



GLOBAL IMMIGRATION TRENDS – May 2025

Introduction

This global migration summary outlines the latest updates and trends in immigration policies, emphasizing changes across different regions across the world and their implications for Nigerians that intend to apply for immigrant and non-immigrant visas.

Asia

Saudi Arabia

TEMPORARY SUSPENSION OF SHORT-TERM VISAS FOR FOURTEEN (14) COUNTRIES

Effective April 13, 2025, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) has temporarily suspended the issuance of short-term visas to nationals of fourteen (14) countries including Nigeria, Algeria, Bangladesh, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Jordan, Libya, Morocco, Pakistan, Sudan, Tunisia and Yemen.

The suspension has been implemented by the KSA Government to manage the influx of travelers during the Hajj season. The affected short term visa categories include also include Business visit visas (single and multiple entry), E-tourist visas, and Family visit visas.

The restriction is expected to remain in place until the 20th of Dhul Hijjah on the Islamic calendar, corresponding to mid-June 2025. Visa issuance to nationals of the affected countries is anticipated to resume thereafter.

Thailand

INTRODUCTION OF DIGITAL ARRIVAL CARD REQUIREMENT

Effective May 1, 2025, Thailand has implemented a new mandatory entry requirement for all foreign nationals - the Thailand Digital Arrival Card (TDAC).

This digital form replaces the previously used paper TM6 form and must be completed by all foreign travelers, regardless of visa type, purpose of visit, or intended duration of stay. The TDAC must be submitted at least three days prior to arrival in Thailand in order to ensure legal entry into the country.

Exemptions apply only to:

- Travelers who are transiting or transferring through Thailand without passing through immigration control; and
- Individuals entering Thailand using a Border Pass.

Foreign nationals who do not fall within these exempt categories are required to complete the TDAC before arriving at a Thai port of entry.

Philippines

LAUNCH OF DIGITAL NOMAD VISA

On April 28, 2025, the Philippine government introduced the Digital Nomad Visa (DNV) program under Executive Order No. 86.

This new visa category is designed for foreign nationals over Eighteen (18) years who wish to work and reside temporarily in the country while working remotely for employers or clients based outside the Philippines. The DNV is valid for an initial period of one (1) year, allows multiple entries, and can be renewed upon expiration. To be eligible, interested applicants must fulfil several requirements including:

- Proof of remote work using digital technology
- Demonstration of adequate income generated from sources outside the Philippines
- A clean criminal record
- Valid health insurance covering the entire duration of stay
- Non-engagement in local employment within the Philippines

The visa is only available to citizens of countries that offer reciprocal digital nomad visa arrangements to Filipinos and maintain a Philippine Foreign Service Post.

The pilot rollout of the program is scheduled to begin within sixty (60) days of the Executive Order's effective date. The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), in collaboration with the Bureau of Immigration (BI), Department of Justice, Department of Tourism, and Bureau of Internal Revenue, will oversee the issuance and administration of the visas. Comprehensive guidelines on the procedure for issuance, renewal, and revocation of the digital nomad visa are currently in development and are expected to be released within thirty (30) days from the effective date of the Executive Order.

Find more:

<https://nomadvisamalta.com/philippines-unveils-digital-nomad-visa-to-attract-global-remote-workers-4/>

Kazakhstan

NEW VISA OPTIONS AND PERMANENT RESIDENCE PATHWAY FOR DIGITAL NOMADS

Kazakhstan has launched a new visa category for digital professionals; the Digital Nomad Visa (B9-1), as part of its broader Digital Nomad Residency Program. The B9-1 visa is designed to attract highly sought after IT professionals, offering the opportunity to reside and work in the country for up to ten (10) years.

Applicants can complete the process online through the official government portal and obtain preliminary residency approval without travelling to Kazakhstan. It is important to note that dependents cannot be sponsored under this visa type.

The visa permits an initial stay of up to one (1) year at a time, with the possibility of renewal as allowed under the terms of the visa. A defining feature of this visa is the opportunity for holders to transition to permanent residency, making it an attractive option for digital professionals seeking a long-term relocation pathway.





