

# Vanuatu Economic Rehabilitation Program (VERP) Fast Track Citizenship





<b>Introduction</b>	<b>03</b>
<b>VERP Overview</b>	<b>04</b>
<b>Vanuatu - The Facts</b>	<b>05</b>
<b>Taxation Benefits</b>	<b>06</b>
<b>Living and Holidays</b>	<b>07</b>
<b>Resident Companies and Banking</b>	<b>08</b>
<b>Becoming a Vanuatu Citizen</b>	<b>09</b>
<b>Passport to 124 Visa Free Countries</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Vanuatu Citizenship Process</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Fees</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Let's Get Started</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Taking the Oath</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Passport Renewal</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Directory</b>	<b>16</b>

## VERP OVERVIEW

In mid-March 2015, Vanuatu was affected by a severe cyclone PAM, the infrastructure and housing were seriously damaged. As such, the Government of the Republic of Vanuatu launched a Vanuatu Economic Rehabilitation Program for the purpose of raising funds by way of contribution to support rebuilding of the infrastructure and promoting economic development of Vanuatu.

The Vanuatu Economic Rehabilitation Program (VERP) was enacted by the Vanuatu Government under the Honorary Citizenship Regulation Order No. 34, 37 and 38 of 2015 with the powers conferred to the Prime Minister by Section 20 of the Citizenship Act (112).

Pursuant to the Order No. 34, 37 and 38 of 2015, candidates may apply for Vanuatu Honorary Citizenship by contribution of USD350,000 for single application to the Government of Vanuatu.

The citizenship acquired under the VERP program is fully recognized by the Government of Vanuatu and the nationality is regarded as Ni-Vanuatu.

Those applying for and receiving Vanuatu Citizenship under the Vanuatu Economic Rehabilitation Program have the full right to reside in Vanuatu at all time and the passport is renewable upon expiry.





## VANUATU - THE FACTS

Vanuatu is a South Pacific Ocean nation made up of 80 plus island archipelago that stretch 1,300 kilometers.

Multiple waves of colonizers, each speaking a distinct language, migrated to the New Hebrides in the millennia preceding European exploration in the 18th century. This settlement pattern accounts for the complex linguistic diversity found on the archipelago to this day. The British and French, who settled the New Hebrides in the 19th century, agreed in 1906 to an Anglo-French Condominium, which administered the islands until independence in 1980, when the new name of Vanuatu was adopted.

Languages: local languages (more than 100) 63.2%, Bislama (official; creole) 33.7%, English (official) 2%, French (official) 0.6%, other 0.5% (2009 est.).

Religions: Protestant 70% (includes Presbyterian 27.9%, Anglican 15.1%, Seventh Day Adventist 12.5%, Assemblies of God 4.7%, Church of Christ 4.5%, Neil Thomas Ministry 3.1%, and Apostolic 2.2%), Roman Catholic 12.4%, customary beliefs 3.7% (including Jon Frum cargo cult), other 12.6%, none 1.1%, unspecified 0.2% (2009 est.).

Population: 285,784 (April 2016 est.). Population growth rate 1.95%.

Economy: primarily based on small-scale agriculture, which provides a living for about two-thirds of the population. Fishing, offshore financial services, and tourism, with an estimated 111,000 visitors in 2015, are other mainstays of the economy. Australia and New Zealand are the main source of tourists and aid. A small light industry sector caters to the local market. Tax revenues come mainly from import duties.

Since 2002, the government has stepped up efforts to boost tourism through improved air connections, resort development, and cruise ship facilities. Agriculture, especially livestock farming, is a second target for growth.

The islands offer scuba diving at coral reefs, underwater caverns and wrecks such as the WWII-era troopship SS President Coolidge. Hiking trails ascend active volcanoes such as Mt. Yasur. Other popular activities include rainforest ecotours, kayaking and deep-sea fishing, plus relaxing at resorts and spas.



## TAXATION BENEFITS

Vanuatu has no income tax. None. Nor any estate taxes or capital gains taxes. In fact, other than enforcing a rather lax 12.5% VAT, Vanuatu has few taxes at all.

