GOLDENVISAS.FYI — GUIDE

Investment Migration Timelines

Typical processing times from engagement to approval for residence and citizenship by investment programmes. Each timeline cites the official government source.

Updated November 1, 2026

Timelines are **government processing times from submission of a complete application**. Document preparation (police certificates, apostilles, bank statements, legalised translations) typically adds **4–12 weeks before submission**.

Citizenship by investment

| Programme | Official timeline | Key steps | Source | |----------|----------|----------|----------| | **St Kitts and Nevis** | 120–180 days from acknowledgment | 1. Agent pre-check (2–4 wks) 2. Submit + pay fees 3. DD + interview 4. Approval-in-principle 5. Contribution + passport | ciu.gov.kn/application-process/ (2026-11-01) | | **Dominica** | 3–4 months | 1. Agent pre-check 2. Submit 3. DD 4. Approval 5. Contribution + passport | cbiu.gov.dm (2026-11-01) | | **Grenada** | 4–6 months | 1. Agent pre-check 2. Submit 3. DD 4. Interview (if required) 5. Approval 6. Contribution + passport | imagrenada.gd (2026-11-01) | | **Antigua and Barbuda** | 4–6 months | 1. Agent pre-check 2. Submit 3. DD 4. Approval 5. Contribution + passport | cip.gov.ag (2026-11-01) | | **Saint Lucia** | 3–4 months | 1. Agent pre-check 2. Submit 3. DD 4. Approval 5. Contribution + passport | cipsaintlucia.com (2026-11-01) | | **Malta (MEIN)** | Closed | The scheme was repealed in July 2025 after the ECJ ruling (C-181/23); citizenship is now by merit at ministerial discretion | eur-lex.europa.eu (2026-11-01) | | **Türkiye** | 3–6 months | 1. Property purchase + valuation 2. Submit 3. DD 4. Approval 5. Passport | goc.gov.tr (2026-11-01) | | **Vanuatu** | 1–2 months | 1. DSP pre-check 2. Submit 3. DD 4. Approval 5. Contribution + passport | vancitizenship.gov.vu (2026-11-01) |

Notes:

- Caribbean CBI: Interview mandatory for main applicant (St Kitts, increasingly others). Conducted virtually or in person.
- Türkiye: Property valuation by SPK-licensed appraiser adds 2–4 weeks before submission.

Residence by investment (golden visa)

| Programme | Official timeline | Key steps | Source | |----------|----------|----------|----------| | **Greece** | 2–4 months | 1. Property purchase/lease 2. Lawyer files 3. Biometrics 4. Card issued | migration.gov.gr/en/golden-visa/ (2026-11-01) | | **Spain** | Closed | Investor residence ended 3 April 2025 (LO 1/2025); only renewals of existing permits continue | lamoncloa.gob.es (2026-11-01) | | **Italy** | 3–4 months | 1. Investment 2. Visa application (consulate) 3. Entry 4. Permit (questura) | esteri.it (2026-11-01) | | **Portugal (ARI)** | 6–12 months | 1. Investment 2. AIMA submission 3. Interview 4. Card | aima.gov.pt (2026-11-01) | | **Malta (MPRP)** | 4–6 months | 1. Agent submits 2. DD (4-tier) 3. Approval 4. Card | residencymalta.gov.mt/legal-framework-mprp-2/ (2026-11-01) | | **UAE** | 2–4 weeks | 1. Property/contract 2. Medical 3. Emirates ID 4. Visa stamping | u.ae/en/golden-visa (2026-11-01) | | **USA (EB-5)** | 24–48+

months | 1. I-526 filing 2. Adjudication 3. Conditional Green Card 4. I-829 (21–24 mo later) | uscis.gov/eb-5 (2026-11-01) | | **Cyprus** (Reg. 6(2) PR) | 2–3 months | 1. Investment 2. Lawyer files with Migration Dept 3. Permit | gov.cy (2026-11-01) | | **Hungary** (guest investor) | 2–3 months | 1. Fund purchase or donation 2. Visa at consulate 3. OIF residence application 4. Card | oif.gov.hu (2026-11-01) |

Notes:

- Greece: Biometrics appointment can take 4–8 weeks to schedule in Athens.
- Portugal: AIMA (ex-SEF) backlog means 12+ months is common. Temporary stay authorisation issued at submission.
- EB-5: I-526 processing time varies by regional centre and USCIS workload. Check USCIS case processing times for current estimates.
- UAE: Fastest programme; medical fitness test and Emirates ID are same-day in most centres.

