

GLOBAL IMMIGRATION TRENDS – October 2026

Introduction

Immigration policies across several jurisdictions continue to change significantly. Governments have responded to public health concerns, tightened compliance and settlement requirements, and expanded measures to attract skilled professionals and investment. Most notably, the spread of the Ebola Virus Disease ("EVD") outbreak beyond the Democratic Republic of the Congo prompted several countries to introduce health declarations, enhanced border screening and, in some cases, entry and visa restrictions. This update highlights the most significant recent developments in global immigration, including public health-related travel measures, mandatory inbound travel insurance, revisions to settlement, residence and family reunification requirements, stricter obligations for sponsoring employers and educational institutions, and the continued expansion of digital immigration services.

Africa

Nigeria

SOUTH AFRICA WAIVES SIXTY (60)-DAY ADVANCE FILING REQUIREMENT FOR CERTAIN VISA APPLICATIONS

On October 2, 2026, South Africa's Minister of Home Affairs, Dr Leon Schreiber, issued Immigration Directive No. 13 of 2026. The Directive grants a blanket waiverof the requirement to submit certain visa extension applications and applications to change of immigration status or visa conditions at least sixty (60) days before the expiry of an existing visa.

Under the previous framework, Regulations 9(8)(c) and 9(5)(a) of the Immigration Regulations, 2014, required such applications to be lodged no later than sixty (60) days before the applicant's current visas expired. Applications filed after that cut-off were often refused on that ground alone, even where the applicant still held a valid visa.

The waiver applies to future applications and to applications already submitted but awaiting adjudication. It also applies to pending appeals against refusals based on the sixty (60)-day requirement. Affected applicants with pending matters may therefore benefit from the waiver without filing a separate request for exemption.

It should be noted that applicants must still maintain valid immigration status, and applications must be submitted before the existing visa expires albeit less than sixty (60) days to expiry.

Kenya

KENYA INTRODUCES MANDATORY INBOUND TRAVEL HEALTH INSURANCE FOR FOREIGN VISITORS

Effective October 5, 2026, the Government of Kenya commenced implementation of a mandatory inbound travel health insurance requirement for eligible foreign nationals entering the country for stays of less than twelve (12) months. The measure, introduced pursuant to section 26(6) of the Social Health Insurance Act, 2023, Regulation 70 of the Social Health Insurance Regulations, 2024, and Gazette Notice No. 11492 of July 30, 2026, is intended to ensure that foreign visitors have access to specified medical and emergency assistance during their stay in Kenya.

Under the new framework, qualifying travellers must obtain valid inbound travel health insurance through the designated government arrangements before entering Kenya.

The prescribed insurance is available through the Electronic Travel Authorization ("**eTA**") application system or the Government's eCitizen insurance portal (the "**Designated System**"). The standard premium is approximately Forty-Four United States Dollars (US$44.00), excluding applicable processing charges, and the insurance provides coverage for ninety (90) days, including multiple entries during its validity period. The policy must provide a minimum cumulative benefit limit of Fifty Thousand United States Dollars (US$50,000.00).

It should be noted that the requirement is not limited to foreign nationals who are required to obtain an eTA. Travellers who are exempt from the eTA requirement are also required to obtain the prescribed insurance unless they qualify for a separate exemption. The exempt categories include Kenyan citizens, persons holding valid Kenyan residence status, nationals of East African Community ("**EAC**") partner states, qualifying diplomatic and official passport holders, asylum seekers and transit passengers who do not enter Kenya.

Although earlier government guidance contemplated the recognition of foreign travel insurance policies meeting prescribed coverage limits, the current implementation arrangements require affected travellers to obtain coverage through the Designated System. Prospective visitors should therefore verify the applicable requirements through Kenya's official eCitizen portal before making travel arrangements.

Tanzania

TANZANIA IMPLEMENTS MANDATORY INBOUND TRAVEL INSURANCE FOR FOREIGN VISITORS

Effective October 1, 2026, Tanzania commenced implementation of a mandatory inbound travel insurance requirement for foreign nationals entering Mainland Tanzania. The measure was introduced pursuant to section 134A of the Insurance Act, Cap. 394, as amended by the Finance Act, 2025, and the Inbound Travel Insurance Regulations published through Government Notice No. 256 of September 4, 2026.

Under the revised framework, foreign visitors entering Mainland Tanzania are required to obtain the prescribed inbound travel insurance policy through the National Insurance Corporation ("**NIC**"). The insurance attracts a premium of Forty-Four United States Dollars (US$44.00) per visitor and provides coverage for a maximum period of ninety-two (92) days. The policy is intended to provide emergency assistance, including coverage for specified medical emergencies and other qualifying incidents during the visitor's stay.

The Ministry of Finance has also clarified the relationship between the insurance arrangements applicable to Mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar. While the NIC is responsible for providing the prescribed insurance for foreign visitors entering through Mainland Tanzania, the Zanzibar Insurance Corporation ("**ZIC**") administers the corresponding insurance arrangements for visitors entering through Zanzibar. Where an emergency occurs within Tanzania, assistance will be provided by the insurer from which the visitor obtained the applicable policy, subject to the terms and conditions of that policy.

International travellers are advised to obtain the required insurance through the appropriate designated provider before departing for Tanzania to avoid delays during immigration clearance. The requirement operates alongside, rather than replacing, the existing visa and other entry conditions applicable to foreign nationals.

TANZANIA INTRODUCES MANDATORY HEALTH DECLARATION AND ENHANCED BORDER SCREENING MEASURES

On October 17, 2026, Tanzania's Ministry of Health issued Travel Advisory No. 18, introducing enhanced public health requirements for international travellers in response to the Ebola Virus Disease ("**EVD**") outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo ("**DRC**") and a related imported case reported in Kenya. The measures were introduced in accordance with the International Health Regulations, 2005, as amended in 2024, and Tanzania's Public Health Act, 2009.

Under the revised arrangements, all travellers entering Tanzania are required to complete an online Traveller's Health Surveillance Form through the Government's AfyaMsafiri portal before departure or upon arrival. Applicants must provide accurate personal, travel and health information and retain the confirmation reference or QR code generated through the electronic system for verification by the competent port health authorities.

The advisory also introduces enhanced health screening at designated points of entry, including airports, land border crossings and seaports. Travellers may be required to undergo temperature checks and other health assessments, while persons displaying symptoms associated with EVD or other infectious diseases will be managed in accordance with the applicable national screening and disease control procedures.

In addition, travellers identified as presenting a higher risk of infection may be subjected to further assessment and follow-up monitoring for twenty-one (21) days. These measures are intended to strengthen Tanzania's border health surveillance and facilitate the early detection and management of potential infectious disease cases.

Uganda

UGANDA REMOVES YELLOW FEVER VACCINATION CERTIFICATE REQUIREMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL TRAVELLERS

On October 2, 2026, Uganda's National Citizenship and Immigration Control ("**NCIC**") announced that a Yellow Fever Vaccination Certificate is no longer a mandatory documentary requirement for entry into Uganda. The clarification removes the previous requirement for international travellers to present proof of yellow fever vaccination as part of the country's immigration entry formalities.

