

COMMONWEALTH OF DOMINICA | PROFILE 2023

MIGRATION
GOVERNANCE
INDICATORS



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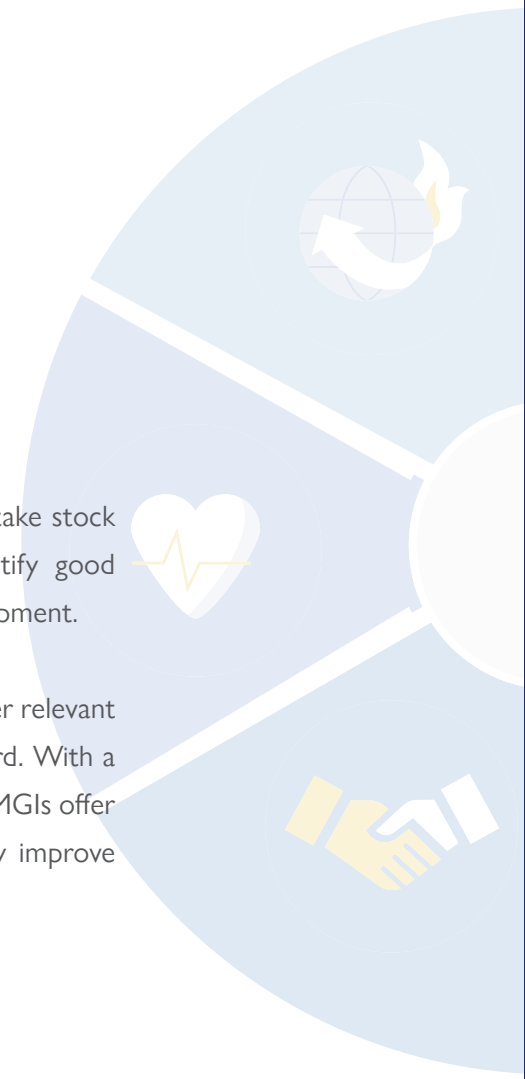
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OBJECTIVES

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 Governance² Framework (MiGOF). This Framework³ 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 Commonwealth of Dominica (hereinafter referred to as Dominica), as well as the areas with potential for further development, as assessed by the MGIs.⁴

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 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.

At the basis of

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.




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*

Which support the measurement of

WHAT THEY ARE NOT

-  Not a ranking of countries
-  Not an assessment of policy impacts
-  Not prescriptive



Note: "The Global Compact 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."

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 18

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 21

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 24

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 26

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 28

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 31

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.



SUMMARY

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Migrants' rights

All migrants, regardless of their status, can access Government-funded health services under the same conditions as nationals. Primary health services provided by public health centres are free for all individuals, and no proof of identification is required.

Permanent residents, residents on temporary permits and residents on family reunion permits have equal access to employment as nationals, including in the public sector. However, they require an employer to sponsor them in order to obtain a work permit.

The development of a policy or strategy to combat hate crimes, violence, xenophobia and discrimination against migrants is an area with potential for improvement.

Whole-of-government approach

The Ministry of National Security and Legal Affairs is tasked with implementing immigration policies to ensure internal security and effective border management. Within the Ministry, the Immigration Division focuses on border management, which includes regulating the entry, stay and exit of foreigners within national borders; the management of embarkation/disembarkation cards; and the granting of passports to nationals and visas to foreigners, such as student and entry visas.

The Diaspora Relations Office takes charge of coordinating initiatives to engage with the country's diaspora population; this is done through the Diaspora Advisory Group and the annual Diaspora Forum.

The formulation of a migration strategy defined in a programmatic document, specifically one that addresses migration linked to environmental degradation and climate change, is an area with potential for further development.

Partnerships

Dominica is a member State of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), and the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States – all of which have established mechanisms for formal intraregional mobility.

Civil society organizations do not have formal involvement in agenda-setting and the implementation of migration-related policies and programmes; however, the Government engages with private-sector partners, such as the Dominica Association of Industry and Commerce and other stakeholders, on an ad hoc basis.

Well-being of migrants

The implementation of a national assessment for monitoring the labour market demand for immigrants and the effects of emigration on the domestic labour market is an area for further development. Additionally, there are no programmes in place to manage labour immigration into Dominica.

