

## Claiming Unemployment Benefit in Spain

Working and paying contributions in Spain gives you entitlement to a number of Spanish social security benefits. These benefits include unemployment benefit, and permanent and temporary incapacity benefit.

If you have been working and paying contributions in Spain, even for just a short time, you may be entitled to claim unemployment benefit. Make your claim at your local employment office in Spain <http://www.sepe.es/>

Unemployment benefit is paid for one third of the period that the unemployed person has contributed. As a minimum the benefit is paid for 4 months and a maximum of 24 months is permitted. The benefit amount is calculated on the basis of the last 180 days salary with both a minimum and a maximum amount applicable. The base amount is supplemented according to the specific family situation of the unemployed person with a supplement for those with children under 26 or handicapped.

The unemployed receive 70% of their reference salary (subject to the ceiling) during the initial 6 months falling to 50% thereafter.

### Activity Agreement

To claim unemployment benefits, you must sign an Activity Agreement with the unemployment office.

This confirms that you are willing to actively participate in searching for work, to take any suitable position offered, and to take part in any retraining schemes or similar which are required. Not adhering to the Activity Agreement is a minor offence and will lead to penalties.

Please note that in order to apply for unemployment benefits the worker must present the following documents within **15 working days** of becoming unemployed:

Unemployment benefits are known as "*el paro*".

To receive unemployment allowance, you must be legally unemployed.

The following situations are considered legal unemployment:

- The end, or authorised suspension of employment
- Temporary and authorised reduction of working hours

If you have been employed for less than one year do not have the minimum requirement of contributions to receive unemployment benefits, however they may

apply for an Unemployment Subsidy (*Subsidio por Desempleo*) providing they meet the following conditions:

- They are legally unemployed
- They register as a job seeker and sign an Activity Agreement (*Compromiso de Actividad*)
- They have contributed at least three months of Social Security payments if they have family responsibilities, or six months of contributions if they do not
- They do not have an income of more than 75 percent of the Minimum Professional Wage (*El Salario Mínimo Interprofesional*)

Note: Self employed workers are unable to claim unemployment benefit but may be eligible for other subsidies.

### **Claiming unemployment benefits in Spain for work done in another EU country**

Someone becoming resident in Spain who has paid contributions in any EU or EEA (European Economic Area) country may use those social security contributions to receive unemployment benefits in Spain.

Request form E301 (a record of contributions made) from the local Employment office before moving to Spain.

When applying, you should state any previous periods of work in the UK (or any other EU country). To certify periods of employment in other EU countries you will need to request a U1 form from each country you have worked in. HM Revenue & Customs is the UK department responsible for issuing U1 forms to certify time worked in the UK.

As in all case the information may change and you should contact your local office through <http://www.sepe.es/>