



## GLOBAL DIRECTIONS

### **Mobility Trends in Mid-February 2019**

#### **Asia**

##### **Australia**

#### **New Agreements Target Labor Shortage**

The Australian government recently signed the Northern Territory Designation Area Migration Agreement (“DAMA II”), a five-year agreement aimed at combating a labor shortage in the Northern Territory and encouraging the movement of workers out of the overcrowded urban areas and into regional and rural areas. This is the second agreement that that Northern Territory has entered into. The prior one expired on December 31, 2018. DAMA II broadens the number of approved occupations and offers a pathway to permanent residency. Employers seeking to hire foreign national workers pursuant to DAMA II will also be able to sponsor individuals to fill positions that do not appear on the shortage list of 117 skilled and semi-skilled occupations provided the employers can demonstrate that they are unable to employ a qualified Australian worker. In addition, DAMA II provides some concessions for English language and salary requirements.

A similar five-year agreement has been signed with Victoria’s Great South Coast region

It is anticipated that other regions of Australia experiencing labor shortages will enter into similar agreements in the near future.

#### **Singapore**

#### **Proof of Vaccination Required for Children’s Long-Term Pass Applications**

Starting February 1, 2019, the Singapore government began requiring foreign national children 12 years of age and younger to submit evidence of vaccinations against diphtheria and measles when seeking long-term immigration passes. This includes applicants for a Dependent’s Pass, Long Term Visit Pass or Student’s Pass. Before applications for these passes can be filed, vaccination records will be reviewed by the Singapore Health Promotion Board (“HPB”) and must be verified. The estimated processing time is about 10 working days.

Individuals requesting an exemption to this requirement for medical reasons must provide a doctor-certified document to HPB.

This new requirement will not apply to current pass holders when renewing or applying for a new pass.

#### **Europe**

##### **Italy**

## **Security and Immigration Decree Approved**

The Italian parliament has approved the Security and Immigration Decree, a measure aimed at modifying its immigration and citizenship law. Law no. 91/1992 introduces the following key changes:

- Foreign nationals seeking citizenship through marriage must demonstrate “adequate” knowledge of the Italian language. Individuals with an EU long-term residence permit and those who comply with provisions of the Integration Agreement are exempt from this requirement.
- Residence permits granted for humanitarian reasons are now abolished.
- Processing time for citizenship applications for foreign nationals seeking Italian citizenship through marriage will increase from 24 months to 48 months.
- Foreign nationals who are granted Italian citizenship through marriage can have their citizenship revoked if they are convicted of crimes related to terrorism or public security.
- The processing time to issue civil status certificates, such as birth or marriage certificates, requested in connection with an application for citizenship is six months.

## **Germany**

### **New Immigration Law Passed to Attract Non-EU Skilled Workers**

The German government recently passed new immigration laws. Key aspects are as follows:

- Any foreign national who signs an employment contract and meets qualification requirements (or their equivalent) will be permitted to work in Germany. The new law strips away a key requirement of the prior law by no longer requiring a “priority check” of whether a German or EU citizen is available to fill the same position.
- Skilled workers are provided the opportunity to move to Germany for a period of six months to search for employment. They will be issued a residence permit that provides permission to work or to seek employment. Applicants are required to demonstrate sufficient knowledge of the German language, the ability to pay for the cost of living in Germany, and the attainment of “equivalence” of their qualification (e.g., academic or other credentials).
- The law also contains certain provisions governing refugees, including the ability to work in Germany for two years after having completed their qualification training in Germany.

## **United Kingdom**

### **Government Tests Its EU Settlement Scheme**

As the Brexit date draws near, the UK government has begun testing its EU Settlement Scheme, the process by which EU citizens residing in the UK will obtain UK immigration status. Any EU citizen residing in the UK will be required to obtain lawful immigration status in order to remain in the UK after the planned implementation period, which ends on June 30, 2021. Starting immediately, EU citizens residing in the UK can apply for either “Pre-Settled” or “Settled” status, depending on how long they have resided in the UK. Applicants who have resided in the UK for less than five continuous years can apply for “Pre-Settled” status, while applicants who have resided in the UK for more than five continuous years can apply for “Settled” status in order to remain in the UK.

The EU Settlement Scheme is currently in its public testing phase. By March 30, 2019, it will be fully open to EU citizens and their dependents.

In the event of a “no deal” Brexit, individuals will have until December 31, 2020 to apply for immigration benefits under the EU Settlement Scheme.

## **Middle East**

### **United Arab Emirates**

#### **New Long-Term Visa System Approved**

In an effort to attract foreign talent and encourage investment and economic growth, the UAE Cabinet recently approved a long-term visa program for investors; entrepreneurs; researchers working in scientific, space, and medical fields; outstanding students; and individuals with specialized talent. Visas will be issued for up to 10 years.

Foreign nationals making an investment of at least AED 5 million will be eligible for a 5-year residence visa. Foreign nationals making an investment of at least AED 10 million—which may include property investments, provided their investment does not comprise more than 40% of the investment—will be eligible for a 10-year visa. More specifically:

- The investment amount must be debt-free and singularly owned by the investor.
- In the instance where there are multiple investors in one property, each partner who invests at least AED 10 million will be eligible to request 10-year visas for one advisor and one executive director.
- The investment must be maintained for at least 3 years.

Foreign national entrepreneurs will qualify for a 10-year visa if they had a previous project worth at least AED 500,000. They must obtain approval of an accredited business incubator within the UAE. The long-term visa benefit would also be extended to business partners and up to 3 executive directors.

Foreign nationals with specialized talent, researchers in a scientific field, doctors, inventors, and highly talented individuals in the field of arts and culture must have a valid employment opportunity and must meet certain eligibility criteria, including having:

- Published articles or scientific books in distinguished publications within their field
- Membership in an exclusive organization with high requirements within their field
- A Ph.D. from one of the top 500 universities in the world
- A doctorate degree plus at least 10 years of relevant professional experience
- Received awards for work in their field
- Made original contributions to their field of expertise
- Specialization in an area of priority in the UAE (required for doctors)
- Accreditation from the Emirates Scientists Council (required for scientists)
- Been awarded the Mohammed bin Rashid Medal for Scientific Excellence
- Accreditation from the Ministry of Culture Knowledge Development Inventors (required for creative individuals in culture and art)

- A patent of value from the Ministry of Economy Exceptional Talents
- Ownership of a well-known internationally leading company
- Specialization in a field and university degree relevant to that field

High-performing foreign national students (and their families) will also be eligible for a 5-year visa. Secondary school students with a grade of at least 95% and college graduates with a GPA of at least 3.75 will be eligible under this category.