

Annex 6

Light Country Cases

Annex 6 of the Talent Attraction and Work-related Residence Permit Process
Models in Comparison Countries -report

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1 The Basque Country: identity and networking as a strategy for talent attraction

The Basque country is an autonomous community in Northern Spain. For many years, the region was marked by a violent fight for independence, but the ETA permanent ceasefire in November of 2010 has brought peace and political stability to the region. Traditionally known for its steel and shipbuilding industry, the region is now one of the most innovative and productive in Spain with 30 % higher GDP per capita than in rest of Spain.

The development has led to a shortage of white-collar specialists, who the region seeks to attract from abroad. As a lesser known region in Europe and, hence, not an obvious international career hub, the region seeks to use its specific culture and identity to its advantage.

1.1 The “Be Basque” programme

The Be Basque initiative is essentially an international network of highly qualified professionals, who are, or want to be, linked to the Basque Country, regardless of their territorial origin. It is made up of over 13 000 professionals spread across more than 100 countries and nearly 400 Basque organizations. The aim is to put professionals working all over the world in contact with other professionals and companies to facilitate talent movement and to build contacts and business relationships between people who have a connection or want to have one with the Basque Country. Membership is free.

The Be Basque network is hosted by Bizkaia:talent, a non-profit organisation established in 2005 with a mission to foster and facilitate the implementation of the necessary conditions for attracting, connecting and retaining highly qualified people in the areas of knowledge and innovation in the Basque Historic Territory of Bizkaia (Basque Country). Bizkaia:talent is financed primarily by the Department for Economic Development of the Provincial Council of Bizkaia.

The network is aimed at two types of users.

1. Anyone with a university degree, who is interested in connecting with the Basque country, irrespective of their place of birth, place of residence or the sector or industry in which they work.
2. Organisations interested in contacting professionals working in the Basque Country or in any other part of the world, either to consider employment possibilities, start business conversations or just to help each other.

After registration, the user will be able to access the Basque Talent Map, which shows a visual map of other users of the network by work location, country and city. Users are also presented with employment opportunities in the Basque Country and relevant information on the technological, scientific and business potential of the Basque Country, as well as the culture, customs and the quality of life offered therein.

While other much larger professional networks like LinkedIn offer similar networking opportunities, Be Basque builds additional value on two fronts: firstly, by linking the network closely to the feeling of "being" Basque, it induces trust in the relationships between users who do not know each other. Secondly, this trust is enhanced through systematic face-to-face meetings of Be Basque members in other countries. The meetings typically feature presentations about topics relevant to the Basque Country, including recent developments in the Country, reasons to invest or work in the region, etc, but also more sector specific info on the Basque Health Cluster, for example.

In addition to the network itself, Be Basque offers special services to dual career couples and social integration services, i.e. recreational activities, which let newcomers know the Basque environment and culture, as well as establishing relationships between newcomers and ones staying longer.

This unusual blend of culture, identity, networking and talent attraction actually works: A remarkable 10 % of the participants in the meetings end up in jobs in the Basque Country and 80 % of companies participating in the meetings join another meeting. Be Basque is financed by the provincial government and companies (more).

The value propositions used to attract talent are:

- *An innovative country*: “The Basque Country was the autonomous community with the highest percentage (24.3 %) in terms of the proportion of companies with ten or more employees carrying out innovative actions in the 2016–2018 period, ahead of the Community of Valencia (22.7 %) and the Community of Madrid (21.2 %).” (Source: EUROSTAT and EU-STAT).
- *Work/life balance*: “The Basque Country combines the highest gross salary, the productivity and the shortest working hours in the Spanish State” (Source: EUROSTAT, INE).
- *High productivity*: “Regarding labour productivity per hour worked, Eurostat data show that the Basque Country had 128.1 points in 2011, as compared to the EU-27 (100.0) and other leading economies like Germany (106.7), Austria (116.8), Denmark (110.5) or Belgium (127.7). This positive record results from a highly qualified workforce, which raises productivity levels, and the importance given to ICT-based industries, among other factors.”
- *Access to human capital*: “Human capital is one of the greatest strengths of the Basque Country. The region has a great number of people with university degrees and a good proportion of science and technology university graduates. Up to 81.1 % of the population completed secondary school, and 26 % of the citizens aged 24 to 64 studied at the university, compared to 23.1 % in the EU-25. In this group, 25.9 % have degrees in science and technology, whereas in the EU-25 the proportion is only 13.1 %. Besides, 13.1 % work on some type of research.” (Source: Eurostat).

