



GLOBAL IMMIGRATION TRENDS – August 2025

Introduction

This global migration summary provides an overview of the most recent immigration policy updates and emerging trends across key regions of the world. It highlights regulatory changes, new visa frameworks, and enforcement measures that are shaping global mobility. Particular attention is given to the implications for Nigerians, whether seeking immigrant or non-immigrant visas, helping applicants understand how these shifts may affect travel, work, study, or settlement opportunities abroad.

Africa

Nigeria

INCREMENT TO DOMESTIC PASSPORT APPLICATION FEES

The Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS) announced an upward review of the Nigerian standard passport fees effective Monday, September 1, 2025. By the new threshold, applicants for the Thirty-Two (32) page, five (5) year booklet will now pay One Hundred Thousand Naira (N100,000) while Sixty-four (64) page ten (10) year booklet now cost Two Hundred Thousand Naira (N200,000), a significant increase from the previous fees schedule in 2024 - Fifty Thousand Naira (N50,000) for Thirty-Two (32) page, five (5) year booklet, and One Hundred Thousand Naira (N100,000) for the Sixty-four (64) page ten (10) year booklet.

This review only extends to applications within Nigeria while applications by Nigerians in diaspora remain unaffected at One Hundred and Fifty United States Dollars (\$150) for Thirty-Two (32) page with five (5) year validity, and Two Hundred and Thirty United States Dollars (\$230) for the Sixty-four (64) page ten (10) year booklet.

South Africa

SOUTH AFRICA INTRODUCES NEW ENTRY AND EXIT STAMP AT ALL PORTS

South Africa introduced new border control procedures effective August 2025. The new process withdrew the old stamps and introduced entry and exit stamps at all ports of entry across the country including airports, land border posts and seaports. The new stamp has a unique number linked to its allocated officer to aid tracking.

This change is part of a wider border-management modernization program aimed at strengthening South Africa's ability to monitor cross-border movement, reduce fraudulent entries, improve compliance with immigration rules; **enhance border security** by creating a clearer audit trail of entries and exits, supporting the detection of irregular stays or re-entries; and **improve verification of travel documentation**.

Travelers entering South Africa for tourism, business, work, or transit, are required to have their passport reflect the updated entry/exit markings, in addition to **double-checking their stamps** when entering and exiting the country to ensure they are accurately recorded and reflect the correct category of travel.

Senegal

SENEGAL LAUNCHES RECIPROCAL E-VISA SYSTEM

As of August 1, 2025, Senegal implemented a reciprocal e-Visa system targeting citizens of countries that require visas to Senegal, specifically non-Africans. The policy is based on a principle of reciprocity such that citizens of countries that mandate Senegalese to obtain visas to their country, will have to obtain one to enter Senegal. In addition, affected applicants are required to make advance payment.

Although the government has not yet released the official list of affected states, countries such as France, the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and China are expected to fall under the new regime, as all currently require Senegalese nationals to obtain visas before entry.

Ghana

GHANA PROPELS IMPLEMENTATION OF DIGITAL BORDER PLATFORM AND ELECTRONIC VISA ROLLOUT

Ghana has announced its plans to accelerate the roll-out of its electronic visa system on August 4, 2025. The electronic visa (e-Visa) system was launched as part of a wider program to modernize border management and strengthen national security.

The initiative follows the introduction of a digital border control system and e-gates at the Kotoka International Airport that allows biometric and facial immigration checks.

While detailed operational guidelines for the e-Visa have yet to be released, its acceleration signals a strategic shift toward digital- first immigration services in Ghana, aligning the country with international best practices in border management.

North America

Mexico

INTRODUCTION OF UPDATED GUIDELINES FOR VISA ISSUANCE

Mexico has introduced changes to its immigration rules. The new guidelines - General Guidelines for Visa Issuance (Lineamientos Generales para la Expedición de Visas)- set out a framework for the further adoption of digital procedures in immigration processes and a new electronic visa (e-Visa) system category. Furthermore, individuals who hold passports of countries not excluded from obtaining Mexican visas, will have to follow a digital process to apply for tourists or short-term visitor visas to Mexico, same as candidates applying for residency.

