

# Talent Attraction Product Research

**Prepared for:**  
**Luxembourg Ministry of Economy**  
**May 2024**

# Executive Summary

Among the workforce and skills challenges that governments face these days are declining birth rates, aging populations, fast-transitioning industries and political tensions that have intensified the discussion around immigration. As a result, it is as competitive and complex a marketplace for talent as ever.

Cities and countries around the world have increasingly shifted attention from business and FDI attraction to talent development, attraction and retention as a means of economic growth. But what are other places offering when recruiting skilled workers? Which locations are performing best and why? And how can Luxembourg apply these learnings for its own good?

In this assessment, we've aimed to extract best practices from leading countries winning the battle for talent. We've also analysed those places that rank lower to see if there are underlying reasons why their performance isn't as strong. We've looked at technical factors such as immigration policy, special visas to attract skills and the rankings on various indexes that correlate to the needs of talent. We also considered qualitative factors such as place branding and promotional efforts.

The highly-rated markets in our initial assessment on pages 3-5 tended to be in the Top 12 of the Global Talent Competitiveness Index (GTCl) – which measures how cities grow, attract and retain talent. The one exception was Portugal, ranking 27<sup>th</sup> thanks to low marks on regulation and openness. However, helping Portugal compete is what expats report as a high quality of life and ease of settling in, while its cost of living is the lowest among all nation's examined. It also has favourable visas that have successfully attracted the technology industry.

For other markets in our analysis, they do not rate as strongly in the William-Russell index (#30+ versus the Top 15 among most high-performing markets) that measures a combination of happiness, well being, healthcare, employment and quality of life. They all also rate outside the Top 25 on Numbeo's 2024 Quality of Living ranking, and trend lower on regulatory measures according to GTCl.

Across the analysis, there is not a single formula that translates to success. Here, we must look at a variety of factors that correlate to successful policy and demonstrated traction, while also recognising that there are anomalies.

# Executive Summary (cont'd)

The top correlations in this report suggest the following:



This importance of quality of life mirrors the key take-aways from C Studios' *What Talent Wants* report in 2023 and DCI's *Talent Wars* report in 2024 (included at the end for reference). Together, they show the preferences of talents from the U.S. and Europe as an indicator of how to effectively reach those interested in international relocation.

# Methodology of Market Selection



## Examine Long List Locations

INSEAD Global Talent Competitiveness Index

William-Russell World Expat Index

InterNations Expat Country Ranking

Frequent Luxembourg Competitors



## Develop Short List

5 European Top Performers

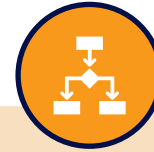
3 Other Relevant European Examples

Based on Mix of Scoring + Relevance to Luxembourg



## Evaluation Measures

- ✓ Immigration Policy
- ✓ Entrepreneur/ Start-Up Programmes
- ✓ Tax Rates
- ✓ Expat-Friendly Schemes
- ✓ Cost of Living
- ✓ Quality of Living
- ✓ English Language Proficiency
- ✓ Talent Branding Initiatives



## Outcomes

- Detailed Assessment of Competitors Across All Measures

# Countries Reviewed

## Top 5 Performers



Finland



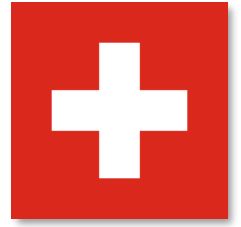
Ireland



Netherlands



Portugal



Switzerland

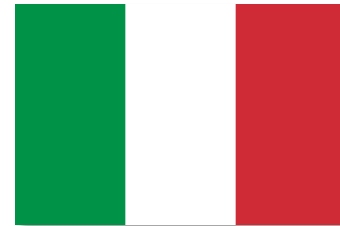
## Other Examples



UK



Belgium



Italy

# Benchmarking Baseline: By the Numbers

**#6***Score: 78.9*

Tax Competitiveness

[Tax Foundation](#)**#23\****Score: 65.3*

Cost of Living Index, 2024

[Numbeo](#)**#22**EF English Proficiency Index,  
2023[EF Education First](#)**#1**

Quality of Living Rank, 2024

[Numbeo](#)**#11**Global Talent Competitiveness  
Index, 2023, [INSEAD](#)**#16**

World Expat Index, 2023

[William-Russell](#)**#19**

Expatriate Country Ranking, 2023

[InterNations](#)**42%**Max Tax Rate  
(Over €220,788)**#6**[OECD Attractiveness](#), Highly  
Skilled Migrants, 2023

*\*This is the one ranking in the index where the closer to number 1, generally the less appealing it is to expats.*



# **Top 5 Performers Best Practices Analysis**

# By the Numbers

**#34***Score: 52.1*

Tax Competitiveness

[Tax Foundation](#)**#60***Score: 46.6*

Cost of Living Index, 2024

[Numbeo](#)**#8**EF English Proficiency Index,  
2023[EF Education First](#)**#20**

Quality of Living Rank, 2024

[Numbeo](#)**#27**Global Talent Competitiveness  
Index, 2023, [INSEAD](#)**#32**

World Expat Index, 2023

[William-Russell](#)**#10**

Expat Country Ranking, 2023

[InterNations](#)**48%**Max Tax Rate  
(Over €81,199)**#13**[OECD Attractiveness](#), Highly  
Skilled Migrants, 2023



# Visa and Residency Policies for Foreign Nationals

Portugal's immigration policy is designed to attract and retain highly skilled workers, entrepreneurs and investors. With various visa options like the Tech Visa and Startup Visa, coupled with supportive integration policies and no fixed annual quotas, Portugal offers an attractive destination for international talent. The country's commitment to creating a welcoming environment for immigrants further enhances its appeal as a hub for innovation and economic growth.



# Baseline Visa Policies

## Short-Term Visas

### Schengen Visa

Portugal, as part of the Schengen Area, allows non-EU nationals to enter Portugal for short stays (up to 90 days) for tourism, business, or family visits with a Schengen Visa.

### Application Process

Applications are made through Portuguese consulates and embassies worldwide. Standard documentation includes a valid passport, travel insurance, proof of accommodation, and sufficient financial means.

## Long-Term Visas

### Residence Visa

For stays exceeding 90 days, non-EU nationals must apply for a residence visa. This visa is a prerequisite for obtaining a residence permit.

### Types of Residence Visas

Includes work visas, study visas, family reunification visas, and others.

### Application Process

Involves submitting an application at the Portuguese consulate, including a valid passport, criminal record certificate, proof of accommodation, health insurance, and proof of financial means.

# Special Visa Options for Workers

## Tech Visa

### Purpose

To attract highly skilled tech professionals from non-EU countries to work for certified tech companies in Portugal.

### Eligibility

Tech professionals with expertise in technology sectors who are employed by companies certified under the Tech Visa program.

### Application Process

Employers must be certified by the Portuguese government. The visa application involves standard requirements like a valid passport, employment contract, and proof of qualifications.

### Benefits

Simplified and expedited visa process, residence permit for the duration of employment.

Source: [Tech Visa Program](#)

## Startup Visa

### Purpose

To attract non-EU entrepreneurs to establish innovative startups in Portugal.

### Eligibility

Non-EU entrepreneurs with innovative business ideas that have high-growth potential.

### Application Process

Must be accepted by a certified incubator in Portugal. Includes a business plan, proof of financial resources, and an application submitted online through the IAPMEI portal.

### Benefits

Residence permit for one year, renewable for two-year periods, family reunification, support from certified incubators.

Source: [Startup Visa Program](#)

## Highly Qualified Activity Visa

### Purpose

For non-EU nationals who have an employment contract, or a binding job offer in a highly qualified activity.

### Eligibility

Individuals with a job offer in a highly skilled occupation, typically requiring higher education qualifications.

### Application Process

Requires an employment contract or job offer, proof of qualifications, and meeting standard visa application requirements.

### Benefits

Residence permit, family reunification, access to social services.

Source: [European Commission](#)

## EU Blue Card

### Purpose

Facilitates the mobility of highly skilled non-EU workers within the EU.

### Eligibility

Requires a job offer with a minimum one-year contract and a salary above a set threshold.

### Application Process

Application submitted to the IND, including proof of qualifications, employment contract, and salary details.

### Benefits

Provides rights to work and live in other EU countries, access to social security, and potential for family reunification.

Source: [European Commission](#)

# Other Relevant Visas and Policies

## Golden Visa Program

### Purpose

To attract investors and entrepreneurs by offering residency in exchange for significant investment in Portugal.

### Eligibility

Non-EU nationals making substantial investments in real estate, business, or creating jobs.

### Application Process

Non-EU nationals must make a qualifying investment in one of the following: Real estate, capital, business and job creation, cultural heritage, or SMEs.

### Benefits

Residency for family members, freedom of movement in the Schengen Area, potential for citizenship after five years.

## Family Reunification

### Purpose

To allow family members of residents and citizens to join them in Portugal.

### Eligibility

Spouses, minor children, dependent adult children, and dependent parents.

### Application Process

Requires proof of relationship, adequate accommodation, and sufficient financial means.

### Benefits

Residence permits for family members, access to social services, and integration support.

## National Strategy for Immigration

### Integration Policies

Portugal has a comprehensive integration policy to support immigrants, including language courses, social integration programs, and access to healthcare and education.

### Anti-Discrimination Measures

Strong legal framework to prevent discrimination and promote equality for immigrants.

# Expatriate-Friendly Policies

Portugal has implemented several policies to attract and retain foreign professionals, investors and retirees. This report explores Portugal's expatriate-friendly policies, focusing on tax incentives, residency options, and other relevant measures. Information is sourced from official government websites to ensure accuracy.



# Non-Habitual Resident (NHR) Regime

The Non-Habitual Resident (NHR) regime is a tax incentive program designed to attract foreign individuals and Portuguese expatriates who have been living abroad. Introduced in 2009, the NHR regime offers significant tax benefits for a period of 10 years.

## Eligibility

- **New Tax Residents:** Individuals who become tax residents in Portugal and have not been taxed as residents in Portugal in any of the previous five years.
- **Application Process:** Applicants must register as tax residents with the Portuguese Tax Authority and apply for NHR status.

## Benefits

- **Foreign Income:** Most foreign-sourced income is exempt from Portuguese taxation, provided certain conditions are met.
- **Portuguese Income:** A flat 20% tax rate applies to certain Portuguese-sourced income (employment and self-employment income) derived from high-value-added activities, as listed by the Portuguese government.
- **Duration:** The NHR status is granted for a period of 10 consecutive years, provided the individual remains a tax resident in Portugal during this period.

## High-Value-Added Activities

Professions eligible for the 20% tax rate include, but are not limited to:

- Architects, engineers, and similar technical fields.
- Artists, actors, and musicians.
- Auditors and tax consultants.
- Medical doctors and dentists.
- University professors.
- Investors, managers, and directors.

# Golden Visa Program

The Golden Visa program, officially known as the Residence Permit for Investment Activity (ARI), aims to attract non-EU investors by offering residency in exchange for significant investments in Portugal. While the real estate investment option is being phased out, other investment routes remain.

## Eligibility:

- Capital transfer of at least €1 million.
- Creation of at least 10 jobs.
- Investment of €350,000 in research activities.
- Investment of €250,000 in arts, culture, or heritage preservation.
- Investment of €350,000 in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

## Benefits

- **Residency:** Offers residency for the investor and their family.
- **Freedom of Movement:** Allows visa-free travel within the Schengen Area.
- **Permanent Residency and Citizenship:** Eligible for permanent residency after five years and citizenship after six years, provided the investment is maintained.