2 China: Free Trade Zones (FTZs) as talent labs

China has vast experience with its special economic zones established in the 1980s and 1990s. Many of these were used as pilot experiments for reforms that were eventually adopted nationwide. However, China did not establish its first true Free-Trade Zone (FTZ) in Shanghai until 2013. With six new additions, China now has a total of 18 FTZs¹.

FTZs have traditionally been used as “test beds” for investment liberalisation, regulation and tax incentives and are now seemingly being used for testing new talent attraction schemes. As a “test bed”, the FTZs are allowed to test the effectiveness of new reforms, rules and legislation that does not yet apply to the rest of China. Therefore, they represent legislative innovation labs and, with it, a window into what initiatives the Chinese government and/or administration might roll out later.

The new Lingang area of the China (Shanghai) Pilot Free Trade Zone launched new policies in late 2019 to provide greater convenience for foreign talents in high-tech innovative industries. The new policies provide greater support for the introduction of foreign tech talents and foreign team members of research and innovation.

For international talents in high-tech fields hired by for instance by research institutions, innovation platforms and state-owned enterprises, the restrictions on age, education background and work experience can be reduced. These international talents can receive work permits of more than two years at a time, depending on the date of their employment contract, in order to improve the stability of work.

Foreign workers with special expertise will be offered a variety of more attractive incentives, including income and housing subsidies. Income tax subsidies will be offered to foreign talent with urgently needed skills². The subsidies are meant to offset the difference between the higher income tax rates in Shanghai and the lower rate in Hong Kong.

Overseas students planning to start new businesses in the zone will be granted work permits directly. Overseas students that work in the zone will not need a work permit, but will instead be granted a Shanghai Overseas Talent Residence Permit (Card B), which can be extended for up to 10 years.

Fixed-price housing will be introduced in the zone and living space will be converted into flats for workers with highly desirable skills.

¹ https://www.bofit.fi/en/monitoring/weekly/2019/vw201941_6/

² <https://today.line.me/id/pc/article/China+to+offer+tax+and+housing+subsidies+to+lure+foreign+talent+to+Shanghai+free+trade+zone+sources+say-95oayr>

The number of foreigners currently working in Shanghai has reached 215 000, forming 23.7 % of the country's total³.

³ www.globaltimes.cn/content/1165067.shtml

3 Germany: the residence permit process

The process of getting a work based residence permit in Germany is in many ways similar to other European countries: if the applicant has secured a job contract they can either start the residence permit process from abroad or travel to Germany on a 90-day Schengen (C-type) visa and then start the application process.

If an international talent wishes to move to Germany but does not yet have a job, Germany is also issuing job seeker visas for international talents in search of a job in Germany. Applicants must have a Bachelor's or Master's degree and a minimum of five years of relevant work experience. The applicant must also have travel or medical insurance for their stay in Germany. The visa is limited to a maximum of 6 months and applicants must prove they have sufficient funds to cover their stay (€853 per month of stay). They are not allowed to work during their stay but can obtain a residence permit visa if they find employment⁴. Austria has a similar visa, although the criteria are different and less liberal than in Germany⁵.

In order to get a residence permit, the applicant must provide the following info before applying:

- a valid passport and a biometric photo
- proof of income
- proof of employment
- proof of health insurance
- proof of residence in Germany
- a completed residence permit application form
- a completed employment permission form
- a completed job description form.

The proof of residence are resident documents from the local registration office (municipal level). Since 2015, they are to be confirmed in writing by the landlord or property owner.

⁴ <https://www.make-it-in-germany.com/en/visa/kinds-of-visa/jobseekers/>

⁵ <https://www.migration.gv.at/en/types-of-immigration/permanent-immigration/very-highly-qualified-workers/>

The actual application is handled by the employer, who prepares the application documents and sends them to the Foreigners' Office. Previously, the employer had to conduct a labour market test, i.e. prove that the job could not be filled by a German, an EU citizen or others that have earned "preferential treatment" (typically international professionals already in Germany). If the job description was included in the "positive list"⁶ of skills needed in Germany, this was relatively easy. However, the labour market test condition was cancelled as per 2 March 2020. The Federal Employment Agency thus no longer carries out priority checks in this regard⁷.