Dominica actively participates in international schemes that promote common qualification frameworks, including those within CARICOM and the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth.

As of February 2024, Dominica does not have any provisions to allow international students to work during the course of their study. Student permits do not allow students to obtain a work permit, and it is not possible for students to hold two separate permits simultaneously while in Dominica.

Mobility dimension of crises

There are established frameworks in place with specific provisions for preventing and addressing the displacement impacts of disasters. These frameworks include the Climate Resilience and Recovery Plan 2020–2030 (2020) and the national Resettlement Strategy (2015).

Dominica does not have a regular practice of collecting and publishing data on disaster displacement. The Local Government Division, under the Ministry of Culture, Youth, Sports and Community Development, collects data on disasters. However, these data are not published.

The development of a travel advisory service to provide citizens with regularly updated travel warnings and recommendations about safety and security conditions in destinations around the globe is an area partially addressed, with potential for improvement.

Safe, orderly and regular migration

There is no system in place to monitor visa overstays in Dominica as the existing border management system does not consistently capture such information.

Dominica has specific strategies in place to combat human trafficking. In May 2013, it ratified the 2000 Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons (Palermo Protocol) and enacted the Transnational Organized Crime (Prevention and Control) Act (No. 13 of 2013) as a result.

Areas with potential for further development include providing regular training to border staff in migration and related topics, as well as establishing measures to ensure that migrant detention is used only as a last resort.

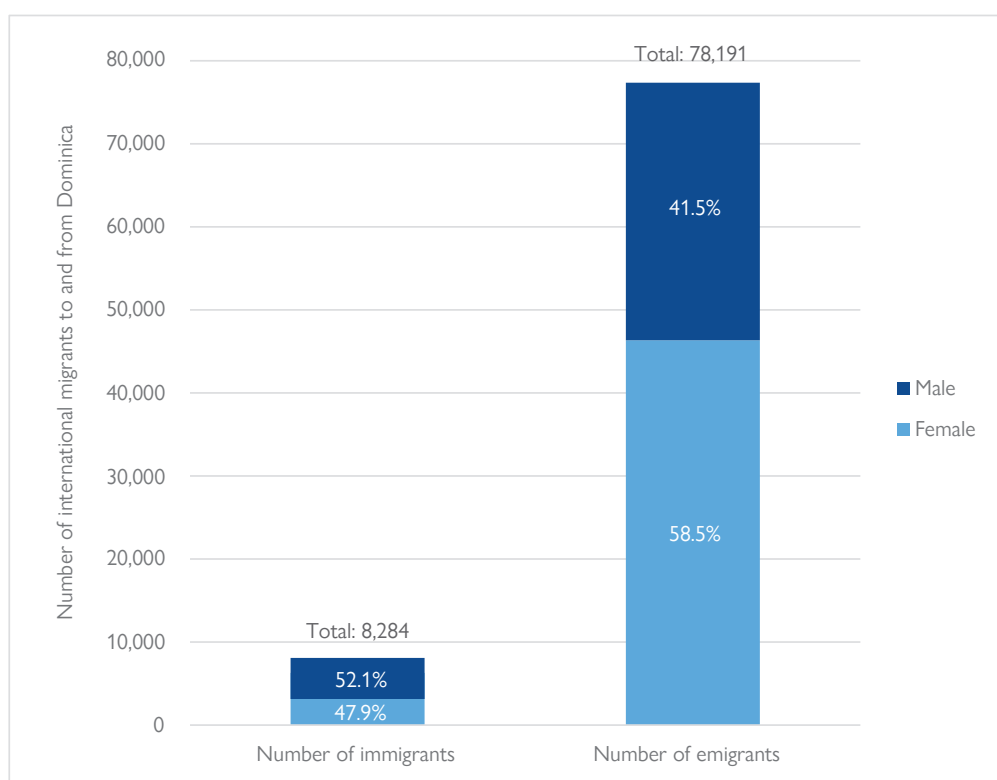


CONTEXT

Immigration to Dominica has increased since the 1990s, rising exponentially since 2005 and reaching a total of 8,284 persons in 2020.⁵ In this sense, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) figures indicate that the 8,300 international migrants living in the country as of mid-2020 represent 11.5 per cent of the country's total population. The distribution of immigrants by sex shows that 48 per cent are female and 52 per cent are male (see Figure 1). Similar to its immigration data, Dominica has experienced increasing emigration since the 1990s, with emigration numbers reaching 78,200 people in 2020, or 109 per cent of its total population (72,000), according to data estimates by DESA.⁶ The share of female emigrants (58.5%) in 2020 is significantly higher than the share of males (see Figure 1).

