

All countries

Requirements

Asia

China

Strict requirements apply under a revised regime set up in 2013. Foreign employees working in China are classified into different levels to encourage the immigration of talents. Foreigners can also apply for permanent residency (a Chinese 'green card') under strict preconditions.

For entry, different visas will apply. E.g. M-visa for business trips or certain short-term work (less than 90 days), Z-visa for work, S-visa for relatives of foreigners working in China to stay (no work), R-visa for foreign talents/ specialists.

Hong Kong

In general, unless a person has the right of abode or right to land in Hong Kong, he/she requires a visa/ entry permit to work, study, establish or join in any business, take up residence or to stay in Hong Kong as a visitor longer than the allowed visa free period.

Singapore

All foreigners who intend to work in Singapore must have a valid pass (commonly known as a work visa) before they start work.

EntrePass: for foreign entrepreneurs wanting to start and operate a new business in Singapore and is subject to strict requirements.

The EntrePass for first time applicants is valid for up to one year. It is renewable for up to two years.

Employment Pass (EP): for foreign professionals who have a job offer to work in a managerial, executive or specialised job in Singapore subject to qualification requirements. The EP for first time applicants is valid up to two years. It is renewable for up to three years.

Personalised Employment Pass (PEP): for high-earning existing Employment Pass holders or overseas foreign professionals. The PEP offers greater flexibility than an Employment Pass.

Overseas Network & Expertise Pass: for top talent in business, arts and culture, sports, science and technology, and academia and research

S Pass: for foreign mid-skilled technical staff to work in Singapore subject to certain requirements. The number of S Pass holders a company can employ is capped at a sub-quota, or dependency ceiling, of 10% of the company's total workforce for the services sector and 18% for all other sectors. The S Pass is valid for up to two years and is renewable.

United Arab Emirates

Employees who are not UAE nationals need to be sponsored by their employer for the purpose of obtaining a UAE residency visa and work permit. GCC nationals do not require a visa, but a work permit still needs to be obtained by the employer.

The process includes security screening and health checks. The visa is typically issued for a 2 year period and renewal applications are subject to the approval of the local authorities and the criteria is updated from time to time.

Europe

Austria

Non-EU citizens need residence and work permits in order to be entitled to work and reside in Austria. The immigration system is very complex and restrictive. A number of requirements have to be met (eg university degree, age limits, high income, language skills (German or English), under circumstances macro-economic benefit for Austria (in case of self-employment, etc).

The most important combined residence and work permit, the Red-White-Red Card (Rot-WeiÃ-Rot-Karte) is granted for a duration of two years and can be prolonged. The conclusion of an integration agreement is precondition for the prolongation. Further, also the EU-Blue Card, which is also granted for a duration of 2 years, is a good (and in some aspects simpler) option, but the general requirements are somewhat higher (in particular only for top earners 2022: EUR 66.593,- gross annual salary plus special payments in the form of 13/14 salary and at least 3 years of university studies relevant to the job.

Besides, there are several other residence/work permits for a temporary stay in Austria (the respective appropriate permit needs to be assessed in every individual case).

After five years of continuous legal residence an application for a permanent residency is possible.

Czech Republic

Non-domestic individuals from third countries (ie non-EU countries, EEA and Switzerland) may be employed only if they hold a relevant work permit from the Labour Office and a residence permit for employment purposes, or if they hold a special card (an Intra-Company Employee Transfer Card, an Employee Card, or a Blue Card), which includes both permits.

An Employee Card is usually issued for the duration of the employment relationship for a maximum period of two years. The validity of the Employee Card may be prolonged repeatedly, each time for a maximum of two years. A university degree or a higher education is not required. It is necessary to submit an employment contract (or an agreement on future contract) and, eventually, documents proving the professional competence for the relevant position.

Notwithstanding the scope of work, the foreigner's monthly remuneration must not be less than the monthly minimum wage (CZK 17,300 in 2023), with weekly working hours of at least 15 hours. It can be applied for either abroad at a Czech Embassy or in the Czech Republic at the Ministry of Interior (in case the applicant has a residency permit in the Czech Republic).

A Blue Card can be issued to individuals from third countries who are highly qualified and looking for positions requiring a high qualification, which is considered to be a university degree, or a completed higher education provided the study lasted at least three years. The application for the Blue Card can be administered by a Czech Embassy or the Ministry of Interior (in case the applicant has a residency permit in the Czech Republic).

A Blue Card is valid 3 months longer than the duration of the employment contract, but for a maximum of 3 years. The employment contract must last for at least one year with the statutory working hours and the agreed gross minimum monthly or annual wage for must correspond to at least 1.5 times the average gross annual wage in the Czech Republic.