Once approved, the applicant will receive an invitation to come to a meeting in person and pick up the new residence permit, either in Germany or at the local consulate. The residence permit is a physical card the size of a credit card with an RFID chip containing the applicants biometric data. Since 1 September 2011, this has substituted the traditional passport sticker.

6 <https://www.make-it-in-germany.com/en/looking-for-foreign-professionals/targeted-recruitment/applicant-profiles-of-international-professionals/resume/>

7 <https://www.schengenvisainfo.com/news/working-in-germany-new-rules-for-non-eu-nationals/>

4 Germany: sustainable sourcing of nurses with pre-arrival language training abroad

Like many other European countries, Germany is in great demand of foreign talent. Germany is already Europe's largest net receiver of foreign labour, especially from its neighboring countries, but there is still a need for more – specifically in the health care system. According to expert's estimates, the German nursing sector will need 150 000 new nurses by 2025. Therefore, they have developed new ways to fill the positions with German-speaking international professionals⁸.

4.1 Attracting nurses from the Philippines – the “Triple Win” project

Germany is in urgent need of trained nurses, which is why the government has set up a formal collaboration with its Philippine counterparts to send Filipino nurses to Germany under the “Triple Win” project. The Triple Win project is a bilateral diplomatic project that started in 2013 and was extended several times. As of January 2020, it has attracted 903 nurses from the Philippines⁹. Qualified applicants must be citizens and permanent residents of the Philippines with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing. Applicants must also possess an active Philippine nursing license with at least two years of professional experience as a nurse in hospitals, rehabilitation centers and other healthcare institutions.

The applicants must also be proficient in the German language before going to Germany to work. This means they must undergo German language training to achieve a B1 or B2 language proficiency level at local language schools to be part of the programme. The language classes are fully paid for by the German Federal Employment Agency. The German employer will pay the visa and airfare from the Philippines to Germany and will assist the employee in finding suitable accommodation.

⁸ <https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/41533.html>

⁹ http://www.poea.gov.ph/news/2020/NR_January%202020%20-%20Germany%20needs%20additional%20550%20Pinoy%20nurses%20under%20Triple%20Win%20Project.pdf

The language training is conducted by private language schools, often with dedicated tracks for nurses going to Germany. As an example, the Intermed Language Institute offers a 10 month course for nurses in one of its seven training schools spread all over the Philippines. The price per participant is about 35 000 PHP (approximately €630).

The project is named "Triple Win" because it aims to generate three benefits¹⁰:

- Pressure is eased on labour markets in the countries of origin with a surplus of qualified experts that cannot be absorbed by the local labour markets.
- Migrants' remittances provide a developmental stimulus in their countries of origin and the professionals will improve their personal competences and build on their career perspectives
- The shortage of nurses in Germany is alleviated.

Germany has been cautious to avoid the worst effects of brain drain in the program and corresponds with both the ILO's standards for fair migration and the WHO Global Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Personnel. This means that although the programme has received criticism, it is nonetheless perceived as a case of "best practice" in terms of the efforts to address issues of brain drain and social rights of the involved nurses¹¹.

Following the scheme involving the Philippines, other agreements in the Triple Win project have now been signed with Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Tunisia and Vietnam¹². From 2012 to November 2019, a total of 3 000 nurses have been placed with German employers in clinics, geriatric care homes and out-patient services. Of these, more than 2 100 have already started working in Germany, while 290 are still undergoing their preparations in their home countries. Another 284 Triple Win positions have yet to be filled. After two years, 81,5 % of the nurses are still with their employers¹³.

10 <https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/41533.html>

11 Faist, Thomas (2018): *The Transnationalized Social Question: Migration and the Politics of Social Inequalities in the Twenty-First Century*, Oxford University Press.

12 Ibid.

13 <https://www.who.int/hrh/migration/B-Triple-Win.pdf?ua=1>

5 New Zealand: Innovative internationalization

New Zealand, being a small country far off from any other talent producing countries, has had to be highly innovative in its attempts to attract talent. This chapter takes a look at two prominent examples of innovative measures New Zealand has adopted to internationalise its economy.

5.1 The Global Impact Visa

There is a fierce global competition to attract the best and most promising start-ups and/or founders of businesses. New Zealand has taken a new approach with a specific focus on high-impact entrepreneurs in close collaboration with the Edmund Hillary Fellowship.

