



Immigration News Highlights

2024-11, 12 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

Brazil

Delays in issuance of National Migration Registration cards

The making of migrant registration cards in Brazil is facing delays due to the end of an agreement between the government and the contracted factory. As a result, the issuance of these cards is taking longer than usual.

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Canada

Canada announces new immigration pilots to support rural and Francophone minority communities

The Canadian Immigration Authorities have announced two new pilot programs, the Rural Community Immigration Pilot, and the Francophone Community Immigration Pilot, aimed at addressing labor shortages in rural and Francophone communities. The Rural Community

Immigration Pilot, will provide pathways to permanent residence for newcomers who can help fill critical labor shortages and want to live long-term in smaller communities.

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United States

[USCIS reaches H-2B cap for second half of FY 2024 and announces filing dates for the second half of FY 2024 supplemental visas](#)

USCIS has received enough petitions to meet the H-2B cap for the second half of FY 2024. As a result, USCIS is announcing the filing dates for supplemental H-2B visas for the remainder of FY 2024, as made available under the FY 2024 H-2B supplemental visa temporary final rule.

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Asia Pacific

China

[China permits visa-free entry for the nationals of six European Union countries](#)

China has expanded its 15-day visa-free entry policy to include six additional EU countries: Switzerland, Ireland, Hungary, Austria, Belgium, and Luxembourg. This policy will be in effect from 14 March to 30 November 2024, allowing citizens holding ordinary passports from these nations to enter China without a visa for various purposes.

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China

[Chinese embassy in South Korea reopens short-term visa applications](#)

The Chinese embassy has declared the restoration of short-term visa issuance for South Korean nationals, while China's National Immigration Administration has also announced the resumption of port visas and the 72/144-hour transit visa-free policy for South Korean citizens, effective from 18 February 2024.

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Japan

[Japan's Immigration Agency implements new guidelines for visa overstayers](#)

Japan's Immigration Services Agency has implemented reforms aimed at improving transparency and accessibility for individuals who have overstayed their visas. Under the revamped procedures, those facing deportation proceedings are allowed to apply for special residence permits. These reforms prioritize fairness and compassion in immigration matters, with a particular emphasis on safeguarding the welfare of children residing in Japanese communities.

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Japan

[Japan introduces new visa rules to increase job opportunities for foreign students](#)

Japan has implemented new visa policies with the intention of allowing more international students to secure employment within the country. Graduates from recognized technical institutions will now be permitted to work in fields outside of their area of study under the revised visa rules.

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Kuwait

[Kuwait maintains visa restrictions for nationals of seven countries](#)

The Ministry of Interior in Kuwait has made it clear that the visa information being circulated on social media regarding visa openings for certain countries is untrue. Furthermore, the Ministry has emphasized that any visa-related announcements will only be made through its official channels.

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Kyrgyzstan

[Kyrgyzstani citizens granted ten-year valid US tourist and business visas](#)

United States government has extended the validity period of newly issued tourist and business visas for citizens of Kyrgyzstan to ten years. Previously, these visas were valid for five years. The new ten-year validity will apply to B1, B2, and B1/B2 visas issued on or after 4 March 2024.

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New Zealand

[New Zealand increases minimum wage for seasonal workers](#)

New Zealand will implement a ten percent increase in the minimum wage for all Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) workers, effective from 1 April 2024. Currently, RSE workers are entitled to a minimum hourly rate of NZD24.97. From April, employers in this sector must ensure that their RSE workers receive at least NZD25.47 per hour, which includes the new minimum wage rate.

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Saudi Arabia

["Study in Saudi Arabia" platform launched to ease visa process for International students](#)

Saudi Arabia has initiated an innovative educational visa program tailored to international students aspiring to pursue their studies in the Middle Eastern country. The "Study in Saudi Arabia" visa initiative facilitates visa processing, offering diverse educational opportunities from short-term courses to extensive academic programs.

