Bloomfield LP

WORLD IMMIGRATION BRIEF

July 2026

GLOBAL IMMIGRATION TRENDS - July 2026

Introduction

Global immigration policies continue to evolve as countries introduce reforms to strengthen border security, expand digital immigration systems, facilitate international mobility and attract foreign investment. This edition highlights key developments including updates to visa regimes, work permit programmes, residence pathways and travel requirements that may impact individuals and businesses.

Africa

Nigeria

NIGERIA ANNOUNCES THE DISENGAGEMENT OF ONLINE INTEGRATED SOLUTIONS

The Nigeria Immigration Service ("**NIS**") issued a Public Notice dated July 9, 2026 (the "**Notice**") announcing the immediate disengagement of Online Integrated Solutions ("OIS"), the service provider previously responsible for receiving and processing Nigerian visa applications on behalf of the Nigerian Mission in the United States of America ("**USA**").

Following the immediate discontinuation of OIS, visa applicants in the USA can no longer submit visa applications through the Visa Application and Submission Centres operated by OIS.

Instead, all visa applications must now be submitted directly to one of the following Nigerian diplomatic missions in the USA:

- The Embassy of Nigeria, Washington, D.C.;
- The Consulate General of Nigeria, New York; or
- The Consulate General of Nigeria, Atlanta.

Accordingly, individuals and organisations planning travel to Nigeria should take note of this development and make the necessary arrangements.

NIGERIA INTRODUCES A MANDATORY HEALTH DECLARATION REQUIREMENT FOR TRAVEL

On May 30, 2026, following recent health advisories concerning Ebola outbreaks in other African Countries, the Federal Ministry of Health and the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (the "NCDC") issued a directive requiring all international airlines operating flights into Nigeria to ensure that arriving passengers complete a mandatory health declaration before entering the country. The directive forms part of the Government's enhanced disease surveillance and prevention measures at Nigerian airports.

All passengers arriving in Nigeria, including Nigerian citizens, foreign nationals, officials or diplomats, are required to complete the NCDC Health Declaration Form before boarding their flight to Nigeria. Compliance with this requirement is mandatory and travellers are strongly advised to complete this requirement before departure to avoid delays during immigration clearance, health screening and entry processing upon arrival.

The Health Declaration Form is accessible on the official NCDC portal at http://healthapp.ncdc.gov.ng/ .

Upon successful completion and submission of the form, passengers will receive, via email, a PDF certificate bearing a unique QR Code. A copy of this certificate, whether in electronic or printed form must remain readily available for presentation to the Port Health Officers upon arrival in Nigeria.

Please note that all travellers who complete the Health Declaration form will be placed under public health follow-up for a period of twenty-one (21)-day after arrival in Nigeria. During this period, the surveillance team will contact travellers by phone, SMS, or in-person to confirm health status. Travellers should therefore ensure that the contact details and addresses provided in the declaration form are accurate to enable the surveillance team to reach them.

NIGERIA ADOPTS ICAO E-PASSPORT VERIFICATION SYSTEM

In a press statement released on July 15, 2026, the NIS announced that Nigeria has adopted the International Civil Aviation Organization (**"ICAO"**) e-passport verification system.

The development enables Nigerian electronic passports to be authenticated in real time by immigration authorities more seamlessly at border control points across ICAO Public Key Directory (**"PKD"**) member states. Additionally, it enhances the security, integrity and international recognition of Nigeria's travel documents.

The adoption also strengthens border management by facilitating faster identity verification, reducing the risk of passport fraud and improving compliance with international aviation and travel security standards. The adoption further highlights Nigeria's commitment to aligning its passport and border control systems with global best practices.

South Africa

SOUTH AFRICA NOW REQUIRES DIGITALTRAVELLER DECLARATIONS

Effective July 1, 2026, all travellers entering or departing South Africa through air, land, sea, and rail ports of entry are required to submit an online Traveller Declaration before travelling.

The digital declaration system is intended to strengthen data integration across government agencies, support inter-agency risk management, and enhance the monitoring of cross-border activities, while simplifying the declaration process for travellers.

It should be noted that travellers will not be denied entry into or departure from South Africa solely because they have not completed a declaration before arriving at a port of entry. Travellers who are unable to complete the declaration before travel will be assisted by South African Revenue Service (**"SARS"**) Customs officials, and may use self-service declaration terminals at ports of entry . However, SARS encourages travellers to complete the declaration in advance to ensure a seamless and efficient border-crossing experience.