Travelers from these countries must now obtain an electronic visa (e-visa) prior to boarding a flight to Brazil. The e-visa permits stays of up to ninety (90) days per year and is accessible through Brazil's official online application platform. The application process is designed to be straightforward and efficient, with most approved applicants receiving their e-visas within a few days of submission, once all requirements are met.

Find more:

<https://www.gov.br/mre/pt-br/consulado-miami/information-about-visas-in-english>

Oceania

Australia

AUSTRALIA SET TO INCREASE INCOME THRESHOLD FOR SKILLED WORKER VISAS

Australia is set to implement key changes to its skilled migration salary policies starting from July 1, 2025, to ensure foreign labor compensation aligns with market expectations and to protect domestic wages.

The following changes will be made:

- The Core Skills Income Threshold (CSIT) will rise from Seventy-Three Thousand, One Hundred and Fifty Australian Dollars (AUD73,150) to Seventy-Six Thousand, Five Hundred and Fifteen Australian Dollars (AUD76,515), impacting nomination applications for the Core Skills stream of the Skills in Demand visa (subclass 482) and the Employer Nomination Scheme visa (subclass 186).
- The Specialist Skills Income Threshold (SSIT) will increase from One Hundred and Thirty-five Thousand Australian Dollars (AUD135,000) to One Hundred and Forty-One Thousand, Two Hundred and Ten Australian Dollars (AUD141,210), affecting nomination applications for the Specialist Skills stream of the Skills in Demand visa (Subclass 482).
- The Temporary Skilled Migration Income Threshold (TSMIT) used for Skilled Employer Sponsored Regional visa (subclass 494) and the Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme (RSMS) (subclass 187) will rise from Seventy-Three Thousand, One Hundred and Fifty Australian Dollars (AUD73,150) to Seventy-Six Thousand, Five Hundred and Fifteen Australian Dollars (AUD76,515).
- Australia's Superannuation Guarantee will also rise from eleven-point five percent (11.5%) to twelve percent (12%).

Consequently, employers are to ensure that salaries meet the new threshold. The stipulated changes will however not affect existing visa holders or applications submitted before July 1, 2025.

Find more here:

<https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/newsmedia/archive/article?itemId=1308>

Europe

United Kingdom

REVISED IMMIGRATION POLICY: INCREASE IN VISA FEES AND SHORT-TERM CHANGES TO STUDENT VISA ROUTE

The Government of the United Kingdom (UK) has announced changes to its immigration policy, including an increase in visa application fees, effective April 9, 2025. The revised fees apply to a range of categories, including long- and short-term work visas, visitor visas, student visas, and sponsorship applications submitted both within and outside the UK.

In addition to the fee adjustments, several substantive policy changes will take effect on the same date. Notably, care providers in England intending to sponsor foreign workers must now demonstrate that they have made reasonable efforts to recruit eligible local residents prior to offering sponsorship. Furthermore, the minimum hourly wage for Skilled Workers including those in care roles has been increased to twelve pounds and eighty-two pence (£12.82).

The updated rules also empower the Home Office to refuse Short-Term Student visa applications that are assessed as non-genuine, as part of broader efforts to maintain the integrity of the immigration system and curb potential abuse.

Find more:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/visa-regulations-revised-table/home-office-immigration-and-nationality-fees-9-april-2025>

UK LAUNCHES WHITE PAPER TO EFFECT MAJOR IMMIGRATION REFORMS

On 12 May 2025, the UK Government laid before Parliament a landmark policy document titled Restoring Control over the Immigration System White Paper, setting out sweeping reforms intended to reduce net migration, tighten visa requirements, and align immigration policy more closely with national labour market objectives. Key highlights include:

- **Skilled Worker Route Reforms:** The minimum skill level rises from RQF Level 3 (A-level equivalent) to RQF Level 6 (degree-level), disqualifying over 180 occupations, particularly in care, hospitality, and logistics. The salary threshold increases to £38,700, and the Immigration Salary List is abolished. Transitional provisions apply to existing sub-degree visa holders, but new applicants face tougher standards.
- **Temporary Shortage List:** In place of the existing Shortage Occupation List, the UK government will introduce a new Temporary Shortage List (TSL) for roles at RQF levels 3 to 5. Occupations will only be eligible for inclusion on this list if there is demonstrable alignment with government-backed workforce strategies, credible investment in domestic training, and adherence to fair employment standards. Furthermore, roles on the TSL will be subject to a number of restrictions, including limitations on bringing dependants, higher minimum salary thresholds, and enhanced English language requirements. The Migration Advisory Committee will oversee which roles qualify for inclusion, the duration of that inclusion, and the imposition of visa caps.
- **Closure of Health and Care Worker Visa Route:** From 2025, overseas applicants will no longer be eligible to apply for care-related positions such as care workers or senior care workers under this route. Existing visa holders in this category will be allowed to extend or switch their visas until 2028. The government's justification for this closure rests on the over-reliance on low-wage migrant labour within the sector and broader concerns over substandard employment conditions. In its place, the UK government intends to introduce Fair Pay Agreements that will set minimum employment standards and incentivise domestic recruitment and retention. This change is likely to present immediate staffing challenges for care providers, who must now pivot to sourcing labour from within the UK workforce.
- **Family Migration Rules Tightened:** From early 2026, the minimum income requirement to sponsor a partner under the five-year family route will increase to £38,700, aligning with Skilled Worker thresholds. This revised threshold will apply to all British citizens, settled persons, and skilled persons seeking to sponsor migrants. A staged English language requirement is also being introduced for all adult dependants.
- **Introduction of "Earned Settlement Model":** The qualifying period for most work and long-stay categories will be extended from five to ten years. Under this framework, applicants will accumulate points based on factors such as employment in critical sectors, active community participation, and demonstrable English language skills. While the government will retain accelerated pathways for certain groups including family members, refugees, and vulnerable migrants. The broader aim is to tie permanent residence more directly to measurable contribution.
- **Study Route and Graduate Visa:** From 2025, only PhD and research-based students will be permitted to bring dependants. Educational institutions will be required to meet stricter compliance benchmarks, maintaining a minimum 95 percent enrolment rate and a 90 percent course completion rate in order to retain their sponsorship licences. The Graduate Route, which currently permits international students to remain in the UK post-study for up to two years (three years for PhD holders), is under review. Proposed changes may also include the introduction of eligibility limits, mandatory job offers for visa access, or numerical caps on visa issuance, with a decision expected by the end of 2025. These measures are intended to ensure that the UK's student visa system prioritises academic achievement rather than serving as a conduit for long-term migration.





Find more:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/restoring-control-over-the-immigration-system-white-paper>

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6821aec3f16c0654b19060ac/restoring-control-over-the-immigration-system-white-paper.pdf>

Sweden

RESUMPTION OF SWEDISH RESIDENCE & WORK PERMIT SERVICES IN PAKISTAN

The Swedish Migration Agency has resumed the provision of residence and work permit services in Pakistan. Applicants requiring biometric enrolment, passport verification, or interviews after submitting their applications can now complete these steps at the Embassy of Sweden in Islamabad, Pakistan.

This change represents a notable improvement from the earlier process, which required applicants to travel to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, for such processes.

This update applies specifically to Pakistani citizens and individuals with residency in Pakistan who have been directed by the Swedish Migration Agency to visit a Swedish embassy for follow-up procedures such as interviews, passport checks, or biometric enrollment.

Find more:

<https://iccimmigration.ca/sweden-resumes-residence-work-permit-services-in-pakistan-what-you-need-to-know/>

Spain

SPAIN ENDS GOLDEN VISA PROGRAM

Spain formally abolished its Golden Visa program on April 3, 2025. The defunct program allowed non-EU nationals to gain residency by investing in Spanish real estate. Launched in 2013, the 12-year program granted residency to individuals who invested a minimum of Five Hundred Thousand Euros (€500,000) in property.

