



Immigration News Highlights

2024-12, 19 March 2024



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.](#)

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[Americas](#)

[Asia Pacific](#)

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Americas

Canada

Nova scotia cuts international student visa quota by 35 percent

Government of Canada has announced that it will reduce the Nova Scotia international visa allowance by 35 percent. The quota of 12,000 will be allocated between educational institutions, including universities, NSCC, private career colleges, and language schools.

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United States

USCIS Streamlines Process for Refugee Employment Authorization Documents

USCIS has implemented a streamlined process for Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization, to provide Employment Authorization Documents (EADs) more efficiently to eligible refugees after they are admitted into the United States. This streamlined process shortens the wait time for an EAD to approximately 30 days instead of several months.

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Asia Pacific

Albania

[Albania Lifts Visa Requirements for Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman & Thailand Until the End of 2024](#)

Albanian government has announced the removal of visa requirements for travelers from Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman, and Thailand. Effective immediately, citizens of these nations can enter Albania with only their valid passport, with the decision set to remain in effect until 31 December 2024.

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Malaysia

[Malaysia to end services of agencies managing visa applications for Bangladeshi workers](#)

Government of Malaysia has decided to terminate the services of agencies that manage Malaysian visa requests for Bangladeshi workers. Applications will now be submitted only via the Immigration Department's MYVISA system.

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Europe and Africa

Andorra

[Andorra launches Youth Mobility Program with Ireland & Republic of Korea](#)

Government of Andorra has introduced new Youth Mobility Programs with Ireland and the Republic of Korea. The program allows nationals of these countries aged between 18 and 30 to visit, explore culture, and access the labour market for up to 12 months.

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Cyprus

[Cyprus introduces new citizenship legislation](#)

Cyprus has implemented changes to its Civil Registry Law to attract skilled foreign individuals. The changes streamline the naturalization process for high-skilled employees and introduces a new residency-based pathway. The amendments also include relaxed residency requirements and language proficiency criteria.

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European Union

[EU makes it simpler for foreign workers to obtain combined work and residence permits](#)

EU makes it simpler for third-country nationals to obtain Single Permits. Single Permit applicants will receive their application decision within 90 days maximum. Single Permit holders will be able to change their employer, and those unemployed will have greeted protection.

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European Union

[EU sets new grounds for canceling visa-free travel for third countries](#)

EU has set three new grounds based on which it can suspend visa-free travel for nationals for some third countries. Member States have agreed to update the mechanism that enables the suspension of visa-free travel for third countries that violate one of the three new grounds.

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Finland

[Finland suspends visa applications for wild berry pickers from Thailand, Cambodia & Myanmar](#)

Finland has suspended visa applications for wild berry pickers from Thailand, Cambodia, and Myanmar. Nationals of these countries are still eligible for seasonal worker visas for picking non-natural berries.

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Germany

[Germany introduces 2-step Schengen visa application process for Turkish nationals](#)

Starting from 18 March 2024, Turkish nationals applying for a German Schengen visa will have to go through a two-step application process. The first step includes registration, and the second step includes the submission of the application via iDATA. Registration is free, but a service fee to iDATA needs to be paid within 48 hours of having an appointment assigned.

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Greece

[Greece to launch fast-track Island visas for Turkish citizens](#)

Greece is set to start issuing fast-track visas for Turkish nationals in March 2024. Under this scheme, Turkish citizens will be able to visit several Greek islands for stays of up to seven days. Greek authorities clarified that the visa-on-arrival is limited to visiting only the designated islands and cannot be used to enter other Schengen countries.

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Hungary

[Updated Hungarian immigration law introduces new residence permits for highly & low skilled workers](#)

Hungary has launched a new immigration law with several changes and stricter regulations for nationals of third countries. The new law introduces different work permit categories: one for highly skilled workers and one for low-skilled guest workers.

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Hungary

Hungary starts issuing 5-year multiple entry visas for Chinese business people

Hungary government has announced that the country will issue five-year multiple entry visas to executives of Chinese companies investing and cooperating with Hungarian companies.

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Portugal

Portuguese visas issued to nationals of Portuguese-speaking countries to expire by June 30

The authorities have announced that nationals of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries will have their long-term visas expire by 30 June 2024. The decision was announced by the Agency for Integration, Migration and Asylum (AIMA), and affects nationals of nine countries who obtained such permits in March 2023.

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Spain

Spain extends citizenship law for descendants of exiled Spaniards until October 2025

Spain has extended a law for granting citizenship to descendants of Spaniards exiled during the regime of Dictator Franco. The deadline for applying has been prolonged from 21 October 2024, to 21 October 2025.

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