

GMS Flash Alert

Immigration Edition

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Sweden – New Rules for EU Blue Card

A Swedish proposal¹ for new rules related to the EU Blue card contains several suggestions to simplify and promote EU Blue Cards in Sweden and it is in line with the government's efforts to promote the migration of highly-qualified labour to Sweden.

An EU Blue Card is a residence and work permit for highly-qualified employment, and the conditions for granting such a permit are regulated in a special chapter of the Swedish Aliens Act (*Utlänningslagen*). The requirements that distinguish an EU Blue Card from a so-called national work permit are that the applicant must have a university degree, or five years of professional experience, and a salary that corresponds to at least one and a half times the average gross salary in Sweden.

The purpose behind the proposal is to enhance Sweden's ability to attract and retain highly-qualified workers and to facilitate their mobility within the EU. The changes should enter into force on 18 November 2023.

WHY THIS MATTERS

The proposal is expected to introduce more flexibility and more favourable terms for highly-skilled workers wishing to come to Sweden to work and live. One measure makes it possible to be employed for at least six months, rather than the current one year. Another would permit changing from a residence permit to an EU Blue Card from inside Sweden. And yet another would make it easier to change employers or profession.

Taken all together, the proposed measures should make it simpler and more convenient – and therefore more attractive – for highly-qualified workers to obtain an EU Blue Card and work in Sweden.

More Details

One of the proposed changes is that an EU Blue Card can be granted to a foreign national who has an employment contract for highly-qualified employment with an employment period of at least six months, rather than the current one-year minimum requirement. The salary must continue to be at least one and a half times the average gross annual

salary in Sweden. It is further proposed that a foreign national with another type of residence permit should have increased opportunities to change to an EU Blue Card from within Sweden.

Moreover, it is proposed that a foreign national who has been granted an EU Blue Card should also be able to change profession or employer without having to submit a new application to the Swedish Migration Agency. Instead, an obligation to notify the Swedish Migration Agency is proposed in the event of a change of employer or if there are other changes that affect the conditions for the EU Blue Card.

It is also proposed that anyone who has been granted an EU Blue Card by another EU member state should be able to enter Sweden and conduct business for a maximum of 90 days during a 180-day period. If the foreign national has had an EU Blue Card in another EU state for at least 12 months, that individual should be able to apply for an EU Blue Card in Sweden through a simplified process.

KPMG INSIGHTS

KPMG in Sweden sees the changes that are now being proposed as positive, and as an important step in attracting and retaining highly-skilled labour from abroad to/in Sweden. It is also in line with the overall agenda of simplifying the processes for particularly highly-qualified workers migrating to Sweden.

Over the past few years, there have been several changes regarding the requirements and processes for applying for different types of work/residence permits in Sweden. It has been the experience of KPMG in Sweden that following such changes it has taken time for the Swedish Migration Agency to implement and interpret the new regulations.

KPMG in Sweden will continue to monitor developments and will endeavour to inform readers of *GMS Flash Alert* as matters evolve.

FOOTNOTE:

1 See Swedish government, the *Regeringskansliet* website, [Genomförande av det nya blåkortsdirektivet Ds 2023:6](#) .

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Contact us

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The information contained in this newsletter was submitted by the KPMG International member firm in Sweden.

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