



Immigration News Highlights

Issue 05 – 1 February 2022



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.



Americas

Canada

Modernizing Canada's immigration system to support economic recovery and improve client experience

The Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) will implement advanced data analytics to reduce the application time for visitor visas by 87%. Further, Canada plans to process 127,000 permanent residency applications in the first quarter of 2022. IRCC will also launch a new digital portal for submission of applications. [Read more](#)

US

DHS Announces Availability of Additional H-2B Visas for First Half of Fiscal Year

The Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Labor announced the availability of additional 20,000 H-2B temporary nonagricultural worker visas for the first half of the FY22. These visas are available for the US employers who are facing drawbacks in their business without additional workers and want to employ the same on or before 31 March 2022. [Read more](#)

US

FY 2023 H-1B Cap Initial Registration Period Opens on March 1

The US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) will begin the registration for H-1B visa for FY23 from March 1 to 18, 2022. USCIS will assign a confirmation number to each registration submitted for the FY23 cap. [Read more](#)



Asia Pacific

Kuwait

New criteria for visa renewal in Kuwait; 250 dinars to be paid by foreigners above 60+

Kuwait implemented a new criterion for renewing visas for foreigners above the age of 60 mandating them to pay 250 dinars for renewals of work permit and insurance. [Read more](#)

Oman

Oman, Colombia sign visa waiver agreement

Oman and Colombia signed a mutual visa waiver agreement for the holders of diplomatic, special, and service passports. The measure was aimed to promote bilateral relations in various fields between the two countries. [Read more](#)

Philippines

Philippines To Reopen for Fully Vaccinated Foreign Tourists In February

Philippines will be open its borders from 10 February 2022 to vaccinated travelers from 157 countries. All vaccinated travelers need to provide a negative RT-PCR test to get a quarantine free entry into the country. [Read more](#)

Qatar

[COVID-19: Travel restriction lists updated](#)

Qatar updates its Green, Red and Exceptional Red country lists on 30 January 2022. Travelers must observe different entry and quarantine restrictions depending upon which list their country of origin is a part of. [Read more](#)

Saudi Arabia

[Saudi to extend validity of iqama, re-entry, visit visas for free; relief to stranded expats](#)

The government of Saudi Arabia has extended the work and residence permits of expatriates who are unable to return to Saudi Arabia due to COVID-19. The expatriates can renew their permits without visiting an Embassy of Saudi Arabia. [Read more](#)

Singapore

[Singapore further simplifies testing protocols for Vaccinated Travel Lane \(VTL\) travelers](#)

From 23 January 2022, all Vaccine Travel Lanes (VTL) travelers entering or transiting through Singapore are only needed to do an unsupervised administered ARTs (Antigen Rapid Test) from Day 2 to Day 7 of their arrival, if they plan to leave their place of residence or accommodation. Such a test is not required if travelers do not intend to go out. [Read more](#)

Thailand

[Thailand to welcome tourists with quarantine-free visas amid Omicron spread](#)

From 1 February 2022, all vaccinated travelers can have a quarantine-free entry into Thailand under the 'test and go' scheme. [Read more](#)

United Arab Emirates

[UAE resumes entry for travelers from 12 African countries, updates entry measures with another 3 effective January 29](#)

UAE authorities allowed the entry of travelers coming from Kenya, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Republic of Congo, South Africa, Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia and Zimbabwe while rules were updated for travelers coming from Uganda, Ghana and Rwanda. The travelers coming from these countries must provide a negative COVID-19 test taken from approved labs within 48 hours before arrival. [Read more](#)



Europe and Africa

Austria

[Austria Updates COVID-19 Entry Requirements for All Travelers](#)

A pre-entry COVID test is not required anymore for entry in Austria for travelers who have taken a booster dose. Those who have only taken a single dose must complete a pre-travel clearance and provide a negative PCR test taken, at most, 72 hours before arrival. [Read more](#)

Czech Republic

[Czechia to Tighten Entry Rules for Citizens of Poland & Romania](#)

Czech Republic has introduced tightened entry rules for travelers from Poland and Romania requiring them to provide a negative pre-entry test before entry. The rules were put into force from 31 January 2022. Travelers who have received a booster shot need not provide a negative pre-entry test. [Read more](#)

Denmark

[Denmark Expands List of Vaccines Accepted for Travel Into Country](#)