# Digital Nomads

Portugal offers a visa specifically designed for digital nomads, recognizing the growing trend of remote work. This visa allows foreign nationals to live in Portugal while working remotely for companies outside Portugal.

## Eligibility

**Remote Work:** Applicants must be employed or self-employed, working remotely for companies or clients located outside of Portugal.

**Income Requirement:** Proof of sufficient income to support themselves during their stay in Portugal. The exact amount may vary, but generally, applicants should demonstrate a stable income that allows them to live comfortably in Portugal.

**Employment Documentation:** Proof of employment or contracts with clients, which can include a letter from the employer, employment contract, or contracts with clients for freelancers.

## Benefits

**Residency:** Provides temporary residency for 1 year, with options for renewal.

**Taxation:** May be eligible for the NHR regime if they meet the requirements, thus benefiting from tax incentives.



# Digital Nomads

\*Additional commentary

Since the inception of the Portuguese Digital Nomad Visa program in October 2022, there has been notable growth in its uptake. Within the first year until November 2023, 2,600 digital nomads had registered under this program ([Schengen News](#)). By March 2024, this number had surged to 16,000, reflecting the program's success in attracting foreign remote workers ([Fortune](#)).

Despite the scarcity of comprehensive data, the visa has garnered positive publicity and significantly attracted foreign talent. This influx has contributed to local economic stimulation, particularly in the real estate and service sectors. However, there are some downsides, including increased pressure on housing markets, leading to higher rental prices and cost-of-living concerns for local residents.

# Talent Attraction Initiatives

Portugal, a country known for its rich cultural heritage and vibrant economy, has been making concerted efforts to attract international talent. This report delves into Portugal's talent attraction initiatives, examining whether the country has a dedicated program or platform, the features and services offered, and the overall approach to talent attraction, including place branding.



# Visit Portugal

[www.visitportugal.com/en](http://www.visitportugal.com/en) is the official tourism website managed by the Portuguese National Tourism Authority (Turismo de Portugal). It promotes Portugal as a premier travel destination but also plays a role in broader place marketing by highlighting the country's culture, lifestyle, and investment opportunities. Key Initiatives:

## Tourism Campaigns

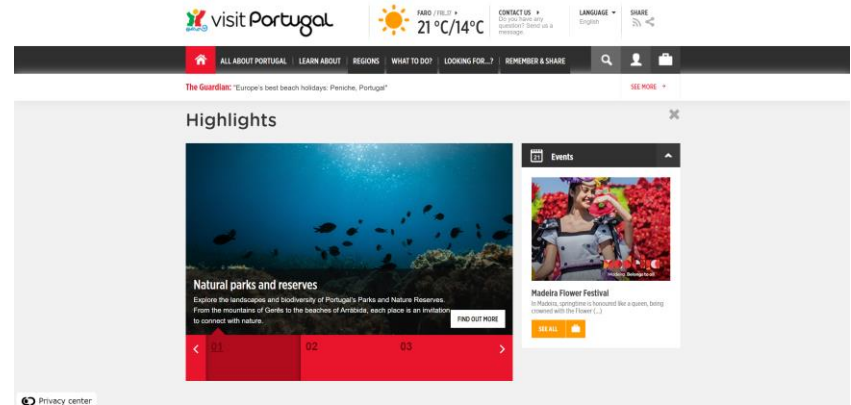
Extensive marketing content across social media to attract tourists, which also promotes the country's liveability and cultural environment.

## Content and Resources

Rich content on Portugal's regions, attractions, culture, and events.

## Partnerships

Collaborates with international travel agencies and organizations to enhance Portugal's visibility.



Entirely focused on B2C with major social media presence, including **FB** (1.5M follower), **IG** (802K), **YouTube** (43.9K), **LinkedIn** (81K), **Twitter** (120.4k), and **Pinterest** (24K).

# StartUp Portugal

[www.startupportugal.com](http://www.startupportugal.com) is a government-backed initiative aimed at fostering entrepreneurship and innovation. It provides various programs and support services to attract startups and entrepreneurs from around the world with focus on the following key areas:

## Startup Visa

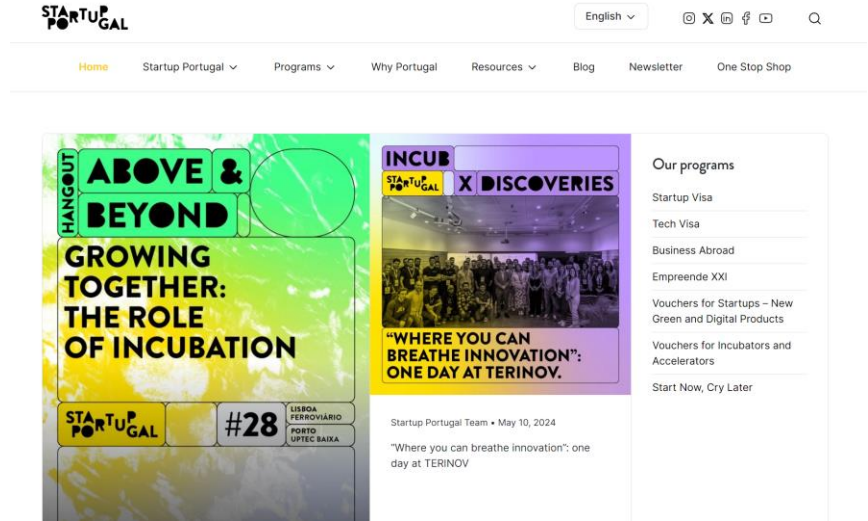
A special visa program designed to attract foreign entrepreneurs who want to establish their startups in Portugal.

## Incubation and Acceleration Programs

Government-supported incubation and acceleration programs for startups.

## Funding and Grants

Information and access to government grants and funding opportunities for startups.



Besides attracting international startups and entrepreneurs to Portugal, it also helps Portuguese startups gain recognition and visibility abroad.

# Talent Portugal (Private-Owned)

[www.talentportugal.com](http://www.talentportugal.com) is available in Portuguese, Spanish and English and serves as a hub for connecting international talent with job opportunities in Portugal. This is a private-sector led initiative with no connection to government that we can find. It features the following three:

## Jobs Board

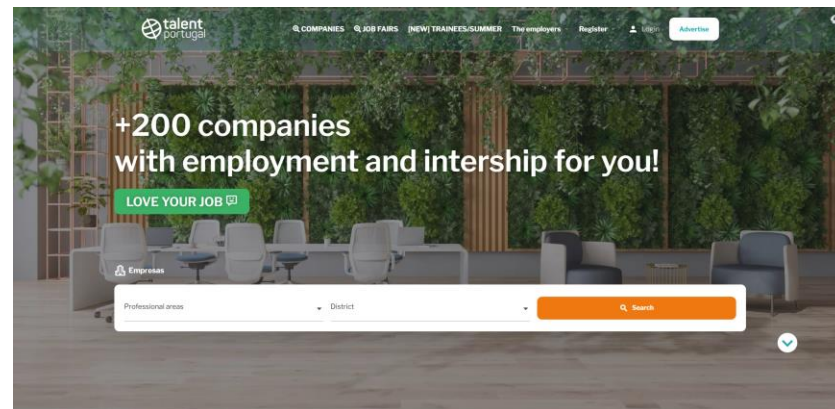
Talent Portugal maintains its own jobs database, allowing job seekers to search for opportunities directly on the platform.

## Company Profiles

Employers can create detailed profiles showcasing their work environment, benefits, and open positions.

## Events and News

The website lists relevant events, such as job fairs and networking opportunities, and provides news related to the job market in Portugal.



Worthwhile mentioning is that most job vacancies of companies aim at internships and entry-level positions. Talent Portugal is also selling its own employer branding courses, tickets to events and advertising space.

# By the Numbers

**#14***Score: 70.6*

Tax Competitiveness

[Tax Foundation](#)**#26***Score: 64.3*

Cost of Living Index, 2024

[Numbeo](#)**#1**EF English Proficiency Index,  
2023[EF Education First](#)**#2**

Quality of Living Rank, 2024

[Numbeo](#)**#5**Global Talent Competitiveness  
Index, 2023, [INSEAD](#)**#11**

World Expat Index, 2023

[William-Russell](#)**#7**

Expat Country Ranking, 2023

[InterNations](#)**49.5%**Max Tax Rate  
(Over €75,518)**#9**[OECD Attractiveness](#), Highly  
Skilled Migrants, 2023

# Visa and Residency Policies for Foreign Nationals

The Netherlands provides various visa options for international professionals, including the Highly Skilled Migrant visa, EU Blue Card, and Startup visa, to attract top talent. There are no annual caps on these visas, ensuring flexibility. Key incentives include the 30% tax ruling for expatriates and clear pathways to permanent residency and citizenship. These programs, managed by the Dutch Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND), support the country's aim to foster innovation and economic growth.



# Baseline Visa Policies

## Short-Term Visas

### Schengen Visa

The Netherlands, being a part of the Schengen Area, allows non-EU nationals to enter for short stays (up to 90 days) for tourism, business, or family visits with a Schengen Visa.

### Application Process

Applications are made through Dutch consulates and embassies worldwide, and standard documentation includes a valid passport, travel insurance, proof of accommodation, and sufficient financial means.

## Long-Term Visas

### Residence Visa

For stays exceeding 90 days, non-EU nationals must apply for a long-stay visa (MVV). This visa is a prerequisite for obtaining a residence permit.

### Types of Residence Visas

Includes work visas, study visas, family reunification visas, and others.

### Application Process

Involves submitting an application at the Dutch consulate, including a valid passport, criminal record certificate, proof of accommodation, health insurance, and proof of financial means.



# Special Visa Options for Workers

## Highly Skilled Migrant (Kennismigrant)

### Purpose

Attracts highly skilled professionals to work in the Netherlands.

### Eligibility

Requires a job offer from a recognized sponsor with a salary above a specified threshold.

### Application Process

The employer applies to the IND on behalf of the employee. Required documents include a valid passport, employment contract, and proof of the employer's recognized sponsor status.

### Benefits

Streamlined process with no labor market test, quick decision times, and eligibility for the 30% tax ruling.

Source: [IND](#)

## EU Blue Card

### Purpose

Facilitates the mobility of highly skilled non-EU workers within the EU.

### Eligibility

Requires a job offer with a minimum one-year contract and a salary above a set threshold.

### Application Process

Application submitted to the IND, including proof of qualifications, employment contract, and salary details.

### Benefits

Provides rights to work and live in other EU countries, access to social security, and potential for family reunification.

Source: [IND](#)

## Startup Visa

### Purpose

Encourages entrepreneurs to start innovative businesses in the Netherlands.

### Eligibility

Requires an innovative business plan and a recognized facilitator based in the Netherlands to support the startup.

### Application Process

The entrepreneur applies to the IND with a business plan, facilitator agreement, and proof of sufficient financial resources.

### Benefits

One-year residence permit with the possibility to extend, access to a network of investors and business partners, and support from a facilitator.

Source: [IND](#)

## Intra-Corporate Transferees (ICT)

### Purpose

Allows multinational companies to transfer employees to their offices in the Netherlands.

### Eligibility

Includes managers, specialists, and trainee employees with an employment contract and a qualifying relationship with the company.