SOUTH AFRICA CONFIRMS VISA-FREE ENTRY FOR CITIZENS OF TWENTY-TWO (22) AFRICAN COUNTRIES

South Africa has released a new list of African countries eligible for visa-free entry. The list comprises of twenty-two (22) African countries whose citizens will be allowed visa-free entry for short-term visits.

Under the country's updated visa exemption policy, eligible travellers may enter South Africa without obtaining a visa in advance for stays ranging from thirty (30) to ninety (90) days, depending on their nationality and the type of passport they hold.

The duration of visa-free stay varies by country, and travellers must continue to satisfy South Africa's entry requirements, including holding a valid passport and complying with applicable immigration conditions.

Cape Verde

CAPE VERDE CANCELS VISA-ON-ARRIVAL FOR CITIZENS OF TWENTY-EIGHT (28) AFRICAN COUNTRIES

Cape Verde has discontinued its visa-on-arrival programme for citizens of twenty-eight (28) African countries, requiring affected travellers to obtain a visa before travelling unless they qualify for another exemption. The change forms part of the country's efforts to strengthen border management and align its immigration procedures with updated entry and security requirements.

The new policy affects travellers who previously relied on obtaining a visa upon arrival and means they must now apply for the appropriate entry authorisation before departure. The countries are Algeria, Botswana, Burundi, Chad, Comoros, the Republic of Congo, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Gabon, Lesotho, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritania, Namibia, the Central African Republic, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

However, nationals of ECOWAS Member States continue to enjoy visa-free entry to Cape Verde under the bloc's free movement arrangements, subject to applicable entry conditions.

Chad

CHAD TO ABOLISH VISA REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL AFRICAN NATIONALS

Effective January 1, 2027, Chad will abolish visa requirements for citizens of all African countries. The announcement was made by the President of Chad, Mahamat Idriss Déby Itno, at the Africa Water Forum held in Chad, positioning the country among the latest African states to adopt measures aimed at enhancing continental mobility.

Under the new policy, holders of valid African passports will be permitted to enter Chad without obtaining a visa for eligible short-term visits. The measure is intended to promote regional integration, tourism, trade and investment.

The development is consistent with broader continental initiatives under the African Union's Agenda 2063 and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), which seek to facilitate the free movement of people and deepen economic integration across Africa.

Tanzania

TANZANIA CONFIRMS VISA-FREE ENTRY FOR CITIZENS OF TWENTY-ONE (21) AFRICAN COUNTRIES

Tanzania has published the official list of twenty-one (21) African countries whose citizens may enter the country without obtaining a visa.

The visa exemption applies to nationals of Angola, Botswana, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, The Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Seychelles, South Africa, South Sudan, Eswatini, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The development reflects Tanzania's continued commitment to promoting regional integration, tourism and intra-African trade, while facilitating easier cross-border travel for eligible African nationals.

Citizens of countries not included on the exemption list, including Nigeria, remain subject to Tanzania's applicable visa requirements.

It should also be noted that the visa exemption is valid only for short-term visits of up to **ninety (90) days** and is limited to purposes such as tourism, holidays, and family visits. Travellers intending to remain in Tanzania beyond this period or for other purposes, including employment or long-term residence, must obtain the appropriate immigration authorisation.

Ethiopia

ETHIOPIA LAUNCHES TEN-YEAR GOLDEN VISA PROGRAMME FOR FOREIGN INVESTORS

Ethiopia's Immigration and Citizenship Service (ICS) has launched a ten (10)-year Golden Visa programme aimed at attracting high-value foreign investment and supporting long-term economic growth. The programme grants eligible foreign investors a ten (10)-year residence permit, allowing them to live, work and conduct business in Ethiopia with streamlined immigration procedures and expedited entry and exit services.

The Ethiopian Government has indicated that the Golden Visa carries a processing fee of Ten Thousand United States Dollars (US$10,000). In addition, applicants are expected to satisfy substantial investment thresholds to qualify for the programme. Current guidance indicates that applicants will generally be required to invest at least Ten Million United States Dollars (US$10,000,000.00) in Ethiopia. However, the minimum investment threshold may be reduced to Five Million United States Dollars (US$5,000,00.00) where the investment generates significant local employment. Detailed implementation guidelines are expected to be issued as the programme is rolled out.

