PhD Students

National Research Residence Authorisation

In accordance with **Management Criterion 2/2026**, issued by the Directorate-General for Migration Management on 7 August 2026, foreign nationals intending to undertake doctoral studies in Spain must apply for a **national research residence authorisation**, as provided for in Article 72 of Law 14/2013 of 27 September.

Who is required to apply?

All students intending to undertake a doctoral programme at the University who are nationals of a country outside the European Union and need to reside in Spain to pursue their studies are required to apply.

Under Section 3 of Management Criterion 2/2026, issued by the Directorate-General for Migration Management and concerning the national research residence authorisation and its application to foreign nationals undertaking doctoral studies, **the application may be submitted either by the foreign national concerned or by the higher education institution where the doctoral studies are to be undertaken**. At present, the University has not established a procedure for applying for this residence authorisation on behalf of students. Therefore, students must submit their applications themselves.

When should I apply for the authorisation?

You must apply once you have enrolled in a doctoral programme and paid the relevant enrolment fees. It is important to have your electronic certificate available at that stage so that you can begin the application process as soon as possible.

Where do I submit my application?

Applications for the national research residence authorisation must be submitted **exclusively online** through the Large Business and Strategic Groups Unit (UGE-CE), which is part of the Ministry of Inclusion, Social Security and Migration.

What do I need before starting the application?

To begin the residence authorisation procedure, you must have a **Foreigner Identity Number (Número de Identidad de Extranjero, NIE)**. You will need this number to obtain the electronic certificate required to identify yourself when using the online application system.

Foreigner Identity Number (NIE)

The NIE is a unique, exclusive, personal identification number issued in sequential order.

If you are in Spain and do not yet have an NIE, you must apply for one through the Directorate-General of the Police, either directly or through the Foreigners' Offices or Police Stations.

If you are outside Spain when applying, you must request the allocation of an NIE through the Spanish Consular Office responsible for your place of residence. The request will be forwarded to the General Commissariat for Immigration and Borders.

Further information on the procedure is available here.

Electronic certificate

The FNMT Citizen Electronic Certificate is an electronic certificate issued by the National Mint and Stamp Factory (Fábrica Nacional de Moneda y Timbre–Real Casa de la Moneda, FNMT-RCM). It links the certificate holder to electronic signature verification data and confirms their identity. This digital certificate contains the holder's identifying information. It enables you to identify yourself online and exchange information with individuals and organisations securely, ensuring that only you and the intended recipient can access that information.
Further information is available on the FNMT website.

Do I have to apply from my country of residence?

Not necessarily. There are two possible routes:

- **If you are already in Spain**, you must submit your application for a national research residence authorisation electronically to the UGE-CE using your electronic identification credentials.

- **If you are in your country of residence**, you must first apply for a Foreigner Identity Number (NIE) and obtain the electronic certificate through the Spanish Consular Office in your country. You will not be able to proceed with your application without these credentials. Make sure you complete these steps sufficiently in advance so that, once you have formally enrolled in the doctoral programme, you can begin the application process with the Large Business and Strategic Groups Unit (UGE-CE). Once your residence authorisation has been granted, apply for the visa that will allow you to enter Spain at the Spanish Consular Office **before travelling to Spain** to begin your studies.

In summary, you must:

1. Apply for an NIE through the Consular Office, explaining that it is required to undertake doctoral studies in Spain, and obtain your electronic identification credentials as soon as you have pre-enrolled in a doctoral programme.

2. Submit your application electronically to the UGE-CE. You must have completed your enrolment and paid the relevant fees beforehand.

3. Once your residence authorisation has been granted, apply for the visa required to enter Spain through the Consular Office.

What does the procedure involve? What steps should I follow?

The UGE-CE website provides detailed instructions specifically designed to help doctoral students submit their applications. Read these instructions carefully before starting the procedure. Remember that you must obtain an electronic certificate, as well as an NIE if you do not already have one, before you can begin the application process.

The entire procedure must be completed electronically through the e-government portal of the Ministry of Inclusion, Social Security and Migration.

- Go directly to the UGE-CE online application system.
- Follow the instructions provided by the system and upload the required documentation.
- Sign and submit the application form.

What documents do I need?

You must provide the following documentation:

- The personal data page of a valid passport or travel document recognised as valid in Spain.
- The MIT form, signed by the student.
- Evidence of sufficient financial resources to cover the requested period of residence and the return journey to the country of origin. The minimum requirement is 50% of the annual statutory minimum wage (*Salario Mínimo Interprofesional*, SMI). For 2026, the annual gross SMI is €17,094. If dependent family members are included in the application, the requirement is 100% of the SMI.
- A certificate issued by an insurance company specifying the period of validity of the health insurance policy taken out with an insurer authorised to operate in Spain. Travel insurance policies and policies involving co-payments or waiting periods are not accepted. A list of authorised insurers is available here.
- Documentary evidence that you have been admitted to a doctoral programme at the University and have paid the relevant enrolment or registration fees.
- A criminal record certificate issued by the authorities of your country of origin or of the country in which you have resided during the previous two years.
- A sworn declaration stating that you have no criminal record in the country or countries in which you have resided during the previous five years.
- Proof of electronic payment of the initial residence authorisation fee, using a bank account debit, Bizum, or credit/debit card. The relevant fee is Form 790, Code 038, Section 7: Applications for International Mobility Authorisations (Law 14/2013).

The UGE-CE instructions linked above provide further details on the documentation that must accompany your application. Always check the official information before beginning the procedure.

How long does the Administration have to process my application?

The Administration must issue a decision on your application for a research residence authorisation within a maximum of **20 working days**. This period begins on the date the application is submitted electronically to the Large Business and Strategic Groups Unit (UGE-CE), under the State Secretariat for Migration.

The applicable administrative silence rule is positive (*silencio administrativo positivo*). This means that if the Administration does not issue an express decision within the 20-working-day period, the application is deemed to have been approved.

Applicable legislation

- Law 14/2013 of 27 September on support for entrepreneurs and their internationalisation.
- Management Criterion 2/2026 of the Directorate-General for Migration Management, concerning the national research residence authorisation and its application to foreign nationals undertaking doctoral studies.

*The information provided on this page is for guidance purposes only