

English-Spanish Dictionary: Spanish Residency and Relocation

This dictionary is designed to help prospective retirees understand and navigate the key terminology of the residency and immigration process in Spain.

1. Moving From (USA, UK, Germany) & Foreign Retirees in Spain

English Term	Spanish Translation	Explanation	Useful Sentence (English)	Useful Sentence (Spanish)
Expat / Expatriate	Expatriado/a	A person who resides in a country other than the one where they were born or raised.	The expat community in Malaga is very active.	La comunidad de expatriados en Málaga es muy activa.
State Pension	Pensión Estatal / Pensión Pública	The economic benefit received from the government of the home country (e.g., Social Security in the US or State Pension in the UK).	I need to submit my state pension proof.	Necesito presentar mi prueba de pensión estatal.
Healthcare Entitlement	Derecho a Asistencia Sanitaria	The right to receive medical services in Spain, which can be through bilateral agreements or the public system.	What is my healthcare entitlement as a UK retiree?	¿Cuál es mi derecho a asistencia sanitaria como jubilado del Reino Unido?
Double Taxation Treaty	Convenio de Doble Imposición	An agreement between Spain and another country to prevent a person or company from paying taxes on the same income in both countries.	I need advice on the double taxation treaty with the US.	Necesito asesoramiento sobre el convenio de doble imposición con EE. UU.

2. Residency & Visa Types

English Term	Spanish Translation	Explanation	Useful Sentence (English)	Useful Sentence (Spanish)
Residency Permit	Permiso de Residencia	A document or status that authorizes a foreigner to legally live in Spain for a specific period.	My initial residency permit is for one year.	Mi permiso de residencia inicial es por un año.
Non-Lucrative Visa (NLV)	Visado de Residencia No Lucrativa (VRNL)	A type of visa designed for individuals who wish to live in Spain without working, demonstrating sufficient economic means.	The NLV requires significant proof of funds.	El VRNL requiere una prueba de fondos significativa.

Alternatives to NLV	Alternativas al VRNL	Other visa options, such as the Entrepreneur Visa, the Digital Nomad Visa, or other investment-based visas (note: Golden Visa is cancelled).	Are there any faster alternatives to the NLV?	¿Hay alternativas más rápidas al VRNL?
Digital Nomad Visa	Visado Nómada Digital	A residency permit for remote workers with income from outside of Spain.	I might qualify for the Digital Nomad Visa instead of the NLV.	Puede que califique para el Visado Nómada Digital en lugar del VRNL.
Schengen Area	Espacio Schengen	An area composed of 27 European countries that have abolished border controls for travel between them.	I can travel freely within the Schengen Area.	Puedo viajar libremente dentro del Espacio Schengen.
ESS ETIAS	ETIAS (Sistema Europeo de Información y Autorización de Viajes)	A forthcoming electronic visa waiver for travelers from countries that do not require a visa to enter the Schengen Area.	Is the ETIAS mandatory for my short trip?	¿Es el ETIAS obligatorio para mi viaje corto?

3. Visa Paperwork & Documentation

English Term	Spanish Translation	Explanation	Useful Sentence (English)	Useful Sentence (Español)
Visa Paperwork	Documentación para el Visado	The set of forms, certificates, and documents required for the visa application.	Have you finished gathering all the visa paperwork?	¿Ha terminado de reunir toda la documentación para el visado?
Proof of Funds	Prueba de Medios Económicos / Prueba de Fondos	Documentation demonstrating that the applicant has the necessary money to support themselves in Spain without working.	They require proof of funds for the entire year.	Requieren prueba de fondos para el año completo.
Criminal Record Certificate	Certificado de Antecedentes Penales	The official document required that certifies the applicant has no criminal convictions.	The criminal record certificate must be apostilled.	El certificado de antecedentes penales debe estar apostillado.
Medical Certificate	Certificado Médico	A document certifying that the applicant does not suffer from diseases that may have serious public health repercussions.	My doctor provided the required medical certificate.	Mi médico me facilitó el certificado médico requerido.

