

Admitting foreign nationals to seek work is one of the policy tools countries may draw on to attract talent or improve matching between employers and candidates, but one where risk is relatively high. Job-search visas are by no means universal and nowhere are they a fundamental element of labour migration management. Yet they may play a useful role in certain circumstances and in specific institutional contexts.

This brief describes the job-search visas currently and previously offered in OECD countries, compares these with other similar measures – current and proposed – to grant access to job seekers. It examines the key issues considered and the assessment of cost and benefit.

Can Job Search Visas help OECD Countries improve labour migration matching?

Key Findings

- One barrier to international recruitment is friction in matching, which may be due to information shortfalls and processing delays (OECD, 2019). To reduce this friction, some OECD countries have allowed migrants to enter the country and seek work. For employers, this grants the opportunity to meet the candidate – and sometimes test their skills in the job – and to hire the candidate immediately.
- For employers, being able to meet and interview the job seeker, and hire them immediately, accelerates and simplifies the recruitment procedure. A job seeker visa may also be to attract qualified job seekers who would not have otherwise considered the destination country.
- A job seeker can meet many potential employers and reduce delays related to visa issuance. By allowing the job seeker to propose themselves to multiple employers, the visa may contribute to improve the quality of the match between job seeker and employer by reducing information imbalances. By reducing the dependence of the job seeker on a single sponsor, it may even improve their bargaining power in negotiating wage and working conditions.
- A job-search visa is different from grant of permanent residence, since it is *time-limited* and meant to allow the recipient find *employment which qualifies* for issuance of a residence permit or visa for employment. If the recipient fails to find qualifying employment by the end of the job-search period, they must depart the country.
- Many OECD countries grant job-search extensions to graduating international students. Such extensions are not considered in this brief, as they involve issuance of a permit to persons already resident in the country for study purposes. The brief focuses on job-search visas granted to job seekers living abroad, for whom different risk considerations apply.
- In granting job-search visas, countries have several considerations: admitting job seekers who are likely to succeed in finding a job eligible for existing labour migration channels; admitting job seekers who are able to support themselves during the job search; and reducing the risk that unsuccessful job seekers will fail to depart upon expiration of the visa.
- This brief reviews the experience of OECD countries in issuing job-search visas and in addressing these three considerations. It first describes the job-search visas currently offered in OECD countries. It then examines other similar measures – current and proposed – to grant access to job seekers. It concludes with a discussion of the issues in implementing a job-search visa and the risks involved.

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Examples of Job Search Visas in OECD Countries

Most job-search visas implemented in OECD countries have focused on highly-qualified workers. To our knowledge there are currently, active or announced, at least 10 job search visas in 7 OECD countries. They all have different eligibility rules and conditions (see Table 2).

The Dutch “Orientation Visa”, for example, is available for Master level graduates of high-ranked universities, with Dutch or English language skills, as well as all graduates from Dutch HEIs. Eligible groups comprise masters or PhD holders from one of the top 200 HEIs on at least 2 of 3 rankings (QS, Shanghai, Times), from a degree programme in English or Dutch. Others eligible are former researchers in the Netherlands and graduates of Erasmus Mundus Joint Masters programmes. The programme was originally established as a points-based selection; high thresholds for issuance mean few participants came from abroad directly rather than from Dutch HEIs (OECD/European Union, 2016). The number of permits issued to job seekers from abroad in the first two years of the programme,

2009-10, was low (about 200, of which 40 were first permits), and about 40% of those entering in 2009 found jobs that allowed them to qualify for the skilled migrant programme. The programme as originally conceived capped the biannual entries at 500, although this was never applied. The programme changed in 2016. Statistics on the programme do not separate between recipients arriving from abroad and those graduating from a Dutch HEI, although the latter represent by far the largest part. Over the past few years, the number of permits issued per year has increased and stood at 1 700 in 2022.

