

people:skills:jobs:



Department for
**Employment
and Learning**
www.delni.gov.uk

EURES Northern Ireland - Frequently Asked Questions



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Q What is EURES?

A EURES (European Employment Services) is a cooperation network formed by public employment services. Trade Union and employer organisations also participate as partners. The objective of the EURES network is to facilitate the free movement of workers within the European Economic Area (EEA) (the 27 members of the European Union, plus Norway Liechtenstein and Iceland) and Switzerland.

Q Can I work in Northern Ireland?

A In order to work in Northern Ireland you will need a **National Insurance Number** which is personal to you and no one else should use this number. To obtain this you need to contact one of the following Jobs & Benefit offices and ask for the National Insurance Section –

Portadown	Tel: 028 3839 7200
Shaftsbury Square	Tel: 028 9054 5500
Lisnagelvin	Tel: 028 7131 9300

A If you are a national/resident from one of the following 28 European countries : Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Lithuania, Latvia, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Poland, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom – you can work in Northern Ireland without any restrictions. However, there are transitional arrangements in place for nationals from the A2 countries Romania and Bulgaria.

Employing a Bulgarian or Romanian National in the UK.

From 1st January 2007, as European Economic Area (EEA) nationals, Bulgarians and Romanians will be able to move and reside freely in any EU Member State. They will not require leave to enter or remain to reside legally in the UK. Bulgarian and Romanian nationals wanting to work in the UK will still need to

obtain **authorisation to work** before starting any employment, unless they are exempt from doing so.

This authorisation will normally take the form of an Accession Worker Card (AWC). For certain categories of employment, the Bulgarian or Romanian national will be able to apply to the Home Office for an Accession Worker Card without the need for an employer to apply for a work permit. These categories are:

Airport/ground staff of an overseas airline, “Au pair” placements, Domestic workers in a private household, Ministers of religion, missionaries or members of a religious order, Overseas government employment, Postgraduate doctors, dentists and trainee general practitioners, Private servants in a diplomatic household, Representatives of an overseas newspaper, news agency or broadcasting organisation, Sole representatives, Teachers or language assistants and Overseas qualified nurses coming for a period of supervised practice.

If the employment does not fall into one of these categories, the process for obtaining authorisation to work is in two stages:

- The UK employer first applies for approval of the employment under the work permit arrangements.
- You must then apply for an Accession Worker Card (AWC).

The AWC will be issued for a specific job. If you wish to change jobs, you will need to re register and obtain a new AWC. You must do this for every new job, for a full 12 months, in order to obtain the right to reside as a worker under EU law.

Further guidance for employers is available from the employer helpline on 0845 010 6677 or at: www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk or www.employingmigrantworkers.org.uk

Translated versions of Living and Working in the UK – Rights and Responsibilities of Nationals from Bulgaria and Romania from 1 January 2007 can be downloaded from www.workingintheuk.gov.uk. For copies of this leaflet phone: 0870 521 0224.



Q Do I need a work permit to work in Northern Ireland?

A Nationals from the 28 member states of the European Economic Area (EEA) including Swiss nationals do not need a work permit. They can work in Northern Ireland/UK without any restrictions. Nationals from the A2 countries Romania and Bulgaria will require a work permit for certain job categories.

Jobseekers from outside the EEA are required to have a work permit before they can take up employment in Northern Ireland. It is normally the responsibility of the employer to apply for a work permit on behalf of an employee.

Q Do I need to register when I come to Northern Ireland?

A If you are a National from one of the A8 Countries: Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovenia and Slovakia, you will need to register with the Home Office under the Workers Registration Scheme (WRS) within one month of starting work in Northern Ireland/UK. Applications for registration are the responsibility of the individual.

You must complete a Workers Registration application giving your name, address, date of birth, nationality, and employment details. You can get an application form and further information by telephoning 08705 210 2224. You can download an application form from the Schemes and Programmes link: www.workingintheuk.gov.uk or www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk

With your first application you will need to send a letter from your employer confirming that you are working, along with two passport photos, your passport or ID card and a one off payment of £90 to register. Please note that the cost of the registration fee for the WRS increases yearly, therefore you will need to contact the Home Office, just before applying, to ensure you obtain the right application form and the correct fee, so as to avoid any repercussions. If you do not apply within one month of starting work, your employment will become illegal.

For Employers:

If you employ a worker from one of the A8 countries, you must ensure that the individual is provided with either a contract or letter on company headed paper showing place of work, position held, wage, hours worked and start date, which the individual will need when applying for Workers Registration. Employers will be responsible for ensuring that they are authorised to employ a worker from A8 member states. They should:

- Take and retain a copy of the individuals completed application form as evidence that they have applied for registration within one month of starting work
- Retain a copy of their valid registration certificate

The Home Office Workers Registration Scheme will send you a copy of the registration certificate once approved. WRS does not apply to self-employed workers, however they must register with Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) as soon as they start work in the UK. For further details Tel: 0845 915 4515 or log onto www.hmrc.gov.uk.

