

JANUARY 2021-HAPPY NEW YEAR

# VOISINS VOICES

A BRITISH EMBASSY PARIS NEWSLETTER



British Embassy  
Paris

## WELCOME

Welcome to our January edition of Voisins Voices and we wish you all a Happy New Year! This is a bumper edition with information about what the newly negotiated end of the Transition Period means for you. Hopefully you have been keeping yourselves up to date by visiting our Living in France Guide online, if not please [click on this link](#) to see more detail and register to get important updates.

Do please forward this to any friends, family, or new acquaintances living in France, to whom this will be of interest. To get added to the distribution list, simply email [France.Enquiries@fco.gov.uk](mailto:France.Enquiries@fco.gov.uk) or visit the below and fill in the form with your email address and name <http://eepurl.com/c9wJZL>

UK Government  
UK TRANSITION

## Settled in France?

- Apply for residency now and obtain your Withdrawal Agreement Residency Permit
- Make sure you're registered for healthcare
- Check your passport validity online and renew it now if you need to

Find out more at [gov.uk/livinginfrance](https://gov.uk/livinginfrance)

✓ Check  
✓ Change  
✓ Go

## The 1st January saw Ambassador Ed Llewellyn in Calais

On the 1st of January, Ed Llewellyn visited Border Force Staff and a team deployed from the Embassy in readiness, following the End of Transition Period. He also used the chance to meet with the head of Calais Port, Jean-Marc Puissesseau, and to express his thanks for the work done on both sides of the border to prepare for the changes.



## BRITISH AMBASSADOR TO FRANCE: LOOKING AHEAD TO 2021

Every month the British Ambassador to France, Ed Llewellyn, shares an insight into his role, via The Connexion French News and Views (<https://www.connexionfrance.com/>).

Here is his column for the January Edition that went live on the 22nd December 2020. "Let me start by wishing everyone a Happy Christmas – despite the extraordinary circumstances of the Covid pandemic.

As you will have heard, to deal with rapidly rising infection numbers, London and parts of the South East and East of England moved into Tier 4. The latest information on this can be found at [gov.uk/coronavirus](https://gov.uk/coronavirus). The next day, the French government announced major restrictions to travel from the UK into France.

As always, keeping UK nationals informed will be a priority for the Embassy. This has been a challenging year for everyone and now we all face a very unusual Christmas. So many are separated from our families in the UK or here in France – my thoughts are with all of you, especially those of you spending Christmas alone. I hope you manage to connect with your loved ones, even if it has to be virtually this year.

Like everyone else, we have had to adapt the Embassy's Christmas celebrations and instead of inviting our French and British friends to a traditional Christmas dinner, we have tried to take Christmas to them.





Homemade biscuits to thank staff at the Franco- British Hospital

At the Residence, we made over 80 Christmas puddings to send across France and donated homemade biscuits to thank staff at the Franco- British Hospital. Upheaval has dominated 2020, and some of that will no doubt continue, although the arrival of vaccines offers light at the end of the tunnel. As I write this, the EU Exit negotiations, which will help to shape the UK's relationship with our European neighbours, are still underway. I will update The Connexion readers once we know the outcome.



80 Christmas puddings wrapped and ready to send across France

For now some things remain uncertain but there is much we already know. From January 1, the way that UK nationals enter France will change. If you are resident in France, you will need to make sure you have a valid passport and proof of your residency. Details on which documents you need and how to apply for residency can be found in our Living in France Guide.

If you have British friends or families visiting you, they will also need a valid passport to enter. They will be able to stay for up to 90 days in every 180-day period without a visa.

However, changes to customs regulations from January 1 mean they will not be able to bring products such as cheese or meat with them from the UK. And they will need to make sure their pet cats and dogs have an Animal Health Certificate, signed by their UK vet. UK-issued EU pet passports will no longer be accepted.

Full details of the entry requirements for coming to France after January 1 are online at: [tinyurl.com/y7wmzteu](https://tinyurl.com/y7wmzteu). I encourage you to follow our social media channels for the latest updates, and for details of how to contact us at one of our Online Events or our weekly Facebook Q&A.

