



IMMIGRATION AND RESIDENCY IN URUGUAY

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How to Become a Permanent Resident

- Uruguay's "Dirección Nacional de Migración" (DNM) is the government office that deals with immigration and residency matters
 - It establishes residency requirements
 - It sets the procedure to obtain residency
 - It receives the petition, together with the relevant documents
 - It decides on the requests
 - It grants visa extensions

- It takes approximately one year to obtain resident status



Where Do I start?

- First of all, one must gather all the necessary documents that the DNM requires
 - Most of them are obtained abroad, not in Uruguay
- The person then enters the country, as a tourist, bringing along the set of required documents
- Within 90 days of having entered the country, the person must personally submit the request for residency at the DNM
 - The 90 day period can be extended for another 90 days
 - Once the request is submitted, the person may stay in the country without limitation, as a “temporary resident”



What documents do I need from abroad?

- Some documents are obtained abroad:
 - Birth certificate
 - Marriage certificate *
 - Police record from country of origin and countries where the person has lived in the last five years (For U.S. citizens, this document is obtained in Uruguay, at the local Interpol office)
 - Documents that prove that the person will have income to support him/herself
- The documents that are obtained abroad require:
 - Legalization at the Uruguayan Consulate in country where issued
 - Legalization in Uruguay, at the Foreign Ministry
 - Certified translation in Uruguay



What documents do I obtain in Uruguay?

- Other documents and requirements are obtained in Uruguay, once the person has arrived:
 - Entry card and copy of passport
 - Passport-size pictures
 - Medical check-up
 - Interpol police-record request, for U.S. Citizens



Proof of Income: the Key Requirement

- Residency applicants must prove that they have an income stream of at least USD 500 per month
- There are many options to prove this:
 - Pension from abroad
 - Mutual fund or Retirement fund income
 - Proceeds from the lease of a property abroad or in Uruguay
 - Income from a company, abroad or in Uruguay
 - Work contract in Uruguay
- The documents that prove that the source of income exists must be clear and must be verified by a Notary in Uruguay



After Becoming a Permanent Resident

- Within approximately one year of filing the residency request, the permanent resident status is granted
- 3-5 years later, one may request Uruguayan Citizenship
 - Uruguay allows dual/triple etc. citizenship
 - Citizenship grants the right to a Uruguayan passport



Bringing One's Personal Belongings

- What can I bring free of import duties and taxes?
 - All of my household belongings
- When can I bring them?
 - When I submit my residency request, I'll ask for an authorization to bring my personal belongings, which I will take to the Uruguayan Customs Authority
 - The goods have to be brought in before the resident status is granted
- How do I bring my belongings?
 - By posting a bond with the Uruguayan Customs Authority, for the value of the eventual import duties and taxes



Bringing One's Personal Belongings (cont.)

- Who helps me bring my personal belongings?
 - A Customs Agent in Uruguay
 - My shipping agent in the country of origin
 - My attorney/the person handling my residency in Uruguay
- What documents must I produce to bring my belongings?
 - A list of the goods must be stamped at the Uruguayan Consulate in the country of origin, before shipping them
 - The DNM authorization for the Uruguayan Customs Authority
- A special case, Law 16.340, allows to bring a car free of import duties, but has many hurdles and is seldom used



Myths on Residency

- **Myth: I need to be a permanent resident in order to own a house or to do business in Uruguay**
 - Truth: Residency is not required to own an asset or do business in Uruguay
- **Myth: I can bring a car free of import duties**
 - Truth: Yes, but only under Law 16.340, which requires that I prove USD 1,500 of monthly income, plus ownership of a property that I won't be able to sell for 10 years, and other requirements
- **Myth: owning a property in Uruguay automatically qualifies me in order to obtain residency**
 - Truth: No. Since November 2005, the DNM looks for income proof, not ownership of assets



Tips on Residency

- ✓ Send your immigration lawyer copies of the documents you intend to submit, before travelling, so they can be verified
- ✓ Work on the wording of your income proof document with your immigration lawyer, to make sure it meets what is needed
- ✓ Send your immigration lawyer and customs agent the list of belongings you plan to bring, so they can verify whether the list is reasonable or not
- ✓ Open a bank account in Uruguay



Opening a Bank Account

- Uruguay's Banking system is a solid one:
 - Few banks, all foreign-owned plus one government bank (BROU)
 - Strictly controlled by Central Bank
 - Bank secrecy laws
 - No history of forced conversion or freezing of deposits
- It's easy to open a bank account:
 - Foreign non-residents can open accounts in any currency
 - A few banks do not open accounts to U.S. citizens
 - No special requirements for foreigners:
 - ID (passport)
 - Proof of Address (utilities bill)
 - Bank reference letter plus local reference



LVM Attorneys at Law: Who We Are

- **Leading Full-Service Law Firm:**
 - Clients: mostly foreign companies and individuals
 - Specializing in Real Estate issues for foreign buyers
- **Staff:**
 - Bilingual
 - Notaries Public, Attorneys, Tax Advisors
- **Services (covering all of Uruguay):**
 - Notary / Legal Assistance in the Purchase Process
 - Tax and Banking Advice
 - Company Formation
 - Title Insurance Advice
 - Immigration / Residency issues

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