



# Immigration News Highlights

2023-06, 7 February 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

### Canada

Canada extends and expands open work permit program for Hong Kong residents

Canadian authorities broadened the application criteria for Hong Kong nationals to apply for work permits through a temporary work permit program introduced in 2020. Eligible individuals who have graduated not more than five years ago, can now apply to work in Canada. The program has also been extended until 7 February 2025.

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### United States

Cap Reached for Additional Returning Worker H-2B Visas for the First Half of FY 2023

The USCIS announced that they the application cap limit for additional H-2B visas made available for returning workers during the first half of FY2023 has been reached. However, the authorities shall still be accepting 20,000 additional H-2B visa applications from non-immigrant workers belonging to Haiti, El-Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras.

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### United States

China to re-open visa offices in the US

The Chinese government announced the re-opening of visa offices in the US cities of Los Angeles, New York, Chicago, San Francisco and Washington DC. Applicants would be required to fill the online form available on the China Online Visa Application website before visiting the consulate or embassy for further procedures.

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## Asia Pacific

### China

[China imposes mandatory virus tests for arrivals from S. Korea only in latest protest over curbs](#)

China resumed the imposition of COVID 19 related entry restrictions on travelers arriving from South Korea. passengers arriving in China on direct flights from Korea will be subjected to mandatory PCR testing upon arrival. The measure is a retaliatory move in response to the restrictions imposed by Korean authorities on Chinese travelers arriving in the country.

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### China

[China, Hong Kong scrap cross-border travel quota, COVID test](#)

Authorities announced that travelers between Hong Kong and mainland China will no longer be required to undergo COVID 19 PCR testing. The daily limit of travelers has also been abolished, and all boundary checkpoints have been opened. Only those individuals who had traveled abroad within the past 7 days would be required to produce proof of negative PCR test.

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### India

[New Rules To Cut Wait For US Visa, Appointments Outside India](#)

The American embassy in India announced the opening of slots for Indian applicants to seek appointments at US embassies and consulates in other countries, amid growing backlogs.

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### Malaysia

[Multiple-entry visa applications opened online](#)

The government of Malaysia has started accepting online applications for multiple entry business and tourist visas. Applicants can complete the necessary documentation and other procedures through the MYVISA portal.

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### Qatar

[Qatar, Japan Sign Exchange of Official Memorandums to Start Mutual Visa Exemption Procedures](#)

On 2 February 2023, the governments of Qatar and Japan signed the exchange of official memorandums to facilitate mutual visa exemption for ordinary passport holders wishing to travel amongst the two countries. Qatari nationals will be issued a three year registration certificate free of charge, and will be allowed to stay in Japan for a period of 30 consecutive days without obtaining a visa.

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## Qatar

### Health insurance made mandatory for visitors

The government of Qatar has made it mandatory for foreign visitors to carry a proof of health insurance in order to apply for or extend a visitor visa. It is not mandatory to purchase the insurance from Qatar if they possess a valid international health insurance policy with coverage in Qatar.

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## United Arab Emirates

### UAE launches entry permit for residents who stayed outside country over six months

Emirati authorities launched an online service facilitating re-activation of residency visas for individuals who have been staying outside the UAE for over six months. Earlier, an individual was required to re-enter the country every six months to maintain the validity of the residency permit.

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## Europe and Africa

## France

### French Embassy in Rabat Resumes Services, Warns Against Intermediaries

The French embassy in Rabat, Morocco, announced the resumption of its services. Authorities have warned citizens against approaching any intermediaries for visa-related services, reiterating that over 800 slots are open at the embassy on a daily basis.

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## Italy

### Italy Increases Work Permit Quota for Foreigners to Over 82,700 for 2023

Italian authorities have increased the work permit quota for foreign unskilled workers and startup visa applicants from third countries. Upto 82,705 spots shall be opened for FY2023, 7,000 slots more as compared to the previous years. The measure was introduced to tackle the ongoing labour shortage in the country.

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## Serbia

### Serbs & Bosnians Will Need an ETIAS Travel Authorization to Enter Croatia as of November 2023

Serbian and Bosnian citizens wishing to travel to Croatia will be required to apply for an online travel authorization from the European Travel Information and Authorization System, and will no longer be permitted to enter the country by only showing a valid visa. The measure will enter into force November 2023 onwards.

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