



GLOBAL IMMIGRATION UPDATE - JUNE 2026

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FEATURE ARTICLE

IMMIGRATION OPPORTUNITIES FOR IRANIANS: AN OVERVIEW – This article provides an update on immigration opportunities for Iranians in several countries.

COUNTRY UPDATES

Canada – The government has released official details for the permanent residence pathway for 33,000 workers. In other news, a PGWP language test upload slot has been added to the Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada portal; temporary travel measures have been implemented in response to the Ebola outbreak in the Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo; IRCC is seeking Express Entry reform consultations; and changes are coming to the Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program.

UNITED KINGDOM – The Home Office has issued new sponsor guidance. An expansion of right-to-work checks is also on the way.

Details:

Feature Article

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Spain

Despite the current situation in Iran and temporary limitations affecting consular services, Spanish authorities have implemented alternative mechanisms to ensure that migration procedures and legal mobility channels

remain available for Iranian nationals wishing to relocate to Spain.

While visa applications and legalizations cannot currently be processed in Tehran, Iranian citizens may continue applying for Spanish residence visas through the embassies and consulates of Spain in Ankara, Amman, Beirut, Damascus, Istanbul, and Yerevan via the corresponding BLS offices. In parallel, Spain has also enabled a reverse legalization mechanism, allowing legal validation procedures to be carried out through the Iranian diplomatic representation in Spain. This measure facilitates the acceptance of public documents requiring legalization and helps maintain administrative continuity for Iranian applicants seeking residence permits, family reunification, studies, or professional opportunities in Spain.

Applicants are advised to remain attentive to official announcements and updates published through the embassy's website and social media channels.

Italy

Iranian nationals, if meeting the requirements, can potentially apply for any Italian visa available to foreign citizens. At present, given the current geopolitical situation, the Embassy of Italy in Tehran has temporarily relocated to Baku, Azerbaijan. Iranian citizens may submit their visa applications at any Italian embassy or consular office that they are able to reach from Iran and in a country in which they can legally stay. For information on the countries where Iranian citizens can travel, or to request a visa appointment, applicants should email consolato.teheran@esteri.it, specifying the type of visa requested and any family ties with European Union (EU) citizens.

Below is a non-exhaustive list of [immigration paths to Italy](#):

- Elective Residence Visa—for individuals with substantial passive income who wish to reside in Italy without working
- Investor Visa—for applicants making a qualifying investment in Italy
- Digital Nomad/Remote Worker Visa—for highly skilled workers performing their activities remotely
- Self-Employment Visa—for freelance activities, founders, Italian company officers, renowned artists (quota-based)
- Startup Visa—for establishing or joining an innovative startup in Italy (self-employment category)
- Intra-Company Transfer Visa—for temporary transfers of qualified staff

within the same corporate group

- EU Blue Card—for highly qualified workers hired by an Italian employer

Other options:

- [Family visa](#)
- [Study visa](#)

Iranian citizens already in Italy who cannot return safely or renew their permits, given the current social, political, and security crisis in Iran and the serious risks of persecution and harm, have the possibility to [apply](#) for [asylum](#) or international protection in Italy.

Türkiye

The Turkish immigration system does not ban any nationality from entry or acquiring status, and does not have quotas or limitations on any particular nationality. Therefore, Iranian nationals, even those traveling on an Iranian passport only, do not encounter particular limitations or restrictions.

Additionally, Iranians have long benefited from visa-free travel into Türkiye for tourism or business purposes for up to 90 days within 180 days. Iranians wishing to obtain a work permit or other resident status may apply without any special restrictions or limitations. Given that Iran shares a border with Türkiye, Türkiye has long hosted a large Iranian expatriate population. Many Iranians residing in Türkiye also purchase real estate and apply for citizenship. Applicants face mostly the same background check procedure as required for other nationalities.

Note, though, that a Turkish consular post may not always be processing visas during hostilities. Lastly, although Turkish Airlines has long engaged in direct flights to and from Iran, during hostilities those flights may not always be operational.

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Country Updates

CANADA

The government has released official details for the permanent residence pathway for 33,000 workers. In other news, a PGWP language test upload slot has been

added to the Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada portal; temporary travel measures have been implemented in response to the Ebola outbreak in the Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo; IRCC is seeking Express Entry reform consultations; and changes are coming to the Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program.

Permanent Residence Pathway for 33,000 Workers

After much hype and speculation about the government's permanent residence (PR) pathway for 33,000 workers, including a [report in the Toronto Star](#) on March 6, 2026, in which Lena Diab, Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), announced the "soft launch" of this pathway, the government has now officially [released details](#).

There is currently no official program that is separate from existing ones, but rather, IRCC has, since January 2026, been targeting PR applicants in rural and remote communities by accelerating the processing of PR applications for eligible workers who have applied under existing programs. These include the Provincial Nominee Program, the Atlantic Immigration Program, the community immigration pilots, the caregiver pilots, and the AgriFood Pilot. IRCC also has accelerated processing of the PR applications of those who have been living in smaller communities for two years or more. IRCC plans to transition 20,000 of these workers to PR status in 2026 and the remaining 13,000 in 2027. No separate PR program has been announced.

