

FAQ for the platform BalkanResidents.com - Serbia

Can I travel to neighboring countries (Bosnia, Montenegro, Albania, North Macedonia, Croatia) with a residence card without a passport?

No, the residence card (temporary residence permit) in Serbia is not a travel document. You always need a passport from your home country to cross the border. The residence card only proves your legal status within Serbia.

Depending on international agreements, some countries (such as Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina) allow foreigners with residence in Serbia to enter without a visa (usually for up to 30 days), but showing a passport at the border is absolutely mandatory.

How long can I stay outside the country where I am a resident?

According to the Law on Foreigners of the Republic of Serbia, temporary residence can be revoked if a foreigner stays outside Serbia for more than half the time for which their residence was granted (for example, more than 6 months if the residence was granted for one year). For those with permanent residence, the rules are stricter - residence is revoked if they are outside Serbia continuously for more than one year, or if they are absent for longer than a certain legal limit over a period of several years.

How can I open a company in Serbia as a resident and what documentation do I need?

As a foreigner with approved residence, you can open a sole proprietorship (PR) or a limited liability company (LLC) through the Agency for Business Registers (APR).

Required documentation: A copy of the passport and ID card for foreigners, a completed registration application, proof of payment of state fees, as well as the founding act (for LLC, which must be notarized). After receiving the decision from APR, you must create a seal (optional, but recommended for banks), open a business bank account, and register with the Tax Administration.

Which lawyers can I hire for representation who speak English/Russian/Chinese/Turkish?

Most business and corporate law firms in Serbia communicate seamlessly in English. For Russian, Chinese, and Turkish, it is recommended to hire larger law firms (e.g., Karanović & Partners, Živković Samardžić, TSG Law Office), which have experts in these languages on their teams or closely collaborate with certified court interpreters who attend legal proceedings.

Documents required to apply for residency in Serbia that must be brought from the home country?

Although it depends on the basis for residence (work, family reunification, property ownership), it is most often mandatory to bring the following originals:

- Certificate of no criminal record (not older than 6 months).
- Extract from the birth register.

- Extract from the marriage register (if applying for family reunification).
- Diplomas and certificates (if applying for a work permit).
- Important: Documents must have an apostille stamp (for countries that are signatories to the Hague Convention) and must be translated into Serbian by a certified court interpreter in Serbia.

How to reapply as a resident if I change my place of residence?

A foreigner is legally required to report a change of address to the competent police department (MUP) within 3 days of changing residence. Personal presence is required, as well as the presence of the property owner with proof of ownership, or a notarized lease agreement for the apartment at the new address.

How to buy a car/motorcycle/truck in Serbia (as a resident) and register it in your name?

A foreigner with an approved temporary residence can buy a car, motorcycle, or truck in Serbia. The vehicle is registered in the name of the foreigner, and the traffic permit and registration are valid until the expiration date of the temporary residence. Required documentation includes a notarized purchase agreement, proof of paid tax on the transfer of absolute rights, a technical inspection, and an insurance policy.

Can I drive a car in Serbia (as a resident) with my driver's license, or do I need to translate it?

With a valid foreign driving license, you can drive a vehicle in Serbia for up to 6 months from the date of obtaining a temporary residence permit. After that period, it is mandatory to exchange it for a Serbian driving license. For the exchange at the Ministry of Interior, you must submit the foreign license, a sworn translator's translation, a medical certificate, your passport, and proof of residence.

Can I buy a boat in my name (as a resident) and use it for personal purposes?

Yes, residents can buy and register a vessel for personal use in their name. Registration is done at the competent Port Authority, and the validity of the navigation permit is aligned with the duration of the residence permit, similar to road vehicles.

Which trails and mountains do you recommend for hiking in Serbia?

- Tara: The trail to the viewpoint Banjska stena is extremely popular, suitable for all levels of fitness, and offers an incredible view of the Drina canyon.
- Suva planina: Ascent to the peak Trem. This is a somewhat more demanding trail located in southeastern Serbia, but it rewards with a spectacular panoramic view.
- Stara planina: Ascent to Midžor (the highest peak in central Serbia). Spacious pastures and unending nature make this trail a true pleasure.
- Fruška gora: Ideal for a lighter hiking experience with a dense network of marked forest trails that pass by numerous lakes and historical monasteries.

Which beaches/excursions/lakes do you recommend?

- Vlasina Lake: A mountain lake known for its unique floating islands made of turf.
- Zaovine Lake (Tara): A lake with crystal clear water, perfect for swimming and enjoying nature.
- Ada Ciganlija: Excursion site - The largest and most visited bathing area in Belgrade with plenty of recreational facilities.

- Srebrno Lake: A highly developed tourist destination on the Danube with good hospitality facilities.

Which mobile operators do you recommend and can I be a postpaid user as a resident?

The three main mobile operators in Serbia are Yettel, MTS, and A1.

Yes - residents can sign a postpaid contract. It is necessary to go to the branch with a passport and a valid personal ID for foreigners. The contractual obligation is usually limited to the duration of the approved residence, and some operators may also require a cash deposit to establish a subscription relationship.