

Mobility: Immigration alert

November 2023



Italy

Italy implements major changes relating to EU Blue Cards

Executive summary

On 2 November 2023, Italy published amendments to its regulations governing the issuance of EU Blue Card. These amendments will go into effect on 17 November 2023.

Key developments

The Italian authorities published Legislative Decree N. 152/2023, which will introduce the following amendments:

► *Qualifications*

- Individuals will be eligible to apply for Blue Cards if they have obtained any qualification (e.g., degree or diploma) after completing a three-year course after school. Currently, applicants are required to hold a university diploma after completing a three-year university course.
- Individuals who do not hold the relevant education qualification will be eligible to apply for Blue Cards if they have at least five years of work experience in their profession or sector. Those working in the IT or communications sectors will be eligible to apply if they have at least three years of relevant work experience in the seven years prior to filing the Blue Card application. Individuals employed in regulated professions (e.g., engineers, doctors) will still be required to comply with additional applicable requirements.

► *Contracts*

- Individuals who enter collaboration contracts (i.e., an arrangement where the individual provides services autonomously, without being in an employment relationship) with companies will also be eligible to apply for Blue Cards. Currently, applicants are required to

have a subordinate contract (i.e., an employment relationship) with companies.

- Individuals who enter employment contracts that are valid for at least six months (down from 12 months) will be eligible to apply. The gross annual remuneration must equal or exceed the remuneration agreed upon in applicable collective bargaining agreements and the average annual gross salary according to data from the Italian National Institute of Statistics (ISTAT).
- Blue Card residence permit holders will be able to simultaneously perform autonomous work and subordinate work.

► *Benefits*

- Holders of Italian Blue Card residence permits will be able to change their employer and sector after one year of entering Italy (down from two years), provided the labor authorities are notified and do not reject the notification within 15 days.
- Holders of Blue Cards issued by another EU Member State will be able to enter Italy: (a) without a work permit to perform work activities for up to 90 days in any 180-day period; (b) without a work visa after residing in the EU country that has issued their Blue Card for at least 12 months (down from 18 months).
- Holders of Blue Cards issued by another EU Member State will no longer be subject to educational requirements when applying for a job in Italy, except in the case of regulated professions.

- ▶ Employers that seek to hire non-EU nationals who hold EU residence permits issued for highly qualified work (e.g., Blue Cards issued by another EU member State) will no longer be subject to labor market test requirements.
- ▶ *Application process*
 - ▶ The authorities will process Blue Card work permit applications within 60 days of application filing (down from up to 90 days).
 - ▶ Blue Card holders will be able to begin work immediately after their arrival in Italy and will no longer be required to wait until the execution of a residence contract to begin work.

Impact on employers

These changes are expected to benefit employers by simplifying Blue Card application requirements and providing enhanced benefits to holders.

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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