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Extension of the period of validity of documents and visas relating to stay in national territory and Reformulation of the Migration Observatory: Necessary Solutions

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The recent Decree-Law no. 41-A/2024 of 28 of June 2024 introduces a one-year extension (until 30 of June 2025) to the validity period of documents and visas for foreign citizens in Portugal. This measure is a direct response to the delays experienced in regularising the situation of thousands of people, significantly affecting the immigrant community in the country. Below, we analyse the legal and practical implications of this decision and the new powers given to the Agency for Integration, Migration and Asylum (AIMA).

When publishing this Decree-Law, the Government justified extending the deadline due to “delays in the Public Administration in processing the procedures for renewing and extending documents relating to the stay of foreign citizens in the national territory”. This extension is aimed at providing an additional period to stabilise the functioning of the public services responsible for migration, ensuring a more secure and timely response to requests to renew documents.

Extending the validity period of foreigners' documents and visas in Portugal is a necessary and appropriate response to the current challenges the Public Administration faces in managing migration. By allowing an additional period of one year, the government is taking an essential step towards guaranteeing the stability and legal security of the immigrant community.

However, this measure must be accompanied by continued efforts to improve the efficiency of the public services responsible for migration. The attribution of new competencies to AIMA and the reinforced autonomy of the Migration Observatory are positive developments that will hopefully contribute to a more effective management of migration in Portugal.

Details of the Decree-Law

The Decree-Law specifies that documents and visas whose validity expire from the date of entry into force of this amendment or in the 15 days immediately preceding it will be accepted until 30 June 2025. After that date, the acceptance of documents and visas relating to a stay in the national territory will be conditional on proof that the holder has scheduled their renewal.

This measure covers a wide range of documents, including residence permits and work visas. The deadline extension attempts to prevent immigrants' documents from becoming precarious, allowing them to continue their lives in Portugal without the fear of bureaucratic irregularities.

AIMA's new competencies and the reformulation of the Migration Observatory

In addition to extending validity periods, the Decree-Law grants new competencies to AIMA, especially in the realm of attracting and retaining qualified human capital, "acknowledging and enhancing the Migration Observatory as an integral body" of that governmental agency.

The Migration Observatory also gains increased autonomy. Its mission is now focused on producing, collecting, processing, and disseminating information and knowledge related to migration phenomena. It will operate with full capacity to monitor and annually report on migration and asylum trends, thereby making a significant contribution to the development of well-informed and effective public policies. This autonomy is crucial in light of mounting migratory pressures, facilitating more efficient and proactive migration management.



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The Migration Observatory's current responsibilities include:

- a) Collecting and analysing data on the phenomenon of immigration;
- b) Promoting studies and research in partnership with university centres and international organisations;
- c) Evaluating migration policies and promoting recommendations for the definition of public policies and legislative initiatives;
- d) Organising debates and academic events, promoting reflection on migratory measures and the integration of migrants;
- e) Publicising scientific findings on migration and combating stereotypes;
- f) Participation in international conferences and projects and cooperation with various national and international organisations;
- g) Developing indicators to measure the performance of AIMA, I. P., among other things.

For more information and details regarding the implementation of this measure, please refer to the full text of the Decree-Law or contact our specialised team for advice.



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