



NEWS VIDEO PEOPLE VOICES SPORT TECH LIFE PROPERTY ARTS + ENTS TRAVEL MONEY INDYBEST STUDENT OFFERS

UK [World](#) Business People Science Environment Media Technology Education Images Obituaries Diary Corrections Newsletter Appeals

News > World > Europe

Spain's offer to Sephardic Jews to 'come home' may come with costly strings and red tape attached



The application procedure for 'returning' Sephardic Jews has been criticised for cost and complication, and for the possible inclusion of a general knowledge test on Spain's constitution

ALASDAIR FOTHERINGHAM BARCELONA Tuesday 05 May 2015

Shares: 385

PRINT | A A A

When it was confirmed that the descendants of a Jewish community exiled from Spain more than 500 years ago would be granted legal rights to apply for Spanish citizenship, Batsheba Chevalier Sola and Jose Romero Caballero, who run Granada's tiny but thriving Jewish information centre, were quietly contented with the news. Now, however, they – and others – are not so sure.

In medieval times, Granada was one of Spain's most important Jewish centres. The modern-day information office, comprising four minuscule rooms and a roof-top terrace in the city's old Jewish quarter, the Realejo, has received a steady stream of local and foreign tourists since it opened in 2012.

But Ms Chevalier Sola says she hears steadily increasing numbers of complaints about Spain's passport project for

PEOPLE



JK Rowling shuts down anti-Labour Twitter trolls

VOICES



Is no one going to give Cameron any credit?

i The only paper to give a clear concise and balanced view on the Election

Search The Independent

Advanced search Article archive Topics

UK ELECTION RESULT

All seats declared **MAJORITY 326**

331 Conservative

232 Labour

56 SNP

8 Liberal Democrat

1 UKIP

3 Plaid Cymru

8 DUP

4 Sinn Fein

3 SDLP

4 Other



Source: Electoral Commission

© GRAPHIC NEWS

Britain changes colour
Dynamic results map

UK polls checker
Every result updated live

i100

NOW TRENDING



1 Naz Shah: Here's what the woman who defeated George Galloway plans to do next



2 These are the contenders for the next Lib Dem leader



3 Here's how the election results would look under a proportional voting system

Sephardic (of Hispanic origin) Jews, principally about the law’s excessive red tape and, within that, an excessive cost for applicants.



The Sephardic Jews were expelled from Spain in 1492. The country is now offering citizenship to their descendants (Getty)

“This law acts as a [historic] recognition of the pain and the damage that was suffered in Spain by the Jews after everything they had contributed here,” Ms Chevalier Sola said. “But I now view it as a two-edged weapon.”

Mr Romero Caballero, a retired religious studies teacher, added: “After the humiliation and pillaging [following the 1492 Alhambra Decree], this law is a formal recognition [of responsibility] but nothing more.”

Legislators in the ruling People’s Party government say there is still room for improvement in the proposed final format of the laws, due to be passed in the autumn, which would allow applicants to gain dual Spanish citizenship.

The small print reportedly requires each applicant to make two visits to Spain, first for a personal interview and then for registration as a citizen. The cost of that is likely to be too high for entire families of Sephardic Jews living, as many do, in North and South America.

There are gripes too, about charges for the passport, fixed provisionally at €75 (£54). Finally, a possible general knowledge test on Spain’s constitution and current social situation has been criticised. Opponents say that knowledge of the ancient Sephardic languages Ladino or Haketia should suffice as proof of Spanish ancestry.

The Tories have finally been detoxified



'Why did you vote Tory?'

Big question gets intriguing answers on Reddit



Here's how Britain would look under proportional representation

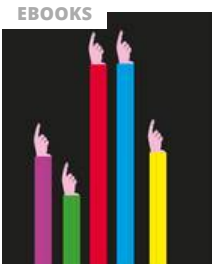
Kim Kardashian Speaks on Bruce Jenner's Transition

This is what happens to internal organs during a... Mashable

Cameron's Stunning Win

Top Gear's Hammond and May ridicule journalist

Promoted Links by Taboola



The Independent Voter's Handbook 2015

A celebration of British elections



On election night, you can't beat the BBC

ITV was faster, Sky was whizzier; but, for the big occasion, the



4 Michael Gove is justice secretary. That's not even the most terrifying thing the Tories will do



5 Women of World War II monument vandalised amid anti-austerity protests

Most Shared Most Viewed Most Commented



Scrap the Human Rights Act and keep TTIP: Here's what you voted for and will get with a Tory government, Britain



