

New Zealand's revamped investment-for-residency program attracts U.S. interest

High net worth investors can now choose from flexible residency options and diverse investment paths in a premier residency-by-investment program.

MIAMI, FL, UNITED STATES, October 13, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- New Zealand has long been synonymous with stunning landscapes, fresh air and herds of sheep. But look beyond the scenery and you'll find one of the world's highest standards of living with a safe environment, excellent healthcare, and political stability.



New Zealand - with its stunning landscape and safe environment - is an ideal place to live, work and invest.

All this makes New Zealand one of the most secure and transparent countries in the world – and an ideal place to live, work and invest. Through its rejigged [Active Investor Plus \(AIP\) visa program](#), New Zealand welcomes investors seeking [permanent residency](#) under a transparent and streamlined application process.

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The program, updated and improved earlier this year by removing language, education or professional background requirements, became more accessible while leading to permanent residency at the end of an investment period as short as three years.

Investors and their dependents are free to live, study and work in New Zealand immediately, even before obtaining permanent residency. The main applicant can include a partner and dependent children up to 24 years old, with

unborn children also qualifying for residency.

REVIVED INVESTOR INTEREST

As of late September 2025, New Zealand has received 348 applications under the simplified program for 1,122 applicants, amounting to a potential total minimum investment of NZD 2.1 billion (USD 1.2 billion), according to Immigration New Zealand's (INZ) official data. Nearly half of these applications were submitted by U.S. nationals – by far the largest proportion of applications from a single country.

In comparison, INZ has received a total of 115 applications for 362 applicants between September 2022 and 31 March 2025 – less than a third of the amount submitted under the revised framework since April this year.

“The renewed AIP program strikes a fine balance between accessibility and meaningful economic contribution,” Jean-François Harvey, global managing partner at Harvey Law Group, said.

By reducing physical presence requirements and broadening acceptable investments, the streamlined framework (with an average time of 26 working days for an application to be approved in principle) has revived investor interest after responding directly to feedback from global investors who found the program's earlier iteration too restrictive due to higher thresholds and an elevated risk focus.

“Removing language requirements and opening diverse investment options makes the program even more attractive to sophisticated investors from the U.S. and beyond,” Harvey said.

The program's unique blend of lifestyle, investment diversification in a growth-focused economy, and family inclusion “elevates the standard in residency-by-investment options,” Harvey added.

FLEXIBLE & FAMILY FRIENDLY

Investors can choose between two types of investment – the Growth Category or the Balanced Category – designed to match different investment profiles and levels of engagement in the local economy:

- The Growth Category: Requires a minimum investment of NZD 5 million (about USD 3 million) in direct investments and/or managed funds, to be maintained over a three-year period. With only 21 days of physical presence in New Zealand required across the entire investment term, it presents an appealing option to investors who prefer lower residency obligations.

- The Balanced Category: Requires a minimum investment of NZD 10 million (about USD 5.8 million) to be maintained over five years, with a physical presence of at least 105 days over the investment period. However, residency days can be reduced to 63 days by increasing the investment amount. Investors can pick from a diverse portfolio of investment products, including bonds, listed equities, philanthropy, and property development covering new residential or new/existing commercial and industrial projects.

All investments must be legally sourced and completed within six months of visa approval, with a possible six-month extension.

Families in particular can enjoy greater flexibility under both categories, as the modest physical presence obligation applies solely to the main applicant, not their dependents.

[“New Zealand’s AIP program](#) offers an unmatched combination of stable governance, economic opportunity, and lifestyle benefits. For families in the U.S. and the wider region, it represents a compelling option for future security and global mobility,” Laure Cochet, senior associate at Harvey Law Group, said.

FROM RESIDENCY TO CITIZENSHIP

Five years after obtaining permanent residency, investors and their families may apply for New Zealand citizenship, subject to meeting criteria such as basic English proficiency and residency of at least 240 days per year over five years (totalling 1,350 days).

New Zealand permits dual citizenship, enabling new citizens to retain existing nationalities while gaining the benefits of a New Zealand passport, which allows them to live, work and study indefinitely in Australia under the Special Category Visa (SCV) Subclass 444.

This visa is automatically issued to New Zealand citizens upon entering Australia and provides a pathway to Australian citizenship after fulfilling the general residence requirement of being lawfully present in Australia for a minimum of four years under the SCV.

ABOUT HARVEY LAW GROUP

Founded in 1992, Harvey Law Group is a premier multinational law firm specializing in immigration and business law. With over 20 offices globally, HLG is dedicated to providing trusted legal counsel and seamless, future-ready solutions for a diverse clientele, including entrepreneurs, skilled professionals, families, and international corporations.

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