The NCIC confirmed that the requirement has been duly removed from the prescribed documentation listed on Uganda's official electronic visa application portal and the immigration authority's website.

It should be noted that the removal of the certificate requirement does not eliminate the public health risks associated with yellow fever or alter vaccination requirements imposed by other jurisdictions. Travellers may still be required to present vaccination documentation when entering or transiting through countries that maintain mandatory yellow fever vaccination requirements.

UGANDA STRENGTHENS BORDER HEALTH CONTROLS AND INTRODUCES ADDITIONAL TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS AMID EBOLA CONCERNS

On October 25, 2026, Uganda's Ministry of Health announced enhanced border surveillance and traveller screening arrangements in response to continuing EVD transmission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo ("**DRC**") and recent cases involving persons who had travelled through the region. The measures are intended to strengthen disease surveillance, facilitate contact tracing and reduce the risk of further cross-border transmission.

Under the enhanced arrangements, all travellers intending to enter Uganda by air, land or water are required to complete a Passenger Locator Form before arrival or at their point of embarkation. Incoming travellers are also required to undergo health screening conducted by the competent port health authorities, including at Entebbe International Airport and designated land border crossings. The Ministry has clarified that the screening requirement applies to all travellers, including diplomatic personnel and representatives of international organizations.

The measures further introduce restrictions on travel across the Uganda–DRC border. Movement is generally limited to specified essential categories of travellers, including humanitarian personnel and commercial truck drivers, subject to mandatory health screening.

Ugandan nationals returning from the DRC are required to undergo twenty-one (21) days of quarantine at their own expense, while persons identified as contacts of confirmed or suspected EVD cases may be subjected to additional monitoring and temporary travel restrictions.

It should be noted that the enhanced surveillance measures do not constitute a general suspension of international travel into Uganda. However, travellers with recent travel history involving the DRC or possible exposure to EVD may be subjected to stricter entry, transit and quarantine requirements under the applicable public health arrangements.

Sierra Leone

SIERRA LEONE REINFORCES MANDATORY HEALTH DECLARATION REQUIREMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL AIR TRAVELLERS

On October 21, 2026, the Sierra Leone Civil Aviation Authority ("**SLCAA**") issued a public notice reiterating the mandatory completion of health declaration forms by passengers arriving at or departing from Freetown International Airport. The notice forms part of the Government's continued efforts to strengthen border health surveillance and ensure compliance with existing public health measures applicable to international travel.

The requirement is administered through the Sierra Leone Health Travel Portal, which was introduced by the Ministry of Health and the National Public Health Agency ("**NPHA**") in June 2026. The electronic platform enables travellers to submit the prescribed health and travel information before arrival or departure and facilitates verification of the information by the relevant authorities.

Under the applicable arrangements, travellers are required to complete the relevant online Health Declaration Form not more than seventy-two (72) hours before their intended travel date. Passengers must provide accurate personal and travel information, including flight details where applicable, and retain the confirmation reference or QR code generated upon submission for verification during airport processing.

The SLCAA has emphasized that compliance with the declaration requirement is mandatory and that passengers who fail to complete the prescribed process may be denied boarding. The Authority has also urged airlines, travel agencies and other stakeholders to ensure that affected travellers are informed of the requirement before proceeding to the airport.

It should be noted that the October 2026 notice does not establish an entirely new health declaration framework but reinforces compliance with an existing requirement introduced earlier in the year. The declaration applies to both incoming and outgoing travellers, including Sierra Leonean nationals and foreign visitors.

Persons intending to enter or depart Sierra Leone through Freetown International Airport should ensure to complete the required electronic declaration within the prescribed period and retain the relevant confirmation for inspection.

North America

United States of America

UNITED STATES REQUIRES EBOLA-RELATED TRAVEL ATTESTATION FOR ALL INTERNATIONAL AIR TRAVELLERS

On October 22, 2026, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (the "**CDC**") issued an Order, subsequently amended on October 28, 2026, requiring all persons travelling by air to the United States from a foreign country to attest that they have not been present in the Democratic Republic of the Congo ("**DRC**") during the twenty-one (21) days preceding their flight. The requirement took effect on November 3, 2026, and was introduced as a public health measure in response to the ongoing Ebola Virus Disease ("**EVD**") outbreak in the DRC.

Under the Order, presence in the DRC includes transit through a DRC airport, whether or not the traveller disembarked. The requirement applies to commercial flights, general aviation, private aircraft and cargo flights, including flights departing from pre-clearance ports and flights on which the United States is a connecting point rather than the final destination. The amended Order also extends the requirement to crew members.

The twenty-one (21) day period is calculated by reference to calendar days. The day on which a person departs the DRC is treated as Day 0, and such person may board a flight to the United States from Day 22, subject to satisfying all other entry requirements. Persons who fail to complete the attestation, or who have been present in the DRC within the prescribed period, will be denied boarding. The restriction applies equally to U.S. citizens, U.S. nationals and lawful permanent residents.

Airlines and other aircraft operators are responsible for collecting and verifying the attestations before boarding and must retain a copy of each completed attestation for at least forty-two (42) days after the relevant flight departs, for production to the U.S. Government upon request. Depending on the airline, attestations may be collected electronically or on paper.

It should be noted that a completed attestation does not override any other entry restrictions applicable to travellers with recent travel history in Ebola-affected countries. All travellers to the United States, including those who have not visited the DRC, should therefore allow for the attestation process at check-in or the boarding gate. Employers and organizations with personnel assigned to, or transiting through, the DRC should also plan travel to the United States to take account of the twenty-one (21) day waiting period.

Canada

CANADA ANNOUNCES NEW FUNDING TO STRENGTHEN FRANCOPHONE IMMIGRATION AND WORKFORCE RECRUITMENT

On September 29, 2026, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada ("**IRCC**") announced an investment of approximately One Million, Two Hundred Thousand Canadian Dollars (CAD1,200,000.00) to support new initiatives under the Francophone Immigration Support Program. The funding is intended to strengthen Francophone minority communities, address labour shortages and facilitate the recruitment and integration of French-speaking and bilingual foreign nationals across selected Canadian provinces.

The first initiative, led by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, seeks to establish a sustainable recruitment pathway for Francophone and bilingual professionals from abroad. The project will focus on attracting qualified individuals into priority sectors, including education, healthcare and early childhood education, with the objective of supporting population growth, addressing labour market shortages and improving access to French-language services within the province.

The second initiative will be implemented by the Conseil économique et coopératif de la Saskatchewan and will focus on strengthening Francophone immigration through a workforce-matching approach connecting international talent with local employers. Measures under the project include the development of an interactive labour market mapping platform, the organization of recruitment activities, assistance with academic credential recognition and professional certification, and cultural integration programmes. The initiative will target industries including agriculture, healthcare, mining, energy, technology and hospitality.

