

TRENDS REPORT



2027

Travel formalities: *what will change*

10 trends observed in our applications, cross-checked with border news, to anticipate the year ahead.



SÉBASTIEN COUX AND LOOPING

*The border no longer
begins at the airport.
It begins on the
traveller's phone.*

Sébastien Couix

Founder and CEO of Visamundi, a travel formalities agency founded in Nantes, France, in 2017.

FOREWORD

The border begins *before departure*

Since 2017, we have seen the travel formalities of thousands of travellers pass through our hands every day. Families heading to London for a weekend, executives flying from Riyadh to Tel Aviv, tour operators sending hundreds of passengers to India or Tanzania. This vantage point has given us one conviction: the border no longer begins at the airport. It begins on the traveller's phone, sometimes weeks before departure.

In 2026, seven out of ten applications we handled were for travellers who did not need a visa. Yet they still had a procedure to complete, a form to fill in and a fee to pay. It is the clearest sign of a shift that many still underestimate: "visa-free" travel has all but disappeared.

This report is not an exercise in futurology. Each trend starts from a dated public fact, cross-checks it against what we measure on our own applications, and then offers a cautious projection for 2027. We have set aside spectacular promises that will not materialise within that timeframe, and kept what will genuinely change life for travellers and travel professionals next year.

We hope it will help travellers plan ahead, companies better prepare their business trips, and travel providers place formalities at the heart of their customer journey. Enjoy the read, and safe travels.

Sébastien Couix

Ten trends, *three movements*

In 2027, travelling “visa-free” will no longer mean travelling without formalities. At Visamundi, 7 out of 10 applications handled in 2026 already concern visa-exempt travellers who must nonetheless obtain an electronic authorisation before boarding.

This report brings together 10 trends, grouped into three movements: more formalities that cost more, more digital control, and a more unstable environment. Each trend starts from a dated public fact, cross-checks it against what we observe in our applications, then offers a cautious projection for 2027 and a tip for travellers.

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What our 2026 applications tell us

69%

of applications are for an authorisation for visa-exempt travellers

"Visa-free" has become a procedure

<1h

average issuing time for a UK ETA

An ETA is almost instant...

8.6d

average issuing time for a Tanzanian e-Visa

...an African e-Visa can take more than a week

23%

of applications submitted less than 7 days before arrival

One traveller in four leaves it to the last minute

8%

of scanned passports expire within 6 months

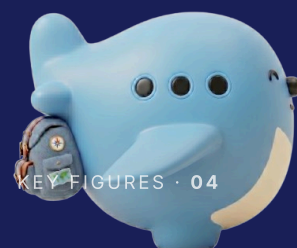
Passport validity remains the number one pitfall

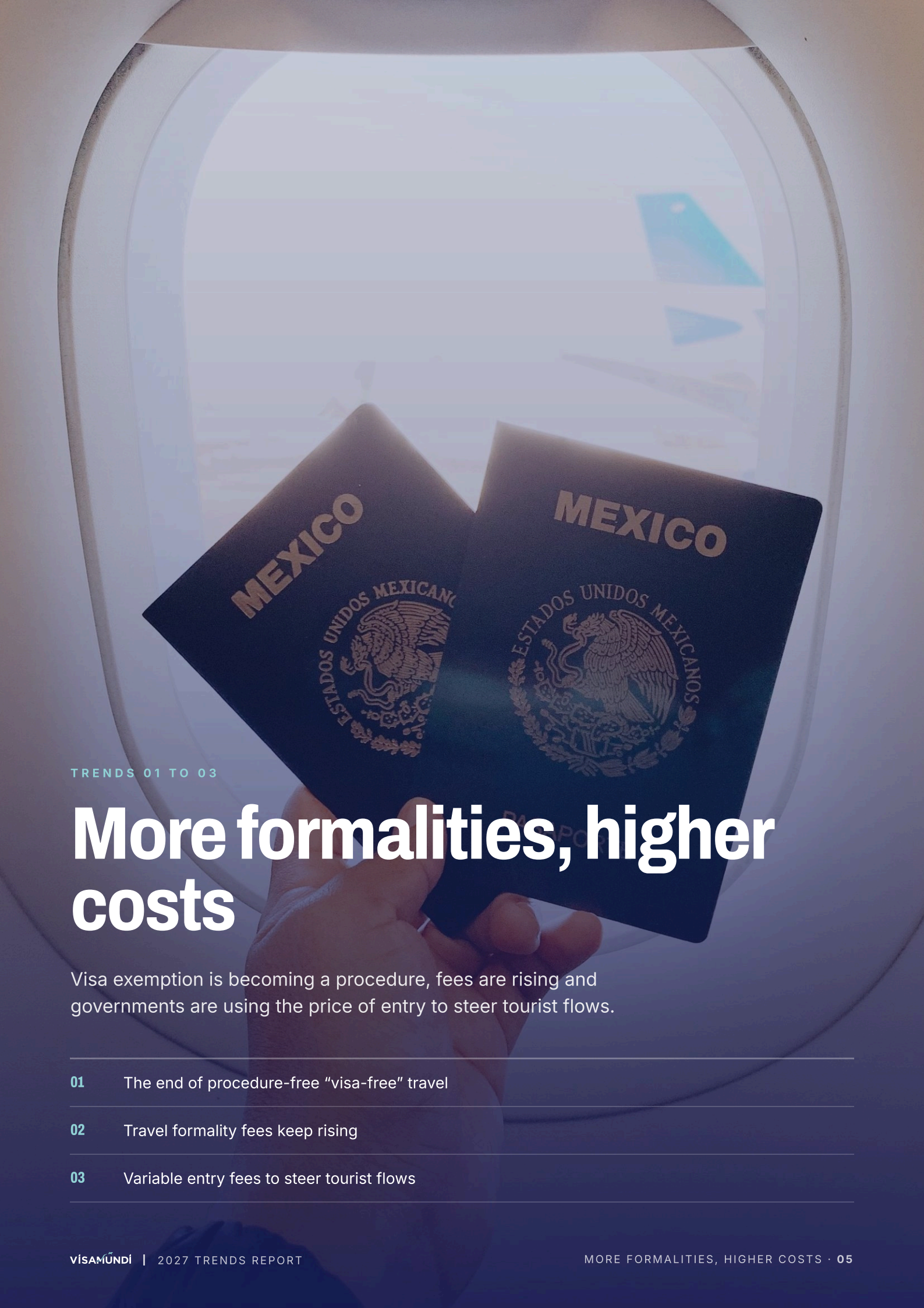
4%

of passport numbers entered differ from the document

A single typo can invalidate an authorisation

Scope: applications paid on the Visamundi platform, April to mid-October 2026. Processing times measured between submission to the authorities and issue of the document.