## 2021 will be a busy year for the UK on the world stage

Looking beyond the end of the transition period on January 1, however, we can be certain that 2021 will be a busy year for the UK on the world stage.

December saw the five-year anniversary of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, with the (virtual) participation of the Prime Minister and HRH The Prince of Wales.

We are proud to be hosting the next global climate change conference, COP26, with Italy, in Glasgow in November. We launch that in early January, so please do look out then for more details on this most important topic.

And that's not all. In December, I was delighted to host the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rishi Sunak, in Paris to help launch the UK's G7 2021 presidency and discuss the ongoing economic response to coronavirus. The government is developing an ambitious G7 agenda, which is an opportunity to address key health, economic and climate challenges with like-minded friends.

So next year sees the UK taking on a leadership role to tackle some of the greatest challenges we face globally.

The Embassy team and I will continue to play our part enabling France and the UK to work together on shared solutions, as well, of course, as being here for you. And on that note, I wish you all a very happy and healthy New Year!

Look out for Ambassador Ed Llewellyn's interview coming soon in the Connexion.

## Travel Restrictions to and from the UK due to New Covid-19 Strain

We appreciate that there is still some uncertainty over how and for how long the new restrictions to travel from the UK to France will be applied. We continue to work with our French partners, and will provide further updates as they become available.

Regarding proof of residency, we can provide the following guidance:

- You should carry your residence permit (EU permit or Withdrawal Agreement permit) as well as your valid passport when you travel. If you have applied but not yet received your permit, carry your certificate of application. You will have received this as an email.
- If you have not yet applied for a residence permit, you should carry evidence that you are resident in France. This could include a tenancy agreement, property rental receipts, or gas or electricity bills in your name dating from 2020.

Please see our Living in France Guide for further details on residency:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/living-in-france>

All travellers over the age of 11 will need to present a document issued by a testing company demonstrating a negative result within 72 hours of boarding.

The French authorities have published a list of the covid tests they will accept here:

<https://uk.ambafrance.org/Antigen-tests-authorized-for...>

You cannot in most cases get a free NHS test if you are planning to leave the UK. The French Embassy has published this indicative (non-exhaustive) list of private test providers:

<https://uk.ambafrance.org/Listes-des-tests-antigeniques...>

Our Travel Advice <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/france> always has the latest information.

## Settlement in France and Travel Delays

We have had a number of questions about the impact of travel disruption on the Withdrawal Agreement, and specifically on settling in France before 31st December. We understand the anxiety the current situation may be causing, and will continue to seek clarity from the French Government about how your rights will be respected.

### Key facts:

- No UK national who is legally resident in the EU will lose their rights.
- The Withdrawal Agreement protects the rights of all UK and EU nationals resident in each other's territory by the end of the transition period.
- If you were already legally resident in the EU, your right to return to your host Member State is protected. You did not need to be there on the 31st December.
- UK nationals moving to the EU from 1 January 2021 will need permission to stay longer than 90 days in a rolling 180-day period. This may require applying for a visa and/or permit. You can find more information on this here [Link to French Embassy]
- Close family members to join you in France after 31 December 2020, even if they were not settled here before, as long as those relationships existed before the end of 2020. There is no time limit to this. We will share details of the relevant process for that in due course.

UK nationals living in France must apply for residency online before 1 July 2021

<https://contacts-demarches.interieur.gouv.fr/.../brexit.../>

You can read more about the documents you will need in our Living in France Guide:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/living-in-france...>



# Busting those residency myths!



## Myth 1: I need to meet high levels of income for residency under the Withdrawal Agreement.

In short: No. Proof of resources is only required in certain limited categories.

In most scenarios, you do not need to prove any levels of income or resources. The only case where you do is if you have been in France for less than 5 years, are retired or not working (i.e. self-sufficient); or if you live in France and work in another country. In this case, you need to show you have as much as or more than the minimum level of work welfare benefit, called "revenue solidarite active" (RSA), whatever your age or household composition (currently 564.78 Euros a month). This is confirmed in the recent French legislation, and is a guideline for prefectures to make a judgment call. They will take your full situation into consideration, for example, if you have family in France, or own your property.

