

Global BRIEF Immigration Alert | January 5, 2012



ROMANIA | 2012 Work Permit Quotas Announced / EU "Blue Card" Option Introduced

On December 29, 2011, the Romanian Government announced the national work permit quotas for 2012. In addition, the Romanian immigration authority established a new category of work permit (EU "Blue Card") for highly-skilled workers.

Work Permit Quota

As a follow up to our earlier Romanian work permit quota client alert (http://www.pro-linkglobal.com/uploads/immigration_alert/gb.pdf), effective January 1, 2012, new national quotas are now in place for Romanian companies sponsoring non-European Economic Area (non-EEA) foreign national workers. The quotas are as follows:

- 3,000 work permits for local employment
- 700 work permits for seconded employees
- 1,000 work permits for highly-skilled workers
- 100 work permits for seasonal workers
- 100 nominal (nominal-wage) work permits
- 200 work permits for internships
- 300 work permits for athletes
- 100 work permits for cross-border workers

Work permit numbers have decreased for the locally-employed compared to last year and work permit numbers increased for seconded workers.

EU "Blue Card" Introduced

European Union (EU) Blue Card programs are being implemented amongst all EU-member countries. The Romanian Government recently announced Blue Cards are now available for highly skilled non-EU applicants possessing the appropriate qualifications. This new work permit category will receive a quota of 1,000 work permits separate from the national work permit quotas listed above.

In general, the purpose of the Blue Card is to facilitate intra-EU movement of highly-skilled workers. Basic requirements include a written commitment from potential Romanian employer for a job position which matches applicant's academic and professional qualifications. Blue Card applications must be supported by an applicant's higher education certificates and/or documents proving professional experience relevant to the proposed position.

The general advantages granted by the Romanian Blue Card scheme are as follows:

- Shorter immigration process includes no need to undergo the initial phases of a traditional work permit application nor undergo Romanian labor recruitment efforts;
- Shorter processing time of approximately 15 days versus 30 days for traditional work permit applications;
- Blue Card holders will enjoy an extended validity period (term of employment contract + three months) up to a maximum of two years versus traditional one-year work permits. Therefore, Blue Card extensions can be made up to every two years rather than renewing every year.
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Action Items for Employers

Companies considering assignments to Romania should consult with their immigration service provider to confirm availability in the work permit category for which the employee candidate qualifies. For highly-skilled workers (e.g., technical workers, IT workers), companies should consider the newly-announced "Blue Card" scheme as a viable option for working both in Romania and for possible, future assignments in other EU-member countries.

This news alert was provided in coordination with our Romanian KGNM-Move One Relocation.

Caveat Lector | Warning to Reader

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