



### **Immigration developments in the MENA Region**

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#### **United Arab Emirates**

Foreign specialists in the fields of software engineering and science may now apply for a Golden Visa under “specialized talent” category, following the launch of the National Program for Coders that aims to position the UAE among best ecosystems in the world for coders and to attract new talent. The program enables coding entrepreneurs, businesspersons, and start-up companies to support the digital transformation in various key sectors by building the necessary infrastructure to establish broader innovation-based economy, by attracting global talent and by developing skills of the local workforce. It provides a range of financing options to entrepreneurs and coders as well as supports with the implementation of their projects and ideas.

It is expected that up to 100,000 Golden Visas will be issued to foreign national specialists from the UAE and overseas. The visa is open to all nationalities and age groups in any of the following categories:

Distinguished experts and talents who achieved success in various areas of coding;

- Individuals working for pioneering international technological firms; and
- Graduates of software engineering, computer sciences, hardware engineering, information technology, artificial intelligence, data science, big data, and electrical engineering.

Applications can be submitted through the Office of Artificial Intelligence in the UAE or through the Federal Authority for Identity and Citizenship.

#### **Bahrain**

The Government of Bahrain announced the adoption of a three-year National Labour Market Plan which seeks to transform the labour market by promoting and creating employment opportunities for Bahraini citizens, increasing the private sector’s contribution to the country’s economic growth and strengthening the existing regulatory framework.

The main objectives of the plan are scheduled for implementation by 2023, and include the following initiatives:

- Education and training initiatives, such as “Skills Bahrain” program, focused on the strengthening of the infrastructure for technical and vocational training;
- The implementation of “Employment Skills Platform,” which provides comprehensive and integrated data on the skills and jobs required by the labour market;
- Adoption of a framework that favours the employment of foreign workers with necessary skills and experience which match the current demand of Bahrain’s labour market and address the skills shortage;
- Increased investment in digital transformation and technology, as well as financial and other support to private sector businesses committed to employing Bahrainis;
- A regular review and evaluation of prescribed Bahrainization rates in the private sector to ensure that the rates respond to the labour market’s needs and indicators;
- Integration of Bahraini women into the labour market in accordance with the directions of the National Plan for the Advancement of Bahraini Women 2013 – 2022; and
- A review of regulatory procedures related to commercial registration, with a focus on compliance with Bahrainization rules and the overall protection of workers’ rights, including the regular payment of wages, settling labour disputes and enhanced efforts for combating human trafficking.

Additionally, it is expected that the labour market testing period will again be revised for foreign workers recruited from abroad.

## **Egypt**

Effective immediately, the Ministry of Manpower have suspended the issuance of admission approvals in the form of a security code, for entry to Egypt for nationals of India and Bangladesh, due to the spread of the Black Fungus disease. Normally, the admission approval is issued once a work permit has been approved, to enable an applicant to apply for an entry visa for entry to Egypt, through the Egyptian consular representation in the applicant’s home country or country of residence.

Although the suspension has currently not been announced officially by the authorities, this is based on Fragomen’s discussions with the Ministry of Manpower and the Ministry of Health.

## **Jordan**

With immediate effect, in accordance with a Defence Order issued by Prime Minister, Bisher Khasawneh, individuals applying for a new work permit or renewal of a work permit and residence permit must obtain a COVID-19 vaccine for their applications to be processed. A copy of the vaccination certificate must be included with work permit and residence permit applications. Individuals must ensure that they have been fully vaccinated in Jordan or their current country of residence prior to submitting any work or residence permit applications.

## **ABOUT FRAGOMEN**

*Fragomen is the world's leading single-focus provider of immigration services and support. Our firm is comprised of law practices and immigration consultancies that work together to support our clients across all regions globally. At Fragomen, we leverage our collective immigration experience to offer clients targeted and trusted solutions that help them achieve their local, regional and worldwide business goals.*

*Fragomen's team of dedicated immigration professionals has extensive experience in working with multinational businesses, local employers, start-ups and individual investors. We have a deep understanding of the region and maintain strong professional relationships with immigration authorities. Our MENA immigration team is supported on a global basis by over 3,800 immigration professionals in more than 50 offices worldwide. Together, we provide comprehensive immigration support in over 170 countries.*

*All we do is immigration, a sole focus that makes a considerable difference. Unlike many other providers, all of our thinking, passion and resources are dedicated to improving the immigration experiences of our clients and their employees. We have the track record, region specific experience and know-how to provide you with a streamlined and compliant immigration solution.*

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