A hand holds two Mexican passports in front of an airplane window. The passports are dark blue with the word 'MEXICO' in gold at the top and the Mexican coat of arms in the center. The coat of arms features an eagle perched on a cactus, surrounded by a circular border with the text 'ESTADOS UNIDOS MEXICANOS'. The background shows a view of an airport tarmac with a large blue and white airplane tail fin visible through the window.

TRENDS 01 TO 03

More formalities, higher costs

Visa exemption is becoming a procedure, fees are rising and governments are using the price of entry to steer tourist flows.

-
- 01 The end of procedure-free “visa-free” travel
 - 02 Travel formality fees keep rising
 - 03 Variable entry fees to steer tourist flows
-

01 The end of procedure-free “visa-free” travel

THE FACTS

Since February 2026, the United Kingdom has been denying boarding to visa-exempt travellers who do not hold an ETA. [THE LOCAL](#) Europe is following suit: after the difficulties of the new EES biometric control system, the launch of ETIAS is expected to slip to 2027. [EURONEWS](#) Japan is planning its JESTA for fiscal year 2028. [THE STANDARD](#)

PROJECTION 2027

What we expect

ETIAS should start in 2027, with a transition period during which unregistered travellers will not be turned away. But the underlying shift is already a done deal: between the UK ETA, the European ETIAS and the Japanese JESTA, almost all the major destinations for Western travellers will require prior authorisation by 2028.

French travellers, as EU citizens, will not be affected by ETIAS. The shock will be felt by visitors coming to Europe: British, American and Canadian travellers, and the business visitors hosted by European companies. The “a passport and a ticket are enough” reflex is disappearing, even for familiar destinations.

The main risk in 2027 will be denied boarding through lack of awareness, especially among occasional travellers. Added to this will be confusion between systems with similar acronyms: EES at the border, ETIAS before departure, ETA for the United Kingdom.

3

major authorisation systems by 2028:
ETA, ETIAS, JESTA

AT VISAMUNDI

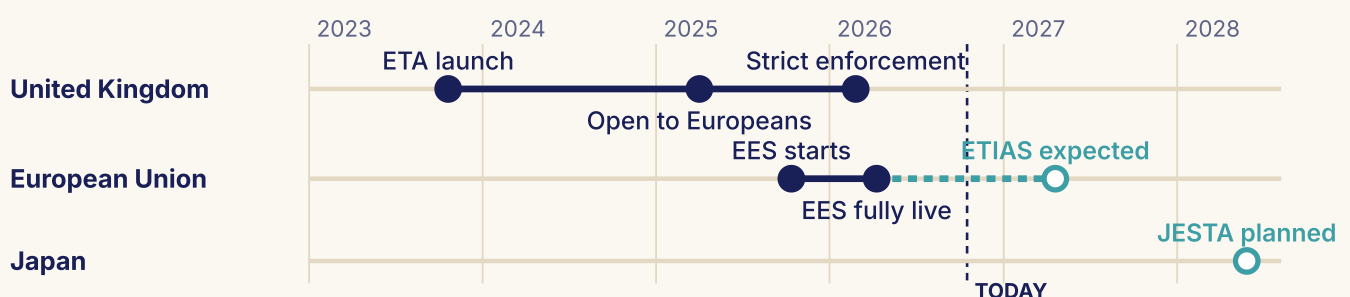
69% of our 2026 applications concern travellers who do not need a visa, but an electronic authorisation. The United Kingdom tops our requests, ahead of Israel (ETA-IL) and New Zealand (NZeTA).

TRAVELLER TIP

Never again assume “no visa = nothing to do”. Check which authorisation is required when booking, not at the airport.

The travel authorisation timeline

Official calendars and announcements, Oct. 2026



02 Travel formality fees keep rising

THE FACTS

The UK ETA went up from £16 to £20 on 8 April 2026, a 25% increase that brings it almost into line with the €20 ETIAS. **THE LOCAL** The US ESTA has gone up from \$21 to \$40, and US visa applicants now pay a \$250 “visa integrity fee”. **KOREA JOONGANG DAILY**

PROJECTION 2027

What we expect

Fees will keep rising, for three reasons. Electronic authorisations have become a source of revenue: a few extra euros, multiplied by millions of applications, fund border systems. Demand is also price-insensitive: a traveller who has booked a flight will not cancel over a few euros. Finally, countries align with one another, as the £20 ETA and the €20 ETIAS show.

The impact will be felt most by families and multi-destination travellers. A family of four combining the United Kingdom, the United States and Canada already pays more than €250 in formalities before buying a single ticket.

In 2027, other countries are likely to raise their fees, particularly those launching or modernising their systems. The price of an authorisation will become a fully-fledged line in the travel budget, just like airport taxes.

+90%

rise in the US ESTA, from \$21 to \$40

AT VISAMUNDI

These authorisations are due for every traveller, children included. For a family, the increase is multiplied by the number of passports.

