



# Immigration News Highlights

2025-39, 30 September 2025



The KPMG team regularly monitors recent developments across the globe in the Immigration space and publishes them as Immigration News Highlights. Please find the key developments that occurred over the last week enumerated below. [Click here to find all issues of the Immigration News Highlights on the GMS Flash Alert: Immigration page.](#)

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## Americas

### Canada

Canada introduces AI-based Travel Compliance Indicator (TCI) for screening at land ports of entry

The Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) has begun using a new AI-powered screening tool, the TCI, at six undisclosed land ports of entry. Announced on 25 September 2025, the TCI assigns travelers a compliance score based on factors such as travel history, identification type, and vehicle details, helping officers decide on secondary examinations. The tool aims to reduce false positives and improve processing efficiency. CBSA plans to expand the TCI to all land POEs by late 2027, with future implementation at air and seaports.

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## Chile

### Chile introduces visa requirement for nationals of 104 countries; Australia exempted

The Chilean Decree has implemented Decree No. 359 requiring nationals from 104 countries to obtain prior authorization or a visa to enter and stay under the Temporary Stay Permit category. The measure, enacted under Article 27(2) of Law No. 21.325, is based on national interest and international reciprocity. Australia is exempted due to reciprocal arrangements. The regulation aims to promote safe and orderly migration and may impact travel planning and compliance for businesses, educational institutions, and NGOs. Applications must be processed through Chilean consulates abroad, with oversight by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the National Migration Service.

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## United States

### United States reports substantial decline in certified H-2B visa positions for second half of FY 2025

The United States Department of Labor reported a significant drop in certified H-2B visa positions for the second half of fiscal year 2025. As of 20 September 2025, only 549 positions were certified for employment starting dates from 1 April 2025. For the 1 October 2025 to 31 March 2026 period, 50,225 positions were certified. The Office of Foreign Labor Certification also noted 3,159 pending prevailing wage determination requests from August. These figures reflect shifting demand and processing trends in the H-2B visa program.

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### United States updates military naturalization guidance to exclude uncharacterized discharges issued after August 2024

United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) updated its policy on 26 September 2025 to clarify that uncharacterized military discharges issued on or after 01 August 2024 do not meet the “under honorable conditions” requirement for naturalization under Sections 328 and 329 of the Immigration and Nationality Act. The update aligns with changes to Department of War regulations and affects eligibility for former alien service members. USCIS also announced it will no longer conduct naturalization interviews or oath ceremonies at ports of entry, requiring veterans abroad to enter the United States via visa or parole for processing.

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### United States introduces visa bond requirement for select countries based on overstay rates

The US Department of State has implemented a visa bond requirement for nationals of The Gambia, Malawi, and Zambia, effective on various dates in 2025. Under INA Section 221(g)(3) and a Temporary Final Rule, eligible B1/B2 visa applicants must post a bond ranging from US\$5,000 to US\$15,000, determined during the visa interview. Compliance includes entering and exiting through designated ports and submitting Form I-352 via Pay.gov. Bonds are refundable if visa conditions are met; breaches may trigger enforcement actions by USCIS.

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## [United States government shutdown may disrupt immigration services; US Department of Labor \(DOL\) systems at risk](#)

The Government of the United States may face a federal shutdown starting 1 October 2025, which could disrupt immigration-related services. While fee-funded agencies like USCIS and the Department of State are expected to continue operations, services such as E-Verify and Department of Labor systems (including FLAG and PERM processing) may be suspended. Employers are advised to file time-sensitive applications before 30 September and prepare for delays. The shutdown may also affect employment-based applications at ports of entry. Agencies will continue to provide updates on operational changes.

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## Asia Pacific

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### India

#### [India to replace paper arrival cards with digital e-arrival system for foreign nationals](#)

The Ministry of Home Affairs announced that starting 01 October 2025, foreign travelers arriving at Indian airports will no longer be required to fill out physical disembarkation cards. Instead, they can submit a digital arrival card via the Bureau of Immigration website, Indian Visa portal, or the official mobile app up to 72 hours before arrival. The move aims to streamline immigration procedures and reduce paperwork. The physical card will remain available for a limited transition period of up to six months.