The initiative forms part of Ethiopia's broader strategy to attract foreign direct investment and improve the ease of doing business. It also complements Ethiopia's wider immigration reforms, including the introduction of new long-term residence and property-linked visa options for foreign investors.

North America

United States of America

SUPREME COURT UPHOLDS BIRTHRIGHT CITIZENSHIP

On June 30, 2026, the USA) Supreme Court, , issued a decision upholding birthright citizenship, confirming that children born in the USA continue to acquire U.S citizenship at birth.

The Court held that children born in the USA acquire citizenship regardless of whether their parents are present in the country unlawfully or are in the USA on temporary basis. This ruling thus invalidates Executive Order 14160, which sought to restrict birthright citizenship for certain children born to non-U.S. citizen parents.

The Court further reaffirmed that birthright citizenship is rooted in the longstanding legal principle of jus soli (citizenship by birthplace) and emphasized that the Fourteenth Amendment to the US Constitution was adopted to guarantee citizenship based on birth within the United States and thus found no basis for any restrictions to birthright citizenship in the text of the Fourteenth Amendment.

USA ENDS "DURATION OF STATUS" FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

On July 17, 2026, the U.S Department of Homeland Security (**"DHS"**), , announced a regulatory change that will end the "duration of status" framework for several non-immigrant visa categories, including F-1 students. It is scheduled to take effect on September 17, 2026.

Under the new rule, most F-1 academic students will be admitted to the USA for a fixed period of up to four (4) years with a grace period of thirty (30) days, as opposed to being permitted to remain for as long as they maintain compliance with their academic program as was obtainable previously. Individuals requiring additional time will need to file an Extension of Stay application with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (**"USCIS"**).

According to DHS, the rule is intended to strengthen national security, improve immigration compliance, reduce visa overstays, and enhance programme integrity.

USA MAKES VISA BOND PROGRAMME PERMANENT FOR CERTAIN B1/B2 VISA APPLICANTS

Effective August 3, 2026, the U.S. Department of State made permanent its visa bond programme for certain B1/B2 business and tourist visa applicants from designated countries, including Nigeria.

Under the programme, consular officers may require eligible applicants to post a refundable bond of Ten Thousand United States Dollars (US$10,000.00), Fifteen Thousand United States Dollars (US$15,000.00) or up to Twenty Thousand United States Dollars (US$20,000.00) as a condition of visa issuance.

The bond requirement is not automatic and will be applied on a case-by-case basis at the visa interview, taking into account factors such as overstay risk, identity verification and travel-document security. The bond is refundable where the traveller complies with the terms of admission and departs the USA within the authorised period.

Canada

THE QUEBEC EXPERIENCE PROGRAM HAS BEEN TEMPORARILY REOPENED

Canada announced that the Quebec Experience Program (the **"QEP"**), which officially closed on November 19, 2025, has been reinstated to run from July 2, 2026, to July 2, 2028, with applications accepted in staged intake periods to align with Quebec's immigration capacity.

The first intake period will run from July 2, 2026, to October 21, 2026, and will be limited to individuals who had already obtained a qualifying Quebec diploma (e.g. bachelor's, master's, PhD, technical diploma, or a vocational diploma of at least 1,800 hours) or eligible work experience as of November 19, 2025, when the program was abolished.

The requirements for applicants under the graduate stream are as follows:

a. they must be residing in Quebec at the time of application;
b. they must have primarily studied in Quebec for at least half of their program;
c. they must have obtained their diploma within the previous three years;
d. they must meet French language requirements (level 5 written and level 7 oral);
e. they must not be subject to a return-home scholarship obligation.

For temporary foreign workers, the requirements are as follows:

a. they must have accumulated at least two (2) years of work experience in Quebec in Training, Education, Experience and Responsibility (TEER) categories 0 to 3;

b. they must hold an eligible position and meet a minimum oral French level of 7.

Additionally, all applicants must settle and work in Quebec, demonstrate knowledge of Quebec values, and show financial self-sufficiency for themselves and any accompanying family members.

It should be noted that during this time, invitations under the Skilled Worker Selection Program (PSTQ) will be reduced and focused on candidates not eligible for the QEP, such as those in lower TEER occupations or with less work experience. From November 2026, PSTQ invitations are expected to resume based on QEP application volumes.

