



Immigration News Highlights

2023-44, 31 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](#)

[Europe and Africa](#)



Americas

Canada

Canada Visa Online (CVO) simplifies the application process for select countries

CVO Canada Visa Online introduced a user-friendly platform with comprehensive resources of the visa application process for citizens of Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Brazil, Costa Rica, and Morocco. The process, once fraught with paperwork and administrative hurdles, has now become an efficient and straightforward procedure.

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Costa Rica - Honduras

Costa Rica and Honduras agree to end visa rules and ease trade

The presidents of Costa Rica and Honduras agreed to reverse short-lived visa requirements for travelers from their respective countries. Costa Ricans seeking to enter Honduras will need a certificate showing their criminal records, while Hondurans seeking to enter Costa Rica will need a certificate detailing any police record.

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United States

[Department of Homeland Security Announces Family Reunification Parole Process for Ecuador](#)

DHS announced a new family reunification parole process for certain nationals of Ecuador, advancing the Biden-Harris Administration's effective strategy to combine expanded lawful pathways and strengthened enforcement to reduce irregular migration.

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United States

[Certain Renewal Applicants for Employment Authorization to Receive Automatic 180 Day Extension](#)

Certain renewal applicants who have filed Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization, qualify for an automatic extension of their expiring employment authorization and/or employment authorization documents (EADs) while their renewal application is pending.

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United States

[USCIS Updates Guidance on EB-5 Regional Center Program](#)

USCIS Policy Manual with new guidance on the EB-5 Regional Center Program and new content on regional center designation and obligations, project applications, and direct and third-party promoters was updated. This update incorporates changes from the EB-5 Reform and Integrity Act of 2022 into the Policy Manual.

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United States

[USCIS Issues Policy Guidance Regarding the 2-Year Foreign Residence Requirement](#)

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) is issuing policy guidance in the USCIS Policy Manual regarding the 2-year foreign residence requirement for the nonimmigrant exchange visitor (J) classification. The update adds information about how USCIS determines whether the requirement has been met.

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United States

[Filing Location Change for H-2A, H-2B, CNMI-related Form I-129 Petitions, Form I-129CW Petitions, and CNMI-related Form I-539 Applications](#)

From 1 November 2023, all H-2A, H-2B, CNMI-related Form I-129 petitions, Form I-129CW petitions, and CNMI-related Form I-539 applications must be filed directly at the Texas Service Center. To allow the public time to transition filing at the Texas Service Center, there will be a 60-day grace period for forms filed at the California Service Center (CSC) or Vermont Service Center (VSC).

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Hong Kong

[Relaxation on Visa requirements for Vietnamese, Laotian, and Nepalese](#)

Hong Kong authorities have announced the simplification of the visa policy for employment, business, and travel for Vietnamese nationals, as well as relaxing the criteria for multiple-entry visas. Additionally, the government has also eased visa restrictions for Laotian and Nepalese talents seeking employment, training, and study in University Grants Committee (UGC)-funded institutions.

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India

[India resumes some visa services in Canada](#)

The High Commission of India in Ottawa announced that its consulates General in Toronto and Vancouver has resumed the visa services effective 26 October, 2023. India will resume visa services for entry visa, business visa, medical visa, and conference visa.

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Israel

[Israel grants visas to UN officials despite pledge to deny them entry](#)

Israeli officials have not been adhering to their promised refusal to grant entry visas to UN officials in protest of recent comments made by the global organization's chief.

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New Zealand

[New Zealand has modified the exploitation work visa rules for foreign employees](#)

New Zealand has announced that employees on an employer-supported work visa who report exploitation can apply for a special visa to leave their job during the investigation. This visa allows them to quickly leave their current job and work for any employer in New Zealand. However, they must first have their exploitation report assessed by Employment New Zealand.

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Saudi Arabia

[Online Qualification Verification Platform introduced](#)

The government of Saudi Arabia introduced a new online platform that will allow foreign nationals to verify education requirements. The Qualification Verification Program (QVP) is currently available to foreign nationals submitting applications for pathways other than the Saudi Cultural Attaché and select other industries.

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Sri Lanka

[Sri Lanka approves free tourist visa for seven country nationals](#)

Sri Lanka's cabinet has announced free tourist visas to visitors from seven countries including China, India, Russia, Japan, Thailand, Indonesia, and Malaysia till 31 March 2024, under a pilot program.

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Thailand

[Thailand announces visa free travel for Indian and Taiwanese Nationals](#)

Thailand Tourism has announced that from 10 November 2023 Indian and Taiwanese nationals can travel visa free and stay there up to 30 days.

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Europe and Africa

Finland

[The Finnish Immigration Service has started using automated decision-making in the processing of residence permits](#)

The Finnish Immigration Service issues an automated decision if the application meets all the requirements for issuing the permit. Negative decisions and decisions that require individual consideration are not issued automatically.

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Netherlands

[Netherlands to put a stop on residence permits for foreign investors](#)

Immigration and Naturalization Service (NLS) has announced that the residence permit for foreign investors will no longer be available from 1 January 2024.

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Thomas Wolf

Head of KPMG's Global
Immigration Network

T: +49 30 530 199-300

E: twolf@kpmg-law.com

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