The Global Impact Visa (GIV) is the world's first immigration policy focused on creating a positive global impact. The visa is led by Immigration New Zealand and it is exclusively available to individuals and teams accepted into the Edmund Hillary Fellowship. The GIV provides leading entrepreneurs and investors a three-year visa to create, support and incubate ventures that result in a positive global impact as part of the Edmund Hillary Fellowship. After three years, migrants can qualify for permanent residency.

The Edmund Hillary Fellowship (EHF) is a New Zealand based global community of high-impact entrepreneurs, investors and changemakers, who collaborate to build new solutions to global challenges. Fellows are accepted into the programme through a competitive application process, gaining access to a global network of diverse expert perspectives, talent and investors, mentorship opportunities and cross-sector collaboration opportunities. The programme is open to New Zealanders and international candidates who – if accepted to the programme – get access to New Zealand's GIV.

The EHF does not provide funding to fellows and does not take equity stakes in the fellows' companies. Since the fellowship is not paid, participants are allowed to work in New Zealand in parallel with participating in the programme, although the primary focus should be on building the venture¹⁴.

¹⁴ <https://www.ehf.org/faq>

GIV is a three-year open work visa that enables participants in the EHF to work and live in New Zealand with a path to permanent residence. Separate visas are also available for immediate family of GIV holders.

The visa is designed to attract individuals and teams with the drive and capability to launch global impact ventures from New Zealand, who may not be able to qualify for other visa categories, as well as investors wishing to support impactful ventures.

In order to be eligible to apply for permanent residence, the applicant must remain in the EHF for 30 months and maintain the support of the EHF.

GIV is a four-year pilot programme and the Immigration New Zealand team is planning to review the policy in 2021. At this point it is not clear whether the duration of the programme is extended. Out of the quota of 400, 261 have so far entered through the programme¹⁵.

5.2 KEA – harnessing the power of the diaspora

An estimated 1.5 million New Zealanders live outside of New Zealand. To harness the power of this diaspora outside the country, the New Zealand-based organization KEA seeks to connect the diaspora with both each other and with opportunities in New Zealand.

The KEA community consists of over 500 000 expats and friends of New Zealand and KEA helps them and companies in New Zealand through several dedicated services.

- *Connecting businesses and talent:* KEA makes about 1000 introductions every year for companies in New Zealand looking to go global. KEA identifies and introduces members of the KEA network, who may be able to give business advice, market insights or further connections to small or medium sized companies for whom international expansion can otherwise be a discouraging task¹⁶.
- *Showcasing events and jobs:* relevant events and jobs in New Zealand are pushed to the network.

¹⁵ <https://www.immigration.govt.nz/new-zealand-visas/apply-for-a-visa/about-visa/global-impact-work-visa> and <https://www.ehf.org/fellowship>

¹⁶ <https://portals.keanewzealand.com/what-is-kea.html>

- *High level support:* World Class New Zealand is a global network of highly achieved industry leaders, who lend their influence and insight to help Kiwis succeed on the world stage.
- *Awards:* World Class New Zealand awards recognise world-leading Kiwis, whose achievements are defining New Zealand's image internationally. The Awards celebrate New Zealanders with outstanding achievements and success offshore.

KEA was founded as a private initiative in 2001 and by 2003, had offices in London, Boston, Los Angeles, Amsterdam and Sydney. In the beginning, most of the funding was provided by private philanthropy with some revenue from government and commercial sources. In 2005, the New Zealand Government increased its commitment to the country's offshore community with major funding that enabled KEA to improve its infrastructure¹⁷. Today, KEA receives funding from the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, New Zealand Trade and Enterprise, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Te Puni Kokiri (Ministry of Maori Development), as well as from a number of corporate sponsors¹⁸.

17 <https://www.keanewzealand.com/history/>

18 <https://www.stuff.co.nz/business/better-business/63776881/kea-expat-network-hits-half-a-million>

6 France: building a leading international start-up hub by design

Competition for building the most successful start-up scenes is fierce. Paris was late to the game, but under the Macron Government, France is now on a mission to be a “nation of unicorns”. France’s ambitious plans to succeed include the setup of Bpifrance – a state financed venture capital fund – and a €5 billion public/private investment fund to help companies scale up. So far, selected companies have each received a €45 000 grant from Bpifrance simply to cover personal and business costs. Paris is also home to Station F, the world’s biggest start-up campus, which has become a cornerstone of the French tech ecosystem.