In 2018, Chile introduced an “International Orientation Visa” to foreigners with a Postgraduate Degree from one of the top 150 academic institutions worldwide. The visa allows residence and work in Chile for up to 12 months, after which the applicant may choose to extend it for another 12 months or to apply for Permanent Residency on the basis of employment. 300 visas were available in the first year (1/8/18-31/7/19), granted by order of application. The use of third-party rankings in job-search visas raises its own issues about reliance on third-party validation (Box 1).

Box 1. International Higher Education Rankings and the Job-Search Visa

How Third-Party Rankings are integrated into Migration Management

- A number of job-search visas include among the eligibility criteria graduation from a top-ranked higher education institution. The rankings used are generally the QS, Shanghai, or Times rankings, and the threshold ranges from the top 50-200 – in some cases, such as the Netherlands, requiring the HEI to appear on at least two of these rankings.
- The methodology behind these rankings has evolved; some HEIs have recently announced they will no longer participate in the ranking. Countries have no control over the rankings, which are known to be subject to manipulation and gaming (Sauder and Espeland, 2009). The small number of job-search visas issued may make this a moot point in terms of oversight, but this heuristic use of private third-party validators is a step towards including indicators of other types in the formal evaluation process.
- Chile has its own ranking system, developed for civil service evaluation of foreign diplomas; the list is specified in Exempt Resolution 2619/2018 and regularly updated.

Source: <https://ind.nl/en/residence-permits/work/residence-permit-for-orientation-year#Designated%20foreign%20educational%20institution>; https://immichile.cl/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/REX-2619-2018_completo.pdf; <https://www.anid.cl/ranking-instituciones-extranjeras/>

In 2022, Chile introduced a “Permit for Work Opportunities”, valid for up to two years, with a possible extension of an additional two years¹. The conditions are established by the Migration Policy Council (Consejo de Política Migratoria) and in the number set by the Council. So far, no criteria or number have been set.

On 1 June 2022, Sweden introduced a “Residence permit for highly qualified persons to look for work or start a business”.² Applicants provide proof of Master-level educational attainment. The Swedish Migration Agency sends the documents to the Swedish Council for Higher Education (UHR) for assessment, which may include contacting the issuing institution in the home country. Applicants must have enough resources to support themselves and health insurance coverage.

From August 2022 through March 2023, a total of 68 permits were issued, of which 28 were to women. There is no data on whether these were first permits or issued to applicants already resident in Sweden. There were far more

applications filed – several thousand – than those processed – more than 600. The need for approval from the UHR may be cause of this delay, although processing times for first-time residence permits for employment may currently stretch beyond 10 months. The refusal rate was about 90%. The reasons for such a high refusal rate are not reported, but it may be that applications are incomplete or the applicant, having failed to obtain a residence permit on other grounds, applied for this visa as a last-chance recourse.

Germany has a job-search visa for persons with academic or vocational qualifications recognised in Germany and at least five years’ experience, along with sufficient funds to support themselves for the duration of their stay – up to six months³. This job-seeker visa has been little used; one barrier to uptake is the requirement to have credentials assessed prior to visa application. This means that most recipients are already in Germany (**Error! Reference source not found.**).

Table 1. Most recipients of job-search permits in Germany are already in Germany

Issuances of Job Search Permits in Germany, 2020-2021

skilled workers with...	First Permit or Status Change	2020	2021	2022 (first half)
Vocational training	without previous title	6	3	
	with status change	38	83	20
Academic training	without previous title	97	32	
	with status change	424	427	294

Note: Skilled workers with vocational training (§ 20 Abs. 1 AufenthG) and academic training (§ 20 Abs. 2). Excludes post-graduate job search. Source: BAMF

Germany has announced in 2023 a separate job-search visa, not requiring prior recognition, based on a PBS with points for qualification, experience, age, language skills, prior experience in Germany and contacts in Germany. While qualification recognition grants extra points, it is not necessary; the recipient must have sufficient means for the

entire stay prior to issuance. The ambition is to admit candidates who are likely to find employment which satisfies at least the current vocational qualification requirements.

