

THE BIG EUROPEAN CITIZENS' SURVIVAL GUIDE

How to succeed as a European citizen in modern Britain

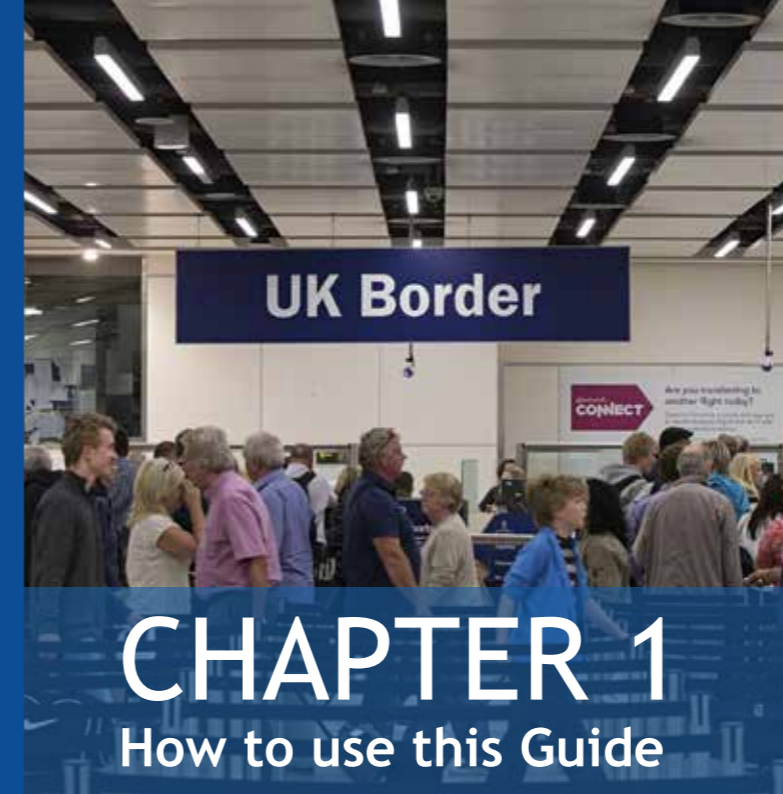


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CHAPTER 1 How to use this Guide

This guide follows EU citizens on their journey into Britain and British society starting from Day One.

Everything from what to do before you set off, through what to do on the first day and the first week and to survive until you become settled, to everything you need succeed and participate fully in British society and become more established.

The guide is written in a conversational style, from the perspective of an EU citizen exercising his or her right to free movement by coming to live in the UK.

At the last census in 2010 (Britain takes a census every 10 years), there were 2.3m non-British EU citizens in the UK. A similar number of UK citizens live in other EU member states.



The contribution of EU citizens to the economic, social and cultural life of Britain is inestimable. However, not enough is done to support and make life easier for EU citizens who move to the UK. This guide will help to put that right.

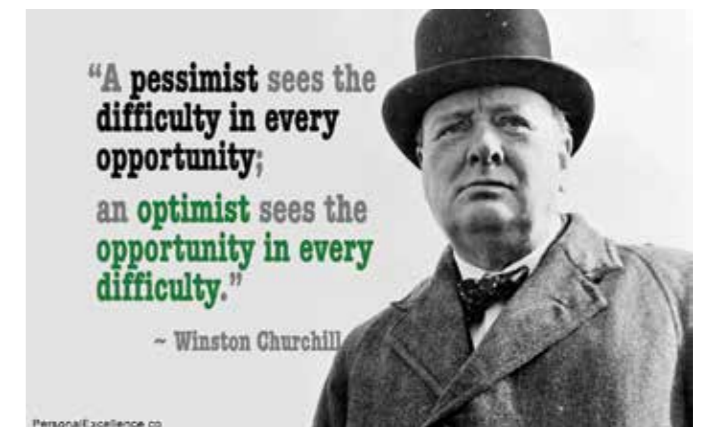
It is never easy to move home and community but a move to another member state is a different proposition altogether.

During the war, Winston Churchill once said:

“This is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it may very well be the end of the beginning.”

Your journey also does not end when you cross the border to Britain – that is just the end of the beginning.

Many of your biggest challenges lie ahead. You will soon realise that you are not as free as you expected or even as you were when you left your home member state.



Like Winston Churchill, your most important survival skill will be your own motivation to succeed. You will find that there will be occasions in Britain when you will need more than a little bit of the Churchillian spirit. The motivation that brought you to the UK will see you through.

The United States of Europe of which Churchill spoke in 1946 is still a distant dream rather than an everyday reality.

It is harder to achieve equality of opportunity for all EU citizens than it should be.

Many people in Europe are not aware that as citizens of a member state of the European Union we have a number of rights and entitlements.

These rights are of real importance when we move from one member state to another. While Britain remains part of the European Union, these rights will continue to be effective in the UK

As an EU citizen living here it is very important that you are aware of what these rights are and how they can be used to protect your interests.

Your rights as an EU citizen

- The right to live, work, study and retire in the UK
- The right to non-discrimination the grounds of nationality
- The right to vote in local, regional and European elections
- The right to stand in local, regional and European elections

Despite these rights, you may face a number of practical difficulties. This guide aims to help you access your rights and overcome those barriers.

In a guide this size we cannot capture every aspect of life in Britain but we hope to offer a valuable and practical introduction from the perspective of the EU citizen.

We will provide signposts to show you where to find more information and where to get help when needed.

We will guide you through the challenges and pitfalls you will face as you study or move into work, settle

down, access public services, start a business and succeed in establishing yourself the UK.

It is important that you know your rights and how to make them effective.

Just think of the young people of the Euromaidan in Kiev to remember how valuable these rights are.

Good luck and every success with your new life in Britain.

Euromaidan demonstrations 2013



CHAPTER 2 Survial skills

There are so many kinds of English but it is surprising how many new arrivals in Britain want to learn the “Queen’s English”.

If you want to sound like a very posh person from the 1950s then so-called Queen’s English is definitely for you!



Michelle and Barack Obama meet the Queen

Remember though that there are literally thousands of different kinds of English spoken around the world (especially in America!)

Your English will be one of many kinds of English and that is absolutely fine.

Less than 45% of the population of London are white British today and over 300 languages are spoken in London schools.

So we are very diverse society, particularly in the cities.

Your top survival skill in Britain is to be able to make yourself understood in English.

Unlike the Queen, you will not be driven round in a horse and carriage surrounded by horse-guards.



Old Bailey, London

Your next survival skill is to learn how to navigate the UK’s roads and public transport system.

Not only will you have to find your way around the highways and bye-ways on your own and learn how to stay on the right side of the law

Your third survival skill in Britain is to learn the rules and how to play by them.

Much of this is commons sense but there are some offences in the UK for example that may not be so in other EU member states and vice versa.

Your fourth skill is learning how to tell a joke, how to queue and how to complain.

The British love to complain and are very good at it. You should learn from them as quickly as possible and do the same.

How to make yourself understood

How to acquire English without having to learn it

Language training can often be expensive and frustrating albeit in many cases necessary if you are to make progress.

Don't forget however, the myriad of ways in which you can exploit the huge potential for acquiring English from your home, work and other environments.

The language you need to say the things you want to say is going to be as useful to you as what you learnt by heart in the schoolroom. A great way to improve your English is to have a hobby or join a club or a local community group or society.

For example, knitting is booming in Britain. Around 7 million women in the UK have an interest in knitting or sewing. There are many celebrity fans of knitting and it is now the UK's favourite hobby.

It is perfectly possible to knit and learn English at the same time - in fact it is much to be recommended.

Useful phrases

Nobody will mind if you ask them to repeat what they have said. This is a much better strategy than pretending to understand when you haven't!

Learn these helpful phrases and use them whenever you need to do so!

"I'm sorry, I didn't understand that."

"Please could you say that again?"

"Would you mind repeating that?"

"Please could you speak a little more slowly?"

"I'm still learning English"

Phonetic alphabet

Learn to spell out your names and address using the "phonetic alphabet".

Despite its name, this has nothing to do with "phonetics" but in fact refers to a set of names that the International Civil Aviation Authority has given to each letter in English so that they can be clearly understood.

PHONETIC ALPHABET	
A Alpha	P Papa
B Bravo	Q Quebec
C Charlie	R Romeo
D Delta	S Sierra
E Echo	T Tango
F Foxtrot	U Uniform
G Golf	O Oscar
H Hotel	P Papa
I India	Q Quebec
J Juliet	R Romeo
K Kilo	S Sierra
L Lima	T Tango
M Mike	U Uniform
N November	V Victor
O Oscar	W Whiskey
P Papa	X X-ray
Q Quebec	Y Yankee
	Z Zulu

Abbreviations and acronyms

These can often catch you out and are rarely taught at school. It's worth looking these up selectively on the internet or asking in a local bookstore for a reference book which will give you a comprehensive guide.

Here are some common examples – how many did you know?

