



Immigration News Highlights

2023-09, 28 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

Canada

[Temporary Foreign Worker Program to transition online](#)

The government of Canada announced the transition of the Temporary Foreign Worker Program from paper to online. April onwards, employers would be required to submit an online Labour Market Impact Assessment form to apply for the TFWP.

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Canada

[Resumption of biometrics collection for temporary residence applicants in Canada](#)

The Canadian government resumed collecting biometric information from people who are seeking for temporary residency in Canada. Individuals wishing to extend or restore their stay as a student, worker or visitor; of those who applying for a work permit, study permit, visitor visa or temporary residence permit will be required to submit their biometrics.

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Mexico

[Mexico's National Employment Service and embassies agree to verify job offers abroad](#)

Mexican authorities, along with Canadian and US embassies will start verifying job offers in order to prevent fraudulent practices. These job offers will be verified before any further immigration procedures are carried out for applicants. Mexican individuals looking to apply for jobs in Canada or the United States can use the government's Online Employment Portal for verified job postings.

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United States

[USCIS issues clarifying guidance for individuals authorized to work under special student relief provisions](#)

The USCIS issued a clarification regarding the employment authorization validity period under Special Student Relief. An SSR off-campus employment authorization of 18 months shall be granted, which is typically the duration of the Federal Register notice validity period. It has also been clarified that the employment authorizations cannot be extended beyond the conclusion period of the student's academic program.

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United States

[FY 2024 H-1B cap initial registration period opens on 1 March 2023](#)

In preparation for the upcoming H-1B registration period, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services has started enabling potential H-1B petitioners to access already existing and set up new myUSICS accounts.

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United States

[U.S. announces new favorable visa regime for Nigerians](#)

The US government increased the validity period from 24 months to 60 months for Nigerian nationals wishing to visit the country on temporary tourist or business visas. The decision shall enter into force from 1 March 2023. The increased validity period will not result in an increased visa application fee, which currently stands at US\$ 160.

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Asia Pacific

Australia

[Australia adds two years to post-study work visa](#)

The Australian government announced the extension of the Temporary Graduate Work visa (subclass 485) from July 2023. The extension shall be available for more than 400 bachelor's and master's programmes, and all PhD programmes, and shall enable students to stay and work in Australia for four years, as compared to the earlier two year period.

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Australia

Australia increases work hours to 48 hours per fortnight for international students

Foreign students studying in Australia on a student visa will now be allowed to work for 48 hours per fortnight. These changes in the student visa work restrictions shall be applicable from 1 July 2023.

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Bangladesh

Bangladesh to allow dual citizenship in 44 more countries

The government of Bangladesh will now allow Bangladeshi nationals to hold dual citizenship in 44 more countries. These new additions in the dual citizenship list include Egypt, South Africa, Kenya, Algeria, Haiti, Bahamas, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, etc.

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Hong Kong

Hong Kong to offer residency visa for investors in local markets

Hong Kong authorities announced the revival of a visa program that grants residency status to individuals investing a certain amount of money in local asset markets. The investment would be required in asset classes other than land and property, and the minimum investment threshold is expected to be set at HKD 10 million. The program was re-introduced in a bid to attract professionals in the midst of an ongoing competition for talent with neighboring countries.

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New Zealand

Extension for employers accredited under the AEWV system

The government of New Zealand announced an extension of accreditation under the Accredited Employer Work Visa system. Employers who were to apply for accreditation under the same before 4 July 2023 will now receive an automatic extension of 12 months.

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Europe and Africa

Finland

Finland cuts processing time of residence permit applications filed by foreign workers

The government of Finland will be cutting processing time for residence permit applications submitted by foreigners who have accepted a job offer in the country. Work based permits will now be processed under a month. All pending and new applications will be processed according to the new rule, even if they were filed prior to the announcement.

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France

France lifts COVID testing requirement for travelers from China

French authorities have decided to abolish all COVID 19 testings and random screenings on arrival being carried out on incoming Chinese visitors. Travelers from China will no longer be required to provide proof of negative PCR test results or fill a health declaration upon arrival in France.

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Germany

Germany ends mandatory testing requirement for travelers from China

The government of Germany announced that travelers arriving from China will no longer be required to take the mandatory pre-arrival COVID-19 test. German authorities have removed China from the virus variant list and have clarified that foreign arrivals from China no longer pose a risk to general public health.

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Ireland

Submission window for IRP renewal extended

The government of Ireland extended the submission window for Irish Residence Permit renewals. Individuals will now be permitted to submit their cards for renewal up to 12 weeks prior to the date of expiry, as opposed to the previous window of 4 weeks before expiration date.

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Malta

Malta to drop COVID testing requirement for travelers from China on 27 February

Maltese authorities will no longer require arrivals from China to undergo pre departure COVID 19 tests. The decision was taken after the current COVID situation in China was evaluated to be no longer risky, and entered into force from 27 February 2023.

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Portugal

Portugal launches innovative AI-driven citizenship application system

The government of Portugal unveiled an artificial intelligence tool which will allow for Portuguese nationality applications to be submitted and validated online. This tool will accelerate the application process by automating the document verification procedures, reducing waiting times for applicants.

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United Kingdom

Brits won't have to apply for an EU travel authorization until 2024

British passport holders will be permitted to travel to the EU Schengen area without any additional administrative and procedural hurdles, since the implementation of the European Travel Information and Authorization System (ETIAS) travel authorization was postponed to 2024 by the European Union.

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