### Application Process

The company submits an application to the IND with documents proving the employee's qualifications, employment history, and purpose of transfer.

### Benefits

Valid for up to three years for managers and specialists (one year for trainees), streamlined process, and facilitates mobility within the company.

Source: [IND](#)

# Expatriate-Friendly Policies

The Netherlands provides a range of expatriate-friendly policies designed to attract and retain international talent. The 30% tax ruling is one of the most notable benefits, offering substantial tax savings for highly skilled migrants. Other supportive measures, such as the Dutch American Friendship Treaty, language courses, and accessible healthcare, further enhance the Netherlands' appeal as a top destination for expatriates.



# 30% Tax Ruling

The 30% tax ruling is a tax advantage for highly skilled migrants moving to the Netherlands for work. Under this policy, 30% of the gross salary, including reimbursement of extraterritorial costs, is tax-free. This means that only 70% of the gross income is subject to Dutch income tax, which can result in considerable tax savings.

To qualify for the 30% ruling, several conditions must be met. They are listed below...

## **Employment**

The employee must be recruited or transferred from abroad by a Dutch employer.

## **Specialist Skills**

The employee must have skills or expertise that are scarce or unavailable in the Dutch labor market. This is typically assessed by comparing the salary with a set minimum threshold.

## **Distance**

The employee must have lived at least 150 kilometers from the Dutch border for at least 16 of the 24 months before starting employment in the Netherlands.

## **Duration**

The 30% ruling is granted for a maximum period of five years. This period was reduced from eight years as of 1 January 2019. Additionally, any previous periods of stay or employment in the Netherlands within the last 25 years are deducted from the five-year period.

## **Phasing Out**

The Dutch government has started phasing out the 30% ruling for certain expats. As of 2021, expats can only benefit from the ruling for a maximum of five years, and the policy has been tightened to ensure it is only granted to those who truly add value to the Dutch labor market.

# Dutch American Friendship Treaty (DAFT)

The Dutch American Friendship Treaty is an agreement between the Netherlands and the United States that facilitates American entrepreneurs' ability to start and run businesses in the Netherlands. Established in 1956, the treaty allows U.S. citizens to obtain a residence permit for self-employment purposes under favorable conditions.

## **Eligibility**

U.S. citizens who intend to start or run a business in the Netherlands.

Investment Requirement: Applicants must invest a minimum capital in their business. The current requirement is around €4,500.

## **Residence Permit**

Initially granted for two years and can be extended if the business remains viable.

## **Business Plan**

Applicants must present a viable business plan demonstrating their business's potential success.

# Dutch American Friendship Treaty (DAFT)

\*Additional commentary

Germany and Italy have Friendship, Commerce, and Navigation treaties with the United States that enhance diplomatic and economic relations. However, these treaties do not provide the same specific residency benefits for entrepreneurs as the Dutch-American Friendship Treaty does ([Wikipedia](#)).

Overall, the Dutch-American Friendship Treaty remains unique in its specific provisions that simplify the process for American entrepreneurs to establish themselves in the Netherlands by requiring a relatively small investment and offering a clear path to residency and work authorization ([Expat Republic](#)) ([Cardon & Company](#)).

# Residence Permit for Wealthy Foreign Investors

The Netherlands does not have a direct equivalent to a Golden Visa program, which allows residency through significant investment in real estate or other qualifying assets. However, the Netherlands does offer a Residence Permit for Wealthy Foreign Investors which serves a similar purpose.

## Eligibility

- The investor must invest at least €1.25 million in a Dutch company or a fund that is recognized by the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs.
- The investment must add value to the Dutch economy, demonstrated through criteria such as job creation, innovation, or increasing the Netherlands' market competitiveness.

## Application Process

- Submit an application to the Dutch Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND).
- Provide proof of the investment, a valid passport, a clean criminal record, and comprehensive details about the investment and its economic impact.
- The investment must be assessed and approved by the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs.

## Benefits

- The residence permit is initially granted for three years and can be extended if the investment remains in place.
- Investors have the right to live and work in the Netherlands.
- Potential path to permanent residency and eventually Dutch citizenship after five years of continuous residence.

# Talent Attraction Initiatives

The Netherlands has established several comprehensive programs aimed at attracting international talent, particularly in the tech and IT sectors. Key initiatives include the Holland Alumni Network and the International Welcome Center system. These programs collectively enhance the country's appeal by offering robust job boards, networking opportunities, and extensive relocation support, including spousal programs. The emphasis on place branding and quality of life further positions the Netherlands as an attractive destination for global professionals. Several city and regional organisations within the country are very active in attracting talent, such as Brainport Eindhoven and IN Amsterdam.



# Holland Alumni Network

[www.hollandalumni.network](http://www.hollandalumni.network) aims to connect international graduates from Dutch higher education institutions with potential employers in the Netherlands.

## Networking Opportunities

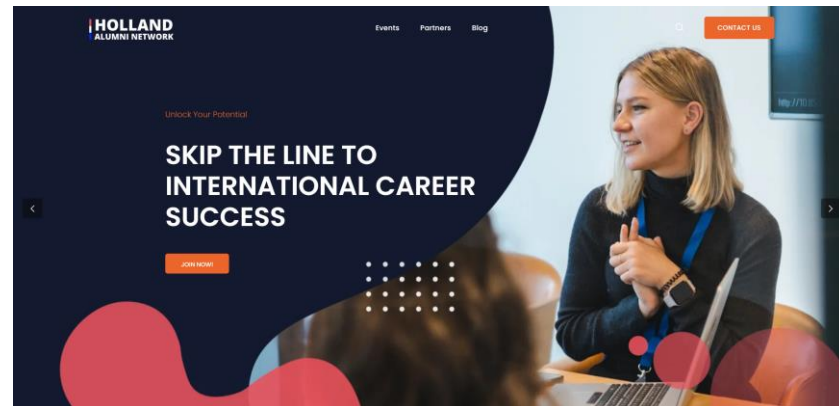
The platform facilitates networking between international alumni and Dutch companies, fostering professional relationships and potential job opportunities.

## Events and Webinars

Regular events and webinars are organized to provide career guidance, industry insights, and opportunities to connect with employers.

## Job Listings

While it does not host its own job board, the network provides links to job opportunities through partnerships with various Dutch companies and organizations.



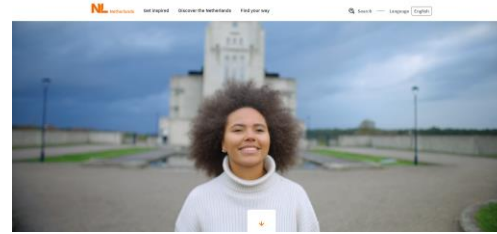
Holland Alumni Network is managed by [Nuffic](#), which is the Dutch organization dedicated to promoting internationalization in education and facilitating global cooperation between institutions, students, and professionals.



# Place Branding Initiatives

## Holland.com (<https://www.holland.com/global/tourism>)

Managed by the Netherlands Board of Tourism & Conventions, Holland.com is the official website for promoting the Netherlands as a tourist destination. It offers extensive information on travel tips, regional highlights, cultural attractions, and events across the country. The website also emphasizes sustainable travel and provides practical information for visitors.



**FB** (788K follower)  
**IG** (145K)  
**YouTube** (8.74K)  
**Twitter** (65.6K)

## IN Amsterdam (<https://www.iamsterdam.com/en/live-work-study/in-amsterdam>)

The organization provides services to employers and international employees, including assistance in hiring highly skilled migrants, and handling immigration and formalities for newcomers. It offers ongoing support in all aspects of life in Amsterdam, such as language learning, volunteering, and cultural acclimation. Through the IN Amsterdam partnership program, it connects local service providers with new English-speaking residents to facilitate their transition.



**FB** (909K follower)  
**IG** (313K)  
**YouTube** (6.96K)  
**Twitter** (398.7K)  
**TikTok** (11.7K)

# Brainport Eindhoven Talent Attraction Program

[www.brainporteindhoven.com](http://www.brainporteindhoven.com) is designed to attract and retain international talent in the tech and IT sectors and support small and medium-sized enterprises in the region. Key Initiatives:

## Job Board

The Brainport website hosts a job board that lists all tech and IT vacancies in the region. This includes opportunities for both new graduates and experienced professionals. The job board allows users to search for vacancies and provides links to apply directly through the companies' own recruitment platforms.

## Support for SMEs

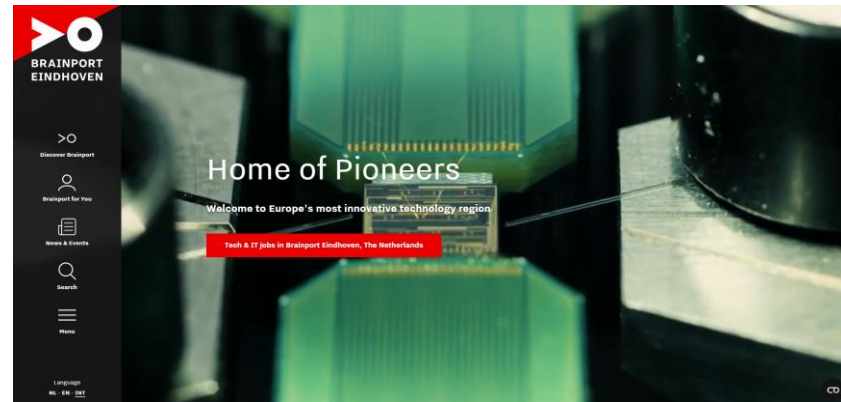
The program actively supports SMEs in attracting and retaining talent. In 2019, the program helped 141 SMEs in this regard.

## International Reach

Outreach, with over 2 million tech professionals and IT specialists targeted worldwide. The website had around 400,000 visits from talent globally, and there were 85,000 clicks on job vacancies.

## Place Branding

The Brainport region is promoted as a hub for groundbreaking technologies and a unique working environment, emphasizing the quality of life, innovation, and opportunities available in the area.



Towards students Brainport is showcasing its innovative educational opportunities, high-tech environment, and extensive support for international learners, making it an attractive destination for higher education.

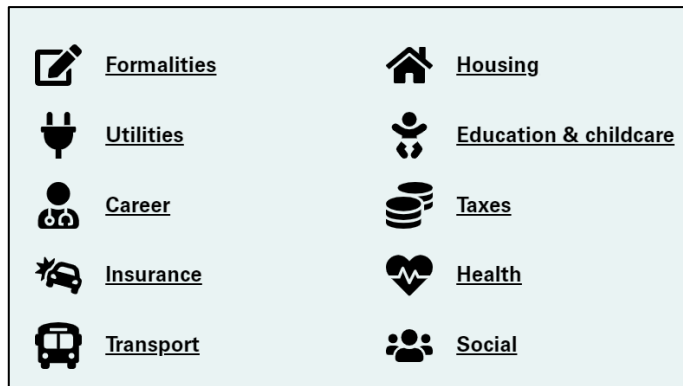
# International Welcome Centres

The Dutch system of international welcome centres has been a global model for providing a soft landing for newcomers, helping to ease the transition and integrate newcomers into the economy and society. The focus is on individuals rather than businesses, although those with startups can access the resources also. Some services are fee-based while others are free.

It provides assistance with paperwork, housing, and settling into the local community.