Japan announced in 2023 that it will introduce a new immigration pathway for highly skilled talents, alongside other pathways such as the points-

¹ Law 177 of 10/5/2022, 5 art. 28-30. Also granted in-country to Masters and Doctoral students in the “final phase” of their studies.

² www.migrationsverket.se/English/Private-individuals/Working-in-Sweden/Look-for-work-or-start-a-business.html

³ Section 20 (1) (2) AufenthG

based system for highly qualified foreigners. The new pathway, "Japan System for Special Highly Skilled Professionals (J-Skip)", was approved on 17 February 2023 by the Cabinet and will be implemented in April 2023 after public comment. This system applies to those who meet specific income and work experience requirements. The pathway follows the same categories of the PBS: advanced academic research; highly specialised and technical activities; and advanced business management and management activities⁴. They would be able to skip the current PBS and automatically be considered for a "Highly Skilled Professional" status of residence. If granted this status, individuals would be permitted to move to

"Highly Skilled Professional (ii)" Status of Residence with an indefinite period of stay after only one year of working in Japan. Family (and even up to two domestic employees) can accompany the principal applicant, just as under the general PBS.

The use of a PBS in Germany and Japan has led to comparisons with the Australian, Canadian and New Zealand permanent migration streams, although these comparisons lie in a misunderstanding of the latter and a confusion between use of a PBS selection grid and the benefit it provides (**Error! Reference source not found.**).

Box 2. Using a PBS to issue a job-search visa

Since different factors can contribute to labour market success and likelihood of finding employment, one mechanism used in a number of job-seeker visas is a multicriterial points-based system (PBS). A PBS is just a selection mechanism used to grant an immigration benefit such as temporary or permanent admission or conditions of stay. A PBS balances different characteristics of applicants: longer experience can compensate for lower education; in-country experience may compensate for weaker language skills (OECD, 2022). PBS can be used for many different purposes (OECD, 2019). Austria, Türkiye, and Japan, for example, use a PBS to grant favourable permit conditions to persons with a qualifying job offer, while the Netherlands uses one to admit foreign entrepreneurs.

In some cases, the use of a PBS for a job-search visa has been erroneously communicated in the press as equivalent to adopting a Canadian, Australian or New Zealand model. The latter select migrants for long-term capacity to integrate and grant immediate permanent residence. The PBS in these countries are not for provisional stays, and the migrants who are selected are expected to have sufficient adaptability to contribute productively in the long run. There is no requirement to find employment within a certain period.

Since the Canadian, Australian or New Zealand PBS grant immediate permanent residence, these countries base selection on a range of factors in which they have confidence that they will contribute to positive long term outcomes. The selection criteria are adjusted according to analysis and evaluation; the countries have monitoring systems in place to track outcomes over time and according to different parameters.

In parallel, Japan has also released another immigration pathway, "Japan System for Future Creation Individual Visa (J-Find)", targeting graduates from prestigious overseas universities

for their job search. Under the existing "Temporary Visitor" policy, these graduates can stay in Japan for up to 90 days under the "Short-Term Stay" status to search for a job. The J-Find

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www.moj.go.jp/isa/publications/materials/nyuukokukan/ri01_00009.html

system would extend the period of stay to two years as a “Designated Activities” status and allow family members to accompany these individuals⁵.

Sponsored provisional visas may be considered a form of job-search visa. Australia offers at least two distinct provisional visas for those without a job offer: Subclass 489 Skilled Regional (Provisional) visa, and Subclass 491 Skilled Work Regional (Provisional) visa. The visas are designed to support permanent migration; one uses the Skill Select points grid and the other uses a shortage occupation list. Unlike the other job-search visas identified in this document, both require sponsorship from the state or territory – or a relative – and require the recipient to remain in the region for which they are sponsored. The visas are quite costly (over AUD 4 000). Most visas are granted to persons already in Australia.

