



GLOBEX UPDATE HEALTH & BENEFITS

Events, developments, and opportunities in the international marketplace.

Recent Successes

- **Implemented new group medical plans in two European countries for global professional services client.**
- **Assisted Partner Broker in winning BOR from a multinational hotel chain with operations in 10 countries. Demonstrating a robust global benefits capability was instrumental to closing the deal.**
- **Secured group travel medical program for large pharmaceutical distributor.**

United Arab Emirates



Employers in the private sector and the free zones in the UAE may participate in a new alternative end-of-service benefits arrangement. This is a voluntary scheme available to employers in the private sector and free zones as an alternative to the existing end of service regime in place for expatriate employees. In essence, this is a move away from a defined benefit end of service scheme to a defined contribution scheme under which monthly contributions are made to an investment fund by the employer on

behalf of its expatriate employees. Employees registered in the alternative scheme may benefit from an investment return and may also make voluntary contributions to the scheme. Upon termination of employment, the employees will be entitled to receive any end-of-service benefit previously accrued upon termination of employment, as well as all monthly contribution payments made into the alternative scheme plus investment returns.

Singapore

Singapore's Prime Minister recently announced new paid family leave policies to strengthen support for working parents and promote shared parental responsibility. The new policies, which will take effect April 1, 2025, include enhanced Government-Paid Paternity Leave (GPPL for fathers of Singaporean children will be increased from the current two weeks to four weeks of mandatory leave) and the introduction of a new Shared Parental Leave (SPL) scheme to replace the current system. The new SPL scheme will allow parents to share 6 weeks (to be increased to 10 weeks on April 1, 2026) of paid leave. Under the new policies, employees must give at least four weeks' notice before taking any parental leave. Both mothers and fathers taking parental leave will enjoy new employment protections, and working parents with irregular employment arrangements will be able to take advantage of the new Shared Parental Leave Benefit (SPB) scheme. The government is also planning additional support measures over the next several years.



France

A discretionary power has been given to the *préfets* until 31 December 2026 to regularize illegal workers working in jobs and geographical areas where there is a recruitment shortage. In practice, this involves granting a one year's residence permit, applicable if the individual has (1) worked as a salaried employee



in a job included in the list of jobs and geographical areas that have experienced recruitment difficulties for at least 12 consecutive or non-consecutive months over the last 24 months, (2) held a job in one of these jobs or areas, (3) proven uninterrupted residence in France for at least three years, and (4) a clean criminal record with no convictions, inabilities or disqualifications. There is discretion to refuse regularization even if these conditions are met. *Préfets* will have to take into account the social and family integration of the illegal workers, whether they comply with public order, whether they are integrated into French society and whether they embrace the way of life and

values of French society and the principles of the Republic. Other changes include training for foreign non-French speaking employees, and social security benefits for foreign nationals who are not EU nationals.

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