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Global Immigration alert

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Denmark

Denmark proposes a new collective agreement-based work permit scheme for certified employers

Executive summary

On 25 June 2026, the new Danish government introduced a bill in the parliament proposing implementation of a new collective agreement-based work permit scheme for certified employers. If approved, the scheme will allow qualifying Danish employers to recruit nationals from 16 selected third countries under a lower salary threshold, provided the employment is covered by a relevant collective bargaining agreement, and additional compliance requirements are met.

The proposed scheme is expected to expand access to international talent for employers facing labor shortages while maintaining safeguards intended to protect the Danish wage and working conditions.

Background

Denmark has experienced labor shortages across several sectors. In 2025, the government, employer organizations and labor unions reached a political agreement on a new framework to facilitate recruitment of foreign workers while preserving the Danish labor market model.

The new bill, if implemented, will seek to balance labor market demands while maintaining protections against social dumping and ensuring compliance with collective agreements and the Danish employment standards.

Introduced in the parliament on 25 June 2026, the bill is expected to undergo its first reading in August 2026.

Key developments

If enacted, the bill would establish a new immigration route for certified Danish employers that meet specified requirements. Under the proposed scheme, employers covered by recognized collective agreements would be permitted to sponsor qualifying foreign nationals from 16 designated third countries under a substantially lower salary threshold (minimum DKK322,000 yearly), compared with the standard Pay Limit Scheme.

To participate, employers would need to obtain and maintain certification from the Danish Agency for International Recruitment and Integration (SIRI). Certification would be subject to compliance requirements and could be revoked if the scheme's conditions are not met.

The proposal also introduces enhanced labor market oversight measures, including requirements related to collective agreement coverage, monitoring of employment conditions and mechanisms intended to ensure transparency regarding wages and working conditions for sponsored foreign employees.

If enacted, the scheme is expected to take effect in January 2027. At the time of publication, the bill remains subject to parliamentary review and approval. Additional implementation guidance is expected if the bill is enacted.

Impact on employers

The proposed scheme may benefit Danish employers seeking access to international talent, particularly in sectors experiencing recruitment challenges.

Employers that meet certification requirements could benefit from a broader talent pool and reduced salary thresholds, compared with certain existing work permit routes. This may increase flexibility for qualifying companies when recruiting both skilled and semi-skilled foreign workers.

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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