An Intra-Company Employee Transfer Card is a type of authorisation for long-term residence in the Territory of the Czech Republic where the purpose of residence (longer than 3 months) of the foreign national is to perform work in the position of manager, specialist or employed intern to which the foreign national has been transferred. The Intra-Company Employee Transfer Card is issued for the duration of transfer to the territory of EU member states, but only to a maximum of 3 years for a manager and specialist and for 1 year for an employed intern. The card may be extended repeatedly to cover the duration of transfer to the territory of member states of the European Union, to a maximum stated above (3 years for a manager and specialist and for 1 year for an employed intern).

England & Wales

As a result of Brexit, the same immigration rules apply to non-European and European citizens coming to the UK to live, work or study. The only exception is for Irish citizens who are exempt from any immigration restrictions due to longstanding Common Travel Area arrangements. Irish citizens can live and work in the UK without needing any visa or immigration permission.

France

A near complete overhaul of French immigration rules entered into effect on November 2, 2016, providing for a broad range of exemptions from work authorisation formalities for nationals of non-EU Member States according to the person's function within the business (nationals of EU Member States continue to be exempt from all visa and work authorisation requirements).

Germany

Non-EU citizens need a national visa before they enter into and start working in Germany. The application must be submitted to the German embassy / consulate in their home country. Citizens from a number of countries ("privileged countries") may enter Germany visa-free for leisure or business travel and only require a visa, if it is intended to work within Germany. This applies in particular to citizens of Australia, Israel, Japan, Canada, South Korea, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. Citizens of these countries may even travel to Germany and apply for a residence permit while being in Germany.

There are various legal options for visa and residence and work permits depending on the applicant's qualification, type of work, type of contract (local contract of employment with a German entity or secondment to Germany) and level of remuneration. The following are the most common permits:

- **Skilled Workers:** Since March 2020 "Skilled Workers" can apply for a residence and work permit, if they have a job offer for any type of qualified occupation (which does not necessarily have to be based on their university degree or completed vocational training as long as the occupation can generally be considered as "qualified"). Skilled workers are employees who hold a university degree which is recognized by German authorities or comparable to a German university degree or who have completed a vocational training with a duration of at least two years which is considered equivalent to vocational training completed in Germany. Qualified occupations are positions that would normally require a skilled worker. IT-specialists with at least three years of work experience do not require a completed vocational training.

- **EU Blue Card:** The EU Blue Card is a special type of skilled worker permit and can be applied for in all Member States of the EU apart from Denmark and Ireland. An EU Blue Card issued for one Member State of the EU, for example for Germany, only permits an employment in Germany and not in other European countries. However, there may be exceptions with regard to short-term mobility, i.e. if only short-term employment for a maximum of 90 days is required in the other EU country. However, the precise conditions would have to be checked in advance in each individual case. If long-term employment in another EU country is planned on the basis of an EU Blue Card for Germany, a work permit for the other EU country may be applied for under eased conditions (so-called long-term mobility). The applicants for an EU Blue Card for Germany must generally provide proof of a university degree (exceptions to this rule may apply in individual cases for IT specialists). If the university degree was not obtained in Germany, it has to be either recognized in Germany or comparable to a German university degree. The applicants must also present an employment contract or a binding job offer for a qualified employment in Germany. The employment contract or job offer must reach a certain level of income (whereas in the case of so-called shortage occupations or for graduates just starting their first job, significantly lower salary thresholds apply).

- **ICT-Card:** The ICT-Card (Intra-Corporate-Transferee Card) is open for employees of a company based outside of the EU for a secondment to Germany as a manager, specialist or trainee.

Hungary

As a member of the EU, Hungary provides special conditions for citizens coming from countries of the EU. The freedom to move to another EU country or to work without a work permit is a right for EU nationals.

Non-EU citizens need a national visa before they enter into and/or start working in Hungary (which shall be submitted to the Hungarian embassy in their home country). If non-EU citizens are entitled to enter Hungary without national visa, they can submit their application directly at the Hungarian National Directorate-General for Aliens Policing in Hungary. The exact requirements depend on whether the country of origin of the given citizen has a relevant agreement with Hungary or the EU.

A residence permit for the purpose of employment may be issued to third-country nationals:

- whose purpose of residence is to perform work for or under the direction and/or supervision of others, for remuneration, under contract for employment relationship
- who perform work as the owner or executive officer of a for-profit business association, co-operative society or some other legal entity, in addition to the work actually performed in that capacity.

The Department of Citizenship and Native registry of the Government Office of the Capital City Budapest is responsible for citizenship matters.

The application for a residence permit shall be submitted with the form "Application for Residence Permit" and Appendix 9 or 7 (depending on whether the third country national will work as an "ordinary" employee or as an owner or an executive officer) completed and printed.

There is an administrative fee charged for the procedure, generally EUR 110, but it can vary based on the type of submission.

Ireland

Information unavailable or not applicable

Italy

As a member of EU, EU/EEA/EFTA citizens can live and work in Italy without any work permit.

For EU citizens who are willing to stay in Italy for more than 90 days is required the registration with local Town-hall.