Snoopers' charter set to return to law as Theresa May suggests Conservative majority could lead to huge increase in surveillance powers



DWP releases document on cuts to disabled work access scheme hours after election result



Every major British political party – except the Conservatives – currently led by a woman



The most embarrassing part of the election? Seeing people mistake Labour for a left-wing party

Promoted stories from the web

Kylie Jenner Admits Her Lips Aren't All Natural

Bush's Iran Plan Is Worse Than Obama's

Here's how UK newspapers think people should vote in the election

Police identify UFC champ Jones as lead suspect

Sponsored Links by Taboola

INDEPENDENT IMAGES



Loading gallery

remote always wanders back to One, says DJ Taylor

MUSIC



Why Britain's greatest rapper swapped London for leafy Surrey

Roots Manuva once rapped about skunk-fuelled hallucinations. But now he is living (and gardening) in Esher, has he become all he feared?

PEOPLE



Tina Fey has a strange way of protesting against 'gender norms'

COMEDY



National Comedy Centre to bring back famous comedians - as holograms

The venue hopes to present a wide roster of expired comedic greats

HEALTH



What's app, Doc? Patients can now send medical data via their smartphone

Abroad, some potential Jewish beneficiaries confirm their dissatisfaction. “It [the legislation] was all very beautiful at first, but afterwards it has been a disappointment,” Patricia Harari, an Argentinian Sephardic Jew now living in Israel, told El País newspaper. “Many families will not be able to afford to take all of their relatives there twice.”

Ms Chevalier Sola plans to apply to open a synagogue – the first in Granada since 1492. However, she and Mr Romero Caballero are unsure of how many former Sephardic Jews – of the estimated 90,000 able to apply – will make use of Spain’s offer.

“We get a lot of Argentinians here, particularly elderly women who are getting very emotional about their new nationality,” Ms Chevalier Sola said. “They feel this law is a recognition, not towards them, but towards everything that was here beforehand. But people actually saying they will use their passport to stay here? So far, nobody.”

Promoted stories from the web

Sponsored Links by Taboola

Pockrass: Why GoDaddy decision is troubling
ESPN

New Airline Provides Only Nonstop Service
Time

17 people who really couldn't care less about the royal baby
Mashable

Jeb Bush Isn't Winning
Bloomberg

Daily Fantasy Baseball Advice and DFS Strategy
Foxsports

Fifa to discuss Palestine's Israel ban plea
Goal

More from The Independent

by Taboola

The Labour party responds to rumours about David Miliband's return

Katie Hopkins pens emotional open letter to her children ahead of her death from epilepsy



OUR FREE AND IMPROVED APP: THE INDEPENDENT DIGITAL EDITION



SPONSORED FEATURES

SPONSORED FINANCIAL CONTENT

What's this?

Ads by Google

Beach Resort Madagascar
Discover a corner of paradise 8d/7n half board 600 € for 2 people
www.riakeresort.com

Apprenez l'hébreu
Cela n'a jamais été plus facile. En ligne à domicile. Enregistrez-vous!
eteacherhebrew.com

Show Me

Between: and

Location:

By clicking 'Search' you are agreeing to our Terms of Use.



Ashdown Group: Senior .Net Developer - Kingston Upon Thames, Surrey
£65000 - £70000 per annum + benefits : Ashdown Group: A long-established, tech...

Ashdown Group: Business Analyst - Financial Services - City, London
£50000 - £55000 per annum: Ashdown Group: Business Analyst - Financial Service...

Ashdown Group: Head of IT Project Management / Programme Manager - London
£65000 - £68000 per annum + Bonus and 26 days holidays: Ashdown Group: Head of...

