

## Residency and Registration

Make no bones about it, dealing with the rules and regulations in Spain is not straightforward as anyone who has bought a house, got married or divorced or been to a government department will know. For some reason they don't speak English but with all of the money that we pump into the local economy it's the least they could do don't you think? To quote Robbie Williams from his song "Millennium", "look up and see the sarcasm in my eyes"

"We are all Europeans so why can't I do this or that? "is a question frequently asked. Well the laws are not universal between England and Scotland so why should they be the same between Spain and the UK for example? Couple this with some of the nonsense coming out of the European Courts and we begin to realise that the laws and rules that govern us are a minefield

### Buying abroad

So, you want to buy a vehicle, perhaps a car or motorhome from outside Spain and use it legally without looking over your shoulder or shuddering at the sight of a roadblock where the police are dressed like they are about to quell a rebellion. Here are some guidelines

If you owned a vehicle before "coming to Spain", generally speaking re-registration is a no-brainer as the vehicle is deemed to be part of your possessions that you are bringing here. You do not need to become a resident for this purpose. Hope that the bar room lawyers are paying attention to this statement

If you are resident and for vehicle registration purposes-but not necessarily for other purposes- you are classed as resident if you have a Padron you have to choose more carefully what vehicle you may buy. In most cases re-registration is straightforward if the vehicle is made for the European market (so there are advantages!!) as it would have been made to standards agreed by member states. Such a vehicle will have an homologation number which will look similar to this e13\*97/27\*0040\*02.

If the vehicle does not display this number it may still be possible to re-register under the more expensive regime whereby it is treated as if it were unique, but not every vehicle can be accepted for Unit Importation

Another option is that any vehicle that is over 25 years of age can be imported and registered as Historic which is much less expensive than Unit Importation and allows the vehicle to retain its original characteristics as well as having other advantages

### Motor homes and campers

The trickiest vehicles to re-register can be motor homes and camper vans so it is here that you must do your homework before considering buying one. Again if you owned it before coming to Spain which in practice means before signing on the Padron, no problem. Similarly if it has homologation, a.k.a. European Type Approval there is no

problem, but here is a pitfall for the unwary. The chassis upon which the coachworks were built may have homologation, but not necessarily the entire vehicle. Type Approval was applied to motor homes much later than with cars with German built vehicles leading the way. Unit importation may be possible but the vehicle must achieve a minimum Euro 3 emissions standard to be accepted

For caravans and trailers, bikes and quads exactly the same principles apply

### Get sound advice

By now some of you will be heading straight to the nearest Spanish dealership rather than have to concern yourself with bewildering regulations. This may be the best option for you, but with the relative bargains that can be had in the global economy for many folks import and re-registration is an attractive proposition

Just as you would consult an electrician about re-wiring, or a lawyer if you were buying a house, it is always best to get sound advice before making any decision. Armed with the right facts your next choice of transport can be made hassle free

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