REPUBLIC OF SURINAME | PROFILE 2022

MIGRATION GOVERNANCE INDICATORS

IOM
UN MIGRATION

IOM is committed to the principle that humane and orderly migration benefits migrants and society. As an intergovernmental organization, IOM acts with its partners in the international community to: assist in meeting the operational challenges of migration; advance understanding of migration issues; encourage social and economic development through migration; and uphold the human dignity and well-being of migrants.

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With research and analysis by

ECONOMIST IMPACT

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OBJECTIVES

The MGIs aim to help governments, upon request, take stock of their migration policies and strategies to identify good practices and areas with potential for further development.

The MGIs open dialogues with governments and other relevant stakeholders to identify priorities on the way forward. With a focus on government ownership of the process, the MGIs offer support at the national and local levels to gradually improve migration management systems.

INTRODUCTION

" Migration has been part of the human experience throughout history, and we recognize that it is a source of prosperity, innovation and sustainable development in our globalized world, and that these positive impacts can be optimized by improving migration governance.[1]

The need to maximize the opportunities and to face the challenges that mobility brings has been recognized with the inclusion of migration in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and with the adoption of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. The incorporation of target 10.7 into the 2030 Agenda created the need to define "planned and well-managed migration policies". This is why, in 2015, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) developed the Migration Governance[2] Framework (MiGOF). This Framework[3] offers a concise view of an ideal approach that allows a State to determine what it might need to govern migration well and in a way that suits its circumstances. That same year, IOM in collaboration with Economist Impact developed the Migration Governance Indicators (MGIs), a standard set of almost 100 indicators that help States assess the comprehensiveness of their migration governance structures.

The indicators constitute a starting point to engage governments in a consultative process that allows them to identify areas that are well developed and others that would benefit from further development, and most importantly priorities that are in line with the specific challenges and opportunities that a given country is facing.

The MGIs are characterized by three main fundamental attributes:
1. The MGI process is a **voluntary** exercise: The MGIs are conducted in countries that have requested to be part of the process.

2. The MGIs are **sensitive to national specificities**: The MGIs recognize the different challenges and opportunities of each context, and therefore, do not propose a one-size-fits-all solution, but rather aim to spark a discussion on what well-governed migration can mean.

3. The MGIs constitute a **process**: The MGI process is not a static tool to collect data on countries' migration frameworks. It is rather the first step of a dynamic exercise that can enable governments to identify areas of their migration policy in need of further development, or that could benefit from capacity-building.

The MGIs recognize that all countries have different realities, challenges and opportunities in relation to migration. Therefore, the MGIs do not rank countries on the design or implementation of their migration policies.

Finally, the MGIs do not measure migration policy outcomes or institutional effectiveness. Instead, they take stock of the migration-related policies in place and operate as a benchmarking framework that provides insights on policy measures that countries can consider as they further progress towards good migration governance.

This country profile presents a summary of the well-developed areas of the migration governance structures of the Republic of Suriname (hereinafter referred to as Suriname), as well as the areas with potential for further development, as assessed by the MGI.[4]

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[1] United Nations, Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (A/RES/73/195 of 11 January 2019), paragraph 8.
[2] "Migration governance" refers to the system of institutions, legal frameworks, mechanisms, and practices aimed at regulating migration and protecting migrants. It is used almost synonymously with the term "migration management", although the latter is also sometimes used to refer to the narrow act of regulating cross-border movement at the State level.
[3] IOM Council, Migration Governance Framework, 106th Session, C/106/40 (4 November 2015), page 1, footnote 1.
[4] The MGI initiative is a policy benchmarking programme led by IOM and implemented with the support of Economist Impact. Funding is provided by IOM's Member States.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

MiGOF

IOM's MiGOF sets out the essential elements to support planned and well-managed migration. It seeks to present, in a consolidated, coherent and comprehensive way, a set of three principles and three objectives which, if respected and fulfilled, would ensure that migration is humane and orderly, and benefits migrants and society.

PRINCIPLES

1. **Adhere** to international standards and fulfil migrants' rights.

2. **Formulate** policy using evidence and a whole-of-government approach.

3. **Engage** with partners to address migration and related issues.

OBJECTIVES

1. **Advance** the socioeconomic well-being of migrants and society.

2. **Effectively address** the mobility dimensions of crises.

3. **Ensure** that migration takes place in a safe, orderly and dignified manner.

At the basis of

MGIs

WHAT THEY ARE

A set of indicators that offers insights on policy levers that countries can use to strengthen their migration governance structures

A tool that identifies good practices and areas that could be further developed

A consultative process that advances dialogues on migration governance by clarifying what "well-governed migration" might look like in the context of SDG target 10.7 and the Global Compact for Migration implementation*

WHAT THEY ARE NOT

Not a ranking of countries

Not an assessment of policy impacts

Not prescriptive

Which support the measurement of

Note: The Global Compact for Migration is framed in a way consistent with target 10.7 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in which Member States committed to cooperate internationally to facilitate safe, orderly and regular migration." More information is available here.

