

Federal Ministry of Interior Announces Major Innovations in Expatriate Administration and Visa Policy

Introduction

On 30 June 2025, the Minister of Interior, Dr. Olubunmi Tunji-Ojo, announced a series of major innovations in visa and expatriate administration during a stakeholder sensitization workshop jointly organized by the Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS) and the Federal Ministry of Interior. These reforms are detailed in the newly released Guide to Nigeria Immigration Processes 2025, a comprehensive document outlining key advancements developed by the Ministry and the NIS.

According to the Minister, the innovations form part of the Ministry's broader reform programme, aimed at leveraging cutting-edge technology to streamline service delivery within the NIS and align Nigeria's immigration processes with global best practices.

Also speaking at the event, the Comptroller General of the Nigeria Immigration Service (CGIS), Mrs. Kemi Nana Nandap, highlighted that the NIS is undergoing a digital transformation to ensure a seamless and user-friendly interface for immigration services. She noted that this shift is already evident in the full implementation of the e-visa scheme, with additional initiatives such as the e-CERPAC and e-Gates set to be launched soon.

This event follows the earlier announcement of reforms in expatriate administration and visa policy made by Dr. Tunji-Ojo at a stakeholder sensitization forum organized by the Nigeria Employers' Consultative Association (NECA) on 11 April 2025. Please refer to our earlier publication [here](#) for more details on those reforms.



VISA

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Key Highlights of the Guide to Nigeria Immigration Processes 2025

The Nigeria e-Visa Scheme

The guide contains some information on the new e-Visa scheme, which was launched on 1 May 2025. The various categories of visas under the e-Visa scheme are listed while the application procedure is also contained in the guide. It is expected that the NIS will issue a detailed guideline containing the revised Nigeria Visa Policy 2025 in due course.

Automation of the Temporary Work Permit (TWP) Application Process

An online platform has been developed to streamline the processing of Temporary Work Permit (TWP) applications. The TWP is a short-term visa issued to foreign professionals invited by Nigerian corporate organizations to deliver specialized, high-level services. Prior to this innovation, TWP requests were submitted via email to a designated address, with approval letters sent back to applicants upon approval.

Under the new system, applicants must first register on the portal, after which they can submit their requests through the official NIS website at <https://twp.immigration.gov.ng>.

Introduction of the e-CERPAC

The Combined Expatriate Residence Permit and Aliens Card (CERPAC) scheme, which applies to non-ECOWAS nationals residing in Nigeria, is being transitioned to a fully electronic platform. The e-CERPAC will be accessible to expatriates prior to their arrival in Nigeria and before the issuance of the relevant visa. This document will serve as an entry permit valid for 30 days. Upon arrival, the expatriate will be issued a green card, completing the process. This innovation is expected to eliminate the need for post-arrival regularization, as the e-CERPAC is processed and issued in advance.

The same procedure applies to accompanying spouses and dependants aged 18 and above, while minors under 18 years are exempt from the e-CERPAC requirement. This transition to electronic platform would eliminate the current practice of purchasing CERPAC forms from designated bank branches and replace it with a digital e-CERPAC document.

Introduction of Expatriate Comprehensive Insurance

An insurance scheme has been introduced to cover the cost of repatriating expatriates, coming to Nigeria for work related purposes. In addition to repatriation, the scheme is designed to provide coverage for medical

emergencies, security-related incidents, and other unforeseen events.

The annual premium for this insurance will vary based on the duration of the expatriate's stay, ranging from \$500 to \$1,000. It is important to note that this fee is non-refundable.

The Nigeria Certified Immigration Agent (NCIA) Framework

In line with its commitment to a secure, transparent, and efficient migration management, the NIS is developing the Nigeria Certified Immigration Agent (NCIA) framework. This initiative is designed to:

- Enhance the integrity of immigration processes
- Safeguard applicants from exploitation
- Professionalize visa facilitation services
- Strengthen compliance with legal and regulatory standards
- Regulate the volume of applications handled by each agent.

