



U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

New Countries Eligible to Participate in H-2A and H-2B Programs

Jan. 14, 2011

WASHINGTON— U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) announced today that the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), in consultation with the Department of State, has identified 53 countries whose nationals are eligible to participate in the H-2A and H-2B programs for the coming year.

The [H-2A program](#) allows U.S. employers to bring foreign nationals to the United States to fill temporary agricultural jobs; the [H-2B program](#) allows U.S. employers to bring foreign nationals to the United States for temporary nonagricultural jobs. USCIS, with limited exception, approves petitions only for nationals of countries designated by the Secretary of Homeland Security as eligible to participate in the H-2A and H-2B programs. A new list of eligible countries publishes in a [Federal Register notice](#) on January 18, 2011, and the designations are valid for one year from the date of publication.

Effective Jan. 18, 2011, nationals from the following countries are eligible to participate in the H-2A and H-2B programs: Argentina, Australia, Barbados, Belize, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Croatia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Guatemala, Honduras, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Jamaica, Japan, Kiribati, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Mexico, Moldova, Nauru, The Netherlands, Nicaragua, New Zealand, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Samoa, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, South Korea, Tonga, Turkey, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Kingdom, Uruguay, and Vanuatu. Of these countries, the following were designated for the first time this year: Barbados, Estonia, Fiji, Hungary, Kiribati, Latvia, Macedonia, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.

After considering a number of relevant factors under the governing regulations, the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of State have determined that Indonesia currently does not warrant a renewed designation as a participating country in the H-2A and H-2B programs for 2011.

This new list does not affect the status of individuals who currently hold valid H-2A or H-2B visas or status. A national from a country that is not on the list may be the beneficiary of an approved H-2A and H-2B petition if the Secretary of Homeland Security determines, in her sole and unreviewable discretion, that it is in the U.S. interest for the alien to be a beneficiary of the petition