

An aerial night view of a city, showing a dense network of lights and roads. A large red rectangular overlay covers the top half of the image. In the top left corner of the red overlay, there is a black box with the word "SOVEREIGN" in white, followed by a small trademark symbol. Below this box is a thin red horizontal line. The main title "Sovereign Group Residency and Citizenship Planning" is written in large, white, sans-serif font across the middle of the red overlay. A thin white horizontal line is positioned below the title.

SOVEREIGN™

Sovereign Group Residency and Citizenship Planning

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About Sovereign

Sovereign opened its first office in Gibraltar in 1987 and has since grown into one of the largest independent corporate and trust service providers in the world. We currently manage over 20,000 structures for a wide variety of clients – companies, entrepreneurs, private investors or high net worth individuals (HNWIs) and their families – and have assets under administration in excess of GBP £20 billion.

Our Personal Wealth services assist families and entrepreneurs to structure their assets in a way that will help to grow their wealth now and preserve it for future generations. We advise on all aspects of the design and implementation of structures, using trusts, foundations, companies and funds, in domestic as well as overseas jurisdictions, to hold assets and investments for secure, efficient wealth and succession planning.

While some of our clients are based only in a single location, many are international families with assets and family members spread across different countries. We have broad experience in managing trusts and estates with complex structures involving assets and beneficiaries in multiple jurisdictions and the legal, tax and compliance issues that arise when the laws of several jurisdictions may apply.

We also provide the support to maximise opportunities and achieve long-term sustainability, from full family office solutions to assistance with tax and regulatory compliance. This includes, but is not limited to: residency, immigration and citizenship, asset management, accountancy, foreign property ownership, retirement planning, insurance, yacht and aircraft registration, as well as specialist tax advice.

20+
international offices

20,000+
clients

£20B+
assets under administration



Sovereign Group a Holistic Approach to International Residency and Citizenship Planning

Acquiring an alternative or second residency or citizenship provides families with a broad spectrum of lifestyle, business, investment, and tax benefits and has become an increasingly popular choice worldwide.

Residency and Citizenship planning options are however continuously evolving, with the creation of new government programmes, the incorporation of additional options and benefits within existing programmes and the removal of programmes no longer considered beneficial to the economy or society.

This combined with the fact that no two clients' requirements and objectives are the same, means Residency and Citizenship planning must be approached holistically, not from the mindset that one or two solutions fit all.

The Sovereign Group monitors the market to ensure we are fully knowledgeable in and provide access to a comprehensive range of residency, citizenship, and tax residency solutions. Our extensive network of offices, experienced local teams and professional service partners ensure that we are best placed to assist clients with the identification, development and implementation of the most suitable overall strategy for their needs.

The Importance of Residency and Citizenship Planning for Individuals, their Families, Businesses and Host Governments

In a world of political uncertainty, closed economic borders with restrictions on travel and the movement of assets, internationally mobile individuals, their families and businesses have developed a genuine need for liberating, flexible solutions. Acquiring a second or alternative residency or citizenship provides families with a broad spectrum of lifestyle, business, investment and tax benefits and has become an increasingly popular choice worldwide.

Many governments have taken notice of increased demand from affluent, self-sufficient, and experienced businesspeople, who wish to create more options and opportunities for themselves and their families. They understand and appreciate that offering residency and citizenship programmes enable them to:

Secure much-needed foreign investment without debt

Create local employment and associated economic benefits

Attract people with proven business success and valuable networks

Enrich their economies and citizens



Residency Programmes

Residency Programmes

The Sovereign Group advises clients on a wide range of residency programmes, catering for most personal requirements and budgets. Qualifying applicants receive a local residence permit and the following additional benefits:

- The right to reside, settle and stay indefinitely in your chosen country.
- Option to include spouse and qualifying dependents
- Greater freedom of movement within cooperating countries
- No language requirements
- Access to high quality educational institutions and medical facilities
- Multiple personal and corporate tax benefits
- Eligibility to apply for citizenship by naturalisation in the future.

Types of Residency Programmes

Government-approved residency programmes enable foreign nationals to gain full residency rights in a new country in return for making capital investment, establishing a local business and/or injecting capital into the economy. Programmes can be categorized as follows:

1. Residency by Investment (RBI) Programmes are often referred to as 'Golden Visas' and provide individuals and their dependents with a residence permit and a variety of associated benefits in exchange for a wide range of investment and donation options. RBI Programmes usually have low minimum stay requirements, they are therefore ideal for establishing an alternative or second place of residence.

2. Financially Independent Visa Programmes provide residence permits to applicants who can demonstrate a regular income and/or personal wealth above a specified amount. They generally require you to make the chosen country your primary place of residence and tax residence.

3. Business Start Up, Investment, and Incubation Programmes provide residence permits to applicants who establish or invest in an existing business, creating local economic activity and employment opportunities in the chosen country. In some instances, the amount needed as an initial investment can be relatively low.

4. Tax Residency Programmes provide preferential rates for new residents and/or non-domiciled individuals who establish tax residency. Some programmes also provide residency status whilst, if need be, others can be established in conjunction with a residency programme listed above.



Cyprus

The Republic of Cyprus an Introduction

Cyprus lies at the crossroads of three continents, occupying a strategic position for access to Europe, Asia and Africa. Its two international airports – Larnaca and Paphos – make Cyprus an excellent platform for travelling throughout Europe and the rest of the world.

This location, together with its membership of the European Union, its culture and advanced infrastructure all make Cyprus a very attractive destination for those looking to establish a European business and/or your primary or secondary place of residence. It also has one of the most attractive tax regimes in Europe.

Its climate, with more than 320 days of sunshine per year, offers the archetypal Mediterranean lifestyle. One of the safest countries in Europe, Cyprus also boasts advanced healthcare services and a great selection of international schools, making it an ideal for raising a family.