KEY FINDINGS

The MGIs consist of almost 100 indicators grouped under the six different dimensions of migration governance that draw upon the MiGOF categories:

MIGRANTS' RIGHTS PAGE 12	Indicators in this domain look at the extent to which migrants have access to certain social services such as health, education and social security. They look at family reunification, access to work, and access to residency and citizenship. The international conventions signed and ratified are also included.
WHOLE-OF-GOVERNMENT APPROACH PAGE 15	Indicators in this area assess countries' institutional, legal and regulatory frameworks related to migration policies. This area also looks at the existence of national migration strategies that are in line with development objectives and overseas development efforts, as well as institutional transparency and coherence in relation to migration management.
PARTNERSHIPS PAGE 17	This category focuses on countries' efforts to cooperate on migration-related issues with other States and relevant non-governmental actors, including civil society organizations and the private sector.
WELL-BEING OF MIGRANTS PAGE 19	Indicators in this area assess countries' policies on the recognition of migrants' educational and professional qualifications, provisions regulating student migration and the existence of bilateral labour agreements between countries. Aspects of diaspora engagement in the country of origin and migrant remittances are also under this domain.
MOBILITY DIMENSION OF CRISES PAGE 21	This category looks at the type and level of preparedness of countries when they are faced with mobility dimensions of crises. The questions look at the processes in place for nationals and non-nationals in relation to disasters and climate change, including if humanitarian assistance is equally available to migrants as it is to citizens.
SAFE, ORDERLY AND REGULAR MIGRATION PAGE 22	This area looks at countries' approach to migration management in terms of border control and enforcement policies, admission criteria for migrants, preparedness and resilience in the case of significant and unexpected migration flows, as well as the fight against trafficking in persons.

1 ADHERENCE TO INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS AND FULFILMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS

1.1. International conventions ratified

Table 1. Signature and ratification of international conventions

Convention name	Ratified (Year)
International Labour Organization (ILO) Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949 (No. 97)	**No**
United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (also known as the Refugee Convention), 1951	**Yes (1978)**
United Nations conventions on statelessness, 1954 and 1961	**No**
ILO Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143)	**No**
Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), 1989	**Yes (1993)**
International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (ICRMW), 1990	**No**

1.2. Migration governance: Examples of well-developed areas

Migrants with a regular status have access to health insurance in Suriname. According to the Basic Health Insurance Law (2014), public health care is governed by the Ministry of Health, which focuses on the prevention of diseases and finances the costs from the State budget. In terms of government-funded health care services, emergency medical treatment is provided free of charge to anyone in the country, including migrants, irrespective of migratory status. In parallel, basic health insurance is mandatory for all residents of Suriname, including foreign ones, and every resident is responsible for covering the costs. Through the payment of a premium, basic health insurance provides access to all primary care facilities. Employers are obliged to pay at least half of insurance costs, while employees cover the remainder. The law states that the Council of Ministers may grant dispensation to certain groups, including migrants, regarding the payment of insurance premiums. The Council of Ministers also has the discretion to grant migrants access to basic health insurance regardless of status.[5]

Public pensions are available to migrants aged 60 years and older, who have resided in Suriname for at least 10 continuous years and have contributed to the public pension fund for at least 10 years, as per the Law Establishing a General Retirement Fund (1981).[6] According to the Personnel Act (1962) and the Family Employment Protection Act (2019), labour-related benefits – such as maternity leave and invalidity benefits – are provided to all employees regardless of nationality.[7]

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[5] In most cases, a residence permit is requested, but those without a permit can obtain medical insurance from private insurance companies. Similarly, those unable to pay the premium can – on the basis of Article 7, paragraph 3 – appeal to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Housing.
[6] In order for foreign nationals to apply to the public pension fund, only a birth certificate and an extract from the civil registry of the Central Bureau of Civil Affairs are required.
[7] General social protection is provided by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Housing, while health-related benefits are delivered by the State Health Foundation and the Implementing Body for Basic Care. The General Pension Fund is responsible for old-age pensions.

Migrants can access government-funded primary and secondary education as well as vocational training on the same basis as citizens of Suriname. According to the Constitution of the Republic of Suriname (1987, last updated 1992), "everyone has the right to education", and the Law on Primary Education (1965) states that every child must attend school until 12 years of age. To enroll, students must present an extract from the Civil Registry of the Central Bureau of Civil Affairs, that can only be obtained by migrants with a regular status. However, in practice, children who cannot present the document can still enroll.[8]

The Agreement between the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the Republic of Suriname on the Export and Enforcement of Social Insurance Benefits (2001) allows Surinamese nationals and persons of Surinamese descent (including Dutch citizens) moving to Suriname to: (a) receive Dutch social benefits to which they are entitled in Suriname – including the basic Dutch pension at retirement age,[9] and (b) access special arrangements, such as financial support, to move to Suriname.

All foreign residents can accept public sector employment under the same conditions as Surinamese nationals. According to the Personnel Act, foreign residents aged 18 years or older with an approved medical examination, who meet the legal requirements of the prospective position, can access public sector employment.[10] Only some public sector roles are restricted to Surinamese nationals, such as the country's president, vice president, elected members of the National Assembly, members of the judiciary or public prosecutors, as established by the Constitution.

Foreign entrepreneurs, in the possession of any category of valid residence permit, have equal access to self-employment as Surinamese nationals. Migrants undertaking self-employment must register at the Chamber of Commerce under the same conditions as nationals.[11]

All temporary foreign residents can apply for a permanent residence permit after legally residing in Suriname for at least five years, as stipulated in the Aliens Act (1992).

1.3. Areas with potential for further development

Only foreign nationals of Surinamese origin, persons of Surinamese descent, foreign residents married to a Surinamese citizen, foreign residents with refugee status, foreign residents employed as civil servants, and "skilled" temporary residents from Caribbean Community (CARICOM)[12] countries have equal access to employment as nationals. According to the Foreign Nationals Work Permit Act (2002), other foreign residents are required to obtain a work permit issued by the Department of Work Permits, of the Ministry of Labour, Employment Opportunity and Youth Affairs. Work permits are linked to a single employer and position, and migrants are unable to change jobs under the same permit. Furthermore, work permit issuance depends on the absence of suitable nationals for the position and proof of qualifications.[13] To assess this, the files of the Public Employment Services of the Ministry of Labour, Employment Opportunity and Youth Affairs are consulted. Additionally, in January 2022, the Ministry of Labour, Employment Opportunity and Youth Affairs introduced a basic language and society test as an additional requirement for obtaining a work permit when the duration of employment in Suriname exceeds six months.[14] In order to obtain the certificate for this test, a payment of 1,500 Surinamese Dollars must be made at the Productive Work Units