BTW	=	By the way
COP	=	Close of play
DOB	=	Date of birth
FYI	=	For your information
LOL	=	Laugh out loud
ONO	=	Or near offer
PC	=	Politically correct (or Personal computer)
PTO	=	Please turn over
RSVP	=	Please reply
TBC	=	To be confirmed (or To be continued - USA)

On the phone

One of the most difficult situations for the non-native speaker is using English on the phone.

Often you will be asked to say your name over the phone and to spell this out – our strong advice is to learn the phonetic alphabet and use this to do so (see above).

Trickiest of all is dealing with call centres, especially if the person you are speaking to is also not a native speaker and/or in many cases simply reading from a script.

Sometimes the simplest thing to do is to politely ask if you can call back as the line is not very good – you will be very unlikely to get the same operator.

Alternatively, you have the right to ask to speak to a manager, who should be a native speaker and will also be better trained.

How to get around

Which way is left?

You will be amazed at how easy it is to forget that in Britain people drive on the left.



When you have other cars to follow, you are unlikely to make a mistake with this! However, late at night when there is no or little traffic around it is all too easy to turn right or left into the on-coming traffic.

Remember that if you are driving a UK car, you will be driving on the left but seated on the right, with the passenger seat nearest to the roadside.

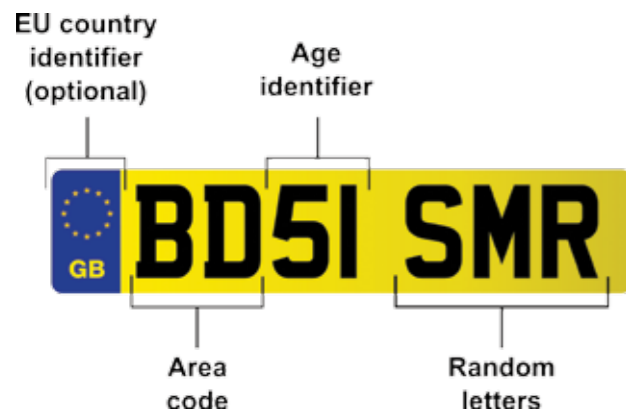
Unfortunately, no SatNav has yet been invented that tells you that you are driving on the wrong side of the road – so be careful!

Tax, Insurance, MOT

You can't drive a vehicle in the UK unless you have the 'trinity' of tax, insurance and MOT (annual certificate of vehicle safety or road worthiness).

An MOT can be obtained from most local garages. However, if you have an old car and it fails its MOT for any reason you will need by law to have the repair carried out by the same garage that conducted the MOT. The reasons for failure could be as simple as a bulb that needs replacing. If it is something more serious then you could be in for a bigger bill – so choose your garage carefully as the cost of obtaining an MOT may turn out to be higher than the MOT itself.

Car insurance also varies and the best thing to do is



to shop around online until you find the best deal.

Once you have renewed your MOT and have insurance you will be able to renew your annual vehicle tax.

Again this is done online through the DVLA (Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority) which you can access via the government website (<https://www.gov.uk/vehicle-tax>).

Tax discs no longer need to be displayed in the windscreen of your car but the tax payments do need to be kept up-to-date and you can be fined for not doing so.

Parking perils

Local councils make a lot of their revenue by issuing parking tickets. All parking attendants are very nice people. It is a big mistake to suggest otherwise under any circumstances. However, it is also true that they are out to get you!

Make sure you are always parked in a marked bay and for the correct time. If you do receive a parking ticket, make sure you pay within 14 days – you will then receive a 50% reduction. However, it is often worth trying to challenge the ticket.

Just because you don't see a parking attendant in the area doesn't mean you won't receive a ticket – many councils have cameras installed or mobile vehicles with cameras and photographic evidence is enough to allow them to issue a fine.

London and some other cities have a congestion charge for driving into the city centre – this is best paid online on the day of travel but it is also possible to pay a day in advance or one day in arrears.

You can also register your vehicle for "auto top-up" so that the charge is collected automatically and billed at the end of each month.

There are very few other road tolls in the UK but one that catches many people out is the newly automated toll on the M25 London orbital motorway at the Dartford Crossing.

If you are a disabled driver you can obtain a disabled parking badge, known as the blue badge, from your



local council – there are many disabled bays, in fact usually far more than are used at any one time, particularly in supermarkets so you should have no difficulty parking.

Speed traps

Speed cameras are everywhere – George Orwell's 1984 come true!

They are very effective in reducing accidents but it is annoying and expensive to receive a speeding fine and you also receive an endorsement on your licence. This can occur even if you are travelling say at 34 mph in a 30 mph area, so be careful.



This is what a UK speed camera looks like

Each minor speeding offence normally means a £60 fine and 3 points on your licence – after four such offences you lose your licence for one year. Points remain active for three years and stay on your licence for four. You also have to report points when you are applying for some jobs or when you are taking out insurance.

There is an alternative to paying the fine and receiving points now for the first offence and this is to attend a "speed awareness training" course. These

are held at hotels or conference centres at various locations around the UK. The training course lasts about 4 hours and is free. They are very worthwhile if you want to keep a "clean licence" and save money and will help you to avoid fines in future.

Accidents and insurance

If you do have even a minor accident, remember that it is a criminal offence to leave the scene without exchanging your name, and the name and/or contact details of your insurance company with the other driver or contacting the police.

The police will usually only attend the scene of an accident if somebody has been injured or if one of the vehicles is so badly damaged that it cannot be moved. Otherwise, it's best to take photos of the cars and then quickly move the vehicles to the side of the road.

Once you have given your name and the name of your insurance company to the other driver you and/or they may leave. It's generally best to check that they are happy for you to do so first or whether they would prefer you to call the police. If you do call the police, they will have a record of your call and if they cannot attend immediately they may give you permission to leave.

In UK law if you run into another vehicle from behind it is almost certainly going to be seen as your fault, whatever the circumstances.

In most cases, it will be the insurance companies who decide who is at fault and there is no need to admit fault to the other driver at the time of the accident, although you may wish to say "What a nuisance" or "I'm sorry this has happened" without formally apologising which might be taken as an admission of fault.



Be careful of road rage - don't react!

In some areas of big cities it is still very dangerous to cycle. Be particularly wary of lorries and any vehicle turning left across your path.

If you are walking in a town or city, watch out for uneven surfaces, and poorly laid paving stones which can trip you up. However, if you do trip over and hurt yourself due to poor maintenance, the council may be liable.

It is not an offence to cross the street away from a pedestrian crossing or when the pedestrian light is red but unwise to do so! It also sets a bad example to the children and you will get some funny looks. On the other hand you will find that people do cross at the red light if there it is clear that there is no danger. The common sense approach is best.

At zebra crossing (back and white stripes in the road) you have the right of way and cars are required to stop if they see you are about to cross. Never park on the zig zag areas away leading up to a level crossing. Outside towns and cities there is a fantastic network of public footpaths. If you are walking on the road, wear bright or reflective clothing if possible and always walk on the side of the road towards the oncoming traffic so that you can see the cars coming towards you.



London Naked Bike Ride, 2013

In rare cases, the other motorist may become very agitated and/or angry with you following even a minor incident. In extreme cases they may even become aggressive towards you. This is known as “road rage”.

If this occurs, do not try to engage with the person but rather walk quickly to a safe place (e.g. shop or restaurant) and call the police.

Unfortunately, even if the accident is not your fault, it may still affect your insurance premium and “no claims bonus”. Some insurance companies argue that victims of accidents present a higher risk even if the accidents are not their fault!

Shop around using “comparison websites” to find the best premium for you – there can be a huge variation.

If you are involved in a serious accident in which people are injured, the emergency services must be called immediately using the number 999.

Cycling and walking

More and more people are cycling but the state of cycle paths in the UK is still a long way behind developments in many other parts of Europe.

In 2005, after over a hundred years of campaigning, walkers finally were given a new right of access to most areas of open country in England and Wales: mountain, moor, heath, down and common land. The right gives walkers the freedom to roam over wide areas of land, using any path or even walking off the path if they wish

Public transport

If you are travelling from city to city by train make sure you book your fares in advance using an online website such as train line. Tickets can be very expensive if you have to buy them on the day of travel.

There is a variety of railcards available to buy on an annual basis which give substantial concessions to different categories of traveller – for example 18-25 year olds, family and friends, or the senior rail-pass.

One of the most cherished concessions in the UK is the free bus pass. From the age of 60 for women and 65 for men you can obtain a pass which will allow you to free off-peak travel on all local buses.

In London, the Freedom Pass gives free travel on all public transport services including the tube, buses and national rail services in the London area. EU citizens resident in the UK are eligible for a freedom pass.



Law and order

Perhaps the most important point to make about the way that policing works in the UK is that the police see themselves primarily as servants of the public rather than servants of the state. For example, a policeman or woman will always be happy to give you directions or advice. The police are there to help you.



The way that a policeman or woman is trained in Britain involves a two year apprenticeship “on the beat”. That means walking the streets in a local area, getting to know the local community and to understand better what the local issues are and where the weak spots are in terms of vulnerability to crime.