Residency by Investment Programme

PERMANENT RESIDENCY PROGRAMME (PRP) – ‘FAST TRACK’

The Cyprus Permanent Residence Programme (PRP) ‘Fast Track’ Visa provides successful applicants with permanent residence status in approximately two months. This status is valid for life, can be passed on to dependants and requires holders to visit Cyprus at least once every two years.

To qualify applicants are required to invest €300,000 invested into a local qualifying property, investment fund or Cypriot-based company employing a minimum of five local employees.

They are also required to demonstrate they have a secure annual income of at least €50,000, have local private medical insurance, and no criminal record.

Financially Independent Visa Programmes

TEMPORARY RESIDENCE PERMIT

The Cyprus Temporary Residence Permit is an annually renewable self-sufficiency visa that allows an individual and their qualifying dependants, to live in Cyprus as a visitor, without employment rights.

To qualify applicants are required to rent or purchase a local residential property, have a minimum annual income of €24,000 sourced outside Cyprus, have local private medical insurance, and no criminal record.

It is also essential that each permit holder does not stay out of the country for no more than three months at a time, as this could result in the permit being cancelled.

Business Start Up, Investment Programme

A CYPRUS FOREIGN INTEREST COMPANY (FIC)

Generally, companies in the Republic of Cyprus are required to prioritise the employment of Cypriots and EU nationals before considering third-country nationals. However, Cyprus offers an exception to companies of foreign interest, allowing them to employ third-country nationals subject to specific requirements. This framework is particularly advantageous for third-country nationals who wish to incorporate their own company in Cyprus.

To qualify as a Cyprus Foreign Interest Company, it must be registered with the Cyprus Registrar of Companies and Intellectual Property, have true economic substance in Cyprus and the majority of shareholders should be third country nationals

The ultimate beneficial owner/s (UBO) must deposit at least €200,000 in the company's Cyprus bank account or, into the operation of its business e.g. the purchase of an office, equipment etc.

If the company has more than one UBO, the €200,000 can be deposited or invested by a single UBO or collectively.

Long Term Residency Permit

The Cyprus Long term residency permit is available to those who have held a valid residency permit for a minimum of five years.

The main qualification requirements are as follow:

1. Continuous Legal Residence in Cyprus for a minimum of five years.
2. Annual income, sourced from outside Cyprus, of a minimum of €24,000, which increases by 20% for a spouse and by 15% for each dependent child.
3. Demonstrate proficiency in the Greek Language having passed the A2 Greek language exam.
4. Demonstrate knowledge of the Culture and History of Cyprus having passed the exam.
5. A certificate of 'no criminal record' and of not being under investigation for criminal offences, that is attested by the relevant authorities.
6. Private Medical Insurance

The Cyprus Long term residency permit provides holders the following benefits:

The right to work in Cyprus

Access to various social services, including healthcare and education.

The permit includes family members, the spouse and children.

After five years of continuous legal residence, individuals may apply for permanent residency



Cyprus Tax Residency Programme

The Cyprus tax residency programme provides preferential tax incentives for qualifying non-domiciled individuals who are resident in Cyprus.

A person is considered non-domiciled if they do not have a domicile of origin or domicile of choice in Cyprus and have not been a Cyprus tax resident for at least 17 of the last 20 years.

The main qualification requirements are as follows:

- 'The 183-day Rule' – For an individual to be considered a tax resident of Cyprus under standard terms, they are required to be physically present in Cyprus for more than 183 days in a calendar year..
- 'The 60-day Rule' – A reduced physical presence requirement applies to individuals who:
 - Maintain (by owning or renting) a permanent home in Cyprus within a tax year.
 - Establish a business and/or are employed in Cyprus and/or holds an office with a Cyprus tax resident company at any time during the tax year.

TAX EFFICIENT BENEFITS

The Cyprus Tax Residency Programme provides residents the following tax benefits:

- No income tax on dividend and interest related income
- No income tax on salaried services rendered outside Cyprus for more than 90 days in a tax year
- Low progressive income tax rates, with the first €22,000 being tax exempt
- A 50% income tax exemption on income earned through Cyprus based employment provided annual income exceeds €55,000 per annum. The exemption applies for a period of up to 17 tax years
- Those earning less than €55,000 per annum through Cyprus based employment may qualify for a 20% income tax exemption. The exemption applies for a period of up to 7 tax years.
- No tax on profits from disposal of securities, including shares, bonds, options and units in collective investment schemes
- A low corporate tax rate of 15% for Cyprus tax resident companies
- Tax free repatriation of profits and capital
- Overseas Pensions income that exceeds the amount of €5,000 euro is taxed at only 5%.
- No Capital Gains Tax on assets other than immovable property situated in Cyprus
- No wealth taxes
- No inheritance taxes
- No gift taxes

Non-domiciled tax status is available for 17 years from the date the individual first becomes a Cyprus tax resident. Non domiciled individuals may also choose to extend the benefits for two consecutive five-year periods by paying a lump sum of €250,000 per period.



Establishing Citizenship Through Naturalisation in Cyprus

To qualify for citizenship through naturalisation, applicants must have lived permanently in Cyprus for 7 years within a 10-year period.

On 23rd of November 2023, the Cypriot government introduced a new law which expedites the time frame for highly skilled professionals to 4 and 3 years. Non-EU nationals living in Cyprus who are highly qualified employees, either working for international companies as directors, key personnel, or specialists, will see their qualifying residency period reduced.

Qualifying professionals must also earn a minimum of €2,500 monthly, hold a university degree or equivalent, have two years' relevant employment experience and demonstrate a modest proficiency in Greek.

