

GMS Flash Alert

Immigration Edition

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Malta – New Migrant Pathway: Specialist Employee Initiative

For third-country nationals applying for a work permit in Malta, the Specialist Employee Initiative, 'SEI', has been introduced alongside the Ordinary Single Work Permit and the Key Employee Initiative (KEI).¹ The Maltese government entity responsible for handling the applications, Identità, has created these categories to cater for the different levels of specialisation and of remuneration thereon, in an aim to expedite the processes for the two latter categories of applicants.

WHY THIS MATTERS

The Maltese government is aiming to provide employers and work permit applicants with greater efficiency and certainty when future planning and to expand the opportunities for entry and work in Malta. The changes are expected to help Malta attract and retain the skilled workers it needs amidst ongoing skills shortages and an increasingly competitive marketplace.

More Details

To be eligible to apply under the SEI, the employee must earn a minimum annual gross salary of €25,000 and have relevant academic and practical qualifications at a minimum:

Malta Qualification Frame (MQF) Level 6 or higher in an area directly related to the employment position being offered in Malta; **OR**

Qualifications - academic, vocational, or other certified skill qualifications, which equate to an MQF level **lower than MQF Level 6**, but which are directly related to the position being offered by the Maltese employer.

AND

Proof of Experience - **Reference letters** of past employment showing a minimum 36 months of relevant work experience.

The following table contains reference to the key differences between the different routes including the processing timeframes:

| | Normal single permit application | Specialist Employee Initiative (SEI) | Key Employee Initiative (KEI) |
|---|--|---|---|
| Validity of permit | 1-2 years | 1-3 years | 1-3 years |
| Application timeframe | 6-8 weeks | 15 working days | 5 working days |
| Eligibility criteria – Employment contract evidencing ... | At least the local minimum wage of €10,021 per annum | At least €25,000 gross annual salary and qualifications + relevant job experience (36 months) | At least €35,000 gross salary per annum and qualifications OR relevant job experience (36 months) |
| Fee | €300 (per year) | €300 (per year) | €300 (per year) |

Source: KPMG in Malta

KPMG INSIGHTS

While the expected timeframes are promising, we expect an initial period of adjustment.

In addition to the expedited processing timeframe, the potential for a lengthened validity period is also of note both for employees and employers as it would serve to dramatically reduce costs and uncertainty around the regular renewal process.

The existing entry framework for attracting foreign skilled workers to Malta has been limiting for employers and workers. The changes announced regarding the SEI are expected to provide both employers and individuals aiming to come to Malta to work with greater flexibility, opportunity, efficiency, and certainty.

If employers and migrating workers require clarity around eligibility and procedures, they should reach out to their global mobility professional or a member of the GMS team in Malta (see the Contacts section).

FOOTNOTE:

1 For more information, see the Identità website: <https://identita.gov.mt/expatriates-unit-employment-related-permits-highly-qualified-individuals/> .

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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 Malta:



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