On the legal side, France has scrapped its wealth tax on all assets other than property and has introduced a flat tax on dividends and an easier process to wind down companies¹⁹.

However, the most important change, according to the French tech industry, is the creation of a special tech visa, which makes it easier for the sector to import talent.

6.1 The French Tech Visa

Introduced in 1 March 2019, the French Tech Visa is a simplified fast-track scheme for non-EU startup employees, founders and investors to obtain a residence permit in France. The visa is valid for four years and automatically extends to the spouse and dependent children. Also, the visa scheme does not have diploma requirements, i.e. it does not require a university degree, for example.

The visa has three target users:

1. **Employees**

To be eligible, applicants need a work contract with a minimum duration of three months with a French company eligible to recruit via the French Tech Visa and a gross annual salary of at least twice the French annual minimum wage (as of 19 Jan-

¹⁹ Other initiatives are available in: <https://lafrenchtech.com/en/how-france-helps-startups/> and <https://sifted.eu/articles/french-tech-kat-borlongan/>

uary 2020, €36 509,20). The application process takes up to three months for applicants living outside France and two months for applicants already living in France on another visa.

2. Founders

To be eligible, founders need financial resources or a gross annual salary amounting to the French annual minimum wage (as of 19 January 2020, €18 254, 60). They also need to get formally admitted by an official French Tech Visa Partner (Incubators, Accelerators, etc.) through their regular selection process. The company must be an “innovative tech company”, but there are no other fixed rules²⁰. The process is purely qualitative and may look at the start-up-related track record of its founders, references, whether or not the company is venture backed, and/or may simply assess the nature of the project. Again, the process takes up to three months, depending on whether the founders are living abroad or already in France.

3. Investors

To be an eligible investor under the Tech Visa programme, investors must invest at least € 300 000 in fixed tangible or intangible assets and must invest either directly or via a company in which the investor holds at least 30 % of shares. They must also own at least 10 % of the company they are investing in and must be creating or protecting (or committing to create or protect) jobs within the four years following the investment. The process takes up to three months, depending on whether the investor is living abroad or already in France.

France also issues visas for other non-tech international talents, including specialists, company founders, researchers and artists. The criteria that applicants must fill differs, but they are mostly a combination of documented employment, salary or investment at a certain level²¹.

²⁰ In Singapore, for example, only companies that have received VC funding are eligible.

²¹ More info on the individual requirements is available in: https://france-visas.gouv.fr/en_US/web/france-visas/international-talents-and-economic-attractiveness

7 Poland: bringing back expatriated citizens

Traditionally, Poland has witnessed an export of labour, in particular to other European countries. Before Brexit, the UK had about 900 000 Poles working in the country. Approximately one million Poles live in France and Germany has an estimated two million Polish immigrants²². However, as a result of Poland's significant growth rates over the last decades, Poland is now itself in need of specialists and skilled blue-collar labour. In order to meet this need, Poland has launched a programme designed to attract emigrated Poles with the needed skill-set back to Poland.

7.1 The “We are 60 million” -campaign

Working together with a number of news channels and broadcasters, the Polish government has launched the “We are 60 million” campaign. One of the campaign's aims is to promote information among Poles abroad about the possibilities of returning to the country. Polish upper-house speaker Stanisław Karczewski hopes that many young people of Polish origin “will fall in love with Poland” and “come here to study, establish families and work with us to build the country's future together”²³.

The signatories to the campaign are the Polish senate (the upper chamber of the Polish parliament), the Polish Community Association (“Wspólnota Polska”) and the National Media Council. Partners in the initiative are the Polish Press Agency, the national broadcaster TVP, the Polish Radio and the “Do Rzeczy” weekly²⁴.

The campaign features social media activity, radio/TV broadcasts and conferences for Polish communities in the US, Germany, Australia and UK²⁵.

The slogan of the campaign refers to the 60 million Poles in the world today. Since approximately 20 million of them live outside the borders of Poland, the potential talent pool is significant. In addition, by focusing the attraction efforts on the diaspora outside its borders, Poland not only targets highly-skilled individuals already primed to

²² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polish_diaspora

²³ <https://www.polskieradio.pl/395/7784/Artykul/2348724,Campaign-urges-expat-Poles-to-return-home>

²⁴ <https://polandin.com/43722680/we-are-60-million-campaign-inaugurated>

²⁵ <https://www.polskieradio.pl/395/7785/Artykul/2442129,Poland's-int'l-role-expat-deals-discussed-at-US-conference>

move to Poland but since the diaspora also speaks Polish and knows the Polish working culture, it is much easier for them to integrate into the more locally oriented parts of the labour market. This is considered as an advantage, since while some parts of the Polish working life (e.g. the tech community) is becoming increasingly international, there are large parts of the economy that remain more traditionally Polish.