At one point, 15% of the entire economy was derived from the country's tax haven status. Vanuatu can be considered to be one of the best tax havens of the world as it provides its clients with tax incentives. Vanuatu qualifies as a tax haven since it has no taxation regime in place for international companies and offshore companies incorporated in the jurisdiction. These companies will operate tax free in the tax haven of Vanuatu as long as their earnings are accumulated outside of the tax haven. Vanuatu offshore business companies and international companies are prohibited by the laws of the country from partaking in business dealings or conducting business on behalf of residents of tax haven Vanuatu. Vanuatu is a pure tax haven for the simple fact that the offshore jurisdiction has no income or corporate taxes for both residents and foreigners.

Vanuatu is also well known for having zero corporate tax, it also has no income tax, no capital gains tax, no estate tax, no wealth tax, no withholding tax, no gift tax and no other personal income taxes.

International companies and offshore or exempt companies are very easy to incorporate in the tax haven of Vanuatu. Company legislation allows for the formation of flexible business company structures. Offshore companies legislation in Vanuatu makes it possible for only one director and one shareholder to incorporate a company in tax haven Vanuatu. Directors can be a corporate body or a natural person.

The tax haven of Vanuatu provides excellent offshore banking and banking services to private individuals and corporations. Vanuatu offshore banking centre is very active with numerous banks having received license to provide offshore banking services. Vanuatu has a number of international banks' branches and agents providing services to the public. As a tax haven Vanuatu offshore bank accounts pay no taxes on interests earned.



Mount Yasur active volcano

## LIVING AND HOLIDAYS

### Living

Vanuatu is a beautiful remote, tax-free tropical paradise. It is known not only for its great location and climate, but also as a great place owning and operating a business.

Life on Vanuatu is far from hectic. As anyone who has visited the islands before—in the South Pacific or elsewhere—hectic is one of the last words you would use to describe island life. People in the islands, with Vanuatu being no exception, often prefer to relax and take life as it comes.

As with relocating anywhere, it is important to consider not only your own position and finance, but also the situation and customs of the place to which you will be moving.

Costs of living are relatively low, but as with any other small island nation, Vanuatu relies on imports, which drives up prices a lot on items that cannot be produced locally. The islands have a very accessible system of banks, internet and mobile networks. This makes it very easy to move to Vanuatu, and yet still maintain a good and active connection with other places in the world.

### Holidays

Sugary white sand, clear blue waters and the subtle whisper of palms swaying in the cooling ocean breeze, Vanuatu certainly offers up a fair share of tropical relaxation, though, this South Pacific archipelago isn't just about beach front repose. Whether you're a culture cat seeking an authentic island experience, or an adventurer hoping for a few thrills, Vanuatu ticks all the boxes for a perfect island holiday.

The sandy shores of its capital, Port Vila, beckon to singles, couples and families alike where you can explore colourful handicraft markets, visit the beautiful Mele Cascades, zipline through the treetops or try horse riding along the beach – all within a short distance from a large choice of accommodation.

If adventure is what you seek, head to Espiritu Santo to dive one of the world's best shipwrecks - The SS President Coolidge – enjoy the abundance of colourful marine life in one of many pristine blue holes.

Up the ante at Tanna Island and take a short walk to the rim of Mt Yasur, one of the world's most accessible active volcanoes, for a once-in-a-lifetime experience....or swim in underwater caves. You'll find plenty of choices to full everyday with something exciting.



## RESIDENT COMPANIES AND BANKING

### Vanuatu Offshore Companies

The Vanuatu International Companies Act is very similar to other international business company (IBC) laws around the world. It was written in 1992 and came into force the same year.

There are a number of features which make Vanuatu an attractive place to form an offshore company. Vanuatu has zero corporate tax, both for international and domestic/resident companies. Companies are also exempt from capital and exchange controls. Accounts must be kept but don't need to be filed, and there are no auditing requirements.

Vanuatu companies are an interesting option for those seeking a high level of privacy and ease of use.

