

Ireland's visa policy

Ireland distinguishes between short-stay visas (type C, up to 90 days) and long-stay visas (type D, more than 90 days) for non-EU/EEA/Swiss and non-UK nationals. Visa-exempt nationals (for example many Annex II countries, US, etc.) can enter without a visa for short visits but must still respect immigration permission conditions at the border. Ireland is not part of Schengen; a Schengen visa does not allow entry to Ireland, and an Irish visa does not allow entry to Schengen countries.

Who needs a visa

Citizens of EU/EEA, Switzerland and the UK do not need a visa to enter Ireland, though they may still need to register for residence depending on length and purpose of stay. Many non-EU countries are visa-exempt for short stays, but large groups (including India, Pakistan, Nigeria, etc.) must obtain a visa even for tourism or short visits. Some nationalities are exempt from visa fees but not from the visa requirement itself.

Short stay “C” visa (≤ 90 days)

The standard short-stay “C” visa covers tourism, visiting family/friends, business, short training or study (e.g., short English courses) for a maximum of 90 days. Applicants must show a valid reason for travel, proof of accommodation, full travel itinerary, travel/medical insurance, and sufficient funds without recourse to public funds. A key requirement is evidence of strong ties (family, social, economic) to the country of residence to show you will leave Ireland before your permission expires.

Long stay “D” visa (> 90 days)

A long-stay “D” visa is needed if you intend to study, work, join family, or otherwise remain in Ireland for more than 90 days. After arrival with a D visa, you must register locally with Immigration Service Delivery (ISD) or GNIB to get an Irish Residence Permit (IRP) and an immigration stamp (e.g., Stamp 1, 2, 3, 4) that defines your rights to work, study, or access services. Different D-visa categories (study, employment, family reunification, research, etc.) have tailored document and financial requirements.

Student visa policies (including 2025 fund change)

For long-term study, you apply for a long-term study D visa with a letter of acceptance from a recognised institution, proof of tuition payment (often full or at least €6,000), English-language test scores, medical insurance, and explanations of study and career plans. From mid-2025, financial requirements increased: students generally must now show at least about €12,000 in liquid, traceable funds for living costs, up from €10,000 under previous rules. Indian and other non-EU students on a valid student permission can usually work part-time during term and

full-time during scheduled breaks, and may access post-study work routes (typically 1–2 years) before moving to an employment permit if eligible.

Work and employment-related policies

Non-EU nationals usually need an employment permit (e.g., Critical Skills or General Employment Permit) plus a corresponding D visa before travelling to take up work. Policy updates up to 2025 have expanded the list of eligible occupations (e.g., some social care and technical trades) and reduced the minimum period before changing employers from 12 to 9 months for first-time permit holders. Spouses and partners of certain permit holders now have broader rights to work without their own employment permit, although some dependants must wait 12 months before relocating and others receive non-work Stamp 3 permission.

Visit, processing times, and documentation

Tourist/visitor C visas typically require a completed online application, passport valid at least 6 months beyond intended stay, photos, fee payment, proof of funds, accommodation, travel plans, and letters explaining purpose and intention to return. Typical processing times for C tourist visas are in the range of about 15–25 working days, but can be longer if extra checks are needed or during busy seasons. Official ISD tables regularly publish which application dates are currently being processed for different visa types (tourism, study, employment, etc.), useful for planning.

Immigration permission stamps and residence

After entry, your passport is stamped with an immigration permission type (Stamp 1 for most workers, Stamp 2 for full-time students, Stamp 3 for non-working dependants, Stamp 4 for certain long-term residents and family members, etc.). These stamps, plus the Irish Residence Permit card, govern what you can legally do in Ireland: work, study, start a business, or simply reside without work rights. Extensions or changes of status usually require applying to ISD with updated documents before your current permission expires.