



MAJOR CHANGES TO THE FOREIGNERS' ACT ARE COMING

The Council of Ministers' work schedule now includes a draft law amending the Act on Foreigners and some other laws, aiming to introduce a series of changes to the current regulations concerning foreigners residing and working in Poland.

Although the full draft law has not been published yet, we have already learned about its main assumptions – including digital submission of residence permit applications, removal of the so-called “stamp in passport”, and significant reworking of the EU Blue Card residence permit.

Key changes for foreigners in Poland include:

1. Changing the way foreigners submit residence permit applications from paper to electronic form, including:

- the obligation for foreigners to submit electronically signed residence permit applications;
- the requirement for personal appearance to obtain fingerprints and present original documents will be retained;
- the passport's stamp, currently serving as confirmation of application submission, will be replaced by a certificate confirming electronic application submission.

2. Implementation of Directive 2021/1883 of 20 October 2021 on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purpose of highly qualified employment (a directive regulating the granting of the EU Blue Card to foreigners), which includes:

- simplifying the rules for obtaining the EU Blue Card;
- granting EU Blue Card holders the right to conduct business activity on the same terms as Polish citizens;
- introducing new information obligations for EU Blue Card holders.

The main purpose of changing the application submission process is to reduce the waiting time for its consideration, as in some offices, the waiting time extends to several months.

The implementation of the directive's provisions is the fulfillment of the obligation stated in it, requiring EU member states to incorporate the directive's content into national regulations no later than 18 November 2023.

The Council of Ministers plans to adopt the draft in the second quarter of this year, so it is expected that the changes may be adopted in the next few months.

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