



INTERCONTINENTAL TRUST NEWSLETTER

August 2021



Intercontinental Trust Ltd

Re-opening up to the world

Over nearly the past 2 years, amidst travelling restrictions that were implemented across the world to prevent the spread of the Covid-19, it has been impossible for Mauritius to increase the influx of visitors and foreign talents.

Vaccination rollouts across the world has instilled a sense of renewed optimism and many countries are gradually returning to normal, albeit a “New Normal”.

In fact, the Mauritian borders have been opened since 15 July 2021 to both unvaccinated and vaccinated tourists subject to certain conditions. Whereas unvaccinated visitors have to stay for 14 days in quarantine hotels (with no access to the hotels facilities such as the beach etc.), vaccinated tourists are required to quarantine at a covid-safe hotels for 14 days with free access to all hotel facilities. Effective as from 1 September, the quarantine period for vaccinated tourists will be revised to 7 days. As from 1 October, vaccinated tourists with a negative PCR test will be allowed on the Mauritian territory without any restrictions.

In the National Budget 2021/2022, the Mauritian government proposed several measures to incentivize foreign investors and professionals to relocate to the island. These measures are now being implemented following the enactment of the Finance (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2021 (“Finance Act 2021”).

The main amendments introduced by the Finance Act 2021 to the Economic Development Board Act, the Immigration Act and the Non-Citizens (Employment Restriction) Act are tabled below:

Proposed Changes	Prior to Finance Act 2021	Finance Act 2021
Introduction of a Family Occupation Permit	N/A	<p>The Family Occupation Permit is a new category of Occupation Permit and will be issued to the applicant, his spouse, dependent child, parent, other dependent or a person exclusively working for the family unit.</p> <p>The applicant or his/her spouse can take up employment in Mauritius</p> <p>Contribution of USD 250,000 or its equivalent in freely convertible foreign currency to the Covid-19 Projects Development Fund</p>
Introduction of Premium Investor Scheme	N/A	<p>Eligibility criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Must relate to pharmaceuticals or medical devices; or – Minimum Investment of Mur 500 million in: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. emerging sectors ii. pioneering industries and first movers iii. innovative technologies and industries; or iv. any targeted economic activities as may be approved; and v. Must comply with the relevant guidelines <p>Holders of a Premium Investor Certificate will benefit from rebates, exemptions and preferential rates, in relation to taxes, duties, fees, charges and levies under any enactment. They will benefit facilities, grants and exemptions in relation to:</p> <p>(A) land and buildings; (B) infrastructure and public facilities; (C) utilities; and (D) labour requirements, including foreign labour.</p>
<p>OP – Professional</p> <p>Duration of Professional OP</p> <p>New categories of Professional OP</p>	<p>3 years</p> <p>N/A</p>	<p>Now issued for 10 years No Change for Young Professional OP</p> <p>New categories of Professional OP:</p> <p>1. Fund accounting and compliance services. Applicant should meet the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Monthly basic salary of at least Mur. 30,000; and – Have at least 3 years of relevant work experience; and – Employer is licensed by the FSC <p>2. Public Sector under the “Service to Mauritius” programme. The employment period should not exceed 3 years</p>