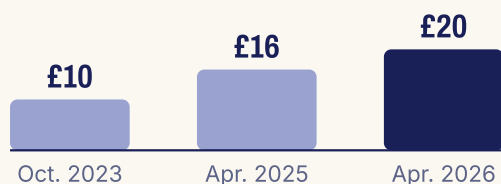
TRAVELLER TIP

When an increase is announced and the authorisation is valid for several years (2 years for the UK ETA), apply before the new price takes effect.

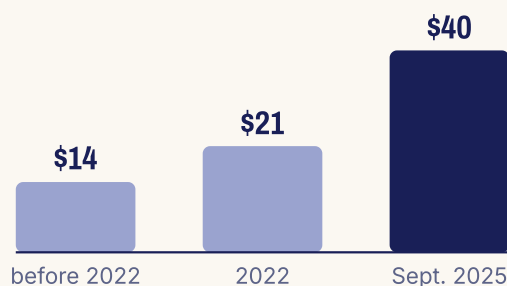
The price of authorisations keeps rising

Official fees per application

UK ETA (£)



US ESTA (\$)



TREND 03 · MORE FORMALITIES, HIGHER COSTS

03

Variable entry fees to steer tourist flows

“Formalities are becoming a tool to manage flows, not just a control.”

Variable entry fees to steer tourist flows

THE FACTS

Countries are increasingly using the price of entry to shape visitor numbers. India has applied seasonal pricing since 2019: the 30-day tourist e-Visa costs \$10 in the low season, from April to June, versus \$25 from July to March. **OUTLOOK INDIA** Conversely, Japan tripled its departure tax on 1 July 2026, from ¥1,000 to ¥3,000 per passenger, around €16, to fund its fight against overtourism.

NIPPON.COM It has also launched a sharp increase in its visa fees, unchanged for more than forty years. **NIPPON.COM**

PROJECTION 2027

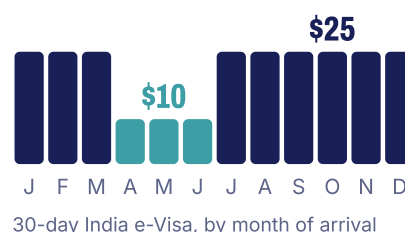
What we expect

Formalities are becoming a tool to manage flows, not just a control. Two levers coexist: discounts to fill off-peak months, as in India, and taxes to slow down saturated destinations, as in Japan. The latter will become the standard response to overtourism, because it brings in money immediately and falls mainly on foreign visitors: Japan aims to raise ¥130 billion from its departure tax in fiscal year 2026.

In 2027, we can expect levies to stack up: variable visa fees, a national entry or departure tax, a local nightly tax, and sometimes access fees for certain sites. High-season surcharges, more politically sensitive, could appeal to destinations that want to avoid quotas. For travellers, the real cost of formalities will no longer stop at the visa.

Two limits will slow the movement. The first is technical: seasonal pricing means linking the price to the arrival date, and therefore checking it, which only countries with a modern e-Visa can do. The second is effectiveness: a €16 tax is hardly a deterrent on a long-haul trip costing several thousand euros. If visitor numbers do not fall, the most saturated destinations could switch to quotas or mandatory reservations.