Denmark announced recognition of several new vaccines for travel. Denmark will accept four additional vaccines- Covishield, Covaxin, Sinovac, and Sinopharm along with those approved by the European Medicines Agency (EMA) for travel. [Read more](#)

Denmark

[Denmark to Impose New Facilitated Travel Rules From February 1](#)

Denmark has phased out travel restrictions including pre-entry testing requirements, approving more vaccines for entry into the country, restrictions on cruise tourism, etc. Denmark opened its borders to travelers from all nations from 1 February 2022. Only EU nationals were allowed to enter the country previously. [Read more](#)

Denmark**[Denmark Ends Post-Arrival Testing Requirement – Other Restrictions to Remain Effective Until End of the Month](#)**

From 1 February 2021, a post-arrival COVID test and a quarantine period are no longer required upon entry into Denmark. However, a pre-departure test remains mandatory for the unvaccinated and those who have never been infected by the virus. [Read more](#)

Estonia**[Only Vatican City State & 4 Third Countries Remain on Estonia's Green List](#)**

Estonia has added Rwanda to its green list due to low infection rates in the country. Currently, only five countries are present in the green list: Vatican City State, Indonesia, New Zealand, Rwanda, and Taiwan. Travelers from these countries are not subject to additional entry requirements. [Read more](#)

Estonia**[Estonia Extends Validity of Vaccination Certificates for Minors](#)**

The Estonian authorities decided to extend the validity of vaccination certificate from 9 to 15 months for minors aged from 12 to 18 years old as the booster dose against Omicron has not yet been decided for minors. [Read more.](#)

European Union**[EU Travel Restrictions to Remain in Place for Unvaccinated & Unrecovered Persons Due to High COVID-19 Rates Throughout the Bloc](#)**

The council for European Unions stated that all unvaccinated and unrecovered EU nationals will continue to be subject to strict entry rules throughout the region. The Council also suggested putting restrictions in place based on traveler's vaccination status rather than the situation of the origin country. However, stricter entry rules will prevail for travelers coming from countries in the dark-red areas. [Read more.](#)

Finland**[Finland Ends Internal Border Controls, Extends Restrictions for Traveler From Third-Countries Until Mid-February](#)**

Finland ended internal border controls for EU and Schengen Area countries on 31 January 2021. The government extended restrictions on arrivals from third countries until 14 February 2022, requiring them to present negative test results upon arrival. [Read more](#)

France**[France Moves 12 Third Countries from Red to Orange List](#)**

France has moved 12 countries from the red to the orange list due to reduced COVID infections. Australia and Argentina were moved from the green to the orange list due to increased list of infections. Travelers coming from the countries in the orange list are exempt from mandatory quarantine requirements if they have been vaccinated. [Read more](#)

Germany**[Germany Adds 12 More Countries to List of High-Risk Areas, Removes Another 13](#)**

Germany has added 12 new countries to high-risk areas requiring travelers from these countries to present either proof of vaccination or recovery from COVID-19 to enter the country without quarantine obligations. These travelers must also fill the digital registration on entry and carry the confirmation with them when travelling to the country. A total of 13 countries were also removed from high-risk areas. [Read more](#)

Germany**[Germany Urges EU to Reduce Recovery Certificates' Validity to 90 Days](#)**

Germany called for reducing the validity of recovery certificate from 180 days to 90 days considering the reinfection frequency of the Omicron variant. [Read more.](#)

Hungary**[Hungary Introduces New Residence Permit for Digital Nomads](#)**

The Hungarian government has introduced a new residency permit for digital nomads called the White Card. The permit allows internationals work remotely for a non-Hungarian company. The permit can be extended once for an additional year. [Read more.](#)

Ireland

[Scheme for long-term undocumented migrants now open for applications](#)

Ireland launched an immigration scheme for undocumented migrants on 31 January 2022. The scheme provides a pathway to immigration for undocumented migrants who have stayed four years in Ireland without an immigration permit (three in the case of minors), have a Stamp 4 immigration permission, and have years of residence for citizenship via naturalization. The scheme is open until 31 July 2022. [Read more](#).