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8   Migrant children without legal residence status are allowed to register when a legal resident signs for them as a legal guardian.
9   In general, any person who reaches the State pension age in the Netherlands will receive a basic State pension: the general old age pension (AOW). Any person who resides or works in the Netherlands builds this pension over the years. "The State pension age (AOW age) is gradually changing, until it reaches 67 years in 2024." More information is available here.
10 However, the Personnel Act does not apply to ministers, members of the Advisory Council, members of water authorities, the Prosecutor General, officials appointed for life or equivalent under State regulations or law, and the Registrar of States.
11 The registration process requires providing an address of residence and country of birth. No restrictions are made regarding nationality or migratory status.
12 The CARICOM Movement of Skilled Community Nationals scheme allows skilled CARICOM citizens to move and work freely in Member States for six months.
13 Other documents required include a photograph of the individual, a photocopy of their valid residence permit or a receipt verifying submission of a residence permit application, the employer's business permit, extract from the Chamber of Commerce and articles of incorporation, a statement including information about the opening hours of the company and the working hours of the migrant as well as a deposit receipt for the work permit application.
14 Foreign nationals who have lived in Suriname for more than five years or who have received basic education in the Dutch language are exempt from this requirement.

Foundation (SPWE). The certificate for the Basic Language Knowledge and Society Test is issued by or on behalf of the Minister of Labour, Employment Opportunity and Youth Affairs or by an institute designated by the minister, namely the SPWE.

Citizens of Suriname who are abroad cannot take part in national elections. Under the Electoral Law (1987) "the members of the National Assembly are elected by those who are, on the 25th day before the day of the nomination of candidates, Surinamese nationals residing in Suriname, and have reached the age of 18 years".

There is no specific policy or strategy to combat hate crimes, violence, xenophobia and discrimination against migrants. However, Suriname's Gender Vision 2021–2035 (2019) includes a long-term goal to "Take into account gender-related dimensions of refugee status, asylum, nationality and statelessness in legislation and regulations". Additionally, the Constitution prohibits discrimination on the grounds of "age, sex, race, language, religion, nationality, education, political affiliation, economic position or social circumstances or any other status". The Equal Labour Treatment Act (2019) prohibits labour discrimination based on national origin, but it had yet to be adopted as of November 2022.

2 FORMULATES POLICY USING EVIDENCE AND WHOLE-OF-GOVERNMENT APPROACH

2.1. Migration governance: Examples of well-developed areas

Suriname's development plans take migration issues into consideration. The 2022–2026 Multi-Year Development Plan (2021), published by the Planning Office Suriname, lists measures such as shorter procedures for work permits for highly skilled migrants, introducing a "citizenship by investment" model, and promoting the sustainable integration of immigrants through introducing language and citizenship tests as a requirement for work permit applications, for example, the basic language and society test which went into effect in February 2022.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Business and International Cooperation collaborates with the private sector for its e-visa platform. The VFS Global platform lists the visa requirements, eligibility, procedures and costs.[15] It also allows people to submit and track visa applications online.

The General Bureau of Statistics collects and publishes migration data on a regular basis. Its most recent Households in Suriname 2015–2018 (2019) publication contains data on immigration, emigration, net migration, gross migration and ratio of net migration to gross migration, all disaggregated by age and sex. The publication is planned to be biannual and the next iteration for 2020–2021 will be published in the fourth quarter of 2022. Additionally, the quarterly conducted Household Survey includes data on the country of birth and year of immigration, disaggregated by age and sex.[16] Immigration data is also collected by the Ministry of Justice's Departments of Aliens Affairs and of Aliens Services, namely through applications for short stay residence permits, and by the Ministry of Defense, through its Border Management System. However, this data is not published.

Suriname's latest census, conducted in 2012 by the General Bureau of Statistics, contained a dedicated section on international and domestic migration with questions on ethnicity, country of birth, nationality, year of arrival in Suriname, other countries of residence, year of remigration to Suriname, motivation to migrate and sociodemographic information about emigrants. All data is disaggregated by sex.[17]

2.2. Areas with potential for further development

There is no overall coordination mechanism on migration issues. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Business and International Cooperation, Cabinet of the President, Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Labour, Employment Opportunity and Youth Affairs, and the Ministry of Justice and Police are mandated with aspects of immigration management. The Department for Consular Affairs and Migration within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Business and International Cooperation is responsible for visa applications. The Directorate of National Security, under the Cabinet of the President, manages border security. The Department of Aliens Affairs within the Ministry of Justice and Police is responsible for managing residency applications, approvals and expulsion processes. The Department of Aliens Service, also within the Ministry of Justice and Police, implements immigration policy and is mandated to supervise the admission of stay and executing orders for the deportation, expulsion or extradition of foreign nationals. The Ministry of Home Affairs is responsible for registering foreign residents through its Central Bureau for Civil Affairs. In parallel, the Ministry of Labour, Employment Opportunity and

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[15] The website is available in Dutch, English, French, Mandarin, Portuguese and Spanish languages.

[16] Only permanent residents who have lived in Suriname for six months and intend on staying were asked to participate in these surveys.

[17] The census relies on proxy respondents to answer questions for all members of a household. The Census Office is currently making efforts to improve its communication strategies so that all respondents can answer such questions in time for the 2023 census.

Youth Affairs processes relevant labour permits for migrants. Finally, the Ministry of Defense checks the entries and exits of foreigners at border and crossing points.

The Diaspora Institute Suriname, under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Business and International Cooperation, is responsible for enacting Suriname's diaspora policy and is tasked with organizing and structuring cooperation with the Surinamese diaspora worldwide. Since January 2022, the Diaspora Institute in collaboration with IOM, is implementing the project "Promoting an evidence-based diaspora engagement policy in Suriname". It is furthermore developing a diaspora engagement policy as of November 2022.