Price of the Indian tourist e-Visa

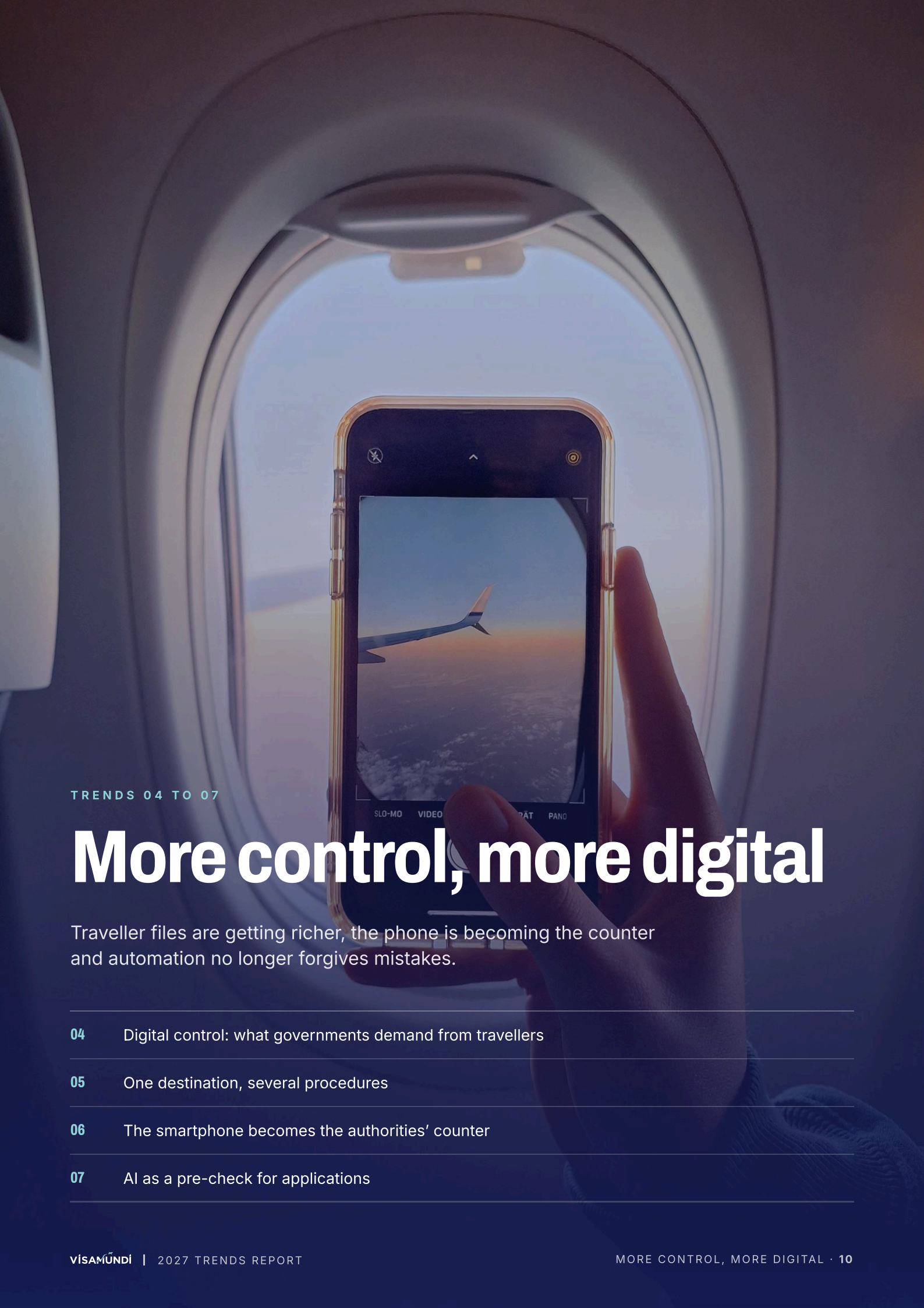


AT VISAMUNDI

For India, our travellers are spread across several types of e-Visa (tourist, business, medical), each with its own price. For New Zealand, the visitor levy is already part of the cost of the formality: it weighs more than the authorisation itself.

TRAVELLER TIP

Include entry and departure taxes in the travel budget, just like the visa. For India, apply between April and June, even for an autumn trip.



TRENDS 04 TO 07

More control, more digital

Traveller files are getting richer, the phone is becoming the counter and automation no longer forgives mistakes.

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- 04 Digital control: what governments demand from travellers
 - 05 One destination, several procedures
 - 06 The smartphone becomes the authorities' counter
 - 07 AI as a pre-check for applications
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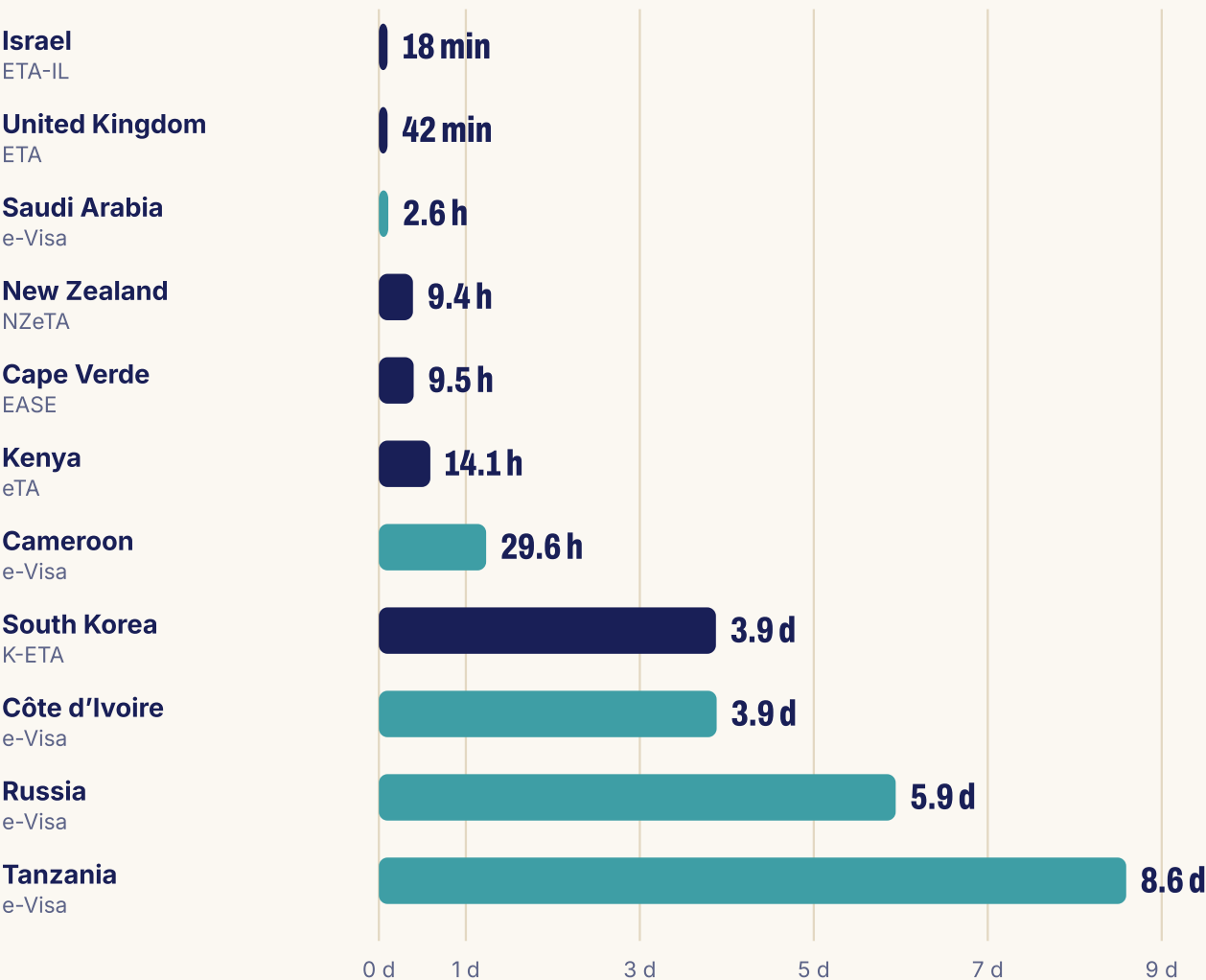
“Issued in minutes”?

Not everywhere.

Average time between submission to the authorities and issue of the document, measured on our 2026 applications. Travel authorisations are often almost instant, but not all of them: Korea’s K-ETA takes nearly four days, longer than a Saudi e-Visa.

Average issuing time by destination

■ Travel authorisation (ETA) ■ e-Visa



Source: Visamundi data, applications from April to mid-October 2026. Average by main document type; times vary by nationality, period and any manual review. They do not include the time travellers spend preparing their application.