The funding forms part of Canada's broader commitment to strengthening Francophone immigration outside Quebec while responding to identified workforce needs. Employers in the affected provinces, as well as prospective Francophone immigrants, should therefore monitor the implementation of the initiatives and assess the recruitment and employment opportunities that may become available under the respective programmes.

ONTARIO LAUNCHES NEW REGIONAL IMMIGRATION INITIATIVE TO ATTRACT SKILLED FOREIGN WORKERS

On October 16, 2026, the Government of Ontario announced a new round of its Regional Economic Development through Immigration ("**REDI**") initiative, which will run until December 31, 2027. The initiative, implemented through the Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program ("**OINP**"), is intended to address regional labour shortages by allocating provincial nomination spaces to selected communities with demonstrated demand for skilled foreign workers and the capacity to support newcomer integration.

The initiative builds on Ontario's earlier regional immigration programmes, which commenced as a pilot in 2020 and were subsequently expanded in 2025.

Under the revised arrangement, six (6) communities have been selected to participate, namely Greater Sudbury, Kenora District, Nipissing District, Rainy River District, Renfrew County and Thunder Bay. These communities were selected based on several considerations, including identified workforce shortages, economic diversification opportunities, employer participation and the availability of settlement services to facilitate the integration of foreign nationals.

Through the REDI initiative, eligible skilled foreign workers intending to reside and work in any of the participating communities may be considered for provincial nomination as a pathway towards Canadian permanent residence. It should be noted that the initiative does not establish a separate immigration application procedure, as interested applicants must satisfy the eligibility requirements of the applicable OINP immigration stream. Furthermore, nomination under the OINP does not automatically confer permanent residence, as the final determination of permanent residence applications remains the responsibility of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada ("**IRCC**").

The initiative is expected to strengthen workforce recruitment and support economic development across the participating communities by facilitating access to international talent. Employers experiencing skilled labour shortages within the designated regions, as well as foreign nationals seeking employment and permanent residence opportunities in Ontario, should therefore assess the applicable OINP requirements and monitor further announcements concerning nomination allocations and participation arrangements.

South America

Venezuela

VENEZUELA PUBLISHES ELECTRONIC APPLICATION PROCEDURES FOR PRO-V 90 VISAS

Venezuela's Ministry of Foreign Affairs has published guidance on the electronic application process for foreign nationals seeking PRO-V 90 visas through its Cancillería Digital platform. The electronic arrangement enables applicants to initiate visa requests, provide relevant personal and travel information, and submit supporting documentation through the designated government portal.

Under the procedure, applicants are required to create an application through Cancillería Digital, select the appropriate Venezuelan embassy or consulate and complete the prescribed electronic application form. Information requested through the platform includes the intended purpose and duration of travel, details of the inviting entity, proposed arrival and departure arrangements, accommodation in Venezuela and relevant local contact information.

The Ministry has published user manuals addressing the PRO-V 90 application procedure, including versions dated April and June 2026. However, the documentary requirements described in the later electronic application guidance differ from those published by certain Venezuelan consular authorities. In particular, the June guidance refers to financial and corporate supporting information, while the published consular requirements in France identify additional professional documentation and other supporting materials. Applicants should therefore confirm the applicable documentary requirements with the competent Venezuelan diplomatic mission and the current instructions displayed on the Cancillería Digital platform before completing their applications.

Following submission, the electronic system provides an acknowledgement containing a summary of the application. The relevant documentation may subsequently be made available electronically, subject to completion of the applicable approval and issuance procedures.

It should be noted that the Ministry's electronic application guidance indicates that information and supporting documents contained in a completed filing cannot be amended through the existing submission. Where corrections become necessary, the applicant may be required to delete the filing and commence a new application.

Prospective applicants should therefore verify the current requirements applicable to their visa category and consular jurisdiction, and ensure that all information and mandatory documents are accurate before finalizing their applications

Asia

China

CHINA INTRODUCES NATIONWIDE ONLINE ACCOMMODATION REGISTRATION SYSTEM FOR FOREIGN NATIONALS

On September 21, 2026, China's National Immigration Administration (the "**NIA**") announced the nationwide implementation of an electronic accommodation registration service for foreign nationals residing or staying in accommodation other than hotels. The measure follows an earlier pilot programme and is intended to simplify compliance with existing registration obligations by providing an alternative to registration in person with the relevant public security authorities.

Under Article 39 of China's Exit and Entry Administration Law, hotels are responsible for registering the accommodation details of foreign guests and transmitting the required information to the competent public security authorities. However, foreign nationals residing or staying in other accommodation facilities are required to complete the prescribed registration, either personally or through their hosts, within twenty-four (24) hours of arrival.

The newly introduced procedure enables affected foreign nationals or their hosts to complete accommodation registration through the NIA's official website, the NIA 12367 mobile application or the designated mini-programmes available on WeChat and Alipay. The service provides a nationwide digital registration channel for persons staying outside conventional hotel accommodation.

It should be noted that the new electronic procedure does not replace the existing option of completing registration in person. The NIA has confirmed that registration completed through the approved online channels has the same legal effect as registration undertaken at the relevant local public security offices.

Foreign nationals staying in private or other non-hotel accommodation, as well as persons hosting foreign visitors, should therefore ensure compliance with the twenty-four (24)-hour registration requirement and may utilize the newly introduced digital channels to fulfil their obligations

Hong Kong

HONG KONG EXPANDS IMMIGRATION FACILITATION SCHEME TO CENTRAL ASIAN AND GULF NATIONALS

Effective October 1, 2026, the Hong Kong Government expanded its Immigration Facilitation Scheme for Invited Persons to include eligible nationals of Central Asian and Gulf Cooperation Council ("**GCC**") countries, in addition to nationals of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations ("**ASEAN**"). The expansion also authorizes all government bureaux and departments to issue invitations under the scheme, extending participation beyond the five (5) government bodies previously designated for that purpose.

The scheme was initially introduced on March 18, 2025, to facilitate immigration arrangements for eligible ASEAN nationals invited to Hong Kong by specified government authorities. The revised framework broadens its geographical coverage to eleven (11) ASEAN countries, namely Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste and Vietnam. It also extends eligibility to nationals of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan in Central Asia, as well as Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates within the GCC.

The expanded scheme is intended to facilitate visits by individuals considered capable of making significant contributions to Hong Kong's economic development, including persons invited to participate in major events, business engagements and other activities of strategic importance to the territory.

Under the revised arrangements, eligible invitees may benefit from consolidated electronic processing of immigration applications, simplified visa requirements where applicable and more flexible eligibility conditions for automated immigration clearance. The scheme also provides for multiple-journey visit visas under relaxed requirements, with qualifying invited persons generally eligible for an extended stay of up to two (2) months per visit, subject to the applicable immigration conditions. It should be noted that nationals already benefiting from a ninety (90)-day visa-free period under the relevant arrangements retain their existing permitted duration of stay.

