

FAQs in relation to MEU1 & MEU3 Residency Documents needed by UK nationals in Cyprus

There will be changes to the way that UK nationals can live, travel and access services in Cyprus after 31 December 2020. The below FAQs explain the importance of obtaining or updating your residency status, the benefits that residency gives you and the difference between temporary (MEU1) and permanent residency (MEU3). Please visit the GOV.UK [Living in Cyprus guide](#) for further guidance on residence rights in Cyprus and follow our social media pages for further updates.

1. Why do I need a residency document? I've lived here for years without one and experienced no problems.

The Withdrawal Agreement that the UK agreed with the EU in 2019, established a transition period until the end of December 2020, during which time UK nationals will continue to be treated in the same way as EU nationals in Cyprus. In order to evidence your rights to live, work, study or access benefits in Cyprus after the end of 2020 you need to apply for residency. If you have been in Cyprus for less than 5 years you should apply for an MEU1 (temporary residency permit). If you have been in Cyprus for over 5 years you should apply for an MEU3 (permanent residency). You will not be penalised if you have been living in Cyprus without residency documents.

You can find all the information on how to apply for your residency document on our [Living in Cyprus](#) page.

2. When do I need to apply by?

You should apply before the end of the transition period on 31 December 2020. This is because UK nationals with residency documents will then be able to continue to travel freely into and out of Cyprus on the same basis

as EU nationals from January 1 2021. UK nationals who have regularised their residency will also be able to register with GESY – the Cypriot General Healthcare system and be entitled to lifelong healthcare rights for as long as they remain resident in Cyprus. After 31 December 2020, the procedure for residency applications and residency documents is likely to change. The new procedures may be different and the new residency document will have a defined validity in years. The current MEU1 and MEU3 documents do not have an expiry date.

3. Is it a legal requirement to have a residency document in Cyprus?

Yes, all UKNs who plan to stay in Cyprus longer than 90 days must register with the Civil Registry and Immigration Authorities and apply for an MEU residency document.

This includes UK nationals who have bought property in Cyprus and spend more than 90 days here, those who have lived in Cyprus for many years and never registered or have residency documents issued prior to 2004, those who work or study in Cyprus, and those who have retired and chosen to make Cyprus their permanent home.

4. I have an older residency document do I have to apply for an MEU residency document?

Yes. Examples of outdated and invalid residency documents include: a brown residency booklet, a blue slip, a pink slip, an ARC, or an old residency stamp in a UK passport.

All these residency documents and stamps in passports, issued prior to 2004, became invalid when Cyprus entered the EU and initiated the MEU residency document procedures for all nationals of EU Member States living in Cyprus. If you do not update your older residency documents you may experience difficulties re-entering Cyprus or accessing services after 31 December 2020.

5. What is the financial criteria that I need to pass in order to be able to apply for my residency document?

According to the Minimum Guaranteed income funds as provided by the Ministry of Labour (EEE), you will need to be able to provide documentary evidence that you receive a minimum income or pension of over €480 per month.

6. If I don't have a residency document and remain in Cyprus for longer than 90 days will I have difficulties leaving or returning to Cyprus?

Yes. The rules on travel to and from the Republic of Cyprus will change after 31 December 2020. If you do not have a residency document then you cannot remain in Cyprus for longer than 90 days after this date. If you exceed the 90 day limit, you could face difficulties and/or fines when travelling in and out of Cyprus. As per our Living in Cyprus guide, you are advised to carry your Cyprus-issued residency documents when travelling in/out of Cyprus.

7. What help is there for UKNs who are elderly or vulnerable to register for residency?

UK National Support Fund

On 6 March 2020 the [FCO announced funding](#) for organisations to provide practical support to UK nationals who may find it harder to complete their residency applications.

These organisations will help individuals who may find it harder to complete the necessary paperwork to secure their residency rights, including pensioners, disabled people, those living in remote areas or who have mobility difficulties, and those who require help with language translation or interpretation.

In Cyprus, two organisations are providing this practical support: SSAFA (specifically for armed forces veterans) and Cyprus Residency Planning Group (CRPG). If you or someone you know may find it harder to complete the paperwork, you can contact them using the details below to discuss how they may be able to help you.

SSAFA: 800 77058 (freephone)

Mon - Fri 09.00-17.30

ukvie.support@ssafa.org.uk

CRPG: 800 09009 (freephone)

Mon – Fri 09.00-13.00

contactus@cyprus-crpg.org

8. I applied for my MEU residency document months ago and still haven't received it. What should I do?

We are aware that there are currently delays in the issuance of residency documents. It is important to keep the receipt that you receive when you submit your residency application, as this receipt will enable you to look into the progress of your application by referencing the application number as it appears on the receipt. If you have not received your residency documents after several months, you can enquire into the status of your application through the **SMS Service for Information Regarding Applications for Residence Permits** by sending a free SMS message to 8999. Send a message with the word STATUS leave a space and add the number of your application.

9. I have been in Cyprus for longer than 5 years and have an MEU1 document, why should I apply for MEU3 permanent residency status?

The MEU3 document allows immediate registration to Cyprus' General Healthcare system known as GESY. You do not have to be an S1 holder or be contributing to the Cyprus Social Insurance Scheme to register with GESY if you have an MEU3.

If you plan to spend time both in the UK and in Cyprus during the year, an MEU1 allows you to be out of Cyprus for up to 6 months per year whereas, the MEU3 permanent residency status allows up to 5 years out of the country.

10. I have an MEU1 can I register with GESY?

If you have an MEU1, you can only register with GESY if you are an S1 holder, or if you are contributing to Cyprus Social Insurance as an employee or company owner, or if you are voluntarily contributing to the Cyprus Social Insurance Scheme.

We advise you to have comprehensive healthcare cover if you are not entitled to register with GESY. There is more information about GESY on our [Living in Cyprus](#) page.

11. I am an early retiree and do not yet have an S1 can I register with GESY if I have an MEU1?

As an MEU1 holder, you can't register with GESY unless you are currently receiving a state pension as evidenced by the S1 document, or unless you are contributing to the Cyprus Social Insurance Scheme. We advise you to have comprehensive healthcare cover if you are not entitled to register with GESY. More information about state pensions and social assistance benefits can be found on our [Living in Cyprus](#) page.

12. If I have an MEU1 or MEU3 residence document can I apply for a Cyprus issued EHIC card?

You can apply for a Cyprus issued EHIC card only if you are contributing to the Cyprus Social Insurance Scheme. Having an MEU1 or MEU3 without contributing to Social Insurance does not entitle you to apply for a Cyprus issued EHIC card.

13. If I have an MEU1 or MEU3 residency document can I apply for social assistance benefits?

Yes, both MEU1 and MEU3 holders are entitled to apply for social assistance and social welfare benefits. More information can be found on the [Living in Cyprus Guide](#) and the Department of Social Welfare Services website [here](#).

If there are changes to residency registration processes, we will update this guidance as soon as information is available.