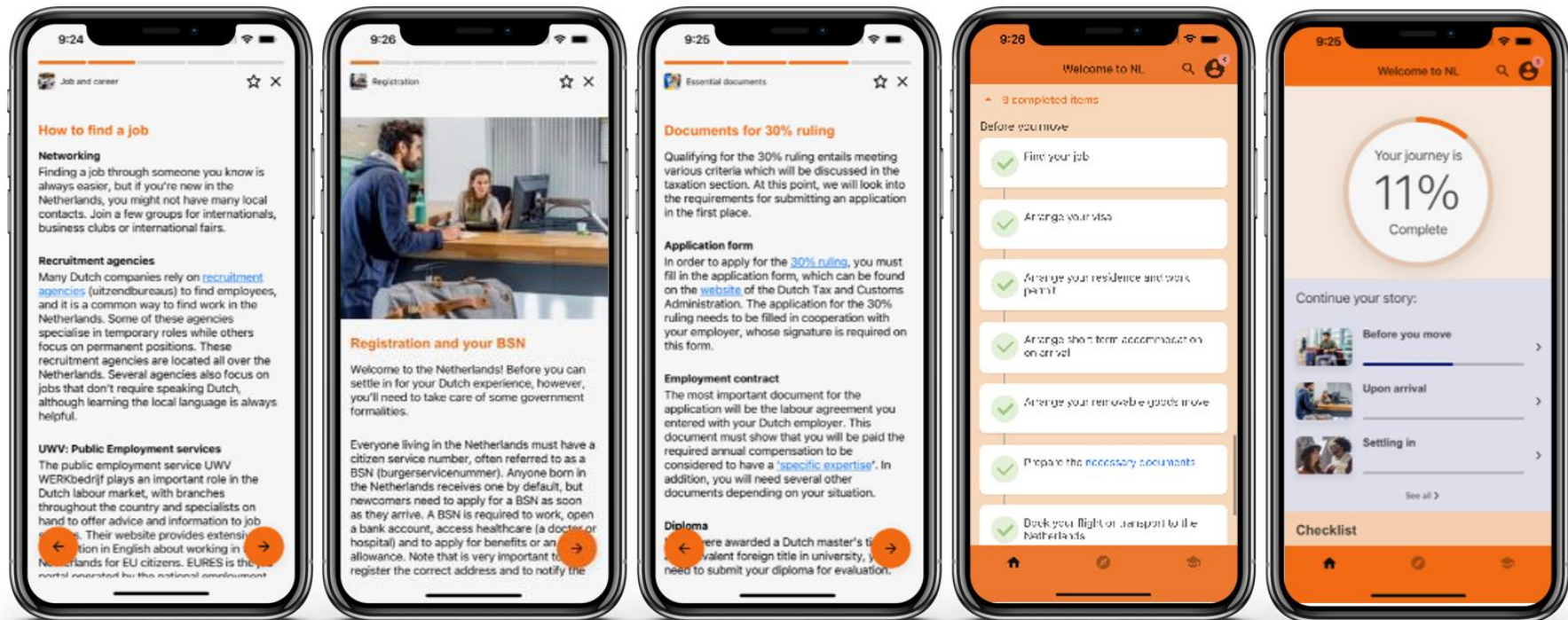
Special programs and resources are available for spouses, helping them find employment, learn the language, and integrate into the local culture.

And they organise events, meetups, and networking opportunities to help expatriates build a social and professional network in the Netherlands.



# Welcome to NL Relocation App

<https://www.welcome-to-nl.nl/immigration/relocation> is a detailed resource that guides newcomers through the process of relocating to the Netherlands. It provides information, links and a “percentage complete” tracker that helps people with required steps before and after relocation. It requires sign-up at the beginning, allowing the government to track usage and interest as well as communicate with registrants.



# By the Numbers

**#28***Score: 58.9*

Tax Competitiveness

[Tax Foundation](#)**#20***Score: 66.5*

Cost of Living Index, 2024

[Numbeo](#)**Native**EF English Proficiency Index,  
2023[EF Education First](#)**#29**

Quality of Living Rank, 2024

[Numbeo](#)**#12**Global Talent Competitiveness  
Index, 2023, [INSEAD](#)**#10**

World Expat Index, 2023

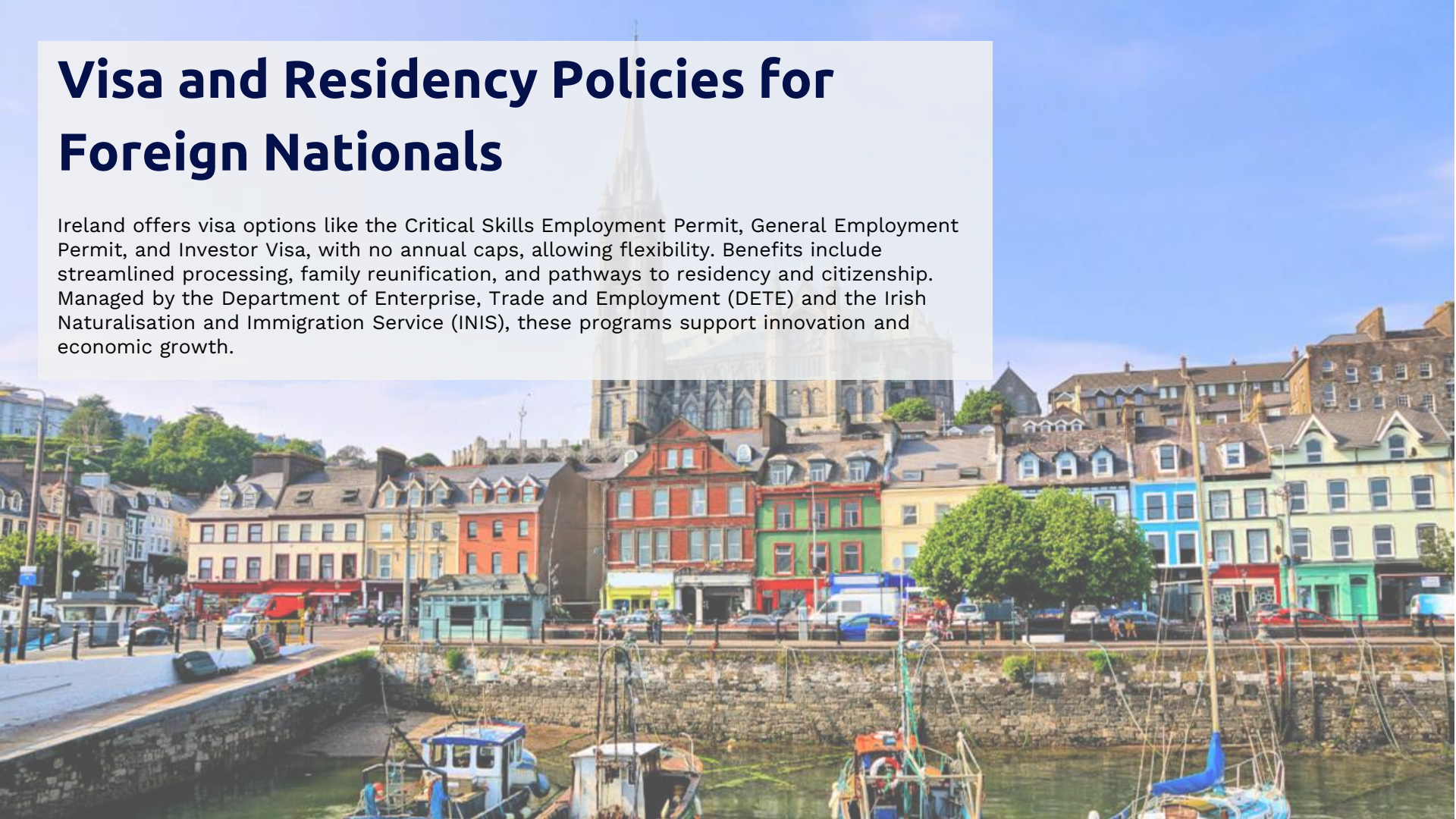
[William-Russell](#)**#39**

Expatriate Country Ranking, 2023

[InterNations](#)**40%**Max Tax Rate  
(Over €84,000)**#12**[OECD Attractiveness](#), Highly  
Skilled Migrants, 2023

# Visa and Residency Policies for Foreign Nationals

Ireland offers visa options like the Critical Skills Employment Permit, General Employment Permit, and Investor Visa, with no annual caps, allowing flexibility. Benefits include streamlined processing, family reunification, and pathways to residency and citizenship. Managed by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (DETE) and the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service (INIS), these programs support innovation and economic growth.



# Baseline Visa Policies

## Short-Term Visas

### C Visa

Ireland offers a Short-Stay Visa (C Visa) for non-EU nationals who wish to visit for up to 90 days for tourism, business, or family visits. Unlike Schengen visas, this visa only allows entry into Ireland and does not permit travel to Schengen Area countries.

### Application Process

Applications are made through Irish consulates and embassies worldwide, and standard documentation includes a valid passport, travel insurance, proof of accommodation, and sufficient financial means.

## Long-Term Visas

### Residence Visa

For stays exceeding 90 days, non-EU nationals must apply for a residence visa, which is a prerequisite for obtaining a residence permit in Ireland.

### Types of Residence Visas

Ireland offers various types of residence visas including Critical Skills Employment Permits and General Employment Permits for work, study visas for educational purposes, family reunification visas for joining resident family members, and other visas for retirees, researchers, and more

### Application Process

Involves submitting an application at the ISD, including a valid passport, criminal record certificate, proof of accommodation, health insurance, and proof of financial means.

# Special Visa Options for Workers

## Critical Skills Employment Permit

### Purpose

Attracts highly skilled professionals to work in Ireland in sectors experiencing labor shortages.

### Eligibility

Job offer in a highly skilled occupation with an annual salary of at least €30,000 or €60,000 depending on qualifications.

### Application Process

Employer or employee applies; required documents include passport, employment contract, and proof of qualifications.

### Benefits

No labor market test, fast processing, family reunification, and path to residency and citizenship.

## General Employment Permit

### Purpose

Allows non-EU nationals to work in various occupations in Ireland.

### Eligibility

Job offer with an annual salary of at least €30,000.

### Application Process

Employer or employee applies; required documents include passport, employment contract, and proof of qualifications.

### Benefits

Broad applicability, potential for family reunification, and path to residency.

## Intra-Company Transfer Permit

### Purpose

Transfer key personnel from overseas branches to Irish branches.

### Eligibility

Job offer from an Irish branch; employee must have 12 months with the company.

### Application Process

Employer applies; required documents include passport and employment contract.

### Benefits

Streamlined transfer process, no labor market test, potential path to residency.

## Investor Visa

### Purpose

Gain residency through significant investment in Ireland.

### Eligibility

Investment in Irish enterprise, investment funds, REITs, or endowment.

### Application Process

Investor applies; required documents include passport and proof of investment.

### Benefits

Residency for investor and family, no residency requirement, path to citizenship.



# Expatriate-Friendly Policies

Ireland offers a range of expat-friendly policies aimed at attracting and retaining international professionals. These policies provide significant tax incentives, support for housing and transport, and favorable conditions for healthcare.



# Special Assignee Relief Program (SARP)

The Special Assignee Relief Program (SARP) offers significant tax relief by reducing income tax on up to 30% of an assignee's salary above €75,000 for expatriates working in Ireland, available to those arriving before 31 December 2025.

