



29 June, 2026

**To:**  
**All Licensed Marketing Agents and Stakeholders**

**OFFICIAL MEMORANDUM:** General Program Update - Processing Timelines

Dear Licensed Marketing Agents,

The Citizenship by Investment Unit of São Tomé and Príncipe wishes to provide an important update regarding the current processing timelines for citizenship applications under the São Tomé and Príncipe Citizenship by Investment Program.

As the Program continues to grow and attract applicants from a diverse range of nationalities worldwide, we remain committed to maintaining the highest standards of due diligence, compliance, transparency, and program integrity. In maintaining these standards, we do recognize that a number of applications have experienced longer processing times than initially anticipated, particularly at the post-approval stage.

We sincerely acknowledge the concerns raised by our stakeholders regarding these delays and would like to provide greater clarity on the current process, revised timelines expectations, and the measures being implemented to improve overall efficiency.

#### **Current Processing Timelines**

Decisions on applications currently take **approximately 2 months**, depending on the applicant's profile and the complexity of the case.

Following approval of an application, completion of the government contribution payment and submission of post-approval documents, applicants should currently expect the issuance of citizenship documents to take **approximately a minimum of 12 weeks**.

Stakeholders are advised to communicate this revised timeframe to applicants to ensure expectations remain aligned with the current operational realities. This revised timeframe is also reflected on the official webpage of the Citizenship by Investment Program.

<https://cip.gov.st/>

#### **Post-Approval Stage and Citizenship Issuance Process**

The issuance of citizenship documents involves multiple government agencies and legal procedures that must be completed sequentially. The current delays reflect the complexity of processing applications through several government agencies, each with its own procedures.

The post-approval process consists of the following stages:

1. Upon approval, the applicant fulfills the government contribution and completes the post-approval documentation requirements.
2. The file is then formally presented to the Council of Ministers for sign off and onward transmission to the President's Office for Promulgation, being the formal act of naturalization.
4. Following Promulgation, the new citizen is registered with the Civil Registry and Notary Office, where the Birth Certificate and Civil Registry Records are issued. The Certificates of Registration are then issued.
5. The National ID card is subsequently produced and issued.
6. The Passport Office issues the Passport.

As is often the case with newly established government initiatives of an international scale, the Program adopted several operational adjustments, legislative reviews, procedural refinements and inter-agency coordination, all of which require time to be fully implemented.

While these developments have contributed to longer processing times in the short term, they are critical to ensuring the long-term stability, credibility and success of the Program.



### Operational Improvements

The Government of São Tomé and Príncipe and the Citizenship by Investment Unit have been actively implementing a number of measures designed to reduce processing timelines and improve overall efficiency, including but not limited to:

- Strengthening coordination mechanisms among the relevant government authorities and the Citizenship by Investment in the decision phase and the post-approval process.
- Increasing administrative support staff dedicated to the Citizenship by Investment Program in each government agency.
- Reviewing legislative and procedural requirements with the objective of simplifying and streamlining aspects of the citizenship issuance process where appropriate.

The Citizenship by Investment Unit remains fully committed to maintaining transparent communication with all Licensed Marketing Agents and stakeholders. We will continue to provide updates regarding processing timelines as further improvements are implemented.

The Government of São Tomé and Príncipe remains fully committed to ensuring that all applications are processed in accordance with the highest standards of integrity, compliance and program longevity.

We sincerely appreciate your patience, understanding, and continued support as we work to strengthen and enhance the Program. Should you require any further clarification, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Respectfully,  
*Atenciosamente,*

Disney Leite Ramos  
Director  
Citizenship by Investment Unit

