

Changes to birth and death registrations overseas

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British nationals living in Spain should note that from Monday 9th June, the Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) is changing the way that it registers the births and deaths of British citizens overseas. The process will gradually be withdrawn from British Consulates in Spain during the rest of 2014. Thereafter this option for British expatriates will be carried out by a central registration unit in the UK.

Consular birth registration is an optional service and is only available to those born overseas who have an automatic entitlement to British Nationality at birth.

There is no legal requirement for a consular birth registration, and a local birth certificate with a certified translation if necessary should be sufficient for all purposes in the UK including applying for a passport.

Similarly there is no requirement for a consular death certificate – a local certificate should be sufficient for winding up the affairs and obtaining probate in the UK.

The processing time for registrations will remain the same but applicants will need to allow extra time for documents to be sent to and from the UK.

British nationals can find information here on how to apply for a consular birth or death registration.

Centralisation of birth and death registration into a single-purpose unit in the UK will allow the FCO to provide a common online application procedure with a credit card payment facility, which will be more efficient and convenient for customers.

Centralisation will also enable FCO consular staff to better focus on their primary function of assisting British nationals in distress.

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