

'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.



KATRIN SARAP
ATTORNEY AT LAW,
PARTNER

(+372) 66 76 440

KATRIN.SARAP@NJORDLAW.EE



KAROLINA ULLMAN
ATTORNEY AT LAW,
PARTNER

(+372) 66 76 444

KAROLINA.ULLMAN@NJORDLAW.EE