



Immigration News Highlights

2023-04, 24 January 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

[Canada doubles immigration program for out-of-status construction workers](#)

The Canadian government announced the doubling of the scope of a pilot program launched for out-of-status construction workers by the Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). The scope has been extended to 1000 individuals for the Greater Toronto area, and eligible persons can apply for permanent residence under the program till 2 January 2024.

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United States

[Termination of arrival restrictions applicable to persons who have recently traveled from Uganda](#)

The US Customs and Border Protection removed entry restrictions on individuals travelling from, or who have recently been in Uganda. Travelers can now enter the States through any airport in the country and wont be subjected to additional health screening upon their arrival in the country.

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United States

Applications for employment-based-adjustment-of-status shall be accepted based on filing dates published in the February Visa Bulletin

The USCIS announced that eligibility of applications for adjustment of status based on employment shall be determined according to the dates published in the State Department's Dates for Filing chart in the February Visa Bulletin.

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United States

Validity of Green Cards to be extended conditionally

The USCIS announced the extension of the validity of Permanent Resident Cards (Green Cards) for those who have filed Form I-751, Petition to Remove Conditions on Residence, or Form I-829, Petition by Investor to Remove Conditions on Permanent Resident Status as per instructions. The validity of the Card can be extended for 48 months beyond the expiration date for eligible individuals.

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Asia Pacific

Australia

Australia set to change skills-based visa programme to demand-driven immigration system

Australian authorities are looking to update their skills-based visa programme in order to meet the country's increasing labour shortage in specific occupations and industries. Certain existing skills will be slashed and new skill-based categories will be added according to identified shortages by employers and businesses.

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China

China to resume group tours to 20 countries

Chinese citizens will be allowed to avail overseas group-tours to 20 selected countries, including Thailand, Russia and New Zealand from 6 February 2023 onwards, as confirmed by the Chinese Ministry of Culture and Tourism.

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India

[US Embassy opens special slots on Saturdays for first-time applicants](#)

The American Embassies in India have opened interview slots on Saturdays for expediting visa verification procedures for first-time applicants, amidst a growing backlog and increasing wait times caused due to the COVID 19 pandemic.

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Indonesia

[Indonesia to Introduce Golden Visa Program for Foreigners](#)

Indonesian authorities have launched a Golden Visa Program for foreigners. Qualifying applicants will be able to acquire residency in the country after they meet specific requirements, including making a significant financial contribution to the country's economic sector.

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Iraq

[Iraq extends visa-free entry for Kuwaitis](#)

Iraqi authorities have extended the deadline for expatriates from Kuwait to enter Iraq without restrictions or conditions. This visa-free entry shall be permitted from the Abdally and Safwan borders till 27 January 2023.

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Europe and Africa

Bulgaria

[Bulgaria to Ease Employment of Foreigners With EU Blue Card](#)

Bulgarian authorities abolished the requirement for workers to have higher educational qualifications in order to work in the country. Holders of just the EU Blue Card will also be eligible to seek employment under a newly approved facilitation for employment of foreign workers.

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Luxembourg

[Luxembourg Increases Salary Requirements for EU Blue Card Holders](#)

Luxembourg authorities increased the salary level for EU Blue Card holders. New salary levels have been set at EUR 84.780 for regular occupations and EUR 67.824 for shortage occupations.

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Portugal

[Portugal Moves Online Applications for Visa Renewals, Including Golden Visas](#)

Portugal has launched online services for renewal of visas, including golden visas. The initiative was launched to combat long waiting times for in person applications. However, individuals can still seek visa-renewal services from the Foreign and Borders Service (SEF) in person.

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Turkey

[Turkish Nationals Can Now Submit Schengen Visa Applications in Adana](#)

The Turkish visa center in Adana is now open to accept and process Schengen visa applications from Turkish citizens. The new center was opened in order to make it convenient for the citizens of Adana, who had to previously travel to a separate city for the same.

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