04 Digital control: what governments demand from travellers

THE FACTS

The United States has proposed making it mandatory for ESTA applicants to declare their social media accounts from the past five years. The plan also covers phone numbers from the past five years, email addresses from the past ten years and biometric data. **AXIOS** For digital nomads, dedicated visas already require proof of income, supplied by the applicant.

PROJECTION 2027

What we expect

The authorisation application is turning into a full profiling file: identity, biometrics, contact history, online footprint. The US social media proposal is the most advanced version, but the logic is general: collect before departure what used to be checked at the counter.

In 2027, ETIAS will in turn ask travellers about their criminal record and certain past stays. Nomad visas will follow the same path: proof of income, now sent as PDFs, could eventually be verified directly with banks. Nothing like this is in place yet, but the technology exists.

In practice, an inconsistency between two declarations, a forgotten account or an omitted email address will weigh more heavily than a frank answer. Honesty and consistency are becoming the first acceptance criterion.

5 years

of social media history requested in the ESTA proposal

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Every new piece of data required makes the form longer and creates more opportunities for error, which is why we systematically check every application before submission.

TRAVELLER TIP

Answer accurately and completely. Today, an omission or an inconsistency weighs more heavily than an awkward answer.

The ESTA proposal: years of history requested

CBP proposal, Dec. 2025

Email addresses		10 years
Social media		5 years
Phone numbers		5 years

05 One destination, several procedures

THE FACTS

For India, travellers must apply for the e-Visa between 120 and 4 days before arrival, then complete the e-Arrival Card (mandatory since April 2026) within the 72 hours before arrival.

BUSINESS TODAY On top of that comes the Air Suvidha 2.0 health declaration, mandatory again for international arrivals: three procedures for a single country. **KHALEEJ TIMES** In Zanzibar, \$44 insurance has been compulsory since October 2024, on top of the Tanzanian e-Visa and even for travellers who are already insured. **L'ÉCHO TOURISTIQUE** In Thailand, the digital arrival card also asks for health information. **NEW STRAITS TIMES**

PROJECTION 2027

What we expect

The visa is no longer “the” formality, but the first on a list. On top of the e-Visa or travel authorisation come an arrival card, a health declaration, compulsory insurance or an entry tax. Each step has its own portal, its own submission window and sometimes its own fees, with no coordination between them.

This fragmentation creates a new risk: travellers who have obtained their e-Visa think they are all set, when one or two procedures remain to be completed on a different timetable. An arrival card can often only be filled in within the three days before arrival, whereas the e-Visa must be obtained well in advance. Forgetting one is paid for at boarding or at the immigration desk.

In 2027, new destinations are likely to add their own arrival card or health component. The value will no longer lie in a single procedure, but in the big picture: knowing, for a given passport and destination, which steps are required, in what order and when.

1 in 2

adds the arrival card (India) or Zanzibar insurance (Tanzania) to their e-Visa

AT VISAMUNDI

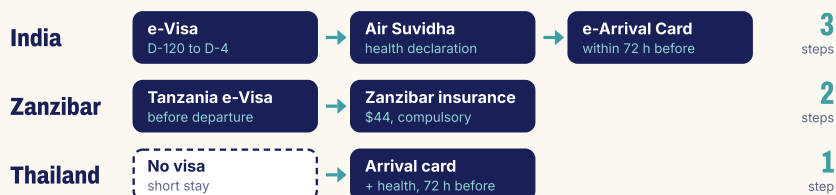
One customer in two adds the arrival card to their India e-Visa when we offer it. For Tanzania, one traveller in two adds the mandatory Zanzibar insurance. Travellers do not refuse these steps: they discover them late, and prefer to hand them over.

TRAVELLER TIP

List every procedure required for the destination, not just the visa, with the submission window for each. For India: the e-Visa no later than 4 days before arrival, then the Air Suvidha declaration and the arrival card before boarding.

The steps before arrival

French traveller, Oct. 2026



TREND 06 · MORE CONTROL, MORE DIGITAL

06

The smartphone becomes the authorities' counter

"The phone is becoming the border counter."

The smartphone becomes the authorities' counter

— THE FACTS

Governments are no longer satisfied with an online form: they want an app installed on the traveller's phone. The United States plans to close the ESTA application website and make the ESTA Mobile app the only channel. **KOREA TIMES** The UK ETA can be applied for online or through an official app.

THE LOCAL The European Union already offers the "Travel to Europe" app for EES pre-registration.

— PROJECTION 2027

What we expect

The phone is becoming the border counter. The official app is used to verify identity, submit the application, receive the decision and, increasingly, to communicate with the authorities: requests for additional documents, expiry reminders, refusal notifications. ETIAS is also planned with a mobile app, alongside its official website.

This shift has a clear advantage for governments: reading the chip and taking a selfie make document fraud much harder than a simple uploaded scan. It also creates a new dependency. Without a recent NFC-enabled smartphone, a charged battery or a connection, the procedure becomes complicated, which penalises older travellers and families managing several passports.

In 2027, every major destination will have its own app, with its own rules and notifications. Frequent travellers will accumulate several, and fake apps imitating official ones are likely to follow the same path as fake websites. The challenge will be less about filling in a form than knowing which app to install, and which to avoid.

NFC

passport chip read by the phone: the new standard

— AT VISAMUNDI

These apps rely on a selfie and on the traveller's phone reading the passport chip. For an intermediary, the role changes: it is no longer just about filling in a form, but about guiding travellers through an official app.

— TRAVELLER TIP

Only download the app from the link on the government website and check that the publisher is the relevant authority. Travel with an NFC-compatible phone, charged, and able to receive notifications abroad.



07

AI as a pre-check for applications

— THE FACTS

Authorities process electronic authorisations in a largely automated way: a UK ETA is issued in under an hour on average across our applications. A mistake is therefore no longer caught by an officer; it triggers a refusal or a request for more information.