As of November 2022, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Business and International Cooperation is developing a migration policy in collaboration with IOM, with representatives from different ministries nominated as part of an interministerial working group. Findings from IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix study (2020) and Migration Needs Assessment Suriname (2021) will help inform the policy.

Suriname does not have an active interministerial coordination mechanism on migration issues. In November 2019, the Migration Flow Committee, chaired by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Business and International Cooperation, was established as an interministerial coordination mechanism on migration. The committee met monthly and was tasked with developing and re-evaluating guidelines, legislation and recommendations related to migration and included representatives from the Ministry of Justice, Immigration Police, Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Labour, Employment Opportunity and Youth Affairs. However, as of November 2022, the committee is inactive. A new committee is under development, with the Ministry of Justice and Police as the chair and 90 per cent of representatives from various ministries having committed to the establishment of a new interministerial coordination mechanism. Meanwhile, ad hoc working groups with various relevant ministries have been established on a case-by-case basis.

The majority of rules and regulations pertaining to migration are presented in Dutch language. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Business and International Cooperation website, which includes information on consular affairs and visa requirements and procedures, is also only available in Dutch language. This is also the case for the Aliens Affairs Department's website which outlines how to apply for residence permits, although the page on asylum for refugees does have English and Portuguese translations. The Central Bureau of Civil Affairs has a website available only in Dutch for its Civil Register and for the registration of immigrants. However, as of November 2022, the bureau is working on translations of its website in multiple languages spoken by migrants. The Aliens Affairs Department is cooperating with embassies of origin countries, such as Brazil and Haiti, regarding the translation of regulations and producing a handbook with essential information for migrants. Surinamese legislation on migration[18] is accessible online, but only in Dutch.

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[18] The main migration-related legislation in Suriname includes the Aliens Act (1992), Aliens Decree (1995), Work Permit Aliens Act (1981), Penal Code (2015), Persons of Surinamese Descent Act (2014), Law Safety and Security Civil Aviation (2002) and the Passenger and Crew List Transfer Act (2016).

3 ENGAGES WITH PARTNERS TO ADDRESS MIGRATION AND RELATED ISSUES

3.1. Migration governance: Examples of well-developed areas

Suriname participates in the South American Conference on Migration (SACM), a biannual platform for consultations on counter-trafficking and counter-smuggling, integration and rights of migrants, information exchanges on migration and other issues.

Suriname is also part of the Caribbean Migration Consultations (CMC), a forum for discussing good practices in migration governance and improving policy consistency and coordination within the region.

Furthermore, the country is a member of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). The Directorate of National Security collaborates with the Caribbean Community Implementation Agency for Crime and Security (CARICOM-Impacs), for example through intelligence sharing and joint training.

Suriname is part of the regional agreement promoting labour mobility between CARICOM Member States. In July 2001, the Nation became a signatory to the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas establishing the CARICOM Caribbean Single Market and Economy (CSME), which allows nationals to enjoy freedom of movement and a six-month stay permit in any other member State. Those recognized as skilled nationals can obtain a Free Movement of Skills Certificate, which enables them to work in Suriname without applying for a work permit or residence permit, as established under the Law Containing Provisions Relating to the Recognition of Qualified Citizen Status of the Caribbean Community (2006).[19] Suriname implements the provisions of the CSME for free movement.

In 2008, Suriname's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Business and International Cooperation signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on readmission with the Ministry of Justice of the Netherlands. The MoU includes provisions on information exchanges on changes in nationalities and residency rights, as well as on the readmission of nationals no longer entitled to residency in either of the two countries. Suriname signed a MoU on migration with Brazil in 2018 which mainly concerns police cooperation in the fight against human trafficking, money laundering and drug trafficking. As of November 2022, Suriname is working on migration-related MoUs with Cuba on the exchange of migration alerts and information sharing between the Division for Identification, Immigration and Aliens Affairs of the Ministry of the Interior of Cuba, Migration Services Suriname and with Belgium.

Suriname engages civil society organizations (CSOs) in migration policy development. For example, the Government is consulting CSOs such as the Projekta Foundation (Stichting Projekta) in efforts to develop its migration policy. The Government also engaged CSOs during development of the Gender Vision 2021–2035 (2019), which applies to migrants and includes specific gender-responsive measures for refugees, asylum seekers and stateless persons.

3.2. Areas with potential for further development

Suriname engages members of diaspora and expatriate communities in national development policy on an ad hoc basis. In 2017, the Surinamese Government in collaboration with IOM launched the website of the Diaspora Institute Suriname under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Business and International Cooperation. The Government also sought to gather information on the skills, experiences and interests of the Surinamese diaspora through a "skills gap assessment" for Suriname, and the

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[19] Skilled nationals are considered to be university graduates, media workers, sportspersons, artists, musicians, nurses and teachers.

"Mapping Suriname's Diaspora" project, which aimed to build capacity in diaspora engagement. In 2017, the Effective and Sustainable Diaspora Engagement for Development in the Caribbean project with IOM in Guyana, Belize, Jamaica and Suriname was launched.[20] As of November 2022, a follow-up Diaspora Engagement Project is planned. As part of this project, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Business and International Cooperation shared a survey questionnaire on best practices of diaspora engagement with consular posts and the Diaspora Institute. However, as of November 2022, the institute is not yet fully operational.

Suriname engages the private sector in migration-related policy development on an ad hoc basis. For instance, the Surinamese Government plans to consult private sector stakeholders as part of its efforts to develop migration policy. The private sector was also involved in a working group on updating migration legislation (Commissie Herziening Vreemdelingenwetgeving), which has since been dissolved. Finally, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Business and International Cooperation collaborates with the private sector, namely VFS Global, to host its e-visas platform.