Apostille of The Hague	Apostilla de La Haya	Legal certification that authenticates the signature and seal on a public document, necessary for it to be valid internationally.	You must get an Apostille for the birth certificate.	Debe obtener una Apostilla para el certificado de nacimiento.
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4. Long-Term Status & Spanish Cards

English Term	Spanish Translation	Explanation	Useful Sentence (English)	Useful Sentence (Español)
Permanent Residence	Residencia de Larga Duración	Status obtained after legally residing in Spain for five continuous years.	I am eligible to apply for permanent residence next year.	Soy elegible para solicitar la residencia de larga duración el año que viene.
Spanish Cards (TIE)	Tarjeta de Identidad de Extranjero (TIE)	The physical identity document received by foreigners who have a residence or stay permit exceeding six months.	I need to book my TIE appointment at the police station.	Necesito reservar mi cita para el TIE en la comisaría.
Renewal (of permit)	Renovación (del permiso)	The process of requesting an extension of the residency permit.	The renewal process must be started 60 days before expiration.	El proceso de renovación debe iniciarse 60 días antes del vencimiento.
Fingerprinting	Toma de Huellas Dactilares	The process of taking fingerprints, a mandatory step for TIE issuance.	I have my fingerprinting appointment next Tuesday.	Tengo mi cita para la toma de huellas el próximo martes.

5. Moving Customs Free

English Term	Spanish Translation	Explanation	Useful Sentence (English)	Useful Sentence (Español)
Moving Customs Free	Traslado con Franquicia Aduanera	The right to import personal goods (household goods) into Spain without paying customs duties or VAT, upon establishing permanent residence.	I qualify for moving customs free status as I'm moving permanently.	Califico para la franquicia aduanera ya que me mudo de forma permanente.
Customs Clearance	Despacho de Aduanas	The process of obtaining the necessary approval from customs for goods to enter or leave the country.	We hired an agent for the customs clearance process.	Contratamos un agente para el proceso de despacho de aduanas.

Relocation of Residence	Traslado de Residencia	The act of permanently changing your usual place of residence from one country to another.	I must prove the relocation of residence happened within a year.	Debo demostrar que el traslado de residencia se realizó en el plazo de un año.
Household Goods	Menaje de Casa / Efectos Personales	Furniture, clothing, appliances, and other household items being moved.	The customs exemption only applies to household goods.	La exención de aduanas solo se aplica al menaje de casa.

6. Mid-North SP & Real Estate (Rent, Buy, Stays)

English Term	Spanish Translation	Explanation	Useful Sentence (English)	Useful Sentence (Español)
Mid-North Spain	Norte-Medio de España	A geographical region that can include autonomous communities like Castilla y León, La Rioja, Navarre, and Basque Country, characterized by a cooler climate and green landscapes.	We are considering retiring in Mid-North Spain due to the climate.	Estamos considerando jubilarnos en el Norte-Medio de España debido al clima.
Real Estate Agent	Agente Inmobiliario	A professional who mediates the purchase, sale, or rental of properties.	We need a reliable real estate agent in Bilbao.	Necesitamos un agente inmobiliario de confianza en Bilbao.
Long-Term Rental	Alquiler de Larga Duración	A lease agreement that generally lasts one year or more, intended for habitual housing.	Finding a long-term rental is essential for the visa application.	Encontrar un alquiler de larga duración es esencial para la solicitud de visado.
Short-Term Rental / Stay	Alquiler de Corta Estancia / Alojamiento temporal	Homes or apartments rented for limited periods (days or weeks), often for vacations or initial stays.	We'll use a short-term rental while searching for a permanent home.	Usaremos un alojamiento temporal mientras buscamos una casa permanente.
Purchase Agreement	Contrato de Compraventa	A legal document that formalizes the agreement between the buyer and seller of a property.	Read the purchase agreement carefully before signing.	Lea el contrato de compraventa detenidamente antes de firmar.
Down Payment / Deposit	Pago Inicial / Arras / Depósito	An amount of money paid in advance to reserve a property or start a rental contract.	The deposit for the apartment is one month's rent.	El depósito para el apartamento es el equivalente a un mes de alquiler.

