

DOING BUSINESS IN TÜRKİYE

Guide for Foreign Investors and Expatriates
2026 Edition

Companies · Tax · Employment · Incentives · Permits · Property · Citizenship



Contents

Foreword	3
PART I · Getting Started	
1. Why Türkiye	4
2. Getting Started: Your First 90 Days	5
PART II · Doing Business: Companies	
3. Company Types & Setup	6
4. Accounting & Reporting	8
5. Corporate Tax	9
6. VAT & Other Taxes	11
7. Withholding Tax & Tax Treaties	12
8. Hiring & Payroll	12
9. Investment Incentives	15
10. Tax & Compliance Calendar	17
PART III · Living and Working in Türkiye: Individuals	
11. Personal Tax for Expats	18
12. Work & Residence Permits	19
13. Buying Property	20
14. Banking in Türkiye	21
15. Citizenship by Investment	22
PART IV · Reference	
16. FAQ & Glossary	24
17. How Level International Can Help	26

Foreword

Türkiye sits between Europe, Asia and the Middle East, with a customs union with the EU and a large, young domestic market. It is also a country with its own legal system, tax rules and business culture, and those rules change often.

Level International advises foreign investors, entrepreneurs and expatriates on tax, accounting, legal and payroll matters in Türkiye. We wrote this guide to answer the questions our clients ask first: which company to set up, what taxes apply, how to hire, and how to live and work here as a foreigner.

The guide is a starting point, not a substitute for advice on your own situation. Rates and thresholds reflect the rules in force in September 2026; many TRY thresholds are revalued every year. Talk to our team before you act.

Level International

Navigate foreign lands with us.

1. Why Türkiye

Türkiye combines a domestic market of more than 85 million people with duty-free access to the European Union for industrial goods and easy reach of markets in the Middle East, Central Asia and North Africa.

- » **Location.** Istanbul is a global aviation hub; Europe, the Gulf, Central Asia and North Africa are a short flight away.
- » **Market.** A large, young and urbanised population, with a median age of around 34.
- » **Trade access.** A customs union with the EU since 1996 and a wide network of free trade agreements.
- » **Equal treatment.** Foreign investors have the same rights as Turkish investors and can own 100% of a company, with no minimum foreign capital requirement beyond the general company rules.
- » **Institutions.** Founding member of the OECD, member of the G20 and a candidate for EU membership.
- » **Talent and cost.** A large pool of university graduates and competitive labour costs compared with the EU.
- » **Incentives.** Investment incentive certificates, R&D centre benefits, technology development zones and free zones (see Investment Incentives).

Türkiye also comes with challenges: high inflation in recent years, frequent changes in tax rules and a paperwork-heavy administration. Working with a local adviser from day one keeps these manageable.

HOW LEVEL INTERNATIONAL CAN HELP

Considering Türkiye for your business? Level International can walk you through the options in a first meeting. Contact us at info@level-international.com.

2. Getting Started: Your First 90 Days

Most foreign investors follow the same sequence: tax numbers first, then the company, then the bank, then people and permits.

1. **Get Turkish tax numbers** for each foreign shareholder and manager. Individuals need only a passport; foreign companies need apostilled and translated corporate documents.
2. **Choose the structure** — limited company, joint stock company, branch or liaison office (see Company Types & Setup).
3. **Prepare and legalise documents abroad**: power of attorney, passports, parent company documents, all notarised, apostilled and translated.
4. **Register the company** through MERSIS and the Trade Registry; registration can be completed in a day once documents are ready.
5. **Open a corporate bank account** and deposit the required capital.
6. **Complete tax registration**; the tax office inspects the registered address.
7. **Set up accounting**: statutory books, e-invoice and e-ledger, and a monthly compliance calendar.
8. **Register with social security (SGK)** before the first employee starts work.
9. **Apply for work permits** for foreign managers and staff; the permit also serves as a residence permit.
10. **Obtain the municipal workplace licence** and join the Chamber of Commerce or Industry.
11. **Apply for incentives** before making the investment, where relevant.

HOW LEVEL INTERNATIONAL CAN HELP

Level International can manage the whole process — company formation, tax registration, bank introductions, accounting set-up and work permits — under one engagement.

3. Company Types & Setup

Foreign investors can own 100% of a Turkish company and enjoy the same legal status as local investors. Most choose a limited liability company (LLC, *Ltd. Şti.*) or a joint stock company (JSC, *A.Ş.*); a branch or liaison office suits specific cases. Companies are governed by the Turkish Commercial Code No. 6102 (TCC).

