



San Miguel Centre

Calle Lope de Vega 45,
San Miguel de Salinas
03193, Alicante
Telephone: 966 723 733 (24 Hr Emergency Line)

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Which Spanish benefits am I entitled to?

If you are a British national resident in Spain, you may be entitled to some benefits and support **from Spanish statutory authorities.**

If you are over 65; or under 65 and not able to work in Spain; these benefits from Spanish authorities will generally be available:

1. if you are **registered as a resident in Spain**. This is the green document (A4 sheet of paper or green card) or the newer TIE photo ID card. Both are equally valid.
2. if you have registered on the census record (padrón) of your local town hall. This entitles you to access a lot of council services and many benefits.

Even if you do not have a TIE or green residents' certificate, if you live in Spain full time you can still register on the local town hall 'padrón' with your valid UK passport. A padrón record on its own does not make you legally resident in Spain as a UK citizen but it can help you access certain council services and provide you with a better case for legal residency in the future.

If you are already registered on the padrón at the town hall (or even if you are not yet but you live locally and your situation is urgent), to find out what benefits you may be entitled to, below are the options of who you can talk to:

1. **Talk to your local council / town hall (' ayuntamiento')**
- 2.

Local councils generally act as a gateway to most social services in Spain, even if they do not run or fund them all themselves.

Many councils have a foreign residents' department or representative who can explain in English how to access council services and advice.

If they do not have this department, many other councils have someone available to help with translation or explain processes in English, although you may need to ask for an appointment to access this service.

Typically, if you need help, you will be directed to see a social worker (*trabajador social*) based at your local council's Social Services department (*servicios sociales*) who will assess your needs. Generally, a local council will give you advice if you are registered on their census (*empadronado*). They will also help to register you on their census if you have not already done so.



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Typical common areas of help and guidance available via your local council social workers include: -

- Emergency food/provisions/local meal centres
- Teleassistance/personal alarms – care monitoring service
- Processing requests for long-term home care assistance/dependency care and residential care under Spanish dependency legislation (*requires a minimum length of time registered in Spain to qualify – typically to have been registered as living in Spain for five years in total in your life, including at least two continuous years in the period immediately prior to applying*).
- Social housing
- Limited home help or access to residential care in cases of real need where personal means are very limited and dependency legislation minimum requirements cannot be met.
- Advice on registering as disabled and any occasional subsidies that may be available.
- Advice on the larger-family benefit card (if you have three or more children, or two children in certain circumstances)
- **Non-contributory pensions.** If you are on a very low income and have limited family help plus are registered as resident in Spain, you may also be entitled to a non-contributory pension as a UK citizen under Spanish law without having paid into the Spanish social security system. Normally you need to 1) be over 65. 2) have lived in Spain for ten years of your life since you were 16, including at least two continuous years in the period immediately prior to applying. If you have registered disabled status of 65% and are between 18 and 65, this residency time requirement is reduced from ten to five years. Normally the town hall social workers can advise on applying.
- **Minimum Living Income allowance (Ingreso Mínimo Vital – IMV) – see part 3 below for more information.**
- **Regional government-funded minimum income benefits programmes** for people on low incomes or at risk of exclusion. Conditions vary by region and town hall social workers can provide information and help with an application (typically called “Renta Mínima de Inserción/Inclusión Social” or similar).
- Guidance on registering as a legal Spanish resident (the TIE card issued by National Police or old green piece of paper) if you are not already legally registered, including arranging legal advice to sort out your position if you have limited personal means and are at risk



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If you live in Comunidad Valenciana, (Alicante, Castellón and Valencia provinces), and are over 65 you are entitled to an older resident's card (Tarjeta del Mayor) which gives small discounts on some participating businesses and services. Local town halls also often offer discount cards to older residents or those with limited resources or a disability.

Energy discounts if you live anywhere Spain: The Spanish government requires power companies to give discounts starting at 25% and rising on electricity supply **to people on low incomes or the vulnerable**. The discount is known as the **Bono Social de Electricidad** and is given if you are on the regulated floating tariff (known as the PVPC) and not special fixed tariffs or deals with the power companies. To apply, contact your power supply company that may be able to help you fill in paperwork.

