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LAWYERS

RESIDENCE BY INVESTMENT · GUIDE · UPDATED 31 OCTOBER 2026

The Portugal *Golden Visa* in 2026

Routes, process, government fees and the new path to citizenship, explained by a Portuguese lawyer.

€250k
lowest standard entry (€200k in low-density areas)

7 days
in Portugal in year one, then 14 per two years

5 yrs
to permanent residence

10 yrs
to citizenship for most nationals; 7 for EU and CPLP

AT A GLANCE

A residence programme that changed *three times* in three years

The Golden Visa (Autorização de Residência para Investimento, ARI) gives non-EU investors and their families a Portuguese residence card, free movement in the Schengen area and a path to permanent residence, in exchange for a qualifying investment kept for five years.

OCTOBER 2023

Real estate closed

The Mais Habitação law removed property purchases, real-estate funds and capital transfers. The programme continued for every other route.

19 MAY 2026

Citizenship takes longer

Organic Law 1/2026 raised the residence period to 10 years (7 for EU and CPLP nationals), counted from the first card. Applications filed by 18 May 2026 keep the old rules.

2025–2026

AIMA backlog

About 46,000 Golden Visa files were pending in October 2026, with 13% decided. The government pledged to clear the backlog in 2026. Planning estimate for new files: 14 to 18 months.

1 MARCH 2026

Higher fees

AIMA's fee table is indexed to inflation every year. Online grant fee: €6,314.20 per person, plus €632.10 for analysis.

WHO IT SUITS

Investors who want EU residence and mobility without moving to Portugal full time, families planning education or retirement in Europe, and founders who want to build a Portuguese business.



THE FIVE ROUTES

Choose the investment that *fits your goals*

ROUTE	MINIMUM	LOW-DENSITY	NOTES
Investment fund units	€500,000	—	CMVM-supervised; 60% in Portuguese companies; 5-year maturity; no real estate
Cultural heritage or arts	€250,000	€200,000	A contribution, not an investment. Projects approved by the cultural authorities
Scientific research	€500,000	€400,000	Paid to public or private institutions in the national scientific system
Company with 5 jobs	€500,000	—	Incorporation of a Portuguese company, or capital increase, with job creation
Job creation	10 jobs	8 jobs	Permanent jobs registered with social security

LOW-DENSITY TERRITORIES

NUTS III regions with fewer than 100 inhabitants per km² or GDP per capita below 75% of the national average. These include much of the Alentejo, the Douro, Trás-os-Montes, the Beiras and the Algarve. We confirm eligibility for each project location before you commit.

CHOOSING A FUND

More than 60 funds are marketed for the Golden Visa and there is no official list. Before subscribing we verify CMVM registration, the 60% Portuguese-company test, the remaining maturity, fees, exit terms and whether US persons are accepted.



PROCESS

From first call to *residence card*

01	**Strategy call and route choice.** Family members, tax planning, low-density options.	WEEK 0
02	**NIF and Portuguese bank account,** remotely with a power of attorney.	1–3 WEEKS
03	**Make the investment** with capital transferred from abroad, after due diligence.	2–6 WEEKS
04	**Gather documents** for every applicant.	IN PARALLEL
05	**Online application on Portal ARI** and payment of the analysis fee.	DAY 1
06	**AIMA review and biometrics** in Portugal: your first trip.	MONTHS
07	**Approval, grant fee and two-year card.** The citizenship clock starts here.	WEEKS
08	**Keep, renew and move forward:** renewals online, PR at year 5.	YEARS 2, 5, 7/10

DOCUMENTS CHECKLIST

- Valid passport for each applicant
- Proof of family relationship
- Criminal record certificates, apostilled and translated
- Health insurance valid in Portugal
- Portuguese tax and social security clearance
- Proof of investment from the entity
- Bank evidence of funds from abroad
- Power of attorney for your lawyer



COSTS AND TIMELINE

A family of four, *filed online*

GOVERNMENT FEES, 4 APPLICANTS	TOTAL
Initial application €632.10 + €6,314.20 × 4	€27,785.20
First renewal, year 2 €632.10 + €3,157.80 × 4	€15,159.60
Second renewal, year 5 €632.10 + €3,157.80 × 4	€15,159.60
Total over five years	€58,104.40

AIMA fee table, Ordinance 307/2023, from 1 March 2026. Excludes legal fees, translations, insurance and fund charges.

EXAMPLE: FILED NOVEMBER 2026

NOV 2026	Application filed
JAN 2028	**First card issued** (14 months)
JAN 2030	First renewal
JAN 2033	Permanent residence
JAN 2035	Citizenship eligibility for EU and CPLP nationals (7 years)
JAN 2038	**Citizenship eligibility,** most nationals (10 years)

IF AIMA DOES NOT DECIDE

AIMA has a 90-day legal deadline. After it passes, the administrative courts can order AIMA to act through an urgent intimação (article 109 CPTA) or an ordinary action to compel a decision. We assess which route fits your facts.



WORK WITH US

Plan your Golden Visa with a *Portuguese lawyer*

CSC Lawyers is a Lisbon law practice working in immigration, nationality and real estate. We take Golden Visa clients from the first strategy call to the residence card, and stay with them through renewals, permanent residence and citizenship.

What we handle

- NIF, tax representation and bank account
- Legal due diligence on funds and projects
- Application on Portal ARI and biometrics
- Renewals and permanent residence
- Court action against AIMA delays
- Portuguese nationality applications

How we work

- Fixed fees agreed in writing before we start
- One lawyer responsible for your file
- Written updates at every AIMA milestone
- English and Portuguese

CONTACT

For more information, *please contact us*

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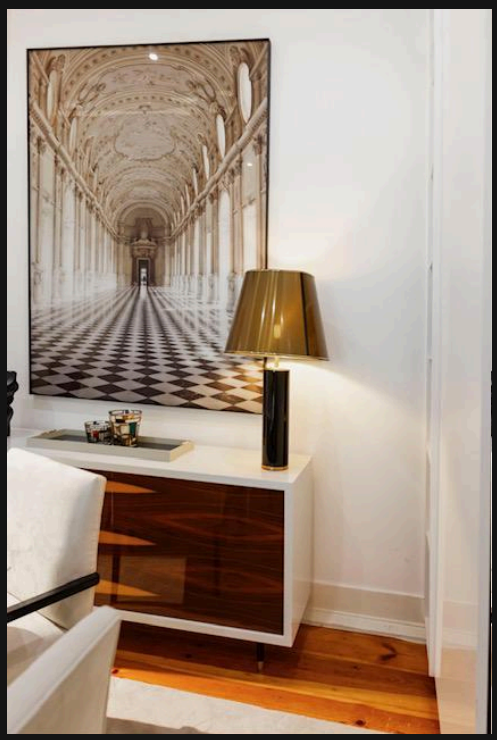

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