



GMS Flash Alert

Immigration Edition

2023-221 | November 21, 2023



Finland - Closure of Southeastern Border-Crossing Points

In response to evolving concerns of facilitated illegal entries into Finland, the Finnish government has announced the closure of specific border-crossing points along Finland's eastern border, effective from 18 November 2023. This decision encompasses closure of the key entry points of Vaalimaa, Nuijamaa, Imatra, and Niirala. This directive will be in place until 18 February 2024.¹

The decision to close Finland's eastern border stems from a significant rise in illegal entries, particularly at key crossing points in southeast Finland. This closure is essential to tackle the growing threat posed by these illegal entries, thus reinforcing public safety and national security.²

WHY THIS MATTERS

Individuals intending to cross the land border between Finland and Russia must now utilise the four northeastern border-crossing points that remain open for passenger transport (Rajajooseppi, Salla, Kuusamo, and Vartius). Concurrently, Finnish citizens are mandated to comply with open border-crossing points during this period.³

The submission of applications for international protection, i.e., asylum, at the land border between Finland and Russia, will be concentrated at the border-crossing points of Vartius and Salla. People seeking to enter the country will be directed and guided to these locations.⁴

The closure of specific border-crossing points may significantly impact the movement of employees and individuals reliant on these routes, particularly affecting those engaged in cross-border activities or commuting between Finland and Russia. Employees accustomed to using the now-closed border points will need to adapt to alternative crossings, potentially altering their travel logistics and routines.

Context

This decision aligns with Section 16 of the Border Guard Act, which permits the government to enact such measures in the face of a serious threat to public order, national security, or public health. The consolidation of international protection application submissions at specific border-crossing points is a strategic move in response to these concerns.⁵

There have been indications that external actors or authorities may have facilitated the entry of individuals into Finland through illegal means. Consequently, the government has taken significant steps to reorganise border crossings, aiming to address the issues that have arisen.⁶

The Finnish government and related authorities are actively monitoring the situation at Finland's eastern border. Regular assessments will be conducted to evaluate the continued necessity of this directive. Any revisions or amendments will be promptly communicated as circumstances evolve.⁷

KPMG INSIGHTS

This development signifies a pivotal shift in border-control measures, necessitating a keen adherence to the updated protocols for travel and border crossing by individuals travelling to/from Finland for tourism, business, or asylum.

The KPMG International member firm in Finland continues to monitor the implementation of the amendments closely.

For additional information or specific inquiries related to these border-control measures, it is advisable to consult with qualified immigration counsel or a member of the immigration team with KPMG in Finland (see the Contacts section).

FOOTNOTES:

1 Ministry of the Interior, "[Government decides to close the border in Southeast Finland](#)" (also available at this link in Finnish, Swedish, and Russian).

2 Raja, Finnish Border Guard, "[Measures to Stop Illegal Entry](#)" (also available at this link in Finnish, Swedish, and Russian).

3 Ministry of the Interior, "[Government decides to close the border in Southeast Finland](#)" (also available at this link in Finnish, Swedish, and Russian).

4 Ibid.

5 Ibid.

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid.

* * * *

Contact us

For additional information or assistance, please contact your local GMS or People Services professional* or one of the following professionals with the KPMG International member firm in Finland:



Sanna Leivo
People Services
Tel. +358 20 760 3322
sanna.leivo@kpmg.fi



Minna Pekkanen
People Services
Tel. +358 44 089 1888
minna.pekkanen@kpmg.fi

** Please note the KPMG International member firm in the United States does not provide immigration or labour law services. However, KPMG Law LLP in Canada can assist clients with U.S. immigration matters.*

The information contained in this newsletter was submitted by the KPMG International member firm in Finland,

© 2023 KPMG Oy Ab, a Finnish limited liability company and a member firm of the KPMG network of independent member firms affiliated with KPMG International Limited, a private English company limited by guarantee. All rights reserved.

www.kpmg.com

kpmg.com/socialmedia



© 2023 KPMG LLP, a Delaware limited liability partnership and a member firm of the KPMG global organization of independent member firms affiliated with KPMG International Limited, a private English company limited by guarantee. All rights reserved.

The KPMG name and logo are registered trademarks or trademarks of KPMG International. The KPMG name and logo are trademarks used under license by the independent member firms of the KPMG global organization.

KPMG LLP is the U.S. firm of the KPMG global organization of independent professional services firms providing Audit, Tax and Advisory services. The KPMG global organization operates in 147 countries and territories and has more than 219,000 people working in member firms around the world.

Each KPMG firm is a legally distinct and separate entity and describes itself as such. KPMG International Limited is a private English company limited by guarantee. KPMG International Limited and its related entities do not provide services to clients.

GMS Flash Alert is a publication of the KPMG LLP Washington National Tax practice.