

# Mobility: Immigration alert

October 2022



## Poland

### Expansion of the Poland Business Harbor Program

#### Executive summary

The Polish government recently introduced changes to the [Poland Business Harbor](#) (PBH) Program. Companies that participate in the PBH Program may now sponsor qualifying applicants from all countries outside of the European Union (EU) and European Economic Area (EEA) for PBH Visas. In addition, individuals who are seeking to enter Poland to work on projects that are deemed strategically important to the Polish economy are now eligible to obtain PBH Visas.

#### Background

The PBH Program was launched in 2020 to facilitate the entry into Poland of individuals seeking to work for Polish startups, certain established enterprises and companies in the information technology (IT) sector. At the time, the Program was open exclusively to applicants who were nationals of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Russia or Ukraine.

#### Recent developments

In September 2022, the Polish authorities expanded the Program to allow nationals of all non-EU and EEA Member States to apply for PBH Visas. Note: EU and EEA nationals do not require a Polish visa or work authorization document to live and work lawfully in Poland; they may work for Polish startups, enterprises and IT companies without PBH Visas.

The Polish authorities also expanded the Program to allow for the issuance of PBH Visas to qualifying applicants who will work on projects that are deemed strategically important to the Polish economy. The authorities will assess projects' importance on a case-by-case at their discretion.

#### Benefits

Successful applicants are issued PBH Visas that allow them to work and reside in Poland for up to one year initially. PBH Visas can be renewed indefinitely in one-year increments (by submitting renewal applications to the Polish Embassy or Consulate in their home country), provided the visa holder continues to meet the eligibility criteria for the PBH Visa.

Successful applicants may also sponsor their qualifying dependents to join them in Poland. Dependent spouses are authorized to work in Poland, and dependent children are authorized to study in Poland during the validity of the PBH Visa. For purposes of the Program, qualifying dependents include married opposite-sex spouses as well as children of the primary PBH Visa holder who are 18 and younger.

#### Eligibility

The Polish government has not announced specific eligibility and application criteria for PBH Visa applicants seeking to

enter Poland to work on projects that are deemed strategically important to the Polish economy. EY will continue to monitor the situation and report on developments as and when they are announced by the government.

The eligibility requirements for applicants seeking to obtain PBH Visas to work in the [IT sector](#), for [startups](#) and certain Polish [enterprises](#) remain unchanged.

### Impact on employers

The expansion of the PBH Program provides Polish companies access to a wider pool of talent and simplifies the relocation process for impacted employees, while addressing key economic priorities for Poland.

### 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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