The qualification timeframes applicable under the new rules are reduced to:

- 4 years for A2 Greek language certificate holders
- 3 years for B1 Greek language certificate holders

To be eligible under the new legislation, applicants must also adhere to several essential requirements:

- A prerequisite is 12 months of legal, uninterrupted residence in Cyprus directly before applying, with allowable short absences not exceeding 90 days that do not break the continuity.
- A history of lawful residence in Cyprus for a total of three, four, or seven years within the last decade, tailored to the specific citizenship route chosen.



Malta

The Republic of Malta an Introduction

The Republic of Malta is a compact island nation at the heart of the Mediterranean, some 80 km to the south of Sicily. An archipelago composed of three main islands – Malta, Gozo and Comino – which have a combined population of around 500,000. The capital is Valletta.

Malta was admitted to the European Union in 2004 and joined the euro zone in 2008 and its two official languages are Maltese and English.

Malta International Airport, located 5km southwest of Valletta, serves all the Maltese Islands and offers direct flights to destinations all over Europe, as well as North Africa and the Middle East.

With a typically Mediterranean climate, Malta is also one of the world's safest countries, with a low crime rate, a welcoming, friendly population and progressive policies and laws. It also provides access to quality educational institutions and medical facilities, excellent business opportunities and infrastructure, and an excellent quality of life.

SOVEREIGN SERVICES LIMITED MALTA A LICENSED ENTITY

A licensed agent of the Residency Malta Agency (license number AKM-SOVE), Sovereign Services Limited Malta is best placed to advise, and support applicants who wish to establish residency and/or citizenship in Malta.

Residency by Investment Programme

The Malta Permanent Residence Programme (MPRP)

QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

1. Establish a Residential Property in Malta:
 - Either rent a property for a minimum of €14,000
 - Or purchase a property for a minimum of €375,000 in Malta or Gozo.
2. Make a Direct Contribution to the government of Malta of €37,000.
3. An additional Direct Contribution €7,500 for each dependant adult included within the application. An exception is made for a spouse or adult child with a registered disability.
4. Non-Refundable Administration Fee: €60,000.
5. Donation to a Voluntary Organisation: Donate €2,000 to a local registered philanthropic, cultural, sport, scientific, animal welfare or artistic non-governmental organisation or society.
6. Provide evidence of Sufficient Net Worth: Be in receipt of a stable and regular financial income, sufficient to maintain themselves and their dependants, without the need to depend upon the social assistance system of Malta.
7. Provide evidence of Minimum Net Worth: Assets of at least €500,000, of which €150,000 is to be in the form of financial assets, such as stocks, bonds, funds or bank deposits.
Or
Assets of at least €650,000, of which €75,000 is to be in the form of financial assets, such as stocks, bonds, funds or bank deposits.
8. Be a Fit-and-Proper Individual: All applicants must demonstrate that they do not have a criminal record or pose a potential threat to the national security, public policy, public health or public interest of Malta.
9. Provide evidence of Health Insurance: All applicants must be covered by a qualifying health insurance policy, which provides a minimum coverage amount of €100,000 in Malta and the Schengen Area.



Business Start Up, Investment Programme

MALTA START-UP RESIDENCE PROGRAMME

The Malta Start-Up Residence Programme grants non-EU nationals a three-year residence permit, extendable for an additional five years. After five years' residency, applicants may also apply for long term residency in Malta.

The programme is specifically designed to facilitate the setting up of innovative start-ups and scale-ups in Malta, whilst supporting the immigration process of their founders, core employees and respective immediate family members.

It also offers support measures administered by Malta Enterprise, with an array of funding opportunities and assistance without the requirement to give up equity or company ownership.

A Malta-incorporated start-up company is required to have a minimum tangible investment and/or paid-up share capital of €25,000. In cases where more than four co-founders apply, an additional €10,000 needs to be placed per additional co-founder. The maximum number of eligible co-founders is six.

Founders and/or co-founders benefitting from this programme are required to have a physical and tangible presence in Malta, not only from a business perspective but also personally residing in and paying taxes in Malta.

Applicants must also have health insurance covering themselves and any dependants in Malta.

To qualify, founders and co-founders must have a concrete intention to develop and/or expand a highly innovative business in Malta. The business cannot have been registered for more than seven years anywhere globally. They must also demonstrate that they are fit-and-proper and of good conduct and have sufficient financial resources to support their business, themselves, and any dependants.

The Nomad Residence Permit

The Malta Nomad Residence Permit, also known as the Digital Nomad Visa, is a one-year residency permit that enables holders to live and work remotely in Malta.

Upon receipt of their residency card, holders are also granted visa free travel access to the EU Schengen area for up to 90 days in any 180 days.

Provided the permit holder continues to meet the qualifying criteria, they are eligible to renew their residence permission for up to three one-year periods, for a total maximum stay of four years.

QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

To qualify applicants are required to:

1. Be 18 years of age or older.
2. Be a Non-EU, EEA or Swiss citizen.
3. Demonstrate a gross minimum annual income of at least €42,000.
4. Be employed by an international company outside Malta, be self-employed with a business registered abroad, or work as a freelancer for international clients.
5. Have health insurance that provides cover in Malta and the EU.
6. Provide proof of purchase or rental of a residential property in Malta, for at least one year.
7. Pass the required criminal background and verification checks.

MALTA INCOME TAX RULES FOR NOMAD RESIDENCE PERMIT HOLDERS

Individuals issued with a Nomad residence permit benefit from a 12-month period during which income derived from 'authorised work' is exempt from Maltese income tax. Thereafter a flat rate of 10% is applicable.



Tax Residency Programmes

MALTA GLOBAL RESIDENCY PERMIT (GRP)

A remittance-based tax residency programme that provides both residency rights and tax residency benefits to non-EU nationals. The minimum annual tax payment in Malta is €15,000. This includes the first €100,000 of income that is remitted to Malta, while any income remittances above this threshold are taxed at 15%.

