

Chandrawat  
& Partners

# IMMIGRATION TO KENYA



# Table of Contents

## Contents

## Page No.

Introduction	02
Purpose of Immigration	04
Non- Direct and Other Routes of Immigration	05
Types of Visas	07
License and Documentation	08
How We Can Help?	11



# INTRODUCTION



Kenya is a migration source, destination, and transit country for neighboring countries and South Africa, the Middle East, North Africa, North America and Europe. Additionally, Kenya is home to one of the largest refugee populations and has some of the oldest refugee camps in Africa. Due to the ongoing migration issues in Kenya, governments, in conjunction with the International Migration Organization ("IOM"), are active in developing policies that shape migration management to achieve a structured migration system.

Much migration within Kenya is from rural to urban centers and is driven by the hope for better economic prosperity, higher educational attainment and better health care. Mainly the male population leaves rural communities for urban city centers such as the capital Nairobi, Kisumu, Mombasa, Eldoret and Nakuru. After spending time in the cities, males, more than females, will return to rural communities for an agricultural-based income. Migration between rural areas is heavily dependent on climate and agriculture. Kenyans who emigrate are mostly skilled workers who will seek out legal channels of migration through visas, although there are incidents where Kenyans are trafficked out of the country after seeking work in countries in the Middle East





There are four overarching migration policies in Kenya: National Migration Policy Draft, Kenya Vision 2030, the National Labour Migration Policy Draft, and the National Diaspora Policy. Refugees and asylum seekers are protected under the Refugee Act of 2008, while trafficking victims are protected under the Counter-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2010. All legislation is implemented through government branches, including the National Coordination Mechanism on Migration and the Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government. In addition to international organizations such as the International Organization of Migration (“IOM”) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (“UNHCR”)

There are 60 organizations addressing refugee matters that are active in Kenya. Kenya has seen more internal migration than international migration. The coastal region has had the highest percentage of migrants (“59.5%”) in urban areas, and the Western regions have had the highest (“77.4%”) migration in rural areas. The age group 0-14 holds the highest proportion of migrants in all regions of Kenya, followed by those aged 25-29. Male migrants outnumber females in rural-to-urban migration. The movement of the population has been predominantly from rural areas to major urban cities such as Nairobi, Kisumu, Mombasa, Eldoret, and Nakuru. The movement is mostly triggered by the desire for better economic or educational opportunities and better-quality health care.

# PURPOSE OF IMMIGRATION

**Employment opportunities:** Kenya has a growing economy and offers employment prospects in sectors such as technology, agriculture, tourism, and finance. Some individuals choose to immigrate to Kenya to explore job opportunities and advance their careers.

**Education:** Kenya is home to several universities and educational institutions that attract international students. People may immigrate to Kenya to pursue higher education, research opportunities, or specialized training programs.

**Retirement:** Kenya's favorable climate, natural beauty, and relatively lower cost of living make it an attractive destination for retirees. Some individuals choose to immigrate to Kenya to enjoy their retirement years in a peaceful and scenic environment.

**Family reunification:** People may immigrate to Kenya to join their family members who are already living in the country. This includes spouses, children, parents, or other relatives who are Kenyan citizens or have legal residency in Kenya.

**Business and investment:** Kenya has a vibrant business environment, attracting entrepreneurs and investors. Many individuals immigrate to Kenya to start businesses or invest in sectors such as manufacturing, real estate, agriculture, or services.

**Humanitarian reasons:** Kenya hosts a large number of refugees from neighboring countries. People may immigrate to Kenya to seek asylum or to work with humanitarian organizations and provide assistance to refugees and displaced populations.

**Lifestyle and cultural immersion:** Some individuals are drawn to Kenya's diverse cultures, traditions, and wildlife. They may choose to immigrate to Kenya to experience a different way of life and immerse them in the country's rich cultural heritage.



# NON- DIRECT AND OTHER ROUTES OF IMMIGRATION

Here are some potential non-direct or alternative routes for immigration to Kenya:

**Investor Visas:** Some countries offer investor visas or business-related programs that allow individuals to establish or invest in businesses in Kenya. These programs often require a substantial financial investment and a commitment to job creation or economic development in the country.