Notary / Notary Public	Notario / Notaría	A public official legally required to certify the authenticity of documents and deeds of sale.	We will sign the deed at the notary's office next week.	Firmaremos la escritura en la notaría la próxima semana.
Utility Bills	Facturas de Suministros	Monthly accounts for essential services like water, electricity, and gas.	Remember to transfer the utility bills to your name.	Recuerde cambiar las facturas de suministros a su nombre.
ITP (Property Transfer Tax)	Impuesto de Transmisiones Patrimoniales (ITP)	A tax applied to the purchase of a second-hand home. Varies by autonomous community.	The ITP rate in this region is 8%.	El tipo del ITP en esta región es del 8%.
Mortgage	Hipoteca	A bank loan secured by the property to finance the purchase of a home.	Do expats need a Spanish mortgage for buying?	¿Necesitan hipoteca española los expatriados para comprar?

7. Taxation & Driving in Spain

English Term	Spanish Translation	Explanation	Useful Sentence (English)	Useful Sentence (Español)
Tax Residency	Residencia Fiscal	The condition by which a person is considered a fiscal resident in Spain (if they spend more than 183 days in the country per calendar year).	Establishing tax residency is key to reporting my income.	Establecer la residencia fiscal es clave para declarar mis ingresos.
Taxpayer	Contribuyente	A natural or legal person legally obliged to pay taxes.	As a retiree, I am a new Spanish taxpayer.	Como jubilado, soy un nuevo contribuyente español.
Income Tax (Resident)	Impuesto sobre la Renta de las Personas Físicas (IRPF)	The main income tax for fiscal residents in Spain.	My IRPF will depend on my total worldwide income.	Mi IRPF dependerá de mi renta mundial total.
Non-Residents Income Tax	Impuesto sobre la Renta de No Residentes (IRNR)	Tax on income earned in Spain by people who are not fiscal residents in the country.	Non-residents pay IRNR on Spanish rental income.	Los no residentes pagan IRNR por los ingresos de alquiler españoles.
Tax Return	Declaración de la Renta	The annual document submitted to the Tax Agency to declare income and calculate taxes.	The deadline for the annual tax return is in June.	La fecha límite para la declaración de la renta anual es en junio.

Wealth Tax	Impuesto sobre el Patrimonio	A regional tax (in Spain) on the net assets of a taxpayer, applicable to residents and non-residents with assets in Spain.	The Wealth Tax threshold varies by region.	El umbral del Impuesto sobre el Patrimonio varía según la región.
Tax Paperwork (Forms)	Modelos Tributarios	Specific forms used by the Tax Agency (Hacienda) for tax declaration.	Which tax form (Modelo) do I need for my dividends?	¿Qué modelo tributario necesito para mis dividendos?
Pensions (Taxes)	Pensiones (Fiscalidad)	The taxation of pensions, which depends on the origin of the pension and the double taxation treaty.	US pensions are usually taxed only in the US.	Las pensiones de EE. UU. suelen tributar solo en EE. UU.
Driving License Exchange	Canje del Permiso de Conducir	The process of exchanging a foreign driving license for a Spanish one. Mandatory for many countries after establishing residency.	I must start the driving license exchange within six months of getting my TIE.	Debo iniciar el canje del permiso de conducir dentro de los seis meses de obtener mi TIE.
Car Registration / Import	Matriculación del Coche / Importación	The process of registering a foreign vehicle with Spanish license plates.	The car registration process can be complex.	El proceso de matriculación del coche puede ser complejo.
Traffic Authority	Dirección General de Tráfico (DGT)	The government authority responsible for traffic rules, driving licenses, and vehicle registration in Spain.	I have an appointment with the DGT next week.	Tengo una cita con la DGT la próxima semana.

8. Welfare & Healthcare

English Term	Spanish Translation	Explanation	Useful Sentence (English)	Useful Sentence (Español)
Social Welfare Services	Servicios Sociales / Bienestar Social	Support services and programs offered by the government (regional or local) to assist citizens and residents in need.	I contacted the local social welfare office for dependency aid.	Contacté con la oficina local de servicios sociales para ayuda por dependencia.
Public Homecare	Servicio de Ayuda a Domicilio (SAD)	Public service for care and assistance to dependent persons in their own homes (cleaning, companionship, etc.).	The SAD service provides support for daily tasks.	El servicio SAD proporciona apoyo para las tareas diarias.

