

PRIMARY AVENUES FOR LAWFUL ENTRY INTO THE U.S.

EMPLOYMENT- BASED IMMIGRATION



The information provided below is a summarized version of the American Immigration Council's fact sheet titled: "How the United States Immigration System Works." Published: June 24, 2024

The U.S. offers multiple avenues for immigrants with valuable skills to enter the country, either temporarily or permanently. These processes can be extensive and are **ONLY** available to immigrants who have not overstayed or violated their visas or entry to the U.S.

The goal of employment-based immigration is to bring valuable skills to the U.S. economy.

Important Immigration Terms

Lawful Permanent Resident (LPR)

Also known as a "green card" holder or a non-citizen who is granted the right to live permanently in the U.S.

Visa

Document allowing foreign nationals to enter, stay, or work in the United States.

Visa Bulletin

Monthly publication from the U.S. Department of State that shares availability of immigrant visas.

4 Principles of U.S. Immigration Laws



Bringing Skills to
U.S. Economy



Reunification of
Families



Humanitarian
Protections



Promoting
Diversity

Employment-Based Immigration

Temporary vs. Permanent Employment-Based Visas

Temporary Employment Visas	Permanent Employment Visas
<p>Employers can petition foreign nationals for specific jobs for limited periods.</p> <p>There are more than 20 types of visas for temp workers, including athletes, entertainers, religious workers, and various H visas for highly skilled & lesser-skilled workers.</p>	<p>In some cases, employers can sponsor the worker for permanent employment.</p> <p>Permanent employment visas are capped at 140,000 per year for the entire country. This number includes their eligible spouses and minor unmarried children.</p>

Permanent Employment-Based Visa Process



The wait for permanent employment visas could take **5-15 years** depending on the country

Legalization Process



- Obtain Department of Labor certification approval
- I-140 approval
- Visa Bulletin waiting time
- Consular processing

Depending on the permanent immigration category sought and the foreign national's current nonimmigrant category, they may be able to complete the steps to become an LPR while continuing to live and work in the United States.