Malta does not apply income tax to foreign-sourced income unless it is remitted to Malta, and there is no tax on capital and savings remitted to Malta and no capital gains tax on assets held outside Malta. Malta has no inheritance tax.

There is no minimum annual stay requirement, but Malta does require applicants to not reside in any other single country for more than 183 days each year.

THE RESIDENCY PERMIT (TRP)

Provides EU nationals with the same benefits as the GRP detailed above.

The Malta Ordinary Residence Programme

The Ordinary Residence Programme (ORP) is available to EU/EEA and Swiss citizens and provides qualifying applicants residency rights in Malta combined with a special tax status.

QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

To qualify applicants are required to:

- Be economically self-sufficient, with a minimum annual income of €14,000 for an individual and €23,300 for a married couple.
- Rent or purchase a place of residence in Malta.
- Have private health insurance
- Have valid travel documents

Non-domiciled ordinary residents of Malta whose foreign annual income exceeds €35,000, are also required to pay a minimum of €5,000 per annum to the Malta Revenue Department.

The Malta Retirement Programme

The Retirement Programme (RP) provides qualifying applicants residency rights in Malta combined with a special tax status.

QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

To qualify applicants are required to:

1. Be in receipt of a qualifying international pension, all of which is received in Malta and constitutes at least 75% of his chargeable income.*
2. Be in possession of sufficient financial resources to support themselves and any accompanying dependants.
3. Investment in property valued to at least €275,000 (€220,000 in Gozo or the South of Malta) or
4. Establish a rental contract for at least €9,600 (€8,750 in Gozo or the South of Malta)
5. Pay a minimum annual tax contribution of €7,500 in respect of the beneficiary, plus €500 for every dependent and/or member of household staff.
6. Be a fit and proper persons, due diligence tests are applied
7. Demonstrate they can communicate in English or Maltese
8. Spend an average of more than 90 days a year in Malta over a 5-year period
9. Not spend more than 183 days per annum in any other single country
10. Have private health insurance with coverage across the EU
11. Have valid travel documents

** Qualifying pensions include periodic payments paid to a former employee in respect of past employment, received as lifetime or temporary annuities, as well as regular income from an occupational retirement scheme, a personal overseas retirement plan and/or insurance policies.*





Portugal

The Portuguese Republic – Portugal

A leading country for individuals and families seeking an alternate residence, Portugal provides a stable political and social environment, clear and transparent tax rules, good infrastructure, a favourable investment climate and an excellent quality of life.

Whether applicants wish to establish Portugal as their primary place of residence or a second or alternative option, Sovereigns highly experienced Portugal based team provide all-encompassing solutions to meet their individual requirements.

Residency by Investment Programme

PORTUGAL GOLDEN VISA RESIDENCE PERMIT (GVRP)

With an average minimum stay requirement of only 7 days per annum, the Portugal Golden Visa Residency Permit (GVRP) provides qualifying non-European investors and their qualifying dependants, full rights residency rights.

To qualify applicants can choose from one of the following qualification options:

1. Invest €500,000 in a Golden Visa qualifying investment fund
2. Establish a single-shareholder private limited company creating at least 10 sustainable jobs in Portugal.
3. Invest €500,000 towards the incorporation of a new company or into an existing company, creating 5 new jobs or maintaining a minimum of 10 jobs, 5 of which are permanent.
4. Donate €250,000 to an accredited institution conducting qualifying projects to, or in support of, artistic production, or the maintenance or recovery of cultural heritage.
5. Invest or donate €500,000 in an accredited public or private institution involved in qualifying scientific research that will benefit the national scientific and technological sector.

The minimum investment amounts applicable to options 4, and 5 may be reduced by up to 20% when applicable to entities in a low-density territory referred to as NUTS III, with less than 100 inhabitants per Km² or a per capita GDP of less than 75% of the national average.

Financially Independent Visa Programme

PORTUGAL PASSIVE INCOME (D7) VISA

The Portugal D7 or Passive Income Residency Visa provides residency status to non-EU citizens who intend to relocate to Portugal and who have a reasonable regular passive income.

The key requirement for making a successful application is proof of regular passive income, this may be derived from pension, rental, dividends or certain categories of investment income. Employment related income does not apply.

Minimum requirements vary depending upon the number dependants the main applicant wishes to include. In 2026 this equates to a minimum annual income of €11,040 for the main applicant, €5,520 for their spouse and €3,312 for each dependent child.

It is also advisable to hold a minimum amount equal to 12 months' income within a Portuguese bank account.

Business Start Up, Investment Programmes

PORTUGAL IMMIGRANT ENTREPRENEUR (D2) VISA

The Portugal Immigrant Entrepreneur (D2) Visa is ideal for business professionals and entrepreneurs who wish to establish a new business or would like to establish a branch of their existing business in Portugal.

Applications are assessed on the local social and economic benefits of the proposed business activity, with preference given to those that create local employment opportunities.

To qualify applicants must provide:

- A structured business plan demonstrating the benefits of the proposed business, that is viable and sustainable
- Proof they have established a Portuguese company or have the financial resources to do so
- Evidence they have the financial ability to sustain the company and that economic substance is attributed to the company, aka employing individuals and performing activities in the country.
- The ability to support themselves and their dependants outside the proposed company
- EU-wide health insurance cover

Applicants are required to spend a minimum of 4 months in the Portugal during the first year, and at least 6 months per year during each subsequent 3-year period.

Tax Residency Programme

The implications of tax are attributed to any of the D visa's available. D7, D2, D8 and or D3 being the most common used. Hence tax guidance and assessments of these both on a personal and or corporate are essential.