The poster for Gaspar Noé's Love film is about as NSFW as it gets

Ads by Google

Fun Spanish Lessons

The best Spanish lessons now online Babbel: Join millions inside!
groovy.spanish.babbel.com

פיינטבול חווייה בגלבע

הראשון והמקורי - הגדול בארץ. מבצע מדורים לאביב! פרטים באתר
paintballg.co.il/פיינטבול_בגלבע

Israel Luxury Apartments

Meier on Rotshild tower in Tel Aviv The apartment of your dreams
meier.co.il

FOOD + DRINK



Bill Granger turns his stash of rice into a base for exciting dishes

FOOTBALL



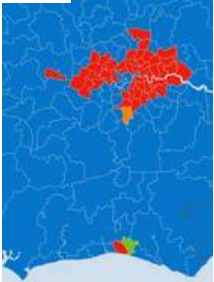
Champions League place in touching distance as Speroni gifts United victory over Palace

PEOPLE



Morgan Freeman calls for marijuana to be 'legalised across the board'

i100



10 maps that show the result in a new light



START YOUR DAY WITH THE INDEPENDENT
SIGN UP FOR DAILY NEWS EMAILS

Ashdown Group: Linux Systems Administrator - Windows, Linux - Central London

£40000 - £50000 per annum + Benefits: Ashdown Group: Linux Systems Administrat...

[View the latest from iJobs](#)

DAY IN A PAGE

Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat

10 ▾ | May ▾ | 2015 ▾ |

Loading gallery



START YOUR DAY WITH THE INDEPENDENT: SIGN UP FOR DAILY NEWS EMAILS

11 COMMENTS

Post a Comment

Login

TOP NEW OLD



MARIO TABONE-VASSALLO 5 days ago

What about the Palestinians driven out of Palestine and still living in refugee camps, including in Syria, or in ghettos like Gaza?

REPLY

+ | 1 | -

SANDMAN 5 days ago

What about the Moors who were expelled after 800 years of living in Spain?

REPLY

+ | -1 | -



JOHN 5 days ago

they invaded and where deported after the reconquista. colonialists don't count I guess

REPLY

+ | 3 | -



DAWAY 5 days ago

To start the Moors itself were invaded by arabs these arabs went into Spain and after 800 years of intermittent war. Expelled or forced to convert into christians. There is no way to recognise them from the rest of the population in north Africa. The Spanish jews were victim of the "Inquisición" which now sound evil but by the time was seen as the only way to "clean" the country and avoid another invasion.

REPLY

+ | 0 | -

LAGUERRE 5 days ago

It'll be Israelis who don't have another second passport who'll be interested in the Spanish offer. Having a second passport is commonly thought to be a wise precaution in Israel now.

REPLY

+ | 0 | -

SINGINGCANARY 5 days ago

Who is this non elected nincompoop, who has only become king due to his family's corruption, to decide who should now have free access to live in Spain, whilst at the same time thousands of well educated Spanish youth are forced to leave Spain to do menial work in other European countries? What he should do is ask the government to call a referendum on the monarchy as the Spanish people are asking him to do and stop diverting the attention to matters which are totally irrelevant to Spain's dire situation.

REPLY

+ | 0 | -



AVNER 5 days ago

mcmlxi /rio
i see you nasty view blinding you off all humanity and common sense

REPLY

+ | 0 | -



RIO CHICO 5 days ago

Another scam by the Spanish elite to screw more money out of whoever. It's about money only, which is why they are not offering the same deal to expelled Muslims, millions of them, because they haven't the money. Not even an apology for the hurt. They just want them to work in their green houses.

REPLY


+ | 3 | -

FREEALI 5 days ago

But RIO , as you see, many of Muslim governments don't regard their citizens even in their own countries,

REPLY

+ | 0 | -

 **JOHN** 5 days ago

because they were colonialists, the Jews weren't.

REPLY

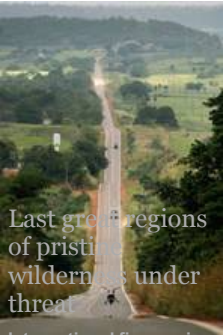
+ | 1 | -

MCMLXI 5 days ago

Who cares. Leave then be where they are. If they don't want to go back then that is up to them. If they want to go back then just go and live in Spanish society as it is and INTEGRATE!

REPLY

+ | -1 | -



Search The Independent

Advanced search

Article archive

Topics

Terms & Policies

Privacy Policy

Cookie policy

Code of Conduct

Complaint form

Email newsletters

RSS

Live Blogs

About i100

Contact Us

Subscriptions

Apps

Work for us

Evening Standard

Homes & Property

iJobs

News video

Sport video

Advertising Guide

Syndication

Novaya Gazeta (English)

ES Business Connections

ES Rentals

London Live

© independent.co.uk