

# BRAZIL VISA APPLICATION CENTRE



IOM Visa Application Centres facilitate safe, regular and orderly migration and mobility by improving visa processing for both migrants and governments with efficient, timely processes that safeguard the rights and needs of migrants.

Especially in the context of humanitarian crisis, IOM operates support centres on behalf of Member States to facilitate the processing of complementary pathways for migration, such as family reunification and the issuance of humanitarian visas.



Goal 10.7: Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility.



Objective 5: Enhance availability and flexibility of pathways for regular migration.



Objective 3: Migration should take place in a safe, orderly and dignified manner.

## SUPPORTING FAMILY REUNIFICATION AND HUMANITARIAN VISA PROCESSING

A particularly successful example is the Brazil Visa Application Centre that was officially opened on September 29, 2015 in Port-au-Prince. After the earthquake in 2010, the irregular migration through long and dangerous routes had been growing rapidly and had become a major concern for both the Governments of Haiti and Brazil. To reduce the number of Haitian migrants who were falling prey to migrant smuggling and trafficking networks, the Government of Brazil established mechanisms to enable these Haitian migrants to obtain visas in countries of origin and transit. Since 2012, through the Normative Resolution RN 97, Brazil has issued humanitarian permanent visas to Haitians coming to the country, which grants them the right to live, work, study and apply for permanent residency in Brazil.

After the resolution of April 2013 of the National Immigration Council to end the annual limit of 1,200 humanitarian visas, the need for a dedicated visa support centre specific for humanitarian visas increased drastically. A rising number of visa-related inquiries and application submissions resulted in a serious strain on the resources of the visa office of the Consulate General of Brazil in Port-Au-Prince, Haiti.

The Brazil Visa Application Centre was established to facilitate humanitarian visas processing in response to the concern over the growing irregular migration to Brazil from Haiti. Two categories of visas are processed in the centre – regular humanitarian visas and family reunification visas.

IOM plays an administrative role, providing the following services:

- Use of a secure, tailored software solution developed by IOM (Visa Application Processing Software – VAPS)
- Information services (website in Portuguese, Creole, English and French, email and call centre)
- Booking and scheduling
- Form-filling assistance for applicants
- Document review and receipt (completeness check and digitization)
- Data input, validation and transfer
- Fee collection and remittance
- Passport, document collection, delivery and return
- Application tracking
- Comprehensive reporting

Meanwhile, the Embassy of Brazil remains the sole visa decision maker. The Brazil Visa Application Centre facilitates the work of the visa office by enabling visa officers to focus on adjudicating and issuing visas instead of handling applicant enquiries and carrying out the administrative tasks of the visa application process. Haitian humanitarian and family reunification visa applicants also benefit from enhanced information services and visa application assistance in their native languages, protecting them from migrant smugglers and unscrupulous visa brokers.

**2010**

Irregular Migration Rapidly Increases



**2012**

Brazil Introduces Permanent Visa for Humanitarian Purposes with 1200 Annual Cap



**2013**

Brazil Lifts 1200 Cap on Permanent Visas for Humanitarian Purposes



**2015**

IOM Launches Brazil Visa Application Centre



Moreover, it is the first step of a wider project that entails raising the awareness of the Haitian population on the dangers of irregular migration, accompanied by a radio campaign, information notices on the website as well as a cultural sensitization booklet provided for all successful visa applicants.

Since its opening in 2015 through the end of 2017, the Brazil Visa Application Centre has processed 41,683 applications. The Government of Brazil has continued to renew the MOU with IOM, demonstrating IOM's exceptional operational capability in emergency situations with high risk. Through the continuous assessment of the socioeconomic and political climate of the country, IOM continues to improve its established systems and the endeavors to ensure the safe, orderly and humane migration of our beneficiaries.