The French authorities are taking a generous approach to citizens' rights under the Withdrawal Agreement. Their starting point is to seek favourable judgements to grant residency wherever possible. The French authorities will take a case-by-case approach to applications where individuals have low resources. When asked about proof of resources, it's usually better to give as full a picture as possible so that the prefecture can understand your individual circumstances (for example, income or resources from abroad, evidence of savings, proof you are a homeowner or living rent-free), and add any relevant information in the comments section of the application. You can find detailed information on the residency system on our Living in France Guide <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/living-in-france>.

## MYTH 2: I had to be physically present in France on 31 December 2020 to be in scope of the Withdrawal Agreement.

In short: Not if you are already settled in France and temporarily absent! Temporary absences of up to six-months each year do not affect the right of residence. Continuity of residence is not affected by the following temporary absences:

- absences not exceeding a total of six months a year;
- longer absences for compulsory military service; or
- one absence of a maximum of twelve consecutive months for important reasons, such as pregnancy and childbirth, a serious illness, study or vocational training or a posting abroad.



### MYTH 3: I don't need to provide fingerprints for my Withdrawal Agreement residence application.

In short: Usually, yes you will.

Almost all applicants will need to give their fingerprints. After you submit your online residence application with your supporting documents, your Prefecture will process it and invite you to an appointment. This appointment will last 5-10 minutes, and all you need to do is show your passport, give your fingerprints, and hand back your EU Carte de Sejour (if you have one). You will then receive your new Withdrawal Agreement residence permit in the post.

It may be possible to arrange this appointment at your local sous-prefecture. When you apply and enter your address on the application form, you will be able to see if it is listed as a processing station.

The EU Regulation of 20 June 2019 obliges France and all Member States to strengthen the security of identity cards for their own nationals, and residence permits for EU nationals and their family members. Therefore, biometric residence permits will become the new norm for everybody. Biometrics are there to protect you and your documents from fraud.

When it comes to the new Withdrawal Agreement residence permit, some Prefectures have been able to waive this appointment in cases where, for example, individuals have recently given their fingerprints. However, this is not the standard procedure and most people will need to give their fingerprints at a new appointment. If you or your family member is unable for health reasons to attend an appointment at the Prefecture, you should also flag this in the comments section of your application.



### MYTH 4: I do not need to inform the prefecture if my personal situation changes

In short: You may have to, if the change relates to your personal details.

You will want to inform the prefecture if you change any of your personal details such as your name, civil status or address. In particular, if you previously applied through the “no-deal” online portal open between October 2019 and January 2020, you need to re-apply via the new site if you have moved house resulting in a change of 'departement'.

However, UK nationals' residence rights under the Withdrawal Agreement are not affected when they change their status e.g you retire, as long as their residence is in accordance with the Withdrawal Agreement. Changing status does not require any action and does not need to be reported to French national authorities. It is also possible to hold multiple statuses (e.g. a student who is simultaneously a worker). If you gain the right to permanent residence (after 5 years' living in France) just after you receive your new WA card, you will be able to get your 10-year card once it expires.

## MYTH 5: An S1 form is not enough to prove healthcare for your residency application.

In short: Yes it is!

You only need to prove you have healthcare cover if you have been living in France under 5 years, are not working or retired. Public and private healthcare will both be accepted for the residency application. Proof of public healthcare might include your 'attestation de droits' from ameli.fr. The French Health Ministry have also advised that a copy of your S1 from the UK should be sufficient if you have recently arrived and are in the process of registering the form with CPAM. In some cases, for example if you have lived in France for under three months and are not working or do not yet qualify for French state healthcare or an S1, you may need private health insurance.

If you are in the process of applying for healthcare, and don't yet have the necessary documentation, you can either wait until you have it sorted, or upload any proof you have, and explain your situation in the comments section of the application. You will have the opportunity to later furnish supplementary evidence and correct any errors or omissions in your application if necessary.