3.1. Types of legal entity

	Limited liability company (Ltd. Şti.)	Joint stock company (A.Ş.)	Branch	Liaison office
Separate legal entity	Yes	Yes	No (part of parent)	No
Minimum capital	TRY 50,000	TRY 250,000 (TRY 500,000 under registered capital system)	None	None
Capital payment	Within 24 months of registration	25% before registration, rest within 24 months	Funded by head office	Expenses paid from abroad in FX
Shareholders	1–50 (individuals or companies)	1 or more, no upper limit	—	—
Management	One or more managers; at least one partner with signing authority	Board of directors (min. 1 member)	Resident branch manager with full authority	Representative
Commercial activity	Yes	Yes	Yes, within parent's scope	Not allowed
Corporate tax	25% on worldwide income	25% on worldwide income	25% on Türkiye-source income	Exempt (no income)
Listing on Borsa İstanbul	Not allowed	Allowed	—	—
Share transfer	Notarised agreement + partners' approval	Endorsement and handover of share certificates	—	—

Other forms (general partnership, limited partnership, partnership limited by shares) exist but are rarely used by foreign investors.

Branch. A branch uses the parent's name with the word "branch" and carries on business within the parent's scope. Profits remitted to head office are subject to 15% withholding tax, which a tax treaty may reduce.

Liaison office. A liaison office may only carry out non-commercial work: market research, collecting information and promoting the parent. It needs a permit from the Ministry of Industry and Technology, granted for up to 3 years and renewable.

3.2. Setting up a company

Incorporation is handled through MERSIS (the Central Registry System) and the local Trade Registry Directorate, which works as a one-stop shop. Once documents are ready, registration can be completed on the same day.

1. Obtain Turkish tax numbers for foreign shareholders and managers.
2. Check the trade name and prepare the articles of association on MERSIS.
3. Sign the articles of association before the trade registry officer or a notary.
4. For a JSC, deposit at least 25% of the cash capital in a blocked bank account; pay the Competition Authority fee (0.04% of capital).
5. File the application with the Trade Registry; the company becomes a legal entity on registration.
6. Prepare the signature declaration of authorised signatories.
7. Certify the statutory books electronically or with a notary and set up e-invoice / e-ledger.

After registration the company must:

- » Register with the district tax office; a tax inspector visits the registered address to confirm it exists.
- » Register with the Social Security Institution (SGK) before any employee starts work.
- » Obtain a workplace licence from the municipality.
- » Join the relevant Chamber of Commerce or Chamber of Industry.

Foreign shareholders' documents must be notarised and apostilled (or legalised by a Turkish consulate) and translated into Turkish. A power of attorney lets the process run without the investor travelling.

HOW LEVEL INTERNATIONAL CAN HELP

Level International's Legal Advisory team handles company formation, branch and liaison office set-up, and corporate changes from start to finish.

4. Accounting & Reporting

Every Turkish company keeps its statutory books in Turkish, in Turkish lira, using the Uniform Chart of Accounts. Companies above size thresholds, and all companies in regulated sectors, must also be independently audited.

4.1. Statutory books

- » **Currency.** Books are kept in TRY. Companies with at least 40% foreign ownership and paid-in capital of at least USD 100 million may apply to keep books in a foreign currency.
- » **Electronic books.** Most companies keep an e-ledger (*e-defter*) and issue e-invoices and e-archive invoices through the Revenue Administration's (GİB) systems. Thresholds for mandatory e-invoicing are set by annual turnover and sector.
- » **Required books.** Journal, general ledger and inventory book (e-ledger for most companies), plus the share register, board / manager resolution book and general assembly meeting book.
- » **Retention.** Records must be kept for at least 5 years under the Tax Procedure Law and 10 years under the TCC.
- » **Inflation accounting.** After years of high inflation, tax-basis inflation adjustment was applied to balance sheets from year-end 2023. The rules for later periods have been amended; confirm the treatment for your fiscal year with our accounting team.
- » **Invoicing in foreign currency.** Invoices between Turkish residents are generally issued in TRY; amounts can be indexed to a foreign currency. Invoices to customers abroad can be issued in foreign currency.

4.2. Financial reporting standards

The Public Oversight, Accounting and Auditing Standards Authority (KGK) sets Turkish Financial Reporting Standards (TFRS, aligned with IFRS). Public-interest entities apply full TFRS; other companies subject to audit generally apply the simplified framework for large and mid-sized entities (BOBİ FRS). Smaller companies follow the Uniform Chart of Accounts and tax rules.

4.3. Who is audited

- » **By size.** A company that exceeds two of three criteria — total assets, annual net sales and number of employees — in two consecutive years is audited from the following year. The TRY thresholds are set by Presidential decision and updated periodically.

- » **By sector, regardless of size.** Companies supervised by the Capital Markets Board, the Banking Regulation and Supervision Agency or the Insurance and Private Pension Regulation and Supervision Agency; companies trading in precious metals; licensed warehouses; and nationwide broadcasters, among others.

4.4. Regular filings

Companies file annual corporate tax returns with financial statements, quarterly advance tax returns, monthly VAT and withholding returns, and monthly social security declarations (see Tax & Compliance Calendar). Large taxpayers may also be subject to full certification by a sworn financial advisor (*YMM*).

HOW LEVEL INTERNATIONAL CAN HELP

Level International's Accounting & Compliance team keeps your books, files your returns and prepares your reports in Turkish and English.

5. Corporate Tax

The standard corporate income tax (CIT) rate is 25% (30% for banks and financial companies), and no company pays less than a 10% domestic minimum tax. A 15% global minimum tax applies to large multinational groups.

5.1. Corporate income tax at a glance

Item	Rule
Standard CIT rate	25%
Banks, financial leasing, factoring, insurance, etc.	30%
Domestic minimum corporate tax (from 2025)	10% of profit before certain exemptions and deductions; the higher of this and regular CIT is payable
Global minimum tax (Pillar Two)	15% for groups with consolidated revenue of EUR 750 million+ (IIR from 2024, UTPR from 2025)
Export income	5-point reduction
Manufacturing income	1-point reduction for industrial registry holders; 12.5% on manufacturing and agricultural income from 2027
Borsa Istanbul IPO (20%+ free float)	2-point reduction for 5 years
Tax year	Calendar year (a different fiscal year may be approved)

Item	Rule
Annual return and payment	By the end of the 4th month after year-end (30 April)
Advance (provisional) tax	Quarterly, by the 17th of the 2nd month after each quarter
Tax losses	Carried forward 5 years; no carry-back

A company with its legal seat or place of effective management in Türkiye is taxed on worldwide income. Other companies are taxed only on Türkiye-source income.

5.2. Deductions and limits

Expenses incurred to earn and maintain business income are deductible, including salaries, rent, depreciation under Tax Procedure Law rates, business travel and statutory taxes. Key limits:

- » **Passenger cars.** Only 70% of running costs are deductible; monthly rent and depreciable purchase value are capped at amounts revalued each year.
- » **Financing expense restriction.** Where borrowing exceeds equity, 10% of the related financing expense is non-deductible.
- » **Thin capitalisation.** Related-party debt above 3 times equity (6 times for related-party banks) is "thin capital"; interest on the excess is non-deductible and treated as a dividend.
- » **Notional interest on cash capital.** Cash capital increases earn a notional interest deduction (50%, or 75% for capital from abroad) for up to five years.
- » **Non-deductible.** CIT itself, tax penalties and late-payment interest, disguised profit distributions and expenses unrelated to the business.

5.3. Main exemptions

- » Dividends received from Turkish companies: fully exempt.
- » Dividends from foreign subsidiaries: exempt subject to shareholding, holding-period and foreign-tax conditions.
- » 50% of gains on the sale of shares held at least 2 years, if kept in a special reserve for 5 years.
- » 25% of gains on real estate acquired before 15 July 2023 and held 2+ years (abolished for property acquired later).
- » Income of qualifying investment funds and REITs, subject to conditions.

5.4. Transfer pricing

Transactions with related parties must be priced at arm's length using OECD methods. Companies file an annual transfer pricing form with the CIT return and prepare an annual transfer pricing report; large groups also prepare a master file and country-by-country report. Profit shifted through non-arm's-length pricing is treated as a disguised profit distribution.

HOW LEVEL INTERNATIONAL CAN HELP

Level International's Tax Advisory team advises on corporate tax planning, transfer pricing and the domestic and global minimum tax rules.

6. VAT & Other Taxes

VAT is charged at a standard rate of 20% on supplies and imports of goods and services in Türkiye; several other transaction taxes apply alongside it.

Tax	Rate
VAT — standard	20%
VAT — reduced	Reduced rates of 10% and 1% apply to specific goods and services, subject to statutory conditions
Stamp tax on contracts and documents	0.189%–0.948% of the value, capped per document (cap revalued yearly)
Stamp tax on payroll	0.759% of gross salary
Banking and insurance transactions tax	5% general (1% or 0% for some transactions)
Resource Utilisation Support Fund (KKDF) on FX loans	3% (under 1 year), 1% (1–2 years), 0.5% (2–3 years), 0% (over 3 years)
Special consumption tax (ÖTV)	Varies; applies to fuels, vehicles, tobacco and alcohol, luxury goods
Digital services tax	7.5% of Türkiye revenue for large digital platforms
Accommodation tax	2% on hotel and short-stay accommodation

VAT. Exports are exempt with a right to refund of input VAT. Where a non-resident supplies services to a Turkish business, the Turkish customer self-accounts for VAT under the reverse-charge mechanism and deducts it in the same month.

Customs. Türkiye is in a customs union with the EU for industrial goods: goods with an A.TR certificate move between Türkiye and the EU free of customs duty. Goods from third countries are subject to the Common Customs Tariff, plus import VAT and, for some products, additional customs duties. Duties are paid when the customs declaration is registered.

HOW LEVEL INTERNATIONAL CAN HELP

Level International's Tax Advisory team supports VAT registration, refunds and reverse-charge compliance.

7. Withholding Tax & Tax Treaties

Payments from Türkiye to non-residents are generally subject to withholding tax at 10% to 20%, which a double tax treaty can reduce or remove.

Payment	Domestic rate	Note
Dividends	15%	Treaty rates are typically 5–15%; no WHT on dividends to Turkish companies
Branch profit remittance	15%	Treaty rates may apply
Interest on loans from non-financial lenders	10%	0% on loans from foreign banks and financial institutions
Royalties and licence fees	20%	Often 10% under treaties
Service fees, including technical services	20%	Often exempt under treaties if there is no permanent establishment
Rent paid to non-residents	20%	

Double tax treaties. Türkiye has more than 90 double tax treaties in force. To apply a treaty rate, the foreign recipient provides a certificate of tax residence; otherwise the domestic rate applies.

HOW LEVEL INTERNATIONAL CAN HELP

Level International's International Tax team reviews cross-border payments and treaty eligibility before you pay.

8. Hiring & Payroll

Hiring in Türkiye means a written contract under Labour Law No. 4857, monthly payroll with income tax, stamp tax and social security withheld, and severance pay for most dismissals. The 2026 gross minimum wage is TRY 33,030 per month.

8.1. Employment contracts

- » Contracts may be fixed-term or open-ended, full-time or part-time, and should be in writing. They are exempt from stamp tax.
- » A probation period of up to 2 months (up to 4 months under a collective agreement) lets either party end the contract without notice or compensation.
- » Discrimination on language, race, sex, political opinion, belief or religion is prohibited.

8.2. Working time and leave

Topic	Rule
Standard working week	Up to 45 hours
Overtime premium	150% of hourly pay (125% where the contract sets a shorter week); or time off in lieu
Overtime cap	270 hours per year; the employee's consent is required
Work on national holidays	Extra day's pay (200% in total)
Annual leave — 1 to 5 years of service	14 working days
Annual leave — 5 to 15 years	20 days
Annual leave — 15+ years	26 days
Employees under 18 or over 50	At least 20 days

8.3. Wages

Wages are paid at least monthly, through a bank account for most employers. A wage agreed in foreign currency may be paid in TRY at the exchange rate on the payment date. The minimum wage is set by the Minimum Wage Determination Commission, normally once a year.

8.4. Ending employment

Length of service	Minimum notice
Under 6 months	2 weeks
6 to 18 months	4 weeks
18 to 36 months	6 weeks
Over 36 months	8 weeks

- » **Notice pay.** The employer can pay wages for the notice period instead of serving notice.
- » **Severance pay.** Employees with at least 1 year of service receive 30 days' gross pay per year of service when dismissed without just cause (and in some other cases). The annual amount is capped at a ceiling revalued twice a year.

- » **Job security.** In workplaces with 30+ employees, an employee with 6+ months' seniority can only be dismissed for a valid reason given in writing. An employee can apply to mediation and then the labour court; if the dismissal is found invalid, the employer must reinstate them or pay 4–8 months' wages plus up to 4 months' idle-time pay.

8.5. Social security and payroll taxes (2026)

Contribution	Employee	Employer
Social security premium	14%	21.75% (reduced by incentives when premiums are paid on time)
Unemployment insurance	1%	2%
Monthly earnings base	TRY 33,030 (floor) to TRY 297,270 (ceiling)	
Stamp tax on gross salary	0.759%	

Income tax on salaries is withheld at progressive rates of 15% to 40% (see Personal Tax for Expats). The portion of salary equal to the minimum wage is exempt from income tax and stamp tax.