The e-Visa process will be fully digital, eliminating the need for consular appointments or paper-based applications. The visa do not permit employment.

Another notable introduction is the adoption of the Unidad de Medida y Actualización (UMA) (in English 'Measurement and Update Unit'), as the acceptable form of proving economic solvency. Using UMA applicants prove economic solvency using monthly income or savings/investments balances as opposed to minimum salary threshold. Moreso, the new guidelines increased the multiples of UMA required to qualify.

Additionally, applicants eligible to apply for Permanent Residency visa without first holding Temporary Residency are retirees/pensioners. Also, Temporary Residents may apply to upgrade to Permanent Residency only after four consecutive years.

United States

FURTHER DIRECTIVE ON SOCIAL MEDIA MONITORING REQUIREMENT FOR APPLICANTS

The United States (US) has commenced the full implantation of social media screening for affected applicants.





Recently, the US issued another notice with further directive requiring all affected applicants are to list all social media usernames or handles of every platform they used in the last five (5) years when completing the DS-160 application form. Applicants who omit social media information stand of risk of having their visa denied and rendered ineligible for future visas.

VISA BOND PILOT PROGRAM FOR MALAWI AND ZAMBIA

The United States has introduced a visa bond pilot program that will require certain travellers from Malawi and Zambia to post refundable bonds before receiving a visitor visa taking effect August 20, 2025. This measure is grounded in INA Section 221(g)(3) and follows the Department of Homeland Security's FY2023 Overstay Report, which identified high B1/B2 overstay rates among nationals of these countries.

Under the program, eligible individual from these countries applying for U.S. business or tourist visas (B1/B2) must pay bonds of Five Thousand United States Dollars (\$5,000), Ten Thousand United States Dollars (\$10,000), or Fifteen Thousand United States Dollars (\$15,000), as determined at the consular interview. Payments must be made securely through the U.S. Treasury's payment platform using Form I-352 (Immigration Bond). Importantly, the bond does not guarantee visa issuance. Applicants are to initiate payment only required after explicit direction from a consular officer, and funds sent through third-party sites will not be recognized.

Furthermore, visa holders subject to bonds must enter and exit exclusively through designated airports namely Boston Logan (BOS) International Airport, John F. Kennedy (JFK) International Airport, or Washington Dulles (IAD) International Airport, failure to do so may result in denial of entry or inappropriate registration of departure. The full bond amount will be refunded if the traveller complies with all terms of the visa status and visa bond, including departing on or before their authorized stay, never using the visa, or is denied admission at a port of entry. However, bonds will be forfeited if the traveller overstays, fails to depart, or attempts to adjust their status (including by seeking asylum). Compliance determinations will be made by the Department of Homeland Security, with USCIS handling breach cases.

INTERVIEW WAIVER ELIGIBILITY FOR NONIMMIGRANT VISAS

Effective September 2, 2025, the U.S. Department of state updated categories of applicants eligible for interview waivers in nonimmigrant visa applications. Going forward, nearly all applicants including minors under fourteen (14) and individuals over seventy-nine (79) will be required to attend an in-person interview with a consular officer.

Exceptions remain for diplomats and officials under visa categories A, C-3, G, NATO or TECRO, and TECRO E-1, as well as for certain applicants renewing a full validity B-1/B-2 visa or Border Crossing Card/Foil within 12 months of expiration provided they meet strict conditions (e.g., applying in their country of residence, no prior visa refusals, and no apparent or potential ineligibility).

Notwithstanding, consular officers may still require in-person interviews on a case-by-case basis for any reason.

This policy update supersedes the Interviewer Waiver Update of February 18, 2025, and reflects a broader tightening of U.S. visa vetting procedures. Consular officers retain discretion to require in-person interviews on a case-by-case basis.

UNITED STATES INTRODUCES NEW USCIS FILING FEES UNDER HR-1 RECONCILIATION BILL

On July 22, 2025, U.S. citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) published a Federal Register notice announcing a series of new mandatory filing fees for certain immigration benefits, following legislation enacted under the One Big Beautiful Bill Act, Public Law 119-21, 139 Stat. 72 (HR-1).

