



Immigration services in the UAE

July 2021

KPMG Lower Gulf Limited



The current landscape

In an increasingly global marketplace, business opportunities can emerge anywhere, and companies need to be well-positioned to take advantage of these situations.

Recent transformations in workplace arrangements and more appealing tax landscapes are prompting more individuals to move across borders to work remotely or relocate to advance their organization's global footprint.

The UAE government has recently introduced several measures to make the country a more investment-friendly destination. One of which is the landmark change to Federal Law No. 2 of the 2015 UAE Commercial Companies Law (CCL) via the issuance of Federal Law No. 26 of the amended 2020 CCL in September 2020.

The amended CCL abolished the required 51 percent minimum UAE ownership in mainland companies carrying out specific activities or operating in certain sectors. This means that new and existing mainland companies are allowed to have 100 percent foreign ownership, effective 1 June 2021. This is subject to obtaining approval from the relevant authorities in each Emirate.

There is a strong possibility that these changes, coupled with the attractive tax landscape, could increase the volume of individuals willing to travel, or relocate to the UAE. However, as companies look to expand their global footprint, the need to address immigration challenges becomes a growing concern, especially as they compete for the top foreign talent.



Geopolitical volatility, protectionism, anti-foreign-worker sentiment and national sovereignty are some factors that adversely affect the movement of skilled talent across international borders. From an immigration perspective, employers that rely on foreign talent are faced with:

- More stringent eligibility requirements for work authorizations
- More intense scrutiny and inspections at border crossings
- Increased compliance enforcement

Global companies that fail to establish the appropriate strategies could lose out on business opportunities and, even worse, be exposed to legal and financial risks. In addition, immigration violations could potentially lead to brand damage and loss of reputation, considering the heightened media attention on the movement and use of foreign workers.



Why KPMG?

With our international immigration experience, we have the flexibility to model service delivery according to your needs. Our immigration professionals closely collaborate to keep the global network on top of the latest immigration updates.

Our member firm professionals will work with your team to design and deliver a holistic strategy, underpinned by a technology solution, customized to your needs.



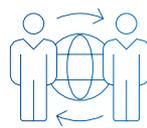
Holistic strategy

Assessments - KPMG's innovative technology tools evaluate requirements for business trips, assignments, project workers and internal transfers for your employees

Process consulting - Our member firm teams assist in reviewing your existing business models and proactively deliver recommendations on organizational and process changes to enhance current practices and processes

Structuring international assignments - We review your assignment efficiency from a tax and immigration perspective. Our member firm professionals develop a partnership approach with you to review business practices and determine immigration risk mitigation strategies to protect your international reputation.

Compliance support We provide strategic guidance, training and collaborate with your teams to help design and manage comprehensive compliance solutions that adhere to immigration laws and regulations globally. Our broad international network of global mobility professionals enables every local office to stay aware of global changes and provide you with updated information and the best possible support.



How can KPMG assist?

We understand how legislative, regulatory, and compliance obligations can affect global business; we ensure our immigration advice is strategic, driven by excellent service and cost optimization.

With our global reach and access to immigration technology tools, we can assist your organization in developing and streamlining the administration of immigration cases to the UAE. We can also mitigate risk and provide the insights needed to help meet your organizational goals.

The United Arab Emirates' (UAE) immigration system is based on a concept of sponsorship - most travel and all work authorization types require a sponsor. The type of sponsor defines the category of visa that may be issued. The UAE provides both short and long-term visa options for prospective foreign employees. The availability of the permit depends on the sponsor's jurisdiction and the intended duration of employment, among other factors.

The main structure of the immigration process, including eligibility and documentary requirements, is the same across all the Emirates. Any differences between free zones and the mainland are generally due to internal regulatory procedures of the free zones.

Companies in the mainland are subject to a classification system that groups them into three main categories: the commitment to Emiratization, cultural diversity, and records of violations. The higher the category, the greater the incentives offered to the employer by the authorities.

Our Services include (but not limited to):



Immigration Consulting and Advisory



Guidance on successful security and medical clearance processing



Application preparation and filing for work and residence permits, entry visas



Business Visas and traveling advice



Issuance of Residency visas



Assistance with virtual working visas



Guidance on entry and departure procedures



Advice on dependent visa processing



Assistance with Public Relation Officer (PRO) duties



Contact us



Pranav Shah
Director
Global Mobility Services
KPMG Lower Gulf Limited

e: pshah27@kpmg.com
t: +971 56 412 5177



Shaima El Shazly
Manager
Global Mobility Services-Immigration
KPMG Lower Gulf Limited

e: selshazly@kpmg.com
t: +971 50 828 7182

www.kpmg.com/ae
www.kpmg.com/om

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@kpmg_lowergulf

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