



Immigration News Highlights

2023-08, 21 February 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

Updated guidance changes age calculation for green card purposes

The USCIS issued an updated guidance for calculating the age limit for a non-citizen child to obtain an immigrant visa. Earlier, children over 21 years of age were unable to obtain lawful permanent citizenship in the US. However, now the authorities will use Dates for Filing chart for determining date cut-offs, providing applicants more clarity about their eligibility status.

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United States

March Bulletin published

The US State Department published the March Bulletin for employment-based filings. The bulletin showed no movement for the next month. China and India EB-1 remained at 1 June 2022. China EB-2 will remain at 8 July 2022, and India EB-2 will remain at 1 May 2019. China EB-3 will remain at 1 September 2018, and India EB-3 will remain at 1 August 2012. All other countries for all categories remain at current.

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United States

State Department closes pilot program for online passport renewals

The US State Department closed the recently started pilot program for online renewal of passports. Qualifying individuals who created their MyTravelGov account before 1 p.m. EST on 7 February 2023 can still avail the online passport renewal service. All other applicants can continue their renewal process via mail or in person.

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Asia Pacific

China

China launches visa scheme to attract professionals to Hong Kong

Chinese authorities launched a new visa scheme for attracting professionals from Hong Kong. The pilot scheme will allow scientists, healthcare professionals and investment arbitrators from Hong Kong and Macau to enter and exit the mainland freely via a multiple entry visa. The program entered into force from 20 February 2023.

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Singapore

COVID-19 related entry requirements lifted

The government of Singapore abolished COVID related entry restrictions for foreign travelers. Individuals arriving in the country would no longer be required to provide proof of vaccination against COVID 19, or proof of a negative predeparture COVID test. The requirement for possessing a COVID travel insurance has also been lifted.

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Thailand

Tourist entry fee confirmed

Thai authorities have approved the decision to levy a tourist fee of THB 150 and THB 300 on foreign visitors arriving by air and via water and land transport respectively. Part of the revenues generated from the fees will be used to cover for health and accident insurance for tourists during their stay in the country. The fees will be added to the price of the plane ticket for air travelers, however, the method of collection for land and water travelers remains undecided.

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Europe and Africa

European Union

EU countries to gradually remove COVID-19 restrictions on travelers from China

On 11 February 2023, European Union Member States announced their unanimous decision to phase out the COVID 19 related travel restrictions imposed on arrivals from China. Random testing of Chinese travelers for COVID will also be stopped from March 2023.

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France

France digitizes naturalization & reintegration application procedure

French authorities announced the complete digitization of the application process for French nationality. The measure was introduced to ease the process for everyone. A new online platform named NATALI has been set up by the authorities for the same. Users will be able to track the progress of their application in real time, along with being notified about any missing information.

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Ireland

Ireland terminates its Golden Visa program for wealthy foreign investors

The government of Ireland announced the termination of the Immigrant Investor Programme (IIP), which allowed non-EU nationals to obtain Irish residency by making a financial contribution to the country. The programme was ended due to accusations of unlawful activities being conducted by those obtaining residency via the same.

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Poland

Poland makes automatic border control gates available for children

Polish authorities confirmed children over the age of 12 years to be eligible for check-in process via the automatic border control gates at six border crossings in the country. Children would have to be at least 140 cm tall to pass through the gates. However, the facility will not be available for third-country citizens.

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United Kingdom

UK issues warning for Britons on Germany, Spain & Portugal

British authorities have issued a warning for travelers wishing to travel to Germany, Spain and Portugal. The warning was issued following COVID-19 concerns. Travelers are encouraged to check their destination country's COVID related restrictions, and follow the same.

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