The Golden Visa is not attributed to a taxable event if on a fund basis and the day count of less than 183 days is adhered to.

Guidance is provided by our highly experienced Portugal team, advising clients in Portugal for three decades on the fiscal landscape of the country.





United Arab Emirates (UAE)

United Arab Emirates (UAE)

A leading country for individuals and families seeking to establish a place of residence in the Middle East, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) provides a stable political and social environment, clear and transparent tax rules, good infrastructure, a favourable investment climate and an excellent quality of life.

Long-Term Residence (LTR) Visas

The UAE Long-Term Residence (LTR) or Golden Visa is a residence permit that enables foreign nationals to live, work or study in the UAE, while enjoying a wide range of benefits, which include a long-term, renewable residence visa valid for up to 10 years, with no requirement to have a local sponsor and no requirement to spend six months or more in the UAE.

Successful applicants can sponsor family members, including spouse and children regardless of their age, an unlimited number of domestic helpers and, should the primary holder of the Golden Visa die, family members can remain in the UAE until their permits expire.

Residency by Investment Visa

The Real Estate Investor Golden Visa option offers a 10 & 2-years visa ideal for those who own or wish to invest in property in the UAE.

10 Year Renewable Golden Visa – Applicants are required to invest a minimum AED of 2,000,000 in local real estate.

2 Year Renewable Golden Visa – Applicants are required to invest in local real estate. Since May 2026, sole owners are not required to meet a minimum investment value. Joint owners are required to invest a minimum of AED 400,000 each.

Business Start Up and Investment Programmes

INVESTORS IN PUBLIC INVESTMENTS

An investor is also able to qualify for the Golden Visa through public investments. To qualify investors must provide evidence that they have invested at least AED2 million in either of:

- A UAE-accredited financial deposit or qualifying investment fund.
- A UAE-based company.

Alternatively, applicants can provide proof that they have made a minimum annual tax payment of AED250,000 for two years prior to the application.

ENTREPRENEURS

Entrepreneurs may qualify for a five-year Golden Visa if they own an economic project of a technical nature or based on risk and innovation. They will also require an approval letter from each of the following:

- An auditor in the UAE stating that the project value is not less than AED500,000
- The authorities in the Emirate stating that the project is of a technical nature or based on risk and innovation.
- An accredited business incubator in the UAE to establish the proposed activity.

Self-Sufficiency / Financially Independent Visas

UAE RETIREMENT VISA

Retirees over the age of 55 or individuals who have worked for 15 years or more inside or outside of the UAE are eligible to apply for a 5 year retirement visa

- Make a financial deposit of no less than AED 1,000,000 within the UAE
- Own one or more real estate properties in the UAE value at no less than AED 1,000,000
or
- Make a financial deposit of no less than AED 1,000,000 within the UAE
- Have a fixed annual income that is no less than AED 180,000 (AED 240,000 in Abu Dhabi) or its equivalent in foreign currencies

UAE REMOTE / VIRTUAL WORK RESIDENCE VISA

Non-UAE nationals employed outside the UAE are eligible to apply for a Virtual Work Visa. This one-year visa allows foreigners to enter and live in the UAE under self-sponsorship. To qualify, applicants must provide evidence that:

- They work remotely for an organisation outside the UAE.
- Receive a monthly income of USD3,500 (or its equivalent in foreign currencies).





Alternative Long Term Residency Programmes

SPECIALIST TALENT VISA

Skilled professionals and executive directors employed in the UAE, who have a minimum bachelor's degree in the field of Science, Engineering, Health, Education, Business and Management, Information Technology, Law, Sociology and Culture, may be eligible to apply for a Specialist Talent Visa.

EXCEPTIONAL TALENT VISA

Medical professionals and scientists, inventors, creative people in the fields of culture and art, athletes, specialists in engineering and science, may also qualify Exceptional Talent Visa.

OUTSTANDING STUDENTS AND GRADUATES

Students and graduates who have achieved outstanding results in high school, universities in and outside the UAE may qualify for an Outstanding Student and Graduate Visa.

BLUE VISA

The 10-year Blue Visa allows individuals working in environmental protection, sustainability, climate change, and renewable energy to live in the UAE without the need for a local sponsor.

Tax Residency Programme

ESTABLISHING TAX RESIDENCY IN THE UAE

The UAE does not apply personal income tax and, until recently, there was no domestic legislative definition of personal tax residence. As of 31 March 2023, however, individuals will be deemed to be tax resident in the UAE if:

- The individual's usual or principal place of residence is in the UAE and the centre of their financial and personal interests is in the UAE, or other conditions prescribed by the Minister, or
- The individual has been physically present in the UAE for a period of 183 days or more in a 12-month period, or
- The individual has been physically present in the UAE for a period of 90 days or more over a 12-month period and is a UAE citizen, UAE resident or GCC national who either has a permanent place of residence in the UAE or carries out a job or business in the UAE.





The Middle East

Business Start Up and Investment Programmes

ESTABLISHING A COMPANY AND RESIDENCY IN THE MIDDLE EAST?

There are numerous options through which a foreign investor can establish a business and residency in the Middle East. Subtle differences to local rules and regulations apply.

Utilising our local teams experience and expertise of company registration in the Middle East, the Sovereign Group will help you determine the best fit for you. We have a strong physical presence in the region with offices based in Abu Dhabi, Bahrain, Dubai, Oman, Qatar and Saudi Arabia.

While the UAE has played a pivotal role in driving the residency programmes offerings for the region, most GCC countries have Golden Visa regimes or long-term visa options of their own.

Bahrain

Bahrain Golden Visa can be obtained through many of the same avenues as the UAE Golden Visa. Investments into real estate of BHD 130,000, retirees with a monthly income of BHD 4,000, expats with a 5-year working history in Bahrain who earn a minimum of BHD 2,000 per month and skilled individuals for contributions to their professional fields. Many of the unique benefits include easy bank account opening, family residency inclusion and no minimum stay requirements.