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[20] The project lasted for 30 months and aimed to establish multilateral strategies and partnerships between the countries of origin of the diaspora and destination countries.

4 ADVANCES THE SOCIOECONOMIC WELL-BEING OF MIGRANTS AND SOCIETY

4.1. Migration governance: Examples of well-developed areas

The Department of Labour Statistics within the Ministry of Labour, Employment Opportunity and Youth Affairs has a working group with participants from the General Bureau of Statistics to monitor labour market demand for immigrants. Additionally, through work permit application statistics, the Ministry of Labour, Employment Opportunity and Youth Affairs collaborates with the General Bureau of Statistics to provide data on the numbers of applicants per sector and successful applications.

The General Bureau of Statistics collects labour market data disaggregated by migration status and sex through its annual household surveys. Data collected include employment rate, sector of employment, duration and weekly hours. Additionally, the Ministry of Labour, Employment Opportunity and Youth Affairs published a Labour in Numbers 2017–2019 report (2020) which presents data on the number of work permit applications by nationality, gender and result, and the number of successful work permit applications and the most common nationality.

Suriname accounts for migrant workers' skills and capabilities when deciding whether to admit them. For authorization of a short stay labour purposes visa, migrants must submit an application on the e-visa platform including an employment invitation letter, reference letter, hiring company's profile from the Chamber of Commerce, its business licence, legalized copies of diplomas and certificates, a reference, job description and a curriculum vitae. The Ministry of Justice and Police then reviews the application for approval. In order to obtain a work permit, migrants must provide copies of any diplomas to prove they possess the necessary skills.

Suriname has accreditation procedures and formalized criteria for recognizing qualifications. Since 2012, the National Body for Accreditation accredits national and international higher educational programmes. It aims to maintain the quality of education on national and international levels. The Surinamese National Training Authority (SNTA), established in 2014, ensures that formalized criteria for recognizing foreign vocational education qualifications are in place. The SNTA oversees vocational education institutions in Suriname and certifies them according to the Caribbean Association of National Training Agencies (CANTA), Competency-based Education and Training (CBET) and the CARICOM Qualification Framework. In 2019, the SNTA adopted CARICOM's Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ) which allows holders of the certificate to find employment in any country within the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME). Qualifications from countries other than CARICOM need to be authenticated by relevant authorities from the country where the awarding institution is located. The Inspectorate for Nursing and Health Care Professions, operating under the Ministry of Health, conducts a specific accreditation process for foreign health workers. For accountants, the Suriname Chartered Accountants Institute maintains a quality-assurance review system under the oversight of the International Federation of Accountants.

4.2. Areas with potential for further development

Suriname has made efforts to set up national labour market assessments to monitor the demand for labour immigration. In 2021 the Ministry of Labour, Employment Opportunity and Youth Affairs, the General Bureau of Statistics, and Pension Fund Suriname signed a memorandum of understanding to operationalize the CARICOM Regional Labour Market Information System (LMIS). It aims to collect, analyse and disseminate information about labour market supply and demand. However, as of November 2022, Suriname's LMIS is inactive.

Suriname does not have a national assessment for monitoring the domestic labour supply and the effects of emigrants on the domestic labour market. The Ministry of Labour, Employment Opportunity and Youth Affairs only has information on domestic labour supply shortages through work permit applications, as one of the criteria for granting such a permit is the unavailability of employees for specific positions or occupations.

The country does not have different types of visas to attract specific labour skills. All categories of labour migrants are required to apply for a short stay visa for labour purposes. When applying for visas, applicants must select a reason for the purpose of visiting and submit documents required for that category, including the employment invitation letter as well as proof of education and qualifications. However, nationals of CARICOM member states recognized as skilled can obtain a Free Movement of Skills Certificate.[21]

International students do not have equal access to university education compared to nationals. To enrol in university, international students must request dispensation from the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture. In addition, some degree programmes[22] have annual quotas in place.

Suriname does not have specific measures in place to promote ethical recruitment for migrant workers. However, since 2017, recruitment agencies have been required to operate in accordance with the Employment Act by Intermediaries (2017), which aims to prevent the exploitation of temporary workers in general. It prohibits discrimination based on country of birth, race, language, religion, education, political conviction or socioeconomic situation during the recruitment process for temporary work, but does not include measures specifically targeted at migrants.

Suriname does not promote the creation of formal remittance schemes. However, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Housing, together with the Ministry of Finance and Planning, Association of Bankers and the Banking Network Suriname, has introduced measures to promote financial inclusion for citizens and vulnerable groups, including migrants. For example, according to its Strategic Plan 2021–2024 (2022), the Central Bank of Suriname aims to promote financial inclusion of the population through various measures, including the introduction of a financial inclusion and education strategy. However, it makes no specific reference to migrants or remittances. Finally, in 2021, the Surinamese Government made efforts to increase the financial inclusion of all Surinamese citizens and commenced dialogues with banks in the country to achieve this. While the dialogues centred on the need to make it easier for citizens to open bank accounts, the similar needs of migrants were not addressed.

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[21] Please see Domain 3.1 for more details on the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas establishing the CARICOM Caribbean Single Market and Economy (CSME).
[22] For example, the Bachelor's in Medicine at Anton de Kom University.

5 EFFECTIVELY ADDRESSES THE MOBILITY DIMENSIONS OF CRISES

5.1. Migration governance: Examples of well-developed areas

The National Coordination Centre for Disaster Relief (NCCR), operating under the Directorate of National Security, is responsible for developing and establishing integrated policy frameworks to prevent and manage crises and disasters and acts as a coordinator and facilitator for crisis and disaster management, among other tasks. According to the Disaster Risk Reduction Country Document for Suriname (2017), developed by the NCCR, it is also mandated to provide displaced persons with relief camps, shelters and medical assistance. In December 2019, the NCCR elaborated contingency plans for all districts of Suriname and initial disaster response activities are carried out through an incident command system at the district level. The NCCR also coordinates with the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) to set up effective emergency responses in the event of crises and disasters.