Police in the UK do not carry guns unless authorised to do so for a specific reason and under very strict constraints (including time constraints).

Across the UK, the police work together with Community Support Officers (CSOs) as part of a neighbourhood policing team. The support officers are trained volunteers who have some of the powers of local police officers (including the power to make an arrest) and who help to keep a visible policing presence on local streets.

All areas of the UK now have elected Police Commissioners responsible for defining and monitoring policing priorities. This has not proved to be a popular or successful development and turn-out for the election of police commissioners has so far been very low.

The rail network has a dedicated police force, the British Transport Police, providing a service to passengers, staff and rail operators across the UK, including on the London underground. The number to call in an emergency is 0800 40 50 40.

How to complain

Many people think that the Brits' sense of humour is their leading national attribute, but a good case could be made for saying that an even more important characteristic is the ability to complain (along with their expertise in queueing).

If Turkish and Arabic speakers expect you to haggle, then the British expect you to complain. It may take some time for you to become accustomed to this but it is very important that you learn to do so.

The art of telling a joke and making a complaint at the same time was famously demonstrated by John Cleese of Monty Python in the 'Dead Parrot Sketch'.



On a more serious note, if you have not had a fair deal and you complain about it the chances are that this will be put right.

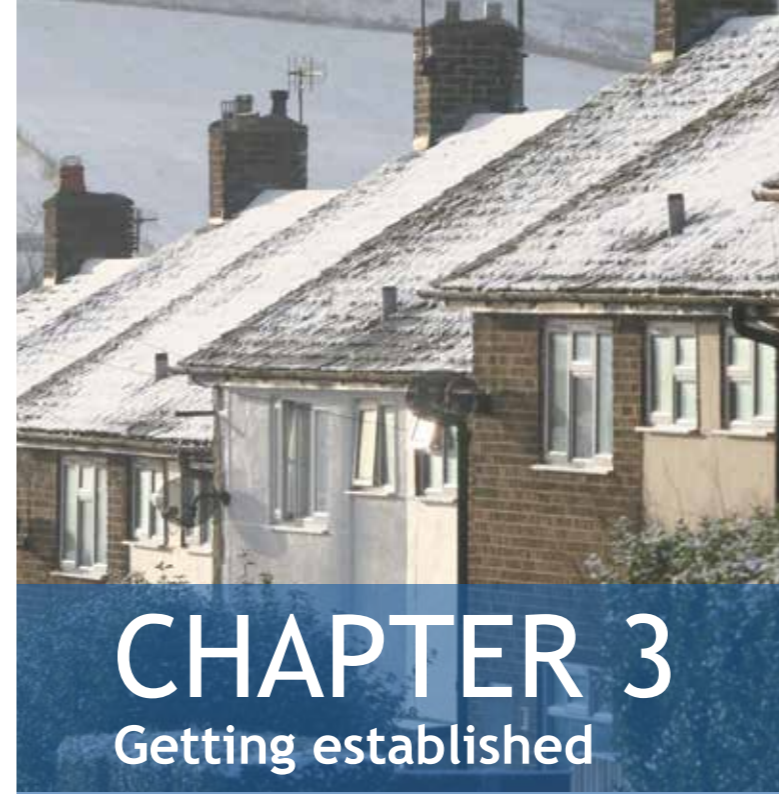
There is in Britain still an innate sense of fairness and a desire to see the wronged individual win out in the end – not just against tyranny but also against injustice.

You can use this to your advantage if you can learn how to complain!

If you are used to a situation where complaining is useless as no solution is ever found, the UK will surprise you in a good way.

It is always worth complaining in Britain – at the very least you will get an apology; in most cases you will get your money back; sometimes you will even be offered compensation.

Complaining is more of an art than a science and there are very good books on the subject, including Mel Stein' How to Complain and the albeit now slightly dated bestseller How to Complain by Christopher Ward, both still in print and available on line – and a wise investment.



CHAPTER 3 Getting established

As an EU citizen you have the right to live, work and study here and so your right of entry is assured.

It is not just EU citizens who have the right to free movement but all citizens of the European Economic Area, which includes Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway (but not Switzerland).^{The European Economic Area (EU 28 plus Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein)}

If your spouse or partner is from outside the EU, he or she also has the right to free movement within the EU (unless you are British in which case restrictions may in fact apply).

When you arrive at the border you will need to show your passport or identity card and you may be asked why you are coming to Britain.

There is a lot to cope with when you move home in your own member state – moving to another one in the EU is a “whole new ball game”.

British people living in the EU enjoy the same rights as national citizens in those members states. In fact a similar number of Brits live outside the UK in other EU member states to the number of EU citizens living in the UK. So free movement works both ways.

Moving

Whether you are moving your home and all your worldly possessions to the UK or just bringing a suitcase, the move itself can be a very stressful experience and needs careful planning.



Every aspect of your move requires careful preparation

Make a check list of what you need to bring with you and think about what you need to do before and after arrival.

This list should include everything from what will happen to your post to how to make sure you have adequate health insurance and all the personal documents you will need to start your new life in Britain.

Make copies of your documents, one set of copies to be kept in your home member state set to bring with you. These should include your birth certificate, marriage/divorce certificate, school-leaving and university diplomas, any professional qualifications.

FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT CHECKLIST		
WHAT YOU NEED	HOW TO DO IT	WHEN TO DO IT
Secure documents	Make photocopies	Week before you leave
Sufficient funds	Withdraw cash	Day before you leave
Mobile phone	Buy pay-as-you-go SIM	On arrival
National Insurance No.	Phone job centre	First day
UK Driving license	Send ID card and your driving license to DVLA	First week
Travel pass	Apply at tube station	First week
Parking permits	Apply at local library	First week
Bank account	Go to Metro Bank	First week
NHS no.	Visit local GP for form	First month
TV License	Phone up or online	First month
Phone and Broadband	Phone up	First month
Insurance	Online	First month
Council tax	Check with landlord	First month
Right to vote	Register online	First quarter

Make sure you have sufficient funds with you in cash – you will find the best exchange rates in London.

If you are coming to the UK for the first time, or are only staying for a short period and not intending to seek work, you may find that the protection of a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC), which you can obtain from your home member state before



Thomas Exchange, for example, has offers excellent exchange rates



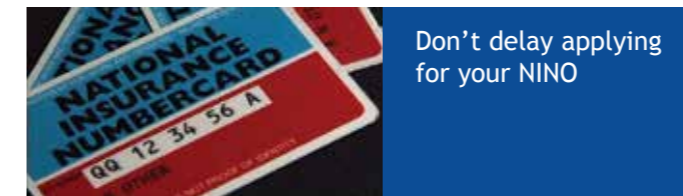
Don't leave home without your EHIC

leaving, will not only put your mind at rest but could also be necessary to access healthcare when you arrive.

Travel insurance is always a good idea, but don't book it through your airline. There are many good offers on the internet including in the UK, some of which you may be able to access before you leave even though you are not yet resident in the UK.

First day

The first thing you should do on the day after your arrival is to apply for a National Insurance Number (NINO). You can only apply for a NINO once you are in the UK and although you can work here without one if you are an EU citizen, it is best to apply for right away.



Don't delay applying for your NINO

Your NINO will make life much easier for you:

National Insurance Number Hotline

To apply for a NINO you need to call this number:

0345 600 0643 – NINO application line

Jobcentre Plus may ask you to come to an interview where you'll be asked about your circumstances and why you need a National Insurance number.

You may be asked to produce your passport or identity card, and possibly confirmation of your address. This can take the form of a letter from the person who owns or is renting the property where you are staying, confirming that you are resident with them.

This establishes that you are in fact resident in the UK. In practice, you may or may not be asked for this information depending on the office and the desk officer.

If there is any problem at all, ask the desk officer, for a list of documents that are required and agree a time frame e.g. 30 days for you to be able to return with these documents to complete the formalities. It may be more difficult for example to obtain a NINO if

you are staying in a hotel or a hostel.

Jobcentre is just the brand name used by the UK department of Work and Pensions for its support services across the UK.

When you attend your NINO interview at a Jobcentre you will be told how long it will take for your NINO to be sent to you.

If you ever lose or forget your NINO, you can ring the **NINO Helpline: 0300 200 3502**.

First week

It is also a good idea to open a **bank account** as soon as possible. The bank will also ask you for proof of address and proof of identity.

Typical annual household bill for Council Tax

Mobile phone bills do not count as proof of address but utility and council tax bills do (when you start receiving them).

Ask your bank to you about applying for a credit card. This will take longer to obtain because you will need to build up a record with credit rating agencies such as Experian first.

In principle, you should not have a problem opening a bank account in the UK but in practice EU citizens' experience of doing so can vary hugely from bank to bank.

If you experience any difficulty or delay in setting up an account with one of the 'Big Four' high street banks, Lloyds, Natwest, Barclays or HSBC, then why not try one of the newer retail banks such as Metro. It is easy to change banks once you have an account if you are not happy with the service.

