

Portugal's Golden Visa Remains Unaffected by Proposed Immigration Reforms, Say Experts

Experts confirm there have been no legal changes to the Golden Visa, as Portugal's Parliament reviews broader immigration and nationality reforms.

LISBON, PORTUGAL, July 9, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Experts say Portugal's Golden Visa remains unaffected by recent proposals to change Portugal's immigration and nationality laws.

The potential reforms, debated last Friday by the Assembly of the Republic, do not directly target the Golden Visa residency-by-investment programme.



Portugal's Golden Visa remains unaffected by proposed citizenship changes

Instead, they focus on updates to Portugal's naturalisation rules, including extended residency periods for citizenship, new cultural integration tests, and procedural tightening around family reunification and visa types.

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Paul Stannard

“To be absolutely clear: none of the proposals currently under discussion directly affect the Portugal Golden Visa today,” says Paul Stannard, chairman and founder of [Portugal Pathways](#) and the [Portugal Investment Owners Club](#).

“There have been no legal changes introduced, and

Portugal has a long-standing tradition of not applying immigration law retroactively.”

During the session on Friday, the Portuguese Parliament:

- Postponed a general vote on the government's package of reforms

- Referred the draft laws to a specialist committee for detailed review and amendment
- Signalled a need for cross-party consensus, particularly as the current government lacks an absolute majority
- Targeted July 16, 2025 — the final session before the summer recess — for a potential vote

According to political observers and legal analysts involved in the consultation process, this delay reflects the political sensitivity of immigration reform in Portugal.

There is a need to distinguish between controlling irregular migration and protecting legitimate, law-abiding value creators and investors choosing Portugal.

While nothing has yet been passed, the current proposals include:

- Extending the residency requirement for citizenship from 5 to 10 years (or 7 years for CPLP nationals)
- Introducing a cultural test
- Stricter criminal record checks
- Adjustments to family reunification procedures and visa categories (although this has already been contested, as the country has a declining birth rate and needs young talent)

A task force, which includes immigration lawyers and financial professionals working closely with leading international law firms, is in discussion with the government.

They are actively engaged with policymakers to ensure that any future changes are legally sound and operationally fair and do not impact Portugal's ability to attract credible international investment and legitimate immigration.



Paul Stannard, chairman and founder of Portugal Pathways and the Portugal Investment Owners Club

The Portugal Golden Visa residency-by-investment programme offers a clear, stable pathway to Portuguese residency for individuals and families who invest in qualifying alternative investment funds or other approved assets.

“Those who proceed now, planning and acting early, have constitutional law on their side,” adds Stannard.

“There is no precedent in Portugal for retroactively applying immigration changes, and it would be potentially unconstitutional to pass such measures without amendments and some form of grandfathering programme for families who have already shown intent.

“This includes those who have already engaged lawyers, prepared documents, opened bank accounts, obtained their NIF tax ID, secured employment, started the process of opening business activity, or similar acts of intent.”

With Portugal facing growing international interest from investors, talent and value creators, particularly from families seeking a European foothold for personal, financial, or geopolitical reasons, the Golden Visa remains a strategic tool for relocation without the need for initial permanent relocation or tax residency — unless voluntarily elected.

A recent webinar hosted by Portugal Pathways detailed these developments, including context on the media speculation leading up to the debate.

[Watch the webinar replay here.](#)

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