



Global Immigration alert

June 2024

United Arab Emirates

The UAE introduces new long-term residency visa for individuals with proven credentials in environmental work

Executive summary

As announced on the [official website](#) of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum on 15 May 2024, the UAE Cabinet has introduced a new long-term visa called “Blue Residency” for foreign nationals who have made “exceptional contributions and efforts” toward protecting the environment.

Key developments

His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE, announced the introduction of the Blue Residency Visa at a cabinet meeting in Abu Dhabi, adding that the introduction of the visa is in line with the UAE’s plans to recognize 2024 as the year of sustainability in the country.

The Blue Residency Visa will be available to individuals engaged in environmental work, including corporate employees, members of nongovernmental organizations, international award winners and distinguished activists and researchers. It will allow holders to reside in the UAE for up to 10 years and is the country’s first long-term residency visa aimed at individuals who have made exceptional contributions toward the environment and sustainability either within or outside the UAE.

Qualified individuals may apply for the new visa directly to the [Federal Authority for Identity, Citizenship, Customs and Port Security](#). Competent authorities may also nominate applicants for the visa.

The authorities are yet to confirm whether Blue Residency visa holders who seek to work in the UAE will need to obtain a separate work authorization. In general, foreign nationals who hold other types of long-term residence authorization (e.g., Golden Visas) are required obtain a separate work authorization if they seek to work in the UAE.

Impact

The Blue Residency visa is expected to help companies further attract international talent in the field of environment work and sustainability, in line with the [UAE’s Green Agenda 2030](#).

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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