Your bank debit card (but not your credit card) can be used to tap into the transport system instead of a

Travelcard or Oyster (pre-payment plastic travel card for London).

You can speed this up by changing your **driving license** to a UK license. This can be done by sending your existing license and your ID card to the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority – DVLA using form D1.



You must exchange your driving license for a UK one within 3 years and can do it on arrival

Under normal circumstances you can drive in the UK on your EU license for 3 years after becoming resident in the UK or until you are 70 before changing to a UK one, but you may prefer to do so on arrival if you plan to stay here for a long time.

Until you bank card arrives, or in order to keep you travel transactions separate, you can apply for an **Oyster card** by picking up a leaflet from any London station or underground station. Other UK cities have similar schemes.

You may also want to find a mobile phone provider and replace your SIM card with a top up card to begin with until you decide whether you want to take out a new mobile phone contract.



Oyster cards make tube journeys cheaper

Numbers are easily portable from one mobile phone company to another. If you decide to switch, you need to ask your mobile phone company for the PAC code to pass to the new provider.

One possible barrier will be any difficulty you experience in providing proof of residence.

If you are the homeowner or main tenant where you live, you will also need to let the local council know that you have moved in so they can register you for council tax purposes.

The council tax is no longer calculated by the number of people in the household but rather on the basis of the value of the property– the values are graded according to certain price bands.

You may also need to contact your council to obtain a residents' parking permit.

These are usually available through local libraries – you need to provide details of your address and your vehicle and permits will only be valid on your street and not in the local council area as a whole.

Don't be caught out and remember that you also need to pay for a TV Licence in Britain.

This is how the BBC is financed, not out of general taxation but through a licence fee. You need one TV licence per property.

If you have one person over the age of 75 you can apply for a free licence (this is not means tested).

Other administrative formalities are relatively straightforward when it comes to moving to the UK. There is no need for a residency permit and UK citizens do not carry an ID card or register with the police.

However, there are many other things you need to attend to before you really have the feeling that you have got yourself established and settled in.

Electoral register

It will only take five minutes but it's very important that you register to vote.



Use this online service to:

- register to vote
- update your name, address or other details on the electoral register

You need to be on the electoral register to vote in elections and referendums.

Registering takes around 5 minutes.

You'll need your National Insurance Number (if you have one). www.registertovote.service.gov.uk

There is now a requirement for all members of a household to register for elections individually rather than via a form completed by the head of the household. Watch out for this, because you can be fined for not putting your name on the register.

There is no connection between the register and the tax authorities but the register can be accessed by credit checking agencies. Your credit reference score is likely to suffer if your name is not on the register.

When you do register to vote, make sure you ask for your name to be excluded from what is called the Open Register.

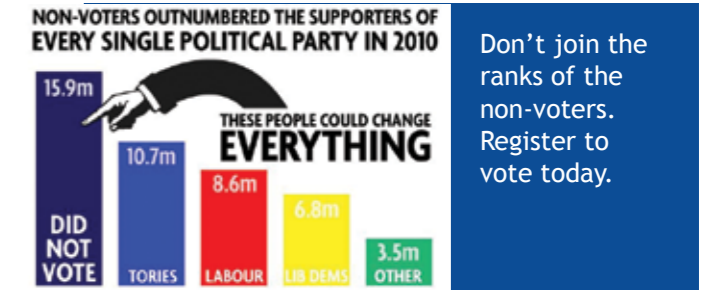
That way your address cannot be accessed by commercial organisations or anyone else via the

internet although the paper register will always be open for inspection at the Electoral registration Office in your local council

Your vote can make all the difference but you cannot vote if you are not on the electoral register.

Don't join the ranks of the silent, the disenfranchised and the dispossessed.

Use your vote, it is your voice and your opportunity to change things for the better.



It is also your right in local, regional and European elections because you are a citizen of Europe.

Habitually resident

Even though you were free to cross the border you may find that it takes some time before you feel as free in Britain as you did before you left home.

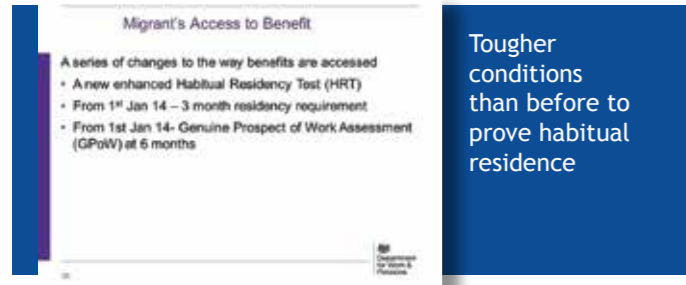
Once it has been established that you are what is known as “habitually resident” in the UK you will have the same rights as UK citizens to access the healthcare, education and welfare systems.

This is also the direct result of your EU citizenship rights.

You may need to demonstrate that you have sufficient funds to support yourself in the UK without having recourse to (i.e. needing help from) state funds in

order to establish habitual residence if you have not yet found work.

Until then the EHIC card will ensure that your home member state can be re-charged by the NHS for any healthcare needs that need to be met in the short term in the UK.



Although you will only need a passport or ID card most of the time in the UK (as well as your driving license), there will also be occasions when you may need to produce your birth and/or marriage certificate or high school and university diplomas, usually in the original.

Britain has no ID card system in place so for certain legal and financial matters for example, when formal identification is required, your birth certificate may be needed.

You can make certified copies of documents and return the originals to your home member state or in a secure place for safe-keeping. Make sure you also make photocopies of your driving license, passport and ID card in case you lose them.

Transition controls

Croatian citizens are still subject to so-called transition controls if they wish to work in the UK

and these will remain in place until 2020.

If you are coming to the UK for the first time from Croatia and you intend to stay here for longer than three months, you will need to show that you have sufficient funds to maintain yourself during that time and that you have health insurance. Other checks may also be required including that you have somewhere to live and that you do not have a criminal record.

Many EU citizens move to the UK not just to work but also to set up their own businesses or to establish themselves as self-employed persons.

As well as the right to free movement, EU citizens also enjoy the right of establishment, i.e. the right to set up a business.

If you are from Croatia, setting yourself up as a self-employed business may be the best and most practical way forward when you arrive in terms of establishing your right to live and work in the UK after the first three months of residence.

Third country nationals

It may strike you as odd that third country spouses of UK citizens do not have the automatic right to come to the UK, whereas the third country partners of other EU citizens do have such a right.

This is to do with the workings of the free movement directive. In order to acquire the right to bring a third country spouse to the UK a British citizens must have lived for at least three months outside the UK but within the European Economic Area (the so-called Surinder Singh route).

That British citizen will then have acquired the same free movement rights as any other EU citizen wishing to move freely from another EU state into Britain.

Finding somewhere to live

One of the most difficult challenges you will face will be finding somewhere to live, especially in big cities like London, Birmingham and Manchester.



The UK population is set to grow by 10 million people by 2039 and most of this population growth will be in the cities.

Social housing provided by councils and housing associations is becoming very scarce and soaring house prices prevent many people from buying especially for the first time. The private rented sector is likely to be your main recourse and here there are many pitfalls to be wary about.

Unscrupulous landlords and unprofessional agencies can treat new arrivals very badly indeed, at best without respect and at worst in an exploitative and deceitful way.

It is worth taking your time to investigate which agency is best for you. Check their reputation online especially their reputation with mobile EU citizens if possible.

Make sure you find an agent who you felt happy with and who respects you and understands your needs.

If things do go wrong, you can complain to your council, particularly if there is an issue of environmental safety. Your CAB will also inform you of your rights as a tenant and where to access legal advice.

Accessing public services

As an EU citizen you have the right to access the National Health Service or NHS in the UK and to send your children to school in Britain

The best way to find a good doctor and a good dentist is to ask the people you are staying with. If they are satisfied with the service, you may be too. Your local pharmacist will also be a helpful source of advice for minor ailments. There will also be a pharmacist open out of hours near you on a rota system. Each pharmacy should have a notice in the window showing the rota for that week.



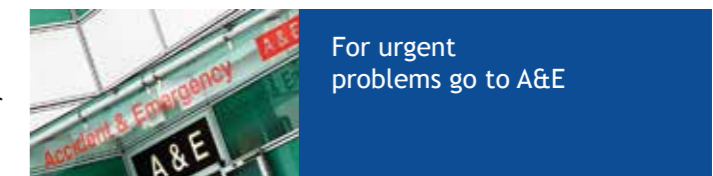
There are only two ways to access public health services in the UK. The first way is through your local doctor (GP) or dentist.

To register with your GP you will need proof of identity and proof of address.

The other way is through the Accident and Emergency Unit (A&E) at your local hospital.

For non-urgent health care needs out of hours or if you can't visit your GP surgery for any reason, call NHS service 111.

999 is the emergency number to call if you are unable to drive to the hospital and need an ambulance.



ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE		
HEALTHCARE PROVIDER	WHEN TO CALL	OUTCOME
Pharmacist	Colds, coughs, minor ailments	You will be given non-prescription medicine and/or advised to see you GP
General Practitioner (GP)	By appointment when you feel ill or for a general check-up; your GP is the gate-keeper for all NHS services and	You will be given a prescription and/or referred for further tests or specialised treatment, including for example with medical health services, or ante and post-natal services.
NHS Service 111	Out of hours phone line for non-urgent treatment	Advice as to whether to self-medicate, visit a GP walk-in centre, or A&E
Walk in centre	24/7 centres for immediate treatment of minor injuries or if you suddenly become unwell	You will be given treatment on the spot and/or advised to go to A&E or your GP.
Accident and Emergency (A&E)	Emergency treatment if you are able to get to hospital yourself	You will be admitted into hospital for treatment, either on the A&E ward or on a main ward in which case you would be kept in over night.
Ambulance Service 999	Emergency treatment and trauma (e.g. accidents, heat attack, strokes) or when you are not able to get to hospital yourself.	You will be taken straight to hospital and admitted via the A&E; you will be given emergency treatment on the spot and on the way to hospital.
Health service in your home member state	Through the NHS you should be able to access specialised healthcare treatments in your own member state if they are not available in Britain.	Appropriate treatment in your home member state.

Education and Schools

As far as schools are concerned, there are three main types to think about at both primary school level (up to aged 11) and secondary school level (up to 18).

The three types are state, private or voluntary-aided (usually church or other religious faith schools).

For many continental Europeans it will appear strange that religion can play such a large role in school life. Not only are there Church of England and Catholic schools in the UK, there are also Hindu, Jewish and Muslim schools.

If you are applying through the state system, you need to do so through your Local Education Authority (LEA) – in most cases this will be your local council.

If you are sending your children to school in the private sector then you need to apply directly to the school.

Access to education is highly competitive in the UK, with some families moving house to be in the catchment area for good local schools (your chances of winning a place are often dependent on how close you live to the school).

Church schools often perform very well and take children on religious as well as distance criteria. For the catholic schools in particular, there is often pressure on parents to attend mass every Sunday in order to secure a place in a good local school. Attendance is even monitored by the priest.

Sixth form colleges have replaced many sixth forms for 16-18 year olds as they are able to offer a much wider range of courses. However, in the private sector, most schools go all the way through to 18.

Post-school, modern apprenticeships which prepare young people for a specific career have become

increasingly popular. Further education courses are designed to be more vocational and less academic.

With the exception of Scotland, students in both higher and further education have to take out loans to pay for their education, and pay these back once they start earning above a certain threshold after starting work.

EU students should receive maintenance loans under the same conditions as their UK counterparts if they can demonstrate that they were habitually resident in the UK prior to taking up the course.

How to make friends

One of the hardest things to do when you arrive in the UK is to find a way to meet people and make friends. You are not alone in this – many people are trying to find you just as you are trying to find them.

There are some good places to start including international groups and societies like Inter-nations which organise meet ups. If it is romance you are looking for there are a large number of internet dating sites to choose from, which would not be in business if they did not have a high success rate!

In practice, most people tend to socialise with their work friends and colleagues they meet through the school run, or through accessing health care such as ante-natal classes (for men and women).

Clubs, societies and voluntary organisations are also great ways of making friends.

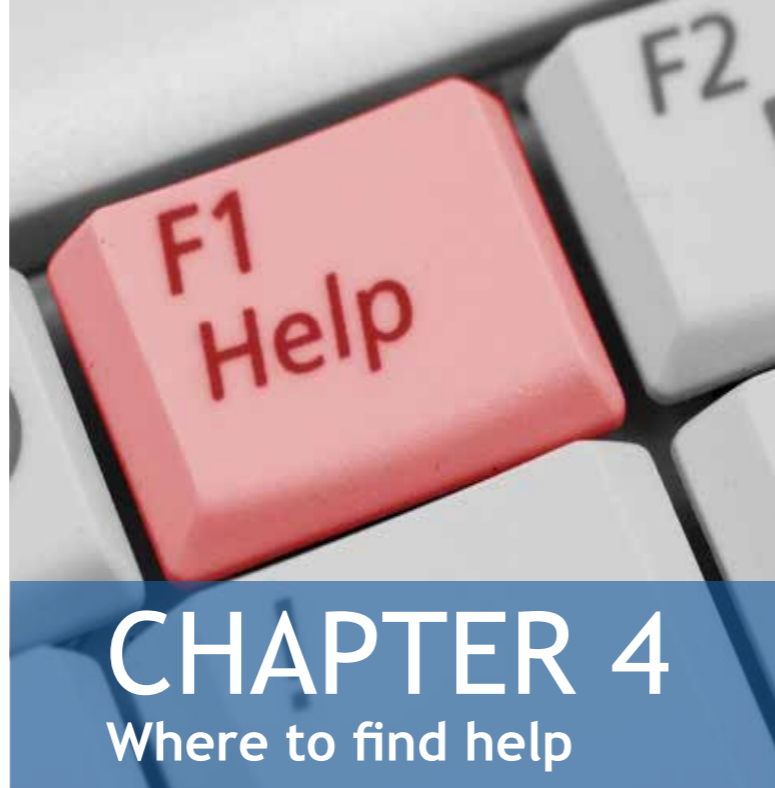
Taking part

Britain has one of the most developed voluntary sector in the EU. Volunteers were the star attraction at the London 2012 Olympics and for good reason – they are a national treasure.

Volunteering can be a great resource for EU citizens and also offer opportunities to gain valuable work experience and build social networks.

You will find everything from the St Johns Ambulance Brigade to Groundwork, an environmental charity which focuses on improving landscapes and the environment in local communities.

Many charities and voluntary groups work in the areas of mental health. Cancer research organisations like MacMillan or BreastCancer Care rely on volunteers and can be a great place to learn what makes the Brits tick and to find new friends.



Where do you turn when you need help?

Even when a support network of family and friends is at hand, we often need professional, independent advice as well.

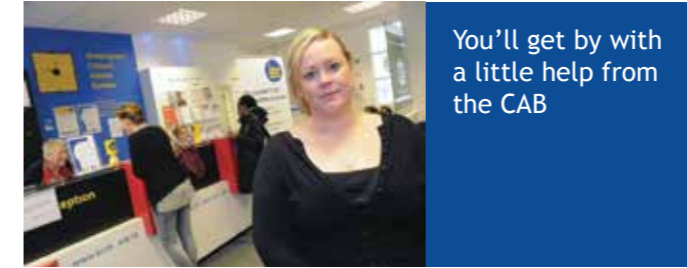
This chapter signposts the help that is available in the private, voluntary and statutory sectors when things go wrong.

The good news is that a lot of help is available and you will find that it can be easily accessed when you know how to do so.

It is a good idea to reach out for help and advice as early as you can – it is not going to make things worse and you may find that starting to fix things sooner rather than later will save you a lot of time and worry in the long run.

Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)

Whatever the issue, your local CAB office will be able to help you – from one of over 3,500 locations around the UK.



To find your nearest centre, visit www.citizensadvice.org.uk, and tap in your postcode.

You will need to go to the CAB in your area and will find a link with the opening times and where to go. You should not need an appointment but make sure you take all relevant paper-work with you about your case.

Take a book or a magazine to read and be prepared to wait – the offices can be very busy!

You may be able to find what you need on the CAB website, which is a very rich source of information about your rights.

The CAB is not a government agency although it does receive public money to carry out its work. It has been in existence for over 75 years. Your information will remain confidential and your identity protected.

Issues the CAB can help you with include: benefits, debt, discrimination, housing, relationships, rights at work and many more including access to public services such as health and education.

Voluntary organisations and charities

If you have serious health, money or relationship problems or need help looking after or befriending an elderly relative then the voluntary sector is a good place to turn to for help.

Victim Support helps with advice and counselling if you have been a victim of crime. Relate can help with marriage counselling.

StepChange is a debt advice charity which can help you resolve money issues with your bank and credit card company if you are in financial difficulty and help you negotiate the time you may need to recover your position.

A comprehensive list of charities and voluntary organisations is available at the back of this guide.

Expat community networks

The largest communities of EU citizens resident in the UK are the Irish, the Italians and the Polish.

They are very well-organised at the community level and offer excellent networks of advice and support.

Excellent examples include the Federation of Poles in Great Britain, the Irish in Britain as well as the many Italian cultural and community associations in Britain.

A list of organisations with their contact details can be found at the end of this guide.

Do not despair if you are not from one of these communities – your community will almost certainly have a network of some kind and somewhere to go for help.

We would particularly recommend the Finn-Guild (not least for sharing their wonderful sense of humour – see below) and the Czech Centre for example, as places to go for advice and support.

Some organisations such as the outstanding Midwest Communities Association in Yeovil reach out beyond national boundaries to work with Poles, Lithuanians, Romanians, Italians and others.

You can also try the many Facebook groups that exist for expat communities in the UK as a way of asking general advice from other members of the group about where to go for help – these are usually closed groups but you should have no difficulty joining your own community’s Facebook group if it exists.