Effective August 21, 2025, USCIS will reject any application or petition that is not accompanied by the new required payments. These surcharges apply across multiple humanitarian and special categories, including asylum, parole, Temporary Protected Status (TPS), and Special Immigrant Juvenile (SIJ) cases.

Unlike existing USCIS filing charges most of these new fees cannot be waived. They include:

- **Asylum (Form I-589):** One Hundred United States Dollars (\$100) filing fee plus One Hundred United States Dollars (\$100) annually while pending.

- **Asylum-related work permits "Employment Authorization Document" (Form I-765, c) (8):** Five Hundred and Fifty United States Dollars (\$550) for the first card, Two Hundred and Seventy-Five United States Dollars (\$275) for renewals (on top of existing fees).
- **Parole-based work permits:** Five Hundred and Fifty United States Dollars (\$550) for initial card, Two Hundred and Seventy-Five United States Dollars (\$275) for renewal.
- **TPS (Form I-821):** Five Hundred United States Dollars (\$500) \$500 surcharge, bringing total costs to Eighty United States Dollars (\$80) waivable fees.
- **SIJ petitions (Form I-360):** Two Hundred and Fifty United States Dollars (\$250) new fee (previously no charge).

USCIS emphasized that these amounts will be adjusted annually for inflation. The agency also published clear payment instructions and consequences of nonpayment, including rejection of filings.

These moves fits into the broader Trump administration immigration strategy, marked by higher costs, tighter eligibility rules, and expanded enforcement measures. For many migrants including asylum seekers and vulnerable populations, the fee increases represent a significant new financial burden.

LIMITATION TO LOCATION FOR IMMIGRANT VISA INTERVIEWS

The United States Department of State announced that effective November 1, 2025, applicants for immigrant visa are now required to apply for interview in the designated consular district within their area of residence, or their country of nationality. Residents of countries where visa operations were suspended are required to apply at the designated immigrant visa processing post or country of nationality. Accordingly, applicants can no longer choose third-country posts for visa interviews with limited exceptions extending to cases like emergencies.

South America

South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands

INTRODUCTION OF ENTRY PERMITS REQUIREMENT FOR WORK OR VISIT

The Government of South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands (GSGSSI) has announced as of August 11, 2025, applicants can now apply and obtain Entry Permits to visit or work in the territories.

The new electronic permit is pegged at Two Hundred Pounds (£200) for visitors and gratis for work permits. Applicants will need apply at least fourteen (14) days prior to arrival through a web-based portal. Visitor permits will be valid for thirty (30) days, while work permits will extend to twelve (12) months and both permits are extendable for an additional period of thirty (30) days for visitors, and six (6) months for work permits.

Interested applicants will have to provide documentation including health insurance, while applicants for work permits will have to provide details of the contract or other arrangement under which the applicant proposes to work in the Territories.

This initiative underscores GSGSSI's commitment to aligning tourism and research with a sustainable policy approach fitting for one of the Earth's most remote and ecologically important regions.

Middle East

Oman

GOLDEN VISA PROGRAM LAUNCH

Oman launched a new golden visa programme for investors effective August 31, 2025. The golden visa is designed to attract and retain foreign investors, entrepreneurs, and skilled professionals, providing a retirement route to qualified applicants. Individuals can become eligible the ten (10) year Golden visa by investing at least or buying property worth Five Hundred Thousand Omani Rial (500,000 OMR) or hire 50 Omani nationals; or the five (5) year Golden visa by investing at least or buying property worth





Two Hundred and Fifty Thousand Omani Rial (250,000 OMR); or the Retirement visa by showing a fixed monthly income of at least Four Thousand Omani Rial (4,000 OMR). The ten (10) year visa grants an electronic residency. All visas are renewable and permit employment and study without a local sponsor, in addition to full rights to own property and businesses.

A main applicant can sponsor spouse, children under twenty-five (25) years and dependent parents.

The scheme provides long-term residency rights, pathways to business ownership, and greater legal certainty for foreign nationals seeking to establish a strong presence in Oman.