Comparing immigration and emigration figures shows that the estimated net migration in Dominica in 2022 is 57 migrants. In addition, data from the World Bank show that personal remittances received in Dominica accounted for 8.7 per cent of its GDP in 2022.⁷ Finally, Figure 2 indicates that the majority of immigrants in 2020 were 20–64 years old (69.5%), followed by people 19 years and younger (24.3%).

Figure 1. International migration to and from Dominica (at mid-2020), by sex

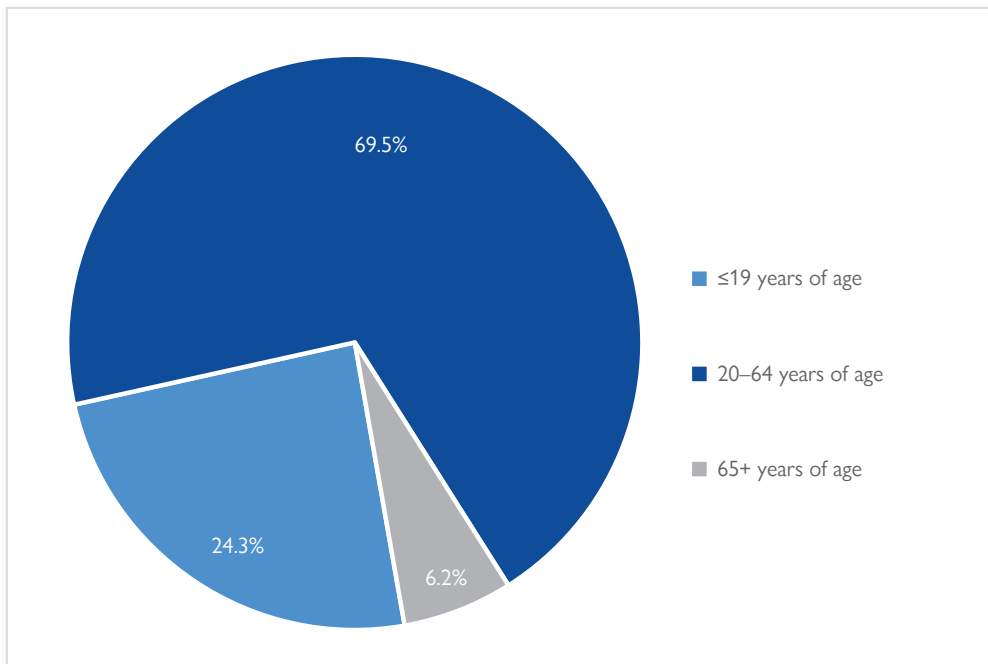


Source: DESA, *International Migrant Stock 2020* (2020).

⁵ Visit the [Migration Data Portal](#) for more information.

⁶ See footnote 5.

⁷ See footnote 5.

Figure 2. Distribution of migrants by age group (at mid-2020)

Source: Migration Data Portal, 2020 data from DESA (2020).



KEY

FINDINGS



1

ADHERE TO INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS AND FULFIL 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)	Yes (1983)
United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (also known as the Refugee Convention), 1951	Yes (1994)
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 (1991)
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

All migrants, regardless of their status, can access Government-funded health services under the same conditions as nationals. Primary health services⁸ provided by the Government's 51 health centres are free for all individuals, and no proof of identification is required. However, secondary health services⁹ are free only for individuals under the age of 18 or over 65. Nonetheless, residents of Dominica who are vulnerable or living in poverty can apply for a welfare card from the Ministry of Health, Wellness and Social Services, which exempts them from fees. The Health Promotion Unit under this Ministry is responsible for disseminating information on health to the population through media, including radio, print, audiovisual and social media, and it has a specific focus on promoting material in various languages. Moreover, in practice, Dominica hires medical staff from the migrant population residing legally in the country, such as Haitian nationals.