Oman

Investors can qualify for Omans 10 Year Golden Residency Programme with a minimum investment of OMR 200,000 in qualifying local company establishment, property, listed shares, bonds, deposits, job creation, and companies meeting foreign investment law.

Qatar

Qatar's real estate investor visa can be accessed in one of two ways. Category 2 is a 5-year renewable property investment of a minimum of USD200,000 in which the applicant can live and work in Qatar without a sponsor. Category 1 requires a higher minimum investment of USD 1,000,000 in a single or collective properties. This higher investment allows the visa holder Permanent Residency (PR) and can benefit from privileges such as public healthcare, education and select commercial investment opportunities.

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia Premium Residency Permit (PRP) can be obtained through many of the similar avenues of other Golden Visa regimes across the region. High-earning skilled professionals, Investment (SAR7 million) into businesses that promote economic diversification, entrepreneurs with MISA accredited investment of minimum SAR400,000, specialised talents in sport, arts or culture and real estate investments totalling SAR4,000,000. Targeted to high-net-worth individuals, the Saudi PRP requires one-off fees based on duration of stay. Limited duration residency is valid for 5 years and is renewable yearly for a fee of SAR100,000.

Permanent Residency is a one-time fee of SAR800,000 without the need for renewal.

The UAE, Oman, Qatar, and Bahrain all offer Investor/ Partner visas which operate similarly to the traditional employment visa but through company setup the applicant can obtain a 2-year renewable visa for their business investment.

Sovereign provides a complete range of company formation and residency solutions to help entrepreneurs turn business ideas into full-fledged companies. In addition to helping with the setup and incorporation process, our team also assist in processing the necessary documentation for your dependant's residency permits. We also facilitate and manage the employment visa process for your employees, taking the stress away from you and ensuring a swift and efficient transition for the team.

The Middle East provides a range of company set up options to suit all requirements, including a:

- **Branch Office**
- **Trade Representative Office**
- **Professional Service Licence**
- **Free zones**





Mauritius

The Republic of Mauritius

Often referred to as the 'Jewel of the Indian Ocean', the Republic of Mauritius is a small group of islands about 800 km east of Madagascar. Almost entirely surrounded by coral reefs and with a maritime subtropical climate, Mauritius has become a popular tourist destination and a highly sought-after location for foreign investors seeking a platform between Africa, Asia and the rest of the world.

Mauritius has a mixed developing economy based on manufacturing, agriculture, tourism, financial services, with ICT also growing in importance. Gross domestic product is now among the highest in Africa and Mauritius is ranked first in Africa and 13th worldwide in the 2020 World Bank Ease of Doing Business Report 2020.

Mauritius has attracted a wide range of settlers, who have brought their own cultural influences and have made Mauritius a vibrant and inclusive country. English and French are considered the official languages but Creole, a French-based patois, is the lingua franca. Mauritians are commonly multilingual.

Most of the population is concentrated on the main island of Mauritius, which hosts Port Louis, the capital and largest city. Mauritius has a good transport infrastructure. The road system is well developed and there are direct flights to Mauritius from 26 cities in 19 countries.

Offering political and social stability, a low-cost standard of living, a business-friendly environment and tax efficiency for both individuals and businesses, Mauritius is an ideal location for those looking to establish a new or alternative country of residency in which to live, work or retire.

Residency by Investment Programmes

RESIDENCY BY PROPERTY ACQUISITION

The Residency by Property Acquisition Permit is available to those invest who invest at least US\$375,000 in one of the following real estate investment categories:

- **Integrated Resort Scheme (IRS):** Qualifying projects larger than 10 hectares
- **Real Estate Scheme (RES):** Qualifying projects smaller than 10 hectares on freehold land
- **Property Development Scheme (PDS):** Social and ecological impact-focused projects
- **Smart City Scheme (SCS):** Multipurpose eco-communities
- **Invest Hotel Scheme (IHS):** New or existing hotel units
- **Ground + 2 Apartment Scheme (G+2):** Condominium developments at least two floors above ground

A residency by property acquisition permit is granted for so long as they hold the property.

Financially Independent Visa

RETIRED NON-CITIZEN RESIDENCE PERMIT

The Retired Non-Citizen Residence programme provides a 10-year Residency Permit to applicants who are at least 50 years and can demonstrate they are financially secure and able to transfer USD2,000 per month, or a total of USD 24,000 per annum to Mauritius.

Holders are eligible to renew the permit upon expiry, subject to providing evidence that they have met the minimum income transfer requirements during each of the previous 10 years.

Retired permit holders are also eligible to apply for a 20-year Permanent Residency Permit (PRP) after five years, provided they have transferred at least USD 200,000 or its equivalent in freely convertible foreign currency, during the 5 years immediately preceding the application.

Residency by Investment In Business and Entrepreneurship

Investment and entrepreneurship have made Mauritius one of the most dynamic developing countries of sub-Saharan Africa and of the Indian Ocean. The country has been consistently growing its economy and attracts investors from around the world.

To further open the Mauritian market to investors, foreign expertise and with a view to long-term stability, the government offers a 10-year Residency Permit to those who meet one of the following Occupation Permit categories:

1. INVESTOR PERMIT

Available to a shareholder and director of a company incorporated in Mauritius under the Companies Act 2001, an Investor is eligible to apply for an Investor Occupation Permit under the following options:

- **Option One** – For individuals who invest USD50,000 into a new Mauritius-based business that has the potential to generate a minimum turnover of 1.5 million rupees in year 1, and a cumulative turnover of 20 million rupees by year 5 of registration.
- **Option Two** – For individuals who invest USD100,000 into a new Mauritius-based business that has the potential to generate a minimum turnover of 1 million rupees in year 1, and a cumulative turnover of 15 million rupees by year 5 of registration.