### Offshore Banking in Vanuatu

Bank secrecy has long been a target of international groups opposed to offshore tax havens. The argument goes that if governments don't know who owns the account, they can't effectively tax it.

Despite the fact that things like numbered bank accounts are long gone, groups such as the Tax Justice Network continue their efforts to eliminate privacy around the world. As European nations such as Liechtenstein are rolling back their bank secrecy programs, the most secretive offshore banking countries include Vanuatu rated as at No.2 in the world, based only on the amount of secrecy offered and not taking into consideration the significance of the jurisdiction.

This island chain is well-known to many of the world's monied elite as an offshore banking jurisdiction since its 1971 offshore legislation.

While it's still a tiny player in the offshore market, Vanuatu is among the most secretive. Vanuatu offers no personal or corporate income taxes, no estate or capital gains taxes, no exchange controls, and no reporting requirements. In fact, other than VAT, customs fees, and stamp duties, Vanuatu has no taxes at all.





## BECOMING A VANUATU CITIZEN

The decision to take a second and dual citizenship is the first step towards becoming a Vanuatu Citizen.

Please ensure that you deal directly with an approved Government of Vanuatu VERP Representative and complete the Official Application Form without any advance payment.

There are many Vanuatu citizenship offers on the internet, many are offering very cheap prices. Ensure that you only deal with an approved representative agent for the VERP program with transparency or sighting an official Government Appointment Letter is the only confident way to ensure your security in applying for citizenship.

Once the application is 'pre-approved' the applicant will then be required to make the first deposit payment.

The process takes from 30 days to 60 days to complete the citizenship process subject to the applicant's nationality and the probity checks and due diligence.

Once the application is approved the applicant will be required to present themselves at the nominated Government of Vanuatu Consul. The default nominated Consul is in Hong Kong.

At the Consul the applicant will participate in the Oath of Allegiance ceremony upon which they will be granted their citizenship and receive their Vanuatu passport.

The applicant will then be entitled to full Vanuatu citizenship benefits and rights and to ensure visa free travel on their Vanuatu passport to 124 countries.

Citizenship is for life.

There is no requirement for the citizen to visit Vanuatu.





## PASSPORT TO 124 VISA FREE COUNTRIES

The Vanuatu passport provides visa free entry to 124 countries across the globe. These are:

Asia (17 Countries)	Oceania (13 Countries)	Europe (40 Countries)		America (29 Countries)		Africa (25 Countries)	
Armenia*	Cook Islands	Abkhazia	Italy	Anguilla	Guatemala	Botswana	Mali*
Bangladesh*	Fiji	Albania	Latvia	Antigua and Barbuda	Guyana*	Burundi*	Mauritania*
Cambodia*	Kiribati	Andorra	Liechtenstein	Bahamas	Haiti	Cape Verde*	Mauritius
Hong Kong SAR	Marshall Islands*	Austria	Lithuania	Barbados	Honduras	Comoros*	Mozambique*
Iran*	Federated States of Micronesia	Belgium	Luxembourg	Belize	Jamaica	Djibouti*	St. Helena
Israel	Nauru*	Bulgaria	Macedonia	Bermuda	Montserrat	Egypt*	Seychelles*
Jordan*	Niue	Croatia	Malta	Bolivia*	Nicaragua*	Gambia	Somalia*
Laos*	Palau*	Cyprus	Monaco	British Virgin Islands	Panama	Guinea-Bissau*	Swaziland
Lebanon*	Papua New Guinea*	Czech Republic	Netherlands	Cayman Islands	Peru	Kenya	Tanzania*
Macao SAR*	Samoa*	Denmark	Norway	Costa Rica	Saint Kitts and Nevis	Lesotho	Togo*
Malaysia	Solomon Islands*	Estonia	Poland	Dominica	Saint Lucia	Madagascar*	Uganda*
Maldives	Tuvalu*	Finland	Portugal	Dominican Republic*	St. Vincent and the Grenadines	Malawi*	Zambia
Nepal*	Tonga*	France	Romania	Ecuador	Trinidad and Tobago		Zimbabwe
Philippines		Germany	Slovakia	El Salvador*	Turks and Caicos Islands		
Singapore		Gibraltar	Slovenia	Grenada			
South Korea (Jeju Island only)		Greece	South Ossetia				
Timor-Leste*		Kosovo	Spain				
		Hungary	Sweden				
		Iceland	Switzerland				
		Ireland	United Kingdom				

