

São Tomé and Príncipe issues first citizenship by investment passport in January 2026

In January 2026, São Tomé and Príncipe officially issued its first passport under citizenship by investment programme.

LOS ANGELES, CA, UNITED STATES, February 17, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- In January 2026, [São Tomé and Príncipe](#) officially issued its first passport under citizenship by investment programme. The event marked a turning point for the small island state and confirmed the launch of the programme.

For international investors, this confirmed that a new jurisdiction had formally entered the citizenship by investment market, with defined application procedures and timelines.



São Tomé and Príncipe citizenship by investment 2026

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Elena Ruda, Chief Development Officer at Immigrant Invest.

Program statistics overview

The São Tomé and Príncipe citizenship by investment programme was launched in August 2025. Since it began accepting submissions in September 2025, the relevant department has received 98 applications from prospective investors and their eligible dependants.

Of the 98 total applications, 27 have completed review and received approval, while 71 remain under active consideration. This distribution reflects both the pace of

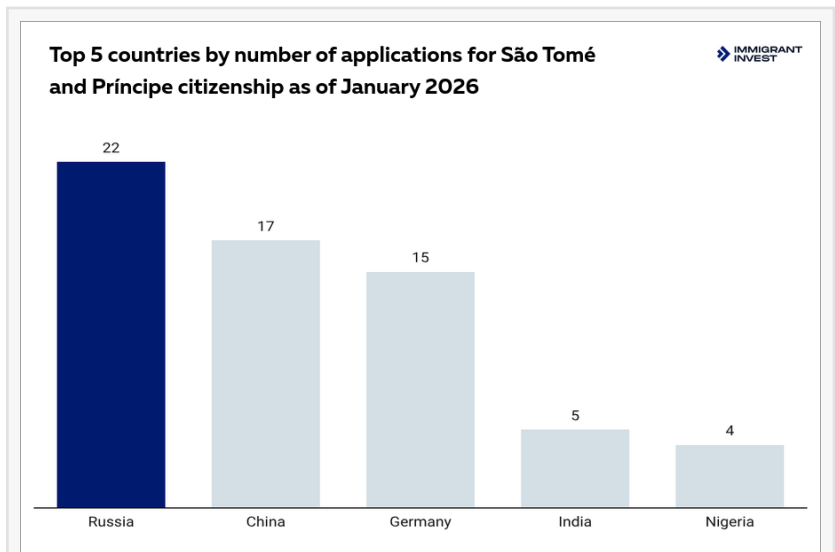
government processing and the thorough review procedures that applicants undergo as part of the due diligence and compliance verification.

The reported average time to process an application has been approximately 2.5 months, with one case handled in a record 4 weeks. These timelines offer a practical benchmark and can be

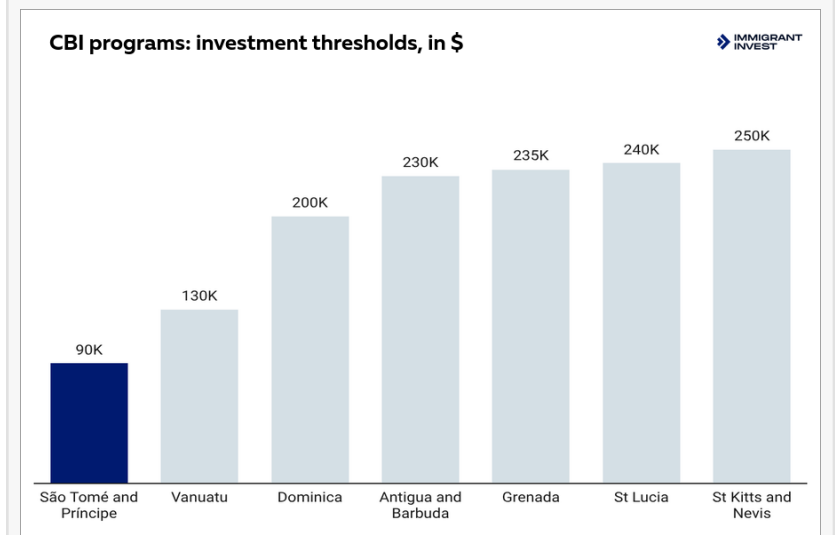
compared with other citizenship programmes, where processing often takes several months depending on the jurisdiction and documentation.

