

Mobility: Immigration alert

March 2023



Sweden

Exemption from passport verification process expected for certain residence and work permit applicants

Executive summary

On 21 February 2023, the Swedish Migration Minister announced that eligible visa-exempt third-country nationals who apply for residence or work permits may soon be exempt from the requirement to get their passports verified at a Swedish embassy or consulate (for first-time applications) or a Migration Agency service center (for renewals) as part of the application process.

Background

In general, third-country nationals who seek to travel to Sweden for up to 90 days must obtain a Schengen Visa, while those who stay for more than 90 days must obtain a residence or work permit.

In November 2022, the Swedish government mandated that all third-country nationals (including visa-exempt nationals) who apply to obtain or renew residence or work permits must visit a Swedish embassy, consulate or Migration Agency service center during the application process to get their passports verified for authenticity. In a recent press conference, Migration Minister Maria Malmer Stenergard stated that this requirement led to higher costs for applicants and longer processing timelines.

Key developments

Once the new exemption goes into effect, visa-exempt nationals who apply to obtain or renew residence or work permits will no longer be required to visit an embassy, consulate or Migration Agency service center as part of the application process. Instead, they can show their passport and application number and submit

their biometrics and photographs at an office of the Migration Agency once they arrive in Sweden. Individuals who apply for residence or work permits and require a visa to travel to Sweden (i.e., [visa nationals](#)) will still be required to visit an embassy or consulate abroad (for first-time applications) or a Migration Agency service center (for renewals) to complete the application process and obtain a permit.

Minister Stenergard added that the government is also considering creating mobile teams comprised of Migration Agency staff that would visit cities outside Sweden where a large number of residence or work permit applications are generally filed. Applicants would be able to show their passports and submit biometrics and photographs to these teams in lieu of visiting Swedish embassies or consulates. Further details regarding these proposed changes are expected in the coming weeks.

Impact on employers

This change is expected to reduce application costs and processing times and streamline the process for employers that seek to hire eligible third-country nationals.

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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