## MYTH 6: My close family member cannot apply for residency online

In short: They can, but non-EU family members should speak to their Prefecture

The Withdrawal Agreement means that UK nationals in scope can be joined by close family members (of any nationality) in France at any point in the future, on the basis of current EU rules, where the relationship existed before the end of the transition period.

It is correct that the deadline to apply for residence via the online application portal is 30 June 2021, so any family relocating to France before then can apply this way. We are waiting for the French authorities to confirm the process for those arriving afterwards and will share this as soon as we have it.

We are aware of some challenges for third-country national family members who do not currently have any kind of residence permit but require a permit number for their online application via the new site. These individuals should speak to their Prefecture about the best way forward. They may first need to make an application via the Prefecture.

## MYTH 7: I need a visa to visit France next year

In short: Not if you live in France under the Withdrawal Agreement or are staying for fewer than 90 days in 180

If you were resident in France before 1 January 2021, you should carry your residence permit (EU permit or Withdrawal Agreement permit) as well as your valid passport when you travel. If you have applied but not yet received your permit, carry your certificate of application. You will have received this as an email.

If you have not yet applied for a residence permit, you should carry evidence that you are resident in France. This could include a tenancy agreement, property rental receipts, or gas or electricity bills in your name dating from 2020.

If you cannot show that you are resident in France, you may be asked additional questions at the border to enter the Schengen area, and your passport may be stamped. This will not affect your rights in France. You can find more information here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/living-in-france#passports-and-travel>

If you have visitors from the UK, they will need to have a valid passport to enter France, and will be able to stay up to 90 days in every 180 days visa-free. For full guidance on visiting France, see our France Travel Advice.





**SETTLED  
IN FRANCE?**

**RESIDENCY MYTHBUSTERS**

Each day we bust one common myth about applying for residency in France under the Withdrawal Agreement

ITS TIME TO TAKE ACTION, FIND OUT MORE  
AT [GOV.UK/LIVING IN FRANCE](https://gov.uk/living-in-france)

✓ Check  
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## MYTH 8: I won't qualify for residency in France if I work abroad.

In short: You may do in some specific instances You may qualify for residency in France even if you work abroad. There are provisions in the French legislation for this.

For example, individuals who are frontier working at the end of the transition period are protected by the Withdrawal Agreement. Frontier workers are defined as EU citizens or UK nationals who regularly undertake economic activity in one or more states in which they do not reside, irrespective of whether they also work in the state of residence. This will often look like a commuter pattern, crossing the border as often as once a week.

You will need to apply for residency in France and may need to get a frontier worker permit in the country where you are working.

Similarly, if you live in France and work in the UK, you can continue to visit and work in the UK by virtue of your British passport. In this instance, you will not be considered as a frontier worker under the Withdrawal Agreement, although you must register as a French resident. As is already the case, you will need to ensure you have healthcare arrangements in place; you should speak to HMRC about your eligibility for an S1 (see <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/hm-revenue-customs/contact/nationalinsurance-enquiries-for-non-uk-residents>).



UK Government  
UK TRANSITION

**Settled in France?**  
Apply for residency now.

Find out more at [gov.uk/livinginfrance](https://gov.uk/livinginfrance)

✓ Check  
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## Important update for travelling to France with your pet dog, cat or ferret!

If your pet passport was issued in an EU member state it remains valid. However, from 1 January 2021, a current EU pet passport issued in Great Britain will NOT be valid for travel to France.

You will instead need an Animal Health Certificate (AHC), which you can get from your vet no more than 10 days before travelling. In order to get an AHC, you will need to take proof of your pet's micro-chipping date and vaccination history.

A dog, cat or ferret must be micro-chipped, and vaccinated against rabies. You must wait 21 days after the primary vaccination before travel.

Your pet's AHC will be valid for:

- 10 days after the date of issue for entry into France
- Onward travel within the EU or Northern Ireland for 4 months after date of issue
- Re-entry to Great Britain for 4 months after the date of issue

Your pet will need a new AHC for each trip to France.

On arrival in France, pet owners travelling with pets will need to enter through a designated travellers' point of entry (TPE).

If you are a UK national living in France and plan to travel with your pet using a UK-issued pet passport, you should speak to your vet. They will help ensure you're compliant with EU Pet Travel Regulations.

