Portugal Extends Golden Visa Citizenship Timeline to 10 Years

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Portugal Extends Golden Visa

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MIAMI, FL, UNITED STATES, September 7, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Portugal's revised Nationality Law changes when Golden Visa investors may qualify for citizenship, while the programme's investment routes, minimum stay and permanent residence pathway remain unchanged.

Portugal's revised Nationality Law has changed the residence requirements for Golden Visa holders seeking citizenship. The law took effect on May 19, 2026, extending the standard naturalisation period from 5 to 10 years while leaving the Golden Visa residence programme itself unchanged.

Organic Law No. 1/2026 amended Portugal's Nationality Law by increasing the period of legal residence required for most foreign nationals to apply for citizenship. Nationals of the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries (CPLP) and EU Member States may qualify after 7 years, while other foreign nationals must generally complete 10 years.

The law also changed how the period of residence required for citizenship is calculated. Previously, this period could start from the date the residence application was submitted. It now starts when the applicant receives their residence card.

More info about the new Portugal Nationality Law here: https://harveylawcorporation.com/portugal-golden-visa-news/


Jean Francois Harvey

The change concerns citizenship law, not immigration law. Portugal's Golden Visa remains available under the same application framework, including its existing investment routes, family reunification provisions and minimum stay requirement. Investors may also continue to qualify for permanent residence after 5 years, subject to the applicable requirements. However, holding a Golden Visa application, residence application or residence permit before May 19 does not, by itself, maintain the former 5-year citizenship timeline. The transitional protection applies to nationality applications that were already pending when the new law entered into force.

While the requirements for citizenship have changed, the Golden Visa itself continues under the same residence requirements. Holders are required to spend only 7 days per year in Portugal, which is among the lowest minimum stay requirements among European Golden Visa programmes. The qualifying investment options also remain unchanged, ranging from €200,000 for certain cultural projects in low-density areas to €500,000 for eligible investment fund subscriptions.

Processing times at AIMA, Portugal's immigration authority, have improved during 2026. However, the wait for a residence card still matters because this period may no longer count towards the residency required to qualify for citizenship.

"It is important to separate the Golden Visa from the citizenship rules that may apply later," said Carla Chibeni, Attorney at Law in Portugal. "The residence programme continues on the same terms, but the people clearly protected by the transitional provisions are those who had already submitted a nationality application before May 19, 2026. Investors who were approaching the 5-year point without having filed for citizenship are currently in a different position."
The law is now in force and does not require further parliamentary approval, but several aspects are still subject to amendments to the Portuguese Nationality Regulation. Until the amendments are finalised, some questions about how the new rules will be applied remain unanswered. This includes whether any further transitional arrangements will be introduced for residents who were close to completing the previous 5-year period when the law changed.

Golden Visa holders should therefore review their residence history, the date their first residence card was issued and whether a nationality application was pending on May 19, 2026. Those who no longer qualify for citizenship on their expected timeline may still consider permanent residence after 5 years or continue renewing their Golden Visa.

Further information on Portugal's Golden Visa, the available investment routes and the distinction between residence, permanent residence and citizenship is available at https://harveylawcorporation.com/portugal-golden-visa-program/. Harvey Law Group provides independent legal guidance based on each applicant's residence history and long-term objectives.

About Harvey Law Group
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Jean François Harvey
Harvey Law Group
7864206230 ext.
email us here
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