



Immigration News Highlights

2023-20, 16 May 2023



The KPMG team regularly monitors recent developments across the globe in the Immigration space and publishes them as Immigration News Highlights. Please find the key developments that occurred over the last week enumerated below. [Click here to find all issues of the Immigration News Highlights on the GMS Flash Alert: Immigration page.](#)

[Americas](#)

[Asia Pacific](#)

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Americas

Brazil

New seafarer immigration controls now effective

Brazil will only accept seafarer identity cards (SIDs) that have been issued in compliance with ILO No. 185, the Seafarers' Identity cards Convention, as of May 1, 2023. There are no visa requirements for stays up to 180 days if entering is through Brazilian territory on a vessel or demonstrate that the purpose of entry is to embark on a vessel in Brazilian waters.

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Canada

IRCC considering new method of processing work permits for TWFP participants

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) is looking at a new procedure for handling work permits for some foreign employees according to a recent Access to Information Request (ATIP). The policy, which was put out in December 2022, would be applicable to foreign employees who currently possess a work visa for Canada and are requesting a new one so they may continue to work in the same profession for the same business.

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Canada

New investment for S.U.C.C.E.S.S. to provide pre-arrival services for newcomers

Minister of international development and minister responsible for the Pacific Economic Development Agency of Canada announced on behalf of the Minister of Citizenship, Refugees, and Immigration, announced a nearly US\$12 million investment in S.U.C.C.E.S.S. to help provide crucial pre-arrival services to new immigrants.

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Canada

New passports, online renewals forthcoming

The Canadian Government has unveiled a brand-new passport design with cutting-edge security measures to protect citizens' identities, including a polycarbonate data page—a technology like that of the country's driver's licenses. The data page on passports will henceforth be laser-engraved rather than inked-printed, making it more resilient and immune to fraud and counterfeiting.

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United States

COVID-19 public health emergency ends, impacting some immigration policies

The government of United States has announced the end of COVID-19 public emergency due to which immigration officials are preparing for a sharp increase in the number of migrants at the southern border as the national COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (PHE) expired at midnight on 11 May 2023. The policies adopted under Title 42 of the US Code relating to public health were also scheduled to expire with the end of the Public Health Emergency on 11 May 2023.

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United States

Final action dates to be used for employment-based adjustment-of-status applicants

The USCIS announced that the eligibility of applicants for adjustment of status will be determined in June using the State Department's Final Action Dates table, which was published in the June Visa Bulletin. USCIS will indicate on their official page that they may use the Dates for Filing table if they find that there are more immigrant visas available for a fiscal year than there are known applicants for such visas.

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Asia Pacific

Australia

New federal budget supports several changes to immigration policy

The Australian Government issued its first complete budget since the election of 2022 on 9 May 2023. The budget included rise in migration planning levels, government fees and charges, Temporary Skilled Migration Income Threshold (TSMIT), compliance policies of visa processing and monitoring, actions against domestic violence and people trafficking, immigration assessment authority, adult migrant English program etc.

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China

Digital APEC business travel cards temporarily accepted

The Chinese government announced that Digital APEC Business Travel Cards (ABTCs) will temporarily be accepted in China. As of 1 May 2023, ABTC holders who have gotten preclearance from Chinese officials but do not possess a real ABTC will not be charged a visa fee. All APEC participants' physical ABTCs are still accepted by Chinese officials.

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Philippines

Philippines seeks 'mutually satisfactory solution' with Kuwait on deployment, visa issues

The Department of Foreign Affairs of Philippines announced on 12 May 2023, that Kuwait and the Philippines will continue their negotiations to find solutions to the problems that have caused Kuwait to cease issuing new entrance and work visas to Filipinos.

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Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia's embassy in Cairo launches E-Visa service

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's Embassy in Cairo introduced the electronic visa service for travelers arriving from the Arab Republic of Egypt on 11 May 2023. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is using the e-visa as part of an effort to automate and enhance the standard of consular services.

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Thailand

Long-term resident visa application process updated

The Thai government has revised the application procedure for long-term resident visas. Individuals can no longer seek for a work permit until their LTR visa applications have been submitted and approved. Foreign nationals must apply for their work permit right away using the LTR web portal after receiving their LTR visa. They must schedule an appointment with the

Department of Employment to get their digital work permit after authorities have approved their work permit application

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Europe and Africa

Bulgaria

Bulgaria implements stricter visa policy, unused Schengen visas no longer valid for entry

The Bulgarian authorities have announced that persons entering the country on a Schengen visa would no longer be subject to the same regulations as previously. According to a new ruling that went into effect in late April, anyone from outside the EU who has a valid Schengen visa but hasn't used it to travel a Schengen member state before arriving in Bulgaria would not be allowed entrance.

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Spain

Spain considers either doubling minimum investment for golden visas or abolishing the program

The Government of Spain is debating whether to keep the Golden Visa Programme, which was introduced by the Mas Pais party, or to either raise the minimum investment requirement. The Head of the Spanish Mas Pais party emphasized that the programme does not serve the national economy, drives out local population and that the golden visas stimulate speculation in home prices in this country.

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Sweden

Sweden to simplify rules for obtaining an EU Blue Card from November

The Swedish authorities announced that the country is expecting to make changes to its EU Blue Card policy to make it simpler for foreigners with high skills to obtain the document. According to the new regulations Sweden proposes to implement, highly skilled foreigners who have a work contract that has been in effect for at least six months are now eligible to apply for the authorization.

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