Vocational-qualification job-search visas are rare in the OECD. Korea offers a 6-month renewable job-search visa on the basis of a PBS, although it requires at least technical vocational education to be obtained in Korea or prior employment on a work permit in Korea. The PBS includes

education, age, language, experience and other criteria. Renewal is allowed if the candidate has been an active job seeker (through public or private channels). The visa originally allowed only paid internships for certain firms, but in 2022 was relaxed to allow some categories of job seekers to work part-time, depending on prior experience and language skills. For job seekers who are not former students, a subsistence requirement (about EUR 670/month for six months) is imposed; renewal requires the job seeker to meet these fund requirements.

Last but not least, Portugal introduced, in 2022, a job-seeker visa which is unique among current programmes as it has no education or skill requirements. Applicants must sign up with the public employment service. The visa is valid for 120 days and can be extended by an additional 60 days. The visa requires at least EUR 2280 in financial resources, or a Portuguese resident sponsor who commits to provide housing and board, as well as to cover repatriation costs if the job seeker fails to depart.

Past programmes which have been cancelled

A number of OECD countries have introduced job-search visas and later withdrawn them.

Norway offered a job-search visas from 2010 to 2012 (OECD, 2014). A 2008 White Paper noted a relative low attractiveness of Norway for skilled workers and tabled the idea of a job-search permit for skilled workers, to make the country more attractive and to allow employers to hire workers in-country without the obstacle of a long processing period. The job-search permit did not function in Norway as expected: many applications were filed, there was concern over fraudulent documents, and the refusal rate hit 84% in 2012 before the Ministry of Labour ordered a suspension of visa issuance in July 2012, before eliminating the visa in 2013. Fewer than half of

those who were approved transitioned to another permit category at the end of the six-month visa: 22% transitioned to skilled employment (about 170 out of the first 790 visas issued), 13% to Norwegian language study, and 4% to au-pairs.

In Denmark, the so-called Green Cards, introduced in 2008, were issued in large numbers. Many recipients never actually came to Denmark; of those who did, few found qualifying jobs. An evaluation in 2010 found that of Green Card recipients in 2008-09, 27% never entered Denmark, and of those who entered, 30% found skilled employment, 42% were in unskilled employment, and the remainder unemployed (Rambøll, 2010). However, at the expiration of the first cohort of Green Card holders in 2011-12, only 6% of the total – or about 70 individuals – changed status due to qualifying economic activity, although a larger group extended their Green

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<https://www.kantei.go.jp/jp/singi/gaikokujinzai/kaigi/dai15/gijisidai.html>

Card. Negative debate around the Green Card influenced the government decision to abolish the permit rather than adjust the admission criteria.

In the United Kingdom, Tier 1 (General) used to offer a points-based system granting long-term visas to job seekers. A survey in 2009 found that 70% were in skilled employment, but an analysis of occupations the following year found that fewer than half of those with occupational information were in jobs which would qualify for one of the existing skilled migrant programmes. The channel was eliminated in 2011.

New Zealand offered a “Silver Fern Job Search Work visa” from 2010 until October 2019; it was struck from regulations in October 2021. It admitted up to 300 people annually to seek skilled employment for up to nine months. Criteria included age (between 20 and 35 years old), holding a qualification recognised in New Zealand that met the needs under the programme or in general under New Zealand’s Skilled Migrant Category (SMC) policy, met language requirements and a minimum amount of maintenance funds for the period of stay in New Zealand. Partners and dependants were not eligible for work permits. Visa recipients could transition to a “Silver Fern Practical Experience” visa with an offer of employment meeting skill requirements. Application volume was high (around 7 000 in 2013), submitted online, meaning the job visa was essentially a click lottery (first-come, first served), with demand crashing

the website in 2017 when slots were opened. Around 30% of applicants between 2010 and 2013 transitioned into permanent residence.

