

Mobility: Immigration alert

November 2022



United Kingdom

Immigration takeaways from the Prime Minister's speech on 21 November 2022

Executive summary

On 21 November 2022, the UK Prime Minister made immigration-related announcements in a speech to the Confederation of British Industry (CBI). Notably, he dispelled the reported notion that the UK would pursue an immigration arrangement with the EU similar to that between the EU and Switzerland, which allows for the free movement of people between Switzerland and the EU.

Key developments

In his speech, the Prime Minister confirmed that the UK government will not pursue any relationship with Europe that relies on alignment with EU Laws. This quashes suggestions that the government might seek a long-term, Swiss-style deal with the EU to reverse the effects of Brexit on the UK economy. Switzerland is not in the European Economic Area (EEA), but as a member of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), it participates in the single market, and as such, it has agreements with the EU that require it to align with EU laws, including the [Agreement on the Free Movement of Persons](#).

The Prime Minister stated that the UK government would protect the budget for research and development that was delivered by the Chancellor in his Autumn budget on 17 November 2022. The budget would allocate GBP 20 billion to the [Advanced Research and Invention Agency](#) and empower the agency to invest in research that is considered high-risk and high-reward.

The Prime Minister also committed to create the most pro-innovation regulatory environment in the world in sectors like life sciences, financial services and artificial intelligence (AI).

In making his announcements, the Prime Minister confirmed his commitment to:

- ▶ Placing innovation at the heart of his governing agenda and making the UK a true island of innovation by attracting the best and brightest talent from around the world
- ▶ Helping the UK create one of the world's most attractive visa regimes for entrepreneurs and highly skilled people
- ▶ Launching a program to identify and attract the world's top 100 young talents in the AI space (this would build on the AI scholarships and masters conversion courses that have already been launched in the UK)

The announcements follow the recommendations included in EY and the City of London's September 2021 [report](#) on global talent competitiveness.

Impact on employers

These announcements may present opportunities for UK employers to streamline processes and reduce costs associated with immigration programs.

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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