

# Mobility: Immigration alert

April 2024



## Lithuania

### Stricter requirements proposed for third-country nationals and employers

#### Executive summary

In mid-April 2024, the Lithuanian government approved a draft amendment to the Law on the Legal Status of Foreigners. If the amendment is approved by the parliament, third-country nationals (and their employers) will be subject to stricter work authorization (and sponsorship) requirements.

#### Key developments

The draft amendment, prepared by the Ministry of the Interior and Ministry of Social Security and Labor, proposes the following changes for employers:

- ▶ Companies will be required to obtain necessary licenses before hiring third-country nationals.
- ▶ Companies will be able to hire third-country nationals only if they are engaged in similar work as the main business of the company.
- ▶ Employers that hire less qualified specialists from third countries will be required to offer them employment on a full-time basis (i.e., 40 hours per week). This requirement will not apply to Blue Card applicants.
- ▶ Employers will be required to submit information to the immigration authorities that less qualified specialists from third countries have relevant educational qualifications and at least one year of professional experience in the three years prior to filing a temporary residence permit application on the basis of employment, or that they earn a minimum monthly gross salary of approximately EUR 1,800. Currently, these individuals are required to meet any one of the following criteria: (a) relevant educational qualifications; (b) at least one year of professional experience in the three

years prior to filing a temporary residence permit application on the basis of employment; (c) a minimum monthly gross salary of approximately EUR 1800.

If approved, the draft amendment will also introduce the following changes for third-country nationals:

- ▶ These individuals will be able to work for no more than four employers simultaneously. Currently, there is no such limit on the number of employers.
- ▶ Only those who hold a residence permit will be able to work in Lithuania. Currently, certain individuals (e.g., electricians, truck drivers) can work in the country using a Schengen Visa or without a visa (if they are visa-free nationals), provided they meet all relevant conditions.
- ▶ Individuals who apply for temporary residence permits will be subject to a quota of 40,000 per year.

If parliament approves, most of these changes are expected to go into effect on 1 July 2024 (with the new quota requirement going into effect on 1 January 2025). Further details are expected to be released in the upcoming months.

#### Impact on employers

In general, the new rules will make it more difficult for employers to hire third-country nationals, including by increasing the time from the day they hire third-country nationals to the day they can begin work. It is not yet clear how certain regulations will be implemented (e.g., can a company that trades in certain

goods hire an IT specialist from a third country? How will the requirement for companies to employ a third-country national full-time be aligned with the restriction on these individuals to work for no more than four employers?).

### 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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