



Immigration News Highlights

2023-41, 10 October 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](#)

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Americas

Canada

Express Entry applicants are no longer required to provide medical reports upfront

Canadian authorities have confirmed that Express Entry PR applicants would no longer be required to mandatorily provide medical examination results. Applicants are now advised to wait until they receive a notification before proceeding with their medical examinations, post which, they shall have 30 days to complete the examination.

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Costa Rica

Costa Rica, Honduras impose reciprocal visa requirements

The governments of Costa Rica and Honduras imposed visa requirements on travelers wishing to travel to either country. The measure was taken in response to growing security concerns.

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Mexico

Mexico implements new visitor visa requirement for airport transits

Mexican authorities announced that travelers transiting through airports in Mexico will now be subject to additional requirements and restrictions after the introduction of the Mexican visitor visa. Holders of passports from Japan, Canada, United States, United Kingdom, the Schengen Zone, and members of the Pacific Alliance are exempted from the new rules, and shall not be required to possess a visitor visa while transiting through Mexico.

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United States

Some Israelis currently ineligible for US visa waiver

The US Visa Waiver program is only applicable to Israeli nationals who hold biometric passports. Holders of an optic Israeli passport will not be able to complete the Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA) form, which is required in order to enter the US for a period of 90 days without obtaining a visa.

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United States

November Visa Bulletin released

The USCIS released the November Visa Bulletin, reflecting no movement in key employment-based visa categories. The Dates for Filing Chart shall be utilised to determine the eligibility for adjustment of status of employment-based filings.

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United States

Registrations for 2025 Diversity Visa program open

The USCIS opened registrations for the 2025 Diversity Visa Program on 4 October 2023, at 12PM EDT, and shall be closing them on 7 November 2023, 12PM EST. Interested applicants would be required to fill and submit the online Diversity Visa entry form available on the e-DV website. Physical paper applications shall not be accepted, and only one entry per person shall be permitted.

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Asia Pacific

Hong Kong

New visa extension rules to take effect in Hong Kong

Hong Kong authorities have announced the abolishment of the special arrangement that enabled non-permanent residents who are outside of Hong Kong to apply for extension of stay without returning to Hong Kong for the same. The arrangement was introduced specially during the COVID19 pandemic, however, 1 January 2024 onwards individuals would have to be physically present in Hong Kong to apply for extension of stay and to collect the e-Visa.

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Iran

[Iran considers visa-free travel with several countries](#)

The Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesperson announced that the country is considering abolishing visa requirements for travelers from several countries, including Saudi Arabia. The decision is being considering following Iran's development in diplomatic relations with Saudi Arabia.

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United Arab Emirates

[New Emirates ID card fee structure for Pakistanis and Indians announced](#)

Emirati authorities released the updated fee structure for Emirates ID cards issued to Indian and Pakistani nationals. A fee of AED100 shall be charged for a five year Emirates ID, along with an AED150 service fee, AED30 typing center fee and an additional AED150 as an urgent service fee for expedited processing, if applicable.

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Europe and Africa

Angola

[Angola puts into place visa-free entry to nationals from over 90 countries](#)

The government of Angola announced a visa waiver for travelers from over 90 countries, including United States, Portugal, Brazil, Russia and China. Nationals from these countries wishing to visit Angola can stay for a period of 90 days without obtaining a visa prior to their arrival.

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Germany

[Germany grants 5-year Schengen visas for Kuwaitis](#)

German authorities announced the launch of a Schengen visa with a validity of 5 years for Kuwaiti nationals holding a valid passport. The measure was taken in order to deepen ties, marking 60 years of diplomacy between the two countries.

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Portugal

[Portugal puts an end to special tax regime for new residents in 2024](#)

The government of Portugal announced their decision to end the tax relief scheme that subjects Portuguese income of new residents to a rate of 20 percent, along with several exemptions, for a period of 10 years. Portuguese citizens not benefitting from the scheme are subject to a regular tax rate of 48 percent. The scheme shall be discontinued as a step towards containing the inflation in the housing market.

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Sweden

Foreign workers need to make over EUR2,900 to be eligible for Swedish work permits as of 1 November 2023

Swedish authorities have increased the subsistence requirement for labour migrants to a minimum of 80 percent of the average salary in the country, amounting to at least EUR2,900. The measure was taken with the aim of reducing low-skilled labour migration to Sweden, and to prevent fraud surrounding to labour migration.

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