Resist the temptation to give any personal information on Facebook about yourself or your case. Many churches and faith groups have very good access to professional advice and community networks.

In some cases you may find that you need to be a regular church-goer to access some forms of support.

Some protestant churches may be organised along national lines such as the Swedish church in London

The French and German communities also have their own schools in London and there are many educational initiatives across the UK aimed at maintaining the language and culture of EU member states.

The cultural institutes such as the Cervantes Institute and the Romanian Cultural Association are also excellent ways to keep in touch with your co-nationals who have been your way before in terms of settling in the UK and integrating into British society.

Embassies and consulates

Your own embassy and consulate may or may not be able to tell you something about life in the UK for EU citizens from your own member state.

It is certainly worth contacting the British consulate in your own member state before coming to the

UK – they should be in a position to give you a lot of useful information about life in Britain and advise you about some of the cultural and national differences you may encounter.

One very valuable source of information about life in Britain is the Life in the UK Study Guide, used to prepare for the citizenship test.

Applying for British citizenship should be unnecessary as an EU citizen but if the UK were to leave the EU this book might prove to be a worthwhile investment.

There is no suggestion that you would have to leave Britain following a Brexit but your status here and future prospects could be more uncertain.

Friends and neighbours

Depending on the issue, friends and neighbours can be the best place to start accessing information and/or support is nearest to home.

There is no substitute for experience so the closer you are to people who are dealing with the same issues and challenges as you, the better quality and advice you will receive.

Make contact with the people who live either side of you – let them know that they can knock on your



Even the meercats are here to help

door if they run out of milk or come home without their key!

Ask them if they are happy to take post and packages in that need to be signed for when you are not at home and offer to do the same in return.

Ask your neighbours if there is anything you need to know about the area in terms of crime, policing, parking, rubbish collection, street cleaning or postal deliveries.

You will be amazed about how much there is to talk about to do with what goes on outside your front door and their front doors.

Many areas of the UK have **Neighbourhood Watch schemes** which help to prevent crime by signing up residents in the same street to look out for each other and contact the police if they see something suspicious going on outside their neighbour’s property.

Find out about this from your neighbours and if one exists in your area it is well worth joining.

You will be given a sticker to put in your window which can act as a deterrent and invited to occasional meetings of the Neighbourhood watch scheme with your local police officers present – these are relaxed social occasions as well as a good opportunity to learn about the street life in your area!

Tenants and residents associations are also an excellent way to meet people and to defend your interests and gather general intelligence and up-to-date specific information about your area.

In the case of residents’ associations, the business of a meeting may relate to local planning applications. Tenants groups can also be a strong voice in dealings with landlords and addressing maintenance issues.



Tenants and residents’ association meetings can be very feisty

Central and local government

The central government website www.gov.uk (also known as the HMG – Her Majesty’s Government’s website) has become an information hub not just for government departments but also for accessing government agencies.

These include the Drivers and Vehicles Licensing Authority (DVLA) and the Television Licensing Authority for example.



The homepage of the government’s website now looks very much like the much-loved home page of the CAB!

However, the government website is also a place to get things done – type in what it is you need to do, e.g. renew TV license, apply for tax credits, register a birth and you will go straight to the right page.

The central government site is very comprehensive and should cover everything you need to know and need to do as a UK resident in terms of dealing with the public authorities.



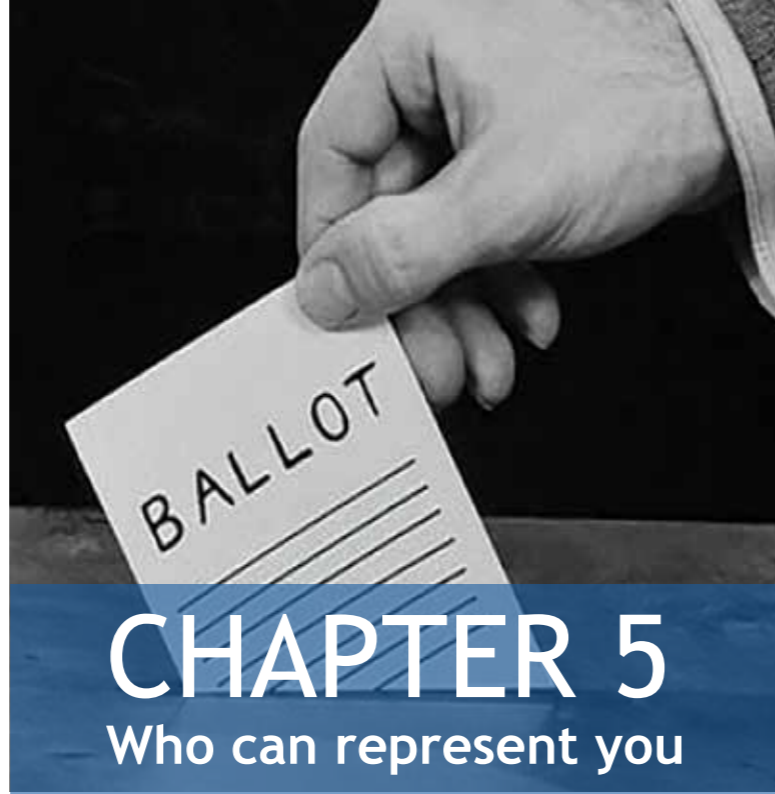
Your local council website will be very content-rich

It is also worth looking at your local council website for information that is more specific to your area.

This can include everything from parking to how to when your Christmas tree will be collected.

Many social services are provided through local councils, which also manage most local state schools, libraries and local amenities.

Councils also deal with housing benefit applications and claims for council tax reductions.



As an EU citizen you have the right to free movement.

You also have certain civil and political rights which are important and can help to protect your interests.

These include the right to:

- protection under the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights
- non-discrimination on the grounds of nationality
- vote and to stand as a candidate for your local council
- vote and stand as a candidate for the Scottish Parliament
- vote and stand as a candidate in the Welsh Assembly

- vote and stand as a candidate in the Northern Irish Assembly
- vote and stand for election for the London Mayor
- vote and stand for election for the London Assembly
- vote and stand for election as a local Police Commissioner
- vote and stand as a candidate in the European election
- right to petition the European Parliament

The EU Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union contains many economic, social and cultural rights in addition to your rights to free movement and the civil and political rights listed above.

The Charter applies to the EU institutions and to the member states when they are applying EU law.

You can enforce these rights by applying to the

European Ombudsman.

Representing yourself may seem very challenging especially when you are living in another member state and without a support network.

However, these rights are an important protection and sometimes just a reference to them can help – no institution wants to run the risk of a legal challenge when there is a good prospect that they will lose and by doing so create a precedent.

You can also ask others to represent you, whether at the local, national or European level.

The most powerful advocate you have in British society is your Member of Parliament, your MP.

Your MP

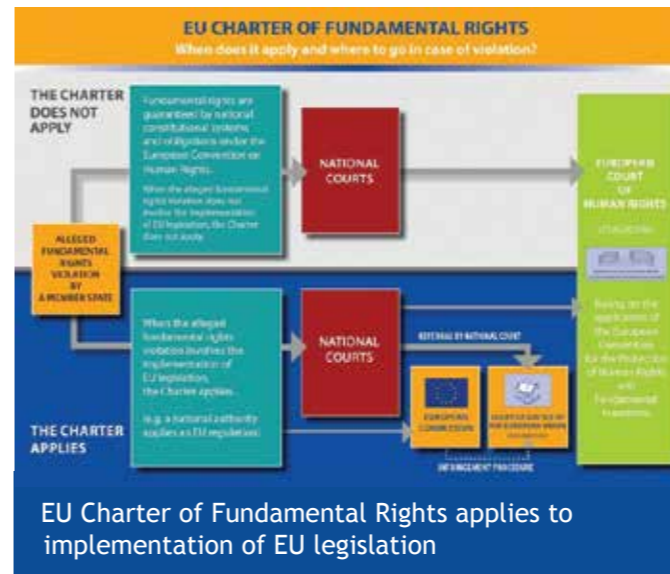
Each Member of Parliament in Britain is elected in his or her own ‘constituency’, that is to say the local area that they subsequently represent.