Since the visa requirements of each country are subject to change from time to time, tourists holding Vanuatu passports are required to check the visa requirements of the respective countries prior to departure. Tourists are also required to understand and observe the regulations and restrictions for entering and staying in the respective countries.

# VANUATU CITIZENSHIP PROCESS

Who can apply for Vanuatu citizenship?

- Any person with a clean criminal record
- Business person or investor
- Perpetual traveller and offshore maverick
- Stateless person
- Person renouncing their citizenship

**Step One** Applicant to provide a certified true copy of existing passport (cover with first and last 3 pages) for clearance by Vanuatu Intelligence Unit (FIU) in Vanuatu.

**Step Two** Upon written confirmation of no adverse findings by FIU Applicant submits completed Application Form and attach all relevant documents as detailed in the document list together with deposit payment. Payment made to BANI LAW, USD Account BRED BANK, Vanuatu.

**Step Three** Application is submitted to Representative to review pre submission to the Citizenship Commission which convey on the last Friday of each month. Application Form must be received 8 days prior to Citizenship Committee meeting.

**Step Four** Screening Committee considers the Application one day before the Citizenship Commission meets and makes a recommendation to the Citizenship Commission.

**Step Five** After Citizenship Commission approves the Application an Agreement in Principle (AIP) is issued to the Representative subject to the Applicant completing their payment. AIP process is 7 to 14 days.

**Step Six** Within 5 days of receiving the AIP, the balance of payment must be paid.

**Step Seven** After full payment has been received the Applicant takes their Oath. This will be commissioned by the Commissioner of Oath from the Vanuatu Government. In this ceremony the new Citizen receives their Certificate of Vanuatu Citizenship as well as their new Vanuatu Passport.



## FEES

Total cost for Vanuatu Citizenship with the issue of the passport is:

Single Applicant            USD 350,000

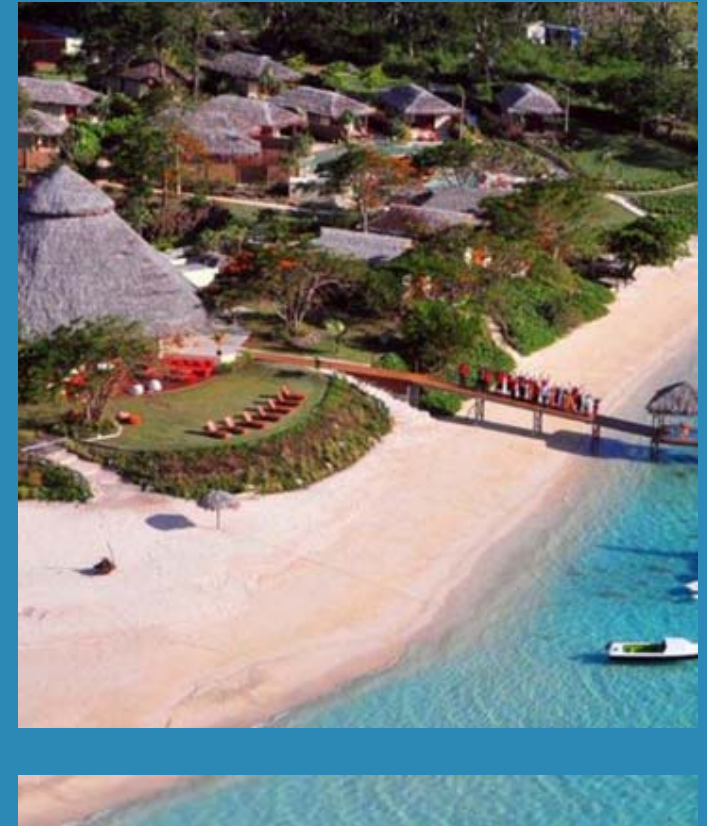
After Pre-Approval is given by the authorities and upon receiving the Clearance Letter from the Vanuatu FIU payment of 50% (USD 175,000).

