

When do foreigners have the right to short-term employment in Estonia?

According to the general rule, an alien who has a legal basis for a temporary stay in Estonia and whose employment has been registered with the Police and Border Guard Board before the employment commences may take employment in Estonia for a short term.



Aliens may arrive in Estonia and stay temporarily in Estonia if they have a legal basis for doing so. Although the most common basis for temporary stay in Estonia is a visa issued by the competent authority of Estonia (short-stay C-visa or long-term D-visa), other possible grounds for temporary stay in Estonia include, for example, a visa or residence permit issued by a competent authority of another Member State of the Schengen Convention, the right to stay in Estonia arising from an international agreement or the right to stay in Estonia directly arising from law or administrative act. This means that an alien does not necessarily have to have a short- or long-term visa issued by Estonia in order to work in Estonia for a short period – it is sufficient that, for example, due to an international agreement, an alien may stay in Estonia for a certain period. This option has previously been used, for example, by Ukrainian citizens, who have the right to stay in the Schengen countries without a visa for 3 months as of 2017.

Short-term employment of an alien in Estonia can be registered for up to 365 days within 455 days. Registration of short-term employment is possible for a longer period when it comes to working as a teacher or lecturer, scientific activities, working as a top specialist or in a start-up company. Short-term employment for seasonal work can be registered for up to 270 days per year.

To register for short-term employment, the employer must submit an application to the Police and Border Guard Board. Under normal procedures, short-term employment is registered or refused within 15 working days from the day following the date of acceptance of the application. If short-term employment is registered, the alien has the right to start working in Estonia.

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