Ireland

[First-time registration process for Dublin-based IRP applicants changed](#)

The Irish government changed the registration process for first-time, Dublin-based Irish Resident Permit (IRP) applicants. Already effective from 14 January 2022, IRP applicants in the region need to book an appointment on a phone instead of using the online system. [Read more](#)

Italy

[Italy to Ease Travel Rules for EU Citizens from February 1](#)

Italy eased entry restrictions for all travelers coming from the European Union. An order was signed requiring all visits from the Union to present a Green pass which shows whether a person has been vaccinated, recovered, or tested negative. Thus, the pre-testing requirement has effectively been removed if a Green pass is available. The measure entered into force on 1 February 2022. [Read more](#)

Lithuania

[Lithuania Obliges Travelers to Pay for Their On-Arrival Required Tests from January 31](#)

From 31 January 2022, all travelers to Lithuania must pay for their own testing expenses during travelling through international routes for all types of transport. [Read more](#)

Netherlands

[Netherlands Removes Quarantine Obligation for Travelers from South Africa](#)

The Dutch government moved South Africa from a very high-risk area to a high-risk one. Effectively, travelers from South Africa will not be subject to additional quarantine requirements. Only a negative COVID test will be needed for entry. [Read more](#)

Netherlands

[Netherlands to Lift Quarantine Requirement for Travelers Who Receive a Booster Dose](#)

The Dutch authorities have announced that incoming travelers who have already received a booster shot, at least seven days before arrival, will be exempt from the mandatory quarantine. The measure entered into force on 2 February 2022. Unvaccinated travelers must observe a ten-day quarantine period while those coming from high-risk areas need to fill a COVID certificate if they have been vaccinated. [Read more](#).

Nigeria

[US resumes drop visa processing in Nigeria 32 months after ban](#)

The United States (US) Government will resume the drop box service or interview waiver in Nigeria after 32 months of suspension. The service allows certain visa applicants who have already been issued a US visa to renew their visas without an interview process. The interview waiver is only allowed for B1/B2, an F, an L, or an H visa. [Read more](#)

Poland

[Poland Facilitates Work Permit Application Procedures for Third Country Nationals](#)

The Polish government has amended laws related to immigration, facilitating procedures for obtaining work and residence permits for third-country nationals. Income requirements or a confirmed place of residence are no longer a priority for third-country nationals to obtain temporary residence or work permit. Moreover, the foreign nationals will have access to the simplified system for changing residence and work permits if they change positions or employers. [Read more](#).

Portugal

[Portugal to Impose New Travel Rules](#)

Authorities in Portugal are considering modifying the entry rules for vaccinated travelers based on the recommendation of the European Union Member States. Additional entry restrictions may be abolished in the future for those who hold a valid vaccine certificate. [Read more](#)

Romania

[Romania Launches Digital Nomad Visa](#)

Romania's government has started implementing the digital nomad visa for a period of six months. The visa can be extended if following requirements are met:

- A proof of full or part-time employment outside Romania for three years.
- A proof income showing that the income earned in the last six months was six times of the Romanian average gross salary, around USD4,170 per month.
- Submission of relevant identification documents. [Read more](#)

Spain

[Spain is the latest country to offer a 'digital nomad' visa for remote workers](#)

Spain is planning to introduce a digital nomad visa which allow foreigners outside of EU to work remotely for a non-Spanish company and stay in Spain for up to one year. The visa is expected to be extended up to two times. [Read more](#)

Spain

[Spain Prolongs Entry Measures for All European Countries for Another Week](#)

Spain has prolonged entry measures for all European countries, except Switzerland, till 7 February 2022. All travelers from these countries must provide a EU COVID Digital Certificate showing a complete proof of vaccination, a negative COVID test or a proof of recovery. [Read more](#)

Sweden

[Sweden Extends Entry Restrictions for EU/EEA Countries Until February 28](#)

Sweden's government decided to extend entry restrictions for travelers from European Union and European Economic Area countries until 28 February 2022 due to increased Omicron cases. Moreover, entry restrictions for travels outside these regions are extended until 31 March 2022 who can only travel if they are covered by one of the exemptions of entry ban and have a pre-entry negative COVID test taken, at most, 72 hours before the entry. [Read more](#)

UK

[UK to remove all travel restrictions for vaccinated travelers from February 11](#)

From 11 February 2022, all travel restrictions for UK-bound vaccinated travelers will be removed. These travelers will only need to complete the Passenger Locator Form (PLF) to enter the country. Partially vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals must fill the PLF and take a pre-departure COVID test within 48 hours of departure. A quarantine period will only be observed in case of a positive COVID test. [Read more](#)



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