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Date: 18 March 2021 at 14:44:54 GMT
Cc: info brexit <info_brexit@immigration.gov.gr>, kgv petropoulos <kgv.petropoulos@astynomia.gr>, ad omg bu1 <ad_omg.bu1@astynomia.gr>
Subject: Re: BREXIT - GR: "British citizens rights"

Dear Sir,

there seems to be some confusion regarding the five and ten-year biometric residency cards and the rights they entail in the EU for UK beneficiaries of the Withdrawal Agreement.

The Withdrawal Agreement and the relevant European Commission's Guidance Note on Citizens' Rights clearly state that once a UK national chooses to live in any EU member-state (eg Greece), if he is not entitled to permanent residency there, he may acquire a five-year (pre-settled) biometric card, renewable. Even if he cannot commit to staying in Greece for 6 months per year, he/she does not lose his/her right of residence under the Withdrawal Agreement. Residency rights under the Withdrawal Agreement are lost only after a continuous five year absence from Greece. The five-year biometric card therefore can be renewed every five years and indefinitely, as long as the holder can prove that he/she has spent at least a few months in Greece per year. The five-year card practically holds the same value in terms of residence as the ten-year permanent residency biometric card, it simply does not guarantee permanent residency status. How one may apply the terms above is a matter of life choice.

As far as the 90 days out of the 180 days visa free travel regime in the EU reserved for UK nationals under the Schengen rules is concerned, it has nothing to do with the above life choice. If a UK national who owns property in Greece wishes to remain in Greece for more than three months per year, there are options under the Greek National Immigration Code for him/her to benefit from (e.g. check the provisions for financially independent persons from third countries who wish to remain in Greece).

The relevant provisions of the Immigration Code can be found at brexit.gov.gr/uk-citizens-in-greece/ as well as the website of the Ministry for Migration migration.gov.gr/

Information on long-term national visas and how to acquire them can also be found at: <https://www.mfa.gr/en/visas/>.

For the moment only the above apply for UK nationals wishing to stay in Greece. If you need further information you may contact the relevant Ministries or the Hellenic Police (telephone numbers on said website). Please check back again at the above mentioned website in case a new more favourable arrangement is foreseen for UK nationals property owners in Greece.

Ομάδα Διαχείρισης Brexit Υπουργείου Εξωτερικών