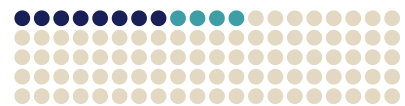
— PROJECTION 2027

What we expect

A I will not predict a government's decision: that remains sovereign and relies on criteria nobody publishes. However, a large share of refusals and delays comes from avoidable errors: a non-compliant photo, a passport too close to expiry, a mistyped number. That is where AI changes the game.

Automated compliance checks will become the norm before any submission, both at intermediaries and on official portals. Reading the passport's MRZ strip, comparing it with the data entered, checking the photo: what took an officer several minutes now takes a few seconds.

On the authorities' side, automated risk analysis will expand. The more automated the processing, the less forgiving it is: an inconsistency an officer would have corrected now leads to a refusal or an in-depth review.



● 8 passports expire within 6 months

● 4 numbers mistyped

Per 100 documents checked, 2026

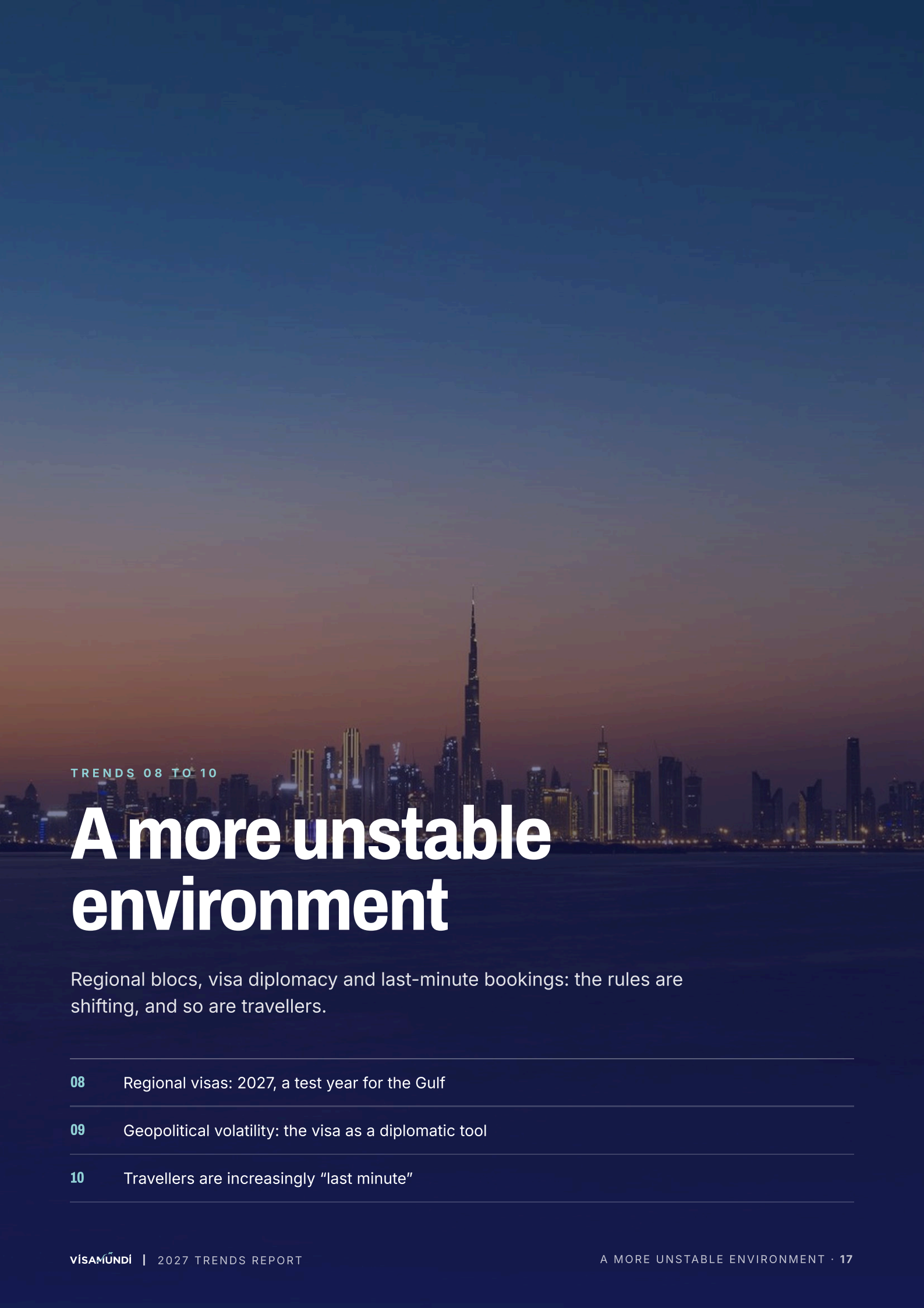
— AT VISAMUNDI

Our AI checks every document before submission. In 2026, 8% of identity documents were due to expire less than six months after being sent, and 4% of passport numbers entered did not match the scanned document.

— TRAVELLER TIP

Check your passport's expiry date before any application, and copy its number directly from the document.

“ *The more automated the processing, the less forgiving it is.* ”

A wide-angle photograph of the Dubai skyline at dusk. The Burj Khalifa is the central focus, its spire reaching into a deep blue twilight sky. Other skyscrapers are illuminated with warm lights, reflecting on the calm water in the foreground. The overall mood is serene yet sophisticated.

TRENDS 08 TO 10

A more unstable environment

Regional blocs, visa diplomacy and last-minute bookings: the rules are shifting, and so are travellers.

