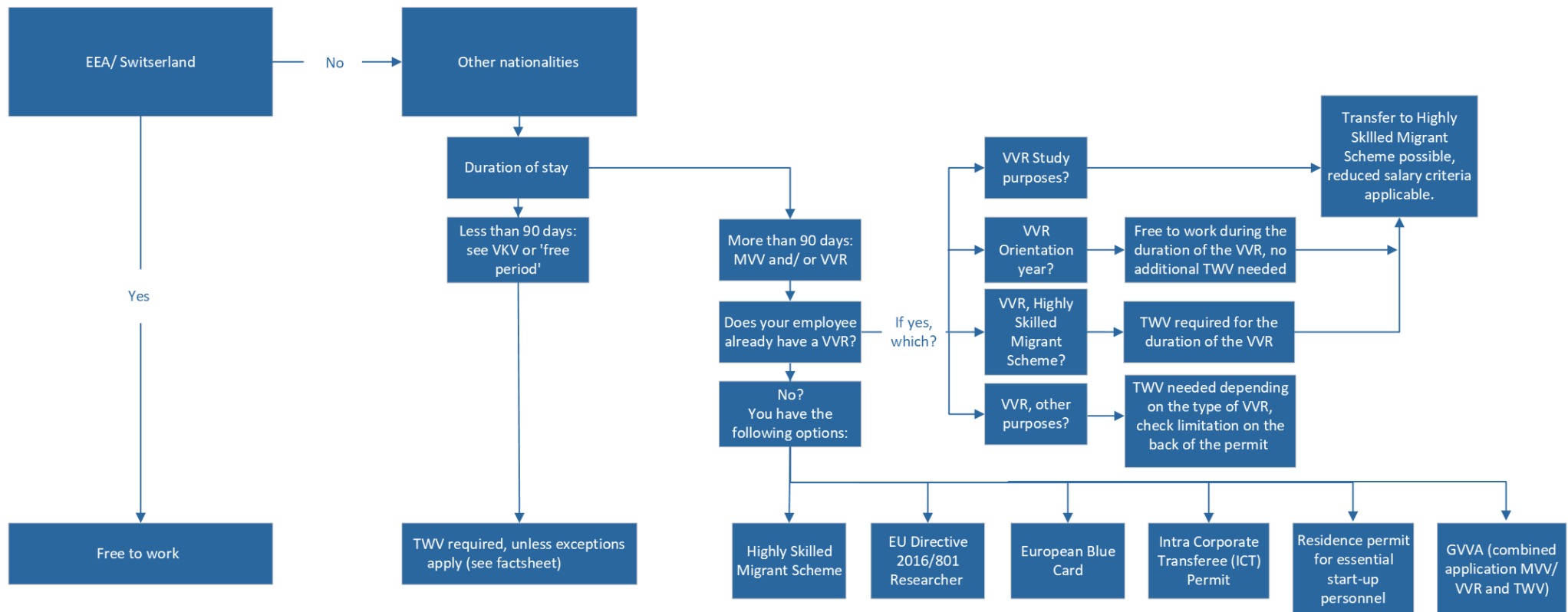


## How do I hire a highly skilled international employee - visa wizard

**This factsheet contains information for employers wishing to hire international employees. It outlines what kind of arrangements you need to make and the options available. The flow chart will help you to determine which regulations and schemes are applicable in your case. Depending on the nationality of your guest, an entry visa and/or residence permit, and work permit is required. Which procedure applies depends primarily on the nationality of your guest, the duration and the purpose of the stay. In addition, there are usually formalities to be completed after your guest's arrival.**

VKV= short stay visa  
 VVR= residence permit  
 MVV= provisional residence permit or entry visa  
 TWV= work permit (for Non-EU nationals)  
 GVVA= combined work and residence permit



## Which scheme should I choose?

The flow chart shows which permits you require for your international employee and the options available. See below for the specific details of each scheme. Which procedure applies depends primarily on the nationality of your guest, the duration and the purpose of the stay.

### Nationality

Citizens from the EEA (EU, Iceland, Norway and Liechtenstein) and Switzerland are free to live and work in the Netherlands without the obligation to have a work permit (TWV) or a residence permit (VVR).

