

GMS Flash Alert

Immigration Edition

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Greece - Digital Nomad Visa Provisions Introduced in Immigration Legislation

On 4 September 2021, Law 4825/2021 came into force introducing for the first time the concept of “digital nomads” in Greece’s Immigration Code (Law 4251/2014) and permitting third-country remote workers to relocate to Greece.¹

WHY THIS MATTERS

The regulation of third-country digital nomad immigration issues is of crucial importance to accommodate both employer and employee needs given the recent change of work patterns that are anticipated to continue in future.

Digital Nomads

- The new law introduces the “digital nomad” concept, defined as a third-country national (self-employed, freelancer or employee) working remotely in Greece for employers or clients outside Greece.
- Digital nomads working in Greece for a period of up to 12 months fall within the category of third-country nationals who can work in Greece on the basis of a national visa with a duration exceeding 90 days. Further, digital nomads can be accompanied in Greece by members of their family to whom, following their application, a separate visa is issued that will expire simultaneously with the digital nomad’s visa, and which does not entitle them to take up employment or any financial activity in Greece.
- The provisions set out the documents to be filed with the competent Consulate (either by the applicant in person or to be sent electronically), which must reply within 10 days of the applicant’s request and complete the procedure for the issuance of the visa in “one stop.” In addition to the general documents to be filed for the issuance of national visas, the digital nomad visa documents include a statutory declaration of the applicant’s intention to reside in Greece on the basis of the national visa for the provision of remote work and on the

applicant's commitment not to provide services or employment to an employer registered in Greece, the employment or project agreement with an employer outside Greece, supporting documents to prove that the applicant has sufficient financial means (at the level of EUR 3,500 on a monthly basis, increased by the number of dependent family members accompanying the applicant) for the payment of living expenses while in Greece without burdening the national social welfare system, etc.).

- As long as the conditions for the issuance of a national visa continue to be met and before its expiry, the digital nomad and family members may apply for a residence permit of two years duration, subject to further renewal every two years, provided that the renewal conditions are met. An exception to the general provisions allows third-country nationals and their family members who meet the conditions and who have entered Greece either on the basis of a short-term visa or who have been released from any visa obligation, can apply for a residence permit during the period of validity of the short-term visa (or the release from the visa obligation). In this case, in addition to the remaining documents provided, the applicants must file with the competent authorities an agreement evidencing lease or purchase of real estate in Greece.
- Absences from Greece do not impede the renewal of the residence permit provided that they do not exceed six months on an annual basis.

Investment Activity

- Bank transfers for investors' residence permits now can be made by the applicant's spouse or up to so-called second-degree relatives by blood or marriage.
- Third-country nationals in possession of an investor's residence permit can redeem the investment in order to realise a new investment (including investment in real estate). In such a case, the third-country national maintains the residence permit already issued until completing the procedures for certifying the new total investment and the issuance of a new residence permit.

FOOTNOTE:

1 Law 4825/2021 (Official Government Gazette Bulletin A' 157/4.9.2021).

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Contact us

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