Further guidance for employers is available from the Home Office website: www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk

Q Where do I go to look for a job?

A You can check the EURES website for jobs throughout Europe at www.eures.europa.eu. For jobs in Northern Ireland you search under the United Kingdom, region Northern Ireland. You can carry out a direct search for vacancies or post your CV on line. You can also find vacancies in the Northern Ireland's public employment service website – www.jobcentreonline.com or you can visit one of the 35 JobCentres/Jobs & Benefits offices located throughout Northern Ireland. Another great jobsearching website is www.nijobs.com.



Q Do I have to pay for the EURES service?

A EURES is a free service to both jobseekers and employers, subject to the preconditions set down by individual EURES/EEA members.

EURES and the Public Employment Services in Northern Ireland are both part of the Department for Employment and Learning, therefore there is No Cost for our Services.

You can also find details of employment agencies by checking the website www.yell.co.uk or the yellow pages telephone directory and look under Employment Agencies. You can find a list of registered employment agencies under www.rec.uk. The press is another important medium. The main recruitment newspapers are the Belfast Telegraph, Irish News and Newsletter.

Q What is the language spoken in Northern Ireland?

A The official language is English and the ability to speak and write English is an important requirement for jobseekers.

Q What is the Currency used in Northern Ireland?

A The currency is the British Pound.

Q Is it difficult to find somewhere to live in Northern Ireland?

A Accommodation in certain areas of Northern Ireland can be expensive and difficult to find. It is advisable to arrange accommodation before you arrive in Northern Ireland or at least have names and addresses of hostels and estate agents. A list of addresses and telephone numbers can be found in the Yellow Pages directory or at www.yell.com. For information on short term accommodation visit the Northern Ireland Tourist Board website on: www.ni-tourism.com or www.hostelnorthernireland.com or www.nihe.gov.uk

Q How much money do I need?

A In addition to your travel costs you will need enough money to cover food, accommodation and travel expenses until you receive your first payment from your employer. Even if you secure employment immediately you should expect to wait at least a month before your first payment.

Q Can I open a bank account easily?


A Before a bank can let you have any kind of account, they need to be confident that you are who you say you are and live where you say you live. Therefore the most important thing you must do is provide the bank with at least one current proof of your identity and one current proof of address.

Q How does the Healthcare system work?

A Healthcare is provided through the National Health Service (NHS). Most NHS care is free, although items such as prescriptions for medicine and dental care treatment must be paid for. EEA nationals may use NHS facilities in the same way as UK citizens, provided they have the correct E forms or European Health Card. A reciprocal agreement between member states enables you to get urgent medical treatment free in the UK. In order to claim this entitlement you will need to have a European Health Card.

A European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) entitles you to reduced cost, sometimes free, medical treatment that becomes necessary whilst you're in a European Economic Area country or Switzerland. The EHIC replaced the old E111. From 1st January 2006, the E111 is no longer valid.

The quickest and easiest way to apply for your EHIC is online at www.ehic.org.uk. Your card will be delivered to you within 7 days. You can also apply by telephoning 0845 606 2030 or by picking up an application form at a post office.



In order to apply for the EHIC you will need: National Insurance Number, Surname/Family name, Forename and Date of Birth, of each applicant.

An EHIC will last from 3 to 5 years.

Some useful websites for Health and Social Care are www.dh.gov.uk/travellers or www.dhsspsni.gov.uk or telephone 028 9052 0500.

Q Who do I contact in case of an emergency?

A Dial 999 (FREE) and you will be asked if you need Police, Ambulance or the Fire Service. If you are using your mobile phone from your native country, you dial 112 which is the European Emergency number. You can also visit a local police station in case of an emergency. The Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) offices have Language Line and access to translators.

Q Can I change to a different job?

A Yes. Your nearest JobCentre or Jobs & Benefits office can help you find permanent or temporary work. However, if you are a National from one of the A8 Countries and you change jobs within 12 months you will have to re-register with the Home Office so as to prove continuous working in the UK for 12 months. You will not need to pay again to re register. If you are a national from the A2 countries Romania and Bulgaria and you change jobs within 12 months, you will need to re-register with the Home Office in order to obtain the right to reside as a worker under EU law after 12 months continuous working in the UK.

Q Who do I contact regarding driving licences?

A For any queries regarding driving licences contact the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency – www.dvla.gov.uk

Employment Law in the UK

Q How much can I expect to be paid?

