

# Mobility: Immigration alert

January 2024



## Ireland

New salary thresholds, work permit categories in Ireland effective January 2024

### Executive summary

Significant amendments to Ireland's employment permits system came into effect in January 2024, including increased salary requirements and updated lists of occupations that enable employees to apply for employment permits.

### Background

The Irish authorities periodically review requirements for Employment Permits, such as salary thresholds and occupations included in the Critical Skills Occupations List and the Ineligible List of Occupations for Employment Permits. These reviews are based on evolving economic circumstances and labor market conditions and are aimed at ensuring that Irish economic requirements are met. The latest review started in June 2023, and changes were announced by the Minister of State for Business, Employment and Retail, Neale Richmond TD, on 20 December 2023.

### New salary requirements

The Minister announced that the salary thresholds for various categories of employment permits will be increased in phases. As of 17 January 2024, the following changes will go into effect:

- ▶ General Employment Permits (GEPs)\*:
  - ▶ EUR 34,000 (to increase to EUR 39,000 by January 2025) for most categories, up from EUR 30,000 currently
  - ▶ EUR 30,000 (to increase to EUR 34,000 by January 2025) for healthcare assistants and home care workers, up from EUR 27,000 currently\*\*

- ▶ EUR 30,000 (to increase to EUR 32,000 by January 2025) for workers in the horticulture and meat processing sectors, up from EUR 22,916 currently\*\*
- ▶ Critical Skills Employment Permits (CSEPs):
  - ▶ EUR 38,000 (to increase to EUR 44,000 by January 2025), up from EUR 32,000 currently, for applicants who hold a relevant degree. The minimum salary requirement for applicants without a degree will remain unchanged at EUR 64,000
- ▶ Intra-company Transfer Permits:
  - ▶ EUR 46,000 (to increase to EUR 53,000 by January 2025), up from EUR 40,000 currently, for eligible assignees
  - ▶ EUR 34,000 (to increase to EUR 39,000 by January 2025), up from EUR 30,000 currently, for eligible trainees
- ▶ Contract for Services Permits:
  - ▶ EUR 46,000 (to increase to EUR 53,000 by January 2025), up from EUR 40,000 currently

\* A Labour Market Needs Test, which is required for GEP applications, will have to reflect the revised thresholds in order to be deemed valid.

\*\* The authorities have indicated that salary levels for these categories will increase further in July 2025 and January 2026 in line with other GEP categories.

## Other changes

The following changes came into effect on 1 January 2024:

- ▶ Individuals working in 43 additional occupations became eligible for employment permits (11 for CSEPs and 32 for GEPs)
- ▶ Existing annual quotas for certain GEP applicants are extended. The following quotas apply:
  - ▶ Meat processing sector: 1,000
  - ▶ Butchers and deboners: 350
  - ▶ Dairy farm assistants: 350
  - ▶ Horticultural workers: 1,000

The minimum remuneration requirement for the Atypical Work Scheme (AWS) authorization is connected to the GEP and will also increase to EUR 34,000 on 17 January 2024.

## Impact on employers

The addition of new occupations to the eligibility lists for employment permits is expected to provide employers increased access to international talent. Companies may consider the increased salary thresholds and modify their workforce policies as required to attract and retain talent.

## Key steps

EY will continue to monitor these developments. Should you have any questions, we encourage you to contact one of our immigration professionals.

### Michael Rooney

Partner - People Advisory Services  
Tel: +353 1 221 2857  
Email: michael.rooney@ie.ey.com

### Jim Ryan

Partner - People Advisory Services  
Tel: +353 1 221 2434  
Email: jim.ryan@ie.ey.com

### Rachel Dillon

Partner - People Advisory Services  
Tel: +353 1 221 2554  
Email: rachel.dillon@ie.ey.com

### Sinead Langan

Director - Head of Immigration  
Tel: +353 1 221 2443  
Email: sinead.langan@ie.ey.com

### Aislinn Stanton

Senior Manager - Immigration  
Tel: +353 1 221 1602  
Email: aislinn.stanton@ie.ey.com

### Ben Willis

Partner - People Advisory Services, EMEIA Immigration Leader  
Tel: +44 20 7951 9589  
Email: ben.willis@uk.ey.com

### Seema Farazi

Partner - People Advisory Services, EMEIA Immigration Leader  
Tel: +44 20 7951 7122  
Email: seema.farazi@uk.ey.com

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EYG no. 000174-24Gbl

2101-3682263  
ED None

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