

Spain Self-Employed (Autónomo) Visa

Application & Post-Arrival Checklist

Consular (from-abroad) route • 2026 requirements

For non-EU nationals who want to run their own business or work freelance in Spain (cuenta propia). You'll need a viable business plan and to show you can support yourself and fund the activity.

Key figures at a glance (2026)	
Living funds	at least 100% of IPREM ($\approx$ €600/month) to support yourself
Investment funds	enough to set up and sustain the business, per your plan
Business plan	required — viability often assessed by a recognised professional association
Social Security (RETA)	monthly autónomo contributions once trading
Consular visa fee	$\approx$ £409 for UK applicants (work-visa reciprocity rate); innovative Entrepreneur visa £966 — confirm which applies
TIE residence-card fee	$\approx$ €16

1. Documents to submit to the consulate

- ☐ Valid passport — with two blank pages
- ☐ National (type D) visa application form — dated and signed
- ☐ Recent passport-size photo — colour, white background
- ☐ Business plan — describing the activity, investment, viability and any jobs created — often needs a favourable report from a recognised professional association
- ☐ Proof of qualifications and any professional licences — required for the activity
- ☐ Proof of sufficient funds — to invest in and sustain the business and support yourself
- ☐ List of authorisations/licences the activity requires — and evidence you can obtain them
- ☐ Criminal-record certificate (UK: ACRO) — apostilled and sworn-translated, issued within 90 days
- ☐ Signed declaration of no criminal record — for the last 5 years
- ☐ Private health insurance — or a commitment to register with Spanish Social Security
- ☐ Proof of visa-fee payment — the applicable consular fee for your nationality — see Key figures above

2. After the visa is issued — next steps

- ☐ Enter Spain within the visa validity — the entry visa covers your arrival window
- ☐ Apply for your TIE (residence card) — within 30 days of arrival — this also assigns your NIE
- ☐ Register as autónomo — with the tax office (Modelo 036/037) and Social Security (RETA)
- ☐ Empadronamiento (padrón) — at your local town hall

- ☐ **Open a (business) bank account** — to keep business and personal money separate
- ☐ **Set up your tax filings** — quarterly IVA and IRPF, and keep proper invoices
- ☐ **Ask about the autónomo 'tarifa plana'** — a reduced Social Security rate often available in your first year
- ☐ **Exchange your UK driving licence** — within 6 months of becoming resident

Legalisation note: Foreign public documents need the Hague Apostille, and anything not in Spanish needs an official sworn (jurada) Spanish translation. Build in time — apostille and translation turnaround is the usual bottleneck.

Deadlines that catch people out

Criminal-record certificate	Must be less than 90 days old at submission
TIE residence card	Within 30 days of arrival in Spain
Social Security (RETA) registration	Before you start trading
UK driving-licence exchange	Within 6 months of becoming resident