If you obtain the Bono Social de Electricidad, you are also automatically entitled to the Bono Social Térmico which subsidises other heating costs (such as using gas).

2. Talk to your local health centre

If you have a medical condition, you should ensure that you have enquired from your doctor about the possibility of medical-condition-related benefits.

Typical common areas of help available via your local health centre, besides healthcare and medicines are: -

- Temporary home care related to your medical condition.
- Mobility apparatus prescriptions for a defined condition
- Disabled parking badge certification (on humanitarian, not long-term grounds; Advice on registering as disabled.

3. Your local Spanish social security office

In addition to talking to your local town hall or health centre (see above), in some circumstances the local social security office, known as the INSS or CAISS (both are the same thing), can offer additional benefits.

Minimum Living Income (Ingreso Mínimo Vital – IMV)

For people on very low incomes, the INSS coordinates applications for the Minimum Living Income benefit (*Ingreso Mínimo Vital – IMV*). This can be given principally to residents of Spain (including UK nationals) over 23 who live independently of a parental home and who do not benefit from other types of assistance such as an old age pension or a non-contributory pension and have low levels of job earnings, savings and other assets. Certain conditions need to be met.

Other benefits from the INSS Spanish social security office

Apart from the Minimum Living Income, benefits available from the Spanish social security office (INSS) will generally **apply only if you (or in some cases a spouse/legal partner) has been working in Spain, (and you or your employer has been paying Spanish social security contributions), or if you are receiving a pension from the Spanish authorities.** (Typical

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benefits for Spanish pension holders include reduced telephone and electricity bills, help with travel to day care centres or subsidised short-break programmes).

4. Unemployment/back-to-work benefit (SEPE) for contracted workers

Unemployment benefit is not handled by the INSS but by the government's SEPE agency instead. Different types are available, and one may apply to you even if you have not worked very much in Spain, although you will have to show you are actively looking for work. **If you have worked with a contract in Spain** for at least 360 days in the last six years before becoming unemployed, you may be entitled to Spanish unemployment benefits for a certain period of time (generally from four months to two years depending on how long you paid contributions for) A lesser benefit may be available if you have worked and paid 3 months contribution (if you have a family) or 6 months.

For those over 52 who have used up their unemployment benefits entitlement* and have continued signing on looking for work, an over-52 unemployment benefit can normally be payable until retirement age or until a job is found, depending on level of other income and if you have paid into the system for a minimum number of 15 years*. Similar alternatives, but generally with less generous levels and timeframes are also available through SEPE which include for over 45s or those with children up to 26 years old to support ('Ayuda Familiar').

Back-to-work benefit if you have never worked in Spain (Renta Activa de Inserción): In a few specific personal situations where it may be hard to find work, SEPE offers a time-limited benefit for those on low incomes where it is not necessary to have worked in Spain before and which can be available to residents in Spain from other countries. Beneficiaries must actively seek work. These limited personal situations include long term unemployed (signed on) over 45, those born in Spain returning to work aged over 45, victims of gender or domestic violence and people registered as 33% disabled or above.

5. Self-employed workers' unemployment/low-activity benefits

Legally registered self-employed workers are known as '*autónomos*' in Spain. All *autónomos* pay a contribution as part of their social security payments towards a benefit if their activity has to stop (or is drastically reduced/constrained for certain reasons but they do not wish to deregister as self-employed). The benefit is known as '*prestación por cese de actividad*'. It is similar to unemployment benefit in conditions for salaried workers but in this case it not handled by SEPE but by the mutual association ('*mutua*') approved by the government that is allotted to the self-employed worker when they register as self-employed. The list of '*mutuas*' is on [this link](#). For more information and to make a claim, an *autónomo* should contact the *mutua* that covers them and/or for general information contact the Social Security INSS office . Applying for self-employed unemployment benefit in this way can be complex, even for Spanish speakers, and to ensure maximum entitlement, those affected usually use a professional gestor (administrative manager). to steer them.