## **Purpose**

Provides income tax relief for employees assigned to work in Ireland by a relevant employer.

## **Eligibility**

Available to individuals who are assigned to work in Ireland for a minimum of 12 months by a company that is tax-resident in a country with which Ireland has a double taxation agreement.

## **Benefits**

Reduces the employee's income tax liability on up to 30% of their salary over €75,000. The relief has been extended to those arriving before 31 December 2025.

# The Start-up Entrepreneur Program (STEP)

The Start-up Entrepreneur Program (STEP) is designed to facilitate the establishment and growth of innovative businesses in Ireland by non-EEA nationals. It aims to attract entrepreneurs with a viable business idea and funding to create jobs and contribute to the Irish economy.

## Eligibility

- The program is available to non-EEA nationals who have an innovative business idea in a high-potential sector. Applicants must have:
- A minimum funding of €50,000.
- A viable business plan that demonstrates the potential to create at least 10 jobs and achieve €1 million in sales within 3-4 years.
- The applicant must be able to prove that they have access to the required funding.

## Benefits

- Successful applicants receive a residence permission for up to two years, which can be renewed.
- Access to Ireland's vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem and business networks.
- The possibility of long-term residency in Ireland if the business succeeds and meets the program's criteria.
- Opportunity to establish a business in an EU member state, with benefits such as ease of travel within the EU.

# Investor Visa

The Immigrant Investor Programme (IIP), often referred to as the Investor Visa, aims to attract non-EU investors by offering residency in exchange for significant investments in Ireland. This program provides multiple investment routes to qualify.

## Eligibility

1. Enterprise Investment: Minimum investment of €1 million in an Irish enterprise for at least three years.
2. Investment Fund: Minimum investment of €1 million in an approved investment fund.
3. Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs): Minimum investment of €2 million in any Irish REIT listed on the Irish Stock Exchange.
4. Endowment: Minimum donation of €500,000 to a project in the arts, sports, health, culture, or education field.

## Benefits

1. Residency: Offers residency for the investor and their immediate family.
2. Freedom of Movement: Allows visa-free travel within the Common Travel Area (CTA), which includes Ireland and the United Kingdom.
3. Permanent Residency and Citizenship: Eligible for long-term residency after five years and citizenship after five years of residency, provided the investment is maintained.

# Talent Attraction Initiatives

Ireland has implemented strategic initiatives to attract international talent, particularly in technology and entrepreneurship. Key programs are supported by IDA Ireland, Enterprise Ireland and Tech/Life Ireland. These initiatives enhance Ireland's appeal by offering business support, job portals, and streamlined immigration processes. They promote Ireland's tech industry, business environment, and high quality of life, positioning the country as an attractive destination for global professionals.



# Place Branding Initiatives

[www.ireland.com](http://www.ireland.com) is an initiative that, while primarily focused on tourism, also contributes to the place branding efforts that make Ireland an attractive destination for potential residents and workers. This initiative highlights Ireland's rich cultural heritage, stunning landscapes, and vibrant cities, thereby enhancing its appeal to expatriates and international talent.

## Cultural Promotion

The initiative promotes Ireland's cultural events, historical sites, and natural beauty, encouraging people to experience the country's unique offerings.

## Quality of Life

By showcasing Ireland's high quality of life, the initiative supports broader efforts to attract not just tourists, but also long-term residents and professionals considering relocation.



**FB** (73K follower)

**IG** (771K)

**Pinterest** (28.9K)

**Twitter** (16.3K)

# Tech/Life Ireland

[www.techlifeireland.com](http://www.techlifeireland.com) provides resources and information about the tech industry in Ireland, such as highlighting companies that are hiring, industry insights, and general guidance on moving to and living in Ireland. It is supported by Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland.

## Information on Tech Companies

The site provides profiles and stories about various tech companies in Ireland, offering insights into what it's like to work there and the types of opportunities available.

## Living in Ireland

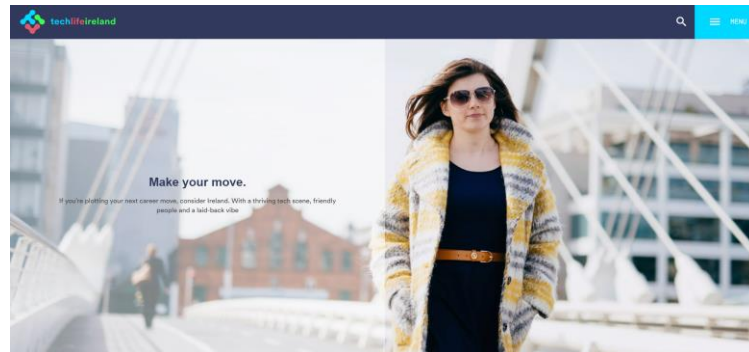
Detailed sections on the quality of life, places to live, and practical aspects of moving to Ireland, such as finding accommodation, understanding the healthcare system, and educational options.

## Industry Insights and Stories

The site shares success stories of tech professionals who have moved to Ireland, providing personal perspectives on the working and living conditions. It also covers trends and demands in the tech sector, like the most in-demand skills and roles.

## Practical Guides

Comprehensive guides on immigration, including details on visa and employment permit processes, aimed at making the transition to Ireland smoother for tech professionals.



Besides informational and educational content Tech/Life Ireland does not feature a job board.

# By the Numbers

**#4***Score: 84.7*

Tax Competitiveness

[Tax Foundation](#)**#2***Score: 112.2*

Cost of Living Index, 2024

[Numbeo](#)**#30**EF English Proficiency Index,  
2023[EF Education First](#)**#7**

Quality of Living Rank, 2024

[Numbeo](#)**#1**Global Talent Competitiveness  
Index, 2023, [INSEAD](#)**#4**

World Expat Index, 2023

[William-Russell](#)**#8**

Expatriate Country Ranking, 2023

[InterNations](#)**11.50%**Max Tax Rate  
(Over €788,000)**#3**[OECD Attractiveness](#), Highly  
Skilled Migrants, 2023



# Visa and Residency Policies for Foreign Nationals

Switzerland offers visa options such as the Schengen Visa for short stays, Student Visa, Work Visa, and Family Reunification Visa, each catering to different needs and allowing flexibility. Benefits include access to high-quality education, employment opportunities, and pathways to residency and citizenship. Managed by the State Secretariat for Migration (SEM) and cantonal migration offices, these programs support Switzerland's economic growth and innovation.



# Baseline Visa Policies

## Short-Term Visas

### Schengen Visa

Switzerland, as part of the Schengen Area, allows non-EU nationals to enter Switzerland for short stays (up to 90 days) for tourism, business, or family visits with a Schengen Visa.

### Application Process

Applications are made through Swiss consulates and embassies worldwide. Standard documentation includes a valid passport, travel insurance, proof of accommodation, and sufficient financial means.

## Long-Term Visas

### Residence Visa

For stays exceeding 90 days, non-EU nationals must apply for a residence visa. This visa is a prerequisite for obtaining a residence permit.

### Types of Residence Visas

Includes work visas, study visas, family reunification visas, and others.

### Application Process

Involves submitting an application at the Swiss consulate, including a valid passport, criminal record certificate, proof of accommodation, health insurance, and proof of financial means.

# Special Visa Options for Workers

## Permit B (Resident Foreign Nationals)

### Purpose

Allows foreign nationals to reside in Switzerland for an extended period, typically for employment, education, or family reunification.

### Employment

Requires a job offer from a Swiss employer.

### Education

Enrollment in a Swiss educational institution.

### Family Reunification

Spouses and children of Swiss citizens or B permit holders.

### Application Process

Submit an application to the cantonal migration offices.

### Required documents

Valid passport, employment contract or proof of enrollment, proof of financial means, and health insurance.

### Benefits

Valid for one year and renewable annually.

## Permit L (Short-term Residents)

### Purpose

For temporary residence in Switzerland, often linked to short-term employment contracts or internships.

### Employment

Requires a short-term job offer from a Swiss employer. Internships or traineeships.

### Application Process

Submit an application to the cantonal migration offices.

### Required documents

Valid passport, short-term employment contract or internship agreement, proof of financial means, and health insurance.

### Benefits

Valid for up to one year and can be extended for an additional year.

## Permit G (Cross-border Commuter Permit)

### Purpose

Allows individuals residing in neighboring countries (EU/EFTA states) to work in Switzerland while returning to their residence abroad at least once a week.

### Eligibility

Must be a resident of an EU/EFTA country. Must have a valid employment contract in Switzerland. For non-EU/EFTA nationals, permanent residence in the neighboring country for at least six months is required.

### Process

Applications must be submitted to the cantonal authorities where the employment is located.

### Required documents

Valid passport, employment contract, and proof of residence in the neighboring country.

### Benefits

Valid for up to five years if the employment contract is indefinite or exceeds one year. For contracts less than a year but more than three months, the permit's validity matches the contract duration.

# Permit G (Cross-border Commuter Permit)

\*Additional commentary

There are no direct marketing campaigns promoting cross-border commute work in Switzerland. However, particularly in the context of teleworking agreements with neighboring countries policies have been put in place:

1. France: A notable permanent agreement between Switzerland and France allows cross-border workers to perform up to 40% of their work remotely from home without affecting their tax status. This arrangement, effective from January 1, 2023, benefits over 200,000 employees, making it easier for them to maintain their cross-border status while enjoying flexible working conditions. This initiative is heavily promoted to enhance cross-border telecommuting and maintain economic ties between the two nations ([Swissinfo](#)) ([ThinkRemote](#)).
2. Italy and Germany: Similar agreements have been extended with Italy and Germany. For instance, the agreement with Italy, starting from January 2024, permits cross-border workers to telework for up to 25% of their total working time without changing their social security affiliations. Germany has also extended its temporary agreement allowing cross-border workers to telework up to 40% of their time without tax implications ([KMU.admin](#)) ([EY US](#)).
3. EU/EFTA Framework: Switzerland participates in a broader multilateral agreement within the EU and EFTA, which allows cross-border workers to telework up to 49.9% of their working time without affecting their social security contributions. This agreement, which includes countries like France, Germany, Austria, and others, aims to simplify the administrative burden and enhance the flexibility for cross-border employees and their employers ([EY US](#)).

These agreements and the associated marketing campaigns highlight Switzerland's commitment to facilitating cross-border work, promoting economic integration, and attracting skilled talent. However, challenges remain, such as ensuring compliance with varying tax and social security regulations and managing the administrative complexities associated with cross-border teleworking ([KMU.admin](#)) ([Zurich Insurances](#)).

# Expatriate-Friendly Policies

Switzerland offers a range of expatriate-friendly policies designed to attract high-net-worth individuals and entrepreneurs. Key programs include the Swiss Residence Program, which allows foreigners to obtain residency through significant financial investments, and the Startup Visa, encouraging entrepreneurs to establish innovative businesses in the country. Additionally, Switzerland provides attractive tax benefits, such as lump-sum taxation for wealthy expatriates and various deductions for work-related expenses.



# Swiss Residence Program

Allows foreign nationals to obtain Swiss residence through significant financial investment in Switzerland.

## Eligibility

- Must make a substantial financial investment in the Swiss economy, typically involving setting up a business or making significant investments.
- The specific amount and type of investment can vary depending on the canton.

## Application Process

- Submit an application to the cantonal authorities where the investment will be made.
- Required documents include a valid passport, detailed business plan or investment proposal, proof of financial means, and health insurance.

