

# New rules for highly qualified professionals to obtain EU blue card in Latvia

The amendments to the Minister Cabinet Regulation No. 564 Regarding Residence Permits (hereinafter the “Regulation”), which entered into force on 14 September 2018, stipulate the opportunity to obtain the EU blue card and to be employed in Latvia for highly qualified professionals who have not obtained a higher education in the three year long program in profession or field which is stipulated in the employment agreement or employment offer, but have gained not less than five years’ experience in this profession or field.

The EU blue card is an official EU work permit which allows the highly qualified employed non-citizens of the EU to work and live in any country within the EU.

Before such professional applies for the EU Blue card, the employer must complete a sponsorship at the Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs (OCMA). Previously, to do so the employer had to submit to the OCMA, among others, a document received in accordance with the rules on recognizing the experience for receipt of EU blue card in a specific profession or field (for non-regulated professions); or a copy of the qualification recognition certificate or equivalent document that attests the compliance of the professional qualification with the requirements specified in the Republic of Latvia (for regulated professions).

Now the changes in the Regulation ease the obtainment of the EU Blue Card. However, the new rules apply only to the employees of professions included in the specific groups of the national “Classification of occupations”: Group 1, which includes legislators, senior state officials, managers, heads of various levels of institutions and organisations, etc., and Group 2, which includes professionals of a high level of theoretical and practical knowledge in the natural, social or humanitarian sciences, such as doctors and their assistants, architects, journalists, senior financial and legal specialists, etc. When completing a sponsorship, a certification about the professional experience must be submitted to the OCMA. This institution has the right, when checking the experience, to appeal to the Ministry, leading in the specific field, to give an opinion whether the gained experience corresponds to the employment in the specific profession or field.



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