The campaign is not designed to be a direct talent attraction campaign, but rather to strengthen the spirit of solidarity of Polish expats with people living in Poland and to enhance the Polish identity of people living abroad. Based on the online feedback to the campaign, there appears to be a reluctance among expatriated Polish talent to return to Poland, mainly because salaries and benefits remain higher in the countries they now work in. Also, the relationship between the shifting governments in Poland and its diaspora has not always been warm. The welcoming attitude of the campaign is hence seemingly met with some skepticism. However, with high economic growth rates and a government that actively seeks to welcome the expatriated Poles with the help of this campaign, this may change in the future.

8 UK: accessing research talent post-Brexit

Following Brexit, EU and non-EU citizens will, from 1 January 2021, be treated equally in the UK. The government has pledged to reduce the overall levels of migration and to give top priority to the most talented and highly-skilled individuals: scientists, engineers, academics and other highly-skilled workers.

EU's free movement policy will be replaced with a new points-based system targeting the most skilled workers, students and a range of other specialists, including scientists, global leaders and innovators. Points are given based on criteria related to salary and education levels, language proficiency, levels of shortage in the UK and job approval by the employer²⁶.

Science and research remain a top priority for the government. It has introduced several initiatives to mitigate the potential negative effects of Brexit. The government has introduced new funding schemes for researchers and new agencies to strengthen research²⁷. It has also introduced a new visa for exceptional talent – the Global Talent Visa.

8.1 The Global Talent Visa

The Global Talent Visa²⁸ was introduced on 20 February 2020 and is intended for very talented and promising individuals in specific sectors. In order to be considered for the Global Talent Visa, applicants must gain an endorsement from one of the six endorsing bodies engaged by the Home Office. In other words, unlike other visas, the evaluation process is partly outsourced to organizations outside the Home Office, which have the necessary skills to evaluate the applicants.

Endorsements in the fields of science, engineering, medicine, social sciences, the humanities or for other academic and research roles are given by the British Academy,

26 Details of the news on immigration can be found in: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-uks-points-based-immigration-system-policy-statement/the-uks-points-based-immigration-system-policy-statement>

27 <https://sciencebusiness.net/news/uk-government-sets-out-plan-darpa-funding-agency-research>

28 <https://www.ukri.org/research/international/global-talent-visa/>

the Royal Academy of Engineering, the Royal Society or by UK Research and Innovation (UKRI).

There are four routes for eligible academics and researchers to obtain endorsement for a Global Talent Visa.

- **Senior appointments:** A fast track endorsement for individuals who have accepted a job as a professor, associate professor, reader or an equivalent position, such as a senior group leader, at an approved UK higher education institution or research institute, provided certain recruitment requirements are met. This route is administered by the British Academy, the Royal Academy of Engineering and the Royal Society.
- **Individual fellowships:** fast-track endorsement for individuals who have been awarded an individual fellowship on the list approved by the British Academy, the Royal Academy of Engineering and the Royal Society. The fellowship must be held currently or within the last 12 months.
- **Endorsed funders:** a fast-track endorsement for researchers and specialists, whose name or job title is specified in a successful grant application from an endorsed funder²⁹ approved by the UKRI. In order to be eligible, researchers must be hosted or employed by eligible institutions named in Annex 2 of the Immigration Rules³⁰.
- **Peer review:** a standard endorsement for individuals, who submit an application for full peer review by the British Academy, the Royal Academy of Engineering or the Royal Society.

The actual visa application is done in two phases: In phase one, the applicants first contact one of the endorsement bodies to get the endorsement. If the applicant gets the endorsement, they can proceed to phase two and apply for the visa in the Home Office. The endorsement does not automatically yield a visa, as normal immigration aspects still apply, including the general grounds for refusal. However, for most of the applicants, the endorsement is in practice enough to secure the visa.

The Global Talent Visa builds on and replaces the existing Tier 1 (Exceptional Talent) visa. The new visa makes it easier for high-level talent to enter the UK and alleviates some of the hassles in Tier 1.