In addition, qualifying participants may be granted Invited Person Status valid for three (3) years, supported by an electronic card facilitating access to designated immigration clearance arrangements. Eligible participants may also enroll for the e-Channel service under relaxed requirements, subject to holding a passport with the prescribed remaining validity.

Government departments, event organizers and prospective invitees from the newly included countries should therefore assess their eligibility under the expanded scheme when arranging official visits, business exchanges and participation in qualifying events. The availability of facilitated immigration procedures remains subject to the applicable invitation and eligibility requirements.

HONG KONG EXPANDS SHORT-TERM VISITOR ACTIVITY SCHEME TO INCLUDE SOCIAL WELFARE SECTOR

On October 1, 2026, Hong Kong implemented an expansion of its Immigration Facilitation Scheme for Visitors Participating in Short-term Activities in Designated Sectors (the "**STV Scheme**"). The revised framework extends the scheme to the social welfare sector, increasing the number of covered sectors from seventeen (17) to eighteen (18), while introducing additional authorized organizations and qualifying activities.

The expansion also affects activities within the international and major events, higher education and financial services sectors. Following the amendments, the scheme covers approximately Four Hundred and Ninety (490) authorized organizations across the designated sectors, although the participating organizations and approved activities remain subject to the applicable government arrangements.

Under the STV Scheme, foreign nationals invited by an authorized host organization may enter Hong Kong as visitors and participate in designated activities without obtaining a separate employment visa or entry permit. The approved activities may be undertaken for a maximum period of fourteen (14) consecutive calendar days per arrival, and participants may receive remuneration where the relevant activity falls within the scope of the scheme.

It should be noted that the exemption is limited to activities recognized under the applicable framework. Qualifying activities must contribute to Hong Kong's economic development or support relevant government policy objectives and must not result in the displacement of local workers.

Foreign nationals and organizations intending to rely on the expanded scheme should therefore confirm that the proposed activity, inviting institution and duration of participation satisfy the prescribed requirements before proceeding with travel arrangements.

India

INDIA REPORTEDLY INCREASES MINIMUM SALARY THRESHOLD FOR EMPLOYMENT VISAS

India's immigration authorities have reportedly introduced a revised minimum annual salary requirement for foreign nationals applying for Employment Visas, increasing the existing threshold from One Million, Six Hundred and Twenty-Five Thousand Indian Rupees (INR1,625,000.00) to Two Million, Four Hundred Thousand Indian Rupees (INR2,400,000.00). The development has been reported following administrative confirmation from immigration officials and the inclusion of the revised salary requirement in recently issued residence permits by certain Foreigners Regional Registration Offices ("**FRROs**").

The revised threshold represents an increase of approximately forty-eight percent (48%) over the previous requirement and is expected to affect foreign professionals seeking employment in India, particularly those whose remuneration arrangements fall below the new benchmark. The reported change applies to new Employment Visa applications and may also affect existing foreign employees seeking extensions or renewals of their immigration permissions through the relevant authorities.

It should be noted that, as at the time of this update, India's Ministry of Home Affairs (the "**MHA**") has not published a formal notification confirming the revised salary requirement or providing comprehensive guidance on its implementation. Furthermore, certain Indian diplomatic missions continue to publish the previous annual salary threshold of INR1,625,000.00. Accordingly, the precise scope and application of the reported increase, including its treatment of applicants falling within existing salary exemptions, remain subject to further official clarification.

The development may have significant implications for employers recruiting foreign professionals, particularly where employment contracts and remuneration structures have been determined by reference to the previous minimum salary requirement. Employers may consequently need to reassess compensation arrangements for prospective foreign employees and evaluate the potential financial implications of the revised threshold for workforce planning and retention.

Employers sponsoring foreign nationals in India, as well as existing Employment Visa holders approaching renewal, should therefore confirm the applicable salary requirements with the relevant Indian diplomatic mission or FRRO before submitting applications. Affected organizations should also monitor further announcements from the MHA regarding the formal implementation and enforcement of the reported salary threshold

INDIA INTRODUCES ELECTRONIC PASSPORT TRANSFER SERVICE FOR EXISTING E-VISA AUTHORISATIONS

The Government of India has introduced a new electronic facility enabling eligible foreign nationals to transfer existing Electronic Travel Authorizations ("**ETAs**") issued under the country's e-Visa framework from an old passport to a newly issued passport. The service, made available through India's official e-Visa portal, is intended to simplify immigration formalities for travellers who obtain replacement or renewed passports while their existing travel authorizations remain valid.

Under the new arrangement, qualifying foreign nationals may use the designated electronic transfer service to update the passport associated with an existing ETA without submitting an entirely new e-Visa application solely on account of the issuance of a replacement passport. The facility is expected to reduce administrative requirements for eligible travellers and facilitate the continued use of valid travel authorizations following passport renewal or replacement.

It should be noted that the service relates specifically to the transfer of existing e-Visa authorizations between passports and does not constitute a general procedure for amending other personal particulars or altering the underlying conditions of an existing visa. Travellers whose personal information has changed should therefore confirm the applicable requirements and whether a fresh visa application is necessary. The facility should also be distinguished from the procedures applicable to regular visas issued outside India's electronic visa framework.

In addition, the existing e-Visa guidance permits foreign nationals to travel to India using a newly issued passport where the relevant ETA remains associated with an earlier passport, provided the traveller carries both the new passport and the old passport containing the original authorization. Eligible travellers may therefore continue to rely on this arrangement where applicable, subject to the prescribed entry requirements.

Foreign nationals intending to visit India following the renewal or replacement of their passports should review the electronic transfer requirements before travelling and ensure that their travel documents remain consistent with their immigration authorizations. Travellers are also advised to use the official government e-Visa portal when undertaking the transfer procedure.

INDIA REQUIRES ELECTRONIC FORM III REPORTING FOR FOREIGN NATIONALS AND OCI CARDHOLDERS

India's immigration authorities have reinforced mandatory accommodation reporting requirements under the Immigration and Foreigners Act, 2025, and the Immigration and Foreigners Rules, 2025, requiring accommodation providers to submit prescribed information concerning foreign nationals staying at their premises. Under the framework, Form III, which replaces the former Form C reporting arrangement, applies to foreign guests, including Overseas Citizen of India ("**OCI**") cardholders.

Pursuant to Rule 17 of the Immigration and Foreigners Rules, 2025, accommodation providers are required to obtain and record the prescribed particulars of foreign nationals upon arrival and departure. The reporting obligation extends to a broad range of accommodation arrangements, including hotels, guesthouses, hostels, serviced apartments, homestays, rented residential properties and other qualifying premises providing accommodation to foreign nationals.

Under the applicable requirements, the keeper of accommodation must electronically submit a completed Form III to the relevant Registration Officer within twenty-four (24) hours of a foreign national's arrival.

Departure information must similarly be transmitted within twenty-four (24) hours after the guest leaves the premises. The required submissions are to be completed through the designated online portal or approved mobile application.