In case you wish to hire an employee from outside de EU/EEA and Switzerland, a visa/ residence and work permit is normally required. This, however, may also depend on the duration of stay and the type of work. Furthermore, if your intended employee already has a residence permit (e.g. linked to the stay of their partner), it is quite possible that it contains the statement '*arbeid vrij toegestaan*' (free to work). In that case, you do not need to apply for a work permit for non-EU nationals.

### Duration of stay

#### Short stay: visa and work permit?

If your non-EU employee will be remaining in the Netherlands for no more than 90 days within a period of 180 days, a so-called short stay, you will usually need to apply for a work permit. There are exceptions for certain categories, e.g. for work involving scientific research or business visits. More information concerning the specific exemptions for these categories can be found on the [EURAXESS-website](#). Please also see the section '*Work permit for non-EU nationals*' below for more information concerning other exemptions.

For some nationalities a short-stay visa is required. In the overview of '[immigration procedures by nationality](#)' you can look up If your employee needs a short-stay visa. You can also check the [IND-website](#). Employees apply for short-stay visas themselves, via the Dutch representative in their own country. Those who do not require a short-stay visa may stay in the Netherlands for a period of 90 days in a period of 180 days. General requirements such as a valid passport and health insurance do apply. For more information, please consult the [IND-website](#). Also, the website [Netherlands World Wide](#) offers detailed information for your employee.

#### Long stay: entry visa, residence permit and work permit?

In case you wish to hire a non-EU employee for a stay in the Netherlands for more than 90 days, a residence permit is required. Depending on the nationality of the employee an entry visa can be applicable as well. In this [overview](#) you can look up what is mandatory.

# The different types of schemes

## Priority for highly skilled migrants - special schemes

In order to attract highly educated and talented non-EU citizens to the Netherlands, special residence permit schemes have been initiated. These schemes can be issued quickly and grant an exemption from the work permit requirement.

### How do I make use of these special schemes?

For certain special schemes you wish to use, you need to be registered with the Dutch Immigration Authorities (IND) as a recognized sponsor. In case you are not a recognized sponsor yet, you can submit an application for recognition to [IND](#). This application is subject to payment and administrative charges. If it is approved, you will become a 'recognized sponsor' and you will be listed in the [public registry](#) of recognized sponsors. Sponsors have both rights and responsibilities, which are outlined on the [IND website](#).

## Highly skilled migrant scheme (application by employer, recognized sponsorship required)

Highly skilled migrants do not require an additional work permit to work in the Netherlands, nor do any family members travelling with, or arriving after, the migrant. An accelerated admissions procedure applies to family members as well. In order to use the highly skilled migrant scheme, the employer needs to be listed as a recognized sponsor with IND.

### Who can be a highly skilled migrant?

To be eligible for the highly skilled migrant status, employees must either earn a specified minimum salary or perform a certain type of job. If the salary criteria alone is assessed, the salary must be in conformity with market standards.

#### Salary criteria

There are three salary [criteria](#). Please note that the criteria are indexed every year.

- Highly skilled migrant aged 30 or older;
- Highly skilled migrant aged under 30;
- Highly skilled migrant transferring from a residence permit for study purposes or the orientation year permit. Employees who are eligible to apply for the orientation year permit but who refrained from doing so because they already found a job, may also apply for what is referred to as a lower salary criteria, within 3 years after graduating.

### Jobs exempted from the salary criteria\*

- Scientific personnel being hired by an educational or research institution when the position indicates that the appointment falls under job code 01 of the Dutch Universities Job Classification System (*Universitair Functieordeningssysteem*, UFO). This category includes amongst others post-docs and university lecturers;
- Trainee specialist doctors (AIOs);
- Guest lecturers.
- *\*For these types of jobs the [salary criteria](#) is the same as for researchers under the EU Directive 2016/801.*

### **Further information**

More information (including which documents you must have on file according to the administration and storage obligations of recognized sponsors) and the application process, is available on [the IND website](#).

## **Researchers under EU Directive 2016/801 (application by employer, recognized sponsorship required)**

Researchers under the EU Directive 2016/ 801 do not require a work permit for non-EU nationals to work in the Netherlands, nor do any family members travelling with, or arriving after, the migrant. An accelerated admissions procedure applies to family members as well. In order to use the EU Directive 2016/ 801, the employer needs to be listed as a recognized sponsor with IND.

