

**Tilleke & Gibbins**

## Thailand – Permanent Residence Applications Open for 2016

In a surprising move, the Immigration Bureau has announced that it will accept applications for Permanent Residence (PR) permits from September 1 to December 30, 2016, during office hours on any official working day. The annual PR application process is always an issue of great interest to foreign nationals who are eligible to seek PR permits, on the basis of having lived in Thailand on a non-immigrant visa for at least three years. In most years, the PR application process opens in December, so the early timing this year will be welcomed by PR applicants.

It is important to note, however, that the Immigration Bureau will grant no more than 100 PR permits to applicants of each nationality. Therefore, if you are seeking a PR permit and there are many people of your nationality living in Thailand, you should prepare your application and supporting documents as soon as possible to enhance your chances of success.

There are five main categories of eligibility for PR applications: (1) investment; (2) business or employment; (3) humanitarian; (4) specialist/expert; and (5) special cases. Different supporting documents are required for each category.

The Immigration Bureau and the Minister of Interior have the authority to review applications. In reviewing an application, they will consider various factors such as an applicant's income, assets, knowledge, professional capability, and relationships with Thai nationals, if any, as well as conditions relating to national security and any other appropriate conditions that are deemed necessary and appropriate in the current economic and social climate, including the ability to speak and understand the Thai language.

The Immigration Bureau and the Minister of Interior have absolute discretion as to whether to approve or reject applications, even though some applicants may possess all of the requisite qualifications and meet all criteria and conditions. Their decision is final and confidential.

If you would like more information about the PR application process, please contact Tilleke & Gibbins at [bangkok@tilleke.com](mailto:bangkok@tilleke.com) or +66 2653 5555.

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