²⁹ See list in: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/immigration-rules/immigration-rules-appendix-w-immigration-rules-for-workers>

³⁰ See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/immigration-rules/immigration-rules-appendix-w-immigration-rules-for-workers?#annex-2-ukri-approved-uk-research-organisations>

9 Singapore: linking talent management, innovation and regional development

Singapore has little access to natural resources and has worked hard to prosper by being an open and welcoming state for international companies, talents and investments since its independence in 1965. Singapore is home to 5.6 million residents, 39 % of whom are foreign nationals, including permanent residents. Although there are exceptions³¹, Singapore is primarily seeking to attract high-level talents like domain specialists, other professionals with a university degree and entrepreneurs.

The city-state has a number of attractive value propositions to offer international professionals: attractive career opportunities in large international companies, a large English-speaking community, a high standard of living, easy access to other East Asian countries and attractive tax conditions for especially wealthy individuals. Singapore also ranks high among global tax havens, which makes it financially attractive for international companies to relocate to.

With international corporations and talents playing such a prominent role in Singapore's development plans, there has always been a very ambitious, coordinated and strategic approach to talent attraction within very targeted sectors. This includes close collaboration between line ministries and the Economic Development Board (EDB) – the lead government agency for planning and executing strategies to enhance Singapore's position as a global business centre. Below, some examples of this cooperation are discussed.

9.1 A fast track programme for selected companies: the Tech@SG Programme

The Tech@SG Programme was launched in January 2020. It is a fast-track mechanism for tech/IP heavy companies in the growth phase looking to rapidly build up their core team through international talents. The programme is run by the EDB and does not itself issue working permits. Instead, the Tech@SG Programme provides com-

³¹ <https://www.mom.gov.sg/passes-and-permits>

pany-level endorsement to the Ministry of Manpower (MOM), reducing the risks of rejections of their working permit (Employment Pass) applications for new employees. A company in the programme can benefit from up to 10 endorsements for international talent over two years to boost the core teams of their companies.

The programme is carefully targeted and in order to be eligible, the company must have a digital or technology offering as its core business product or service. It must also have secured more than USD 10 million (cumulative) in investment funding in the past 36 months or received funding from an investment firm recognised by the programme during the past 36 months. The applicant's fixed monthly salary must meet the MOM's minimum salary criteria (USD 3 900, as of May 2020) and the applicant must fill a core role in the team, i.e. a core business function, a technical function or a management position³².

It takes five days to process the application in the EDB and another 21 days for the MOM to approve/disapprove the Employment Pass application.

9.2 The World Class Universities Program

In 1996, the prime minister announced the government's intention to turn Singapore into the "Boston of the East". Boston had Harvard and MIT, but also more than 200 universities, colleges and research institutions. This was something Singapore wished to imitate. In 1998, Singapore consequently launched the World Class Universities Program with the aim of attracting at least 10 foreign universities into establishing facilities in Singapore over a ten-year-period.

Following the program, Singapore took the concept a step further in 2002 with the launch of the Global Schoolhouse Initiative. Under this initiative, the efforts to attract foreign universities were accompanied by a new emphasis on the attraction of foreign students. The ambitious goal was to attract 150 000 fully self-funded foreign students by 2015, up from a total of 50 000 in 2002.

Several economic advantages for pursuing this vision were outlined. Firstly, the increase in institutional spending and spending by the foreign students would fuel economic growth and create high-paying jobs. Secondly, the influx of foreign students would contribute human capital to knowledge-based activities, such as research and development. Thirdly, an increase in the number of educational institutions and a

³² For the full list of criteria, please see <https://www.edb.gov.sg/en/how-we-help/incentives-and-schemes/tech-sg.html>

greater diversity of courses would help stem the outflow of domestic students to overseas universities. Lastly, foreign students would boost Singapore's pool of talented individuals and form a network of international alumni around the world.

The programme itself was only partly successful³³. Due to issue such as high living costs, Singapore was not able to attract a large number of students and the economy of the university campuses suffered. Yet, the case highlights the close linkage between the internationalisation of higher education and industrial policy with internationalization efforts – led not by the Ministry of Education, but by the Economic Development Board (EDB).

33 Many international universities did set up in Singapore, including the Johns Hopkins University, the University of Chicago and INSEAD, but many of the universities closed their operations down after a few years, despite heavy subsidies from the ECB (source: "Singapore's "Global Schoolhouse" Aspirations", *International Higher Education* , #87, fall 2016).