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- 08 Regional visas: 2027, a test year for the Gulf
 - 09 Geopolitical volatility: the visa as a diplomatic tool
 - 10 Travellers are increasingly "last minute"
-

08 Regional visas: 2027, a test year for the Gulf

THE FACTS

In September 2026, the GCC Secretary-General announced that the unified tourist visa for the six Gulf countries would launch “soon”, without giving a date. [KHALEEJ TIMES](#) In Southeast Asia, the Philippines, which chairs ASEAN in 2026, is championing a Schengen-style regional visa, with no timetable or agreement so far. [DAILY TRIBUNE](#)

PROJECTION 2027

What we expect

The Gulf visa has a good chance of being launched, but probably in stages: a common portal, a first list of eligible nationalities, then an expansion. Making six immigration systems work as one takes time. For agencies and tour operators, it would end the headache of combined tours between Dubai, Oman and Qatar.

In Southeast Asia, the ambition exists but remains political. ASEAN countries have neither the same exemption lists, nor the same level of digital infrastructure, nor the same priorities. A common visa is not realistic in the short term; bilateral agreements and reciprocal exemptions are more likely.

The underlying trend goes beyond these two projects: regional blocs want to market themselves as a single destination. Even without a common visa, we will see more shared portals and easier movement between neighbouring countries.

6

countries, one tourist visa: the Gulf project

AT VISAMUNDI

In Saudi Arabia, the e-Visa is issued in under three hours on average across our applications. A common Gulf visa would change the way multi-country tours are sold.

TRAVELLER TIP

Until the unified visa launches, each Gulf country keeps its own rules: one visa per destination.

“Regional blocs want to market themselves as a single destination.”

09 Geopolitical volatility: the visa as a diplomatic tool

— THE FACTS

Travel formalities now follow diplomatic news: US tightening, reciprocity, but also strategic openings. China has extended its 30-day visa exemption for France and dozens of other countries until 31 December 2026, to attract visitors and strengthen ties with Europe. [GULF NEWS](#)

— PROJECTION 2027

What we expect

Entry rules will change more often, with less notice. They serve diplomacy as much as security: openings to attract, tightening as a precaution or in retaliation, imposed reciprocity.

For travellers, instability takes two forms. First, the rules themselves, which can change between booking and departure; an exemption granted for one year, like China's, may not be renewed. Second, demand, which swings sharply from one destination to another with conflicts and travel advisories.

In 2027, monitoring becomes essential. Travellers and companies will need to check entry requirements a few days before departure, not just when booking.

30 days

visa-free in China for French citizens, until 31 December 2026

— AT VISAMUNDI

The Middle East went from 8% of our applications in April 2026 to 38% in September, driven by Israel and Saudi Arabia. Regional conflicts cause demand to swing sharply from one corridor to another, from one month to the next.

— TRAVELLER TIP

Re-check entry requirements and travel advisories a few days before departure, not just when booking.

“ *In 2027, monitoring becomes essential.* ”

Status	Time	Flight	From	Hall	Status	Time	Flight	From	Hall	Status	Time	Flight	From	Hall	Status	Time	Flight	From	Hall	Status
Est at 11:57	10:15	AE 981	Kachung	At gate	10:07	11:00	MU 721	Shanghai/SHA	At gate	10:45	11:50	CA 103	Tianjin	Est at	11:30	12:40	SC 4623	Yantai		
Chy to 08:09	10:15	FD 588	Bangkok/DMK	At gate	10:17	11:05	FM 721	Taipei	At gate	10:25	11:55	CX 238	London/LHR	Est at	11:18	12:40	SQ 800	Singapore		
At gate 09:52	10:15	HK 231	Shanghai/PVG	At gate	10:06	11:05	KA 607	Beijing	At gate	10:35	11:55	FM 8235	Shanghai/PVG	Est at	11:43	12:40	IS7 4412	Isigaki		
At gate 09:51	10:20	KA 397	Tokyo/HND	At gate	09:39	11:05	KA 597	Chengdu	Est at	10:48	11:55	KA 463	Kachung	Est at	11:24	12:45	UA 221	Da Nang		
At gate 09:51	10:20	CX 3397	Hangzhou	At gate	10:18	11:10	KA 825	Kuala Lumpur	Est at	10:53	12:00	ZE 991	Seoul/ICN	Cancelled		12:45	UA 701	Shanghai/PVG		
At gate 10:01	10:20	KA 623	Amsterdam	Est at	12:14	11:15	AK 128	Quanzhou	Est at	11:02	12:00	CX 469	Taipei	Est at	11:51	12:45	FM 701	Taipei		
At gate 09:44	10:20	MU 2501	Wuxi	At gate	09:58	11:15	MF 8017	Xiamen	Cancelled		12:00	OM 5735	Singapore	Est at	11:44	12:50	KA 465	Seoul/ICN		
Est at 21:00	10:25	CX 616	Bangkok	At gate	10:13	11:20	MF 381	Singapore	Est at	11:05	12:10	CX 700	Bangkok	Est at	11:52	12:50	KE 613	Bangkok		
Cancelled	10:30	AA 8953	Chengdu	At gate	10:15	11:20	SQ 890	Ningbo	Est at	11:28	12:10	PG 4653	Beijing	Est at	11:17	12:55	CI 999	Taipei		
At gate 09:32	10:30	HK 463	Chongqing	At gate	10:18	11:25	CX 415	Seoul/ICN	Est at	10:58	12:20	CZ 340	Seoul/ICN	Cancelled		12:55	KA 423	Kachung		
At gate 09:30	10:30	HK 469	Nanjing	At gate	09:56	11:25	KA 831	Shanghai/PVG	Est at	11:20	12:20	LJ 113	Shanghai/PVG	Est at	11:53	13:00	WE 830	Seoul/ICN		
At gate 10:01	10:35	KA 726	Dubai	At gate	10:31	11:30	HK 768	Bangkok	Est at	11:53	12:20	SC 8021	Osaka/Kansai	Est at	11:48	13:00	CX 417	Seoul/ICN		
At gate 09:25	10:40	CI 641	Taipei	At gate	10:17	11:30	EV 6285	Guangzhou	Est at	11:06	12:20	CX 597	Manila	Est at	11:48	13:00	KA 503	Osaka/Kansai		
At gate 09:42	10:40	CX 650	Singapore	At gate	10:22	11:35	KA 781	Qingdao	Est at	11:59	12:25	PR 315	Hanoi	Est at	11:39	13:00	IL 7053	Nagoya		
At gate 10:19	10:45	OM 5734	Manila	At gate	10:30	11:35	KA 101	Beijing	Est at	11:55	12:25	BL 160	Phnom Penh	Cancelled		13:00	NH 875	Beijing		
At gate 09:56	10:45	CX 912	Ningbo	At gate	10:39	11:35	CA 101	Jinan	Landed	10:46	12:25	NH 859	Tokyo/HND	Est at	11:48	13:05	IL 4155	Taipei		
At gate 10:04	10:50	KA 643	Nanjing	At gate	10:46	11:35	SC 4789	Seoul/ICN	Est at	12:10	12:30	UA 7807	Shanghai/PVG	Est at	12:43	13:05	KA 720	Kuala Lumpur		
At gate 09:49	10:50	HK 221	Shanghai/PVG	At gate	10:47	11:40	QZ 721	Seoul/ICN	Est at	12:10	12:35	CX 365	Seoul/ICN	Est at	12:23	13:05	IC 9796	Da Nang		
Landed 10:48	10:55	HK 129	Hangzhou	At gate	10:44	11:45	UA 7355	Jakarta	Est at	11:21	12:35	TC 2101	Seoul/ICN	Est at	12:41	13:05	UD 553	Tokyo/HNT		
At gate 10:07	10:55	HK 383	Tianjin	At gate	10:27	11:45	CX 752	Penang	Est at	11:01	12:35	CI 672	Beijing	Est at	11:56	13:10	ICX 559	Clark		
At gate 09:33	10:55	KA 883	Nanjing	At gate	10:32	11:45	KA 892	Osaka/Kansai	Est at	11:27	12:40	HA 5017	Shanghai/SHA	Est at	12:57	13:10	KA 721	Changsha		
	11:00	KE 603	Seoul/ICN	Est at	11:10	11:45	MM 063	Bangkok	Est at	11:34	12:40	SA 285	Johannesburg	Est at	12:57	13:15	BL 164	Da Nang		

