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Belgium – New Exemption for Additional Contribution, Plans for Single Permit

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A new exemption from payment of Belgium's additional contribution of up to EUR 215 will apply to foreign scholarship students and researchers.¹ As announced in our [Flash Alert 2015-039](#) (17 March 2015), the processing of certain Belgian visa type D applications and residence permit applications recently became subject to the payment of an additional contribution of up to EUR 215. There were some categories of migrants/inbound individuals who were exempted; the exemption was just extended to foreign scholarship students and researchers.

In addition, Belgian immigration regulations will soon be amended to provide for a single permit system.

Why This Matters

Foreign scholarship students and researchers will not be subject to the additional contribution, which should help lower their costs and reduce related administrative burdens in respect of migrating to Belgium.

The single permit system entails a significant procedural reform of the current Belgian immigration system, which should lead to more simplified immigration procedures. Global mobility and immigration advisers should be prepared to revise their processes and plans with respect to employees and other individuals relocating to Belgium to live and work.

Foreign Scholarship Students and Researchers: Exemption from Additional Contribution

Certain specific groups were exempt from the additional contribution of up to EUR 215 that was recently introduced in the framework of an application for a Belgian visa type D and a Belgian residence permit. The Flemish government announced in a recent press release that the federal government decided to extend these exemptions to foreign scholarship students and researchers.²

Single Permit

As mentioned in our [Flash Alert 2015-039](#) (17 March 2015), unlike certain other countries, Belgium currently still has a dual system of immigration compliance formalities. One part of the formalities entails granting the right to work in Belgium to non-European Economic Area (EEA) or non-Swiss nationals. There is a separate set of formalities applying to the right to enter and reside in Belgium.

It has been determined that this dual system is not compliant with EU Single Permit Directive 2011/98 on adopting a combined work and residence permit system with

a unified application process by December 2013.³ Belgium received a warning of non-compliance and a reasoned opinion from the European Commission following this infringement.

KPMG Note

Belgium is expected to implement a single permit system by November 2015.

The KPMG International member firm in Belgium is closely monitoring the situation and will endeavor to keep readers informed of any further developments.

Footnotes:

1 Program Act of 19 December 2014; Royal Decree of 16 February 2015. *Loi-Programme du 19 decembre 2014 (Programmawet)*, published in the *Moniteur Belge/Belgisch Staatsblad*, 29 December 2014. And *Le décret royal du 16 février 2015, modifiant le décret royal du 8 octobre 1980 relatif à l'entrée sur le territoire, le séjour, l'établissement et l'éloignement des étrangers (Kininklijk besluit to wijziging van het koninklijk besluit van 8 oktober 1981 betreffende de toegang tot het grondegebied, het verblijf, de vestiging en de verwijdering van vreemdelingen)* published in the *Moniteur Belge/Belgisch Staatsblad*, 20 February 2015.

2 See the 24 July 2015 press release (in Flemish). Click [here](#).

3 Directive 2011/98/EU of the European Parliament and of the council of 13 December 2011 on a single application procedure for a single permit for third-country nationals to reside and work in the territory of a Member State and on a common set of rights for third-country workers legally residing in a Member State.

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