



Immigration News Highlights

2024-20, 14 May 2024



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.](#)

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[Americas](#)

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Americas

Canada

New measure to support skilled temporary workers in Manitoba

Immigration, Refugee and Citizenship Canada has approved Manitoba's request to extend temporary resident status for potential nominees under the Provincial Nominee Program who have work permits expiring in 2024. This will allow 6,700 skilled workers, mainly post-graduation work permit holders, to continue working in Manitoba while their applications are processed.

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Mexico

Mexico tightens travel rules on Peruvians

Mexico has implemented visa requirements for Peruvians as of 6 May 2024, to slow down migration to the US. The decision was initially planned for 20 April but was postponed after Peru reinstated visa-free entry for Mexicans.

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United States

[USCIS clarifies policy on location of H-3 training](#)

USCIS has updated its policy manual to clarify that H-3 nonimmigrants can participate in training provided on the property of an academic or vocational institution, under certain conditions. Generally, H-3 trainees cannot train primarily at or by an academic or vocational institution. However, if other H-3 requirements are met, training that takes place on the physical property of an academic or vocational institution may qualify if it is primarily created, offered, and sponsored by a government agency or other nonacademic or nonvocational entity.

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Asia Pacific

Australia

[Increase to the financial capacity requirement for student and student guardian visas](#)

The Australian government has announced an increase in the financial capacity requirement for Student and Student Guardian visa applicants, effective 10 May 2024. The new requirement will be a proportion 75 percent of the national minimum wage, aiming to better reflect the amount of money needed to provide a minimum standard of living while studying in Australia. This change considers that students are out of course session for 25 percent of the year, during which time they may return home or have access to unrestricted work.

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Australia

[Changes to the Temporary Graduate visa program](#)

The Australian Government has announced changes to the Temporary Graduate visa programs, effective 1 July 2024. The Graduate Work stream will be renamed the Post-Vocational Education Work stream, and the Post-Study Work stream will be renamed the Post-Higher Education Work stream. The maximum eligible age for applicants will be reduced to 35 years, except for Hong Kong and British National Overseas passport holders. Stay periods for each stream will also be adjusted.

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Australia

[Australia resumes accepting TOEFL scores for visas](#)

Australian authorities have announced that from 5 May 2024, TOEFL test results taken on or after that date will be accepted for all Australian visa applications. TOEFL exams taken before 26 July 2023, remain valid for 2 years. The Australian authorities had suspended TOEFL for visa applications, but it is accepted again.

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Azerbaijan

[Azerbaijan and Gambia abolish visa requirements for holders of diplomatic passports](#)

Gambia and Azerbaijan have signed an agreement to eliminate visa requirements for diplomatic passport holders traveling between the two countries, aiming to facilitate smoother diplomatic relations.

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China

[China extends visa-free policy for 12 countries](#)

China has extended visa-free entry for 12 countries, including Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Malaysia, the Netherlands, Spain, and Switzerland, until the end of 2025. Eligible citizens can stay in China for up to 15 days without a visa.

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India

[India-Moldova visa waiver agreement for holders of diplomatic and official passports](#)

Indian and Moldovan authorities have announced the signing of an agreement that allows visa-free travel for holders of diplomatic and official passports from either country. The agreement will come into effect allowing passport holders to travel between the two countries without needing a visa.

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Thailand

[Thailand extends 30-day visa exemption for Indian and Taiwanese tourists](#)

The Thai cabinet has approved a temporary visa exemption for visitors from India and Taiwan, allowing them to stay in the country for up to 30 days without a visa. The exemption is effective from 11 May 2024 to 11 November 2024, and is an extension of the current visa-exemption scheme, which has been in effect since 10 November 2023, and will expire on 10 May 2024.

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Kazakhstan

[Kazakhstan and Vietnam introduce visa-free travel](#)

Kazakhstan and Vietnamese governments have agreed to exempt each other's citizens from visa requirements starting 25 May 2024. Eligible individuals can stay for up to 30 days from the date of entry and a total of 90 days within six months.

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United Arab Emirates

[Dubai launches new gaming visa](#)

Dubai has introduced a Gaming Visa program to attract content creators, offering employment and training opportunities. The program, in collaboration with companies and academic institutions, grants long-term cultural visas to individuals, artists, and creators under the Creative

and Talented Accreditation Certificate. Eligible applicants must be 25 or older, submit a passport copy and professional CV, and apply via the official website.

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United Arab Emirates

Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Grand Tours visa

GCC announced that "GCC Grand Tours" will be the name of the new unified tourist visa, which will allow tourists to spend more than 30 days in all six Gulf countries including Bahrain, Kuwait, Iraq, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates.

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Europe and Africa

European Union

New visa "cascade" regime for India

The European Commission has introduced new rules, the "cascade" regime, for visas issued to Indian nationals residing in India, allowing them to obtain long-term, multi-entry Schengen visas valid for 2 years after using two visas in the past 3 years. This can be followed by a 5-year visa if the passport is valid, making travel to the Schengen area easier for frequent Indian travelers.

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France

Saudis can make walk-in appointments for France Schengen visa in 2 centers

French authorities have announced that Nationals of Saudi Arabia can apply for a France Schengen visa without needing a prior appointment at two VFS centers. Walk-in appointments are available at the VFS centers in Riyadh and Dammam. These walk-in appointments are free of charge, with applicants only needing to pay the visa processing fee of EUR80 and the VFS service fee.

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Spain

Spain opens visa application center in Kuwait

Spanish immigration authorities have announced the opening of the new premises of BLS in Kuwait facilitating a seamless visa application process for the more than 30,000 individuals who seek entry to the country each year.

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United Kingdom

Seasonal worker visa scheme extended to 2029

The UK government has announced that it will extend the seasonal worker visa route for an additional five years until 2029 to address labor shortages in the food supply chain. The government has confirmed that 43,000 visas will be available for the horticulture sector in 2026,

with an additional 2,000 visas for poultry. The number of visas available for 2026 to 2029 will be set out later this year.

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