Migrants who are resident in Dominica can access primary, secondary, vocational and tertiary education. According to the Education Regulations (2011), for a person to be admitted as a student, they must be one of the following: "(a) child of a citizen of Dominica; (b) national of a Member State of the Community; (c) child of a Foreign or Commonwealth Diplomat or Consular Officer serving in Dominica; (d) child of a person employed in Dominica by an overseas or regional organization in which the Government of Dominica participates; (e) child of a person, resident in Dominica, who is employed by a regional or international organization or institution which transfers staff from one country to another; [or] (f) a child who is resident in Dominica" (Section 23(1)). Additionally, as per Section 14 of the Education Act (No. 11 of 1997,

⁸ These include family doctors, emergency care, maternity care, dentistry and pharmacy.

⁹ These include hospital services and specialized assistance.

amended in 2017), “all persons are entitled to receive an educational programme appropriate to their needs”, although Section 16(2)(a) states that tuition fees may be applied to persons who are not citizens of any member State of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).¹⁰

Regular migrants have equal access to social protection as nationals. In order to access social protection benefits, migrants must provide a birth certificate, an official employment letter and their work permit. Self-employed migrants can access long-term benefits (old-age, invalidity and survivors’ benefits) by making voluntary contributions. The Social Protection Act (No. 38 of 1975, amended in 2012) covers insured persons, contributions and types of benefits, among other provisions, but it does not address migration and related issues. Dominica’s draft Social Protection Policy (2022)¹¹ aims to enhance the provision of efficient, effective and sustainable social protection services through an integrated protection system, including for immigrants. At the regional level, CARICOM has an agreement on social security (1996) that aims to protect the rights to benefits and ensure equal treatment when moving from one country to another for CARICOM nationals, and provides for cooperation among CARICOM States in the social security area.

Migrants are able to accept public-sector employment under the same conditions as nationals. However, they are not eligible to join the Police Force. Dominica’s Public Service Act (No. 27 of 1991, amended in 2016), the Caribbean Community Skilled Nationals Act (1995, amended in 2022) and the Recruiting of Workers Act (No. 3 of 1943, amended in 2003) do not address the specific terms and conditions of employment for migrants in the public service.

Migrants have the option to apply for permanent residency status in Dominica through either residing in the country and/or being employed for a minimum of five years, or by submitting an application, whose approval is at the discretion of the Minister for Labour, Public Service Reform, Social Partnership, Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development.¹² The provisions for obtaining permanent residency are outlined in the Immigration and Passport Act (Chapter 18:01 of the 2017 Revised Laws of Dominica). The Act states that, notwithstanding any other laws, the Cabinet has the authority to grant a permanent residence permit to individuals who are not citizens of the State, subject to conditions determined by the Cabinet (Section 19A). However, citizens of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS)¹³ and their spouses and dependants have the privilege to stay in Dominica indefinitely by obtaining an OECS Free Movement Indefinite Stay Stamp on arrival.

CARICOM citizens, as well as British nationals, can apply for Dominican citizenship after holding a work permit and/or a residence permit for five years, while individuals of other nationalities face a residence period of seven years, as per Sections 5 and 6 in Part II of the Citizenship Act (No. 26 of 1978, amended in 2017). Individuals married to persons of Dominican origin can obtain citizenship after being married for three years and living in Dominica for at least one year. However, in the case of skilled foreigners, the CARICOM National Skills Certificate replaces the need for a work permit as provided for under the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas (2001).¹⁴ Additionally, migrants can obtain citizenship through the Citizenship by Investment programme, established in 1993, by investing in Dominica’s Economic Diversification Fund or purchasing pre-approved real estate.

¹⁰ CARICOM is a group of 20 countries established in 1973 that aims for cooperation to achieve economic integration, foreign policy coordination, human and social development, and security.

¹¹ As of February 2024, the Policy is under review for approval by Cabinet.

¹² The documents required in the application for permanent residency are as follows: (a) application forms provided by the Labour Division within the Ministry of Labour, Public Service Reform, Social Partnership, Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development; (b) a medical certificate stating that the applicant is in good health and has not suffered from any communicable disease in the past three years; (c) two testimonials from persons who have known the applicant from the time they have been in Dominica; (d) financial statement provided by a banker or letter from the employer stating the duration and type of employment; (e) recent police record; (f) application fee to be paid at the Treasury Department; (g) Treasury receipt as proof of payment of the application fee; (h) letter from the applicant’s friend/family accepting responsibility for the applicant while in Dominica, if applicant is not employed; (i) cover letter requesting permanent residency; (j) marriage certificate; and (k) copies of work/residence permits issued since the applicant has been in Dominica.

