

# Nigeria Immigration Service Issues New Visa Policy

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## Background

The Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS) on 4 February 2020 launched the Nigeria Visa Policy 2020 (NVP 2020). The new policy is designed to facilitate economic activities and in turn economic development and national security.

The NVP 2020 expands the classes of visas from the current six to 79 classes. The new classes are categorized into three:

- **Short Visit Visas** (28 classes): These allow foreigners to visit Nigeria for a period of up to 3 months, for the purpose of tourism and short business meetings, amongst others.
- **Temporary Residence Visas** (36 classes): These allow individuals to reside in Nigeria for the purposes of employment, accompanying employed migrants and schooling, amongst others.
- **Permanent residence Visas** (15 classes): these confer permanent residence status on spouses of Nigerian citizens, Nigerians by birth who have renounced their

Nigerian citizenship, and their spouses, investors who import an annual minimum threshold of capital, highly skilled individuals and some classes of retirees.

## Visa Application Channels

The NVP 2020 contains three channels via which foreigners can apply for Nigerian visas:

### Visa on Arrival (VoA):

This channel is open to citizens of countries who fall into the category of frequent business travelers, tourists, emergency relief workers, returning holders of other national passports who are Nigerian by birth; and holders of passports of African Union (AU) countries. The application for this Visa can be done at the Nigerian port of entry, where the visitor makes a payment online, via the NIS's website, undergoes biometric enrolment and is issued the entry visa.

### Electronic Visa (e-Visa):

This service is an online process that allows intending visitors apply online, via the NIS's website and obtain a pre-approval before coming to the country. The e-visa channel is available for a larger class of Short Visit Visas compared to the Visa on Arrival channel.

The basic requirements for this application channel are a valid passport, return ticket, evidence of sufficient funds and hotel reservation/ host address.

## Visa at the Nigerian Mission or Visa Application Center:

All classes of visas can be processed at the Nigerian Mission or authorized Visa Application Centers. The relevant application can be filled on the NIS website and payment can be made online. Documents are then submitted at the Nigerian Mission and if approved, the visa issued.

## Takeaway

The update to the VoA policy, to include AU passport holders, demonstrates Nigeria's willingness to fully embrace the vision of the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) treaty. Also, the introduction of VoA requiring no pre-approval shows a commitment to improving the ease of doing business in Nigeria. The NIS needs to train relevant immigration officers on the new visa policy to avoid wrong or inconsistent application of the new rules.

For a deeper discussion, please contact any member of our team below or your usual contact with PwC Nigeria:

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