



Immigration News Highlights

2023-17, 25 April 2023



The KPMG team regularly monitors recent developments across the globe in the Immigration space and publishes them as Immigration News Highlights. Please find the key developments that occurred over the last week enumerated below. [Click here to find all issues of the Immigration News Highlights on the GMS Flash Alert: Immigration page.](#)

[Americas](#)

[Asia Pacific](#)

[Europe and Africa](#)



Americas

United States

USCIS clarifies guidance on citizenship and naturalization for adopted children

The USCIS published an updated version of Volumes 5 and 12 of the USCIS Policy Manual, focusing on the citizenship and naturalization provisions applicable to adopted children. The guidance now provides further clarifications on the eligibility criteria for naturalization and immigration for adopted individuals, including instructions on what is to be done in case the adoption is disputed or dissolved.

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United States

Suspension of biometric requirements in lieu of Form I-539 extended further

The USCIS extended the temporary suspension of the requirement to submit biometrics for select Form I-539 applicants. The suspension, which was in effect till 17 May 2023, has now been extended till 30 September 2023. The biometric fees for the same has also been waived during the suspension period for eligible applicants.

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Asia Pacific

Australia

[Australia unveils direct pathway to citizenship for New Zealanders](#)

The government of Australia has introduced a direct citizenship pathway for Kiwi nationals living in the country, reversing the previously applicable rules of citizenship. From July 2023 onwards, citizens of New Zealand who have been residing in Australia for a period of four or more years can apply for Australian citizenship without having to become permanent residents first.

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Japan

[Japan considers widening long-term foreign worker visa scheme](#)

Japanese authorities are considering widening the number of professional areas from 3 to 12, in which skilled workers will be eligible to receive long term work visas. The measure is being considered to deal with the rapidly ageing Japanese workforce, leading to a shortage of workers in numerous professional fields in the country.

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Malaysia

[Malaysia to make MM2H more flexible](#)

Malaysian authorities announced their plans to make the My Second Home (MM2H) visa initiative, in response to rising popularity of golden visas across the globe. Earlier, the MM2H visas had stricter eligibility criteria, including a requirement to provide proof of US\$338,000 in liquid assets and a minimum of RM40,000 in monthly income.

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Sri Lanka

[Sri Lanka digitizes immigration and entry process](#)

The government of Sri Lanka has shifted the entire visa application and entry process online, with the introduction of electronic immigration forms. The initiative also includes the launch of an online arrival card system, wherein foreign travelers can apply for the same online before their scheduled arrival in the country.

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Europe and Africa

Egypt

[Kuwaitis can enter Egypt with regular visa taken before travel or upon arrival](#)

Egyptian authorities confirmed that Kuwait nationals will be allowed to enter the country on a regular visa, irrespective of whether they are arriving at any of the Egyptian airports, or are

travelling from any of the consulates. The new exceptions will not be applicable to the companions of the Kuwaitis included in the decision.

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European Union

European Union approves visa liberalization with Kosovo

The European Parliament announced the approval of visa liberalization for nationals of Kosovo. The measure will allow nationals from Kosovo to travelling to the Schengen area, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland to enter these countries without a visa, permitting a stay of up to 90 days within a period of 180 days.

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European Union

EU border system that replaces passport stamps postponed

The European Union announced the postponement of implementation of the Entry/Exit System (EES), which was set to come into effect in November 2023. The system aims to replace the physical stamping of passports at country borders with a digital registration system, cataloguing those who enter and exit the Schengen area.

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Serbia

Serbia has introduced visas for Cubans, in bid to align its visa policy with EU

The government of Serbia announced new travel requirement for travelers from Cuba. Cuban nationals wishing to visit Serbia for tourism or business purposes will now be required to obtain a visa, as opposed to the previous requirement of possessing only a letter of invitation. The measure was introduced to align Serbia's immigration policies with those of the European Union.

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South Africa

South Africa announces overhaul of its work visa system

South African authorities are planning to change their work visa system, streamlining application requirements and reducing time frames for obtaining a work visa in the country. The new plans include the introduction of a Trusted Employer Scheme for eligible companies, and the introduction of a points based system, creating a more flexible system for skilled individuals to obtain a work visa.

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Spain

Spain won't apply visa liberalization for Kosovo citizens despite EU agreement

The authorities of Spain will not be recognizing the liberalization agreement that was signed between the European Union and Kosovo, affording nationals of Kosovo visa-free travel to the Schengen area and a few other select European countries. In spite of the agreement, travelers from Kosovo will still be required to obtain a visa in order to travel to Spain.

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Switzerland

Immigration services to be centralized and expanded

The government of Switzerland announced the centralization and expansion of immigration services in Zurich. Immigration services will now be available at registration offices located in three central areas, and online immigration services will be expanded further. The measure has been taken to reduce increasing processing wait times post the COVID-19 pandemic.

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