

Mobility: Immigration alert

April 2023



Sweden

Sweden set to implement major changes relating to EU Blue cards

Executive summary

On 16 March 2023, the Swedish government published a memorandum proposing several changes to the current laws governing Sweden's issuance of EU Blue Cards. If adopted, the amendments will go into effect on 19 November 2023.

Background

In 2009, Sweden introduced its version of the EU Blue Card pursuant to EU Directive 2009/50/EC. The Blue Card authorizes highly qualified third-country nationals to work and reside in Sweden. To obtain a Blue Card, eligible applicants must satisfy certain educational criteria or have at least five years of relevant professional experience in their field. The Swedish government recently published a [memorandum](#) regarding a new proposed EU directive (i.e., EU Directive 2021/1883), which, if approved, will go into effect in November 2023 and replace EU Directive 2009/50/EC. The government is accepting comments from relevant stakeholders regarding the proposed amendments until 1 June 2023.

Key developments

The proposed amendments include the following:

- ▶ Applicants would be required to have an employment contract with a duration of at least six months to be eligible for Blue Cards, down from one year currently.
- ▶ Applicants who have an offer of employment that is valid for one year or more would no longer be required to apply for comprehensive health insurance. Currently, all applicants are required to provide proof that they have health insurance in Sweden.
- ▶ Blue Card holders whose employment details change (e.g., when they change positions within the same company

or switch employers within Sweden) would no longer be required to apply for a new Blue Card if they continue to meet the eligibility criteria for Blue Cards. These individuals would simply need to notify the Swedish Migration Agency of the change.

- ▶ For the first time, Blue Cards would be available to family members of Swiss nationals or nationals of EEA Member States, holders of ICT Permits, seasonal workers, asylum seekers and individuals seeking humanitarian protection.
- ▶ Holders of valid Swedish permits who would be eligible to apply for Blue Cards would be able to convert their existing permits to Blue Cards from within Sweden. Currently, holders of other permits are required to depart the country and submit Blue Card applications from outside Sweden.
- ▶ Holders of Blue Cards issued by other EU Member States would be able to conduct permissible business activities in Sweden for up to 90 days in any 180-day period without obtaining any permission from, or notifying, the Swedish Migration Agency.

Impact on employers

The proposed amendments would give impacted individuals greater access to the Swedish labor market, while offering employers greater options and flexibility when hiring third-country nationals to work in Sweden.

Key steps

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

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