5.2. Areas with potential for further development

Suriname does not have a specific national disaster risk reduction strategy to provide assistance to migrants during crises or a contingency plan to manage large-scale population movements in times of crisis. The Development Plan (2017–2021) and Multi-Year Development Plan 2022–2026 (2021) do not contain measures regarding refugees or internally displaced persons.

Suriname does not have a strategy in place for addressing migration linked to environmental degradation and the adverse effects of climate change. However, the Paramaribo Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2017) considers the adverse effects of climate change on coastal areas and lists flood forecasting and early warnings, flood hazard maps, land-use planning and building codes, resettlement and urban management as mitigation measures. There are no specific provisions to make exceptions to immigration procedures for migrants whose country of origin is experiencing crisis. However, the Aliens Act (1992) states that an individual may be granted a residence permit if "in view of the social and political situation in the country from which he originates and of his personal circumstances, he cannot reasonably be required to return to that country." Assistance to determine refugee status is mainly provided by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Nonetheless, as of November 2022, the Government is developing a formal refugee status determination framework to carry out these tasks.

6 ENSURES THAT MIGRATION TAKES PLACE IN A SAFE, ORDERLY AND REGULAR MANNER

6.1. Migration governance: Examples of well-developed areas

The Central Bureau for Civil Affairs maintains a database for the registration of nationals residing abroad, disaggregated by age, sex, nationality and residence. Nationals who decide to emigrate are encouraged to register with the bureau in the week preceding departure. However, not all emigrants comply. When Surinamese nationals abroad register with embassies and consulates overseas to renew or apply for a passport, this information is sent to the bureau on a weekly basis.

The Directorate of National Security (Directoraat Nationale Veiligheid, DNV), under the Cabinet of the President, is responsible for immigration management at border posts. Border control activities are implemented by the Ministry of Defence's Immigration Service and supported by the general police force and its Aliens Service Department. Since 2013, Suriname's dedicated coastguard agency has supported border security activities and aims to counter human trafficking and smuggling.

Since 2012, the DNV operates a border management system that monitors visa overstays. It registers entries and exits, types of visas, numbers of journeys, police records and unpaid fines. It automatically flags visa overstays and traces visitors who have entered the country, those who have departed, and the length of stays. The system is connected to the Interpol database, as well as to CARICOM-Impacs (Caribbean Community Implementation Agency for Crime and Security), CARICOM's Joint Regional Communications Centre,[23] and the Regional Intelligence Fusion Centre (RIFC).[24] The DNV liaises with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Business and International Cooperation, the Consular Affairs Department, Ministry of Justice and Police and the Aliens Affairs Department to track the visa status of migrants.

Border staff are regularly trained by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Business and International Cooperation as well as other partners such as the US embassy and IOM on migration legislation and regulation, risk management, anti-human smuggling and trafficking, among other topics. CARICOM-Impacs organizes monthly trainings for police units on intraregional safety issues and safety at border posts. This training covers best practices for engaging and communicating with migrants from different backgrounds. Furthermore, in 2021, CARICOM-Impacs provided border staff with Spanish language lessons.

Suriname has a policy focused on attracting returning Surinamese nationals and people with ancestral links to the country. The Persons of Surinamese Descent Act (PSA) (2014) allows all members of the diaspora without Surinamese nationality – including persons born in Suriname and those whose parents or grandparents were born in Suriname – to stay in Suriname without a visa, to register as a permanent resident, and to work without a work permit. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Business and International Cooperation handles applications for PSA documents and conducted an awareness-raising campaign targeted at emigrants when introduced. Additionally, under Suriname's Agreement on the Export and Enforcement of Social Insurance Benefits with the Netherlands, nationals voluntarily returning to Suriname from the Netherlands may continue to receive Dutch social benefits they remain entitled to (including a basic Dutch pension upon retirement age) and may access special return arrangements, such as financial support.

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[23] The Joint Regional Communications Centre is responsible for the operations and management of the Advance Passenger Information System.
[24] The Regional Intelligence Fusion Centre is a CARICOM sub-agency which supports Member States in intelligence gathering, sharing and analysis.

There are provisions to ensure that migrant detention is used only as a measure of last resort. Survivors of human trafficking, as well as migrants with an irregular status awaiting extradition, are kept out of detention as long as they report on a weekly basis to the Aliens Service Department. This department guides migrants with an irregular status who do not intend to leave the country (for instance, returning to their country of origin in order to re-enter with the correct documentation) and offers support to prevent detention. According to the Penal Code (2015), migrant children under 12 years of age with an irregular status are not to be detained, instead they are to be placed in children's shelters.

6.2. Areas with potential for further development

Suriname does not have a comprehensive strategy for countering trafficking in persons (TIP). The Penal Code prohibits and punishes all forms of human trafficking, but it does not contain provisions for the protection and assistance of victims of trafficking. The National Development Plan of Suriname 2017–2021 commits to increased prevention and control of cross-border crime related to human trafficking and smuggling by strengthening border post operations, but it does not explicitly mention policy measures nor implementation plans. However, a TIP Working Group was established in 2016 and consists of representatives from six government agencies: the Ministry of Justice and Police, the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Labour, Employment Opportunity and Youth Affairs, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Business and International Cooperation, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Housing, and the prosecutor's office under the Ministry of Justice and Police. It works on awareness raising, inter-departmental coordination on counter-trafficking efforts and develops victim support protocols. The TIP Unit of the Surinamese Police Force focuses on investigating cases of human trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation or forced labour.