### **Who can qualify for the EU Directive 2016/801?**

The EU Directive 2016/ 801 defines researchers as follows: *"a third-country national who holds a doctoral degree or an appropriate higher education qualification that gives that third-country national access to doctoral programs, who is selected by a research organization and admitted to the territory of a Member State for carrying out a research activity for which such qualification is normally required."*

It is important that research is the researcher's primary task, i.e. that at least 50% of the researcher's time is spent on research activities (at doctoral level). Next to the research, other activities such as teaching duties may be carried out. However, they cannot demand more than 50% of the researcher's time. Also, a [salary criteria](#) is in place. For all the specific requirements, please visit the [IND-website](#).

The EU Directive 2016/801 is only available to research institutions. The IND will assess whether you qualify as a research institution based on the following conditions:

- You are a public research institution that falls under the Dutch Universities Job Classification System (UFO); or
- You are a public research institution included in the annex to the Higher Education and Research Act; or
- You are a private research institution included in the National Academic Research and Collaborations System (NARCIS); or
- You are a private research institution that has received a Research and Development Work (S&O) declaration for the current or previous calendar year. (Salaries tax and National Insurance Contributions (Reduced Remittances) Act (WVA)).

### Further information

Further information (including which documents you must have on file according to the administration and storage obligations of recognized sponsors) and the application form are available on [the IND website](#).

## European Blue Card (application by employer, no recognized sponsorship required)

A European Blue Card is a work and residence permit intended for employees who perform work requiring advanced qualifications within the European Union. A European Blue Card enables these workers to settle in a different European country more easily. The scheme looks similar to the highly skilled migrant scheme but there are certain differences. To apply for a European Blue Card, recognized sponsorship is not required, however the salary norm is higher, and the processing time is longer.

### Who is eligible for a European Blue Card?

Employees must meet a few criteria, such as:

- The [salary criteria](#);
- Have a qualification demonstrating that they have completed a higher-education degree of at least three years. In case of a foreign diploma Nuffic must evaluate the diploma;
- Have at least a 6 months contract for a highly qualified job.

### Further information

For a full list of criteria and the application form, please visit the [IND-website](#).

## Orientation Year permit

During to what is referred to as the [orientation year](#), scientific researchers and students with a higher education degree can apply for a permit with which they may remain in the Netherlands for the duration of one year with the purpose of finding a job as a highly skilled migrant or starting an innovative business. During this year, they are free to carry out any type of work without the obligation to have a work permit (job, work placement, volunteer work). Furthermore, no extra salary or income requirements are applicable.

### Who is eligible for an Orientation Year Permit?

The following non-EU nationals are eligible to apply for an orientation year residence permit:

- International students who have successfully completed a Bachelor's or Master's program at a Dutch institution of higher education (university or university of applied sciences) based on a residence permit for study purposes;
- Researchers who have actively participated in scientific research projects in the Netherlands, based on a residence permit for research purposes according to the Directive (EU) 2016/801 or the highly skilled migrant scheme;
- Highly educated persons from abroad who have successfully completed a Master's or PhD program at a designated foreign educational institution. If this is the case, additional requirements apply, for instance the evaluation of the diploma by Nuffic. Please see the [IND-website](#) for details.

An application can be made up to three years following completion of one of the aforementioned grounds. For all details concerning the requirements, please also see the [IND-website](#).

The orientation year permit is valid for one year and cannot be extended. However, the applicant becomes eligible for easy access into the [highly skilled migrant](#) scheme through a [reduced salary requirement](#). The change from an orientation year permit to a highly skilled migrant permit needs to take place before the orientation year permit expires.

## **Residence permit Intra-corporate transferee (application by employer, no recognized sponsorship required)**

This scheme is intended for employees who work for a company outside the European Union but who are transferred to a branch in the Netherlands.

