KEY AMENDMENTS TO ARMENIA'S LAW ON FOREIGNERS

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AN OVERVIEW OF THE KEY AMENDMENTS TO THE LAW OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA ON FOREIGNERS

01. The amendments introduce a new concept of quotas, defined as annual limits on residence statuses established by the Government of Armenia. Quotas may be set based on the type of residence status, the number of permits available, and the grounds on which the residence status is sought.

02. This change replaces the current work permit system. In principle, a work permit may only be granted if there are no Armenian citizens available to fill the relevant position. In practice, however, this mechanism has proven ineffective. The amendments replace the labour market test with a quota-based system. The new system allows the Government to set annual migration and residence permit targets based on labour market needs and migration trends.

03.

The amendments introduce a new **Work Entry Visa**, which did not previously exist under Armenian immigration law.

The visa may be issued for up to 120 days and allows foreign nationals to enter Armenia for short-term employment, apply from within Armenia for a temporary residence permit based on employment, or collect a residence permit that has already been approved. The visa may be issued for single or multiple entries, cannot be extended, and may only be granted once per calendar year.

The temporary residence may be granted for a maximum period of **one year**

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04.

The amendments expand the categories of foreign nationals eligible for *permanent* residence in Armenia. Among other grounds, permanent residence may now also be granted to foreign nationals who have (a) conducted business activities in Armenia and held temporary residence status for at least three of the previous five years or (b) made an investment in Armenia.

Permanent residence permits will be issued for a period of **5 years.**

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The rules governing the application process for residence status have been revised.

Under the new procedure, foreign nationals must collect their residence card or certificate of lawful residence in person and provide biometric data, including fingerprints and an electronic signature (using a signature pad). Only after this step can the document be issued, and Mobile ID can be activated.

The existing rule remains unchanged: if an application for residence status is refused, the foreign national may reapply after one year.

A residence permit may be revoked if a foreign national’s employment or service contract is terminated before the expiry of their temporary residence status, and no new contract is concluded within 15 working days through the electronic employment contract system.

The amendments introduce a new framework for granting temporary and permanent residence based on entrepreneurial activity in Armenia.

FOREIGN NATIONALS MAY QUALIFY FOR RESIDENCE IF:

- They are shareholders, participants, or security holders in an Armenian company and have invested at least AMD 2,000,000 in the company's charter capital or acquired shares or securities with a value of at least AMD 2,000,000.
- Alternatively, they operate as a sole entrepreneur and maintain at least AMD 1,000,000 in funds across their business accounts (in any currency equivalent), or generate at least AMD 1,000,000 in business turnover (or equivalent foreign currency) within the 60 days preceding the application.
- Residence status may be revoked if the investment falls below AMD 1,000,000, or if the invested capital is withdrawn from the company, or if no tax-related business activity is recorded within 180 days after obtaining residence status.
- However, revocation will not apply if the foreign national reinvests at least AMD 1,000,000 in another Armenian company or transfers the investment within one month into the charter capital of another Armenian legal entity.

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To renew residence, continued business activitymust be confirmed through the electronic system or supporting documents if system data is not available.

Residence status may be revokedif the required investment level or businessactivity is not maintained, or if tax-related activity is not recorded within 180 days of obtaining status. However, revocation will not apply where the investment is transferred to another Armenian company or reinvested within one month.

The amendments introduce the possibility of obtaining permanent residence in Armenia based on investment activity.

However, this routeis not yet fully regulated in detail. The specific requirements, eligibility criteria, and procedures for obtaining and maintaining investment-based permanent residence will be defined by the Government of Armenia.

At this stage, the law establishes only the general framework, while the practical implementation will depend on future government regulations.

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The draft amendments to the Law on State Duty revise several fee rates related to the issuance of temporary and permanent residence status, as well as the renewal or replacementof residence documents. They also updateexemptions and introducenew state duties for certain services provided by the Migration and Citizenship Service of the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

Incase of refusal, the state duty willbe non-refundable.

A state duty rate has been introduced for the new Work Entry Visa to the Republicof Armenia.