



LATIN AMERICAN DISABLED PEOPLE'S PROJECT WELFARE ADVICE

21-11-2013

RIGHTS AND RESPONSABILITIES

This page explains your rights to enter, live in and work in the UK if you are a national of a country in the European Economic Area (EEA) or Switzerland. It also explains your family members' rights.

As an EEA or Swiss national, you have the right to live and work in the UK (known as the 'right of residence') if:

- you are working here (and have obtained our permission to work if this is required - see below); or
- you can support yourself and your family in the UK without becoming an unreasonable burden on public funds.

Entering the UK

When you enter the UK, you must show your passport or national identity card. You should use the separate channel marked 'EEA/EU', where it is available. Immigration officers will check your passport or national identity card to ensure that it is valid and belongs to you.

Your family

If you have a right to live in the UK, your family may join you here. Your family is defined as:

- your spouse (husband or wife) or civil partner;
- any children or grandchildren of you, your spouse or your civil partner who are under 21 years of age or who are dependent on you; and
- the parents or grandparents of you, your spouse or your civil partner.

If you are a student, only your spouse or civil partner and dependent children have a right of residence.

Other relatives (including extended family members such as brothers, sisters and cousins) do not have an automatic right to live in the UK. To be considered, they must be able to show that they are dependent on you.

If you and your partner are not married or in a civil partnership, you must be able to show that you are in a durable relationship with each other.

Family members who are not EEA or Swiss nationals

If your family members are not EEA or Swiss nationals, they may need to apply for an **EEA family permit** before they can come to the UK. This permit is similar to a visa.

For more information, see the [EEA family permits](#) page.

Employment

If you are a national of Bulgaria or Romania, you **must** obtain our permission in order to work here. You should read the pages for [Bulgarian and Romanian nationals](#) for details.

If you are a national of any other EEA country or Switzerland, you will not need to apply for our permission in order to work here.

You and your family members can:

- accept offers of work
- work as an employee and/or in self-employment
- set up a business
- manage a company
- set up a local branch of a company

You can also do all these types of work if you are studying in the UK. Your employer should not discriminate against you because of your nationality in terms of conditions of employment, pay or working conditions.

Registration certificates, residence cards and family member residence stamps

A **registration certificate** is a document, issued to an EEA national, that confirms the holder's right of residence under European law. You **do not need** a registration certificate to be able to enter, live in or work in the UK.

Residence cards are issued to EEA nationals' family members who are not EEA nationals themselves. The card is in fact a sticker (also called a 'vignette'), placed in your passport, which confirms your right of residence in the UK under European law. It is normally valid for 5 years, and you should produce it as evidence of your status when asked to do so. (In some circumstances, we may issue you with an immigration status document instead of an vignette in your passport. You should produce this document **and** your passport as evidence of your status when asked to do so.)

If the EEA national is a worker from Bulgaria or Romania, who requires authorisation to work in the UK, their non-EEA family members cannot apply for a residence card until the Bulgarian or Romanian national has completed 12 months' continuous legal employment in the UK. Until that time, each non-EEA national family member can apply for a **family member residence stamp** to confirm their right of residence under European law.

To find out how to apply for a registration certificate, see the [Residence documents for European citizens](#) section.

To find out how to apply for a residence card or family member residence stamp, see the [Residence documents for family members](#) section.

Permanent residence

When you have lived in the UK for a continuous period of 5 years, you can apply for **confirmation of permanent residence**. For more information, see the [Residence documents for European citizens](#) or [Residence documents for family members](#) section.

Posted workers

If you are a Swiss national or Swiss company that conducts business in the UK, you may send non-EEA or non-Swiss national employees to work for you in the UK for up to 90 days without needing to apply for a work permit. Those employees must have been working for you in Switzerland or in an EEA member state for a reasonable period of time. Your non-EEA or non-Swiss national employees will need to apply for **posted workers authorisation**.

You should contact your nearest visa application centre for details of how to apply.

Public funds

You do not need to work while you are living in the UK. But if you do not work, you must be able to support yourself and your family in the UK without becoming an unreasonable burden on public funds.

Healthcare

If you are an EEA national in the UK as a student or as a self-sufficient person you must have comprehensive sickness insurance for the duration of your stay in the UK. To find out more, see the [Healthcare - comprehensive sickness insurance](#) page.

RESIDENCE DOCUMENTS FOR EUROPEAN NATIONALS

This page explains why a national of the European Economic Area (EEA) or Switzerland may want to apply for confirmation that they have the right to live in the UK. If you are an EEA or Swiss national, you can apply for a **registration certificate**. This is a document which confirms your right of residence in the UK under European law.

When you have lived in the UK for a continuous period of 5 years in accordance with the European regulations, you can apply for a **document certifying permanent residence**. From 1 January 2012 Bulgarian and Romanian nationals can apply for permanent residence using the EEA3 form.

Do you need to apply?

Under European law, you **do not** need to obtain documentation confirming your right of residence in the UK if you are a national of a country in the EEA.

However, if you want to support an application for a residence card by any of your family members who are **not EEA nationals**, you must demonstrate that you are residing in the UK in accordance with the Immigration (European Economic Area) Regulations 2006 and are 'exercising Treaty rights' in the UK. You are said to be exercising Treaty rights if you are:

- employed or self-employed; or
- studying; or
- economically self-sufficient (meaning that you have sufficient funds to support you without requiring public funds); or
- a jobseeker; or
- retired; or
- someone who has had to cease working in the UK owing to permanent incapacity.

(If you are a Bulgarian or Romanian national, you may need to be authorised by us before you can work here. See the [European workers](#) section for more information.)

When can you apply for a registration certificate?

All EEA nationals and Swiss nationals can apply for a registration certificate at any time.

How to apply

To find out how to apply for a registration certificate or a document certifying permanent residence, see the [How to apply for residence documents](#) page.