



MIGRANT E- REGISTRATION IN NIGERIA

The Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS) recently launched the Migrant e-Registration Platform for foreigners who intend to stay in the country beyond ninety (90) days. This is in line with provision of the Immigration Regulations 2017. The Federal Government of Nigeria has directed all foreigners in the country to register with the NIS by January 2020.

Who must register

All foreign visitors to Nigeria, including ECOWAS nationals who intend to stay for longer than a duration of ninety (90) days, must register at designated registration centres. What is not immediately clear is whether the 90-day period would be cumulative, but there should be further clarifications regarding this within the first few months. Notwithstanding, this ambiguity, it is advisable for all foreigners /employers to comply with the current directive even when uncertain that their stay may exceed 90days.

Those exempted from registration

Foreigners exempted from this exercise include those staying in Nigeria for less than ninety (90) days, persons enjoying diplomatic immunity and persons under the age of eighteen (18).

Non-compliance

Foreigners who fail to comply will be deemed illegal immigrants while hosts of such immigrants i.e. employers or homeowners may be liable for the offence of migrant-smuggling if found to harbour non-complaint immigrants.

Nature and registration process

The e-registration process involves the completion of a registration form and a biometric registration process which can be done at the migrant registration centre nearest the foreigner's place of residence.

Cost of registration

The general public has been advised that the entire process is free of all charges.

Benefit of registration

Registration would serve as an identification document and ensures that the migrants are secured under immigration responsibility amongst others.

This development which is long overdue is expected to facilitate better monitoring and integration of foreigners in Nigeria while improving national security. Furthermore, the Comptroller-General of Immigration explained that the registration, "will be linked with national identity eco-system to generate a unique number that will eventually connect to all identity systems in Nigeria."

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