**Volunteer or NGO Work:** Volunteering or working with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Kenya might provide an opportunity to live and work in the country for a certain period. While this might not lead to permanent immigration, it can offer an immersive experience and potentially open doors to other opportunities.

**Student Visas:** Enrolling in an educational program, such as a university degree, could allow you to obtain a student visa. While studying, you may explore possibilities for employment or other immigration options.



**Intercompany Transfers:** If a person already employed by a multinational company that has a presence in Kenya, you might be able to transfer to a Kenyan branch through an intra-company transfer program.

**Research and Academic Positions:** Researchers, academics, and professionals in specialized fields may have opportunities to work in Kenya through research grants, academic appointments, or collaborations with Kenyan institutions.

**Retirement Visa:** Kenya offers a retiree residency program for individuals who meet certain financial requirements. This program allows retirees to live in Kenya as long as they can demonstrate a stable income or pension.

**Special Programs and Agreements:** Occasionally, bilateral agreements or special programs between countries can facilitate unique immigration opportunities. Check with your country's embassy in Kenya or Kenyan embassies abroad for such programs.



# TYPES OF VISA

**Single Entry Visa:** Issued for single entry to persons whose nationalities require visa to enter Kenya either for business, tourism, medical or other reasons.

**Transit Visa:** Issued to persons whose nationalities require visa to enter Kenya and are connecting through Kenya to other destinations for a period not exceeding 72 hours. Those connecting flights directly without leaving the airport don't need to apply for Transit visas.

**Multiple Entry Visa:** Issued for multiple entries to persons whose nationalities require visa to enter Kenya either for business, tourism, family visits, medical or other reasons.



**5yr Multiple Entry Visa:** Issued to USA nationals who require visa to enter Kenya either for business or tourism or other reasons.

**East African Tourist Visa:** This is a Joint Tourist Visa issued to persons traveling to and within Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda for tourism.

**Courtesy Visa:** This is a visa issued to Diplomatic, Official and Service passport holders coming into the country on official business or duties, and to Ordinary passport holders where it is considered by the Director General to be desirable on the grounds of international courtesy. It can be issued for either Single, Transit or Multiple entries.





# LICENSE AND DOCUMENTATION



**Obtain a Passport:** A passport is document issued to Kenya citizens by the Directorate of Immigration services and is valid for a maximum period of ten (10) years to enable them to travel abroad.

The Directorate of Immigration Services derives its mandate from section 27(1) of the Kenya Citizenship and Immigration Act 2011 and Kenya Citizenship and Immigration Regulation 2012

Kenya has launched the e-Passport system to issue digital passports in compliance with ICAO document 9303 and the East African Community Summit resolution.

## **Obtain a pass: Kenya Dependent's Pass (KDP)**

This is a document issued to a person whose spouse, child, parent or guardian is lawfully entitled to enter and remain in Kenya in accordance with the Kenya Citizenship and Immigration Regulations, 2012 Section 27 (1). For children, the age limit is 21 years except for those in full time education institutes or mental and physical incapacity.

### Special Pass

This is a document issued under Regulation 34 of the Kenya Citizenship and Immigration Regulations, 2012, to person(s) who wishes to enter or remain in Kenya for a limited period of up to 6 months for purposes of temporarily conducting a business, trade, or profession. A prohibited immigrant pass is also issued for the purpose of appealing a decision  
Students/Research/Internship passes.

This is a document issued to applicants (foreign students) according to Section 30(1) of the Kenya Citizenship and Immigration Regulations 2012, who wish to pursue their education in Kenya's Education system or Training Institutions where they have been accepted or admitted.

The applicant (foreign student) must be accepted as a student by an approved Educational or Training Establishment.





**OBTAIN A VISA:** Visa is an authorization that allows foreign nationals to enter Kenya for various purposes like tourism, visit, business, and resettlement among others. Administration of visas is provided for by The Kenya Citizenship and Immigration Act, 2011. The ACT is operationalized through The Kenya Citizenship and Immigration Regulations, 2012.