Foreign employees and social security. A foreign employee who stays covered by the social security system of a country with which Türkiye has a social security agreement can be exempted from Turkish premiums by filing a certificate of coverage. Otherwise full Turkish contributions apply.

8.6. Hiring foreign employees

A foreign national needs a work permit before starting work (see Work & Residence Permits). Under the Ministry of Labour and Social Security's assessment criteria, an employer generally needs:

- » At least 5 Turkish citizen employees for each foreign employee. This test does not apply to up to five foreign employees in a workplace with net sales of TRY 50 million or more in the previous year.
- » For a company on the balance-sheet basis with at least one year-end balance sheet: paid-in capital of at least TRY 500,000, or net sales of at least TRY 8,000,000, or exports of at least USD 150,000 in the previous year. A newly established company must have paid-in capital of at least TRY 500,000.
- » A salary for the foreign employee of at least a set multiple of the minimum wage, depending on the role (higher multiples for senior managers, engineers and specialists).

New exemptions in 2026. From 3 August 2026, the employment and financial criteria are not applied to in-country applications for up to three foreigners per workplace who have stayed legally in Türkiye for at least one year in the last three years. Foreigners who have lived in Türkiye for at least eight years under a work or residence permit are exempt from the criteria altogether. Until 31 December 2027, workplaces in manufacturing, poultry farming and waste recycling can employ one additional foreigner for every five Turkish employees without meeting the employment criterion, and a similar rule applies to accommodation businesses from 11 March 2026.

Further exemptions apply to shareholders, certain sectors (such as IT specialists) and highly qualified applicants. The criteria are updated frequently; confirm the current rules before filing.

HOW LEVEL INTERNATIONAL CAN HELP

Level International's Outsourcing & Payroll team runs monthly payroll, SGK filings and employment contracts, in English.

9. Investment Incentives

Türkiye replaced its 2012 regional incentive scheme with a new Investment Incentive System in 2025. Support is now tied to the type of investment — technology, strategic, local development or priority sector — and is granted through an investment incentive certificate issued by the Ministry of Industry and Technology.

9.1. Investment Incentive System (2025)

Programme	Aimed at
Century of Türkiye Development Initiative — Technology	High-tech and high value-added investments
Century of Türkiye Development Initiative — Local Development	Regional competitiveness, e.g. food production and livestock
Century of Türkiye Development Initiative — Strategic	Projects meeting minimum value-added and export-ratio criteria
Sectoral — Priority Investments	Sectors designated as priorities
Sectoral — Target Investments	Other eligible manufacturing and service investments (some Istanbul and financial-sector projects excluded)
Project-based incentives and HIT-30	Large projects of at least TRY 2 billion, with tailored packages

Support instruments available under a certificate, depending on the programme:

- » VAT exemption on machinery and equipment
- » Customs duty exemption on imported machinery and equipment
- » Reduced corporate tax until a set share of the investment is recovered
- » Employer's social security premium support
- » Interest or profit-share support on investment loans
- » Land allocation

- » VAT refund on building works for large strategic investments

9.2. R&D and design centres (Law No. 5746)

Companies with at least 15 full-time R&D staff (30 in certain manufacturing sectors), or 10 design staff, can be certified as an R&D or design centre. Benefits include:

- » 100% deduction of qualifying R&D spending from the tax base
- » Income tax exemption on R&D staff wages: 95% for PhD holders, 90% for master's, 80% for others
- » 50% of the employer's social security premium paid by the state
- » Stamp tax exemption on related documents; VAT and customs exemptions on equipment

9.3. Technology development zones (Law No. 4691)

- » Corporate tax exemption on profits from software and R&D carried out in the zone
- » Income tax exemption for R&D and software staff until 31 December 2028
- » VAT exemption on application software produced in the zone
- » Ready office space and university links

9.4. Free zones and organised industrial zones

- » **Free zones** are outside the customs area. Goods can be stored indefinitely and are exempt from customs duties; manufacturers enjoy a corporate tax exemption on production income, and companies exporting at least 85% of their output can pay salaries free of income tax.
- » **Organised industrial zones (OIZs)** offer ready infrastructure, VAT-free land purchases and property tax exemption for 5 years from construction.

9.5. Other support

- » **TÜBİTAK** grants for R&D and innovation projects, from concept to prototype.
- » **KOSGEB** project-based grants and loan support for SMEs.
- » **Export support** from the Ministry of Trade for market research, trade fairs, branding and overseas offices.