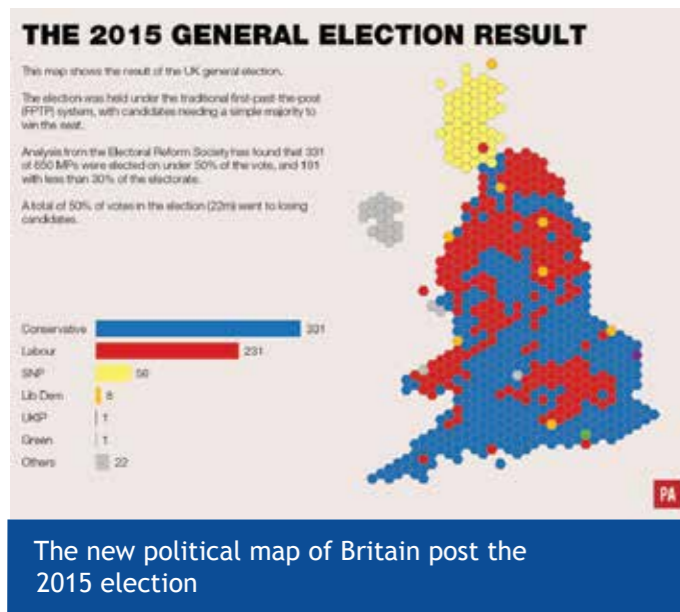
Unlike many other member states where politicians are elected on a proportional basis from party lists, British MPs are elected to represent one area, known as a (single-member) constituency and by an electoral system called “first-past-the-post”.

This means that the MP who wins the most number of votes in that constituency is elected to parliament to represent everyone from that area.

The political party with the highest number of MPs returned to parliament is invited to form a government – usually one party will have a majority but between 2010 and 2015 Britain had a coalition government.

It is often said that British MPs have three voices they have to represent – that of their party, that of their constituency and that of their own conscience.





included the new leader Jeremy Corbyn and his Shadow Chancellor John McDonnell.

In the Conservative Party famous rebellions are usually on issues to do with Europe.

Sometimes, in relation to issues such as gay marriage, abortion or assisted dying for example, MPs may be given what is called a “free vote” and vote with their conscience.

In their constituencies MPs will rarely take a party line.

Most MPs will pride themselves on their ability to be able to represent both the whole community, and any individual person within that community, “without fear or favour”. That is also the expectation of their constituents (voters).

There is a story about the late Rev. Ian Paisley, the firebrand preacher and larger than life political leader of Northern Ireland’s nationalist community over decades of conflict. To give you a sense of his politics, as an MEP he once interrupted an address by the Pope (a man he referred to as the anti-Christ) during the Pope’s address to the European parliament.

Despite all this, Ian Paisley would take great pride in representing individual Catholics who came to his constituency surgery and asked for help. He, like all MPs, saw it as a matter of principle, to represent all his constituency with equanimity and fairness.

You can make an appointment to meet your MP at one of the regular office hours or “constituency surgeries” as they are known which your MP will hold in your local area. The only criterion for being able to make an appointment is that your address falls within the constituency that the MP represents.

To find out who your MP is, you can go to the parliamentary website, open the MPs. Lords & Offices tab

In parliament MPs are expected to divide along party lines. Without party discipline in the Commons, it would be impossible to pass the winning party’s manifesto promises into law.

You can find out how your MP voted on various issues here on the **TheyWorkforYou website**.

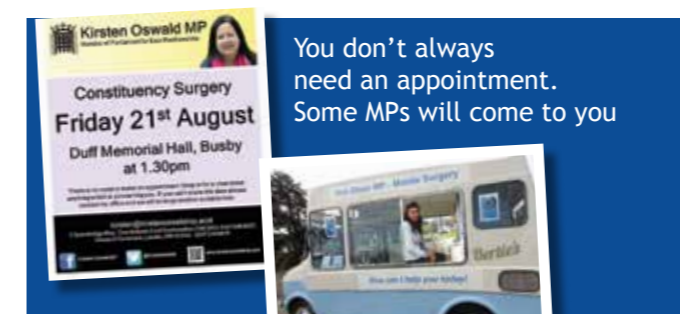
The men and women who make sure that MPs will be in the Commons for the vote and that they will vote the right way are called the “Whips”.

Whips are not supposed to tell individual MPs which way to vote. However, they stand at the doors of the voting lobbies and so it is very difficult to avoid walking into the ‘Aye’ or “Yes” lobby when you are supposed to be voting “No.”

There are often occasions when MPs vote against (or “rebel”) against their own party for reasons of conscience. Serial rebels in the Labour Party have

and tap in your postcode where it says **Find your MP**.

Each MP will have a website with information about how to contact them as well as when and where constituency surgeries take place. In rural constituencies spread across a number of small towns and villages for example, the MP will move the surgery around the constituency on a regular basis.



Normally “surgeries” are held in church halls, community centres or other such locations so that they are readily accessible to the local community. Sometimes the MP will hold the surgery in his or her constituency office.

Usually you will be able to make an appointment, but be ready to turn and wait in the queue, particularly if you have an urgent matter that needs attention.

It is important to remember that MPs do not sit in judgement over your case, they are there to represent you. You don’t have to convince your MP of the justice or injustice of your cause – you need to get straight to the point and tell your MP what your problem is. Your MP should then discuss with you how he/or she can help.

Remember that your MP has dealt with many often very similar cases – in the end you need to agree to

any course of action the MP proposes to take on your behalf, but their advice is valuable and based on experience.

A great way to learn about how MPs work, and also to find out how to get experience working for an MP is through the Work4MP website.

It is not easy to find an opportunity but even part-time, freelance or voluntary work in an MP’s office is a very worthwhile experience and can be a valuable addition to your CV.

In the end, the MP is a resource – for you and your community – and you can access this resource very easily, even as an EU citizen.

Regional and local representatives

The structure of local and regional government in the UK is so complicated that your first step if you need assistance should normally be to go and see your MP (with the possible exception of Scotland).

If you do need to see a local councillor or a regional representative then your MP will be very pleased to make the referral.

In Scotland, there is a Government and a Parliament rather than an Executive and an Assembly (as is the case with Northern Ireland and Wales). This is because Scotland has been granted greater autonomy than Wales and Northern Ireland, especially in relation to issues such as health and education.

As an EU citizen, you can vote for your MSP (Member of the Scottish Parliament), Welsh Assembly Member (MA) and Northern Ireland Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA). London also has an elected authority made up of two components, a directly elected Mayor and an Assembly made of a

YOUR MP IS HERE TO HELP			
ISSUE/ PROBLEM	WHAT YOU NEED TO DO	WHAT YOUR MP WILL DO	LIKELY OUTCOME
Policy concern	Write a letter setting out your concern	Forward your letter to the Government Minister responsible	Your MP will receive a letter signed by the Minister responding to your concern and forward this to you.
Housing issue	Gather all the paper-work, and book an appointment to see your MP	Write a letter to the Council asking them to expedite consideration of your application. Or Refer the matter to your local council	Your case file will come to the top of the pile and will usually be adjudicated more quickly. If the authorities know that an MP is looking over their shoulder they will not want to make a mistake. However, your MP is not able to obtain anything to which you are not entitled by law.
Immigration issue			
Planning issue			
Other case work	Email your MP, state what the problem is and why you would like the MP to do.	Either take immediate action or invite you to attend a surgery appointment	Your MP will always try to do something to help.

mixture of directly elected members and members elected by proportional representation.

The current Mayor of London is Boris Johnson (Conservative) who is also an MP. His predecessor was the Ken Livingstone (Labour).

A number of cities in the UK also have directly elected mayors, including Bristol, Leicester and Liverpool. A city can hold a referendum if it wants to create the position of directly elected mayor but

many cities have either chosen not to do so or held referendums which returned a no vote.

Finally, all areas of the UK also now elect a Police Commissioner to oversee local policing. As an EU citizen you do have a vote for your local police commissioner but the system is not thought to be working well and turn-out is low.

We complain all the time about our elected politicians in Britain but we seem more than content

to leave decision-making to them!

Turn out in elections is falling and new initiatives to give the public more of a direct say in decision-making (such as the referendum on changing the voting system in the UK that took place in 2012) often fail due to lack of turn-out.

One spectacular exception to this was the referendum in 2014 on Scottish independence, which very nearly led to the break-up of the United Kingdom (and by the way, EU citizens had the vote).

Some say that Scotland will leave the United Kingdom if the UK pulls out of Europe following the Stay or Leave Referendum which will take place at the latest in 2017.

EU citizens living in the UK have not been granted the vote in this important referendum.

Political parties

The way to become a local, regional or national politician is not by “kissing babies” but by “stuffing envelopes”.

That is a slight exaggeration but in British politics you are still expected to work your way up from the grassroots. Grassroots campaigning has a lot to do with mail-shots to your potential voters. Hence we have the expression “licking envelopes”.



Only half the fun if you use a machine



Doorstep canvassing helps get the vote out on polling day

Nowadays of course much of this communication is done via social media and by email but the traditional canvassing of voting intentions by teams of volunteers going out on a Sunday morning still goes on.

When Labour won a landslide victory in 1997, Tony Banks, a veteran and very funny MP announced the end of canvassing – he said that as Labour had done better in the areas where it had not canvassed (this was true) canvassing should be abolished (it was not)!

The purpose of canvassing is not to persuade people to vote for your party but to find out if they already intended to do so.

National elections can be decided on the narrowest of margins in so-called “key seats” and so voter turn-out in these “marginal” is vital. The way to maximise voter turn-out is to target your known supporters which is why canvassing (or voter id) as it is sometimes called is so important.