## Benefits

- Residence permit for the investor and their family.
- Access to Switzerland's high-quality healthcare, education, and social services.
- The possibility of long-term residency and eventual citizenship if certain conditions are met.

# Lump-Sum Taxation

Offers a favorable tax regime for wealthy foreigners wishing to reside in Switzerland without engaging in gainful employment.

## Eligibility

- Primarily aimed at retirees or individuals who do not seek employment in Switzerland.
- Requires individuals to have a substantial net worth and be willing to pay taxes based on their living expenses rather than income or assets.

## Application Process

- Submit an application to the cantonal tax authorities.
- Required documents include a valid passport, proof of financial means, and a detailed declaration of global assets and income.

## Benefits

- Taxes are assessed based on estimated living expenses in Switzerland, typically resulting in lower tax liabilities.
- Access to Switzerland's high-quality healthcare, education, and social services.
- Simplified tax reporting requirements.

# Business Investment

Encourages entrepreneurs to obtain residence permits by investing in Swiss businesses and creating jobs.

## Eligibility

- Must invest a significant amount of capital in a Swiss business.
- The investment should create jobs and contribute positively to the local economy.
- Specific investment thresholds and requirements may vary by canton.

## Application Process

- Submit an application to the cantonal economic development agency.
- Required documents include a valid passport, detailed business plan, proof of investment, and evidence of job creation.

## Benefits

- Residence permit for the investor and their family.
- Access to Switzerland's vibrant business environment and economic stability.
- Potential for long-term residency and eventual citizenship if the business succeeds and meets the program's criteria.



# Talent Attraction Initiatives

Switzerland talent attraction strategies are aimed at drawing highly skilled professionals from around the world. Central to these efforts is the platform [ch.ch](https://www.ch.ch), which serves as a comprehensive resource for both potential and current residents. Ch.ch provides detailed information on various aspects of living and working in Switzerland, including immigration policies, work permits, and integration support.



# Work in Switzerland

[www.ch.ch](http://www.ch.ch) is a key initiative to attract and support international professionals, providing resources for SMEs, and extensive integration support. By offering information about Switzerland's high quality of life and robust professional opportunities, it positions the country as a top destination for global talent.

## Support for SMEs

Provides resources to help SMEs attract and retain talent, including legal guidance and integration strategies.

## Place Branding

Highlights Switzerland's high quality of life, excellent healthcare, education system, and political stability through multimedia content and expatriate testimonials.

## Integration Support

Offers detailed guides on permits, residency, language courses, and community resources to help expatriates integrate smoothly.

## Educational Resources

Information on educational opportunities, including Swiss schools and vocational training programs, promoting lifelong learning and professional development.

The screenshot shows the 'ch.ch' website interface. At the top, it says 'Easy answers about life in Switzerland'. Below that, there are navigation links for 'All themes' and 'Foreign nationals in Switzerland'. The main heading is 'Working in Switzerland as a foreign national'. A sub-heading states: 'Most foreign nationals require a permit to work in Switzerland. The procedure for obtaining a permit depends on your nationality and type of employment.' At the bottom of the page, there is a logo for 'Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft' and 'Confédération suisse' with the text 'A service of the Confederation, cantons and communes'. On the right side, there is a search bar and a list of expandable sections: 'Citizens of EU/EFTA member states', 'UK nationals', 'Non-EU/EFTA nationals', 'Remember to take out insurance', and 'Further information', each with a plus sign.

Purely informative and does not provide active help to match talent with jobs in Switzerland.

# By the Numbers

**#19***Score: 66.5*

Tax Competitiveness

[Tax Foundation](#)**#22***Score: 65.5*

Cost of Living Index, 2024

[Numbeo](#)**#14**EF English Proficiency Index,  
2023[EF Education First](#)**#5**

Quality of Living Rank, 2024

[Numbeo](#)**#6**Global Talent Competitiveness  
Index, 2023, [INSEAD](#)**#3**

World Expat Index, 2023

[William-Russell](#)**#16**

Expatriate Country Ranking, 2023

[InterNations](#)**44%**Max Tax Rate  
(Over €150,000)**#14**[OECD Attractiveness](#), Highly  
Skilled Migrants, 2023

# Visa and Residency Policies for Foreign Nationals

Finland offers various visa options for skilled workers: the Residence Permit for a Specialist for highly skilled professionals, the Residence Permit for an Employed Person for those with job offers, the EU Blue Card for highly qualified professionals, the Start-up Entrepreneur permit for innovators evaluated by Business Finland, and the Intra-Corporate Transferee (ICT) Permit for internal company transfers. These visas aim to attract global talent and support economic growth through skilled labor and innovation.



# Baseline Visa Policies

## Short-Term Visas

### Schengen Visa

Finland, as part of the Schengen Area, allows non-EU nationals to enter Finland for short stays (up to 90 days) for tourism, business, or family visits with a Schengen Visa.

### Application Process

Applications are made through Finnish consulates and embassies worldwide. Standard documentation includes a valid passport, travel insurance, proof of accommodation, and sufficient financial means.

## Long-Term Visas

### Residence Visa

For stays exceeding 90 days, non-EU nationals must apply for a residence visa. This visa is a prerequisite for obtaining a residence permit.

### Types of Residence Visas

Includes work visas, study visas, family reunification visas, and others.

### Application Process

Involves submitting an application at the Finnish consulate, including a valid passport, criminal record certificate, proof of accommodation, health insurance, and proof of financial means.

# Special Visa Options for Workers

## Specialist Residence Permit

### Purpose

For highly skilled workers coming to Finland to perform expert duties requiring special expertise.

### Eligibility

- Must have a higher education degree or equivalent professional experience.
- Confirmed job offer with a minimum salary of EUR 3,638 per month in 2024.

### Application Process

- Apply through the Finnish Immigration Service.
- The permit can be applied for via the fast-track service, allowing approval within two weeks if all requirements are met.
- Required documents include proof of employment, educational qualifications, and other necessary documents.

### Benefits

- Valid for up to two years.
- Allows for quick processing through the fast-track option.
- Eligible for a D visa to facilitate immediate travel to Finland upon issuance.

## Employment Residence Permit (TTOL)

### Purpose

For individuals who have found employment in Finland.

### Eligibility

- Must meet specific qualifications and income requirements.
- The employer must verify the professional skills needed for the job.
- Salary must meet the minimum specified in the relevant collective agreement or be at least EUR 1,399 per month if no agreement exists.

### Application Process

- Apply through the Finnish Immigration Service.
- Required documents include terms of employment filled out by the employer, proof of qualifications, and other necessary documents.

### Benefits

- The permit allows working in Finland for the duration of the employment contract.
- The right to work may be unrestricted or restricted depending on the terms of the permit.
- Eligible to bring family members under certain conditions.

## Start-up Entrepreneur

### Purpose

For entrepreneurs planning to establish a start-up in Finland.

### Eligibility

- Must have a start-up plan evaluated and positively assessed by Business Finland.
- The business plan should be innovative and capable of international growth.

### Application Process

- First, receive a positive assessment from Business Finland.
- Then, apply for the residence permit through the Finnish Immigration Service with the necessary documents, including the business plan and proof of funding.

### Benefits

- Facilitates the establishment of innovative start-ups in Finland.
- Allows for residence in Finland for the duration of the business establishment and operation.

# Special Visa Options for Workers

## Intra-Corporate Transferee (ICT)

### Purpose

For employees being transferred within the same company to work in managerial, specialist, or trainee roles in Finland.

### Eligibility

- Must be a manager, specialist, or trainee employee.
- Valid employment contract within the same company for the transfer.

### Application Process

Apply through the Finnish Immigration Service with necessary documents, including the intra-corporate transfer agreement and proof of employment.

### Benefits

- Allows for work in Finland and possibly other EU countries under specific conditions.
- Valid for the duration of the transfer, typically up to three years.

## EU Blue Card

### Purpose

For highly qualified employment in Finland.

### Eligibility

Must have a higher education qualification. Job offer with a salary at least 1.5 times the average gross annual salary in Finland.

### Application Process

- Apply through the Finnish Immigration Service.
- Required documents include proof of qualifications, employment contract, and other necessary documents.

### Benefits

- Valid for up to two years.
- Easier access to other EU countries for work.
- Allows for family reunification under specific conditions.

# Expatriate-Friendly Policies

Finland offers attractive policies and benefits for expats, including comprehensive social welfare, progressive tax benefits, and residence permits for investors and entrepreneurs. Expats enjoy equal rights in the workplace, extensive healthcare coverage, and various tax deductions and credits to reduce their tax burden. For investors, the Start-up Entrepreneur visa supports innovative business ventures. These features make Finland an appealing destination for skilled professionals and business investors alike.





# Investor Visas

Finland offers several residence permits for investors and entrepreneurs, aimed at encouraging business investment and innovation in the country.

## Investor Visa

### Purpose

For individuals who want to invest in a business in Finland.

### Eligibility

Applicants must be aged 21 to 60, have at least a bachelor's degree, a clean criminal record, and at least three years of experience in their field. The minimum investment required is EUR 350,000.

### Application Process

Submit an application with a business plan to the Finnish Immigration Service. The business plan will be assessed for profitability by the Center for Economic Development, Transport, and the Environment.

## Residence Visa for Entrepreneurs

### Purpose

For individuals intending to start or run a business in Finland.

### Eligibility

Applicants must register their business in the Trade Register and prove that their business operations will be profitable. This permit is available for private entrepreneurs, partners in a general partnership, general partners in a limited partnership, and shareholders in managerial positions in a limited-liability company who own at least 30% of the company.

### Application Process

The application is processed in two stages: first by the ELY Centre and then by the Finnish Immigration Service.

# Foreign Expert Tax Regime

The foreign expert tax regime provides a flat tax rate of 32% on Finnish-source salary income for those foreign employees whose work requires special knowledge and who would be otherwise taxed at the normal progressive tax rates applicable to resident individuals.

## **Purpose**

To attract highly skilled international experts to work in Finland.

## **Eligibility**

- The cash salary is at least EUR 5,800 in each month during the validity period.
- Cannot be applied if the person has been resident in Finland within the last five calendar years preceding the commencement of working in Finland.

## **Benefits**

- The foreign expert tax regime is applicable for a maximum period of 84 months; after that period, the salary is taxed according to the normal rules. This change went into effect as of 1 January 2024; the previous maximum period was 48 months.

# Talent Attraction Initiatives

Finland's talent attraction initiatives include the Talent Boost Program, which aims to attract and retain international talent by enhancing Finland's appeal and supporting integration into the labor market through collaboration with cities, public actors, and businesses. Work in Finland, managed by Business Finland, promotes Finland as an attractive work destination and aids companies in recruiting and integrating international professionals. Additionally, Regional Talent Hubs offer localized support, resources, and networking opportunities to help international professionals settle in specific regions, working closely with local universities, businesses, and municipalities.



# Work in Finland

[www.workinfinland.com](http://www.workinfinland.com) is a strategic initiative designed to attract and support international professionals by providing a comprehensive job portal and extensive integration support. It highlights Finland's high quality of life and robust professional opportunities, positioning the country as a top destination for global talent.

