

# 'Start-up visa' to attract entrepreneurial non-EU nationals to Estonia

As from 18 January 2017, it has become easier to obtain a temporary residence if you have a good business idea. Simply apply for a 'Start-up visa'.

Estonia is quite restrictive when it comes to immigration. There is a quota of a maximum of 1,300 temporary residence permits per year, not including refugees under EU's relocation programme, and last year this quota was filled before the end of the year.

The start-up scene in Estonia is, however, rather vivid, and many entrepreneurs, who want to come, are hindered by the restrictive immigration rules. So a change was needed.

As from 18 January 2017, the Estonian Aliens Act includes an exemption making it easier to obtain a visa if you have a good business idea. This is called a 'Start-up visa'.

## How do I apply for the 'Start-up visa'?

If you want to apply for a Start-up visa, you start by submitting your business idea via the Internet to an expert panel that will assess the idea. The expert panel consists of members of the Estonian start-up community, and you will receive their decision within ten days.

If they like your idea and think it has potential, you will get a visa to come to Estonia and try to make business out of your idea. There is also a possibility to apply for Start-up visas for further employees needed in the start-up.

The visa can later be prolonged, and in the long run you can be eligible for a permanent residence permit.

Read more about this innovative way of attracting talent from outside the EU

## Need help applying?

Contact Partner Karolina Ullman if you need help enhancing your chances of obtaining a Start-up visa. She worked with the Estonian entrepreneurial community for over a decade, and, thus, she can help access and enhance your chances.



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