Holders of an Investor permit are eligible to renew the permit after 10 years, provided the company has achieved a minimum annual gross income of at least MUR5 million as of the sixth year of registration.

Holders are also eligible to apply for a 20-year Permanent Residency Permit (PRP) after five years, provided the company has achieved a cumulative turnover of MUR 75 million during any consecutive five-year period, immediately preceding the application.

2. SELF-EMPLOYED AND ENTREPRENEURS PERMIT

Available to self-employed business owners who make an initial transfer of USD50,000 to their own Mauritius company bank account and provides three letters of intent, including two from local clients.

Holders are eligible to renew the permit after 10 years, subject to a minimum annual business income of MUR750,000 in year one and a cumulative turnover MUR6 million by year five of registration.

They are also eligible to apply for a 20-year Permanent Residency Permit (PRP), provided they have generated a cumulative business turnover of MUR 15 million during the 5 years immediately preceding the application.

3. INNOVATIVE START-UPS

The Innovator Permit seeks to encourage an innovative ecosystem in Mauritius by welcoming ambitious entrepreneurs and startups who have Research and Development as a core aspect of their activities. Investors have a unique opportunity to test and scale up ideas into innovative products or services, by leveraging local support networks.

This category does not have a minimum investment requirement. Instead, applicants are required to submit their innovative project to the Economic Development Board for evaluation and approval **OR** register with an incubator provider accredited by the Mauritius Research and Innovation Council.

Residency by Profession

Mauritius has always been a welcome home for foreign professionals with unique skills and talents. From dynamic sectors like technology and innovation, information and communication, healthcare, tourism, finance, trade, to real estate, Mauritius offers opportunities for expatriates to explore the Mauritian job market under two qualifying categories:

1. PROFESSIONAL PERMIT

Available to those employed locally by a multinational or local company, provided they have a contract of employment with a minimum monthly basic salary of MUR 30,000.

Depending upon the duration of the contract of employment, the Professional Permit is valid for a maximum of 10 years.

After five years permit holders are eligible to apply for a 20-year Permanent Residency Permit (PRP), provided they have received a basic monthly salary of at least MUR 400,000 for the five consecutive years immediately preceding the application for the PRP.

2. YOUNG PROFESSIONAL PERMIT

Mauritius opens its doors and employment market to foreign students who have studied at a local tertiary education institution.

Qualifying applicants are eligible for a maximum 3-year Occupation Permit, provided they secure an employment contract with a monthly basic salary of at least MUR 25,000.

Taxation of Individuals

An individual is deemed to be a tax resident of Mauritius in the following instances:

- They are domiciled in Mauritius, unless their permanent place of residence is outside Mauritius.
- They have spent a combined total of 270 days or more in Mauritius during the last 3 years.
- They have spent more than 183 days in Mauritius during any tax year.

All income generated in Mauritius is subject to Mauritian income tax and those deemed tax resident are subject to Mauritian income tax on their worldwide income. However, income derived from outside Mauritius is only taxable if it is remitted to Mauritius.

On the 1st of July 2025, the following income tax rates apply:

EARNINGS FROM	TO	RATE
MUR 0	MUR 500,000	0%
MUR 500,001	MUR 1,000,000	10%
MUR 1,000,001	and above	20%

Mauritius does not apply Capital Gains, Wealth, Inheritance, Estate or Gift taxes.



PASSPORT

**Citizenship
Programmes**

New or Alternate Citizenship

Obtaining a new or alternate citizenship provides applicants and their qualifying dependants numerous benefits, including:

- New citizenship that can be passed down to future generations.
- Governmental protections, including security and legal rights.
- The right to reside, settle, work and stay indefinitely in your chosen country.
- Visa-free or visa on arrival access to up to 186 countries.
- Greater freedom of movement, for travel residence and/or work
- Access to excellent education and healthcare systems.
- The option to maintain dual citizenship.
- Multiple personal and corporate tax concessions.

Types of New or Alternate Citizenship Options and Legislation

The Sovereign Group offers a range of citizenship solutions that can be categorised as follows:

- **Citizenship By Investment (CBI) Programmes** provide qualifying applicants citizenship in 3 to 18 months, in exchange for a range of investment and donation options.
- **Citizenship by Merit Legislation** provides a discretionary pathway where a country grants nationality to individuals for exceptional achievements, talents, or service, rather than just investment or long-term residence. It rewards outstanding merit in fields such as science, business, sports, or arts that provide significant value to the nation.

Please us representative for further information relating to countries with citizenship by merit legislation.

- **Citizenship Through Naturalisation**, the legal process by which a non-citizen may qualify to acquire citizenship of that country after a certain amount of time holding legal residency status. The rules of naturalisation vary from country to country but typically include a promise to obey and uphold that country's laws and include additional requirements, such as having proved a significant commitment to and connection to the country, an adequate knowledge of the national language and culture.

Please contact us for further information relating to citizenship through naturalisation.

Citizenship by Investment (CBI) Programmes

CARIBBEAN CITIZENSHIP BY INVESTMENT PROGRAMMES

Caribbean Citizenship by Investment (CBI) Programmes are highly sought after by those who wish to secure an alternative passport, to expand their citizenship rights, estate planning options, their ability to travel worldwide, whether that be for personal or business reasons and/or, as an insurance policy in case the situation in their home jurisdiction takes a turn for the worse.

Caribbean CBI programmes provide successful applicants with the option to live and work in their chosen country, tax efficiency, freedom of movement within member states of The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and visa free or visa upon arrival access to a up to 155 countries around the world.

