

UK and Spain strike 'historic' deal over Gibraltar's future and borders

Level 1: Elementary

1 Warmer

a. Look at the image of Gibraltar and discuss these questions.



1. Which countries are the closest to Gibraltar?
2. Why might people in Gibraltar want to travel to Spain or from Spain to Gibraltar?
3. Why is free movement so important for the economics of Europe?

2 Key words

a. Match the correct word to each definition. Then find and highlight them in the article to read them in context.

agreement

border

deal

goods

historic

1. a general promise or decision made by a number of people or groups _____
2. an agreement between people, especially in politics or business _____
3. items that are made to be sold _____
4. an important event, person or period in history _____
5. the line that separates two countries or states _____

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residence

Schengen

self-governing

territory

uncertainty

6. controlling its own government without help from others _____
7. the place where someone lives _____
8. a group of European countries that were part of an agreement allowing their citizens to travel freely without borders _____
9. land that is owned or controlled by a particular country _____
10. a state of doubt about the future or about what the right thing to do _____

b. Complete the sentences with words from the previous activity. You may have to change the form of the word.

1. The three countries signed a(n) _____ to reduce pollution.
2. The tree was between the gardens, so the neighbours made a(n) _____ to share the fruit.
3. Having lived in Madrid for five years, she got permanent _____ in Spain.
4. He loves travelling in Europe because it's easy to move between the _____ countries.
5. There will be a vote to allow each state in the country to be _____.
6. Money can be exchanged for _____ or services.
7. The king gave a(n) _____ speech on the opening night.
8. The government says that it has not lost any of its _____.
9. Politicians are saying that the economic _____ could affect the financial market.
10. Tijuana is on the _____ of Mexico and the US.

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People to be able to move across land border with no checks, and airport to have Eurostar-style dual border checks

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11 June, 2025

- 1 The UK and Spain have made an important new deal about Gibraltar. This ends a long disagreement about what happens after Brexit. The deal makes it easier for people and goods to move between Spain and Gibraltar.
- 2 There will be new passport checks at Gibraltar's airport, like the ones used in Eurostar stations, but people and goods crossing the land border will not be checked anymore.
- 3 This deal does not change who controls Gibraltar. It is still British. But British people who are not living in Gibraltar must follow Schengen rules. They can only stay in the Schengen area for 90 days in a 180-day period. If they stay longer than 90 days, they may not be allowed to enter. Spanish officers will decide who can enter Gibraltar under Schengen rules.
- 4 UK Foreign Secretary David Lammy said this is a good and useful deal after many years of uncertainty. Spanish Foreign Minister José Manuel Albares and Gibraltar's leader Fabian Picardo called this deal a "historic agreement."
- 5 Every day, about 15,000 people cross the border, including many workers who live in Spain but work in Gibraltar. Now, people living in Gibraltar can use residence cards, and Spanish citizens can use ID cards to cross. The deal helps to stop a "hard border" that the EU could have created.
- 6 At a meeting in Brussels, Albares said this agreement is a new beginning between Spain and the UK. "The border will disappear. We will have free movement of people and goods," he said.
- 7 UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer called Gibraltar's leader to say congratulations. They agreed this was a big step for better relations between the UK and Spain. This agreement might create more financial opportunities for the two countries.
- 8 Gibraltar is a British territory in southern Spain. It has been British since 1713 but is self-governing in most areas. In 2002, 99 per cent of people in Gibraltar voted to stay British and not share control with Spain.

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First published in *The Guardian*, 11/06/2025

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3 Comprehension check

a. Are these sentences True (T) or False (F) according to the article? Correct any that are false.

1. The UK and Spain have made it easier to move between Gibraltar and Spain. T / F
2. People will now have to show their passports every time they cross the land border. T / F
3. British people who do not live in Gibraltar must follow Schengen rules. T / F
4. The new deal gives Spain full control of Gibraltar. T / F
5. Around 15,000 people cross the border between Spain and Gibraltar every day. T / F
6. In 2002, most people in Gibraltar voted to share control with Spain. T / F

4 Key language

a. Use the words in the box to complete the sentences from the article and answer the questions.

can

could

may

might

must

- a. People from the UK who are not living in Gibraltar _____ follow Schengen rules.
 - b. If they stay longer, they _____ not be allowed to enter.
 - c. People living in Gibraltar _____ use residence cards.
 - d. The deal helps to stop a 'hard border' that the EU _____ have created.
 - e. This agreement _____ create more financial opportunities for the two countries.
1. Which word describes someone's ability to do something? _____
 2. Which words describe how likely something is to happen? _____
 3. Which word describes something you have to do? _____

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b. Use the words in the box to complete the sentences. You can use some words more than once.

can

could

may

might

must

1. Spanish citizens _____ cross the border using their ID cards.
2. UK visitors who are not residents _____ follow Schengen rules.
3. The Spanish police _____ stop someone who has broken the Schengen rules.
4. Gibraltar residents _____ travel without getting their passports stamped.
5. People _____ not stay longer than 90 days in the Schengen area without a visa.

5 Discussion

a. Discuss these statements.

- All British people should be allowed to enter British territory without restrictions.
- Free movement of people is more important than having police from another country controlling entry into the territory of a country.

6 In your own words

a. In pairs or small groups, list what can happen if there is free movement of people or if a country has complete control of its territory.

b. Present your ideas to the class. Use words to describe how likely your ideas are to happen.