



U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

USCIS Announces Countries Eligible for H-2A and H-2B Visa Programs

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), in consultation with the Department of State (DOS), have announced the list of countries whose nationals are eligible to participate in the H-2A and H-2B visa programs in 2020. The [notice](#) listing the eligible countries will be published in the Federal Register on Jan. 17, 2020.

For 2020, the acting secretary of Homeland Security has determined, with the concurrence of the Office of the Secretary of State, that the countries designated as eligible in 2019 will remain unchanged.

DHS maintains its authority to add countries to the eligible countries list at any time, and to remove any country whenever DHS and DOS determine that a country fails to meet the requirements for continued designation. Examples of factors that could result in the exclusion of a country or the removal of a country from the list include fraud, abuse, denial rates, overstay rates, human trafficking concerns, and other forms of noncompliance with the terms and conditions of the H-2 visa programs by nationals of that country.

The H-2A and H-2B visa programs allow U.S. employers to bring foreign nationals to the United States to fill temporary agricultural and nonagricultural jobs, respectively. Typically, USCIS approves H-2A and H-2B petitions only for nationals of countries that the secretary of Homeland Security has designated as eligible to participate in the programs. However, USCIS may approve H-2A and H-2B petitions, including those that were pending as of the date of the Federal Register notice, for nationals of countries **not** on the list on a case-by-case basis only if doing so is determined to be in the interest of the United States.

Effective Jan. 19, 2020, nationals of the following countries are eligible to receive H-2A and H-2B visas:

Andorra	Finland	Malta	Serbia
Argentina	France	Moldova*	Singapore
Australia	Germany	Mozambique	Slovakia
Austria	Greece	Mexico	Slovenia
Barbados	Grenada	Monaco	Solomon Islands
Belgium	Guatemala	Mongolia	South Africa
Brazil	Honduras	Montenegro	South Korea

AILA Doc. No. 20011701. (Posted 1/17/20)

Brunei	Hungary	Nauru	Spain
Bulgaria	Iceland	The Netherlands	St. Vincent and the Grenadines
Canada	Ireland	Nicaragua	Sweden
Chile	Israel	New Zealand	Switzerland
Colombia	Italy	Norway	Taiwan**
Costa Rica	Jamaica	Panama	Thailand
Croatia	Japan	Paraguay*	Timor-Leste
Czech Republic	Kiribati	Papua New Guinea	Tonga
Denmark	Latvia	Peru	Turkey
Dominican Republic*	Liechtenstein	Poland	Tuvalu
Ecuador	Lithuania	Portugal	Ukraine
El Salvador	Luxembourg	Romania	United Kingdom
Estonia	North Macedonia	Samoa	Uruguay
Fiji	Madagascar	San Marino	Vanuatu

*Moldova, Paraguay, and the Dominican Republic are eligible to participate in the H-2A program, but they are not eligible to participate in the H-2B program.

**Regarding all references to “country” or “countries” in this document, it should be noted that the Taiwan Relations Act of 1979, Pub. L. No. 96-8, Section 4(b)(1), provides that “[w]henver the laws of the United States refer or relate to foreign countries, nations, states, governments, or similar entities, such terms shall include and such laws shall apply with respect to Taiwan.” 22 U.S.C. § 3303(b)(1). Accordingly, all references to “country” or “countries” in the regulations governing whether nationals of a country are eligible for H-2 program participation, 8 CFR 214.2(h)(5)(i)(F)(1)(i) and 8 CFR 214.2(h)(6)(i)(E)(1), are read to include Taiwan. This is consistent with the United States’ one-China policy, under which the United States has maintained unofficial relations with Taiwan since 1979.

This notice does not affect the status of H-2 beneficiaries who currently are in the United States unless they apply to extend their status. It does apply to nonimmigrants changing status in the United States to H-2A or B. Each country's designation is valid, subject to removal for failure to meet the requirements for continued designation, from Jan. 19, 2020, until Jan. 18, 2021.

For more information on these programs, see the [H-2A Temporary Agricultural Workers](#) and [H-2B Temporary Non-Agricultural Workers](#) pages on our website.

Last Reviewed/Updated: 01/16/2020