



Immigration News Highlights

2023-10, 7 March 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 Tourist Visa holders can now apply for a 2 year work visa while visiting

The government of Canada announced the extension of the temporary policy that allows foreign visitors in Canada with a valid job offer to apply for a temporary work permit without leaving the country for the same. The validity of the policy has been extended till 28 February 2025.

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St. Lucia

St. Lucia introduces new entry requirement for visitors

The authorities of St. Lucia have introduced a new entry compliance requirement for foreign arrivals. Individuals would have to complete a new digital immigration form, submit their itinerary for the duration of their stay, and submit their contact information and purpose of visit. These formalities would have to be completed within 72 hours of arrival in the nation.

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United States

USCIS confirms cap hit for H-2B visa petitions

The USCIS confirmed that they have reached the cap limit for the second half of the fiscal year with regards to H-2B visa petitions. Any cap-subject visa petitions with employment date starting on or after 1 April 2023 and before 1 October 2023 will be rejected. However, the agency will still be accepting cap-exempt H-2B visa petitions.

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United States

[USCIS issues clarifying guidance on eligibility for the O-1B visa classification](#)

The USCIS released a guidance providing clarity on the process followed for determination of eligibility for O-1B nonimmigrants of extraordinary ability in the arts and nonimmigrants of extraordinary achievement in the motion picture or television industry. The report includes examples of evidence that would satisfy the requirement criteria for O-1B, and explains the considerations made while deciding eligibility.

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United States

[USCIS announces premium processing, new online-filing procedures for certain F-1 students seeking OPT or STEM OPT extensions](#)

The USCIS announced the expansion of premium processing to select F-1 students who wish to seek Optional Practical Training employment authorization or Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics OPT extensions. In order to be eligible, the students would have to be filing under any one of the three categories: (c)(3)(A) (Pre-Completion OPT), (c)(3)(B) (Post-Completion OPT) or (c)(3)(C) (24-Month Extension of OPT for STEM students).

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United States

[China's embassy in US to step up visa processing as applications rise](#)

The Chinese embassy in the US announced their plans to issue more visas in response to the increasing demand following the reopening of Chinese borders. There would be more appointment slots available for visa applications, and office hours would be increased as required.

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United States

[US now allows students to apply for a visa up to a year in advance](#)

The USCIS confirmed that students wishing to apply for the F and M type student visas can do so one year before the commencement of their program, as opposed to the previous requirement of 120 days in advance. However, it has been clarified that students won't be allowed to enter the country more than 30 days before the start date of their program with this visa, irrespective of when it has been issued.

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Japan

[Japanese government has eased entry restrictions from mainland China and allowed airlines to fly to local airports](#)

Japanese authorities reduced the COVID related entry restrictions imposed temporarily over arrivals from mainland China. From 1 March 2023, only a sample of 20 percent of arriving foreigners from mainland China will be tested, instead of the previous mandate for all arrivals to be tested. However, a negative PCR test from 72 hours prior to departure would still be required to be presented.

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Singapore

[Companies in Singapore must verify educational qualifications of Employment Pass applicants](#)

The government of Singapore announced a new compliance requirement for companies wishing to hire foreigners, making it mandatory for such companies to conduct a background verification of the educational qualifications of their applicants for test of authenticity. Third party verification proofs for the same will have to be submitted to the Ministry of Manpower for applicants with a diploma-level qualification and above.

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Singapore

[Singapore makes it costlier for foreign businessmen to attain permanent residency under GIP](#)

Singapore authorities announced that foreign businessmen wishing to seek permanent residency under the Global Investor Programme (GIP) would now be required to invest a minimum of SGD 10 million, including paid-up capital, to be eligible for the programme. The minimum limit has been increased from the previous investment requirement of SGD 2.5 million.

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South Korea

[South Korea to lift pre-arrival COVID testing requirement for travelers from China](#)

The government of South Korea announced the easing of COVID related entry restrictions for travelers arriving from China. Individuals would now have to present proof of a negative PCR test taken 48 hours before departure from China. Post-arrival COVID testing requirement would also be abolished by the authorities.

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United Arab Emirates

[UAE updates residence visa rules](#)

Emirati authorities introduced a new update to the residency visa rules, which would require individuals wishing to sponsor five relatives to have a minimum monthly salary of AED 10,000.

Those wishing to sponsor 6 relatives would be required to have a monthly minimum salary of AED 15,000.

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Europe and Africa

Denmark

Denmark opens working holiday quota for citizens of Chile & Argentina

The government of Denmark announced the opening of new Working Holiday quota for applicants of Chilean and Argentinian nationality. The quota period would be open from 1 March 2023 to 31 August 2023, and would grant up to 75 residence permits to applicants belonging to the aforementioned countries. These permits will be issued on a first-come-first-serve basis.

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Portugal

Portugal to grant 1-year residence permits to citizens of Portuguese-speaking countries

Portuguese authorities announced the initiative of granting automatic residence permits to applicants from countries that are a part of the Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP). Individuals would be required to prove that they have a job in the country by submitting a work contract, in order to receive the automatic one-year residence permit. The initiative has been introduced as a measure against the ongoing labour shortage faced in the country.

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United Kingdom

Priority processing services resumed for some visa categories

The British authorities have resumed the priority services for visa applications under the new marriage and family visa categories. Under the priority treatment, the applications will be processed within 30 days, instead of the standard time period of 60 days.

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