If you have a pet passport issued by an EU member state, you can use it to bring your pet to Great Britain.

For full details of the changes beginning 1 January 2021, please visit

<https://www.gov.uk/.../pet-travel-to-europe-from-1...>

## SIX MONTHS TO APPLY FOR YOUR RESIDENCY PERMIT... HELP IS AVAILABLE!

If you are settled in France, remember that you must apply before 1 July 2021.

Most UK nationals in France will be able to complete the simple online application by themselves, but if you are experiencing difficulties and need help, the UK government is funding four organisations across France to provide practical support to UK nationals.

This month we showcase one of those organisations, the [Franco British Network](#). This organisation offers free assistance to UK Nationals living in the Dordogne, Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes, and Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur regions who are applying for French residency and who may struggle to complete this without assistance. You can watch their video about applying for residency permits here

<https://francobritishnetwork.fr/2020/11/25/watch-our-new-video/>

See more [here](#). Next month, we will profile another of the four UK National Support Fund organisations providing cover across France.

For more information and contact details, please see the end of this newsletter or our Living in France Guide: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/living-in-france#visas-and-residency>



## EHIC/S1 REMINDER

Remember that UK nationals who are living in France or moved there permanently before the end of 2020, will see their rights to access healthcare in France stay the same from 1 January 2021 for as long as they remain resident.

However, some people living and working in France, such as S1 holders, some students and posted workers need to apply now for a new UK-issued EHIC to replace their existing cards. Further information is available from [www.nhs.uk/EHIC](http://www.nhs.uk/EHIC) or by calling the Overseas Healthcare Team on 0044 191 218 1999.

## USEFUL LINKS TO ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE OR SUPPORT:

Please visit the webpages below for more information. The links and contact details can signpost you in the right direction and also connect you to those who can provide support or offer help with technical matters if you need it.

Key websites:

- Living in France Guide: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/living-in-france>
- France Travel Advice: <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/france>
- Sign up to the Business Newsflash: [bit.ly/WeeklyNewsflash](http://bit.ly/WeeklyNewsflash)
- French government website: [www.brexit.gouv](http://www.brexit.gouv)

If you use social media, do also consider following us on Facebook @ukinfrance and on Twitter @BritishinFrance.

# UK NATIONALS SUPPORT FUND

In France, [four British Government funded organisations](#) can help UK nationals secure their residency rights. They provide practical support to individuals finding it harder to complete applications, including pensioners, disabled people, those living in remote areas or who have mobility difficulties, and those who face language barriers or barriers in accessing technology.

[IOM - The International Organisation for Migration \(Brittany, Normandy, Ile de France, Hauts-de-France, and Pays de la Loire\)](#)

Visit the [IOM website](#)

Email: [UKnationalsFR@iom.int](mailto:UKnationalsFR@iom.int)

Hotline: 08 09 54 98 32 available during the following hours:

Mon - Tues 2pm to 4pm and Wed - Thurs 10.30am to 12.30pm

[FBN - The Franco-British Network \(Dordogne, Provence-Alpes-Côte-d'Azur, Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes\)](#)

Visit the [FBN website](#)

Email: [The Franco-British Network](#)

Hotline: 05 19 88 01 09 available during the following hours:

Mon, Tues and Wed, 9am to 1pm; Thurs and Fri 1pm to 5pm

[Church of England - Diocese in Europe \(Nouvelle Aquitaine, Occitanie, Grand Est, Bourgogne-Franche-Comté, Centre-Val de Loire, Corsica\)](#)

Visit the [Diocese in Europe Residency Support Project website](#)

Hotline: 05 32 80 00 05 available during the following hours:

Mon - Fri 9:30am to 12:00pm and 1:30pm to 4pm;

Tues 5.30pm to 8pm; Sat: 9:30am to 12:00pm

[SSAFA, The Armed Forces Charity \(veterans across France\)](#)

Visit the [SSAFA website](#)

Email: [ukvie.support@ssafa.org.uk](mailto:ukvie.support@ssafa.org.uk)

Hotline: 08 05 11 96 17