

Investing in Portugal

A legal overview for international investors

2026



ANTAS DA CUNHA E CIA

Portugal offers a stable, transparent, and EU-integrated legal environment for foreign investment with no particular restrictions.

1. Setting up a Business

The two main corporate vehicles are:

- **Public Limited Liability Companies (S.A.)**, requiring a minimum share capital of EUR 50,000 and 5 shareholders; and
- **Private Limited Liability Companies (Lda.)**, requiring a minimum capital of EUR 1 per shareholder and at least 2 shareholders (or one, in the case of a single-shareholder company).

Through the "Empresa na Hora" service, a company can be incorporated quickly by choosing a pre-approved name and using standard bylaws.

2. Employment Framework

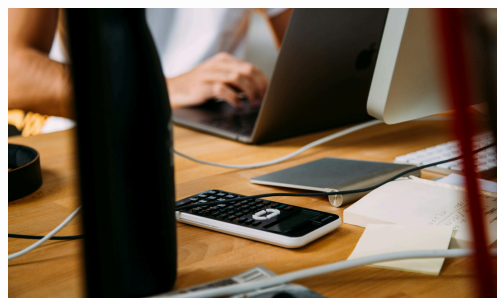
- Employment contracts are permanent by default, terminable by the employer only with cause or during the trial period. Alternative arrangements include term contracts, temporary work, part-time and multiple employer contracts.

- Companies may also resort to management contracts, term contracts, temporary work, part-time and multiple employer contracts to adjust their workforce to business needs.

- The 2026 minimum wage is EUR 920/month. Social security contributions: 23.75% (employer) and 11% (employee).

3. Tax Highlights

- **Corporate Income Tax (CIT):**
 - General rate of 19% (forecast to decrease by 1 p.p./year until 2028); reduced rate of 15% on the first EUR 50,000 of taxable profits for SMEs.
 - The participation exemption regime allows dividends and capital gains to be exempt where holding and substance requirements are met. Tax losses may be carried forward indefinitely (up to 65% of taxable income/year). Portugal has double tax treaties with nearly 80 jurisdictions.
 - A reduced rate of 15% applies to the first EUR 50,000 of taxable profits for SMEs and small-mid cap companies. Portugal's participation exemption regime allows dividends and capital gains to be disregarded from taxable profit where specified holding and substance requirements are met. Tax losses may be carried forward for an unlimited period, limited to 65% of the taxable income each year. Portugal has concluded double tax treaties with nearly 80 jurisdictions.
- **Personal Income Tax (PIT):**
 - Employment and professional income subject to progressive rates up to 48% (plus solidarity surcharge). Investment income (dividends, interest, capital gains) taxed at a flat 28%.
- **VAT:** The general rate is 23% (reduced rates of 13% and 6% apply to certain goods and services).



4. Dispute Resolution

- Portugal is recognized as an arbitration-friendly jurisdiction which allows parties to seek full reimbursement of legal fees and costs from the losing party, and tribunals must render a final award within one year from their constitution.

- Mediation is also available as a structured and cost-efficient alternative, with mediated settlements directly enforceable before Portuguese courts.

5. Immigration & Golden Visa

Portugal provides a comprehensive immigration framework for professionals and investors. The key visa categories include:

- **D1 Visa** (employees);
- **D2 Visa** (entrepreneurs);
- **D3 Visa** (highly qualified professionals and Tech Visa);
- **D7 Visa** (passive income holders); and
- **D8 Visa** (digital nomads).

The Golden Visa program remains a flagship route for non-EU investors:

- The permit is granted for 2 years (renewable), with minimal physical presence of 7 days in the first year.
- Qualifying investment routes include:
 - Job creation (no minimum capital);
 - Scientific research (EUR 500,000);
 - Arts and cultural heritage (EUR 250,000);
 - Eligible non-real estate investment funds (EUR 500,000), and
 - Company capitalization combined with job creation (EUR 500,000).
- After 5 years of legal residence, investors and their families may apply for permanent residence or Portuguese citizenship, which confers full EU citizenship rights.

acessórias. Devem ainda ser considerada a sujeição a danos reputacionais.

O cumprimento das normas de proteção de dados são, cada vez mais, um fator diferenciador no mercado, transmitindo confiança a potenciais clientes e parceiros.

6. Real Estate

Foreign investors have the same rights as nationals. The key aspects are:

- Real estate is classified as urban, rural or mixed (relevant for IMT/IMI);
- Ownership rights are recorded in the Land Registry Office (essential for enforceability);
- Acquisition: negotiation, promissory agreement, due diligence, and public deed/authenticated document;
- Investment structures: funds (CMVM-regulated), REICs, and SPVs (some with specific tax regimes);
- Taxation: IMT, Stamp Tax, IMI, AIMI, capital gains and VAT;
- Environmental compliance: impact assessments, energy certificates, and soil contamination rules.

This summary is for informational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. It reflects Portuguese law as of 2026. For specific situations, specialized legal advice is recommended.



How Can We Help?

Antas da Cunha Ecija is the first Full AI Firm in Portugal. An international firm with over 200 professionals, it is committed to innovation and multidisciplinary teams. It is part of ECIJA, the largest Ibero-American network and the Winston Taylor global alliance, with over 3,000 lawyers in 30 countries

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