

Global Immigration alert

May 2024



European Union

First-time applicants from Bahrain, Oman and Saudi Arabia now eligible for five-year multiple-entry Schengen Visas

Executive summary

On 22 April 2024, the High Representative of the EU announced that the EU will issue multiple-entry Schengen Visas with a validity of five years to first-time Schengen Visa applicants who are nationals of Bahrain, Oman and Saudi Arabia.

Background

The Schengen Area is a border-free zone that enables the free movement of eligible non-EU/non-EEA nationals who seek to enter the Schengen Area for business traveler activities (and generally not for regular work activities) or tourism. Depending on their nationality, third-country nationals may require a Schengen C Visa to be admitted for up to 90 days cumulatively in any rolling 180-day period. Those who wish to enter for more than 90 days in any 180-day period may require a D Visa. As of the date of publication, the Schengen Area comprises 29 countries, of which 25 are EU Member States.

Key developments

The five-year visas will be available to qualifying nationals of Bahrain, Oman and Saudi Arabia who live in, and apply from, their country of citizenship. At the time of application, individuals must hold a passport that is valid for at least five years. A subsequent Schengen Visa can be issued for five years, provided the applicant's passport is valid for the requested duration.

Impact on employers

The new rules are expected to benefit employers by further facilitating and reducing the costs associated with Schengen Visas permitting business travelers from Bahrain, Oman and Saudi Arabia to travel freely across the Schengen Area within the permissibility of the issued visa.

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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