### **Who is eligible for the ICT permit?**

The following non-EU nationals are eligible:

- Your employee will be working in the Netherlands as a manager, specialist or trainee;
- The transfer takes place within the same company to a branch in the Netherlands;
- Your employee has been working for the company outside the EU for at least 3 months and has a valid employment contract there;
- The salary is in line with the market standards and meets the [salary criteria](#) of highly skilled migrants

### **Learn more**

For a complete overview of all the criteria and the procedure, please visit the [IND website](#).

## **Residence permit for essential start-up staff**

The residence permit for essential startup personnel makes it possible for startups to attract employees with specific high-quality expertise and skills from abroad. At the moment, the scheme is still in the pilot phase until June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025, and will continue for another year after that.

### **Who is eligible for an essential start-up personnel license?**

The following non-EU nationals are eligible:

- The start-up is an innovative company with scalable activities. This means that the company can grow with the demand for the product or service;
- The employee is an expert in a special field that the start-up needs in this stage;
- The employee has an employment contract with the start-up and meets the [income requirements](#);
- The employee receives a share in the company (employee participation).
- To assess the application, IND asks the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO) for advice about the start-up and the role of the employee.

### **Learn more**

For a complete overview of all specific conditions, please visit the [IND website](#).

## Other schemes

### Combined work and residence permit (GVVA, application by employer)

If you do not wish to or cannot make use of one of the schemes described above, you may apply for [a combined work and residence permit \(GVVA\)](#). The GVVA, also called a 'single permit', gives internationals from outside the EEA and Switzerland the right to live and work in the Netherlands for a period longer than 90 days. The GVVA combines a residence permit and work permit for non-EU nationals into one permit. The application must be reviewed by both IND and the Netherlands Employees Insurance Agency (UWV) and the processing time can take up to 90 days. It is not necessary to be listed as a recognized sponsor with IND.

The UWV applies strict rules when issuing work permits and approving GVVA applications, and tests for priority workforce criteria in the Dutch labor market. Do you wish to hire an employee from outside the EEA or Switzerland? If so, you will need to prove, among other things, that you have attempted to recruit both in the Netherlands and in these countries, and that you have notified the UWV of the vacancy. An overview of the requirements can be found on [the IND website](#).

### Other residence permits for work

In addition to the purposes of residence described above, there are a number of other schemes such as the residence permit for trainees, cross-board service providers or the residence permit to gain work experience through an EU programme. You can find more information about these specific schemes the [IND website](#).

### Work permit for non-EU nationals (TWV, application by employer)

As you can see in the flowchart, there are situations in which the application for a residence permit is not needed, but only a work permit is required. In principle, you must apply for a work permit for non-EU employees who stay in the Netherlands for less than 90 days, or who stay longer, but for whom no special immigration procedure applies. The UWV applies strict rules when issuing work permits and tests for priority workforce criteria in the Dutch labor market. Amongst other things, you will need to prove, that you have attempted to recruit both in the Netherlands and in the EU/ EEA area, and that you have notified the UWV of the vacancy. For more details, please consult the UWV website: [Work permit information | UWV](#)

#### Exemptions

There are, however, a number of exceptions to the general rule requiring employers to apply for a work permit for non-EU nationals (TWV), for instance:

- labor migrants who have held valid work permits for five continuous years, and who have not since moved their principal residence outside the Netherlands;
- employees already in possession of a residence permit (e.g. linked to the stay of their partner) stating 'Arbeid is vrij toegestaan, TWV niet vereist' (Free to work, no work permit (TWV) required);
- employees with a sticker in their passport stating 'Arbeid is vrij toegestaan' (Free to work). This sticker is valid for a limited time, which is stated on the sticker itself;
- employees with a residence permit for 'arbeid als zelfstandige' (self-employed work), provided the work falls under the type of work for which the residence permit was issued;



- lecturers or scientific personnel appointed to teach or conduct research at a research organization. This includes short-term teaching and academic staff as well;
- visits qualifying as business meetings. Such visits may last no longer than four weeks within a thirteen-week period.

For a list of all the exemptions, please visit the website of the [UWV](#).

- Residence permit for study purposes

Does your intended employee currently have a residence permit for study purposes? A student may work while they are studying, however this is limited to a maximum of 16 hours per week, or full-time during the summer months. For this type of work, a TWV is needed. For more details, please visit the factsheet on the [Nuffic-website](#).

