



# Immigration News Highlights

2024-14, 2 April 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

### Brazil

Brazil postpones imposing visas for Australians, Canadians & Americans until 10 April 2025

The government of Brazil announced the extension of visa rules for Australian, Canadian, and American travelers until 10 April 2025. Travelers from these nations would be required to obtain an e-visa for visiting Brazil for various purposes.

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### United States

USCIS issues alert on new H-1B visa regulations: Incomplete applications to face rejection

The USCIS announced that from 1 April 2024, all paper-based H-1B and H-1B1 (HSC) petitions shall have to be filed at USCIS lockbox locations. Petitions sent to USCIS centers after this date will be rejected without exception

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### United States

#### USCIS provides third gender option on Form N-400

The USCIS announced that the Form N-400 for naturalization shall now include a third gender option, "X," with updated guidance in the USCIS Policy Manual. Starting from 1 April 2024, applicants can select "X" as their gender. Those with pending applications can also request a gender update after this date.

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### United States

#### USCIS announces filing location change for certain employment-based I-485 and related forms

The USCIS announced the shift of filing locations for certain forms from service centers to a lockbox, starting 1 April 2024. The measure was taken aiming to enhance efficiency, cut costs, and facilitate electronic adjudication by centralizing form digitization.

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### United States

#### New citizens will be able to seamlessly request social security updates

The USCIS confirmed that starting 1 April 2024, applicants filing Form N-400 for naturalization can request a Social Security number (SSN) or card and update their immigration status with the Social Security Administration (SSA) without visiting an SSA office. The new form allows noncitizens to apply for an SSN or replacement card alongside their naturalization application, eliminating the need to visit an SSA field office for these services.

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### United States

#### Fee hike for H-1B, L-1, and EB-5 US visas goes into effect

The Department of Homeland Security confirmed that the new fees for H-1B, L-1, and EB-5 visas will be effective from 1 April 2024. The application fee for Form 1-129 will increase to US\$780 from US\$460. H-1B registration fees shall increase from US\$10 to US\$215.

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## Asia Pacific

### Japan

#### Japan adds new roles to Skilled Foreign Worker Visa

The Japanese government announced the expansion of its skilled worker visa program to combat labor shortages, allowing extended stays for up to five years in key industries. The Cabinet decision added road, railway transportation, forestry, and timber industries to the visa, totaling 16 eligible sectors.

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## Taiwan

### Revised Immigration Act implemented

The government of Taiwan announced their new immigration policy, effective 1 March 2024, which allows foreign nationals to extend visitor visas for a fee, with certain conditions. Alien Resident Certificate holders can now apply for extensions earlier. Residents on visas from 2024 onwards have an extended period to apply for the Alien Resident Certificate.

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## Europe and Africa

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## Bulgaria

### Bulgaria will start issuing 5-year multiple-entry Schengen visas to Kuwaitis from March 31

Bulgarian authorities began granting five-year multiple-entry visas to Kuwaitis starting 31 March 2024. The Bulgarian Schengen visas will be available to eligible individuals, and Kuwaitis were advised to handle their visa applications early.

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## France

### France to open embassy in Guyana & offer Schengen visa services in 2025

The government of France announced their plans to establish an embassy in Guyana, making it easier for locals to apply for Schengen visas. The embassy will be located in Georgetown, with the exact opening date yet to be announced.

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## Germany

### Germany to simplify ID card & passport application procedures

German authorities announced the simplification of the process of getting ID cards and passports by reducing bureaucratic obstacles for naturalized citizens. The updated system will eliminate the need for paper passport photos.

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## Italy

### Italy starts accepting applications for non-EU agricultural seasonal workers

The government of Italy announced their plans to welcome 89,000 foreign workers this year to address labor shortages in various sectors. A large number of non-EU nationals have already applied for agricultural work visas with a validity of six or nine months.

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## United Kingdom

### UK raises skilled worker visa salary thresholds

The UK government announced significant changes to the Skilled Worker visa salary thresholds, effective from 4 April 2024. The minimum annual salary for the visa increased from GBP26,200 to GBP38,700, with exemptions for Health and Care workers.

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