

Mobility: Immigration alert

October 2022



Austria

New, relaxed eligibility criteria for Red-White-Red Cards

Executive summary

The Austrian immigration authorities recently implemented changes to the eligibility criteria for Red-White-Red Cards, including reducing salary thresholds and relaxing language proficiency requirements. In addition, applications for dependent family members may now be filed in Austria at the same time as the primary application.

Key developments

Red-White-Red Cards authorize eligible third-country nationals (i.e., nationals of countries outside the EU and EEA) and their qualifying dependents to work and reside in Austria for an initial period of up to two years. These Cards can be renewed indefinitely in two-year increments.

On 1 October 2022, the following changes went into effect:

- ▶ **Salary (Other Key Employees):** All individuals applying under the category of "Other Key Employees" must now earn a monthly gross salary that equals or exceeds 50% of their Austrian employer's maximum monthly social insurance base contribution, which in 2022 amounts to EUR 2,835 or more per month. Previously, these applicants were required to earn at least 60% of the employer's maximum monthly base contribution.
- ▶ **Salary (university graduates):** Applicants who graduated from Austrian universities are now required to earn a salary that equals or exceeds the minimum amount stipulated in the collective bargaining agreement for the industry

in which they work. Previously, these applicants were required to earn at least 60% of their employer's maximum monthly social insurance base contribution.

- ▶ **Work experience (general):** In general, applicants receive points (and increase their probability of being approved for a Red-White-Red Card) based on several factors, including their previous employment experience. Pursuant to the recent changes, applicants now earn one point for every six months of work experience, down from one point for every 12 months of work experience previously.
- ▶ **Education and related work experience:** Applicants are no longer required to have an academic degree or work experience in the field in which they will work in Austria. Previously, applicants were required to have academic degrees and work experience that were directly tied to their fields of work in Austria.
- ▶ **Language proficiency:** Applicants may now submit German or English language certificates that were issued up to five years prior to the filing of their applications. Previously, they were required to submit language certificates issued no more than one year prior to the filing of their applications.
- ▶ **Dependent applications:** Austrian employers may now submit Red-White-Red Card applications on behalf of primary applicants' qualifying dependents in Austria at the same time as the primary applications. Previously, dependents were required to submit their applications in person at an Austrian Embassy or Consulate after the primary application was approved.

Impact on employers

The changes in the eligibility criteria for Red-White-Red Cards and the dependent application process are expected to increase Austrian employers' access to young talent and skilled employees, and expedite the entry of these individuals and their dependents into Austria.

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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