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# Residence and visas for company founders

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**In short:** Forming or owning a company abroad does not by itself let you live or work there. Some countries tie residence to the company (the UAE), others run founder or startup routes with an endorsement or committee approval (the UK, Estonia, Singapore). Residence also affects personal and corporate tax, so plan the two together.

## Company ownership is not residence

Most registries let a foreigner be a director or shareholder without any visa, and services such as Estonian e-Residency give digital access, not the right to stay. To live in the country and manage the business there you need a residence permit or long-stay visa in your own right.

## Common route types

- **Company-sponsored residence**: the company you own sponsors you, as with UAE investor or partner visas.
- **Endorsed founder routes**: an approved body assesses the business idea, as with the UK Innovator Founder visa.
- **Startup committee routes**: a national startup body approves the company, as with the Estonian startup visa.
- **Entrepreneur passes**: the labour ministry assesses the venture against innovation criteria, as with Singapore's EntrePass.
- **Investment-based residence**: a minimum investment in a company, property or deposit, such as the UAE Golden Visa.

## Tax consequences

Moving to run your company can make you tax resident there and can move the company's place of management too; see corporate tax residence and permanent establishment. A tax residence certificate is how you prove residence to banks and treaty partners.

## See also

- UAE residence through your company
- UK Innovator Founder visa
- Estonian startup visa
- Singapore EntrePass
- Corporate tax residence

## Frequently asked questions

**Does e-Residency let me live in Estonia?**

No. It is a digital identity for running an Estonian company online; living there needs a visa or residence permit.

**Can my family join me?**

Most routes allow dependants, usually subject to their own applications, fees and proof of funds or housing.

## References

1. Innovator Founder visa . GOV.UK. Accessed November 2026.
2. Residence services . Federal Authority for Identity, Citizenship, Customs and Port Security. Accessed November 2026.
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4. Eligibility for EntrePass . Ministry of Manpower, Singapore. Accessed November 2026.

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