TREND 10 · A MORE UNSTABLE ENVIRONMENT

10

Travellers are increasingly “last minute”

“Between the promise of instant processing and actual timelines, more trips will be jeopardised.”

Travellers are increasingly “last minute”

THE FACTS

Electronic formalities have created an illusion of ease: an authorisation “issued in minutes” gives the impression that it can be sorted out the day before departure. Amid geopolitical uncertainty and high airfares, travellers are also booking later, to stay flexible or wait for good deals. Formalities therefore end up being handled at the last minute.

PROJECTION 2027

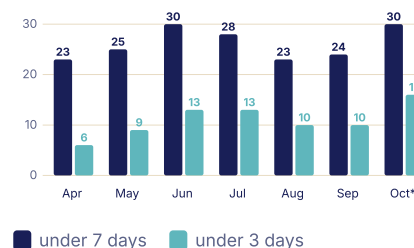
What we expect

The last minute will become the norm for a significant share of travellers. Yet not all formalities lend themselves to it. A UK ETA is issued in under an hour on average across our applications, but a Tanzanian e-Visa takes more than eight days. The gap between the promise of instant processing and actual timelines will lead to more trips being jeopardised.

ETIAS will illustrate this gap. Most applications should be processed within minutes, but some will be reviewed manually, which can take several days. Travellers who apply the day before will discover this risk at the worst possible moment. Priority processing services, reminder alerts and express pre-submission checks will therefore gain ground.

For agencies and airlines, last-minute travel raises a question of responsibility. The moment of booking becomes the last reliable point of contact to flag the required formality: once the ticket is bought, many travellers check nothing more before the airport. That is when the information must be given, and when the procedure can be started.

Share of applications submitted shortly before arrival, 2026 (%)



AT VISAMUNDI

The share of applications submitted less than seven days before arrival rose from 23% in April 2026 to 30% in October. The share submitted less than three days before more than doubled, from 6% to 16%. The rise is not linear: a first peak appears in June and July, as summer approaches, then the trend picks up again in the autumn.

TRAVELLER TIP

Start the application as soon as the ticket is bought, even for an authorisation said to be instant. For e-Visa destinations, allow at least two weeks, and check actual processing times before booking a short-notice departure.

How we *built this report*

METHODOLOGY

Each trend combines three elements: a dated public fact, published by the press or a government body; an observation measured on applications handled by Visamundi; and a cautious projection for 2027, limited to what can reasonably happen within the year.

Internal data covers applications paid on the Visamundi platform from April to 15 October 2026. Issuing times are measured between submission to the authorities and issue of the document. Shares by destination reflect Visamundi's activity, not the overall market.

The projections are Visamundi's own and are not official announcements. Entry rules change quickly: always check the requirements in force before departure.

CREDITS

Photography: Pexels. Looping mascot and visual identity: Visamundi. Editorial design: Visamundi, October 2026.

PRESS SOURCES

Euronews	ETIAS set to be postponed to 2027 after EES difficulties
The Local	UK ETA price rise and denied boarding
Korea JoongAng Daily	ESTA at \$40 and the visa integrity fee
Axios	Proposed social media checks for ESTA
The Standard	Japan adopts JESTA
Nippon.com	Japan triples its departure tax
Nippon.com	Departure tax and visa fees in Japan
Outlook India	Seasonal pricing of the Indian e-Visa
Business Today	Mandatory e-Arrival Card in India
New Straits Times	Thailand's digital arrival card
Khaleej Times	Unified Gulf visa; India's Air Suvidha 2.0
Daily Tribune	Proposed ASEAN common visa
Gulf News	Extension of China's visa exemption
L'Écho touristique	Mandatory insurance in Zanzibar
India e-Visa portal	e-Visa application windows (official source)
Korea Times	ESTA Mobile app as the only channel



*Visa-free no longer means **formality-free.***

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