A As per UK Government Legislation, you are legally entitled to receive the National Minimum Wage (NMW). There are three effective rates for each respective age group.

16-17 years olds

18-21 year olds

22 years +

For information on the rates of pay for your age or, if you believe you are not receiving the correct NMW, contact the National Minimum Wage helpline (NI) on - 0845 650 0207 or 0845 600 0678. Information is also available at www.direct.gov.uk. The rates of pay levels can only be affected by the provision of accommodation or accredited training.

Q Can my employer make deductions from my wages?

A Employers can only make deductions from your wages for:

Accommodation – The amount the agency can deduct is limited by law. If you are paid no more than the National Minimum Wage or Agricultural Minimum Wage your employer cannot deduct more than £29.05 per week, rising to £30.10 from the 1st October 2007. Full guidance can be found on www.dti.gov.uk or contact Tel: 020 7215 5000. This amount is revised from time to time, so please check website.

If you work in agriculture you must be paid the agricultural minimum wage, after money has been deducted from wages to pay for transport.

No other deductions may be made without your agreement in writing from your contract with the employer.

Your employer may ask you to sign a separate agreement asking you to agree to pay more for your accommodation or other items such as transport. If you are not given any choice about where you live or what services you use, such deductions may be illegal. Before you sign an agreement ask for advice.

Q Where can I get Advice?

A For Legal and Social issues, advice on money, family, daily life, your rights, you can contact your local Citizens Advice Bureau www.citizensadvice.co.uk
The advice can be translated and transmitted in 100 different languages with an interpretation service.

In the local Belfast area you can contact a Citizens Advice Bureau at

11 Upper Crescent, Tel: 028 9023 1120 or

6 Callender Street, Tel: 028 9050 3000

Q Questions about Europe?

Call **Europe Direct** from anywhere in Europe Freephone 00800 678 9 10 11.
You can choose 1 of 23 official languages or you can log on to the Europe Direct website www.ec.europa.eu/europedirect

Tax and National Insurance

Q Will I have to pay UK Tax and National Insurance?

A UK tax will be payable in your wages for UK work. Your employer will make the necessary arrangements and deduct money from your wages. You will not have to pay UK social security contributions (known as National Insurance) if your contract with a temporary work agency was signed in your country of residence and you pay your social security contributions there. You will need a form E101 which will confirm you pay social security contributions to your country of residence and will prevent a demand for UK National Insurance contributions.

If you enter into a contract in the UK, either with an agency or a direct employer, you will have to pay National Insurance to the UK. The employer will make the necessary arrangements and deduct the money from your wages. If you are paying tax and national-insurance you will have a national insurance number, therefore it is important to know this number. If you have any queries regarding Taxation or National Insurance you can contact Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs Tel: 0845 302 1469 or log on to www.hmrc.gov.uk.

Q Will I have to work long hours?

A You cannot be required to work more than 48 hours a week, averaged over 17 weeks (over 26 weeks if you are working on a farm) unless you have agreed in writing that you are willing to do so.

Q Will I get time off for Holidays?

A You are entitled to four working weeks paid holiday a year. So if you have a contract for one years work and work five days a week you are entitled to 20 days paid holiday. If your contract is for six months and you work five days a week, you are entitled to 10 days paid holiday. These days may include public holidays. Check your holiday entitlement with your employer or on your written contract.

If you work in the agricultural sector you are entitled to 22 days paid holiday a year (11 days if you are on a 6 month contract) plus public holidays. If you have not taken all the holidays you are entitled to when your contract ends, your employer must pay you for the days you have not taken.

Q What if the place I work is dangerous or unhealthy?

A Your employer and the employment agency are required by law to ensure a good standard of Health and Safety for you and to give you any training you need to do your work safely. If you have concerns contact the Health and Safety Executive, Tel: 08701 545500 or log on to www.hseni.gov.uk.

Q Anything else?

A Check your contract and any other documents you are asked to sign and make sure you really understand what you are agreeing to before you sign it. If it's not clear ask the agency or employer to explain. Do not sign anything you don't understand.

Never give your passport to anyone else. If someone has your passport and won't give it back, report them to the police, who will help you.

Remember that some work you will be expected to do may be very hard and tiring depending on the job. If you don't think you will be physically up to the job on offer, you should consider another type of work.

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

THE BRANCH:

EURES - (European Employment Services) is a co-operation network designed to facilitate the free movement of workers within the European Economic Area (EEA), offering advice and guidance to both jobseekers and employers.

THE DEPARTMENT:

Our aim is to promote learning and skills, to prepare people for work and to support the economy.

This document is available in other formats upon request.

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