¹³ The Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States is an intergovernmental organization, established in 1981, that is dedicated to regional integration in the Eastern Caribbean and consists of 11 Eastern Caribbean countries.

¹⁴ Please see Section 3.1 of this report for more details.

1.3. Areas with potential for further development

Permanent residents, individuals with temporary permits and those on family reunion permits have equal access to employment as nationals. However, they require an employer to sponsor them for a work permit to be granted. According to the Immigration and Passport (Amendment) Act (No. 19 of 2003), migrants are required to obtain a work permit in order to engage in any occupation for profit or reward, or to be employed in Dominica for remuneration (Section 27C(1)). Only citizens of CARICOM and OECS countries are exempt from this requirement and can work without a permit, as per the Immigration and Passport Act. To hire a migrant worker, an employer must demonstrate to the Government that there is no suitably qualified and available Dominican citizen for the position. Additionally, they are required to publish the job application details, including the duties, responsibilities, salaries and other prerequisites, in three issues of a local newspaper. Migrant workers have the flexibility to switch jobs under the same work permit, but they must update their permit to reflect their new employer.

Dominicans residing in another country are able to vote in national elections only under specific conditions, as there are no provisions for postal or electronic voting from another country. Voting must be conducted in person, and as provided by the Registration of Electors Act (No. 13 of 1974), the electoral register shall not include individuals that have been absent from Dominica for a period exceeding five years (Section 11(3)(c)). However, as of February 2024, this issue is being considered as part of a review of electoral regulations.¹⁵

Dominica does not have a policy or strategy in place to combat hate crimes, violence, xenophobia and discrimination against migrants. Dominica's Growth and Social Protection Strategy (2014) supports the elimination of discrimination against women and condemns the abuse of children, while making no specific reference to migrants. Nonetheless, Dominica's national Constitution (1978) provides for protection from discrimination on the grounds of race, origin, sex, political opinions, skin colour or creed (Section 13). Additionally, in February 2022, Dominica's Ministry of Education, Human Resource Planning, Vocational Training and National Excellence, together with IOM, launched the Migration Matters Creative Competition for Dominican students, which aimed to raise awareness of migration and related topics.¹⁶

¹⁵ For more information, see the Report on electoral reform in Dominica (2023).

¹⁶ The competition involved a drawing competition for primary school students on the impact of migration on the family, a creative presentation competition for secondary school students (Forms 1–3) on outstanding migrants making contributions to their country or community, and an essay competition for secondary school students (Forms 4–5) on the factors that motivate people to migrate and the consequences of migration in the Caribbean.



2

FORMULATE POLICY USING EVIDENCE AND WHOLE-OF-GOVERNMENT APPROACH

2.1. Migration governance: Examples of well-developed areas

The Ministry of Labour, Public Service Reform, Social Partnership, Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development is responsible for designing and coordinating the implementation of a migration policy or strategic plan. The Ministry of National Security and Legal Affairs is tasked with implementing immigration policies to ensure internal security and effective border management. Within the Ministry, the Immigration Division focuses on border management, which includes regulating the entry, stay and exit of foreigners within national borders; the management of embarkation/disembarkation cards; and the granting of passports to nationals and visas to foreigners, such as student and entry visas.

The Ministry of National Security and Legal Affairs' Registry Division is responsible for issuing birth, death, marriage, and non-marriage certificates and special marriage licenses¹⁷ and registering persons as citizens of Dominica; while the Labour Division of the Ministry of Labour, Public Service Reform, Social Partnership, Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development is responsible for granting citizenship and naturalization, the processing of work and residence permits, and the issuance of the Caribbean Community National Skills Certificate, which permits certified skilled nationals from member States to reside and work in any member State of the Community. The *National Resilience Development Strategy: Dominica 2030 (2020)* identifies the Ministry of National Security and Legal Affairs as the agency responsible for managing immigration and related issues at the national level.

