



BJA Legal & Tax Committee News

Update on Immigration and COVID-19 measures

In positive immigration news, on 21 August 2020 Belgium has finally announced that it was lifting the travel ban for Single Permit holders, effective immediately. This means that foreign workers under the status “single permit” with a valid annex 46, as well as their family members are again able to obtain a visa D at the Belgian consular authorities abroad. Applicants are able to travel to Belgium to start their employment, which unfortunately has not been possible since the travel ban went into effect in March.

Despite EU recommendations to lift travel restrictions for a limited number of countries, Belgium continued to maintain a general travel ban for non-essential travel coming from outside of the EU. There are only a limited number of exemptions to the travel ban, among them ‘highly-skilled workers’. This category was previously interpreted by the Belgian authorities in a very narrow way and was only applicable to EU Blue Card holders. The EU Blue card is not a common permit type as most highly skilled workers receive the Single Permit, and thus this interpretation caused a lot of frustration and confusion among expats and their employers.

The new guidance has been shared with all the Belgian consular posts abroad. When filing the visa D application, it is recommendable that applicants also submit an employer’s written confirmation of the new start date in Belgium, in case the start date has been delayed.

Regarding Covid-19 measures upon arrival, new arrivals in Belgium must complete the Health Passenger Locator Form. They must respect the required self-isolation or quarantine period of 14 days.

Brexit Update

As negotiations continue, there still is not much clarity as to what the relationship between the UK and the EU will look like after 1 January 2021. It is recommendable preparing for the “worst case scenario”, and remaining informed of changes and the impact those changes will bring, in order for businesses and affected individuals to be well prepared in advance. On 17 September 2020 Deloitte will host a webinar, in which Brexit will be discussed from both a tax and immigration perspective.

Wim Eynatten –BJA Legal & Tax Committee Chair and International Tax Partner, Deloitte

Erin Clor – Senior Manager Immigration Services, Deloitte

287/7, avenue Louise
1050 Brussels, Belgium
T +32 (0)2 644 14 05
E-mail info@bja.be
Website www.bja.be

Royal Association | Founded in 1963