While detailed eligibility thresholds and investment categories are still being finalized, Oman has indicated that successful applicants will enjoy renewable multi-year residency, the ability to own one hundred percent (100%) of businesses, and preferential treatment in certain government initiatives.

This move aligns Oman with other Gulf states, such as the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar, which have recently expanded long-term visa schemes to attract foreign talent and investment. It reflects a broader regional trend of using residency incentives to secure both capital inflows and human resources needed to build knowledge-based economies.

Asia

Japan

KISARAZU CITY DESIGNATED AS "HOMETOWN" FOR NIGERIAN MIGRANTS

On August 22, 2025, the Japanese government designated Kisarazu City as the official "hometown" for Nigerians wishing to live and work in Japan. Under the new arrangement, the Japanese Government will introduce a special visa category for highly skilled workers, as well as artisans and other blue-collar workers willing to upskill.

This designation is part of Japan's broader strategy, which was announced at 9th Tokyo International Conference for African Development (TICAD9), to enhance people-to-people exchanges, support regional revitalization, and counter demographic challenges such as population decline and aging. By formalizing ties between specific cities and African communities, Japan is creating localized hubs for migration and collaboration.

Further directive on the visa system will be issued in due course.

Vietnam

IMMIGRATION RULES REFORMS: EXPANSION OF VISA-FREE TRAVEL TO TWELVE (12) ADDITIONAL EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

Vietnam has broadened its visa exemption policy, granting citizens of twelve (12) more European countries visa-free access for tourism stays of up to Forty-five (45) days.

This initiative, was issued under the Vietnam's Tourism Development Stimulus Scheme in its Government Resolution No. 229/NQ-CP dated August 12, 2025, is designed to run through from August 15, 2025 to August 14, 2028.

The countries now eligible for visa free entry include Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and Switzerland joining earlier beneficiaries such as Germany, France, Italy, Spain, the U.K., Russia, Japan, South Korea, Denmark, Sweden and Norway.

Vietnam also promulgated Decree No. 221/2025/ND-CP that provides visa exemption for foreign nationals in special categories that are prioritized for Vietnam's socio-economic development including official guest of top Vietnamese leaders, academics, experts, scientists, investors and executives among others, effective from August 15, 2025. Eligible candidates will receive a special visa exemption card allowing multiple entries into Vietnam within the validity period. The exemption period will not exceed five (5) years and must be at least thirty (30) days less than the passport's remaining validity

Europe

European Union

EU LAUNCHES BIOMETRIC ENTRY/EXIT SYSTEM (EES)

The European Union is set to roll out its new Entry/Exit System (EES), a landmark digital border control measure replacing traditional passport stamping with biometric data collection is launching. The Entry/Exit System (EES) is an automated IT system for registering all non-EU nationals (excluding nationals of Iceland, Norway, Liechtenstein and Switzerland) travelling for a short stay of up to Ninety (90) days, each time they cross the external borders of any of the European countries using the system. The EES applies to non-EU nationals who do not need a visa to travel for a short stay in the European countries.

From October 12, 2025, the EES will be introduced progressively across all borders of the Schengen Area including Iceland, Norway, Liechtenstein and Switzerland. The six-month rollout will conclude once the system is fully operational by April 10, 2026, at which point manual stamping will cease.

Conclusion

Immigration systems worldwide are undergoing rapid change, balancing security, digital modernization, and economic growth. While many countries are expanding access through e-Visas, digital border tools, and investor residency schemes, others are tightening oversight with visa bonds, biometric tracking, and even social media vetting.

For Nigerians and other migrants, this creates both opportunities and risks: more pathways for travel, study, and investment in some regions, but stricter scrutiny and compliance requirements in others. Immigration today is shaped not just by paperwork, but by wider political, technological, and security priorities—making informed, country-specific strategies essential.

This alert is for general information only. It is not offered as advice on any particular matter, whether legal, procedural or otherwise.

Foreign currency values are subject to fluctuations, and it is advisable to verify current rates for updated fees.

For additional information, please contact Bloomfield LP Email- immigration@bloomfield-law.com or your usual contact at Bloomfield LP.

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