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Global Immigration alert

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Poland

Poland amends its framework for employing third-country nationals

Executive summary

On 14 April 2026, Poland published draft bill UD396, proposing amendments to the Act of 20 March 2025 governing access of third-country nationals to the Polish labor market. The draft legislation seeks to address provisions that raised interpretation inconsistencies during the initial months of application of the Act and to align the system with the objectives of Poland's Migration Strategy.

Background

The Act of 20 March 2025 entered into force on 1 June 2025 and introduced a revised framework for employing third-country nationals, including full electronic processing of work permits and statements, enhanced employer reporting obligations, and strengthened refusal grounds and sanctions. Following several months of application, the authorities identified areas of inconsistent interpretation and gaps in monitoring, prompting the preparation of draft bill UD396 to improve and clarify the existing rules.

Key developments

The draft bill proposes the following changes:

- Narrowing access to priority processing for work permits and visas by introducing an additional investment value threshold of PLN 100 million for projects carried out within the Polish Investment Zone, significantly reducing the number of employers eligible for fast-track processing.
- Establishing a statutory work permit exemption for nationals of selected high-income third countries, subject to mandatory electronic notification of employment or intended employment and applicable working conditions. At this stage, the exemption could potentially apply to nationals of the following jurisdictions: Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea, Singapore, Taiwan, the United Kingdom and the United States.
- Expanding the notification regime to additional categories of third-country nationals authorized to work without a

permit, creating a single information framework for monitoring work performed under permit exemptions.

Impact on employers

The proposed amendments may impact employment planning and compliance frameworks in several areas:

- Use of priority processing may become more limited due to the introduction of additional investment value criteria.
- Employers hiring nationals of selected high-income third countries may benefit from simplified access to the labor market but will be subject to mandatory electronic notification and monitoring obligations.
- Engagement of third-country nationals under work permit exemptions or civil-law contracts may involve broader reporting obligations and clearer compliance requirements, increasing the importance of accurate documentation and timely notifications.

Relevant considerations include:

- Reviewing current and planned employment of third-country nationals to identify reliance on priority processing, work permit exemptions or notification-based access to the labor market.
- Updating internal immigration and onboarding procedures to reflect expanded notification obligations and clarified rules applicable to civil law contracts.
- Monitoring the legislative process and prepare internal guidance for HR and business teams ahead of the expected adoption in Q3 2026.

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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