



Belgium: Salary Thresholds Increasing in 2015 for Fast-Track Work Permit B and Blue Card Applications

The Belgian Ministry of Employment has increased the minimum salary required for both the Fast-track Work Permit B and the European (EU) Blue Card. The EU Blue Card is a work and residence permit for highly skilled non-EU citizens. The Blue Card was designed by the EU to assist with the harmonization of immigration requirements across EU member states, however the specific requirements and application procedures differ by country. Pursuant to new regulations, which will go into effect on January 1, 2015, applicants must meet the following minimum salary threshold requirements:

1. Fast-tracked Work Permit B applicants for highly skilled applicants: € 39,802 (the threshold for 2014 was € 39,422).
2. Fast-tracked Work Permit B applicants for executive/managerial level applicants: € 66,4905 (the threshold for 2014 was € 65,771).
3. EU Blue Card applicants: € 51,465 (the threshold for 2014 was € 50,974).

These threshold requirements apply to applications filed at the Ministry of Employment's regional offices in both Flanders and Brussels. The regional office in Wallonia has not yet confirmed the salary threshold, but it is widely expected that it will not deviate from these amounts. As a general rule, the Ministry of Employment does not typically allow discretionary bonuses or other non-guaranteed compensation to be counted towards an applicant's salary to meet the threshold amount.

As always, Foster will continue to monitor changes in requirements and procedures that impact on immigration-related benefits and requirements and will provide future updates via our firm's website at www.fosterglobal.com.