The Sovereign Group is partnered with highly experienced, government authorised legal and application processing partners with offices in the Caribbean and the Middle East. Together we provide full guidance and assistance with the preparation and processing of CBI applications in the following Caribbean countries:

- Antigua & Barbuda
- Dominica
- Grenada
- Saint Lucia
- Saint Kitts and Nevis

CARIBBEAN CBI PROGRAMME BENEFITS

Caribbean CBI programmes provide investors and their dependents with a broad range of benefits, which include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Grant of citizenship, typically within three to six months
- Minimum qualifying investment of USD200,000*
- Multiple investment options – government donation, bonds or real estate
- Option to include dependent family members under a single investment
- Visa-free travel or visa-upon-arrival access to up to 155 countries worldwide
- No minimum stay/residency requirements
- Protection of business and/or personal assets
- No income tax
- No inheritance, estate, or wealth taxes



Alternative Residency and Citizenship Programme Options

The Sovereign Groups global network of professional service partners enables us to assist clients with the development and implementation of alternate or second residency and citizenship strategies in the following additional countries:

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

- EB-5 Immigrant Investor Programme

PORTUGAL

- Highly Qualified Activity (HQA) Visa Programme

GREECE

- Golden Visa – Invest a minimum of €250,000 into qualifying property
- Financially Independent Persons (FIP) Residency Permits
- Digital Nomad Visa
- Non-Dom Tax Regime for Investors
- Non-Dom Tax Regime for Retirees

ITALY

- Investor Visa
- Elective Residency Visa
- Representative Office Visa
- Tax Programmes – High Net Worth Individual (HNWI) Flat Tax Regime and the Southern Italy Flat Tax Regime

SPAIN

- Non-Lucrative Visa
- Digital Nomad Visa
- Special Regime for Displaced Workers (The Beckham Law)

LATVIA

The Latvia Golden Visa Programme – A minimum investment of € 60,000 in an operational Latvian company, €250,000 in property or 5-year non-interest-bearing government bonds or €280,000 in a 5-year bank deposit account.

PANAMA

- Qualified Investor Permanent Residency Programme – A minimum investment of US\$ 300,000 into qualifying property
- Friendly Nations Visa Programme



Sovereign Group Residency and Citizenship Planning Services

The process of obtaining citizenship or residency consists of a series of important steps that need to be implemented carefully and at the right time. Sovereign has a wealth of international and local expertise and a high success rate of delivering grants of residency or citizenship within a minimum time frame.

Sovereign will assist clients to identify the most suitable programme to match their individual circumstances and requirements and will advise on the most effective way to meet the investment criteria. Sovereign will then manage each step of an application and structuring of the investment to ensure that all submissions are executed correctly and at the right time.

Through our global office network, Sovereign can provide clients with a seamless service in both their current location, as well as in the target country for residence or citizenship. Each country has a different set of requirements that applicants must fulfil but the following requirements are common to all such programmes:

- Applicants are required to have a clean criminal record
- Applicants are required to show the legal source of their income and/or investment funds
- Applicants are required to clearly demonstrate that they meet their chosen programmes qualifying requirements

Sovereign only works with investors who have passed its internal due diligence checks, which are similar to those used by the government authorities. Police clearance records from authorities in the applicant's country of origin and in country/countries where the applicant has resided must be provided at the preliminary stage.

Applications will have to be submitted in the correct language and any documents in another language will need to be accompanied by an authenticated translation. All documents must be submitted in original or be officially certified. Certifications should be authenticated by an apostille or validated by the appropriate government department.

Sovereign or its professional partners will assist with identifying the best available options for investment, provide a legal overview of purchase agreements, relevant documents or both, and advise on any tax implications. We will also run a pre-clearance check with the responsible authorities and, where necessary, assist with the incorporation of holding company structures.

Sovereign's CBI and RBI Services

In respect of application submissions, Sovereign will:

- Assist with the preparation of all required documents
- Check the citizenship/residency application packs to ensure they are complete and up to standard
- Monitor the status of the applications and provide continuous follow-up.

Once residency or citizenship is granted, Sovereign or its professional partners will assist with the process of obtaining the passport, residency or identity card for the main applicant and all family members.



International Mobility, Private Client and Corporate Services

Sovereign works closely with applicants during each stage of the planning and implementation process. When combined and managed correctly, the following Sovereign Group services enable individuals and families to develop and implement a comprehensive, flexible and tax efficient international Mobility, Private Client and Corporate Service strategy:

- International residency, tax residency and citizenship planning
- International corporate establishment and management
- Personal and corporate banking
- Tax Planning
- Trusts and foundations
- Estate and succession planning
- International retirement plans
- Wealth management
- International life and medical insurances
- Yacht and Aircraft registration and management Services

Strategies are developed and implemented in accordance with each client's specific needs. Comprehensive quotations will be provided during the planning process.





Contact Us

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Bahrain ▪ Cyprus ▪ Gibraltar ▪ Guernsey ▪ Hong Kong
Isle of Man ▪ Malta ▪ Mauritius ▪ Oman ▪ Portugal ▪ Qatar
Saudi Arabia ▪ Singapore ▪ South Africa ▪ Switzerland
United Arab Emirates – Abu Dhabi, Dubai ▪ United Kingdom – London, Chester

An aerial night view of a city, likely London, with a large, illuminated wing structure in the foreground. The city lights are visible in the background, and the sky is dark with some light clouds. The wing structure is a large, white, curved shape that extends from the bottom left towards the center of the image. The city lights are a mix of yellow and white, creating a dense pattern of light points. The sky is a deep blue-grey color, with some lighter clouds near the horizon. The overall scene is a high-angle, wide shot of a city at night, with a prominent, illuminated wing structure in the foreground.

[SovereignGroup.com](https://www.SovereignGroup.com)

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