Private Homecare	Asistencia Domiciliaria Privada	Home care and support services contracted directly with a private company or individual.	We prefer private homecare for flexibility and specific needs.	Preferimos la asistencia domiciliaria privada por la flexibilidad y necesidades específicas.
National Health System	Sistema Nacional de Salud (SNS)	Spain's public health system, which provides universal coverage to residents.	My public healthcare coverage is through the SNS.	Mi cobertura sanitaria pública es a través del SNS.
Public Healthcare (Residents)	Asistencia Sanitaria Pública (Residentes)	The right to receive medical care through the SNS once one is a resident and taxpayer.	Do I get public healthcare coverage immediately after residency?	¿Obtengo cobertura sanitaria pública inmediatamente después de la residencia?
Medications	Medicamentos	Prescribed drugs and medicines. In Spain, retirees often have reduced or zero co-payments.	I need to know the co-payment rules for my medications.	Necesito saber las normas de copago para mis medicamentos.
Private Health Insurance	Seguro Privado de Salud	An insurance policy contracted with a private company. Essential for obtaining certain visas (like the NLV).	You must have comprehensive private health insurance for the NLV.	Debe tener un seguro privado de salud completo para el VRNL.
European Health Card (EHIC)	Tarjeta Sanitaria Europea (TSE)	A card for EU/EEA/Swiss citizens that allows necessary medical care during temporary stays in other member countries.	I used my EHIC during my initial short stay in Spain.	Usé mi TSE durante mi estancia corta inicial en España.
Certificate of No Coverage	Certificado de No Cobertura	A document issued by the country of origin confirming that the applicant is not entitled to public healthcare in that country.	Non-EU nationals often need a Certificate of No Coverage for their visa.	Los nacionales no comunitarios a menudo necesitan un Certificado de No Cobertura para su visado.
Convenio Especial	Convenio Especial	An agreement that allows residents in Spain who do not qualify for public healthcare (e.g., due to lack of contributions) to access it by paying a monthly fee.	I applied for the Convenio Especial while waiting for my residence period to be established.	Solicitamos el Convenio Especial mientras esperábamos que se estableciera mi período de residencia.
Form S1 (UK Nationals)	Formulario S1	A document that allows pensioners from the UK and other countries to transfer their healthcare rights to the Spanish SNS.	The S1 form grants full public healthcare access to UK pensioners.	El Formulario S1 otorga acceso completo a la sanidad pública a los pensionistas del Reino Unido.

Senior Discounts	Descuentos para Mayores / Carné de Jubilado	Benefits and reduced rates offered to seniors, often through specific cards.	Ask about the senior discounts at the theater or on public transport.	Pregunte por los descuentos para mayores en el teatro o en el transporte público.
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9. Life in Spain & Practicalities

English Term	Spanish Translation	Explanation	Useful Sentence (English)	Useful Sentence (Español)
Cost of Living	Coste de la Vida	The average expenditure required to maintain a certain standard of living (housing, food, transportation, etc.).	The cost of living is lower here than in London.	El coste de la vida es más bajo aquí que en Londres.
General Expenses	Gastos Generales	All recurring costs, including utilities, home maintenance, and local taxes.	We budget €1,500 per month for general expenses.	Presupuestamos 1.500 € al mes para gastos generales.
Cultural Shock	Choque Cultural	The anxiety and confusion felt when encountering a completely different social or cultural environment.	The Spanish meal times were a major cultural shock.	Los horarios de comida españoles fueron un gran choque cultural.
Social Integration	Integración Social	The process of adapting and actively participating in the social and community life of the new country.	Learning Spanish accelerates social integration.	Aprender español acelera la integración social.
Town Hall / City Council	Ayuntamiento	The local government body that manages municipal services.	I need to go to the Town Hall to register my address (empadronamiento).	Necesito ir al Ayuntamiento para registrar mi dirección (empadronamiento).
<i>Empadronamiento</i>	Registro en el Padrón Municipal	The act of registering in the municipal inhabitants register, essential for	Getting the <i>empadronamiento</i> is the first step after moving.	Obtener el empadronamiento es el primer paso después de mudarse.