For Non-EU citizens, the regulation varies depending on (i) the length and (ii) the nature of the activity.

Netherlands

During the first phase of setting up a company, one can travel to the Netherlands for business meetings. Depending on the nationality, without a visa or based on a business visa, for a maximum of 90 days in every consecutive period of 180 days.

After that, Non-EU/EEA nationals require permission to work in the Netherlands. There are three main options, the Highly Skilled Migrant permit (recognition as a sponsor required), the Intra Corporate Transfer (ICT) or the European Bleu Card (EBC). For the HSM and ICT route the applicable wage criterion, in 2023, is EUR 3,672 (<30 years old) / EUR 5,008 (30 years or older). There is a reduced salary criterion of EUR 2,631 directly after an orientation year for highly educated persons. For the EBC route, the applicable wage criterion in the second half year of 2022 is EUR 5,867 irrespective of age.

Poland	<p>Non-EEA-nationals need a work and residence permit/visa in order to reside and work in Poland. If the job position as described in the permit changes the employer is required to reapply for permission. Same applies to the change of employer company.</p> <p>It is also possible to employ citizens of Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Russia and Ukraine on the basis of a statement on the intention to entrust work to a foreigner (which enables initial employment without a work permit for up to 6 months within the next 12 months).</p> <p>Certain facilitations are provided for IT workers within the Poland Business Harbour Programme in terms of immigration formalities. It includes three paths of participation: for companies, for startups and for individuals. One of the elements of the package is also support in the form of connecting entrepreneurs with investors and grants for R&D activity. It is applicable for citizens of Belarus, Georgia, Russia, Ukraine, Moldova and Armenia.</p> <p>After five years of continuous legal residence, application for a permanent residency is possible.</p>
Portugal	<p>Portuguese Law has different types of visas: short term, seasonal, temporary and for residence purposes. Regarding the residence visa, it is required an effective residence in Portugal (6 consecutive or 8 interpolated months) to maintain a Residence Permit during the validity of the visa. The only exception is the residency permit for investment activity.</p>
Slovakia	<p>Non-EU citizens coming to Slovakia for work or business shall in most cases request a residence permit. The application has to mention a specific purpose for which the applicant comes to Slovakia (eg work, business). A separate work permit shall be requested only in certain circumstances. The residence permit for employment purposes can be issued for a maximum period of five years, whereas the residence permit for business purposes is limited to a maximum period of three years. Both types of residence permits could be renewed; in this regard, the same maximum periods apply (ie three and five years respectively).</p>
Spain	<p>In Spain there is a set of immigration regulations that can be divided into five large blocks, in which we find all the cases of international mobility of workers or the hiring of foreigners:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. General foreigners' regime: This is the general regulation applicable to non-EU citizens, including British citizens since Brexit, which establishes the requirements for their hiring or for their regularisation when their administrative situation in Spain is not legal. 2. Law 14/2013 on support for entrepreneurs and investors: This is a specific law that shortens administrative deadlines and seeks to streamline and facilitate certain procedures that serve to attract talent by hiring highly qualified workers, facilitate the mobility of workers in groups of companies, attract investment with Golden Visas, or attract entrepreneurship. 3. Professionals in the audiovisual sector: A specific regulation has been issued for this sector that simplifies the procedure so that they can move and work in Spain. 4. Community regime: This is applied to European Union citizens when they decide to become residents in Spain. Although EU citizens have the right to move and reside in any part of the Union, they must register in Spain in order to receive a NIE number. 5. Nationality: After a certain period of legal residence in Spain, foreign citizens can apply for Spanish nationality, in some cases having to renounce their nationality of origin if there is no dual nationality agreement.

South America

Brazil

To obtain a National Migratory Registration Card (CRNM) - a document that authorizes the legal stay of the immigrant in Brazil -, it is necessary to request a Residence Permit. For this, the interested party must apply to the Brazilian consulate in his country of origin (if he is abroad) or go to the Ministry of Labor / Federal Police (if he is in national territory). If the foreigner does not request this document within 90 days of arriving in the country, he will be considered an illegal immigrant and can be deported.

The Residence Permit can be granted in the following cases

I - in case the residence has the following purposes: a) research, teaching or academic extension; b) health treatment; c) humanitarian reception; d) study; e) work; f) working vacation; g) practice of voluntary religious activity or service; h) performance of investment or activity with economic, social, scientific, technological or cultural relevance; i) family reunion;

II - in case the person a) is a beneficiary of a residence and free circulation treaty; b) has a job offer; c) has already held Brazilian nationality and does not wish to or does not meet the requirements to reacquire it; d) is a beneficiary of refuge, asylum or protection to the stateless person; f) is a minor who is a national of another country or a stateless minor, unaccompanied or abandoned, who is at the Brazilian borders or in national territory; g) has been a victim of trafficking in persons, slave labor or violation of rights aggravated by his/her migratory condition; h) is on provisional release or serving a sentence in Brazil.