In addition to the electronic reporting requirement, accommodation providers must maintain records containing the prescribed arrival and departure particulars of foreign guests for a minimum period of one (1) year. Such records must be maintained electronically and made available for inspection by the relevant authorities where required. The inclusion of OCI cardholders is particularly significant, as the revised statutory framework extends accommodation reporting obligations to a category of foreign nationals previously exempted from certain reporting requirements.

It should be noted that failure to comply with the prescribed reporting obligations may attract enforcement action under the Immigration and Foreigners Act, 2025, and the regulations made thereunder. The authorities have identified a compounding amount of Fifty Thousand Indian Rupees (INR50,000.00) for relevant reporting offences under the applicable framework. However, this amount relates to the statutory procedure for compounding offences and should not be construed as an automatic administrative penalty imposed for every instance of non-compliance.

Hotels, corporate housing providers, landlords and other persons accommodating foreign nationals should therefore review their existing guest registration procedures and ensure that the required information is electronically submitted within the prescribed timelines. Particular attention should be given to the inclusion of OCI cardholders, the maintenance of accurate accommodation records and compliance with the applicable electronic reporting requirements.

INDIA CLARIFIES TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS FOR OCI CARDHOLDERS UPDATING PASSPORT DETAILS

On October 12, 2026, the Embassy of India in Switzerland published a notice clarifying the immigration arrangements applicable to Overseas Citizen of India ("**OCI**") cardholders who obtain new passports and are required to update their passport information in the OCI registration system. The clarification addresses the ability of affected cardholders to travel to and from India while their updated passport details are being processed by the relevant authorities.

Under the applicable requirements, OCI cardholders, irrespective of age, must update their passport particulars through the designated OCI Services portal whenever a new passport is issued. The required update must be completed within three (3) months of the issuance of the new passport and generally involves the electronic submission of the relevant passport information and supporting documents.

The Indian authorities have clarified that OCI cardholders will not be subject to travel restrictions solely because their passport details are undergoing the prescribed update process. Accordingly, eligible cardholders may continue travelling to and from India during the period between the issuance of a new passport and the final acknowledgement of the updated documents through the OCI registration system.

It should be noted that the clarification does not dispense with the requirement to update passport particulars within the prescribed period. The authorities have also advised OCI cardholders to travel with both their previous and newly issued passports, where available, to facilitate immigration verification and avoid difficulties at border control points.

OCI cardholders who have recently renewed or replaced their passports should therefore ensure that the relevant details are updated through the official OCI Services portal within three (3) months of issuance. Affected travellers should also retain the necessary supporting documents and review applicable travel guidance before undertaking international journeys while their passport updates remain under consideration.

Japan

JAPAN EXTENDS PRE-ENTRY TUBERCULOSIS SCREENING REQUIREMENT TO INDONESIAN NATIONALS

Japan's Immigration Services Agency has announced the extension of its pre-entry tuberculosis ("**TB**") screening programme to Indonesian nationals seeking medium- to long-term residence in Japan.

Under the revised arrangements, designated medical institutions in Indonesia are scheduled to commence TB examinations on November 2, 2026, while the mandatory submission of a Tuberculosis Clearance Certificate will apply to relevant applications filed from January 4, 2027.

The extension forms part of Japan's broader public health measures aimed at addressing tuberculosis cases among foreign-born residents. The screening framework already applies to designated applicants from the Philippines, Nepal and Vietnam, with Indonesia becoming the latest country scheduled for implementation. Myanmar and China have also been identified for inclusion, although commencement dates for those jurisdictions have not yet been announced.

Under the revised procedure, affected Indonesian nationals will generally be required to undergo screening at an approved medical facility and obtain the prescribed Tuberculosis Clearance Certificate before completing the relevant immigration application. Where an applicant is required to obtain a Certificate of Eligibility, the TB clearance documentation must be submitted as part of that application process. Applicants who proceed directly with a visa application without a Certificate of Eligibility will generally be required to provide the clearance certificate at the visa application stage.

It should be noted that the screening requirement is subject to applicable exemptions and is principally directed at Indonesian nationals seeking medium- or long-term residence, rather than all categories of temporary visitors. The announced implementation dates also remain scheduled dates pending the commencement of the respective requirements

Indonesian nationals intending to relocate to Japan for employment, study or other qualifying long-term purposes should therefore factor the new medical screening requirement into their immigration preparations, particularly where applications are expected to be submitted on or after January 4, 2027

Malaysia

MALAYSIA ANNOUNCES NEW IMMIGRATION AND INVESTMENT INCENTIVES UNDER BUDGET 2027

On October 9, 2026, the Malaysian Government announced a series of immigration and investment measures under Budget 2027 aimed at strengthening the country's competitiveness as a destination for foreign professionals, remote workers and multinational businesses. The measures include expanded employment opportunities for certain dependants of expatriates, additional flexibility for digital nomads and enhanced fiscal incentives for companies operating under the Global Services Hub ("**GSH**") Scheme.

Under the announced arrangements, spouses of Category I Employment Pass holders who possess valid Dependant Passes will be permitted to undertake employment in Malaysia from January 1, 2027, subject to compliance with the applicable conditions. The measure is intended to improve Malaysia's attractiveness to internationally mobile professionals by allowing eligible accompanying spouses to pursue employment opportunities while residing in the country.

The Government has also announced additional residence flexibility for existing holders of the DE Rantau Nomad Pass. Under the proposed arrangement, qualifying pass holders who have attained the existing two (2)-year maximum stay will be permitted to continue residing and working remotely in Malaysia, subject to the prescribed eligibility criteria. It should be noted that the Budget announcement does not specify the precise duration of any additional stay, and the applicable extension arrangements will depend on the relevant implementing requirements.

In addition, the GSH Scheme will be enhanced from January 1, 2027, to provide qualifying multinational businesses with further investment incentives. Newly qualifying GSH companies will be eligible for a preferential corporate tax rate of five percent (5%) on income generated from approved activities, while existing qualifying participants may benefit from the same rate on income exceeding a prescribed baseline. The Government has also announced the possibility of extending incentive periods in successive five (5)-year intervals, subject to an overall maximum of thirty (30) years.

The Budget further provides for exemptions from withholding tax on qualifying interest payments and stamp duty on certain intercompany loan arrangements involving GSH companies undertaking treasury and fund management activities, subject to the applicable conditions.

These measures are expected to provide greater flexibility for expatriate families and remote workers, while strengthening incentives for multinational companies considering Malaysia as a regional operational base. However, the announced measures remain subject to their respective implementation arrangements. Affected individuals and businesses should therefore assess their eligibility under the relevant schemes and review the applicable requirements before relying on the proposed benefits.

Taiwan

TAIWAN REVISES POLIO VACCINATION REQUIREMENTS FOR VISA APPLICANTS WITH SPECIFIED TRAVEL HISTORY

On October 2, 2026, Taiwan's Bureau of Consular Affairs announced revised health documentation requirements for certain foreign nationals applying for visas to Taiwan. The measure, introduced in line with recommendations issued by the World Health Organization, requires applicants with relevant recent travel or residence history in designated countries to provide evidence of vaccination against poliomyelitis.

