

Immigration Regulatory Updates

JULY 2026



In this July 2026 edition of the Moroom Africa Immigration Update, we highlight significant developments shaping international mobility across Africa and beyond. The month was marked by continued expansion of visa-free travel initiatives within Africa, revisions to visa policies by major destination countries, and notable changes affecting international students and business travellers. Several countries introduced new entry exemptions to promote regional integration, while others tightened immigration controls or revised visa processing procedures. These developments underscore the growing importance of staying informed of evolving immigration requirements when planning international travel, cross-border employment, and business operations

1. Nigeria Immigration Service Warns Against Unauthorised Passport and Visa Payment Platforms

The Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS) has reiterated that all passport and visa applications must be processed only through its official online platforms. The Service warned members of the public, including Nigerians in the diaspora, against making payments through unauthorised agents, religious organisations, private entities, or individuals claiming to act on its behalf.

According to the NIS, the official platforms are:

- Passport applications: passport.immigration.gov.ng
- Visa applications (Embassy): visa.immigration.gov.ng
- e-Visa applications: evisa.immigration.gov.ng

The Service further encouraged applicants requiring assistance to contact only its verified communication channels.

Individuals and corporate travellers should ensure that all passport and visa applications are submitted only through the official NIS portals to avoid fraud, financial loss, and delays in processing.

2. Nigeria Discontinues Online Integrated Solution (OIS Services) for Visa Processing in the United States

The Nigeria Immigration Service has announced the immediate disengagement of Online Integrated Solution (OIS Services) as the operator of Nigeria's Visa Application and Submission Centres in the United States.

Pending the introduction of a new arrangement, applicants requiring Nigerian visas in the United States are to submit their applications directly to:

- The Embassy of Nigeria in Washington, D.C.; or
- The Consulates-General of Nigeria in New York and Atlanta.

The NIS assured applicants that adequate measures have been put in place to ensure the continued processing and issuance of visas and advised applicants to monitor official channels for further updates.

Individuals and organisations facilitating travel to Nigeria from the United States should note the revised visa submission procedure and advise applicants accordingly to prevent disruptions.

3. United States Proposes Fixed Admission Periods for Student and Exchange Visitors

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security has proposed significant changes to the admission period for holders of F, J, and I visas.

Under the proposal:

- Student (F) and Exchange Visitor (J) visa holders would generally be admitted for a maximum of four years.
- Foreign journalists holding I visas would be limited to a maximum stay of 240 days.
- Visa holders wishing to remain beyond their authorised stay would be required to apply for extensions.

Students and educational institutions should monitor the implementation of these proposed rules, as they could materially affect long-term study and exchange programmes.

4. United Kingdom Retains Financial Evidence Requirement for Nigerian Students

The United Kingdom has retained its financial evidence requirements for Student and Child Student visa applicants from Nigeria and most African countries.

The UK has clarified that only Botswana, Mauritius and Tunisia are exempt from submitting financial evidence upfront. Nigerian applicants, as well as applicants from most African countries, must continue to provide proof of funds. Applicants studying outside London must demonstrate maintenance funds of **£1,171 per month**, while those studying in London must demonstrate **£1,529 per month**, for up to nine months. Funds relied upon for the application must generally be maintained for at least **28 consecutive days** before submission. Applicants using personal or family savings should also ensure their financial documents are dated no more than 31 days before the application date.

Prospective students should ensure that financial documentation complies fully with UK immigration requirements to minimise processing delays.

5. United States to Restructure Visa Processing Across Africa

The United States has announced plans to restructure visa processing across Africa by reducing routine visa-processing locations to twenty regional hubs.

Although the U.S. Embassy in Abuja will cease routine visa processing under the new structure, Lagos has been retained as one of the designated regional processing centres.

Applicants who would previously have processed visas through Abuja may in future be required to attend appointments in Lagos or another designated regional hub.

The restructuring is expected to increase application volumes at regional processing centres and may lead to longer appointment waiting times and additional travel costs for applicants.

6. Spain Confirms Only Eight African Countries Have Visa-Free Entry in 2026

Spain has confirmed its 2026 visa policy, under which only eight African countries—Botswana, Namibia, Mauritius, Seychelles, Rwanda, Cabo Verde, Eswatini, and Lesotho—benefit from visa-free entry for short stays within the Schengen Area. Citizens of Nigeria, Ghana, Kenya, and most other African countries must continue to obtain a Schengen visa before travelling.