Pre-submission timeline (document gathering)

| Task | Typical time | Notes | |------|--------------|-------| | Police certificates (all countries 10+ years) | 4–8 weeks | Some countries (e.g. USA FBI, UK ACRO) take 6–10 weeks | | Apostilles/ legalisations | 2–4 weeks | Hague Apostille Convention countries: 1–2 weeks; others: embassy legalisation 4–8 weeks | | Bank statements (3–5 years) | 1–2 weeks | Request from banks early; some require in-person | | Tax returns/certificates | 2–4 weeks | Tax authority processing varies | | Corporate documents (if business source) | 2–6 weeks | Company registry extracts, audited financials, shareholder resolutions | | Translations | 1–2 weeks | Certified translations required for non-official-language documents | | Medical exams | 1–2 weeks | Approved panel physicians only | | **Total pre-submission** | **6–14 weeks** | Start early; run tasks in parallel |

Renewal timelines

| Programme | Renewal period | Processing time | Notes | |----------|---------------|-----------------|-------| | Greece Golden Visa | 5 years | 1–2 months | Biometrics required | | Italy Investor Visa | 2 years (first), then 3 | 1–2 months | Questura appointment | | Portugal ARI | 2 years | 6–12 months | AIMA backlog; temporary proof issued | | Malta MPRP | 5 years | 1–2 months | Residence card renewal | | UAE Golden Visa | 5 or 10 years | 1–2 weeks | Online renewal | | USA EB-5 | Conditional (2 yr) !’ Permanent | I-829: 12–24 mo | File 90 days before conditional expiry |

What causes delays

| Delay factor | Impact | Mitigation | |--------------|--------|------------| | Incomplete application | 4–12 weeks | Use checklist; agent pre-review | | Police certificate delays | 4–10 weeks | Apply early; use expedite where available | | Name discrepancies | 2–8 weeks | Ensure all docs match passport exactly | | Source-of-funds queries | 4–12 weeks | Prepare detailed audit trail upfront | | Interview scheduling | 2–6 weeks | Be flexible with dates; virtual option | | Government backlog | Months | No mitigation; check published processing times | | Sanctions/high-risk nationality | Additional DD | Disclose early; provide extra docs |

Planning your timeline

Conservative estimate (add 50% to official times for first-time applicants):

- Caribbean CBI: **6–9 months** from engagement to passport
- Malta MPRP: **6–9 months** to residence card
- Türkiye: **5–8 months**
- Vanuatu: **3–4 months**
- Greece Golden Visa: **4–7 months** (incl. property search)
- Portugal ARI: **12–18 months** (incl. AIMA backlog)
- EB-5: **36–60+ months** to permanent Green Card

Start document gathering 3 months before you plan to submit. The government clock starts only when a complete application is received.

Official processing time trackers

- **USCIS**: egov.uscis.gov/processing-times/ (form I-526, I-829)
- **IRCC (Canada)**: cic.gc.ca/english/information/times/ (SUV, other)
- **UKVI**: gov.uk/visa-processing-times (Innovator Founder and work routes; the Investor visa closed in 2022)
- **AIMA (Portugal)**: aima.gov.pt (ARI statistics)
- **Greece**: migration.gov.gr (Golden Visa statistics)
- **Malta**: residencymalta.gov.mt (MPRP statistics)

Always confirm current processing times on the official website before you commit.

Frequently asked questions

Why do timelines vary?

Due diligence complexity, application completeness, interview scheduling, government workload, and programme-specific steps (e.g. Malta residence period) all affect timelines.

Can I speed up the process?

No official fast-track exists. Complete documentation, prompt responses to queries, and using an experienced authorised agent avoid delays.

What happens if my application is delayed?

Most programmes issue a receipt acknowledging submission. You can follow up via your agent. Some (e.g. St Kitts) publish service standards (120–180 days).

Does the timeline include document gathering?

The timelines below are **government processing times** from submission of a complete application. Document gathering (police certificates, bank statements, legalised documents) typically adds 4–12 weeks before submission.