

## Becoming a Freelancer in Belgium

Going Freelance, or “independent” or becoming a “contractor”, might initially seem intimidating to those who don't know exactly what it involves. There are obviously a variety of both personal and professional factors one must take into account before making the change, but many Belgian IT professionals have found it a very rewarding way to apply their hard earned skills.

Here are some of the many positives Freelancers feel about their professional lives:

**Being you own boss:** Becoming a Freelancer does require one to be organized, confident and even a little brave, but Freelancers are recruited for the immediate contribution they can make and generally enjoy a high level of autonomy. Consequently it can be professionally satisfying and extremely enjoyable. And of course, no line manager is forever!

**Freedom:** Although the number of opportunities vary, Freelancers can choose when and where to work and what projects sound interesting to them. They can also decide exactly when it is right for them to take a holiday.

**Financial:** Part of being a Freelancer means occasionally having to look for a new for a new mission, but once in a mission you will usually be paid substantially more than an equivalent permanent member of staff. And, Freelancers who take professional advice can generally be more tax efficient than employees.

**Variety and skills development:** Freelancers do have to spend some of their own time keeping their skills up to date. But by moving from contract to contract and company to company, they often develop very varied experience and an impressive CV which means that it becomes easier to gain the next contract.

### The Process to Follow

Inevitably there are some steps to follow that will ensure that you have the right paperwork in place and the authorities are kept happy.

We suggest that you read the following then go and see an accountant or a representative of the Guichet D'Entreprise and ask for their advice, this should be free of charge.

#### Step 1.

Go to the bank and open a professional account. You will need to deposit 12,600 euro as you would typically be opening a BVBA/SPRL. You will receive a document confirming your deposit.

#### Step 2.

Take the document and go and see an accountant, together you will decide the 'status' of your future company. This states the main activity of your company. <http://www.notaire.be/>

#### Step 3.

You and your accountant then sign the document, your accountant will keep it and deposit it at the Tribunal de Commerce. You will then receive a document certifying that your application is pending.

You will later receive a document confirming your registration.

#### Step 4.

When the 'status' is officially published by the authorities, you must go the Gichet D'Entreprises to complete your registration. In the mean time you should apply for a VAT number.

[http://economie.fgov.be/enterprises/crossroads\\_bank/bce\\_kbo\\_fr\\_006.htm](http://economie.fgov.be/enterprises/crossroads_bank/bce_kbo_fr_006.htm)

#### Step 5.

Contact a 'mutuelle', to get access to health care.

Chrétiennes : [www.mc.be](http://www.mc.be)  
Libérales : [www.mut400.be](http://www.mut400.be)  
Libres : [www.mloz.be](http://www.mloz.be)  
Neutres : [www.mutualité-neutre.be](http://www.mutualité-neutre.be)  
Socialistes: [www.mutsoc.be](http://www.mutsoc.be)

#### Step 6.

You then need to choose a 'secretariat sociale', it does not necessarily need to be your Guichet D'entreprises. You must insure yourself and your company.

More information @ [www.securex.eu/be](http://www.securex.eu/be)

And that is it. You can now apply and accept Freelance positions and enjoy the benefits of an Independent career.

For more in depth information please see:

[http://mineco.fgov.be/SME/Starters/ZichVestigen\\_nl.htm](http://mineco.fgov.be/SME/Starters/ZichVestigen_nl.htm)

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