

# ALERTS

## Immigration Update

### SEVEN NEW COUNTRIES TO BE ADDED TO THE VISA WAIVER PROGRAM

MVA Immigration Team

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On October 20, 2008, President George Bush announced that seven countries will be added to the Visa Waiver Program (VWP). The Visa Waiver program allows nationals of participating countries to enter the US for business or pleasure without a visa for stays of up to 90 days. The new rule was published today and goes into effect immediately.

Previously, 27 countries participated in the visa waiver program. Starting today, the Department of Homeland Security will begin to admit nationals of the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia and South Korea without a visa for trips not exceeding 90 days for business or pleasure. More information on the Visa Waiver Program can be found [here](#).

As a Visa Waiver Program country, nationals of the new participating countries will still need to receive online approval from the ESTA program before attempting visa waiver travel to the U.S. after January 12, 2009. More information about the ESTA program can be found [here](#). All entrants under the VWP must still demonstrate non-immigrant intent, sufficient funds for their trip and a return ticket within 90 days of their date of entry.

If you have any questions regarding use of the Visa Waiver or ESTA programs, please call or email your [MVA Immigration Team Contact](#).