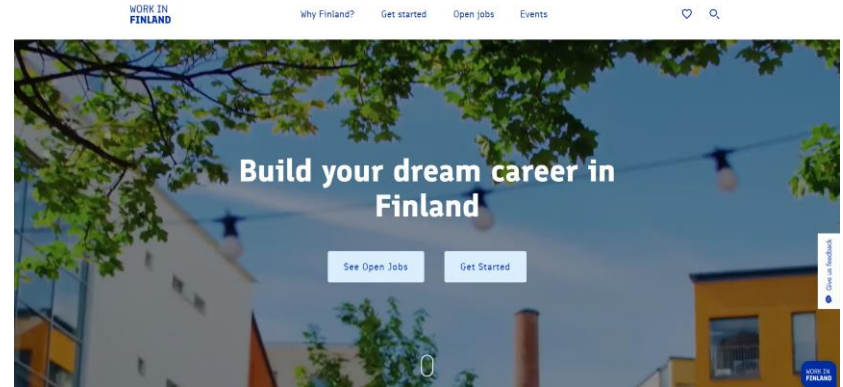
## Job Portal

Provides a dedicated job board for English-speaking professionals, allowing users to create profiles on Job Market Finland, receive tailored job recommendations, and connect with potential employers.

Links to additional job portals such as Duunitori, Oikotie, and Rekrytointi.com to broaden job search options.

## Integration Support

Offers detailed guides on permits, residency, language courses, and community resources to help expatriates integrate smoothly. Provides resources to navigate Finnish bureaucracy, find accommodation, and access healthcare and educational services.



Work in Finland is an initiative by Business Finland

# Talent Boost

<https://tem.fi/en/talent-boost-en> is a national initiative managed by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Culture. It aims to attract, integrate, and retain international talent in Finland to address labour market needs and boost economic growth.

## Objective

Enhance Finland's appeal to international professionals, streamline residence permit processes, and support the integration of foreign workers into the Finnish labor market.

## Key Measures

Attractiveness: Promoting Finland's high quality of life, robust professional opportunities, and strong education system to international talent.

## Residence Permit Processes

Ensuring easy and effective permit procedures to facilitate the immigration of skilled workers.

Retention: Developing strategies to retain international professionals by improving integration services and combating work-based exploitation.

## Integration Support

Offers comprehensive resources and guidance on permits, residency, language courses, and community resources to help expatriates integrate smoothly into Finnish society.

## Collaborative Efforts

Works with cities, higher education institutions, companies, and other stakeholders to create a supportive environment for international talent.



# Key Points from Top Performers

1

Special visas or highly-skilled migrant options are a common solution to fast-track acceptance of skilled internationals.

2

Special tax regimes are a competitive enhancement that has been used by most of these countries to increase appeal.

3

Dutch system of welcome centres are a model for talent reception and integration, which are spreading to other countries.

4

Most have dedicated live-work websites to inform about procedures and connect individuals to job opportunities.

5

Place branding initiatives are common in this cohort, either at the national or regional levels.





# **Learnings from Other Relevant Countries**

# By the Numbers

**#27***Score: 60*

Tax Competitiveness

[Tax Foundation](#)**#28***Score: 63*

Cost of Living Index, 2024

[Numbeo](#)**#7**EF English Proficiency Index,  
2023[EF Education First](#)**#27**

Quality of Living Rank, 2024

[Numbeo](#)**#16**Global Talent Competitiveness  
Index, 2023, [INSEAD](#)**#31**

World Expat Index, 2023

[William-Russell](#)**#38**

Expatriate Country Ranking, 2023

[InterNations](#)**50%**Max Tax Rate  
(Over €46,440)**#18**[OECD Attractiveness](#), Highly  
Skilled Migrants, 2023



# Where Belgium is Succeeding And Where It Is Not

## Strengths

- Belgium rates highly for English proficiency and is in the Top 20 in the GTCI and OECD's attractiveness.
- The nation offers specific visas for entrepreneurs and start-ups, encouraging innovation and business development (Belgium Entrepreneur Visa). These visas often come with additional support such as access to business networks and funding opportunities.

## Weaknesses

- Belgium is in the middle of the pack for most major data points, with only one Top 10 ranking (English proficiency).
- It has one of the highest tax rates in Europe at 50%. A relatively new expat tax regime was introduced as of 1 January 2022, which could help offset this.
- Belgian's nation brand isn't overly strong, but solid. Worldwide it ranks No. 19 and No. 23 in the [Ipsos](#) and [Brand Finance](#) nation brand indices, respectfully.
- There is no significant nation-wide talent attraction effort to share jobs or lifestyle information to non-EU workers.

## Weaknesses

- Belgium's federal structure means that responsibilities are divided between the federal government, regional governments (Flanders, Wallonia, and Brussels), and community governments (French, Dutch, and German-speaking). This results in multiple regulatory frameworks and complex administrative processes, something on which Belgium ranked poorly in the GTCI.

# Professional Card

The Professional Card Visa in Belgium offers non-EEA nationals the opportunity to establish a self-employed business in the country, provided they can demonstrate significant economic, innovative, or cultural value.

## Eligibility

- Must be non-EEA nationals with a valid right of residence.
- Must demonstrate compliance with regulatory obligations.
- Self-employed activity must fit into one of these categories:
  - Economic added value (classic business)
  - Innovative added value
  - Sporting, cultural, or artistic added value

## Application Process

- Apply at the Belgian consulate or an authorized enterprise counter.
- Submit necessary documents, including a business plan and criminal record extract.
- Pay the applicable fees.

## Benefits

- Allows individuals to establish and operate a business in Belgium.
- Initial visa period of two years.
- Possibility of extension based on compliance and economic contribution.

# New Expat Tax Regime

Belgium's new expat tax regime offers tax benefits and allowances for foreign employees and self-employed individuals relocating to Belgium for work.

## Eligibility

- Employees or company directors recruited directly from abroad or through a foreign company.
- Must not have had any link with Belgium for at least 60 months prior to employment start.
- Minimum annual gross remuneration of EUR 75,000.
- Must hold a relevant master's or doctoral degree, or have at least 10 years of professional experience, and devote at least 80% of working time to research activities.

## Application Process

- Application must be initiated by the employer or the self-employed individual.
- Submission of necessary documents, including employment contract, proof of salary, and non-residency status.
- Application must be submitted within a specific period after the start of employment in Belgium (typically within six months).

## Benefits

- Employers can provide a tax-free expense allowance of up to 30% of the gross remuneration, capped at EUR 90,000 per year.
- Certain expenses such as relocation, furnishing, and school fees can be reimbursed tax-free.
- Five-year validity period, extendable by three years under specific conditions.
- Not tied to a specific employer, allowing continuity if the expat changes jobs within Belgium.

# By the Numbers

## #30

Score: 56.1

Tax Competitiveness

[Tax Foundation](#)

## #27

Score: 63.7

Cost of Living Index, 2024

[Numbeo](#)

## Native

EF English Proficiency Index,  
2023

[EF Education First](#)

## #26

Quality of Living Rank, 2024

[Numbeo](#)

## #10

Global Talent Competitiveness  
Index, 2023, [INSEAD](#)

## #40

World Expat Index, 2023

[William-Russell](#)

## #43

Expatriate Country Ranking, 2023

[InterNations](#)

## 45%

Max Tax Rate  
(Over £125,140)

## #7

[OECD Attractiveness](#), Highly  
Skilled Migrants, 2023

# Where UK is Succeeding And Where It Is Not

## Strengths

- UK is home to the world's leading universities, such as Oxford, Cambridge, and Imperial College London, which attract top students & researchers.
- The Global Talent Visa is designed to attract leaders or potential leaders in academia, research, arts, and digital technology. It offers a streamlined process and fewer restrictions.
- UK offers several employment visas to keep it competitive with other countries in Europe and prioritize critical areas of need.
- London – it's a global city with the world's No. 1 city brand. This drives a majority of demand.

## Weaknesses

- The cost of visas and the Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS) are significantly high, making the UK a less attractive option for many skilled professionals, particularly those from less affluent countries. The UK's visa requirements have been changed to restrict the number of people coming to the UK.
- The process for obtaining and renewing residence permits is seen as overly complex and bureaucratic. This complexity can deter expatriates from settling in the UK long-term.
- UK has a high tax rate, but no additional scheme for internationals to appeal to those coming from lower tax regimes.

## Weaknesses

- The [Global Talent Network](#) is a nation-wide talent attraction effort by UK DBT to attract high-skilled workers but is yet to fully take shape.
- UK remains with a long-term positive perception and place brand, but highly visible issues with politics and healthcare have presented obstacles in recent years. Net migration to the UK fell 10% last year (685K) after hitting a record high in 2022 (764K).
- The high cost of living (mostly in London) can be a deterrent, combined with relatively low salaries compared to countries like the U.S. or other high-income EU countries.

# Global Talent Visa

The Global Talent Visa in the UK allows leaders or potential leaders in academia, research, arts, culture, and digital technology to work in the UK, supporting the country's innovation and economic growth.

## Eligibility

Must be endorsed by a recognized UK body with a proven track record of leadership or potential in one's field, or holding an eligible award can sometimes bypass the endorsement process.

## Application Process

Apply for endorsement from a designated body. Once endorsed, apply for the visa online, providing necessary documents and paying the fee. Submit biometric information & wait for the visa decision.

## Benefits

Flexibility to work for any employer, switch jobs, or be self-employed. It provides a pathway to permanent residency after 3 or 5 years, the ability to bring family members to the UK, and does not require a job offer or sponsorship.

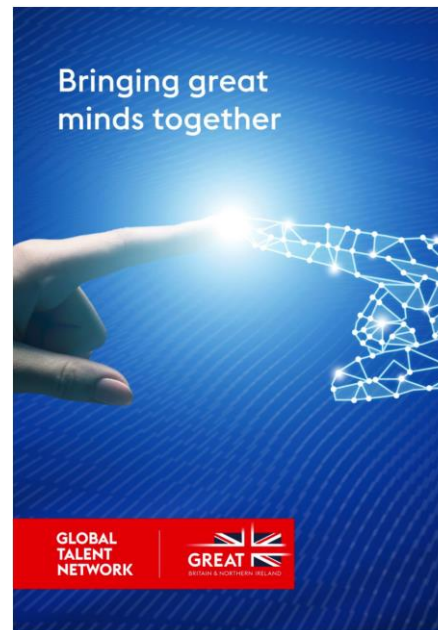
# Global Talent Network

The Global Talent Network is an international community of skilled professionals interested in working in priority science and technology roles in the UK. The network connects top international talent with employers, provides information about moving to and living in the UK, and assists individuals in navigating the UK's diverse visa options.

## Who Can Benefit?

The programme supports individuals in India and the USA who are interested in working in the UK's AI, Quantum, and Life Sciences sectors and have:

- A proven track record in technical AI roles (e.g., data scientists, data analysts, developers, research engineers, machine learning engineers).
- A PhD in quantum technologies and related fields, including quantum computing architecture, software control, algorithms, electronics, and photonics.
- The commercial and fundraising skills and experience to support innovative life sciences and healthcare companies in scaling up.



Global Talent Network members a range of support and advice, helping them to plan a move to the UK.