Venture capital obligation. Companies claiming more than TRY 2 million in certain deductions or exemptions must invest 3% of the benefit in venture capital funds or start-ups.

HOW LEVEL INTERNATIONAL CAN HELP

Level International's Tax Advisory team assesses eligibility, prepares incentive certificate applications and tracks the conditions afterwards.

10. Tax & Compliance Calendar

Turkish companies file something almost every month. The main recurring deadlines for a calendar-year company are below; when a deadline falls on a weekend or public holiday it moves to the next working day.

When	Filing or payment
Monthly — by the 26th of the following month	Combined withholding tax and social security return (payroll taxes, stamp tax on salaries, SGK premiums) and payment
Monthly — by the 28th of the following month	VAT return and payment
Monthly — by the end of the following month	Form Ba / Bs (purchases and sales above the reporting threshold)
Monthly — by the end of the 3rd month after each month	Upload of e-ledger (e-defter) files and approval certificates
Quarterly — 17 May, 17 August, 17 November	Advance corporate tax return and payment (Q1–Q3)
By 31 March	Annual general assembly / partners' meeting for the previous year
March	Individual annual income tax return (payment in March and July)
By 30 April	Annual corporate tax return, financial statements, transfer pricing form, and payment
May and November	Property tax instalments
January and July	Motor vehicle tax instalments

HOW LEVEL INTERNATIONAL CAN HELP

Level International's Accounting & Compliance team manages this calendar for you and sends a monthly compliance report.

11. Personal Tax for Expats

Individuals resident in Türkiye pay income tax on worldwide income at progressive rates from 15% to 40%; non-residents pay only on Türkiye-source income.

Residence. You are a tax resident if your legal domicile is in Türkiye or you stay more than six months in a calendar year. Foreigners who stay longer only for a specific, temporary assignment or because of force majeure remain non-resident.

Taxable income falls into seven categories: business income, agricultural income, employment income, self-employment income, rental income, investment income (interest, dividends) and other gains such as capital gains.

11.1. 2026 income tax rates — employment income

Annual taxable income (TRY)	Tax on lower limit (TRY)	Rate on excess
0 – 190,000	0	15%
190,000 – 400,000	28,500	20%
400,000 – 1,500,000	70,500	27%
1,500,000 – 5,300,000	367,500	35%
Over 5,300,000	1,697,500	40%

The same rates apply to other income, but the 35% band starts at TRY 1,000,000 instead of TRY 1,500,000.

11.2. Other points

- » **Filing.** Salaried employees generally do not file a return. A return is required if payroll income exceeds TRY 5,300,000, if a second employer pays more than TRY 400,000, or if you receive foreign employment income without Turkish withholding.
- » **Dividends.** Half of dividends from Turkish companies is exempt; the rest is declared (15% withholding is creditable).
- » **Rental income.** Residential rent up to TRY 58,000 a year (2026) is exempt; above that it must be declared.

- » **Capital gains on property.** A gain on real estate sold within five years of purchase is taxable.
- » **Inheritance and gift tax.** 1% to 30%, payable over three years in instalments.
- » **Property tax.** 0.1% of the assessed value for residences, 0.2% for other buildings and 0.3% for land (doubled in metropolitan areas). Residences worth more than TRY 17,711,000 (2026) pay an additional 0.3%–1% on the excess.

HOW LEVEL INTERNATIONAL CAN HELP

Level International's Tax Advisory team prepares personal tax returns and advises expatriates on residence and double taxation.

12. Work & Residence Permits

Foreigners need a work permit from the Ministry of Labour and Social Security before starting work in Türkiye; a valid work permit also counts as a residence permit. Applications are filed online through the Ministry's e-İzin system.

12.1. How to apply

- » **From abroad.** The foreign employee applies at the Turkish consulate in their country of citizenship or residence; the employer completes the online application in Türkiye within 10 days.
- » **From Türkiye.** A foreigner already holding a residence permit valid for at least 6 months can have the employer apply directly online.
- » **Timing.** Extensions can be filed within the 60 days before the permit expires.

12.2. Types of work permit

Permit	Who it is for	Duration
Temporary work permit	Employees of a specific employer	Up to 1 year at first; then up to 2 years, then up to 3 years
Indefinite work permit	Long-term residence permit holders or those with 8 years of legal work	Unlimited
Independent work permit	Self-employed professionals with at least 5 years of legal residence	Set by the Ministry
Turquoise Card	Highly qualified professionals, investors, scientists, cultural and sports figures	3-year transition period, then indefinite

Permit	Who it is for	Duration
Tech Visa	Founders and staff of technology start-ups	Programme-based

Some activities are exempt from a work permit (e.g. short installation or repair work, certain athletes and coaches) and are handled through the e-Muafiyet system. A number of professions are reserved for Turkish citizens.

