

# E-VISA REGIME TO BOOST BRAZILIAN TOURISM REVENUE



A new measure aimed at the visitors from USA, Canada, Australia and Japan is expected to boost Brazilian tourism substantially. Starting at the end of 2017 tourists from these four countries will face simplified entry requirements, including e-visa regime.

The whole visa application process for these visitors, which includes payment of fees, analysis, its approval, and issuance, will be available online, with an estimated time of processing reaching 48 hours.

**The simplification, already contemplated in the Brazil + Tourism Plan, presented last week by the Ministry of Tourism, is likely to bring more revenue to the industry and to attract more visitors from the given countries.** The e-visa regime is expected to inject R 1.4 billion (EUR 415 million) in the country's economy in a two-year timeframe.

For Embratur's president, Vinicius Lummertz, demanding an entry visa is the number one obstacle to the growth of foreign tourism, regardless of the country.

"Nowadays, Brazilian tourism accounts for about 9% of our GDP. Technical figures of the WTTC (World Travel & Tourism Council) indicate that, as the entry's visa restrictions are narrowed, the countries can foster a growth from 5% to 25% in revenue," the entrepreneur clarifies.

According to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), simplifying the travelling process can generate an increase of up to 20% in the flow of people between two destinations.

## Major Sources of Tourists

The e-visa regime will primarily affect the four aforementioned nations, given how strategic they are and what they represent in the number of foreign tourists and total income. In 2016, 849,000 tourists arrived in Brazil from the United States, Canada, Australia and Japan - which accounts for 15% of the whole 6.6 million foreigners who visited the country last year alone. They spent R 539 million.

During the 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games, both held in Rio, the country established a provisional exception in its policy of diplomatic reciprocity, targeting visitors of those four countries. The experiment nurtured a 55.31% growth in the number of foreigners coming from the beneficiary countries, compared to the same period of 2015.

According to a research conducted by the Ministry of Tourism, 82% of those tourists affirmed that a non-visa policy would make it easier for them to return to Brazil.

## Visa Policy

Brazil conducts a visa policy that is based on the reciprocity principle. In other words, people from the USA, Canada, Australia and Japan, nations in which Brazilian citizens have to apply for a visa in

order to enter their territories, also need an authorization to fly to Brazil.

**The goal of the e-visa regime is to streamline the entry of those tourists in Brazil.** After that, the measure might extend to include Saudi Arabia, Qatar, India and China. Currently, Brazil has bilateral agreements on visa exemptions with around 90 countries.

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