

GMS Flash Alert

Immigration

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Georgia – Mandatory Work Authorization Introduced for Foreign Employees and Self-Employed Individuals

The Government of Georgia adopted a new Resolution establishing the “Rule for Granting the Right to Work to Labor Immigrants and Self-Employed Foreigners” on 20 February 2026,¹ which entered into force on 1 March 2026 (the “Rule”). The new framework introduces a formal work-authorization regime for most foreign nationals working or engaging in self-employment in Georgia, with specific procedures, timelines, and fees, as well as transitional rules for those already active in the market.

Also see the [article](#) published by KPMG Law in Georgia.

WHY THIS MATTERS

The Rule has significant implications for employers, foreign workers, and self-employed individuals operating in Georgia. Failure to comply with the new framework may expose employers and foreign nationals to enforcement measures, and requires careful planning of start dates, documentation, and alignment with residence permits and visas.

Key Highlights

Scope and applicability

The Rule applies to foreigners who do not have permanent residence in Georgia and who seek to:

- Work for a local employer (including remote work); or
- Engage in self-employment or entrepreneurial activity in Georgia.

Exclusions

The Rule does not apply to refugees; persons under temporary or additional protection; asylum seekers; diplomats; journalists accredited in Georgia; persons covered by international agreements; or holders of investment residence permits.

Application process

According to the Rule, the right to work in Georgia is granted by the State Employment Promotion Agency (“the Agency”) and must be obtained by foreigners prior to commencing any employment or self-employment activities in the country. This right is non-transferable and is specifically linked to a particular employer and position for employees, or to a defined field of activity for self-employed individuals. If there are any changes in the employee’s position or the self-employed person’s field of activity, then a new permit is expected to be obtained.

The application process for securing the right to work in Georgia is clearly delineated for both labor immigrants and self-employed foreigners:

- For labor immigrants, local employers are required to advertise the vacancy first on www.worknet.moh.gov.ge. If no suitable local candidate emerges, the employer may then proceed to submit an application for a foreign employee via www.labourmigration.moh.gov.ge, accompanied by the requisite documentation.
- Self-employed foreign nationals, on the other hand, apply directly through www.labourmigration.moh.gov.ge and are required to participate in a mandatory video interview with the Agency, in addition to submitting all necessary documentation.

The Agency will conduct a thorough review of an applicant’s documents within 30 calendar days, with an expedited option available in just 10 business days.

Processing times and fees

- Standard processing (30 calendar days): 200 GEL;
- Expedited processing (10 business days): 400 GEL.

The employer pays for employees; self-employed foreign nationals pay for themselves.

Quotas

Annual quotas apply to certain professions and activities, specifically:

- Courier services
- Passenger transportation
- Tourist guides
- Mountain/ski guides

Validity and extensions

The initial right to work in Georgia is granted for a period of six months to one year. IT professionals are eligible for work authorization with a validity of up to three years. Extensions are available as follows:

- During the first five years, extensions may be granted for up to one year at a time;
- Thereafter, extensions may be granted for up to five years per extension.

To support continuity of work authorization, applications for extension are to be submitted at least 30 calendar days before the current permit expires.

Refusal and termination

The right to work may be refused or terminated on several grounds, including incomplete or incorrect documentation, a mismatch between the applicant's qualifications and the needs of the labor market, exhaustion of quotas for certain professions, or the initiation of deportation proceedings or expiration of the applicant's visa or residence permit.

Transitional provisions

- For those self-employed foreign nationals who, as of 1 March 2026, are already engaged in economic activity in Georgia and receiving financial benefits, enforcement mechanisms are expected to take effect from 1 May 2026.
- Labor immigrants who are registered in the unified database of the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Labour, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia (www.labourmigration.moh.gov.ge) and whose registration status is active as of 1 March 2026, shall, no later than 1 January 2027, obtain work authorization and the corresponding residence permit in accordance with the legislation of Georgia.

KPMG INSIGHTS

The introduction of a formal, centralized regime for granting work rights marks a significant shift in Georgia's immigration and labor landscape and requires both employers and foreign nationals to adjust how they plan and manage work arrangements.

In light of the changes, organizations and entities might wish to consider the following:

- Employers could allow time for mandatory vacancy posting and schedule start dates around standard or expedited processing timelines, while recognizing that work authorization is not transferable between roles and that new permits may be needed if responsibilities change.
- Self-employed foreigners could face more structured requirements, including authorization linked to their specific economic activity and a mandatory video interview with the Agency, as well as compliance with transitional deadlines if they are already active in Georgia.
- Given the interdependence between work authorization, residence permits, visas and sector-specific quotas or exemptions, organizations and individuals could seek professional advice to assess eligibility, sequence applications, and remain compliant with the new framework. It is important to remember that non-compliance may result in penalties.

Given the considerable changes in procedures and policies relating to labor migration, employers and foreign nationals may wish to consult with their qualified immigration counsel or a member of the KPMG Immigration team with KPMG Georgia (see the Contacts section).

ENDNOTE:

1 Matsne, Legislative Herald of Georgia, (in Georgian): [“შრომით იმიგრანტსა და თვითდასაქმებულ უცხოელზე შრომითი საქმიანობის უფლების გაცემის წესის დამტკიცების შესახებ | სსიპ “საქართველოს საკანონმდებლო მაცნე.”](#) published on 20 February 2026.

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Contacts

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