Many individuals and businesses will be disappointed with this announcement as they had hoped there would be a new pathway to PR that would reward those with solid track records of legally working and contributing to the communities they live in.

PGWP Language Test Upload Slot Added to the Portal

Since November 2024, there has been significant confusion with respect to the new requirement to include a proof-of-language assessment with a post-graduation work permit (PGWP) application—specifically, where and how to upload the language test results in the IRCC application portal. This resulted in many students having their PGWP refused and having to seek reconsideration and/or restoration of status. IRCC has now introduced a dedicated upload slot. Applicants must select the "Proof of Language Proficiency" slot to upload their language test results. Previously, applicants had to upload their results in one of the other slots, such as "Client Information." Many applicants did not know

about the new requirement or how to utilize the other slot, or they just forgot to include it because there was no dedicated portal.

Graduates of a bachelor's degree, master's degree, doctoral degree, or any program from a university must achieve CLB 7 for English or NCLC 7 for French in all four language abilities: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Graduates of a college, polytechnic, or non-university program must achieve CLB 5 or NCLC 5 in all four language abilities.

Temporary Travel Measures in Response to the Ebola Outbreak in the Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo

The government [announced](#) that as of May 27, 2026, it has suspended for 90 days, or until August 25, 2026, immigration documents for people residing in countries that have a high or very high risk of outbreak of the Ebola Bundibugyo virus. As of June 1, 2026, these countries include the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Uganda, and South Sudan. This means that those with a valid temporary resident visa (TRV), electronic travel authorization (eTA), or permanent resident visa who reside in these countries will not be allowed to travel to Canada during this period. It is unclear if those already issued a permanent resident visa who are now unable to proceed to Canada to be landed will need to ask IRCC to extend the validity and submit new medical examinations for this purpose.

From May 30, 2026, until August 29, 2026, Canadian citizens, permanent residents, persons registered under the *Indian Act*, and foreign nationals who have been in these areas within the previous 21 days and do not show symptoms of the Ebola disease must quarantine for 21 days upon entering Canada.

As the Ebola Bundibugyo virus continues to spread in the eastern DRC, this announcement comes a few weeks before hundreds of thousands of international visitors will visit Canada as Vancouver and Toronto are set to host games of the 2026 FIFA World Cup. FIFA World Cup games will be hosted in cities across Canada, the United States, and Mexico.

Express Entry Reform Consultations

IRCC is [seeking consultations](#) as it contemplates updating program requirements for the Express Entry and Comprehensive Ranking System (CRS) points used to invite Economic Class candidates for permanent residence. IRCC

has proposed simplifying Express Entry by merging the three Express Entry classes—the Canadian Experience Class, Federal Skilled Worker Program, and Federal Skilled Trades Program—into one program.

It has proposed that the minimum requirements for this program are to have:

- A minimum education of high school or equivalent;
- Achievement of at least CLB 6 for English or NCLC 6 for French on a language test; and
- Skilled work experience of a minimum of one year in the past three years in TEER 0-3 of the National Occupational Classification (NOC), which equates to managerial occupations (TEER 0) to those usually requiring university (TEER 1) or college education (TEER 2-3).

IRCC has also proposed adding a high-wage occupation factor for CRS points in which occupations where the median wage throughout Canada is higher than the median wage of all Canadians would provide further points. This factor would depend on an applicant's work experience in the occupation with a higher median wage rather than the applicant's wage being high.

OINP Changes to Come

As of May 30, 2026, the Ontario government's amendments to the *Ontario Immigration Act* to allow it to make changes more easily to the Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program (OINP) have come into force. Actual changes to the OINP have not yet been finalized, but the Ontario government has announced that it is redesigning the OINP.

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UNITED KINGDOM

The Home Office has issued new sponsor guidance. An expansion of right-to-work checks is also on the way.

A recent previous Home Office guidance update said that sponsors needed to perform additional right-to-work checks on "any worker" they "directly engage." There was a lack of clarity on what this meant and who sponsors needed to check. The Home Office has now issued [new sponsor guidance](#) that reverts to the previous, much simpler position. In summary, sponsors only need to check the right to work of (1) everyone they sponsor, regardless of employment

status; and (2) all other employees.

This is good news and will be a relief for many sponsors. However, new legislation is on the way that will [expand](#) right-to-work checks to non-employees. This will apply to all employers and sponsors. The new legislation is in section 48 of the Border Security, Asylum and Immigration Act. Section 48 could be in force as soon as October 1, 2026.

Given that section 48 will mean employers need to check the right to work of those under a worker's contract (people who have the status of a worker in employment law), individual subcontractors, and those providing a service under any online matching service, employers should start to prepare for that now. Preparations could involve auditing the workforce and labor supply chains, reviewing contracts and onboarding processes, and training human resources staff.

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