Asia

Japan

JAPAN RAISES ENTRY VISA FEES

Effective July 1, 2016, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan has increased entry visa fees by four hundred percent (400%).

The visa fee for a single-entry visa has been increased from Three Thousand Japanese Yen (JPY 3,000) (equivalent to approximately US$18.00) to Fifteen Thousand Japanese Yen (JPY 15,000) (equivalent to approximately US$91.00). For a multiple-entry visa, the fees have been increased from Six Thousand Japanese Yen (JPY 6,000) (equivalent to approximately US$36.00) to Thirty Thousand Japanese Yen (JPY 30,000) (equivalent to approximately US$183.00).

Alongside the changes in short-term visa fees, Japan has also enacted laws to raise the administrative caps for long-term residency statuses, with some permanent residence application fees set to rise to Two Hundred Thousand Japanese Yen (JPY 200,000) (equivalent to approximately US$1,221.00).

The Japanese government stated the increase takes into consideration inflation, foreign exchange rate fluctuations, and aligns visa costs more closely with Western standards.

South Korea

SOUTH KOREA OFFICIALLY LAUNCHES THE DIGITAL NOMAD (WORKATION) VISA

On July 7, 2026, the Ministry of Justice, South Korea, announced the launch of the Digital Nomad (Workation) Visa (F-1-D) which became officially available on June 30, 2026. This official launch follows a pilot program that ran from January 2024 to May 2026.

The official launch comes with revised and more relaxed eligibility requirements than those applied during the pilot programme to make the workation visa more attractive.

To qualify, applicants must meet the following requirements:

a. be at least eighteen (18) years old;

b. have been employed by a foreign company or owned a foreign business for more than one (1) year;

c. must also be able to perform their work remotely while residing in Korea;

d. demonstrate an annual income equivalent to at least twice Korea's Gross National Income (GNI) per capita, which is approximately Sixty-Five Thousand, Eight Hundred United States Dollars (US$65,800.00) or Thirty-Six Thousand, Nine Hundred and Sixty-Three United States Dollars (US$36,963.00) where resident outside Seoul, Incheon and Gyeonggi Province after tax deductions;

e. maintain a clean criminal record; and

f. hold a medical insurance coverage of at least Seventy-Five Thousand United States Dollars (US$75,000.00) for medical treatment and repatriation through out the period of stay in Korea

It should be noted that the revised rules also extends the maximum permitted stay from two (2) years to three (3) years, allowing eligible foreign nationals to live and work remotely from South Korea for a longer period. Additionally, the visa allows spouses and dependent children to accompany the principal applicant.[TLA1.1]

Singapore

SINGAPORE GRANTS VISA-FREE ENTRY FOR FORTY-FOUR (44) AFRICAN COUNTRIES

Following the coming into force of the Immigration (Exemption from Singapore Visa) Order 2026 on July 1, 2026, citizens of forty-four (44) African countries are eligible for visa-free entry for short-term visits.

Under the updated framework, nationals of these countries may enter Singapore without obtaining a visa in advance, subject to meeting the country's standard immigration requirements, including holding a valid passport, demonstrating sufficient funds, and possessing onward or return travel arrangements.

The clarification further confirms that nationals of the following African countries continue to require a visa before travelling to Singapore: Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Mali, Morocco, Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Tunisia.

Thailand

THAILAND REVISES VISA-FREE ENTRY FOR SOUTH AFRICA, MAURITIUS AND SEYCHELLES

On July 14, 2026, the Thai Cabinet approved a revised country-specific visa framework setting out nationalities eligible for thirty (30)-day visa-free entry, fifteen (15)-day visa-free entry, and Visa on Arrival.

Under the revised framework, South African passport holders will be eligible for thirty (30)-day visa-free entry, while nationals of Mauritius and Seychelles will enjoy fifteen (15)-day visa-free entry for tourism purposes.

The revised framework replaces the previous sixty (60)-day visa exemption with country-specific visa privileges based on the principles of reciprocity, security considerations and bilateral relations.

The revised rules will take effect fifteen (15) days after the relevant Ministry of Interior notifications are published in the Royal Gazette.

Europe

Finland

FINLAND UPDATES CITIZENSHIP REQUIREMENT FROM 2027

The Finnish Parliament has approved amendments to the Citizenship Act (the **"Act"**), introducing stricter requirements for obtaining Finnish citizenship. The new rules will take effect on January 1, 2027, but will only apply to applications submitted from March 1, 2027.