You don't have to be a party member to campaign and help – non-party members who help are often referred to as ‘supporters’ which makes it sound as if the members don't support the party. You won't need to attend many local party meetings to realise that there is often a grain of truth in this.

If you want to put your name forward to stand for election, you will need at least two years membership. Candidates are selected by their local parties



Crowded church halls at election time for the political ‘hustings’

collective pay agreements and general terms and conditions of employment with the company where you work.

The membership fee for joining a union may be fixed or it may vary with the amount you are paid. Either way it is a worthwhile investment and insurance policy.

You can search a list of unions and their contact details put together by the Certification Officer, the independent organisation responsible for the legal regulation of unions.

Or you can also use the TUC’s interactive tool to help you find a trade union in your workplace, or one which covers your type of job.

Once you have joined a trade union, your trade union rep will be able to explain more about your rights at work and the benefits that you receive, often including reductions on services such as legal fees and travel insurance.

All being well, you will never need your trade union rep to represent you but trade union membership is a valuable insurance policy in case you ever do.

Movements and campaigns

If you are keen to campaign for issues or have your voice heard on the particular things that matter most to you then you may find that social movements, NGOs and pressure groups are a better avenue through which to channel your energies.

Well-known examples of movements and pressure groups in the UK include Amnesty International, Breast Cancer Care, MacMillan Cancer Research, Greenpeace, Mind (a mental health charity), Mumsnet, the NSPCC (National Society for the

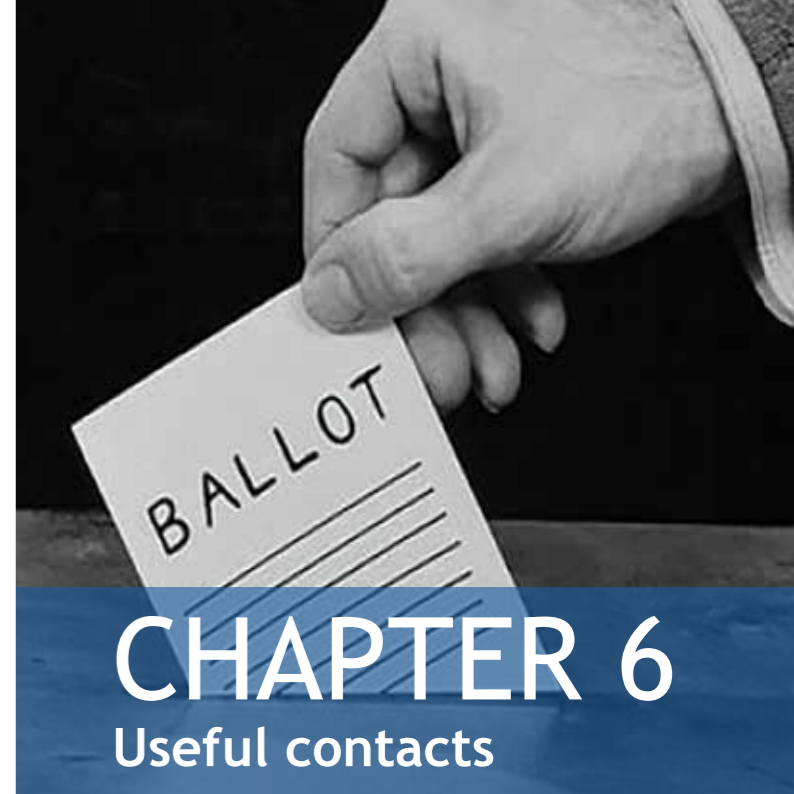
Prevention of Cruelty to Children), Oxfam, the Ramblers Association, RSPCA (Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals) and the World Wildlife Fund (WWF).

In your local area, amenity groups, parent and teachers associations, patient forums, residents associations and many other channels will exist for you to take part in community life and make sure that your voice is heard and represented. There are also many opportunities to become involved in community life through church and other faith groups.

Once you have established yourself in the UK, met your friends and neighbours, joined a trade union, voted for your local councillor, made your first complaint, written to your MP, told your first joke, you may decide that you like it in Britain and want to settle down here and stay on.

One sign of this will be your engagement in community life and the opportunity to give something back to the community and the member state that you have made your home.

You will make new friends, and open up new opportunities. You will feel not just that you are welcome in Britain but you will start to feel more settled and established and less of an outsider. You will feel that you have really arrived in the UK and confident that you want to stay on.



CHAPTER 6 Useful contacts

Advocacy and advice

Age UK

Largest UK charity dedicated to helping everyone make the most of later life.

Aire Centre

Promotes awareness of European law rights and assist marginalised individuals and those in vulnerable circumstances to assert those rights.

Carers UK

Only UK national membership charity for carers, acting both as a support network and a movement for change.

Citizens Advice Bureau

Free, independent, confidential and impartial advice to everyone on their rights and responsibilities.

organised not just at a constituency-wide level but also at the level of local sections or wards.

There are usually preliminary “short-listing” meetings followed by the final “hustings” when each candidate speaks and answers in questions and there is then a vote to decide who the candidate for the election should be.

Identity politics is still very strong in the UK and local issues tend to dominate. Expertise in a particular policy field or European experience is not usually considered to be an asset or even desirable.

What counts is the local identity and the ability to connect with and represent local people.

You are one of those people, whether you have the vote in parliamentary elections or not.

Trade unions and civil society

Politics is not the only way for you to be represented.

In the workplace you have the right to be represented by a trade union. The contacts of your trade union representative at work should be in the company handbook, intranet site or on the union noticeboard.

Joining a trade union will give you access to valuable support if anything happens at work that you are unhappy with or if you are involved in a grievance procedure.

Your trade union will also be involved in negotiating

Disability Rights UK

Disabled people leading change, working to create a society where everyone with lived experience of disability or health conditions can participate equally as full citizens.

Law Centres Network

Legal advice, casework and representation to individuals and groups. Trains and supports local groups and educates people about the law and their rights.

Mind

Advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem and campaigns to improve services, raise awareness and promote understanding.

Prisoners' Advice Service

The only independent registered charity offering free legal advice and support to adult prisoners in England and Wales.

Shelter

Helps millions of people every year struggling with bad housing or homelessness through our advice, support and legal services.

Stepchange Debt Advice

Tailored advice and practical solutions to help individuals manage debt and make a fresh start.

Victim Support

Independent charity for victims and witnesses of crime in England and Wales.

Executive agencies

Companies House

Maintains register of companies, company directors and annual returns for all UK companies.

Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority

Compensation claims from people who have been physically or mentally injured because they were the victim of a violent crime in England, Scotland or Wales.

DVLA

Maintains registers of drivers and vehicles in Great Britain.

Electoral Commission*

Independent elections watchdog and regulator of election and party finance.

Equalities and Human Rights Commission

Statutory commission tasked by parliament to challenge discrimination and to promote and protect human rights.

HM Courts and Tribunals Service

Responsible for the administration of criminal, civil and family courts and tribunals in England and Wales.

HM Government Website

One stop shop for government services and information.

HM Land Registry

Registers the ownership of land and property in England and Wales.

Insolvency Service

Provides services to those affected by financial distress and failure.

Intellectual Property Office

Official UK government body responsible for intellectual property (IP) rights including patents, designs, trade marks and copyright.

Legal Aid Agency

Provides civil and criminal legal aid and advice in England and Wales.

Office of the Public Guardian

Protects people in England and Wales who may not have the mental capacity to make certain decisions for themselves, such as about their health and finance

Planning Inspectorate

Deals with planning appeals, national infrastructure planning applications, examinations of local plans and other planning-related and specialist casework in England and Wales

TV Licensing*

Informs people of the need to buy a TV Licence. We send licence renewal letters and we process queries, applications and payments.

*The starred * agencies are non-governmental.*

Institutions

European Commission

Representation of the European Commission in the UK

European Ombudsman

Find out how to take forward a complaint about maladministration of EU institutions

European Parliament

Information office of the European Parliament in the UK

House of Commons

Parliament website

House of Lords

Parliamentary website

Local Government Association

Information office of local government in UK

London Assembly

Assembly website including information about work of elected members

London Mayor

London Mayor's website

Northern Ireland Assembly

Assembly website including information about work of elected members

Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman

Information about how to take forward a complaint

Scottish Government

Government website including information about all departments

Scottish Parliament

Parliamentary website including information about work of elected members

Welsh Assembly

Assembly website including information about work of elected members

Welsh Executive

Assembly website including information about work of elected members

Third sector

ECAS - European Citizens Action Service

Information and advice about your rights as an EU citizen

EESC - European Economic and Social Committee

Represents third sector interests including trade unions and businesses at European level

NCVO - National Council for Voluntary Organisations

Represents voluntary organisation in Britain

New Europeans

Advice and advocacy for EU citizens

TUC - Trade Union Congress

Represents trade union movement as a whole

VOLUNTEERING MATTERS

Represents and offers training and development for volunteers

THE BIG EUROPEAN CITIZENS' SURVIVAL GUIDE

How to succeed as a European citizen in modern Britain

www.neweuropeans.net