Through the NCIA, the NIS aims to foster greater accountability and improve the overall quality of immigration service delivery.



Introduction of Online Landing and Exit Cards

Travellers entering or departing Nigeria are required to complete an online landing and exit card application. This initiative is part of the Nigeria Immigration Service's efforts to enhance border management by enabling more effective monitoring of travellers' duration of stay and identifying individuals who overstay their permitted time in the country.

Amnesty Program

The NIS has introduced an amnesty program to allow foreigners currently residing illegally in the country to regularize their immigration status. A portal, which should be launched in July 2025, will be utilized to process requests from individuals who may have violated the terms of their entry.

The initiative primarily targets individuals holding all types of expired single and multiple entry visas (Visa on Arrival / Business Visa) and expired CERPAC. The end date of the amnesty program had been initially set as 31 July 2025, but this may be extended by the Ministry given that the programme has not yet been fully launched. Upon expiration of the amnesty period, expatriates still found defaulting will be liable to a fine or possible deportation.

It is important to note that certain visa categories are excluded from the amnesty program. For individuals not covered by amnesty, they must ensure timely renewal or extension to avoid penalties or immigration sanctions. Details on exempt visa categories can be found on www.immigration.gov.ng/expired-visa-holders.

Introduction of e-Gates

The NIS has deployed Automated Border Control Systems, commonly known as e-Gates, at major international entry and exit points across the country. These systems are designed to facilitate faster, more secure, and contactless immigration clearance for eligible Nigerian passport holders.

While the e-Gates streamline the clearance process, additional checks may still be conducted, when necessary, particularly in cases requiring further document verification or security screening.

ECOWAS National Biometric Card (ENBIC)

The ENBIC is a regional identification initiative set to replace the current ECOWAS travel certificate, which has traditionally served only as a travel document within the region. The ENBIC introduces a more secure, versatile, and integrated solution for identification, travel, and residency across all ECOWAS member states.

The card is designed to serve dual purposes:

1. As a national identity card for citizens within their home countries.
2. As a regional travel document and residence permit, enabling holders to live and work freely across ECOWAS countries without the need for additional visas or permits for stays exceeding 90 days.



Commentary

The Federal Ministry of Interior's continued push to digitalize the NIS operations is commendable, considering the longstanding challenges users have faced with the manual processing of immigration facilities such as residence permits.

However, there is still a need for clearer guidance on the transition timelines for several of the newly introduced initiatives, particularly the e-CERPAC. This is especially important for expatriates who currently hold valid residence permits issued under the existing system. Providing timely and detailed information on how the transition will be managed is essential to ensure a smooth and coordinated migration to the new platform.

Furthermore, concerns remain about the Nigeria Immigration Service's (NIS) readiness to fully implement these reforms, given the technical challenges encountered during the rollout of the e-Visa scheme earlier this year. To ensure a smooth and effective transition, it is essential that the Ministry invests in robust infrastructure and skilled personnel capable of supporting the new systems and minimizing potential disruptions.

During the recent stakeholder sensitization programme, the specific commencement dates for several of the announced reforms were not clearly outlined. Although the Minister indicated that implementation would begin in the coming weeks, stakeholders would greatly benefit from defined timelines to ensure adequate preparation, planning, and compliance with the new processes.

To ensure the success of these reforms, the Ministry should also consider collaborating with the organized private sector to host regular post-implementation engagement sessions. These forums would provide an avenue for stakeholders to raise concerns, share feedback, and work collaboratively with the government to resolve emerging issues.

In the meantime, stakeholders are strongly encouraged to stay informed and seek expert guidance to navigate the evolving immigration landscape. KPMG remains well-positioned to provide the necessary support and advisory services to ensure compliance and effective adaptation to these reforms.

For further enquiries, please contact:

Adewale Ajayi

ng-fmtaxenquiries@ng.kpmg.com

home.kpmg/ng
home.kpmg/socialmedia



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