Italy’s 1998 immigration law introduced the category of “entry for job-search with sponsorship”, subject to annual quotas. The law allowed individuals, as well as local and regional governments, employer associations, trade unions and NGOs active in immigration for at least three years, to sponsor applicants. The quota of 15 000 for the year 2000 and 2001 were quickly used, but the category was eliminated in the 2002 reform of the 1998 law. Visa issuance for approved applicants was far lower; only 3 500 visas were issued in 2001-2002 for this category. Most applications were sponsored by other resident foreigners of the same nationality.

Job-search visas have also been targeted specifically at the live-in care sector, where attempts to formalise international mediation for family and care workers have faced obstacles in obtaining the trust of families (OECD, 2008). Spain, recognising the difficulty of international mediation in the family sector, provided a small allotment of job-search visas - 450 in 2007 - for prospective domestic and home-care workers, although with no skills requirements. Although candidates were vetted by the Spanish authorities in their home countries, there were not enough applicants in 2007, and this small number of visas went unutilised, and the programme was not renewed.

Allowing visitors to seek work without a specific job-search visa

The intention to seek work is usually grounds for refusal of a tourist or visitor visa. Nonetheless, some OECD countries allow visitors to seek work. New Zealand, for example, allows visitors to look for work or attend a job interview, as long as the primary purpose of the trip is to visit. Visitors who find work may change to a work-based visa without departing the country. Since distinguishing the purpose of the visit is usually left to the official approving admission, there is a range of discretion. Allowing visitors to seek work and receive a residence permit for employment without departing and applying from abroad is less

common in other OECD countries, which usually forbid this.

When in-country issuance of residence permits for employment is granted to visitors on tourist visas or admitted on visa exemptions, the effect may be to favour certain nationalities. For example, Norway allows citizens of other countries who qualified for a three-month visa, for example, as tourists, to seek work, with no restrictions on in-country issuance of a work permit if successful. Germany allows citizens of Japan, Australia, Canada, Israel, New Zealand, Korea, the United States, and the United Kingdom to apply for their residence permit for work purposes after entering Germany without a

visa⁶. Citizens of these countries are also exempt from the skills threshold normally applied to work permits, and from the requirement that the employer have a corporate base in Germany. A labour market test applies where applicable, but the refusal rate is low. More than half of the work permits issued to citizens with privileged nationalities are issued through this exemption, for a wide range of occupations (OECD, 2013).

Sweden's 2008 law introduced a mechanism to allow change of status inside Sweden only for workers who came to Sweden to meet a potential employer – e.g. for a job interview – and are then hired into occupations on the national shortage list (maintained by the SMB and updated twice annually). Even within this list, the employer must

demonstrate that a delay related to visa formalities will cause damage to the business. The restriction prevents use of tourist visas as “job-search” visas (OECD, 2011). This option is rarely used. From January 2019 to May 2011, only 292 applications were made and 150 permits granted under this route.

In other cases, these possibilities are even more restrictive. Israel grants an in-country status change to an employment visa to tourists who meet eligibility criteria under its “Right of Return” law for Jews and their descendants, but who have not decided to become an Israeli citizen (Krakover and Karplus, 2002). The Temporary Residence Visa type A/1 is valid for up to 5 years and allows employment.

Key issues in job-search visas

The job-search visas presented in this document vary but face a number of similar issues.

They must set skills thresholds which make a successful job-search likely. Many thresholds have been set very restrictively, limiting the potential uptake of the job-search visa and raising the question of why a job-search visa is even necessary for such highly-qualified individuals, who should be able to attract employer sponsorship without having to visit in person. High-income high-education candidates should also face fewer obstacles in obtaining a visa. One argument for its use is that the job-search visa may provide an alternative to a longer wait for an employer-sponsored visa, however, if the candidate has already identified the employer.

Given the inherent risk in admission, many countries impose financial requirements or sponsorship. Sponsorship is meant to protect the host country from exposure to costly removal procedures in the case of unsuccessful job search, although in most cases the financial requirements are relatively low – equivalent to basic income. Sponsorship is used in different types of migration programmes but tend to always face the same limitation that in practice few

countries actually assign liability to “sponsors” for costs incurred.