Suriname does not regularly publish information about its counter-trafficking activities. However, the TIP Unit develops annual action plans with measures to raise awareness and provide victim care, but this is not publicly available. The website of the Surinamese Police Force contains announcements on some activities of the TIP Unit, such as reports about specific cases and arrests. As of November 2022, the TIP Unit plans to develop its own website.

There are no specific measures to protect migrant workers from exploitation. The Constitution of the Republic of Suriname prohibits all forms of forced labour, but makes no specific reference to migrants or nationality. The Employment by Intermediaries Act (2017) also forbids the employment of migrants with an irregular status and advises against the temporary employment of migrants with a regular status. The Labour Policy Note (2016–2021) aims to achieve safe and secure working environments for migrant workers and specifically mentions women and migrants in irregular employment, but does not propose concrete measures to realize this.

There are no specific procedures in place to ensure the timely identification of migrants in vulnerable situations and provide them with adequate referral and protection services. Moreover, there are no systems in place to trace and identify missing migrants within the national territory.

After the MGI assessment

IOM would like to thank the Government of Suriname for their engagement in this process. IOM hopes that the results of this assessment can feed into the Government's strengthening of their migration governance. After an MGI assessment, the following are recommended:

The MGI report can be used to inform policy work with the support of IOM (if desired).

The findings can feed into capacity-building activities, which may connect to other IOM initiatives.

A follow-up assessment can be conducted after three years to verify progress.

Governments can exchange best practices and innovative solutions with other governments that have conducted the MGI process.

MIGRATION GOVERNANCE INDICATORS

PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE PROTOCOLS ON THE RISKS OF THE NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

This annex summarizes key national COVID-19 policy responses in Suriname from a migration governance perspective. It is based on 12 questions that were added to the standard Migration Governance Indicators (MGIs) assessment in Suriname in order to effectively assess national migration governance in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Government covers COVID-19-related health services for all persons residing in Suriname, including migrants.[1] Regarding testing, the only requirement is a valid ID card, but migrants with an irregular status can also access testing by providing their name and a photograph.

Suriname introduced "COVID-19 stamps" for migrants who entered Suriname between 13 December 2019 and 13 March 2020 to prevent migrants losing their regular status due to closed offices during full lockdowns in 2020. COVID-19 stamps should be renewed every three or six months for Dutch citizens of Surinamese descent and for CARICOM (Caribbean Community) citizens. The measure remains in place as of November 2022.

The Public Health Office's "COVID-19 Dashboard" webpage providing daily COVID-19 health statistics, its "Get Vaccinated" website promoting the national vaccination campaign, and the Directorate National Security's COVID-19 information website are available only in Dutch language.[2,3,4] However, the Medical Mission (a government-subsidized non-governmental organization) produces multilingual videos on its COVID-19 vaccination campaign on YouTube.[5] Additionally, the Public Health Office produces "COVID-19 News" videos in Spanish, Portuguese and Chinese languages.[6]

Data collection and dissemination related to key COVID-19 health statistics do not capture migratory status as a separate variable.[7] The Public Health Office publishes daily updates on the number of tests conducted, positive tests, new cases, hospitalized patients, intensive care unit patients, and deceased persons. However, statistics are only disaggregated according to district.

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[1] National Assembly, State of Emergency COVID-19 Act, 2020.
[2] Directorate National Security, Covid Suriname, n.d.
[3] Public Health Office, COVID-19, n.d.
[4] Public Health Office, Get Vaccinated, n.d.
[5] Medical Mission YouTube, Videos, n.d.
[6] Public Health Office, COVID-19 News, n.d.
[7] Public Health Office, COVID Dashboard, n.d.

Private sector actors set up the Surinamese for Surinamese (Su4Su) initiative, managed by the Surinamese Business Association, to raise funds domestically and among the Surinamese diaspora in the Netherlands to assist the Surinamese pandemic response and mobilized Dutch medical professionals to assist in hospitals in Suriname.[8] The initiative was coordinated with the Ministry of Health and aided by multiple Surinamese State-owned enterprises as well as the Netherlands' Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Suriname's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Business and International Cooperation.
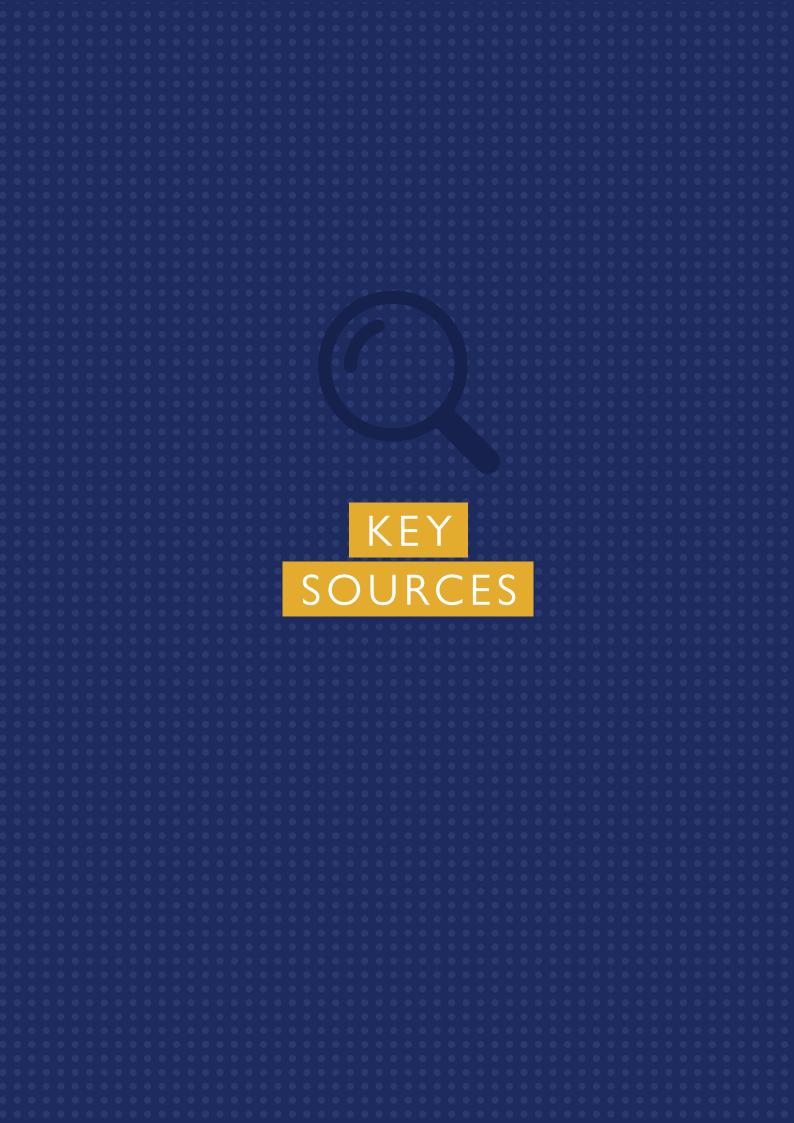
During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Business and International Cooperation offered a rescue package including financial assistance to nationals stranded abroad. The ministry identified nationals abroad, opened a dedicated email account for stranded nationals and offered assistance for repatriation. Since April 2020, Surinamese residents stranded abroad have been invited to register on the official COVID-19 website of the Surinamese Government using an online form.[9]

