

# Tax & Legal Alert

Bulgaria • Issue 7, 8 April 2008

## International assignment solutions

If your company needs an expatriate to come and work in Bulgaria from a non-EU country, you may need to consider well in advance the timeframe involved in obtaining the necessary permits.



## Employing non-EU nationals – lengthier procedures after EU accession

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This Tax & Legal Alert is produced by PricewaterhouseCoopers' Tax Department.

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To work and live in Bulgaria a non-EU national should have a work permit<sup>1</sup>, visa D, residence permit and ID card. By statute, these should be processed by the authorities within 3.5 months. However, after Bulgaria's EU accession these procedures take much longer and in practice, from filing the work permit application to getting the ID card, you may need to wait 4 - 5 months.

Considering also that during most of the immigration procedures the applicant should not work or even be present in Bulgaria, and that many of the documents may require special certification, it is advisable to start collecting the documents 5.5 - 6 months prior to the expatriate's assignment start date in Bulgaria.

Most of the documents which are required are listed in the law or are known from practice, but additionally, the authorities are allowed, at their own discretion, to ask for other supporting documents. This is usually the main cause of the delays.

Another inconvenience is that the applicant is required to make several personal visits to the offices of the authorities. Representation under a power of attorney is not allowed by the authorities, so a consultant can accompany the individual, but cannot be a substitute for the face-to-face visits.

The immigration process is lengthy and difficult, and regrettably, there are no "fast track" procedures, even for the largest investors in Bulgaria.

PricewaterhouseCoopers has years of experience helping clients with their expatriate staff, and with proper planning and coordination, we can guide you in getting your expatriate staff to Bulgaria.

<sup>1</sup> Work permits are not required for executives, managers or board members of Bulgarian companies, branches or representative offices of foreign companies. The immigration procedures for them are less burdensome.