Under the revised requirements, applicants who have resided in or visited Afghanistan, Cameroon, Chad, Djibouti, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Laos, Pakistan or South Sudan for a period of four (4) weeks or more within the preceding twelve (12) months are required to submit proof of polio vaccination as part of their visa applications.

Affected applicants must demonstrate that they have received either the Oral Polio Vaccine or the Inactivated Polio Vaccine within the twelve (12) months preceding the relevant application. The requirement is intended to strengthen public health safeguards applicable to travellers with recent exposure to jurisdictions identified under the relevant international health guidance.

It should be noted that the previous guidance required the qualifying vaccination to have been administered at least four (4) weeks before the visa application date. However, the latest announcement does not expressly restate this additional timing requirement. The precise application of any further vaccination timing conditions should therefore be confirmed through the competent consular authorities.

Prospective visa applicants with recent residence or travel history in any of the designated countries should review their vaccination records and ensure that the necessary supporting documentation is available before submitting their applications.

Middle East

Saudi Arabia

SAUDI ARABIA SUSPENDS VISA ISSUANCE AND ENTRY FOR TRAVELLERS FROM KENYA AMID EBOLA CONCERNS

On October 30, 2026, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia announced additional precautionary measures against the spread of the Ebola Virus Disease ("EVD"), following an assessment of the epidemiological situation by its national health authorities. The measures were announced through the Saudi Press Agency and build on preventive protocols first introduced in July 2019 and strengthened in May 2026 for travellers from countries considered to be at risk of Ebola outbreaks.

Under the new measures, Saudi Arabia has suspended travel by its citizens to the Republic of Kenya and halted the issuance of all categories of visas to persons arriving from Kenya. In addition, entry into the Kingdom is prohibited for travellers arriving from Kenya, whether directly or through third countries, where such travellers stayed in Kenya or in any other country experiencing an active Ebola outbreak during the twenty-one (21) days preceding their arrival.

The restrictions follow earlier measures introduced in June 2026, under which Saudi Arabia suspended travel to, and arrivals from, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Uganda and South Sudan. The Saudi Public Health Authority ("Weqaya") has indicated that the health situation within the Kingdom remains stable and under continuous monitoring.

It should be noted that the Government of Kenya has described the measures as disproportionate and has formally requested that Saudi Arabia review and lift the restrictions. The measures may therefore be revised following further diplomatic engagement or changes in the epidemiological situation.

Europe

United Kingdom

THE UNITED KINGDOM CONFIRMS EARNED SETTLEMENT FRAMEWORK AND EXTENDS STANDARD QUALIFYING PERIOD TO TEN (10) YEARS

On November 2, 2026, the UK Home Secretary, Shabana Mahmood, announced the Government's final reforms to the settlement system. The reforms follow the consultation launched in November 2025 and replace the current model under which most migrants qualify for indefinite leave to remain ("**ILR**") after five (5) years with an "earned settlement" framework based on contribution, integration and conduct.

Under the new framework, the standard qualifying period for settlement will increase from five (5) years to ten (10) years. Applicants on the ten (10)-year pathway must have had earnings of at least Twelve Thousand, Five Hundred and Seventy-One Pounds Sterling (£12,571) in five (5) of the previous seven (7) years. Shorter pathways will be available to persons making a greater contribution, including a three (3)-year pathway for persons with exceptional economic contribution, such as earnings of at least One Hundred and Twenty-Five Thousand, One Hundred and Forty-One Pounds Sterling (£125,141) in three (3) of the last four (4) years, and a five (5)-year pathway for higher earners with earnings of at least Fifty Thousand, Two Hundred and Seventy-One Pounds Sterling (£50,271) in three (3) of the last five (5) years, eligible public service workers such as doctors, nurses and teachers, and certain persons with a British connection. The previously proposed fifteen (15)-year pathway for roles below RQF Level 6 has been withdrawn.

The framework also introduces stricter conditions. Persons who commit a qualifying immigration breach as adults, including overstaying, working in breach of conditions or deception, will be placed on a twenty (20)-year pathway, while persons who have accessed public funds within the last five (5) years will be excluded from the three (3), five (5) and ten (10)-year pathways. Adults with a UK criminal record will be refused settlement. All applicants will be required to meet the English language requirement at CEFR Level B2 (for applications made from March 26, 2027), pass the Life in the UK test and have no outstanding debts to the Government.

It should be noted that there is no general transitional exemption, and the new framework will apply to persons already in the United Kingdom who have not yet obtained ILR. Limited transitional arrangements apply to specified groups, including care workers who entered or switched into the care worker route before May 12, 2025, health and education workers in roles below RQF Level 6 who arrived before May 2025, and Skilled Workers who obtained their visas before April 2024. The Government has indicated that the corresponding changes to the Immigration Rules will begin to be laid from December 2026, with implementation over the course of 2027. The current Immigration Rules continue to apply until then.

UNITED KINGDOM TO RETAIN TWO (2)-YEAR GRADUATE VISA FOR GRADUATES OF HIGH-COMPLIANCE UNIVERSITIES

On October 28, 2026, the UK Government indicated in its 2026 Budget that the Graduate visa will be granted for two (2) years to persons who graduate from high-compliance universities with strong labour market outcomes. The measure creates an exception to the previously announced reduction of the Graduate visa from two (2) years to eighteen (18) months, which will apply to applications made on or after January 1, 2027.

Under the existing timetable, bachelor's and master's degree graduates who apply for the Graduate visa on or after January 1, 2027 will generally receive eighteen (18) months of permission, while applicants who apply on or before December 31, 2026 will continue to receive two (2) years. Graduates of doctoral programmes will continue to receive three (3) years of permission. Under the new measure, graduates of qualifying universities will be eligible for the longer two (2)-year period.

It should be noted that the Government has not yet published the criteria for identifying qualifying universities or the date from which the measure will take effect. Further details are expected to be set out in subsequent changes to the Immigration Rules and accompanying guidance.

UK UNIVERSITIES WITHDRAW OFFERS TO STUDENTS FROM NIGERIA AND OTHER HIGH VISA REFUSAL COUNTRIES UNDER STRICTER SPONSOR COMPLIANCE RULES

Several UK universities have begun withdrawing admission offers and pausing recruitment from countries including Nigeria, Pakistan and Bangladesh, following the introduction of stricter compliance thresholds for institutions that sponsor international students. The development follows revisions to the Home Office's Basic Compliance Assessment ("BCA"), which applies to compliance assessments applied for on or after June 1, 2026.

Under the revised BCA, student sponsors must maintain a visa refusal rate of less than five per cent (5%), reduced from the previous threshold of ten per cent (10%), an enrolment rate of at least ninety-five per cent (95%), and a course completion rate of at least eighty-five per cent (85%), rising to ninety per cent (90%) in June 2027. Sponsors that fail to meet the thresholds risk losing their licence to sponsor international students.