The decision came amid growing political and public concern over housing affordability. The Spanish government noted that increased foreign investment had driven up property prices, limiting housing access for local citizens.

The Spanish Congress of Deputies voted to abolish the program in December 2024. The corresponding legislation was published in the Official State Gazette on January 3, 2025, and included a three-month transition period, culminating in the program's formal termination on April 3, 2025.

Africa

Tanzania

VISA-FREE ENTRY FOR ANGOLAN NATIONALS

Effective April 8, 2025, Tanzania has implemented visa-free entry for citizens of Angola travelling for tourism purposes. Under the new policy, eligible Angolan nationals may enter and stay in Tanzania for up to ninety (90) days per calendar year without the need to obtain a visa in advance.

This move reciprocates Angola's earlier waiver of visa requirements for Tanzanian nationals and reflects ongoing efforts to enhance regional mobility within the Southern African Development Community (SADC). The exemption applies **exclusively to tourism**. All eligible travelers must present valid passports and satisfy standard entry conditions upon arrival.

The development aligns with broader regional integration goals under the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and is expected to support tourism and bilateral cooperation in sectors such as agriculture, industry, and the blue economy.

Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)

DRC ENDS VISA-FREE ENTRY FOR ZIMBABWEAN NATIONALS; NEW ENTRY BARRIERS AFFECT CROSS-BORDER TRANSPORT

Effective April 2025, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) officially revoked its visa-free entry policy for Zimbabwean nationals, introducing a mandatory Fifty United States Dollars (\$50) entry visa effective immediately. This shift replaces a previously operational bilateral agreement that allowed for easier cross-border movement, particularly for those in the transport and mining logistics sectors.

A prior Memorandum of Understanding that had exempted truck drivers has been withdrawn without warning or stakeholder consultation. Consequently, Zimbabwean truck drivers who are key players in freight operations to and from the Haut Katanga mining region are now subject to this requirement. The visa is valid for thirty (30) days from the date of entry.

Liberia

LIBERIA INTRODUCES E-VISA ON ARRIVAL

Liberia has implemented a new Electronic Visa on Arrival (e-VoA) system effective March 11, 2025. Under this system, eligible international travelers arriving by air can apply for a visa online prior to departure and receive their visa upon arrival at Monrovia-Roberts International Airport. Applicants are required to create an account on the official Liberia Immigration Service portal, upload necessary documents (passport biodata page, passport-sized photograph, and airline ticket), complete the online application form, and pay applicable visa fees.

Upon arrival in Liberia, travelers must present their printed approval document with a QR code, undergo biometric verification (including fingerprints and facial scan), and then receive a visa endorsement in their passport. The e-VoA is valid for single entry and permits a stay of either thirty (30) or ninety (90) days depending on approval.

Travelers requiring multiple entries must apply for a separate Re-Entry Permit online. Nationals of ECOWAS countries remain exempt from visa requirements under regional agreements. However, nationals of twenty-three (23) countries with Liberian diplomatic missions including the **United States, United Kingdom, China, France, Nigeria, Ghana, and South Africa**¹ must apply for a visa through those missions and are not eligible for the e-VoA.

Nigeria

REFORMATION OF IMMIGRATION POLICIES: IMPOSITION OF PENALTIES FOR OVERSTAY

The Nigerian government has announced major immigration policy reforms aimed at reducing visa overstays and enhancing national security. These changes were presented by Minister of Interior Olubunmi Tunji-Ojo during a stakeholders' forum on April 11, 2025.

Key highlights of the new policy:

- Fifteen United States Dollars (\$15) daily fine for overstays
- Five (5) year ban for overstay of three (3) months, and ten (10) years for overstays of one (1) year or more
- The policy takes effect on May 1, 2025, with a three (3) month moratorium until August 1, 2025, allowing foreigners to regularize their visa status without incurring penalties before strict enforcement begins in August 2025.

