



# Immigration News Highlights

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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

DHS announces start of applications for visa-free travel to US for eligible Israeli citizens and nationals

The US Department of Homeland Security announced the opening of the visa-waiver program for Israeli nationals wishing to travel to the US. Applications shall be accepted through the Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA). Successful applicants shall be permitted to travel to the US for business or tourism purposes, for a maximum period of 90 days, post which they shall be required to obtain a visa.

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## Asia Pacific

### Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia expands its e-visa program to six additional countries

Saudi Arabian authorities extended the kingdom's e-visa program to include six more countries- Turkey, Thailand, Panama, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Seychelles, and Mauritius. The e-visa shall be granted to individuals traveling to the kingdom for the purposes of leisure, business, or Umrah.

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### United Arab Emirates

#### Residents no longer required to get out of car for border checks between UAE and Saudi Arabia

The Emirati authorities implemented the Smart Land Borders Crossing system at the Ghuwaifat border crossing between Saudi Arabia and UAE, enabling citizens to cross the border without getting out of their vehicles. Travelers must have their car license plate registered under their names, and must get their passports, Emirates ID and biometrics scanned at the crossing for seamless crossing.

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### United Arab Emirates

#### Three-month visit visas discontinued

Emirati authorities have suspended the issuance of visit visas with a validity of three months. Visas with a validity period of 30 and 60 days are still available. However, the 90-day visa is still available for those wishing to travel to Dubai, and have resident first-degree relatives in the city.

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### United Arab Emirates

#### UAE visit visa extension can be done only one time, for 30 days only

The Federal Authority for Identity, Citizenship, Customs and Port Security (ICP) announced that a visa to the UAE can be extended only once, for a maximum period of 30 days. A fee of AED750 shall be charged for extension of the visa.

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## Europe and Africa

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### European Union

#### Schengen visas to become more secure & accessible as MEPS adopt digital visas

The Members of EU Parliament voted on and approved of a law to digitalize the Schengen visa. The digitalization is expected to make the visa more accessible, along with reducing efforts and costs of application. the visa shall be processed on a single website, notifying applicants of approval of their visa application, in case of multi-country trips.

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### Ghana - South Africa

#### Ghana, South Africa sign visa waiver deal

The governments of Ghana and South Africa signed a visa-waiver deal, allowing citizens of both countries to travel to either country without having to obtain a visa before their travel. Holders of ordinary passports shall be permitted to enter and stay in either country for a maximum period of 90 days, without alternative to work.

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## Ireland

### Ireland increases national minimum wage

The Irish government announced an increase of 12.4 percent in the national minimum wage for the year of 2024. The hourly minimum wage shall increase from the current rate of EUR11.30 to EUR12.70. The new wage level shall enter into force from 1 January 2024.

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## Ireland

### Foreigners can now apply for Irish citizenship online

Irish authorities announced the launch of an online portal enabling candidates to submit their applications for citizenship online. Applicants would be required to fill an application form, upload supporting documents and make the necessary payments on the website itself. However, the option of the offline paper-based application process shall still be available for those unable to access the online service.

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## Italy

### Italy to charge foreigners a EUR2,000 yearly fee to use public health service

The government of Italy announced that foreigners living in Italy, holding nationality of countries lying outside the EU shall be required to pay a fee of EUR2,000 annually in order to access the Irish national health service. Discounted fee rates shall be available for legal residents, international students and au pairs.

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## Kenya

### Kenya waives visa requirement for Angola nationals

The government of Kenya announced that citizens of Angola wishing to travel to Kenya shall no longer be required to obtain a visa before doing so. The initiative was taken as a step towards strengthening ties between the two countries.

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## Portugal

### Another Portuguese city to implement tourist tax

Portuguese authorities announced that tourists wishing to travel to the city of Peniche would be required to pay a tourist tax of EUR1 for overnight stays. The measure was introduced as an attempt to control over tourism in the city.

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## Turkey

### Turkey raises property investment threshold for foreign residency

The government of Turkey announced new rules for foreigners wishing to seek a residence permit in the country. The minimum threshold for property investment for gaining citizenship has

been increased from US\$50,000 for small cities and US\$75,000 for large metropolians, to US\$200,000. This new threshold shall be applicable regardless of the location of investment.

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