Given that study visa refusal rates for nationals of Nigeria, Pakistan, Bangladesh and certain other countries are significantly above the new threshold, some institutions have withdrawn offers or revoked Confirmations of Acceptance for Studies ("CAS") issued to applicants from these countries. According to Home Office data reported by the Financial Times, twenty-two point seven per cent (22.7%) of UK study visa applications from Nigeria were withdrawn in the first half of 2026, compared with 4.5% in the corresponding period of 2025.

It should be noted that the UK Government has not introduced a nationality-based ban on student visas for Nigerian nationals. The restrictions arise from individual institutions' recruitment decisions in response to the revised compliance thresholds.

Hungary

HUNGARY INTRODUCES ELECTRONIC REPORTING PROCEDURE FOR GUEST SELF-EMPLOYMENT RESIDENCE PERMIT HOLDERS

Hungary's National Directorate-General for Aliens Policing ("**NDGAP**") has introduced an electronic procedure enabling foreign nationals holding residence permits for guest self-employment to fulfil their mandatory periodic reporting obligations through the Enter Hungary online platform. The measure provides a digital channel for submitting the required declarations and forms part of the administrative procedures governing continued residence under the guest self-employment category.

Under the new arrangement, affected permit holders are required to access their accounts on the Enter Hungary portal and complete the designated periodic reporting declaration electronically. The process is intended to simplify compliance with existing reporting requirements by providing a dedicated electronic submission mechanism.

It should be noted that compliance with the reporting requirement is directly relevant to the renewal of residence permits issued for guest self-employment. Under the applicable immigration regulations, renewal applications may only be approved where the permit holder has fulfilled the prescribed periodic reporting obligation within the stipulated timeframe.

Foreign nationals residing in Hungary under the guest self-employment category should therefore ensure the timely completion of their reporting obligations through the designated platform, as failure to comply may adversely affect the renewal of their residence permits.

Sweden

SWEDEN CEASES RECOGNITION OF NON-BIOMETRIC RUSSIAN PASSPORTS AND INTRODUCES TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

Effective October 1, 2026, Sweden ceased recognizing ordinary non-biometric passports issued by the Russian Federation for immigration and entry purposes.

The decision, announced by the Swedish Migration Agency, introduces additional documentary requirements for affected Russian nationals seeking to enter Sweden or obtain immigration permissions under the country's existing legal framework.

A non-biometric passport is a travel document that does not contain an electronic chip storing identifying information concerning its holder, including relevant biometric data. Under the revised rules, ordinary Russian non-biometric passports are no longer accepted as valid travel documents for entry into Sweden or for applications relating to visas, employment permits, study permits, visitor permits and residence permits based on family reunification.

The Swedish authorities have, however, introduced transitional arrangements applicable from October 1 to December 31, 2026. During this period, affected individuals may continue to rely on ordinary Russian non-biometric passports where they hold a valid visa issued before October 1, 2026, by Sweden, another European Union Member State or another Schengen country, or possess a valid residence permit issued by any of those authorities before that date.

In addition, the authorities have confirmed that Russian non-biometric diplomatic and service passports will cease to be recognized from January 1, 2027, extending the restriction beyond ordinary travel documents.

Russian nationals affected by these measures should therefore assess the validity of their existing immigration documentation and take steps to obtain biometric passports through the appropriate Russian authorities. Individuals intending to submit new immigration applications or undertake international travel should also consider the applicable transitional deadlines to avoid difficulties arising from the non-recognition of their travel documents.

Switzerland

ZURICH MIGRATION OFFICE OUTLINES REQUIREMENTS FOR FAMILY REUNIFICATION APPLICATIONS

Switzerland's Zurich Migration Office has published guidance outlining the considerations applicable to the assessment of family reunification applications under the relevant immigration framework. The guidance explains the circumstances in which eligible foreign nationals may sponsor qualifying family members and identifies the documentary and substantive requirements applicable to different family reunification categories.

Under the applicable framework, the competent immigration authorities assess whether an application satisfies the prescribed eligibility requirements and whether any circumstances exist that could constitute grounds for revocation of immigration status or indicate an abuse of rights. These considerations include possible revocation grounds, referred to as Widerrufsgründe, and indications that the relevant family reunification entitlement is being exercised improperly.

The guidance addresses several categories of family reunification, including applications submitted by Swiss nationals, foreign nationals holding qualifying residence or settlement permits, and nationals of European Union or European Free Trade Association ("**EU/EFTA**") countries seeking to sponsor family members who are nationals of third countries. In the case of qualifying EU/EFTA nationals, the relevant provisions of the Agreement on the Free Movement of Persons are also taken into consideration.

Depending on the applicable immigration category, applicants may be required to satisfy conditions relating to accommodation, financial resources, dependency, family relationships and the absence of circumstances indicating an abuse of immigration rights. The precise requirements differ according to the sponsor's nationality and immigration status.

It should be noted that the published guidance explains existing administrative assessment requirements and does not, by itself, establish the introduction of a new statutory family reunification regime.

Applicants and sponsoring family members should therefore ensure that the information and supporting documentation submitted accurately establish their eligibility under the relevant category. Particular attention should be given to any circumstances that may raise questions concerning the continued validity of immigration rights or the proper exercise of family reunification entitlements.

Iceland

ICELAND PROPOSES STRICTER PERMANENT RESIDENCE AND FAMILY REUNIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

On October 1, 2026, Iceland's Ministry of Justice published proposed amendments to the country's residence permit legislation aimed at strengthening immigration requirements, particularly for foreign nationals from countries outside the European Economic Area ("**EEA**"). The proposed reforms are intended to bring Iceland's immigration framework into closer alignment with the regulatory approaches adopted in other Nordic jurisdictions.

Under the proposed amendments, the period of qualifying residence required before a foreign national may apply for permanent residence would increase from four (4) years to six (6) years. The Bill also seeks to revise certain age and cohabitation conditions applicable to spouses, including the introduction of a two (2)-year cohabitation requirement, alongside further changes to the conditions governing family reunification applications.

The proposed legislation would also introduce a new residence permit category for individuals who have been victims of labour market offences, while discontinuing the existing residence permit pathway for au pairs from countries outside the EEA. According to the Government, these measures are intended to strengthen immigration controls while improving safeguards for vulnerable foreign nationals, including persons exposed to human trafficking and workplace exploitation.

The proposals follow recommendations issued by a working group established by the Minister of Justice in 2025 to examine areas in which Iceland's immigration legislation and administrative practices differed from those of neighbouring Nordic countries.

It should be noted that the proposed amendments would not invalidate residence permits already issued under the existing framework. In addition, the residence and employment rights enjoyed by EEA nationals would remain unaffected by the contemplated changes.

