

# Mobility: Immigration alert

December 2023

## Belgium

### Implementation of new EU Blue Card Directive delayed

#### Executive summary

The implementation of the new EU Blue Card Directive in Belgium has been delayed. The Directive was initially expected to go into effect by 18 November 2023. Until it is fully implemented, current legislations governing the issuance of Blue Cards will remain in place.

#### Background

On 20 October 2021, the European Parliament proposed the EU Blue Card Directive 2021/1883, which would replace the older Directive 2009/50. Key updates in the new Directive include decreased salary thresholds; relaxed contractual and qualification criteria, with relevant experience replacing the requirement for higher educational certificates; and allowing Blue Card holders to perform business activities in other EU Member States for up to 90 days in a 180-day period without obtaining a work permit.

EU Member States were initially allotted a two-year period to incorporate the provisions of the new Directive into their respective national legislations. However, many Member States (e.g., [Sweden](#)) have not yet implemented it.

#### Key developments

Federal and regional authorities in Belgium are currently working on finalizing the technical aspects of the new Directive's implementation. The new legislations will depend on the interpretation of the Directive by the Brussels, Flemish and Walloon regions, which have autonomy regarding implementation. The authorities may make adjustments to specific provisions

of the Directive to ensure effectiveness until it is fully integrated into law. Further updates are expected in the coming months.

#### Impact on employers

The new Directive will simplify and streamline the process for Belgian employers seeking to recruit third-country nationals and enhance access to skilled talent in sectors experiencing labor shortages. Employers may use this additional period to adapt their policies to ensure compliance with the new rules.

#### Key steps

EY will continue to monitor these developments. Should you have any questions, we encourage you to contact one of our immigration professionals.

## EY | Building a better working world

EY exists to build a better working world, helping create long-term value for clients, people and society and build trust in the capital markets.

Enabled by data and technology, diverse EY teams in over 150 countries provide trust through assurance and help clients grow, transform and operate.

Working across assurance, consulting, law, strategy, tax and transactions, EY teams ask better questions to find new answers for the complex issues facing our world today.

EY refers to the global organization, and may refer to one or more, of the member firms of Ernst & Young Global Limited, each of which is a separate legal entity. Ernst & Young Global Limited, a UK company limited by guarantee, does not provide services to clients. Information about how EY collects and uses personal data and a description of the rights individuals have under data protection legislation are available via [ey.com/privacy](https://ey.com/privacy). EY member firms do not practice law where prohibited by local laws. For more information about our organization, please visit [ey.com](https://ey.com).

Ernst & Young LLP is a client-serving member firm of Ernst & Young Global Limited operating in the US.

© 2023 Ernst & Young LLP.  
All Rights Reserved.

EYG no. 011692-23Gbl

2101-3682263  
ED None

**[ey.com](https://ey.com)**

### **Hendrik Serruys**

Partner - People Advisory Services  
Tel: +32 479 982 950  
Email: [hendrik.serruys@be.ey.com](mailto:hendrik.serruys@be.ey.com)

### **Nivard Bronckaers**

Manager - People Advisory Services, Global Immigration  
Tel: +32 496 556 267  
Email: [nivard.bronckaers@be.ey.com](mailto:nivard.bronckaers@be.ey.com)