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Saudi Arabia

[Saudi Arabia starts issuing visas for Hajj 2024](#)

Saudi Arabia began issuing Hajj visas to Muslim pilgrims around the world on 1 March 2024 for the upcoming Hajj season. The visa application period will run until 29 April 2024.

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Singapore

Singapore set to increase minimum wage threshold for foreign workers by 2025

Starting from 1 January 2025, individuals applying for or renewing Singapore's Employment Pass will face an increased monthly salary requirement. This change represents a shift from the current standard, as the minimum qualifying wage will rise from US\$5,000 to US\$5,600.

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United Arab Emirates

Dubai launches platform to cut visa processing from a month to just five days

The United Arab Emirates has unveiled its latest innovation – the 'Work Bundle' platform, which aims to reduce the processing time required to complete all the necessary documents to acquire UAE work permits and residency visas. Following the new launch of this platform, the work and residency visa process will be reduced from almost one month to just five days.

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Uzbekistan

Uzbekistan's 2nd home visa program set to launch for international visitors

Uzbekistan government introduces a tourist visa program called "Uzbekistan is My Second Home," permitting international visitors to stay in this territory legally for up to a year without restrictions.

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Europe and Africa

Greece

Lesvos to introduce fast-track visas for Turkish citizens

Lesvos will introduce fast-track visas for Turkish nationals starting from 1 April 2024. The decision follows an agreement between Athens and Ankara to bring back the special Schengen Express Visa program for Turkish citizens who want to visit certain eastern Aegean islands.

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Iceland

Iceland launches ID card that replaces passport for travel within European Economic Area (EEA)

Iceland has introduced new ID cards that serve as an alternative to passports for travel within the EEA. These updated ID cards are available for all individuals, including children. They feature a prominent image of the cardholder, a chip like passports, and indicate the nationality of the holder.

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Ireland

Ireland introduces visa requirement for Dominica, Honduras & Vanuatu Nationals

Effective from 7 March 2024, nationals of Dominica, Honduras, and Vanuatu will need to obtain a visa to be permitted entry to Ireland, the Irish authorities have announced.

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Ireland

[Ireland provides Emergency Travel Assistance for some Dominica, Honduras & Vanuatu travelers after visa rule change](#)

Ireland has announced its provision of emergency travel assistance to individuals from Dominica, Honduras, and Vanuatu. This assistance will be available to those who have already made travel arrangements and meet specific criteria falling under five categories. It is important to note that only those who plan to enter Ireland on or before 7 April 2024, will be eligible to benefit from this arrangement.

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Ireland

[Ireland lifts visa requirement for diplomatic passport holders from nine countries](#)

Ireland has lifted the visa requirement for diplomatic passport holders of Indonesia, Qatar, Kuwait, Montenegro, Moldova, Türkiye, Colombia, Peru, and Georgia. Visa-free entry also applies to those who hold an official, service, or public affairs passport and accompany a Minister of the Government to Ireland.

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Italy

[Italy to grant 12,000 work visas to Tunisians by 2027](#)

Italy and Tunisia have officialized an agreement, creating employment opportunities for thousands of Tunisian nationals. A total of 12,000 Tunisians can work in Italy over the next three years.

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Italy

[Italian Bosses to Hire 6,000 Indian Citizens Starting From April](#)

Italy to admit 6,000 non-seasonal Indian workers in the year 2024, in accordance with the Migration and Mobility Agreement between India and Italy. The application process for Indian workers will commence in April and will continue until the end of the year, specifically December 2024.

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United Kingdom

[UK Home Office announces 10-year extension for Work Visa sponsor licenses](#)

The UK Home Office has announced that it will extend the renewal period for United Kingdom work visa sponsor licenses from four years to ten years, effective from 6 April 2024. This means that sponsor licenses that are due to expire will now be automatically extended for a decade, eliminating the need for future renewals.

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