**Cyprus has officially launched the EU Blue Card**

In a move that signals both strategic foresight and alignment with broader EU priorities, Cyprus has officially launched the **EU Blue Card,** a long-anticipated residence and work permit designed to attract highly skilled third-country nationals. Aimed at reinforcing the country's competitive edge in key sectors of the economy, the new permit offers qualified professionals a clear and structured pathway to live and work in Cyprus. According to the latest announcement by the Deputy Ministry of Migration and International Protection, the Migration Department of the Republic of Cyprus was set to begin accepting applications for the European Union (EU) Blue Card as of Monday, 7 July 2025.

Under this new framework, third-country nationals who are highly qualified professionals and have a valid employment contract or a binding job offer earning them a gross annual salary of at least €43,632, are eligible to apply for residence and employment rights for themselves and their family members. In addition to granting the right to live and work in Cyprus, the EU Blue Card also enables mobility within most EU Member States, excluding Denmark and Ireland. It is also worth noting that Cyprus imposes no admission quotas for the issuance of EU Blue Cards.

The duration of the EU Blue Card permit is linked to the length of the holder's employment contract and can be granted for up to three consecutive years. In cases where the employment contract is shorter than this range, the EU Blue Card is issued for the duration of the contract plus an additional 3 months. The EU Blue Card will not be withdrawn in the event of unemployment, except under specific conditions. Withdrawal may occur if the holder accumulates more than three months of unemployment and has held the EU Blue Card for less than two years, or if the holder accumulates more than six months of unemployment after having held the EU Blue Card for at least two years. Changing employers is also possible by submitting an application to renew the EU Blue Card, provided the necessary criteria are met.

**Eligible Sectors of Employment**

- Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)
- Pharmaceuticals (research positions only)
- Shipping (excluding ship captains and crew)

**Highly Qualified Employment**

According to the Aliens and Immigration (Amendment) Law of 2024 [L.111(I)/2024], there are three conditions that must be met for the employment to be considered as highly qualified:

- **Employment status**:
- The applicant must be legally considered an employee and thus protected as an employee under national employment law or in accordance with national practice, for the purpose of performing **genuine and effective work** under the direction or supervision of another person.

- **Remuneration**:
  The employment must be **paid**.
- **Qualifications**:
  The individual must possess higher professional qualifications, which may be demonstrated by either of the following:
    - A higher education qualification, or
    - Higher professional skills, evidenced by at least three (3) years of relevant professional experience acquired within the last seven (7) years in one of the occupations listed in Annex I of Directive (EU) 2021/1883 — namely:
        1. ICT Managers, and
        2. ICT Professionals.

**Rights of EU Blue Card holders in Cyprus**

- Entry, re-entry, and residence in the Republic of Cyprus.
- Access to highly qualified employment.
- Equal treatment with Cypriot citizens in terms of working conditions, education and training, social security etc.
- Family reunification with permits equal in duration to those of the EU Blue Card holder. Additionally, spouses of EU Blue Card holders enjoy unrestricted work rights, including self-employment.
- Accumulation of periods of residence in different member states for the purpose of eligibility of acquiring EU long-term resident status.

**Mobility within the EU**

EU Blue Card holders are permitted to move within the EU for the purpose of highly qualified employment, thereby expanding their access to opportunities across the Union's internal labour market. Mobility includes:

- **Short term mobility**
  Enter and stay in other EU Member States for a period of 90 days within any 180-day period for the purpose of carrying out a professional activity, without further formalities.
- **Long term mobility**
  After 12 months of legal residence in the first Member State, Blue Card holders and their family members may apply for residence in a second Member State for highly qualified employment.

**Procedure**

A third-country national can enter the Republic of Cyprus with either a tourist VISA, valid for up to 90 days within a 180-day period, or an entry permit issued by the Civil Registry and Migration Department.

Within seven days of arriving in the Republic, the third-country national must register with the Aliens' Register and secure their EU Blue Card.

Applications will be processed within 90 days, provided that they are duly completed and no documents or information is missing. For EU Blue Card applications related to long-term mobility, the processing time is 30 days.

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