



# Immigration News Highlights

2023-05, 31 January 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

### United States

#### TFY 2024 H-1B Cap Initial Registration Period Opens on March 1

The USCIS announced the opening of the registration period for H1-B electronic applications. The window shall be open from 1 March 2023 to 17 March 2023. Applicants would be required to submit their registrations on the myUSICS portal along with a US\$ 10 filing fee.

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### United States

#### USCIS Extends COVID-19-related Flexibilities

The USCIS extended COVID-19 related flexibilities through 23 March 2023, to assist applicants, petitioners, and requestors. Under the flexibilities, the USCIS considers a response received within 60 calendar days, after the due date set forth for certain notices or requests, as inclusive, provided such request or notice was issued between 1 March 2020 and 23 March 2023.

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### Armenia

#### [Armenian nationals can now travel to UAE visa-free](#)

The Armenian government approved amendments to the Memorandum of Understanding signed with United Arab Emirates exempting diplomatic passport holders from obtaining entry permits, now allowing citizens of Armenia to visit UAS visa-free.

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### China

#### [China reopens visa-free travel to Japanese citizens](#)

Chinese authorities have resumed issuing port visas, along with re-opening the 72/144-hour visa-free transit policy for Japanese nationals visiting China. The National Immigration Administration had halted the issuance of visas to Japanese nationals previously in response to discriminatory COVID 19 related entry restrictions imposed by Japan on Chinese nationals visiting the country.

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### China

#### [Chinese tourists not required to produce PCR tests for entry into Namibia](#)

Chinese nationals wishing to travel to Namibia will no longer be required to provide proofs of COVID-19 tests while entering the country, as confirmed by Namibian authorities.

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### Kazakhstan

#### [Quota applications window opened](#)

The government of Kazakhstan has opened applications for work permits from companies in need of foreign workers for specific quota-subject job categories. Employers will be required to apply for the same through the official website of the government and provide information on the current number of foreign hires, along with the intended number of foreign hires.

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### Saudi Arabia

#### [Saudi Arabia introduces free four-day transit visa for stopovers](#)

Saudi Arabia announced the launch of an electronic transit visa that will allow visitors stopping over in the country to get an entry visa into the Kingdom. The transit visa is free of charge and will be issued with the traveler's ticket. It will be valid for three months and will allow the holder a stay of 4 days in the Kingdom.

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## South Korea

[South Korea extends restrictions on China arrivals amid concerns over post-Lunar New Year holiday Covid-19 surge](#)

South Korean authorities will continue to impose entry restrictions on incoming travelers from China throughout the month of February. The decision was taken over rising concerns of increased spread of COVID 19 following the Lunar Year Holidays in the country.

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## United Arab Emirates

[Visa services fees increased](#)

The government of UAE announced an increase in the visa service fees for residence and visit visas. Foreigners will now be required to pay AED 370 for a new Emirates ID card with a two-year validity, increased from AED 270. The insurance fee for a one-month visit visa has also been increased from AED 270 to AED 370.

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## Europe and Africa

### Algeria

[Tourists Who Wish to Travel to Algeria Can Now Get a Visa-on-Arrival](#)

Algerian authorities announced their decision to issue visas-on-arrival for tourists visiting the country. The measure was taken to attract tourists and reduce bureaucracy, in order to revive the country's tourism sector post the pandemic.

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### Poland

[Minimum Wage Increased in Poland](#)

The government of Poland increased the monthly minimum salary to PLN 3,490 from PLN 3,010. The minimum wage is expected to be increased again in July 2023 to PLN 3,600. These new wages shall be valid for applications submitted on or after 1 January 2023, and those applications submitted prior to 1 January 2023 pending approval. The new rates shall not affect the EU Blue Card minimums.

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### Portugal

[Portugal will open its own facilities for visa assistance in Luanda](#)

The Portuguese ambassador to Angola has announced the launch of Portugal's independent facility to support visa applications in Luanda. The initiative was taken to deal with increasing numbers of pending visa applications from Angolans wishing to migrate to Portugal.

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## Sweden

### Sweden Extends COVID-19 Entry Restrictions on Travelers From China Until 18 February

Swedish authorities have announced the extension of COVID 19 related entry restrictions on Chinese nationals arriving in the country. The restrictions shall be kept in place till 18 February 2023, post which an evaluation of the rate of infections will be conducted to decide further moves.

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