Each job-search visa must determine the duration of the job-search period, although current job-search visas offer six to 24 months maximum job search. There is no evaluation so far of outcomes of job-search visa recipients, so it is not possible to assess how long it takes for them to find work. In any case, the visa does not seem indexed to any indicator of how long job-search periods usually last.

For programmes which have less restrictive criteria, some selection must be made, with a lottery likely necessary.

Another issue is granting the possibility to work during the job-search period and restrictions on type of employment. Germany does not allow this. Other countries allow unrestricted employment, so that job-seekers can take any job – even a job that does not meet the skills threshold of work permits – to support themselves during the job-search period. This creates a risk of underqualified employment, especially if there is also a risk of rent-taking from sponsors.

Offering a job-search visa means also establishing some expectations for success: what share of recipients is expected to find suitable employment? Many visas (e.g., Danish Green

⁶ BeschV § 26

Card; Norwegian job-search permit; UK General Tier 1) have a rate of high-skilled job placement of 20-30%. If goals are 100% success, these rates are disappointing; if unsuccessful candidates depart with no delay, these rates can be seen as favourable.

Indeed, the most challenging issue in granting a temporary job-search permit is the enforcement of departure requirements if the recipient fails to find a job. Removal is complex and costly and the least desirable outcome, so countries try to admit job seekers who are likely to respect visa conditions. Consular discretion applies to issuance of all visas, and in this case as well: it is up to the visa officer to determine intent. Policy makers can provide clear guidelines on characteristics to consider, but the assessment of intention is done at the time of visa request. For the highly restrictive programmes, risk is low:

Assessing the costs and benefits of a job-search visa

Most OECD countries do not offer job-search visas and have no plans to introduce one. This suggests that they have not seen a compelling case for adding this to the “tool-box”. Notably, several countries have experimented with job-search visas and later cancelled them, although the reasons vary and even in the case of evaluation the policy choice has sometimes been to abolish the visa rather than adjust the criteria.

The lack of evaluation, *ex ante* and *ex post*, probably limits the appetite and effectiveness of these programmes. If the risk were properly assessed, notably for programmes which target global talents, the potential net benefit may turn out to be higher than expected.

The job-search visa can serve several purposes. First, to reduce friction. Germany's information site for potential migrants notes that the job-search visa will allow the recipient to “improve [their] chances of making contact with German employers and finding a job in Germany that matches [their] qualifications.” Where there is less difficulty in matching, the job-search visa would be less useful. The job-search visa is also a means for less skilled workers to quickly match with small

even if the visa recipient doesn't leave, numbers are low and the migrants are unlikely to end up in low-wage employment. For less restrictive programmes, more evaluation is needed to understand how risk is assessed and what contributes to success of job seekers.

Further, the job-search visa may not be the solution to overcoming employer reluctance to hire. Unlike temporary work permits in most OECD countries, the job-search visa does not bind the worker to the employer, making it easy during the job-search period to hop from job to job and making employers skeptical about retention.

Conversely, the need for the job seeker to secure a job offer allowing transition to a regular work permit may make them vulnerable to exploitation by employers who promise to sponsor them in order to enable them to acquire temporary worker status. .

and medium size – or even family – employers who have limited capacity to review and select candidates abroad. This was the reasoning behind the Italian sponsored job-search visa in the late 1990s and the short-lived Spanish care-work job-search visa.

Another reason to offer a job-search visa is to signal openness and attract more qualified migrants than would otherwise arrive. However, no analysis has been done on the impact of job-search visas on the issuance of work permits, so it is difficult to know how many additional qualified migrants are attracted by the visas. Until clearer figures are available on the use and outcomes of these visas, it is difficult to say whether this is achieved.

Where job search programmes require the applicant to find a qualifying job in order to remain in the country, the fact that few qualify is not a large concern, if failed job seekers return home. If they do not, and use other solutions to remain in the country, the job-search visa is rapidly undermined.