12.3. Residence permits

Permit	Typical grounds
Short-term residence	Business, investment, property ownership, tourism, scientific research; up to 2 years at a time
Family residence	Spouse and children of a Turkish citizen or of a foreign permit holder
Student residence	Full-time students in Türkiye
Long-term residence	Foreigners who have lived in Türkiye legally for 8 years without interruption

Residence permits are issued by the Presidency of Migration Management. Short-term permits based on property ownership require a minimum property value that is higher in metropolitan cities. Some neighbourhoods are closed to new residence registrations by foreigners, so check the address before signing a lease or purchase.

HOW LEVEL INTERNATIONAL CAN HELP

Level International's immigration team prepares and follows work and residence permit applications for employees and their families.

13. Buying Property

Foreign individuals and foreign-owned Turkish companies can buy real estate in Türkiye, and a transfer can complete within days once the title deed (*tapu*) is ready. A residence permit is not required to buy.

13.1. What you need

- » A Turkish tax number (issued by any tax office on presentation of your passport)
- » Passport and sworn translation
- » A valuation report from a licensed appraiser (mandatory for foreign buyers)
- » Payment through a Turkish bank, which documents the foreign-currency inflow

13.2. Before you buy

- » Check the land registry for mortgages, liens, seizures and annotations.
- » Confirm the property is not in a military or special security zone, where foreigners cannot buy.
- » Foreign individuals may not own more than 30 hectares in total nationwide, or more than 10% of the private land in a district.
- » Nationals of some countries face reciprocity restrictions.
- » Work with a licensed agent and an independent lawyer.

13.3. Costs and taxes

- » Title deed fee: 4% of the declared value, usually split between buyer and seller.
- » VAT may apply to new-build purchases from developers; exemptions exist for certain foreign buyers who bring in foreign currency.
- » Annual property tax (see Personal Tax for Expats).
- » A gain on resale within five years of purchase is subject to income tax.

If you are buying with a view to citizenship, see Citizenship by Investment.

HOW LEVEL INTERNATIONAL CAN HELP

Level International's Legal Advisory team carries out title checks, reviews contracts and represents you at the land registry.

14. Banking in Türkiye

Türkiye has a well-regulated banking sector supervised by the Banking Regulation and Supervision Agency (BDDK), with monetary and exchange-rate policy set by the Central Bank of the Republic of Türkiye. Profits, dividends and capital can be transferred abroad freely, and foreigners can open accounts in TRY and foreign currencies.

14.1. The banking system

- » **Types of banks.** Deposit (commercial) banks, development and investment banks, and participation (interest-free) banks.

- » **Loans.** Banks lend in TRY and foreign currency. Companies can only borrow in foreign currency if they meet FX income or size tests under Decree No. 32; KKDF may apply to FX loans (see VAT & Other Taxes).
- » **Other finance.** Leasing, factoring and financing companies, plus the Credit Guarantee Fund (KGF), which guarantees loans to SMEs.
- » **Capital movements.** Foreign capital is registered through the bank that receives it. Repatriation of profits and sale proceeds is unrestricted once taxes are paid.

14.2. Opening a bank account

Requirements vary by bank; these are the documents usually requested.

Resident foreigners	Non-resident foreigners
Residence permit, work permit or other Turkish ID card	Valid passport
Proof of address (utility bill, rental contract or residence registration)	Turkish tax number
Turkish tax number (the foreigner ID number serves as tax number)	Proof of address abroad, translated if needed

For a **company account**, banks ask for the trade registry gazette, articles of association, signature declaration, tax certificate and ID documents of shareholders and signatories. Banks apply strict know-your-customer checks and may ask about the source of funds and expected transactions.

Opening an account is subject to the bank's internal compliance and KYC procedures; additional documents may be requested.

HOW LEVEL INTERNATIONAL CAN HELP

Level International can prepare the documents banks require and introduce you to banks experienced with foreign clients.

15. Citizenship by Investment

Foreigners, together with their spouse and children under 18, can obtain Turkish citizenship by making one of the qualifying investments below and keeping it for at least three years.

