



Immigration News Highlights

2024-17, 23 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](#)

[Asia Pacific](#)

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Americas

Canada

Changes to Temporary Foreign Worker Program

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada in March announced changes to its Temporary Foreign Worker Program, including modifications to the validity period of Labour Market Impact Assessments and to the cap for low-wage temporary foreign workers employed by employers in certain sectors.

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United States

May 2024 visa bulletin

US Department of State released the May 2024 Visa Bulletin reflecting minimal movement in employment-based cut-off dates relative to the April 2024 Visa Bulletin. The cut-off dates reflected in the Visa Bulletin, coupled with USCIS' confirmation of which chart will apply, dictate eligibility to file a Form I-485 application in each month. In addition, the Final Action Dates chart

in the applicable Visa Bulletin determines whether a pending Form I-485 or immigrant visa application may be approved.

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United States

USCIS updates definition for Schedule A, Group II occupations

US Citizenship and Immigration Services updated the Schedule A, Group II definition of “science” or “art” to align with the United States Department of Labor (DOL) definition which is effective from April 2024. DOL defines science or art as any field of knowledge or skill in which colleges and universities commonly offer specialized courses leading to a degree.

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United States

Cap reached for additional returning worker H-2B visas for second half of FY 2024

US Citizenship and Immigration Services has received enough petitions to reach the cap for the additional 19,000 H-2B visas made available for returning workers for the early second half of FY 2024 with start dates from 1 April to 14 May 2024, under the H-2B supplemental cap temporary final rule.

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United States

Papua New Guineans get US visa validity extended to six months

The US Embassy has updated its visa policy for Papua New Guinean travelers, effective from 17 April 2024. Visitor visas (B-1/B-2) for Papua New Guineans will now be valid for up to six months, allowing for a single entry.

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Asia Pacific

Iran

33 countries granted visa-free access to Iran

Iranian officials have announced that Iran offers visa-free access to citizens of 33 countries after abolishing visa requirements for these country nationals.

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Pakistan

Georgia & Pakistan lift visa requirements for diplomatic & official passports

Pakistan authorities have announced that visa-free travel for Georgian and Pakistani diplomatic passport holders began on 2 April 2024, allowing 90-day stays. Georgia and Pakistan signed a visa exemption agreement in September 2023 for these passport holders.

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Sri Lanka

[Sri Lanka launches new e-visa system & hikes tourist visa fees](#)

Sri Lankan government has announced an increase in its visa fees and has launched a new e-visa system to ensure efficiency and convenience. According to the Sri Lankan authorities, the e-visa system will replace the Electronic Travel Authorization method that has been applied so far.

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Tajikistan

[Tajikistan cancels visa-free entry for Turkish citizens](#)

Tajikistan government has revoked visa-free access for Turkish citizens starting 20 April 2024, in response to Türkiye's similar decision for Tajik nationals. Turkish citizens must now obtain visas for Tajikistan through embassies or consulates, with fees ranging from US\$60 to US\$190.

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Thailand

[Thailand & Kazakhstan introduce visa-free travel](#)

Thailand and Kazakhstan have reached a visa-free travel agreement to boost tourism in their countries. This agreement would allow citizens of the countries mentioned above to travel to each other's countries visa-free, with a limit of 30 days per visit and a maximum of 90 days within any 180-day period.

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Turkey

[Türkiye introduces its digital nomad visa](#)

Türkiye is launching a Digital Nomad Visa, allowing remote workers to live and work in the country for companies or clients abroad. Citizens of few countries aged 21-55 are eligible to apply for the Digital Nomad Visa if they meet specific requirements.

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Europe and Africa

Cyprus

[New rules for obtaining citizenship based on years of residence](#)

The Cyprus Ministry of Interior announced on 22 March 2024, that it is accepting the submission of applications for obtaining Cyprus citizenship based on the new provisions of the amending legislation.

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Denmark

Denmark sets new salary level for herdsmen and farm managers

Denmark has set a new salary level for herdsmen and farm managers applying for residence and work permits. Applications submitted on or after 12 April 2024, will be assessed based on the new salary level.

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European Union

EU approves more favourable work and stay permit rules for non-EU nationals

EU Council has simplified the bureaucratic hurdles for the single permit. Application for the single permit can be made from foreigners' home countries or within the bloc. Member states must issue a decision on single permit applications within three months.

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European Union

EU reduces Schengen visa fee for the Gambia to standard EUR80

The European Union Council has decided to reduce the Schengen visa fee for The Gambia to the standard EUR80. Since 2022, Gambians have been paying a EUR120 visa fee. The fee has been reduced to normal amid improved cooperation between The Gambia and the EU.

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Lithuania

Lithuania tightens conditions for employment of foreign workers

Lithuania has decided to tighten the conditions and requirements for the employment of foreign workers in the country. Only foreigners who hold a valid residence permit will be permitted to work in Lithuania.

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Norway

Norway lifts financial assistance barrier for permanent residence applicants

Norway has lifted the requirement to prove not having received financial assistance in the last 12 months when applying for a permanent residence permit. Effective 18 April 2024, permanent residence applicants will only have to prove they have been receiving a certain amount of income in the last year.

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United Kingdom

UK begins eVisa rollout for foreigners

The British government has started its immigration system digitalisation, which is being implemented by inviting foreigners with Biometric Residence Permits to substitute their documents with a UK Visas and Immigration account. This account will be used by foreigners to access their eVisa.

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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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