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### New Zealand

#### [Revised Memorandum of Understanding aimed at enhancing inbound tourism from China](#)

Immigration New Zealand and Tourism New Zealand have signed an updated Memorandum of Understanding with selected Chinese travel agents to streamline visitor visa processing under the Approved Destination Status and Free and Independent Traveller scheme. The agreement reinforces New Zealand's commitment to strengthening tourism ties with China, including a reduced 5-day visa turnaround for trusted agents. It also expands eligibility to include incentive trips, events, and study tours. Complementary visa settings—such as five-year multiple entry visas and upcoming NZeTA-based travel from Australia—further enhance New Zealand's appeal to Chinese travellers.

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#### [New Zealand's active investor plus visa programme](#)

New Zealand's Active Investor Plus Visa is designed to attract high-value investors who actively contribute to business growth and innovation. Recent changes introduced two investment categories—Growth and Balanced—simplifying the process and broadening eligible investment types. Since April 2025, 348 applications representing over NZD2.1 billion in potential investment have been received, with 62 resident visas granted and NZD398.9 million already committed. The updated visa settings also remove language requirements and reduce residency obligations, making New Zealand a more attractive destination for global investors.

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## Philippines

### [Philippines expands electronic visa \(e-Visa\) access to additional European countries](#)

On 29 September 2025, the Philippines expanded its e-Visa system to nationals of France, Austria, Greece, and the Netherlands. While citizens of these countries already benefit from 30-day visa-free entry, they can apply online for a Temporary Visitor Visa allowing stays of up to 59 days. This marks the first European expansion of the e-Visa program, which previously covered select Asian, African, and Gulf countries. The update supports streamlined travel for tourism and business, with processing times ranging from 7 to 21 business days depending on visa type.

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## South Korea

### [South Korea announces K-Star visa to attract global science and technology talent](#)

South Korea's Ministry of Justice launched the Korea Science and Technology Advanced Human Resources (K-Star) visa on 25 September 2025 to attract top global talent in STEM fields. The visa enables international graduates from 20 designated universities to apply for the F-2 resident visa without employment requirements if recommended as 'excellent talent'. It also reduces the required period of stay for permanent residency from six years to three years, streamlining the path for high-skilled individuals in science and technology.

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## Europe and Africa

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## Saudi Arabia

### [Saudi Arabia updates Umrah visa rules for 2025, mandates hotel and transport pre-bookings](#)

Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Hajj and Umrah announced new visa requirements for Umrah 2025, making confirmed hotel and local transport bookings mandatory before applying for a visa. Pilgrims must book accommodation and transfers through the official Nusuk platform or licensed agents. The move aims to reduce fraud, improve safety, and streamline the pilgrimage experience. The updated process aligns with Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 goals and encourages early planning to avoid delays or rejections.

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## Namibia

### [Namibia expands visa-on-arrival eligibility to 36 additional countries](#)

The Ministry of Home Affairs, Immigration, Safety and Security has expanded its visa-on-arrival program to include 36 additional countries, integrated into the country's electronic visa (e-Visa) portal. The move supports efforts to boost tourism and streamline entry procedures. While travelers may still apply at the border, authorities are encouraging online applications by announcing a forthcoming fee increase for manual submissions. The new surcharge aims to improve border efficiency and reduce administrative delays.

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## United Arab Emirates

The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) to launch unified tourist visa in Q4 2025 to boost regional mobility

The GCC will launch a pilot phase of its unified tourist visa—known as the GCC Grand Tourist Visa—in Q4 2025. This Schengen-style visa will allow travel across all six GCC countries (UAE, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman, and Kuwait) on a single permit. The initiative aims to boost regional tourism, business travel, and economic integration. Full implementation will follow after coordination with relevant authorities, with further details on visa cost and duration to be announced.

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## United Kingdom

United Kingdom proposes contribution-based settlement model with 10-year residency requirement

The UK Home Office announced a proposed contribution-based model for Indefinite Leave to Remain on 29 September 2025, aimed at reducing net migration and improving integration. Under the new framework, migrants must reside lawfully in the UK for a minimum of 10 years, with reductions possible for meeting earnings or integration benchmarks. Applicants must demonstrate employment, National Insurance contributions, English proficiency, a clean criminal record, and community involvement. The proposal will undergo public consultation before implementation.

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**Thomas Wolf**  
Head of KPMG's Global  
Immigration Network  
T: +49 30 530 199-300  
E: [twolf@kpmg-law.com](mailto:twolf@kpmg-law.com)



[social.kpmg](#)



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