IMMIGRATION

Residence permit to develop a business project

Temporary residence and self-employment work authorization

By **Aray Asociados Editorial Team** Published September 26, 2023

The content of this page is for guidance purposes only. Only the provisions set out in the regulations in force at the time of submitting the application shall apply.

DURATION AND RENEWAL	UPDATED
Initial duration: The initial authorization is valid for 1 year.	**November 14, 2026**

Topics: Self-employment | Entrepreneurship | Work

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01 Description

The temporary residence and self-employment work authorization allows nationals of third countries to reside legally in Spain and engage in economic activity on a self-employed basis, that is, as self-employed professionals (autónomos) or business owners. This permit is regulated by immigration legislation and is subject to specific conditions regarding financial means, the viability of the business project, and compliance with applicable sectoral regulations.

02 Advantages

- Allows you to carry out an independent economic activity in Spain
- Possibility of family reunification once the requirements are met
- Access to the Social Security system and healthcare coverage
- Renewable and with the option to obtain long-term residence

03 Who can apply? (including family members)

Profile of the main applicant:

- Non-EU foreign nationals who wish to settle in Spain to carry out a professional or business activity independently.

Who must be the main applicant:

- The foreign individual who will engage in the economic activity as a self-employed worker.

Family members who may accompany the applicant in the same application:

- It is not possible to include family members in the initial application. Family reunification must be requested at a later stage, in accordance with the applicable regulations on reunification.

04 Requirements

For the residence and self-employment work visa (from the country of origin):

- ✓ Not be unlawfully present in Spanish territory
- ✓ Have no criminal record in Spain or in previous countries of residence
- ✓ Not be listed as inadmissible in the Schengen area
- ✓ Have sufficient financial means for personal support

- ✓ Viable business project
- ✓ Compliance with the legal requirements for opening and operating the business
- ✓ Membership in the relevant professional association (colegiación) or professional authorization, if the activity requires it

For the residence and work authorization (decision of the Oficina de Extranjería, the immigration office):

- ✓ Submission of the business plan
- ✓ Proof of sufficient investment
- ✓ Registration with the corresponding Social Security schemes
- ✓ Municipal or sector-specific licenses depending on the activity

05 Required documents

- ☐ Valid and complete passport
- ☐ Criminal record certificate
- ☐ Detailed business plan
- ☐ Proof of professional qualifications or experience
- ☐ Proof of financial means
- ☐ Documentation demonstrating the planned investment
- ☐ Required authorizations or licenses for the activity
- ☐ If applicable, certificate of professional association membership (colegiación) or professional accreditation

06 Application process

1 **Document gathering**

The applicant must collect all required documents, including the business plan, proof of financial means, and the necessary licenses or authorizations to carry out the activity.

2 **Submission of the application**

The application must be submitted in person at the Spanish diplomatic mission or consular office in the applicant's country of residence.

3 **Decision and visa issuance**

The consulate will issue a decision within a period of up to 3 months. If approved, the self-employment residence and work visa will be issued.

4 **Entry into Spain and final procedures**

The applicant must enter Spain during the validity period of the visa and apply for the Foreigner Identity Card (TIE) within one month of entry.

07 Duration and renewal

Initial duration:

The initial authorization is valid for 1 year.

Renewal:

The renewed self-employment residence and work authorization will be valid for four years, unless a long-term residence authorization applies. It will allow the holder to work both as an employee and as a self-employed person anywhere in the national territory and in any sector of activity. The effects of the renewed authorization will be retroactive to the day immediately following the expiration of the previous authorization.

08 FAQ

Can I apply for this authorization if I am already in Spain as a tourist?

No. This authorization must be applied for from the country of origin; it is not possible to switch to it from a short-term stay.

What is the processing time?

The processing time for the application is three months. This period is counted from the day following the date the application is officially registered for processing.

If the three-month period passes without a decision, the application may be deemed denied through silencio administrativo (administrative silence).

Can I include my family in the same application?

No. Family reunification must be applied for later, once residence has been granted.

Do I need to prove experience or education for the project to be approved?

Yes. You must provide proof of qualifications or prior experience related to the activity you intend to carry out.

09 Applicable law

- Ley Orgánica 4/2000, de derechos y libertades de los extranjeros en España y su integración social
- Reglamento de Extranjería, aprobado por RD 1155/2024

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