Investment	Minimum amount	Condition
Real estate	USD 400,000	Title deed annotated not to sell for 3 years
Fixed capital investment	USD 500,000	Confirmed by the Ministry of Industry and Technology

Investment	Minimum amount	Condition
Bank deposit	USD 500,000	Held for 3 years
Government bonds	USD 500,000	Held for 3 years
Real estate or venture capital fund shares	USD 500,000	Held for 3 years
Private pension system	USD 500,000	Held for 3 years
Job creation	50 employees	Confirmed by the Ministry of Labour

Process. The investment is certified by the relevant authority; the investor then obtains a short-term residence permit and applies for citizenship. Türkiye allows dual citizenship, so most applicants keep their original nationality.

Thresholds and rules for this programme change periodically. Confirm the current requirements with our team before committing funds.

HOW LEVEL INTERNATIONAL CAN HELP

Level International's citizenship team guides you from choosing the investment to receiving your Turkish passport.

16. FAQ & Glossary

16.1. Frequently asked questions

Can a foreigner own 100% of a Turkish company?

Yes. There is no requirement for a Turkish partner or Turkish manager, and nationality does not restrict who can be a shareholder or director.

How long does it take to set up a company?

Registration itself can be completed in a day. In practice, preparing and apostilling documents abroad and opening the bank account make the full process one to three weeks.

Do I need to travel to Türkiye to set up a company?

No. With a notarised and apostilled power of attorney, a local adviser can complete the process on your behalf.

Which is better, a limited company or a joint stock company?

A limited company is cheaper and simpler and suits most small and mid-sized operations. A joint stock company is better for larger investments, many shareholders, easy share transfers or a future listing.

Does a company need a Turkish-resident director?

No for limited and joint stock companies. A branch needs a manager resident in Türkiye with full authority.

Can I invoice in euros or US dollars?

Invoices to customers abroad can be in foreign currency. Invoices to Turkish customers are generally in TRY, but the amount can be indexed to a foreign currency.

Can profits be sent abroad?

Yes. Dividends and branch profits can be transferred freely after corporate tax and 15% withholding tax, which a tax treaty may reduce.

Does a work permit also give me residence?

Yes. A valid work permit counts as a residence permit. Family members apply for family residence permits.

Can I buy property without a residence permit?

Yes. You need a Turkish tax number, passport and a valuation report; a residence permit is not required.

Do I pay Turkish tax on my income from abroad?

Only if you are a Turkish tax resident — generally after staying more than six months in a calendar year. Double tax treaties then prevent the same income being taxed twice.

16.2. Glossary

Term	Meaning
A.Ş. (Anonim Şirket)	Joint stock company
Apostille	International certification of a public document for use in Türkiye
e-Devlet	The government's online services portal
e-Defter / e-Fatura	Electronic ledger / electronic invoice
GİB (Gelir İdaresi Başkanlığı)	Revenue Administration (tax authority)
İkamet izni	Residence permit
Çalışma izni	Work permit
KDV (Katma Değer Vergisi)	Value added tax
KKDF	Resource Utilisation Support Fund, a levy on certain loans and imports
Ltd. Şti. (Limited Şirket)	Limited liability company
MERSİS	Central Registry System for companies
Noter	Notary public
OSB (Organize Sanayi Bölgesi)	Organised industrial zone
ÖTV (Özel Tüketim Vergisi)	Special consumption tax
SGK (Sosyal Güvenlik Kurumu)	Social Security Institution
Tapu	Title deed; also the land registry office

Term	Meaning
Ticaret Sicil Gazetesi	Trade Registry Gazette, where company registrations are published
Vergi numarası	Tax identification number
YMM (Yeminli Mali Müşavir)	Sworn financial advisor

17. How Level International Can Help

Level International supports foreign investors from the first question to day-to-day compliance, with one team covering tax, accounting, legal and payroll.

Your need	Our service
Choosing and setting up a company, branch or liaison office	Legal Advisory — corporate and commercial
Corporate tax, VAT, transfer pricing, tax treaties, incentives	Tax Advisory — Turkish and international tax
Bookkeeping, statutory books, e-invoicing, tax returns, reporting	Accounting & Compliance
Payroll, social security, employment contracts	Outsourcing & Payroll
Work and residence permits, citizenship, property purchase	Legal Advisory — immigration and citizenship

Let's talk about your plans in Türkiye.

One team for tax, accounting, legal and payroll — from your first question to day-to-day compliance.

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DISCLAIMER

This guide provides general information as of September 2026 and is not legal or tax advice. Rules and thresholds change frequently; contact us for advice on your situation.

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