“The first passport issuance in January 2026 marks an important milestone for the programme’s functionality,” says Elena Ruda, Chief Development Officer at [Immigrant Invest](#). “It confirms that the legal and administrative mechanisms are in place not only to review applications, but also to deliver citizenship outcomes.

For new programmes, the transition from accepting applications to issuing passports is a critical step in establishing operational credibility.” International investor interest The geographic diversity among applicants for São Tomé and Príncipe citizenship illustrates an international response. As reported by the media, citizens of Russia represent the largest group of applicants, followed by investors from China and Germany. Additional interest has come from Venezuela, Kuwait, Israel, France, Spain, and other countries.



São Tomé and Príncipe passport by investment



Citizenship by investment programs

This spread suggests that investor motivations arise from a range of economic, personal, and strategic considerations rather than a concentrated regional demand.

Several factors influence investor interest in a citizenship by investment programme. Investors often weigh the potential benefits of a second citizenship against economic, travel, and personal planning priorities.

A relatively low investment threshold and an operational framework that produces documented results can prove attractive for applicants seeking diversification of their international standing.

Citizenship by investment options in other regions, such as established Caribbean programmes, usually handle higher volumes and longer histories of issuance. In contrast, São Tomé and Príncipe’s programme is at an early stage and is developing with a limited application volume

and defined review timelines.

Requirements for São Tomé and Príncipe citizenship

Investment requirement. The São Tomé and Príncipe programme offer one option, a contribution of \$90,000+ for a single applicant. This defined route avoids complex asset requirements or multiple investment categories, which can complicate eligibility assessment and processing.

A straightforward contribution model helps align investor expectations with administrative processes.

Family inclusion. Applications may include immediate family members, such as a spouse, children under 30, and parents and grandparents over 55. A civil partner may also be included if they can demonstrate cohabitation and shared financial obligations with the investor.

In the case of family inclusion, the investment threshold increases. Families of up to 4 people must contribute \$95,000+, and additional \$5,000 are paid for each applicant starting with the 5th.

The inclusion of family members in a single application without the need for separate filings can streamline the process for families seeking collective citizenship status by investment.

Process. Applicants must submit a full set of documents for review. This includes a valid passport, police clearance certificates, proof of residential address, evidence of the lawful origin of funds, and civil status documents for included family members. Submitting complete and accurate information helps ensure efficient processing and reduces the risk of delays during evaluation.

Each application is subject to Due Diligence checks conducted by the country's authorised government authorities, covering identity, background, and source of funds. The investment is made only after the application has received approval in principle.

Comparison with other CBI countries

A \$90,000 contribution, when viewed against common investment migration options, positions São Tomé and Príncipe's programme among the more accessible in terms of entry cost.

Other jurisdictions require significantly higher levels of investment. For example, Caribbean countries set minimum contributions starting around \$200,000 to 250,000. The Vanuatu programme's threshold is \$130,000 for a single applicant.

Property acquisition options available under Caribbean CBI programmes involve ongoing management obligations. The contribution model therefore represents a distinct choice for applicants seeking a clear financial commitment with defined procedural expectations.

About Immigrant Invest

Immigrant Invest is an international consulting company specialising in residence and citizenship by investment programmes. The company advises high-net-worth individuals on legal pathways to second citizenship and long-term residence worldwide.

Immigrant Invest supports clients at every stage, from initial eligibility assessment to document preparation and submission. This includes compliance checks, coordination with authorised agents, and communication with government departments.

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