

# **Spanish visas may be delayed due to strike**

**Spanish Foreign Office workers in the UK warn that visa applications could be delayed due to indefinite strike.**

Since Monday 14 March The Spanish Embassy and Consulates in the UK are running on a reduced staff basis for urgent services as their employees have been on strike over work conditions.

As per Spanish rules, a reduced staff service is in place to provide help with urgent and basic services. However, even though the offices are still operating, delays in processing visa applications may occur caused by a decrease in staff members and their capacity to cope with the workload.

Since Brexit, British citizens need to apply for a visa to stay in Spain for longer than 90 days in every 180-day period. This results in a significant rise in visa applications adding to those of all other foreign nationals who can no longer use their UK residence card to travel to the EU.



Striking staff at the consulate on Castle Street

This increase in visa applications already challenged the Consulates last summer when they struggled to provide appointments to every applicant on time.

It is believed that working with fewer members of staff could lead to a similar situation.

Almost two weeks have passed since Spanish Foreign Office employees began their strike. The employees say that little has been heard from the Government in Madrid or the Minister of Foreign Affairs, José Manuel Albares, who, so far, has failed to sit at the negotiating table.

Workers are asking the Spanish government to end years of wage freeze and job insecurity as inflation keeps rising.



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