Proposed Changes	Prior to Finance Act 2021	Finance Act 2021
<p>Application of a new OP in case of change of employment</p> <p>Application for a Permanent Residence permit (PRP)</p>	<p>A new OP would have to be applied if an OP holder changes his/her employment</p> <p>Only those who held a Professional OP and meeting the relevant conditions could apply for a PRP under this route</p>	<p>In case an OP holder changes job, he/she is not required to apply for a new OP provided that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The new employment meets the criteria laid out by the EDB (minimum salary) - The OP holder informs the EDB and the immigration officer - The OP holder provides any other information as may be required <p>In case of an OP holder is unemployed, he/she is not required to apply for a new OP provided that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - he/she finds employment within 6 months - informs the EDB within that timeframe - the new employment meets the criteria laid out by the EDB (minimum salary) <p>The OP holder provides any other information as may be required</p> <p>Now those who hold a valid work permit issued under the Non-Citizens (Employment Restriction) Act can apply under this route subject to meeting the basic minimum monthly salary of Mur. 150,0000 for 3 consecutive years immediately preceding the application</p>
<p>OP - Self employed</p> <p>Eligibility criteria for application of a Self-employed OP</p>	<p>Only an individual was entitled to apply through this route</p>	<p>Applicant can now also apply an OP under this route through a locally incorporated company</p>
<p>Residence Permit (RP)</p> <p>- for foreign nationals acquiring an apartment in a ground+2 building</p>	<p>Foreign nationals who acquired an apartment for a minimum of USD 500,000 could apply for a long stay visa of 10 years (the "Visa"). The Visa is renewable depending on the ownership status of ownership. It remains valid so long as the non-citizen holds the apartment.</p>	<p>Foreign Nationals are now able to claim a Residence Permit if they acquire an apartment used, or available for use, as residence, in a ground+2 building provided that the purchase price is of a minimum of USD 375,000 or its equivalent in any other hard convertible foreign currency – the exchange rate will be the selling rate in force at the time of the signing of the title deed</p>
<p>Other notable changes</p> <p>Expediting OP application process</p> <p>Conversion of Permanent Residence Permit issued under the investor/professional/self-employed route to Retired Non- citizen Permit</p>	<p>No timeline agreed for when a response is required from the public sector agency</p> <p>This conversion was not possible</p>	<p>The public sector agency is required to revert within 5 business days from the date of request failing which the Economic Development Board (EDB) will assume that the agency has no objection to the application</p> <p>This conversion is now possible, provided that the applicant has a monthly disposable income of USD1,500 or its equivalent in any other hard convertible foreign currency</p>

Proposed Changes	Prior to Finance Act 2021	Finance Act 2021
Automatic extension of Permanent Resi-dence permit granted and valid on 1 September 2020	No such confirmation provided previously	It has been clarified that PRP granted previously and which was still valid as of 1 September 2020 will remain valid for a period of 20 years as from the date of issue of the PRP
Increase in penalty for non-citizen taking up employment or employees employing non-citizen without a valid work permit	Non-citizens taking up employment and employers employing non-citizens without a valid work permit were liable to the following: Fine: Minimum of Mur. 25,000 up to a maximum of Mur. 50,000 Imprisonment: term not exceeding 2 years	Penalty has been increased as follows: Fine: Minimum of Mur. 100,000 up to a maximum of Mur. 500,000 Imprisonment: term not exceeding 5 years
Introduction of a provisional work permit	N/A	In cases where the process for renewal of work permit has been delayed, a provisional permit can be issued

What about the dependents of OP and RP Holders?

OP and RP Holders can apply for residence permits for their dependents. The following categories of persons are eligible to apply as dependents of OP and RP Holders: spouse (including Common Law Partner of the opposite sex), parents, and children including stepchildren or lawfully adopted children.

The definition of “Dependent child” has been broadened under the Finance Act 2021 to remove the age restriction which was previously limited to 24 years of age. Dependent child now means:

- wholly dependent on the person
- unmarried
- not engaged in any gainful activity

As of the date of this writing, the Economic Development Board is yet to issue the new guidelines with regard to the new categories of permits/measures being introduced. More details on the above measures will follow once the updated guidelines are published – stay tuned for our upcoming newsletter on same.

For any additional information please contact us.

Mauritius Office

Email: mauritius@intercontinentaltrust.com
Website: www.intercontinentaltrust.com

Seychelles Office

Email: seychelles@intercontinentaltrust.sc

South Africa Office

Email: sa@intercontinentaltrust.com

Singapore Office

Email: singapore@intercontinentaltrust.com.sg
Website: www.intercontinentaltrust.com.sg

Kenya Office

Email: ke@intercontinentaltrust.com



**Proud Supporter of
THE GLOBAL GOALS**
For Sustainable Development

ISAE 3402
COMPLETED TYPE II AUDIT



Best Real Estate & Infrastructure Funds Administrator 2019 & 2020 | Best Investment Funds Administrator 2018



DISCLAIMER

The information in this newsletter was prepared by Intercontinental Trust Limited to provide potential clients with a broad overview of the opportunities available in Mauritius. While all reasonable care has been taken in the preparation of this newsletter, Intercontinental Trust Limited accepts no responsibility for any errors it may contain, whether caused by negligence or otherwise, or for any loss, however caused, sustained by any person that relies on it. Readers are advised to consult with appropriate, qualified professional advisors before taking action. Intercontinental Trust Limited will be pleased to discuss any specific issues.

If you do not wish to receive further information from Intercontinental Trust Limited, please send an email to unews@intercontinentaltrust.com