Upon receiving Vanuatu Citizenship Commission Approval in Principal letter 50% payment (USD 175,000).

Family Applicant:            USD 400,000 (up to 4 persons)

After Pre-Approval is given by the authorities and upon receiving the Clearance Letter from the Vanuatu FIU payment of 50% (USD 200,000).

Upon receiving Vanuatu Citizenship Commission Approval in Principal letter 50% payment (USD 200,000).





## LET'S GET STARTED

You've made the decision that you want to become a Vanuatu Citizen, so what do you need to do to get started?

Firstly, you will need to contact an official representative agent of the Government of Vanuatu VERP Program. If you have this document in your hand then you will have already met an official representative or have direct access to meet one.

Before your first meeting you will need to do a little pre preparation. This includes:

- Ensure that your bank balance is over USD 450,000 and bring a copy of your bank statement of valid this
- Have copy of your passport photo page with public notary confirmation
- Arrange a meeting with the VERP Representative and bring copies of the above with you
- After the meeting and upon giving the documents to the VERP Representative, you will hear back from the VERP Representative to confirm your Pre Approval within one week. You will be given an official letter confirming this. After this you will need to meet the VERP Representative again to complete the Application Form and provide the other documents required plus transfer the deposit payment to the official Government's Legal Agent, BANI LAW in Vanuatu.
- Within 30 to 45 days you will receive the confirmation letter that your citizen certificate and passport are ready for you to attend the Oath Ceremony and collect them. At this time you will complete your payment transfer.
- You will be given your appointment time to attend the Oath ceremony. Arrive 15 minutes early for registration.
- On completion of the Oath ceremony you will be given your certificate of citizenship and passport. You are now a Nu-Vanuatu Citizen. Congratulations.



## THE OATH OF ALLEGIANCE

The Citizenship Ceremony for applicants in the Asia region will take place at the Government of Vanuatu Hong Kong Consul offices.

Each applicant will swear their Oath of Allegiance to become a Citizen of Vanuatu with the following words as below:

---

REPUBLIC OF VANUATU

**Citizenship Act, Cap. 112**

---

### OATH OF ALLEGIANCE

I, \_\_\_\_\_ do this day of 2016 swear that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to the President and the Republic of Vanuatu, So help me God.

---

### SOLEMN AFFIRMATION

I, \_\_\_\_\_ do this day of 2016 solemnly affirm that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to the President and the Republic of Vanuatu.

---



# PASSPORT RENEWAL

Vanuatu citizenship is for life.

The initial passport issued, when expired, can be renewed through any Vanuatu Embassy or Consulate for the standard passport renewal fee.

The Application should be submitted with:

- Two (2) recent, identical passport photos (less than 6 months old)
- Original Birth and Citizenship Certificate(s)
- Previous Vanuatu Passport

Currently the appropriate fee (VT) for the service required is:

- Normal 7,000 (up to 21 days processing time)
- Express 10,000 (up to 14 days processing time)
- Urgent 15,000 (up to 3 days processing time)



**REPUBLIC OF VANUATU**

**APPLICATION for a VANUATU PASSPORT**

**THIS APPLICATION SHOULD BE SUBMITTED WITH**

- Two (2) recent, identical passport photos (see clause 6 of the Regulations) The Ministry of Home Affairs must write the applicant's full name on the back of one photo, and sign and date the back of the photo.
- Original Vanuatu birth certificate
- Previous Vanuatu Passport
- The appropriate fee (VT) for the service required:
  - Normal 7,000 (up to 21 days processing time)
  - Express 10,000 (up to 14 days processing time)
  - Urgent 15,000 (up to 3 days processing time)
- Original birth and citizenship certificate(s) as specified in the Citizenship Declaration section