Applicants are required to submit a valid passport, travel insurance, proof of accommodation, financial evidence, and a return travel itinerary. Given the time required to secure appointments and assemble supporting documentation, travellers are advised to begin the application process well in advance.

Businesses and individuals planning travel to Spain or other Schengen countries should account for visa processing timelines and documentary requirements to avoid disruptions.

7. South Africa Maintains Visa-Free Access for Citizens of 22 African Countries

South Africa has reaffirmed its visa exemption regime for citizens of 22 African countries in 2026. Eligible travellers may enter South Africa without a visa for periods ranging from 30 to 90 days, depending on nationality and passport type.

The exemptions continue to support regional mobility within Africa, particularly among Southern African Development Community (SADC) member states. Travellers are nevertheless encouraged to verify the specific conditions applicable to their nationality and passport category before departure.

Employers with regional operations should continue to assess visa eligibility carefully before assigning personnel to South Africa, as exemption periods differ across countries.

8. Chad Announces Visa-Free Entry for All African Nationals from January 2027

Chad has announced that it will abolish visa requirements for all African passport holders effective 1 January 2027. The policy forms part of broader efforts to strengthen continental integration, facilitate trade, and promote the free movement of persons across Africa.

With this announcement, Chad joins a growing number of African countries adopting continent-wide visa-free policies in support of the African Union's Agenda 2063 and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

9. Ethiopia Maintains Restrictive Visa-Free Policy

Ethiopia has confirmed that only citizens of Kenya and Djibouti qualify for visa-free entry in 2026.

Nationals of Nigeria, Ghana, South Africa, and most other African countries must continue to obtain visas before travelling.

Nigerian passport holders remain ineligible for Ethiopia's visa-on-arrival programme and are expected to secure visas prior to departure.

Travellers are advised to confirm the latest requirements through Ethiopian immigration authorities before making travel arrangements.

10. South Sudan Updates Visa Policy

South Sudan has updated its visa policy, confirming that only citizens of Egypt and Tanzania currently benefit from visa-free entry.

Nationals of other African countries, including Nigeria and Ghana, remain subject to visa requirements and applicable visa fees before travelling.

11. Angola Expands Visa-Free Entry to 16 African Countries

Angola continues to operate one of Africa's broader visa exemption programmes, allowing citizens of sixteen African countries to enter without visas for stays of up to 30 days.

Eligible travellers must nevertheless satisfy standard immigration requirements, including possession of a valid passport, evidence of sufficient financial means, and onward or return travel arrangements. Persons travelling for employment, long-term residence, or study remain subject to the appropriate visa requirements.

12. Brazil Grants Visa-Free Entry to Namibian Passport Holders

Brazil has announced that Namibian citizens will benefit from visa-free entry beginning in 2026.

Namibia joins Botswana, Morocco, Seychelles, South Africa, and Tunisia among African countries whose nationals may travel to Brazil without first obtaining a visa, subject to compliance with standard immigration requirements.

13. Ukraine Continues eVisa Programme for Three African Countries

Ukraine has confirmed that only South Africa, Seychelles, and Mauritius remain eligible for its electronic visa programme.

Eligible travellers may apply online for short-term visas valid for stays of up to 30 days for purposes including tourism, business, medical treatment, journalism, sports, and cultural activities.

Citizens of countries outside the eligibility list must continue to apply through Ukrainian embassies or consulates.

Conclusion

July 2026 reflects two significant trends in global mobility. Across Africa, governments continue to embrace regional integration through expanded visa-free travel arrangements, while several major destination countries—including the United States, the United Kingdom, Spain, and Ethiopia—have maintained or introduced stricter immigration controls and compliance requirements.

For businesses operating internationally, educational institutions, and frequent travellers, proactive immigration planning remains essential. Organisations should continue monitoring policy developments, particularly where changing visa requirements, processing arrangements, and documentary obligations may affect employee mobility, international recruitment, or cross-border business operations.

Should you require further assistance or clarification on any of the above, please feel free to contact [**pamilerin.akabunwa@moroomafrica.com**](mailto:pamilerin.akabunwa@moroomafrica.com).

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