Under the amended Act, applicants will now be required to demonstrate sufficient knowledge of the Finnish society and a strong level of integration by passing a new citizenship test. Alternatively, applicants may qualify by completing the Finnish or Swedish matriculation examination or by obtaining a higher education degree in Finland in Finnish or Swedish.

The test will be administered by the Finnish Immigration Service. The test will be based on standardized content to ensure consistency and transparency and will assess knowledge of Finnish laws, fundamental and human rights, history and culture, and principles of equality, including gender equality.

The test requirement will apply to applicants aged eighteen (18) to sixty-four (64) and may be taken in either Finnish or Swedish. It should be noted that although this new requirement is effective from January 1, 2026, applications submitted on or before February 28, 2027, will be processed under the current legislation, while those submitted from March 1, 2027, onward will be assessed under the updated rules.

Belgium

BELGIUM MAKES CHANGES TO SINGLE PERMIT APPLICATION

Effective September 1, 2026, Belgium will introduce a new administrative fee applicable to employers hiring non-European Economic Area (**"EEA"**) and non-Swiss nations in the region. An administrative fee of One Hundred and Eighty Euros (€180.00) (equivalent to approximately US$204.00) will apply to all Single Permit applications.

The new fee will apply to both initial Single Permit applications and renewal requests and is intended to cover the administrative costs associated with processing the labour market component of the application by the government.

The new administrative fee is separate from the existing federal retribution fee, which will continue to apply to the residence permit component of a Single Permit application. Accordingly, employers submitting Single Permit applications from September 1, 2026, will be required to pay both the federal retribution fee and the new administrative fee, where applicable.

Please note that this measure does not apply to work permit.

Montenegro

MONTENEGRO INTRODUCES SEASONAL VISA-FREE ENTRY FOR ELIGIBLE UAE RESIDENTS

Montenegro has introduced a seasonal visa-free entry programme for eligible United Arab Emirates (**UAE**) residents to make travel easier during the 2026 summer season. The temporary measure is set to continue until October 1, 2026, and is designed to boost tourism and strengthen travel links between the UAE and Montenegro.

Under this arrangement, foreign nationals holding a valid UAE residence permit may enter Montenegro without obtaining a visa for stays of up to ten (10) days, provided they satisfy the prescribed conditions. Eligible travellers must have held their UAE residence permit continuously for at least three (3) years, travel on a direct flight from the UAE to Montenegro, present proof of a confirmed tourist arrangement or accommodation, and hold a valid return or onward ticket.

The visa exemption is available only for the specified seasonal period and does not replace Montenegro's general visa policy. It should be noted that UAE nationals continue to enjoy visa-free access to Montenegro for up to ninety (90) days, while the new measure extends a temporary travel facilitation to qualifying UAE residents of other nationalities.

The initiative is expected to encourage tourism from the UAE by simplifying entry requirements for long-term residents and providing greater flexibility for leisure travel during the peak summer season.

Spain

SPAIN ANNOUNCES VISA-FREE ENTRY FOR CITIZENS OF EIGHT (8) AFRICAN COUNTRIES

In early July 2026, Spain announced that citizens of Botswana, Cabo Verde, Eswatini, Lesotho, Mauritius, Namibia, Rwanda and Seychelles will be eligible to travel visa-free to Spain and the wider Schengen Area for short stays of up to ninety (90) days within any one hundred and eighty (180)-day period. The initiative is aimed at promoting tourism, facilitating business travel and strengthening diplomatic, economic and cultural ties between Spain and the beneficiary African countries.

Under this arrangement, eligible travellers will no longer be required to obtain a Schengen visa before undertaking short-term visits for purposes such as tourism, business meetings, family visits or other non-remunerated activities. However, they will remain subject to the standard Schengen entry conditions, including the requirement to hold a valid passport, demonstrate the purpose and duration of their visit, provide evidence of sufficient financial means where required, and satisfy border authorities that they meet the conditions for entry.

The new visa-free arrangment reflects Spain's continued efforts to enhance mobility and deepen engagement with selected African countries. Citizens of countries not covered by the new measure will continue to require a Schengen visa for short-term travel to Spain.

