

Foreign citizens

If you are a foreign citizen, you may require a personal permit to run a business in Sweden. The requirements vary, and therefore it is important that you contact the Swedish Migration Board (Migrationsverket) for further information. If you do not live in Sweden, you should contact a Swedish embassy or consulate in your country to find out what applies to your particular case.

General requirements on foreign citizens

Swedish Tax Agency

When making an application to the Tax Agency for F-tax (business tax certificate) and VAT (value added tax) registration, you have to enclose a certified copy of your passport or other ID document. If you are staying in Sweden for no longer than six months and you are not registered in the country, the Tax Agency will provide you with a so-called co-ordination number as a temporary national registration number.

Swedish Companies Registration Office

The Swedish Companies Registration Office is the authority where you register your company. Depending on business form, different requirements regarding residence apply, for example to board members and co-owners. In certain cases you must inform the Swedish Companies Registration Office of the name of an authorised representative, residing in Sweden, with the task of accepting service of process (limited companies, economic associations, and Swedish branches of foreign companies) or of the name of a manager for your company, residing in Sweden (sole traders). Contact the Swedish Companies Registration Office for more detailed information.

Swedish Migration Board

If you are going to run a Swedish business and live in Sweden, you must have a residence permit (does not apply to Nordic citizens and citizens from the EU/EEC), no matter what your own position is, for example a sleeping partner

providing only capital or the like. However, if you live abroad you will not need a residence permit. What is of decisive importance is thus where your place of residence will be.

Specific requirements depending on nationality

Some rules differ depending on which citizenship you have.

Nordic citizens

Nordic citizens, that is citizens of Denmark, Finland, Norway and Iceland who intend to live in Sweden, do not have to apply for a residence permit to start a company in Sweden.

Citizens of the EU/EEA

If you are an EU/EEA citizen you have a right to reside in Sweden and may stay here for more than three months without a residence permit. A person with a right to residence must register with the Migration Board no later than three months after entering the country. On entering into Sweden, you must have a valid passport or an identity card stating your citizenship.

To register, you must fill in a form with a request for registration of your right of residence. You have to enclose certified copies of a valid passport or identity card. You must also enclose documents showing that you satisfy the conditions within the category of "self-employed person".

In order to register at the Migration Board as a self-employed person, you have to be able to show the registration certificate for the company and/or other documents which show that you have your own company. Therefore you must first contact the Companies Registration Office and the Tax Agency to get your company registered.

If you are going to perform a temporary service, for example as a consultant or a freelance, you must be able to verify this by means of a certificate, an agreement, or similar documentation. The document must show:

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- what type of service you will be doing
- how long you will be engaged in the service.

The document has to be written and signed by the person for whom the service will be performed. The residence permit will in this case be valid for the duration of the service.

Citizens from outside the EU/EEA

If you are a citizen of a country outside the EU/EEA, you must apply for a residence permit to reside and start a business in Sweden. The price of the residence permit is SEK 1 000 for each adult person.

You must apply for the permit at a Swedish embassy or consulate, in your country of residence, no later than three months before entry into Sweden. Citizens from the following countries are exempt from the application cost:

-Switzerland and Japan.

The requirements that must be met in order to obtain a residence permit are as follows:

- Your business plan must be realistic.
- Your business should be expected to attain satisfactory profitability.
- You must have documents proving that you have the capital required to set up or acquire a business.
- You must have a sufficient amount of money to support yourself and your family during the first year.
- You must give an accurate account of your entrepreneurial intentions by handing in a business plan and a budget.
- You have to be able to present your experience in the intended line of business, your education, your contacts, etc.
- If you acquire a company, the two latest annual reports have to be sent in together with the application.

If you present a pronouncement on your business plan, made by a registered/chartered accountant working in Sweden, your application

could be processed faster. You must pay the cost for the accountant yourself.

If your application is approved, you will receive a one-year residence permit which can be renewed for another year. After this two-year period, the possibility of a permanent residence permit will be examined.

A foreign citizen living outside the EU, who wants to start a business in Sweden, must report the name of a VAT representative to the International Tax Office. The VAT representative's task is to be in charge of the company's VAT accounting and to represent the company in VAT matters. For countries under special agreement with Sweden a VAT representative is not required, as for example, Norway, Faroe (Färöe) Islands and Greenland.

Miscellaneous

If you already have a residence permit, for example, as a student or through family connections, you do not need a new one to start your own business. However, if you finish your studies or if your residence permit expires and you want to start a business of your own, you must file an application for a new residence permit within the category "self-employed" persons.

For more information

Swedish Migration Board

The Migration Board handles matters concerning residence permits and answers questions. phone +46 771 19 44 00, www.migrationsverket.se,

Government Offices of Sweden

Swedish embassies and consulates

(*Look under the Ministry for Foreign Affairs*), phone +46 8 405 10 00, Addresses to embassies and consulates can be found at: www.sweden.gov.se.

Swedish Companies Registration Office

To register your business, contact the Companies Registration Office, phone +46 60 18 40 00, www.bolagsverket.se.

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Swedish Tax Agency

Contact the Tax Agency if you have any questions about VAT, F-tax or other taxes, phone +46 8 694 10 00, (from Sweden 0771-567 567), www.skatteverket.se.

International Tax Office

The International Tax Office is where you register a VAT representative, phone +46 8 694 10 00, (from Sweden 0771-778 778).

Swedish Association of Ethnic Entrepreneurs (IFS)

IFS (Internationella Företagarföreningen) has offices in various places in Sweden and gives advice free of cost to foreign persons who want to start a business in Sweden, phone +46 8 693 99 46/47/48, www.ifs.a.se.