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8   SU4SU, Fund, n.d.
9   COVID-19 in Suriname, Online registration form "Registration Repatriation Surinamese", n.d.

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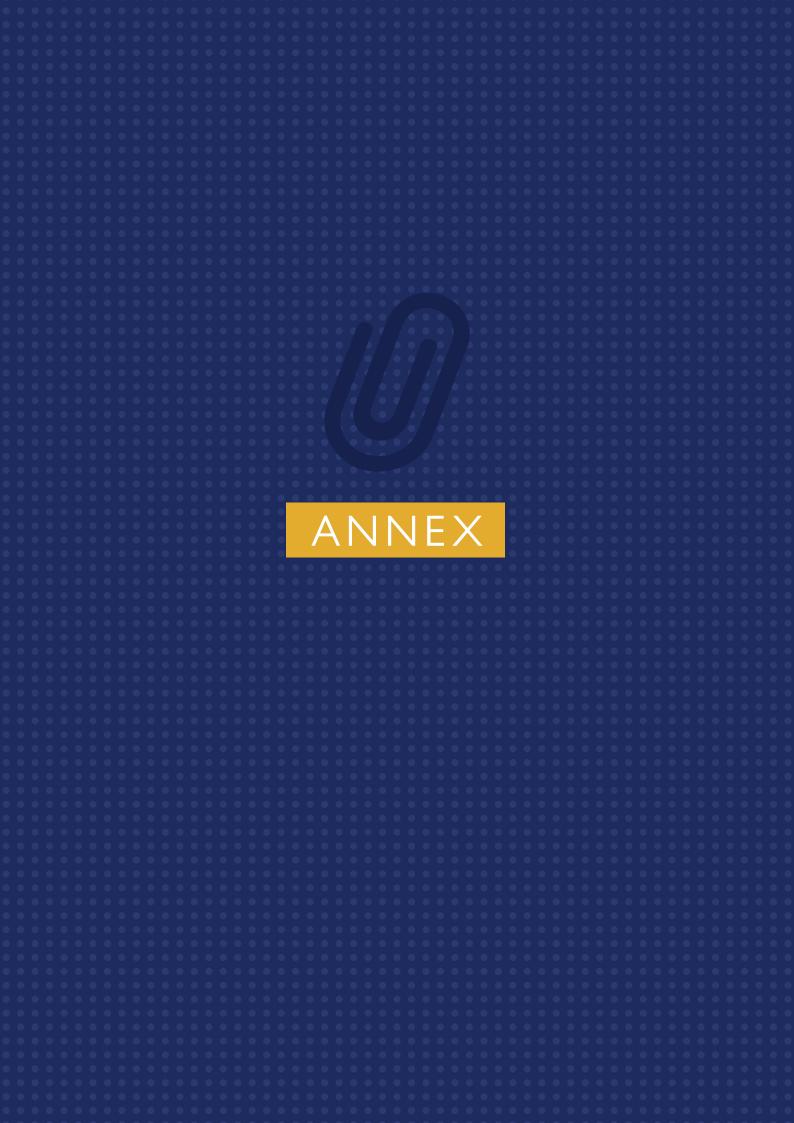
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* All hyperlinks were working at the time of writing this report.

ANNEX

The MGI process

1
Launch of the MGI process

The first step of the process is to explain what the MGIs entail to key government officials, in order to ensure full understanding of the project and complete buy-in.

2
Data collection

The second step of the process is to start the collection and analysis of data, based on about 90 indicators grounded in the six dimensions of the MiGOF. A migration governance profile based on the analysis of the findings is then drafted and shared with the government counterparts.

3
Interministerial consultation

The third step of the process is to convene an interministerial consultation where all relevant ministries and other stakeholders discuss the good practices and main areas that could be developed further as identified in the draft migration governance profile, as well as priorities on the way forward. It is also an opportunity for them to comment and provide suggestions on the draft profile.

4
Publication of the report on the Global Migration Data Portal

After the migration governance profiles are finalized and vetted by government counterparts, they are published on the Global Migration Data Portal[25] and the IOM Publications Platform.[26]

[25] You can find the profiles here.
[26] Please visit this link.

www.migrationdataportal.org/mgi

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