After graduation, the applicant will become eligible for a residence permit as a highly skilled migrant, subject to a [reduced salary requirement](#). In this case, you must apply for a 'change of limitation' to knowledge migrant status. For more information, please visit [the IND website](#).

- How do I apply for a work permit for non-EU nationals?

Is there no exemption applicable in your situation? You can apply for a work permit for non-EU nationals via the [UWV-website](#), where you will also find the specific criteria for each scheme. Applications can be done via the employer portal. For this an eHerkenning account is necessary.

### Further information

Further information on conditions, exemptions and the application procedure can be found on the website of the [UWV](#).

## Other practical matters

### Basic healthcare insurance

International employees are obliged to make sure that they are adequately insured and take out a [basic healthcare insurance](#) policy if they are socially insured in the Netherlands. It is advisable to inform your employee of this requirement.

People are socially insured in the Netherlands if they:

- Fall under wage tax legislation; or
- Qualify as Dutch residents as defined by the Social Insurance Bank (SVB).

People fall under wage tax legislation if they are gainfully employed. For example:

- Employees who have a contract;
- People on a zero-hour contract;
- Visiting professors with a fixed part-time appointment for which social premiums are paid in the Netherlands.

This does not include:

- Unpaid researchers, such as scholarship recipients;
- Employees seconded from other institutions who come to work for you temporarily but are not added to your payroll.

In case you have doubts about the status of your employee or that of any accompanying family members, it is advisable to request a Wlz-assessment by the [Social Insurance Bank \(SVB\)](#). In case of unpaid researchers, you can check this [flowchart](#) in order to see which type of health insurance is applicable. The website of the [SKGZ](#) provides detailed information in English for your employee.

## **Citizen service number (BSN) via registration in the Personal Records Database**

A Citizen Service Number ([burgerservicenummer](#), BSN) is a unique personal number issued to every person registered in the Personal Records Database (*Basis Registratie Personen*, BRP). A BSN is automatically issued by the municipality where the migrant registers in the BRP. A BSN is required for various matters, such as opening a bank account and taking out a health insurance policy. Your employee will receive a BSN automatically upon registering with the BRP.

## **BRP registration via RNI**

People staying in the Netherlands for less than four months cannot register with the BRP in every municipality and therefore may not automatically receive a BSN. These people must register with the Register of Non-residents (*Registratie Niet-Ingezetenen*, RNI) to obtain a BSN. To do so, non-residents must register in person, present valid proof of identification and supply their residential address in their home country. Non-residents will receive their allocated BSN straight away at the service counter during registration, as well as a summary of the personal details collected. BRP registration via the RNI is possible in eighteen Dutch municipalities. The [Dutch government website](#) provides more information on where and how this is possible.

## **The Expat Scheme (30% facility)**

The Expat Scheme (30% facility) is a tax scheme that allows the additional costs incurred by international employees when they move to the Netherlands to be reimbursed tax-free.

These can include expenses associated with searching for accommodation, a suitable school for their children or the cost of a language course ('extraterritorial' expenses). You may reimburse these costs tax-free. One option is to refund the actual costs incurred; however, if your employee satisfies certain criteria, they may also be eligible for a special reimbursement facility offered by the Dutch Tax and Customs Administration, known as the '30% facility'. This facility does not depend on nationality – even Dutch citizens who qualify as incoming employees can make use of it. Further information on the 30% facility can be found on [the website of the Dutch Tax and Customs Administration](#).

# Further information

## Key legislation

- [Foreign nationals \(Employment\) Act \(WAV\);](#)
- [Foreign Nationals \(Employment\) Act, implementation \(BuWav\)](#)

## Information from the Immigration and Naturalization Service (IND)

- The [IND website](#) contains information on topics such as:
- Special immigration procedures (admission and residence);
- Recognized sponsor status;
- The GVVA/single permit;
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## Information from the Employee Insurance Agency

- [Work permit for non-EU nationals \(TWV\) - application](#)
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Nuffic

The Dutch organization for internationalization in education

### Disclaimer

We have assembled the provided information with the greatest care. However, we cannot provide an absolute guarantee that all of the information is entirely accurate. In other words, we cannot be held responsible for the consequences of errors.

