

TECH VISA

Tech Visa is a certification program for technology and innovative companies for the purpose of granting visas or residence permits to highly qualified third-country nationals wishing to develop their activity in Portugal.

This Visa aims to ensure that qualified people, especially from the technological field, foreign to the European Union, can access jobs created by Portuguese companies in a simplified way. Thus, the program is aimed at technological and innovative companies, inserted in the global market, wishing to attract qualified and specialized staff to Portugal.

IAPMEI is responsible for the evaluation and certification of companies, under Tech Visa program.

Companies who apply for a tech visa are evaluated and selected based on the following criteria:

- a) To be legally constituted;
- b) Not having debts to the social security and tax administration;
- c) Not having outstanding wages;
- d) Not to be considered as companies under restructuring;
- e) To identify in the application the technical qualification areas preferably desired under the "Tech Visa" program, in accordance with the National Qualifications Listing;
- f) To have a positive net equity, as evidenced by the latest available Simplified Business Information (IES);
- g) To develop an activity of production of internationalized goods and services;
- h) To prove the technological and innovative basis by meeting at least two of the following requirements:
- i) To be a startup created two years ago, at least, that operates in a high or medium-high technology or knowledge intensive sector;
- j) To have more than 15% of highly skilled workers;
- k) To obtain a positive evaluation of the application, on the following evaluation criteria:
 - i. Market potential;
 - ii. Degree of technological innovation;
 - iii. Orientation to foreign markets.

The assessment is based on the market potential and the internationalization orientation of the companies, which cannot have more than 50% of employees hired under Tech Visa at the same time. In the case of companies that mainly develop their activity in the interior territories, this limit is 80%.

The major advantage of Tech Visa is that it allows technology and innovative companies, based in Portugal but inserted in the global market, to be able to have more workers from non-EU countries more quickly, thus eliminating the lack of qualified people in these areas.

To which professionals is this measure intended to?

As far as the public who benefits from this measure is concerned, all professionals who meet the following mandatory requirements for inclusion in the program are covered:

- a) Being a citizen of a third State and not permanently residing in the European Union;
- b) Having a regularized status with the tax administration and social security;
- c) Not having a criminal record;
- d) Being over 18 years old.

One of the following requirements must still be met by the professionals:

- a) Having a V level as minimum qualification;
- b) In case of having level IV qualification - professional technical course, technical competence must be proven, obtained by a minimum experience of 5 years;
- c) Employment contract or promise of one with a minimum duration of 12 months;
- d) Having a minimum annual salary equivalent to 2.5 times the index of Social Support (€ 438,81);
- e) Proficiency in Portuguese or English, according to the duties to be performed.

In this way, it is more effective and efficient to grant a residence permit for highly qualified immigrants.

Tech visa has already certified 179 companies. Of these, 100 companies have already issued terms of liability to hire 695 foreign workers.