# By the Numbers

**#38***Score: 48.4*

Tax Competitiveness

[Tax Foundation](#)**#32***Score: 58.9*

Cost of Living Index, 2024

[Numbeo](#)**#35**EF English Proficiency Index,  
2023[EF Education First](#)**#40**

Quality of Living Rank, 2024

[Numbeo](#)**#32**Global Talent Competitiveness  
Index, 2023, [INSEAD](#)**#37**

World Expat Index, 2023

[William-Russell](#)**#47**

Expatriate Country Ranking, 2023

[InterNations](#)**43%**Max Tax Rate  
(Over €50,001)**#31**[OECD Attractiveness](#), Highly  
Skilled Migrants, 2023



# Where Italy is Succeeding And Where It Is Not

## Strengths

- Italy has several specialised visa programmes aimed at attracting high-value residents from abroad, particularly around research and entrepreneurs.
- Italy has among one of the lowest tax rates compared to the other countries in this assessment. Additionally, the Italian government has made changes to the special tax regime that will come into effect in 2024.
- Italy is culturally rich and has a strong place brand, rating 5<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> in the Ipsos and Brand Finance indices, respectively.

## Weaknesses

- Italy doesn't rank above 31 on any of the key indicators, resulting in a hurdles to overall attractiveness and competitiveness for talent.
- Italy does not have comprehensive and well-publicized talent attraction programs compared to other European countries. There is limited support and funding for start-ups and innovation compared to other European countries.
- The lack of English proficiency and preference for Italian in the workplace can be an obstacle to global attraction.

## Weaknesses

- Persistent economic challenges, including slow GDP growth and high public debt, create uncertainty and reduce economic dynamism that is often attractive to internationals.
- Complex and time-consuming administrative procedures for visas and residence permits deter talent.

# Special Tax Regime

The tax regime for new residents is dedicated to individuals transferring their residence to Italy and envisages a substitute tax on their foreign income. This beneficial regime aims at enhancing investments and attracting to Italy high-net-worth individuals.

## Eligibility

Taxpayers are eligible to benefit from the special tax regime if they meet the following conditions:

- They qualify as non-tax resident in Italy for at least three years (instead of the previous two years) prior to transferring to Italy.
- They commit to stay in Italy for at least four years (instead of the previous two years) and to work mainly in the territory of Italy.
- Move to Italy to work for an Italian or foreign company, with their work primarily conducted in Italy.

## Benefits

- Tax Exemption: 70% of taxable income is exempt from taxes for five years, extendable to ten years if specific conditions are met, such as purchasing a residential property or having dependent children.
- Higher Exemption in Southern Regions: For those relocating to specific southern regions like Abruzzo, Molise, Campania, Puglia, Basilicata, Calabria, Sardinia, or Sicily, the exemption increases to 90%.
- Extended Benefits: Additional exemptions apply if the expat has dependent children or buys a home, promoting long-term settlement in Italy.

# Special Visa Options for Workers

## Self-Employed Visa

### **Purpose**

Allows individuals to establish and run their own business within the country.

### **Eligibility**

Certificate of No Impediment (Nulla Osta) from the Italian authorities, a viable business plan, and financial resources.

### **Application Process**

Securing the Nulla Osta, submitting the visa application online or at the Italian consulate, providing necessary documentation, paying fees, and completing biometric data submission.

### **Benefits**

Ability to operate a business, access to the EU market, and the possibility to bring family members and eventually apply for permanent residency..

## Research Visa

### **Purpose**

Intended for researchers invited or employed by accredited Italian research institutions to engage in research activities.

### **Eligibility**

An invitation or employment contract from a recognized institution and proof of academic qualifications and research proposals & Certificate of No Impediment.

### **Application Process**

Submitting the visa application with necessary documentation to the Italian consulate or embassy, paying the required fees, and providing biometric data.

### **Benefits**

Opportunity to work with leading research institutions, contribute to academic advancements, bring family members, and potentially obtain permanent residency after five years of continuous residence..

# Key Points from Other Relevant Examples

1

High levels of bureaucracy and limited “fast-track” systems have been hurdles for all 3 countries.

2

Place branding initiatives are lacking, with only the UK’s effort underway (and still very nascent/limited).

3

English proficiency isn’t a solution itself, but higher levels can aid in attraction. It is a challenge in Belgium & Italy.

4

It is not just about attraction, but also integration/retention. Surveys show that existing expats rate these countries lower on this metric.





**Appendix**  
**Talent Attraction Research**  
*What Talent Wants, 2023, C Studios*  
*Talent Wars, 2024, DCI*

# Industry Insights on Talent Attraction

C Studios and sister-agency DCI jointly conduct talent research to identify what working-age professionals across Europe and in the U.S. seek in jobs and locations. In 2023, the two surveys shows familiar feedback from both regions, with the pursuit of an improved quality of life (and what that phrase means to talent) a common theme.



Europe

43%

...of talents listed “to have a better quality of life” as the leading trigger for their recent relocation, by far the top response in both markets.

52%

88%

...of talents are open to acquiring new skills if it would improve their career outlook. Of this percentage, a large number are willing to relocate to access such upskilling opportunities.

81%

48%

...of working age professionals said that “internet research” was the leading influencer of perceptions about a place when considering relocation, outpacing “first-hand experience.” In Europe, social media was No. 2.

47%



USA

# What Triggers Relocation in the First Place?



Better Quality of Life

43%

Larger Living Space

26%

New Job required relocation

25%

Closer to family

22%



Better Quality of Life

52%

Closer to family

24%

New Job required relocation

24%



# What Lifestyle Factors Drive the Relocation Process?



Safety/crime rates

7.9

Cost of living

7.9

Welcoming/friendly population

7.8

Housing availability

7.8



Cost of living

7.7

Housing costs

7.7

Safety/crime rates

7.6

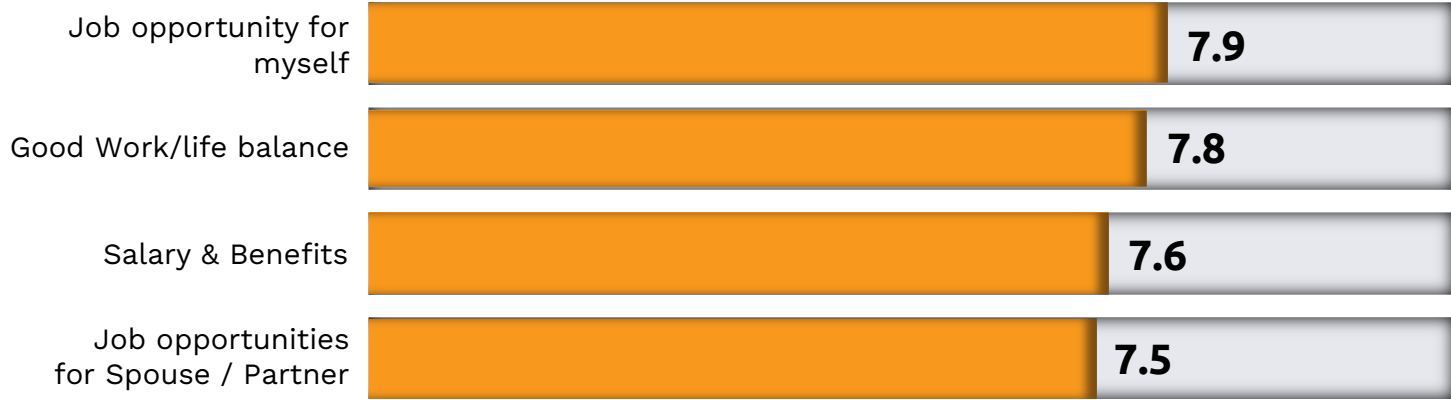
Housing costs

7.6

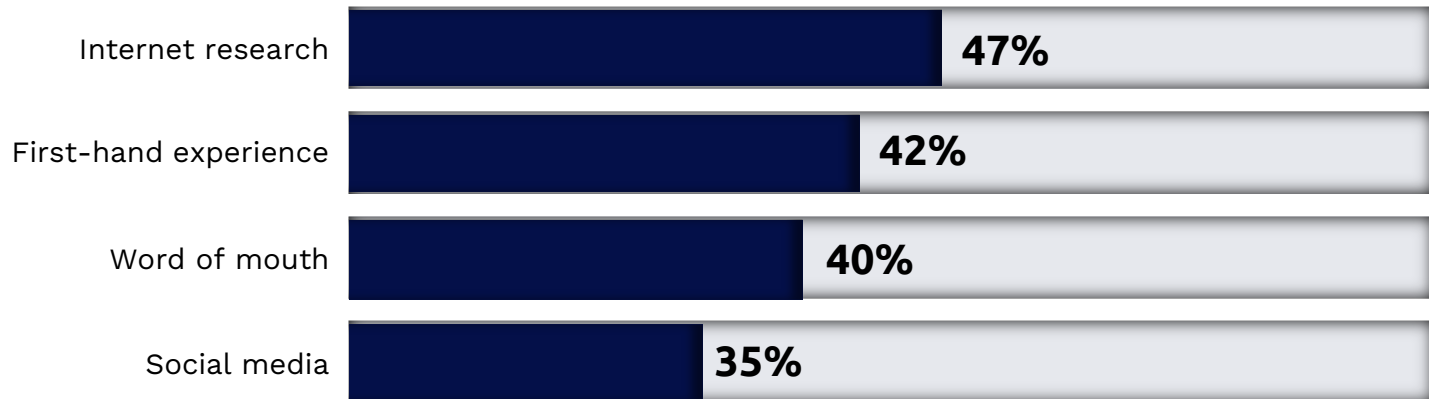
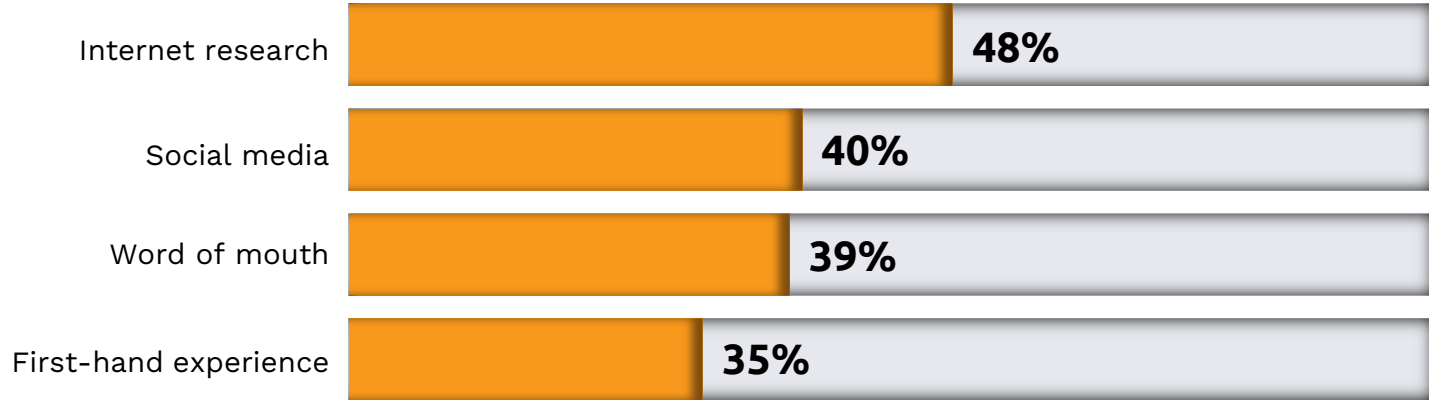




# What Career Factors Drive the Relocation Process?



# What Influences the Perception of a Place Most?



# Thank You!

**c-studios.com**

Joop Geesinkweg 501  
1114 AB Amsterdam

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Frankfurt Paris London Belfast Dublin Dubai Shanghai New York Denver

OOO GLOBAL