Table 2. Job-Search Visas in OECD countries, characteristics, 2023

Issuances of Job-Search Permits in Germany, 2020-2021

Country	Year introduced	Eligibility	Financial requirements	Maximum Duration	Employment allowed?
Chile "International Orientation Visa"	2018	Postgraduate Degree from one of the top 150 academic institutions on Chilean list (see Note). Requires legalised degree with apostille.	None, but only granted to 300 recipients per year (in first year)	12 months initial, 12 months renewal	Yes, unrestricted
Chile Job Opportunities Visa	2022	To be determined	To be determined	2 years, renewable for 2 years	Yes, unrestricted
Germany job-search visa	2020	Academic or vocational qualifications recognised in Germany and at least five years experience.	Sufficient funds to support themselves for the duration of their stay. Possibility for "sponsorship".	up to six months	No. Can apply for a work permit from within the country.
Germany "Chancenkarte"	2023	PBS with points for qualification, experience, age, language skills, prior experience in Germany and contacts in Germany.	Sufficient means for the entire stay. Possibility for "sponsorship".	Up to 12 months	No. Can apply for a work permit from within the country.
Japan (J-Skip)	2023	Researchers/engineers: Master and annual income of JPY 20 million, or 10 years of experience and JPY 20 million High-level managers: 5 years of experience and annual income of JPY 40 million	None	5 years (If moved to "Highly Skilled Profession (ii)", an indefinite period of stay would be allowed.)	Yes, unrestricted.
Japan (J-Find)	2023	Graduated from an institution within the top 100 of university rankings within last 5 years	At least JPY 200,000 upon arrival in Japan	2 years	Yes, unrestricted
Korea (D-10-1)		A PBS includes education, age, language, experience and other criteria. General criteria include one of the following: Previous recent employment with Fortune Global 500 firm; or recent degree from a top-200 Times-ranked university; or graduate of Korean community college or higher.	If not a former student, a subsistence requirement (about EUR 670/month for six months) is imposed; renewal requires the job-seeker to meet these fund requirements.	6-month renewable, if the candidate has been an active job-seeker.	Originally allowed only paid internships for certain firms. From 2022 allows some categories to work part-time, depending on prior experience and language skills.
Netherlands (Search Year for Highly Educated Individuals –	2009; amended in 2016 and	Master or PhDs from two of top 200 universities (see Note), who graduated less than three years ago. Requires evaluation of degree by Nuffic. Until 2016, sufficiently high	None	12 months. Must qualify for other scheme to stay; lower salary threshold	Yes, unrestricted

Zoekjaar hoogopgeleiden)	2021	score in a points system based on education, language abilities, age and previous contact with the Netherlands. Also available to graduates of Dutch HEIs.		applies in case of transfer to highly skilled migrant scheme.	
Portugal, visto de procura de trabalho	2022	None. Requires online registration with IEFPP (Institute for Employment and Vocational Training) – the Public Employment Service.	Travel and health insurance; return ticket. Resources equal to at least 3 times the minimum wage (EUR 760/month) or a certified sponsor resident in Portugal who commits to cover room, board and repatriation costs.	120 days, extendable by 60 days	No. Can apply for a work permit from within the country.
Sweden, Residence permit for highly qualified persons to look for work or start a business	2022	Advanced level (Master >60 credits) degree; plan to seek employment or start business. Applicant must be outside Sweden.	SEK 13,000 for each month plus money to pay travel home. health insurance valid for care in Sweden	3-9 months.	No. Can apply for a work permit from within the country. May not start working before application for the new permit.

Note: Rankings used for NLD: Times Higher Education World University Rankings; QS World University Rankings; Shanghai Academic Ranking of World Universities. Prior to 2021, it was only necessary to appear in the top 200 of one of these rankings. Rankings used for CHL: Ranking Instituciones Extranjeras
Source: OECD Secretariat analysis.

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🔗 Useful links

www.oecd.org/migration

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