Ireland

IRELAND TEMPORARILY PERMITS INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL WITH EXPIRED RESIDENCE PERMIT CARDS

Effective July 13 to August 31, 2026, Ireland has introduced a temporary travel concession allowing certain non-European Economic Area ("EEA") nationals to travel internationally using an expired Irish Residence Permit ("IRP") card, provided they submitted their renewal application before the card expired.

The temporary measure was announced by the Minister for Justice, and is in response to processing delays in IRP renewals. To benefit from the concession, eligible travellers must carry their recently expired IRP card, proof that their renewal application was submitted before expiry, and a printed Travel Confirmation Notice issued by the Irish Immigration Service Delivery ("ISD").

Travellers are also advised to check with their airline before departure and confirm that any transit country will recognise the temporary arrangement. The concession does not apply where the renewal application was submitted after the IRP card had expired.

Italy

ITALY OPENS APPLICATIONS UNDER THE 2026 DECRETO FLUSSI PROGRAMME

Italy has officially opened applications under the 2026 Decreto Flussi, its annual work permit quota programme for non-EU nationals. The programme authorises the entry of foreign workers in 2026 across seasonal, non-seasonal and self-employed categories to address labour shortages in key sectors of the Italian economy.

Eligible sectors include agriculture, tourism and hospitality, construction, transport and logistics, manufacturing, healthcare, domestic and care services, among others. Successful applicants will receive a work authorisation (nulla osta), enabling them to apply for a national work visa at the relevant Italian consulate before travelling to Italy.

Applications must be submitted online by Italian employers through the Ministry of the Interior's portal during the designated "click day" windows, with quotas allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.

Notably, Nigeria is among the countries whose nationals are eligible to apply for non-seasonal work permits under the 2026 programme.

Middle East

United Arab Emirates

UAE INTRODUCES VISA-ON-ARRIVAL FOR ELIGIBLE KENYAN PASSPORT HOLDERS

Effective June 25, 2026, the United Arab Emirates (the **"UAE"**) introduced a visa-on-arrival scheme for eligible Kenyan passport holders. The new policy allows qualifying Kenyan nationals to obtain a visa upon arrival at UAE ports of entry, eliminating the need to secure a visa before departure.

Under the new arrangement, Kenyan citizens holding ordinary passports, together with their accompanying family members, may obtain either a fourteen (14) day visa on arrival, which may be extended once, or a sixty (60) day visa on arrival, provided they hold a valid residence permit issued by the United States, the United Kingdom, any European Union Member State, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Singapore or South Korea.

It should be noted that the policy does not apply to all Kenyan passport holders. Rather, eligibility is limited to individuals who possess a valid residence permit from one of the aforementioned jurisdictions. Kenyan nationals who do not meet these requirements must continue to obtain a UAE visa through the existing application process before travelling.

The initiative forms part of the UAE's broader efforts to facilitate international mobility and strengthen bilateral relations, trade and investment. It will also simplify travel arrangements and reduce administrative burdens for eligible citizens.

UAE ISSUES CLARIFICATIONS ON THE FIVE-YEAR MULTIPLE-ENTRY TOURIST VISA FOR ALL NATIONALITIES

The General Directorate of Identity and Foreigners Affairs – Dubai (**"GDRFA Dubai"**) has clarified the requirements and conditions for the UAE's five (5) year multiple-entry tourist visa, which allows visitors of all nationalities to enter the country multiple times without the need for a local sponsor or host.

The visa enables holders to make multiple entries over a five (5) year period. Holders may remain in the country for up to ninety **(90) days on each visit**, extendable for a further ninety **(90) days**, provided the total period of stay does not exceed one hundred and eighty **(180) days in a year**.

To qualify, applicants must hold a passport valid for at least six (6) months, maintain a bank balance of at least Four Thousand United States Dollars (**US$4,000.00**) during the six (6) months preceding the application, obtain valid UAE health insurance, and provide proof of onward or return travel and accommodation. The total application cost is Three Thousand, Seven Hundred and Thirteen UAE Dirhams (Dh3,713) (equivalent to approximately **US$1,011.00**) including visa fees, service charges and a refundable financial guarantee.

The initiative forms part of the UAE's strategy to promote tourism, business travel and long-term visitor mobility by offering greater flexibility to frequent travellers from around the world.

Saudi Arabia

SAUDI ARABIA CONFIRMS EVISA ELIGIBILITY FOR THREE (3) AFRICAN COUNTRIES

Saudi Arabia has confirmed that citizens of Mauritius, Seychelles and South Africa are the only African nationals currently eligible to apply for its electronic tourist visa (eVisa).