NIGERIA SET TO LAUNCH E-VISA

In line with its commitment to enhancing ease of travel, investment, and tourism, Nigeria has officially launched its E-Visa system under the 2025 Visa Policy. This new digital platform enables eligible foreign nationals to apply for and obtain a Nigerian visa electronically, eliminating the need for in-person visits to Nigerian embassies or consulates.

1. Other countries include Belgium, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Germany, Guinea, Italy, Japan, Kuwait, Morocco, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone.





Key Features of the Nigerian E-Visa System

- **Online Processing:** Applications are submitted through the official portal: <https://evisa.immigration.gov.ng>.
- **Fast Turnaround:** Applicants can expect a decision within 48 hours of submission.
- **Validity Period:** The e-Visa is valid for 30 to 90 days, depending on the visa category.
- **Electronic Confirmation:** Successful applicants receive an e-Visa approval or confirmation letter via email, which must be printed and presented upon arrival in Nigeria.

Eligible Visa Categories

The e-Visa applies to a wide range of short-term travel purposes, including:

- Transit Visa
- Business – Single Entry Visa
- Business – Multiple Entry Visa\
- Business – Frequently Travelled Business Executives
- Tourism Visa
- Sports Visa
- Creative Arts Visa
- Study Tour Visa
- Academic Exchange Programme Visa (for students, scholars, lecturers)
- International Cultural Exchange Visa
- Emergency/Relief Work Visa
- Visas for Returning Nigerians Holding Foreign Passports
- Visiting Visa – Single Entry

How to apply for a Nigerian Evisa

- Visit the official e-Visa portal
- Register an account: provide basic information and create login credentials.
- Select visa category
- Complete the application form
- Upload required documents: depending on the visa type, this may include invitation letters, bank statements, hotel reservations, passport bio-data page, etc.
- Pay the visa fee

- Wait for approval: applicants will receive updates via email. If approved, an e-Visa approval letter or visa approval confirmation will be issued.
- Obtain entry: print out the confirmation and carry it with you to Nigeria. Upon arrival, you may receive a visa sticker or endorsement in your passport, or endorsement in your passport, or in some cases, an electronic entry stamp.

Find more here:

https://www.bloomfield-law.com/sites/default/files/2025-05/blp_immigration_client_alert_expatriate_administration_system_copy.pdf

North America

United States

US EMBASSY IN NIGERIA INTRODUCES NEW REQUIREMENTS FOR VISA INTERVIEWS

The United States has introduced updated requirements for visa interviews in Nigeria, effective April 22, 2025. Under the new policy, all applicants attending interviews in Abuja and Lagos must present a DS-160 visa application form (DS-160 form) with a confirmation/barcode number (starting with AA and ending with 00-two zeros) that matches the one used to make their appointment online when attending the visa interview.

Applicants must also ensure that the location for their appointment corresponds with the location selected on the DS-160 form.

Failure to present a matching barcode number may result in denial of entry to the consular section or being unable to attend the interview.

In cases where the DS-160 barcode does not match the appointment, applicants should log into their Applicant Visa Information Tracking System (AVITS) account at least 10 days before their interview to submit a support ticket requesting correction. Reusing a DS-160 form from a previous application is not permitted.

If an applicant is turned away due to a mismatch in barcode numbers, they must resolve the issue and reschedule a new appointment before continuing the visa process.

Find more:

[New Requirement For Visa Interviews - April 11, 2025 - U.S. Embassy and Consulate in Nigeria](#)

Conclusion

A consistent feature of global immigration developments is the dynamic and evolving nature of visa policies. Increasingly, countries are adopting more flexible entry requirements, particularly for work, business, and tourism-related travel. While many of these changes reflect a broader trend toward liberalization, the underlying motivations vary significantly across jurisdictions, often influenced by each country's unique economic conditions, labor needs, and strategic interests.

Ultimately, immigration policies, whether permissive or restrictive are shaped by domestic policy objectives and reflect shifting national priorities. As such, individuals and organizations are encouraged to stay updated on these developments and consult qualified professionals to navigate the implications effectively.

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

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

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

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