



Mobility: Immigration alert

April 2024

Serbia

New portal for nationals of Albania and North Macedonia under the Agreement on Conditions for Free Access to the Labor Market in the Western Balkans

Executive summary

In April 2024, Serbia introduced a new online portal for nationals of Albania and North Macedonia who seek to apply to enter and work in Serbia under the Agreement on Conditions for Free Access to the Labor Market in the Western Balkans (i.e., “the Agreement”).

Background

The Agreement, which was signed by Albania, North Macedonia and Serbia in December 2021, aims to simplify entry, work and residence procedures for nationals of each country in the two other countries. Based on the Agreement, the single labor market of Albania, North Macedonia and Serbia was officially established in March 2024.

Key developments

Eligible nationals of Albania and North Macedonia (and not companies) must submit a request under the Agreement via the newly launched online platform. To do so, individuals must create a profile on the [Open Balkan](#) online portal of their home country and obtain an Open Balkan ID number. They may submit the request for free access prior to entering Serbia, or no later than 90 days from the date of arrival in Serbia. Requests will be processed within 30 days from the date of submission.

Successful applicants will receive an electronic document via email that authorizes them to stay and work in Serbia for up to two years, with the possibility of extension. These individuals will not be required to separately obtain work and residence

authorization. However, they will not be eligible to sponsor dependents. The time spent in Serbia under the Agreement will not be counted toward the time required to become eligible for permanent residence in Serbia.

Impact on employers

The Agreement is expected to benefit Serbian companies by providing them greater access to talent from Albania and North Macedonia.

Key steps

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

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