

Social security in the EU

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When Latvia joined the European Union (EU) on 1 May 2004, social issues were coordinated according to *the Regulation No. 1408/71 of the Council on the application of social security schemes to employed persons and their families moving within the Community* (Regulation No 1408/71) and *the Regulation No 574/72* (Regulation No 574/72) *laying down the procedure for implementing Regulation No 1408/71*.

A new *Regulation No 883/2004 of the European Parliament and the Council of 29 April 2004 on the coordination of social security systems* (Regulation No 883/2004) and the new *Regulation No. 987/2009 of 16 September 2009 laying down the procedure for implementing Regulation No.883/2004* (Regulation No 987/2009) came into effect on 1 May 2010.

Regulation No 883/2004 and Regulation No 987/2009 are instruments ensuring that persons, moving within the EU do not lose their right to social security. However, every member state has its own legislation and the Regulations are used for coordination purposes.

The said Regulations apply to the EU states since 1 May 2010, while the Regulations apply to third country citizens since 1 January 2011, whenever they live in a member state legally and do not have connection to only one member state.

From 1 April 2012 on Regulation No 883/2004 and Regulation No 987/2009 applies also to Switzerland but the said Regulations apply also to EEA member states Norway, Liechtenstein and Iceland since 1 June 2012. The EU/EEA states and Switzerland are defined as EU member states within this text.

The EU social security coordination regulations promote free movement of persons and are aimed at improving life quality and working conditions.

The Regulations are related to the following services:

Sickness benefits;

Maternity benefits and equivalent paternity benefits;

Disability pension;

Retirement pension (service pension);

Survivor's pension;

Compensations for accidents in the working place and occupational diseases;

Burial allowances;

Unemployment benefits;

Family benefits (family state benefit, family state benefit supplement for disabled child care, disabled child care benefit and parent's benefit).

EU social security rules are based on following principles:

Equal treatment. The same rights are guaranteed for a citizen of another member state and the same responsibilities apply;

Accumulation of periods. Retention of rights during their acquisition period. Insurance or employment periods accumulated in another country may be taken into account when deciding on retention of benefit rights and pensions.

Place of residence rules are not applied. Benefits granted according to regulations of a member state are paid to the recipient also when the person or his or her family members live in another state;

Only regulations of one country may be applied. This rule protects migrating workforce from making social security payments

in more than one EU member state and ensuring at the same time that employees are insured in one of the states.

When engaging in legal employment in any of the EU member states, you have the right to become a member of social security system of the state of employment. Remember though, that social security payments are always retained by the EU member state they were made!

More information on procedure of granting services in accordance with the Regulations – the changes, gains and responsibilities, can be found in the „EU and government agreements” section of our homepage.

Application forms can be found in the „Application forms” section.

It is not necessary to legalize documents issued by another EU member state.

[1] Member states of the EU: Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Germany, Denmark, Ireland, Greece, Portugal, Spain, Austria, Finland, Sweden, Czech Republic, Estonia, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania, Croatia.

[2] United Kingdom – continue to apply the EU rules on social security coordination until 31 December 2020

<https://www.vsaa.gov.lv/en/social-security-eu>