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Global Immigration alert

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Armenia

Armenia introduces significant changes to its immigration framework

Executive summary

On 20 January 2026, the Armenian Parliament adopted amendments to the Law "On Foreigners", effective 1 November 2026. The changes aim to digitalize residence procedures, enhance monitoring and control of foreign nationals entering Armenia, and address existing legislative gaps.

Key developments

- **Transition to a fully digitalized system:** The entire application and approval process for residence statuses will be conducted through a unified electronic platform. Qualifying individuals would receive residence cards in person after approval and arrival in the country.
- **Changes to the types of residence statuses:** The special residence status is abolished due to its overlap with the criteria for permanent residence. Current holders may retain their status until expiration.
- **Amendments to the criteria for permanent residence status:** New eligibility criteria for permanent residence are introduced, which include investment in Armenia and exceptional services rendered to Armenia. At the same time, existing criteria for permanent residence have also been revised. Under the currently effective legislation, one of the criteria for granting permanent residence to a foreign national is that the individual proves the existence of a spouse or close relative in the Republic of Armenia who is an Armenian citizen (parent, child, sibling, grandparent or grandchild). Under the amendments, family-based permanent residence requirements are tightened, limiting qualifying family members to a spouse, parent or child who is an Armenian citizen. Additionally, applicants must have held temporary residence status for at least three years within the preceding five years prior to filing an application. Entrepreneurial-based permanent residence will also now require applicants to have held temporary residence for at least three years within the preceding five years prior to filing an application.
- **Financial thresholds for permanent residence based on entrepreneurial activity:** A foreign national may obtain temporary or permanent residence status on the basis of entrepreneurial activity, provided that the foreign national:
 - Is a shareholder or participant in an Armenian commercial company or securities holder, and invested at least AMD 2,000,000 in the charter capital of a commercial company or acquires stocks or securities of the same value, or
 - Is an individual entrepreneur and has at least AMD 1,000,000 in their accounts or demonstrates business turnover of AMD 1,000,000 (or equivalent foreign currency) within the 60 days preceding the application date.After residence is granted, foreign nationals must maintain ongoing financial compliance to avoid invalidation of their residence status.
- **Introduction of a quota system:** An annual quota determined by the Armenian government will limit the number of residence statuses granted. Once the quota is exhausted, any additional applications for residence status will be declined.
- **Changes to the concept of work permit and related exceptions:** The term "work permit" is replaced with "permit to stay or reside in Armenia for the purpose of employment" (Permit). The Permit allows foreign nationals to obtain (i) work entry visa, (ii) temporary residence status or (iii) work in Armenia during their lawful stay. The current work permit exemptions for founders and directors of commercial companies with at least 50% foreign participation and for employees of foreign commercial companies working in Armenian branches or representative offices are abolished under the amendments.
- **New visa category:** A work entry visa has been created under the amendments and would be granted to eligible individuals for single or multiple entry, for up to 120 days and only once per calendar year. A work entry visa may be granted for:
 - Short-term employment in Armenia

- Filing an application from the territory of Armenia for temporary residence on the basis of employment
- Obtaining a document confirming temporary residence status granted on the basis of employment

Foreign nationals who entered Armenia with an entry visa other than a work entry visa, and who intend to apply for temporary residence status on the basis of employment, must first change their visa type to a work entry visa.

- *Increase in state fees:*
 - Temporary residence: AMD 1,50,000 (currently AMD 1,05,000)
 - Permanent residence: AMD 2,50,000 (currently AMD 1,40,000)

Impact on employers

The legislative amendments are expected to require employers to undertake additional workforce planning due to the quota system and the removal of certain employment-related exemptions. They may update their internal processes to ensure compliance with the new rules and revise workforce planning to mitigate delays or business disruptions.

Key steps

EY will continue to monitor these developments. Should you have any questions, we encourage you to contact one of our EY professionals.

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