

# GMS Flash Alert

## Immigration

2024-142 | June 28, 2024

## Finland – Changes to EU Blue Card Requirements for Highly-Skilled Workers

On 13 May 2024, Finland implemented a legislative change<sup>1</sup> to meet the EU Blue Card Directive requirements, aiming to ease and simplify the process for highly-skilled non-EU nationals to enter and work in the European Union.

### WHY THIS MATTERS

These updates are significant for foreign highly-skilled professionals considering working in Finland and more widely in the EU. The changes aim to standardise the entry and residence conditions for highly-skilled workers coming from outside the EU and make the EU – as well as Finland (a part of the EU) – a more attractive destination for global talent.

### Key Changes Explained

Below are the key changes made to the EU Blue Card:

- **Lower Salary Requirement:** The salary must be at least the average gross salary in Finland (in 2024 EUR 3,638 per month: previously the requirement was 1.5 times the gross salary). (For related coverage, see [GMS Flash Alert 2024-027](#), 29 January 2024.) The lower salary requirement aligns the Blue Card with the national permit for specialists, making it accessible to a broader range of highly-skilled professionals.<sup>2</sup>
- **Flexibility on education requirements:** Applicants must have a higher education degree involving a minimum of three years of study OR at least five years of relevant work experience. This offers flexibility as previously having a three-year-long higher education degree was compulsory for the EU Blue Card.<sup>3</sup>
- **Decreased requirement for assignment duration:** Highly-skilled individuals can now apply for the EU Blue Card for an employment duration that lasts up to six months instead of the previous one-year requirement. If the duration of the employment is less than two years, the EU Blue Card will be issued for the length of the employment contract plus an additional three months beyond that period (max. length two years).<sup>4, 5</sup>

- **Unemployment Protection:** If a Blue Card holder becomes unemployed, he/she will have at least three months to find a new job. His/her residence permit cannot be revoked during this period. If the individual has resided in the country for over two years, he/she will have at least six months to search for a job. In addition to EU Blue Card changes, there is a separate initiative from the Finnish government to offer further flexibility for specialists, start-up entrepreneurs, and EU Blue Card holders to extend the job-seeking period for six months.<sup>6, 7, 8</sup>
- **Increased Mobility:** 12 months in the first country, easier short-term work in others. Increased mobility within the EU is another significant change benefitting Blue Card holders, who will now only need to stay in their initial country for 12 months compared to the earlier 18 months, before moving to another EU country.<sup>9</sup>

## KPMG INSIGHTS

With flexible, more liberal policies around the EU Blue Card, the climate for making Finland and the broader EU more attractive to highly-skilled professionals from outside the EU has considerably improved.

The changes should be welcome news for international talent and the companies hiring them.

However, navigating these changes and understanding how they can be leveraged to enhance building a company's skilled workforce may be challenging; therefore, for additional guidance and assistance, it may be a good idea to reach out to your usual global-mobility professional or immigration counsel or a member of the global-mobility team with KPMG in Finland (see the Contacts section).

The KPMG International member firm in Finland will continue to monitor this matter and will endeavour to inform readers of *GMS Flash Alert* of any important developments.

## FOOTNOTES:

1 (In English) Ministry of the Economic Affairs and Employment in Finland / Työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö, "[Government proposes changes to EU residence permits for highly skilled workers](#)." (15.2.2024). (Also available in Swedish and Finnish at this link.)

2 (In English) The Finnish Immigration Service / Maahanmuuttovirasto, "[Changes in the salary requirement for EU Blue Card holders](#)" (13.5.2024). (Also available in Swedish and Finnish at this link.)

3 (In English) Ministry of the Economic Affairs and Employment in Finland / Työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö, "[Government proposes changes to EU residence permits for highly skilled workers](#)." (15.2.2024). (Also available in Swedish and Finnish at this link.)

4 (In English) Ministry of the Economic Affairs and Employment in Finland / Työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö, "[Government proposes changes to EU residence permits for highly skilled workers](#)." (15.2.2024). (Also available in Swedish and Finnish at this link.)

5 [Laki kolmansien maiden kansalaisten maahantulon ja... 224/2024 - Säädökset alkuperäisinä - FINLEX®](#) (available only in Finnish) "[The Act on the Entry and Residence Conditions of Third-Country Nationals for Highly Skilled Employment](#)" .

## FOOTNOTES (cont'd):

6 (In English) Ministry of the Economic Affairs and Employment in Finland / Työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö, "[Government proposes changes to EU residence permits for highly skilled workers.](#)" (15.2.2024). (Also available in Swedish and Finnish at this link.)

7 (In English) Ministry of the Economic Affairs and Employment in Finland / Työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö, "[Consultation round on three-month unemployment rule begins: proposal deviates from Government Programme for specialists and permit holders who have worked in Finland for longer than two years](#)" (13.6.2024). (Also available in Swedish and Finnish at this link.)

8 [Laki kolmansien maiden kansalaisten maahantulon ja... 224/2024 - Säädökset alkuperäisinä - FINLEX®](#) (available only in Finnish) "[The Act on the Entry and Residence Conditions of Third-Country Nationals for Highly Skilled Employment](#)" .

9 (In English) Ministry of the Economic Affairs and Employment in Finland / Työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö, "[Government proposes changes to EU residence permits for highly skilled workers.](#)" (15.2.2024). (Also available in Swedish and Finnish at this link.)

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## Contact us

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*\* 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.**

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