



LEGAL MATTERS

Choosing the right car insurance

By Goya Abogados,
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Most of us choose our car insurance by looking for the best price, and don't generally stop to review the conditions the insurance policy offers.

We must be especially careful with Legal Defence and Claims because if we do not reach an agreement in the event of accident, for example, we could be obliged to make a claim through civil proceedings, with very high costs involved. To go to the civil courts requires at least one lawyer, a prosecutor and a subject matter expert,



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↑ Carefully review the conditions of your insurance and understand what it covers in the event of accidents or civil proceedings

and here lies the importance of choosing the right car insurance cover, because many hide

limitation clauses in the fine print. For example, when a claim is brought against us it

does not usually pose any problems, except for the provision of a bond and its limits. Disagreements usually occur when it is you who wants to start a claim, because if the legal department of your insurance company sees no legal possibilities to claim in court, they may tell you that they're not going to make that claim, nor repay the costs for your lawyer. This is why you should pay particular attention to whether there are any clauses that allow the company to refuse to provide services to the insured if they feel that the process is unworkable. Other clauses

that are usually included, and of which we must take special care, are exemptions or limits on fees if a company lawyer is not designated. Some insurance companies indicate unlimited coverage regarding attorney fees. Here we have to pay attention to the fine print because this is only applicable if a lawyer is assigned by the company itself. If we want to assign representation freely, we will have a limit to the legal fees provided.

Finally, we must pay special attention to the limits and requirements contained in the policy regarding the pro-

vision of a bond. The bond is the amount that can be demanded by the court in the case of criminal proceedings for provisional release. With this respect, the insurance policy may contain one of two options: either pay the amount required as a deposit or take over the commissions required by a credit institution or loan company specialised in providing the bond (which does not include management fees). This is why it's so important to make sure that our insurance covers the amount required as a bond without any limit. ■

BREXIT
NEGOTIATIONS

By Brexit & the Canaries,
Facebook Community

As I write, the third session of withdrawal negotiations has concluded. How much progress has been made? Well, early signs suggest none, with EU chief negotiator, Michel Barnier, commenting: "No decisive progress has been made".

Let's remind ourselves what was agreed by the UK negotiating team (headed by David Davis) at the very start of this process. Before any substantive negotiations on the future of the relationship between the UK and the EU can be started, the exit criteria have to be agreed. Namely: citizens' rights; the UK EU border in Ireland; settlement of liabilities. The first two have to be settled first, as liabilities will depend on the outcome of these agreements.

Citizens' rights

The UK position, insisting that jurisdiction of the ECJ must end on Brexit day, complicates the resolution of the rights issue. The UK's position of offering a significantly watered down 'settled status' for EU27 citizens in the UK has already been dismissed as unworkable, princi-

Where are we now?

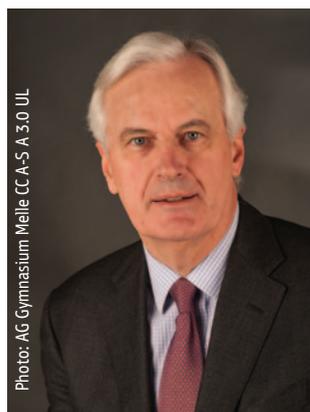


Photo: AG Cymnasium Welle CC-A 3.0 UL
↑ Michel Barnier, European chief negotiator for Brexit

pally because there is no guarantee that those rights would be maintained by future UK Governments. The recent action of the Home Office 'mistakenly' sending letters to long standing, working EU27 nationals, telling them they will be detained and deported, have not helped. To date: no agreement.

Irish border

This is serious. The Good Friday Agreement (GFA), which finally brought peace to Northern Ireland, is caught up in this. In addition it is the only land border the UK has with the EU. As the UK are seemingly determined to leave the Single Market and Customs

Union, the current open border, a pivotal part of the GFA, would not be possible. This leaves the only option of a hard border, complete with immigration, security and customs checks. This would violate the terms of the GFA unless some other bespoke agreement can be hammered out. Let's not forget that, to add complexity, Theresa May's minority government is propped up by Northern Ireland's DUP. So far, there is no progress on this either.

Liabilities

The unhelpful recent intervention by the Foreign Secretary, telling the EU to "go whistle" has only served to make this issue even more delicate than it already was. Picking out the numerous commitments to the EU budget, valuing capital invested and ensuring pension liabilities are dealt with properly, makes this a painstaking task. Unfortunately, the UK Government in this latest round has not made any concrete proposals, not even submitting a position paper, rendering any progress nigh on impossible.

In response to David Davis's demand that the EU be "more

flexible", Mr. Barnier said: "To be flexible you need two points, our point and their point. We need to know their position and then I can be flexible". Without clarity, without some idea on what the UK actually wants, the negotiations are in danger of stalling completely. In short, insufficient progress has been made to move on to the future relationship, but the clock has not stopped - time is running out. The prospect of a 'crash out with no deal' scenario is being brought ever closer.

What does this mean for us?

As this lack of progress and uncertainty shows, the period has had some profound effects on the UK economy already, and there is no sign that anything will change for the better in the near future. Investment is falling, prices are rising, wage and GDP growth stagnating, and as a result the pound is taking a battering. For UK citizens in the Canaries, this is deeply damaging. If you are on a fixed UK income, such as a pension or annuity, or have GBP denominated savings, the value has fallen roughly 17 per cent since the referendum. Inflation in Spain



↑ Brexit & the Canaries Facebook Community

is on the way up, latest figures showing a rise of about 2 per cent year on year. Having your income effectively cut by nearly 20 per cent is unsustainable for many.

However, the bad news doesn't end there. About 70 per cent of the Canaries GDP is derived (directly or indirectly) from tourism, 50 per cent of that originates from the UK. With fewer tourists making the trip, and with less money to spend in their pockets while they're here, there will be an inevitable and gradual knock-on effect to the local economy. Therefore, those of us who work or run businesses here will have to brace ourselves for, at the very least, a period of stagnation in revenue growth and income. The final worry is what effect crashing out may have on our

status as residents. Will we be entitled to healthcare on the same basis as today? Will our residency be challenged? Will only those with permanent residency be eligible to stay? These are questions for another day perhaps, but there is no doubt that many are worrying about the future.

Facebook community

Brexit & the Canaries Facebook Community is campaigning for a fair deal for the UK expat community across the Islands. If you would like to support the group, receive the latest news or contribute your experiences, please visit: www.facebook.com/groups/1864999887122547. Also, email: brexit.canaries@gmail.com. ■

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