The eVisa allows eligible travellers to obtain a one (1)-year, multiple-entry visa permitting stays of up to ninety (90) days for tourism, leisure, family visits, events and Umrah (excluding the Hajj season).

Applications are completed online through Saudi Arabia's official eVisa portal, significantly simplifying the entry process for eligible travellers. Citizens of other African countries, including Nigeria, remain ineligible for the eVisa and must obtain the appropriate visa through the standard consular process.

Oceania

New Zealand

NEW ZEALAND MAKES UPDATES TO SKILLED MIGRANT AND WORK TO RESIDENCE VISA

Effective August 24, 2026, New Zealand will introduce changes to the Skilled Migrant Category (**"SMC"**) and related Work to Residence pathways. These updates include the introduction of two (2) new residence pathways and clarifications on key requirements across the point-based system and Work to Residence routes.

New Pathways

The new pathways are the Trades and Technician pathway and the Skilled Work Experience pathway

The Trades and Technician pathway will apply to applicants holding a relevant Level 4 or higher trade or technical qualification, along with at least four (4) years of directly relevant post-qualification work experience. Additionally, applicants must hold a qualification recognized on the New Zealand Qualifications and Credentials Framework (NZQCF). For New Zealand qualifications, a minimum of one hundred and twenty (120) credits is required, which may be combined across qualifications where relevant. For overseas qualifications, the one hundred and twenty (120)-credit requirement has been removed, although applicants must obtain an International Qualification Assessment (IQA) confirming equivalency to at least a Level 4 New Zealand qualification.

On the other hand, the Skilled Work Experience pathway will be available to applicants who can demonstrate at least five (5) years of directly relevant skilled work experience meeting the pathway criteria.

Clarifications on the point-based SMC Pathway

The clarifications made are as follows:

a. Applicants claiming points for Level 8 or Level 9 qualifications must also hold a supporting bachelor's degree or equivalent, supported by a qualification certificate and academic transcript.

b. For overseas qualifications, an IQA is generally required unless the qualification is listed on the List of Qualifications Exempt from Assessment (LQEA). However, an IQA is not required for the supporting bachelor's degree.

c. Applicants claiming points for a New Zealand master's degree are not required to provide evidence of a bachelor's degree.

d. Applicants must provide robust and independently verifiable evidence of directly relevant experience, and self-employment will not be considered.

e. Applicants will generally be assessed against the wage threshold in place when they begin accumulating their qualifying work experience, rather than any higher threshold introduced at the time of residence application.

NEW ZEALAND UPDATES ENGLISH LANGUAGE TESTING REQUIREMENTS FOR IMMIGRATION APPLICATIONS

Effective July 12, 2026, the Immigration New Zealand (**"INZ"**), accepts only in-person Occupational English Test (**"OET"**) results for immigration applications that require OET as evidence of English language proficiency.

INZ has advised that the change is intended to support the integrity of the testing process, ensure fairness for all candidates, and confirm that test results accurately reflect an individual's English language abilities. Thus, all components of the test must be completed in person at a supervised testing facility.

Applicants who have already completed an at-home OET, or who complete the test on or before July 12, 2026, may continue to use those results for immigration purposes. Applicants taking the OET from July 13, 2026, onwards must complete the test in person at an approved test center.

Australia

AUSTRALIA INTRODUCES AUSTRALIA TRAVEL DECLARATION

In July 2026, the Australian Government introduced the Australia Travel Declaration (**"ATD"**), a new digital platform that will gradually replace the paper Incoming Passenger Card for international travellers entering Australia.

This announcement follows a pilot programme which commenced in October 2024 during which more than four hundred and fifty thousand (450,000) passengers on eligible inbound Qantas flights to Brisbane, Sydney, and Melbourne used the ATD. Following the successful pilot phase, the ATD will be introduced at international airports and seaports across Australia over the next twelve (12) to eighteen (18) months.

The introduction of the ATD forms part of the Australian Government's broader efforts to modernise border processing while maintaining customs, immigration, and biosecurity controls.

Conclusion

The latest developments reflect a continued global focus on digitalisation, enhanced border controls and greater mobility through targeted immigration reforms. As immigration requirements continue to change, individuals and organisations should remain informed and take proactive steps to ensure compliance with applicable entry, residence and work authorisation requirements.

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