### **Administration of visas is classified into three broad categories**

#### **Category One**

Nationals and persons who do not require visa to enter Kenya

#### **Category Two**

Nationals and persons who may obtain visas on application

**Category Three:** Nationals and persons whose applications are referred to the Director General of Immigration Services in Nairobi for approval. Visa Section performs the following functions; Policy development and implementation on matters related to visas, Processing visa applications, Processing applications for Exemption of persons enjoying immunity and Privileges.

### **WORK PERMIT AND PASSES**

The core function of the Permits Section is the processing and issuance of work permits and passes. There are various classes of permits as provided under the enabling regulations.

#### **Applications Submission and Collection**

All applications for Permits and Passes are made and submitted online accompanied by all the necessary requirements which should be uploaded.

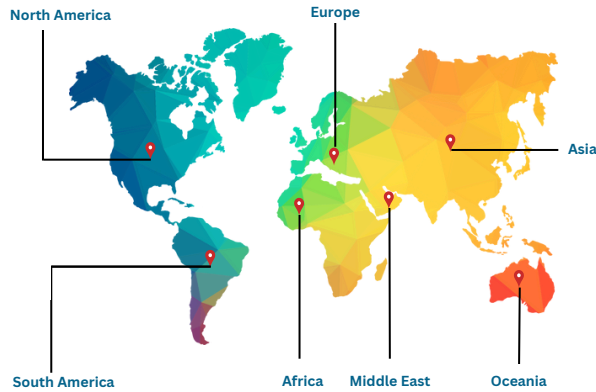
Applicants can print out their own Permits and Passes from their eFNS Accounts once they are processed and issued.

# How we can help?

- Immigration law can be complex, and a specialized law firm will have in-depth knowledge of the relevant laws, regulations, and procedures related to immigration to Estonia. We can assess eligibility, review documents, and provide accurate information tailored to specific circumstances.
- Our firm can assist in preparing and submitting visa applications. We can ensure that all necessary documents are complete, accurate, and meet the requirements of the Estonian authorities. This can increase the chances of a successful visa application and minimize the risk of delays or rejections.
- We can help explore and understand the various visa options available for immigration to Estonia. We can assess goals and qualifications and advise on the most suitable visa category for various situations, whether short-stay, long-stay, startup, or residence permits.
- Immigration laws and regulations can change, and it is essential to remain compliant throughout the immigration process. Our firm keeps the client updated on any changes in immigration policies, informs them about rights and obligations, and ensures that our client adheres to the legal requirements during their stay in Estonia.
- If the visa application is denied or there are any immigration-related challenges, our firm can assist with filing appeals or providing legal representation. We can help understand the reasons for the denial and explore options for challenging the decision or seeking alternative solutions.
- Beyond immigration matters, our firm can also provide comprehensive legal services related to relocation to Estonia. This may include assistance with business setup, contract review, tax advice, employment matters, and other relevant legal aspects.



## SERVING CLIENTS WORLDWIDE



The information contained herein is of a general nature. Although we endeavor to provide accurate and timely information, there can be no guarantee that such information is accurate as of the date it is received or that it will continue to be accurate in the future. The information is not offered as an advice on any matter, and no one should act or fail to act based on such information without appropriate legal advice after a thorough examination of the particular situation. The information does not make us responsible or liable for any errors and/or omissions, whether it is now or in the future. We do not assume any responsibility and/or liability for any consequences.

## Key Contact



**Surendra Singh Chandrawat**

Managing Partner

✉ [surendra@chandrawatpartners.com](mailto:surendra@chandrawatpartners.com)

Connect Surendra on

[LinkedIn](#)

[WhatsApp](#)

Chandrawat & Partners is a leading and rapidly growing full-service firm providing high quality professional and corporate services to foreign and local clients, representing companies and individuals in a wide range of sectors through separate entities established in various countries worldwide.

Copyright © 2025 | All rights reserved | Chandrawat & Partners | Email: [enquiries@chandrawatpartners.com](mailto:enquiries@chandrawatpartners.com) | Website: [www.chandrawatpartners.com](http://www.chandrawatpartners.com)

Follow us on:

