in Italy guide on [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) here <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/living-in-italy>, and continue to follow our UK in Italy social media channels. You can help us to reach other UK nationals in Italy by telling a friend, so they can also do what they need to do to secure their rights.

Coronavirus update

Lastly I wanted to highlight our [Travel Advice](#) page which provides the very latest information on the coronavirus. If you are travelling around Italy or to the UK, you should continue to consult the official information available. There is also information available on the healthcare pages [here](#) as well as the UK Chief Medical Officer advice [here](#).

Best regards,

Jill Morris CMG

Her Majesty's Ambassador to Italy