Signature or Thumbprint of passport holder to be made here

---

**PARTICULARS OF APPLICANT**

Have you had a Vanuatu passport before (if so use one)?	YES/NO	Has your passport been Lost or Stolen (if so use one)?	YES/NO	If passport lost or stolen, provide a police report.
PASSPORT No.		DATE OF TRAVEL (DD/MM/YYYY)		SERVICE LEVEL (if so use one) Normal/PRIORITY
FAMILY NAME				
GIVEN NAME(S)				
DATE OF BIRTH (DD/MM/YYYY)		GENDER (M/F)		MILANDEMAN NAME(S)
OTHER NAME(S)				NAME AT BIRTH (if different from FAMILY and GIVEN NAMES ABOVE)

**CITIZENSHIP DECLARATION:** I declare that I am a citizen of Vanuatu and no other country (Tick one of the options as applicable)

Born after 30 July 1980, with at least one parent that was a Vanuatu citizen at the time of birth. (Provide EITHER original birth certificate showing at least one parent of indigenous ni-Vanuatu ancestry, OR original birth certificate showing at least one parent who is a Vanuatu citizen, and proof of the parent's citizenship (e.g. citizenship certificate).

Born on or before 30 July 1980 and of indigenous ni-Vanuatu ancestry. (Provide an original birth certificate showing at least one ni-Vanuatu parent).

Citizen by naturalisation granted by the Citizenship Commission after 30 July 1980. (Provide both an original birth certificate and Vanuatu citizenship certificate). List previous nationalities and passport details below.

Previous Nationality/ies \_\_\_\_\_

Passport No. \_\_\_\_\_ Place of Issue: \_\_\_\_\_ Country/ies of issue \_\_\_\_\_ Issue Date: \_\_\_\_\_ EXPIRES/VTY \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry Date: \_\_\_\_\_ EXPIRES/VTY \_\_\_\_\_

MARITAL STATUS	SINGLE / MARRIED / DIVORCED	DRIVING LICENCE No.		V.N.P.F No.	
PLACE OF BIRTH		COUNTRY OF BIRTH		EYE COLOUR	
HEIGHT	CM	OCCUPATION/ PROFESSION		MARKS/ SCARS	

PRESENT ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

COMMENT TO ISSUE A PASSPORT TO A PERSON UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE (Parent or Guardian to complete this section and sign the Application Declaration below)

I consent to a passport being issued to \_\_\_\_\_ CHILD'S Name Here \_\_\_\_\_

My relationship to the child is: Mother / Father / Guardian (if so use)

My name is: \_\_\_\_\_ Parents and Grand Parents of Person (Child's Parent)

My Date of Birth is: \_\_\_\_\_ DD/MM/YYYY \_\_\_\_\_

**IDENTITY WITNESS DECLARATIONS**

FULL NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ FAMILY AND GIVEN NAMES \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

No. \_\_\_\_\_ PASSPORT No. (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

**WITNESS DECLARATION:** I declare that: I have known the applicant for at least one year, and the information on this form is correct to the best of my knowledge. The person in the passport photo is the applicant named on this form.

DATE \_\_\_\_\_ SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

OFFICE USE ONLY

Application Form New Fees



## **DIRECTORY**

---

### **Geoffrey Bond**

Official VERP Representative Agent

Hong Kong: L16 Winsome House, 73 Wydnham Street, Central

Thailand: L4, 409 CG CASA, 150 Sukhumvit Soi 22, Klongtoey, Bangkok 10110  
T +66 9 34466956

Vietnam: 295 Hoang Tham Street, District 13, Ho Chi Minh City  
T +84 125 2977133

geoffreybond@ymail.com

---

### **Bani Law**

Legal & Consultancy Services

Contact: Bill Bani

1st Fl., Orchid House, Port Vila, Republic of Vanuatu

---

### **Vanuatu Honorary Consulate in Hong Kong**

Room C, 1 Fl, Austin Commercial Centre, 4 Austin Avenue, Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon  
T +852 2723 2188



## MAP OF VANUATU