As the measures remain legislative proposals, the existing immigration requirements continue to apply pending their enactment and commencement. Foreign nationals intending to pursue permanent residence or family reunification in Iceland should nonetheless monitor the progress of the Bill and assess the potential implications of the proposed changes for their immigration plans.

Luxembourg

LUXEMBOURG INTRODUCES MANDATORY PRE-ENTRY VISA PROCEDURE FOR THIRD-COUNTRY NATIONALS SEEKING LONG-TERM RESIDENCE

Effective October 1, 2026, Luxembourg introduced a revised immigration procedure for third-country nationals intending to establish their first period of long-term residence in the country. The new framework replaces the previous procedure requiring an application for temporary authorization to stay with a long-stay visa application process conducted through the competent Luxembourg or Belgian diplomatic or consular mission abroad.

Under the revised arrangements, third-country nationals seeking an initial stay exceeding ninety (90) days are generally required to apply for a Type D long-stay visa before travelling to Luxembourg, irrespective of whether their nationality ordinarily qualifies them for visa-free short-term entry. This represents a departure from the previous framework, under which certain visa-exempt nationals could travel to Luxembourg without completing the same preliminary consular formalities.

The new procedure requires affected applicants to submit their applications through the competent diplomatic or consular mission, or through an authorized external service provider where applicable. Applications will be received and subjected to preliminary checks by the relevant diplomatic mission before being examined by the competent Luxembourg authorities. The final decision on the long-stay visa application remains the responsibility of the Ministry of Home Affairs, through its General Department of Immigration.

It should be noted that the supporting documents required under the new framework depend on the relevant residence category.

Applicants seeking residence for employment, study, family reunification or other qualifying purposes must therefore comply with the applicable category-specific documentary requirements. The time required to process an application may also vary according to the nature and completeness of the application and the relevant administrative procedures.

The revised framework includes transitional arrangements for applications submitted before its commencement. Temporary authorizations to stay issued before October 1, 2026, will remain valid in accordance with their existing terms and conditions. In addition, applications submitted on or before September 30, 2026, will continue to be examined under the previous procedure.

Where an outstanding application submitted before October 1, 2026, is approved, the applicant will receive a notification authorising the submission of a long-stay visa application at the competent consular post. In such circumstances, applicants will not be required to resubmit the supporting documents already examined during the original application process and may proceed by presenting the relevant notification in accordance with the applicable consular procedure.

The change primarily affects third-country nationals seeking an initial qualifying period of long-term residence and does not generally replace the existing procedures applicable to the renewal or modification of valid residence permits. Applicants should nevertheless confirm the requirements applicable to their particular immigration circumstances.

Third-country nationals intending to relocate to Luxembourg for employment, study, family reunification or other long-term residence purposes should therefore review the revised pre-entry requirements and factor the applicable consular arrangements into their relocation plans. Particular attention should also be given to applications submitted before October 1, 2026, to ensure that the relevant transitional procedures are properly followed.

Netherlands

NETHERLANDS INTRODUCES CORRECTIVE ENFORCEMENT MEASURES FOR RECOGNISED SPONSORS

Effective November 1, 2026, the Dutch Immigration and Naturalisation Service (the "**IND**") commenced a one (1)-year pilot introducing alternative enforcement measures for recognised sponsors that fail to comply with certain administrative obligations. The measures are intended to allow employers and other recognised sponsors to correct specified compliance failures before the IND imposes financial penalties.

Under the pilot, the IND may respond to qualifying breaches by contacting the recognised sponsor by telephone, email or letter, by organising information sessions for groups of recognised sponsors, or by inviting the recognised sponsor to a formal enforcement meeting at the IND's offices. Previously, the IND's response to such breaches was generally limited to the issuance of a warning or the imposition of a fine.

The measures apply mainly to breaches of the recognised sponsor's duty to inform and duty to keep records, including failure to report a change in the location where records of foreign nationals are kept, failure to notify the IND of an employee's transfer between sponsors within the same corporate group, failure to report the termination of an employment contract or study programme, reporting failures relating to expired or expiring residence permits, and failure to update records where a foreign national obtains a residence permit under a different category. Recognised sponsors that commit the same listed breach more than twice within a year may be subjected to additional scrutiny.

It should be noted that the pilot does not remove any existing sponsor obligations or exempt recognised sponsors from penalties. The IND may continue to apply its pre-existing policy where a recognised sponsor fails to show willingness to address identified issues, while cases involving fraud, abuse or breaches of the duty of care will remain subject to standard enforcement procedures. At the end of the pilot period, the IND will assess the effectiveness of the measures and determine whether they should be retained or modified.

Oceania

New Zealand

NEW ZEALAND REVISES MINIMUM AGE REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTNERSHIP-BASED VISA APPLICATIONS

Effective September 25, 2026, Immigration New Zealand (the "**INZ**") introduced revised eligibility requirements for foreign nationals applying for visas under designated partnership-based immigration categories. Under the new framework, both the principal applicant and the supporting partner must be at least eighteen (18) years old when the application is made, and evidence of the relationship will generally be considered only in respect of periods during which both parties had attained the prescribed minimum age.

For partnership-based residence applications, the required twelve (12)-month period of cohabitation may only begin to accrue after both partners have reached eighteen (18) years of age. Consequently, applicants will generally need to have attained at least nineteen (19) years of age before satisfying the prescribed cohabitation period for the relevant residence category.

The revised requirements also apply to temporary partnership-based visa categories, although applicants under those categories are not subject to the same mandatory twelve (12)-month cohabitation requirement. Such applicants must nevertheless provide sufficient evidence establishing that their relationship is genuine and stable, with relevant relationship evidence assessed by reference to the period after both parties became eighteen (18) years old.

The changes extend to dedicated partnership-based visitor, employment and residence visa categories, including applications under culturally arranged marriage visa arrangements. However, they do not apply to partners included as secondary applicants under other residence visa categories or to applications submitted under the general visitor visa framework.

It should be noted that the revised minimum age requirement does not otherwise alter the existing eligibility conditions applicable to partnership-based immigration applications. In addition, residence visa applications submitted before September 25, 2026, and visas already granted before the commencement of the revised rules remain unaffected.

Prospective applicants and supporting partners should therefore review the updated eligibility requirements before submitting new applications, particularly where the relationship commenced before either party attained eighteen (18) years of age. Applicants are also advised to consult the latest INZ guidance, as the relevant electronic application forms and supporting administrative materials may not immediately reflect the revised requirements.

Conclusion

Recent immigration developments across the jurisdictions examined reflect a continued emphasis on digitalization, strengthened regulatory compliance and the refinement of entry and residence requirements. Governments continue to balance the facilitation of international mobility against public health, immigration integrity and domestic labour market priorities. Most notably, the Ebola Virus Disease ("EVD") outbreak has led to a rapid rise in health-related entry requirements, many of which took immediate effect and may be revised at short notice. Affected individuals and organizations are therefore encouraged to review their immigration arrangements, confirm current entry requirements before travel and monitor further regulatory developments to ensure continued compliance.

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.

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