The Immigration and Passport Act (No. 5 of 1941, amended in 2017) is Dominica's national legislation regulating immigration. It creates regulations related to distinct migration categories, based on which persons can enter the territory without prohibition for visits, employment and family reasons.

The Diaspora Relations Office, established in 2015 under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Business, Trade and Energy, is responsible for coordinating efforts to engage with Dominica's diaspora population. The Office works towards fostering connections with nationals living abroad and addressing common challenges through its Diaspora Advisory Group. The Group provides support and advice on specific queries related to the diaspora. Additionally, the Office organizes an annual Diaspora Forum to engage with nationals living abroad.¹⁸

The Discover Dominica Authority (DDA), a statutory body established in 2007, is entrusted with the implementation of tourism promotion and marketing activities. Recognizing the importance of the diaspora, DDA has developed activities such as the Dominica Diaspora Connection (DDC). The DDC programme, established in 2018, ensures that members receive up-to-date information on national development and airline and accommodation deals, as well as recognition for contribution to the national economy. Dominica's national Diaspora Policy (2010), developed by the Ministry of Employment, Trade, Industry and Diaspora Affairs, presents provisions for citizenship rights, skills retention, skills transfer, financial and economic incentives, investment opportunities, trade promotion, tourism promotion and cultural exchanges.¹⁹ A new diaspora policy is under consideration as of February 2024.

¹⁷ This is applicable for foreigners wishing to get married in Dominica.

¹⁸ This is an opportunity for diaspora members to raise their concerns, as well as to be updated about the policies and plans of the national Government. The Forum usually takes place during Dominica's annual independence celebration (in November) and includes the participation of distinct national agencies and departments (e.g. the Immigration Division) that come to present their respective programmes and listen to queries and/or recommendations.

¹⁹ The Ministry of Employment, Trade, Industry and Diaspora Affairs no longer exists in the current national administrative structure, and the mandate for diaspora affairs is concentrated within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Business, Trade and Energy.

Rules and regulations pertaining to migration are available and free to consult on national government websites. Dominica’s embassy website lists requirements for visitors to the country, as well as generic information related to work permits, residency and citizenship procedures (except for the Citizenship by Investment route). As of February 2024, the forms required to apply for a visa, work permit, student visa or permanent residency are available on the website of the Ministry of National Security and Legal Affairs.²⁰ The websites of the Invest Dominica Authority and the Citizenship by Investment Unit provide clear information about options for investment and business visas. The website of the Work in Nature (WIN) Programme provides information about visas for individuals working remotely from Dominica (the digital nomads). The Government has an official website describing how migrants should proceed to legally enter the country, including details on the countries that do not require a visa for a period not exceeding three to six months, how to apply for a Certificate of Identity,²¹ how to apply for a visitor’s visa, how to apply for an extension of stay and entry requirements. Clear and easily accessible information relating to the WIN Extended Stay Visa, which has a specific website, is publicly available. Additionally, Dominica’s web portal makes available the legal texts and related regulations on migration (such as the Immigration and Passport Act, the national Diaspora Policy, and the Citizenship Act (1978, amended in 1991)).

2.2. Areas with potential for further development

There is no established interministerial coordination mechanism specifically dedicated to addressing migration issues in Dominica. However, ad hoc measures have been put in place to handle such matters. For instance, the Ministry of National Security and Legal Affairs collaborates with the Ministry of Labour, Public Service Reform, Social Partnership, Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development for the issuance of work and residence permits.

There is no coordination mechanism in place to formally engage Dominica’s lead agency on gender equality and diversity – the Bureau of Gender Affairs within the Ministry of Health, Wellness and Social Services²² – in agenda-setting and the implementation of migration-related policies. However, each national agency and department has a focal point addressing gender and related topics. The National Policy and Action Plan on Gender Equity and Equality for Dominica (2006) provides a framework for promoting equality between men and women to advance national development, but it makes no specific reference to migrants. As of February 2024, the Ministry is revising the Policy and Action Plan, which will include references to migrants, with a specific section dedicated to them.

The Government of Dominica does not have a migration strategy defined in a programmatic document. In the *National Resilience Development Strategy: Dominica 2030*, there is mention of the development of a Population Situation Analysis Report, which is overseen by the Ministry of Finance, Economic Development, Climate Resilience and Social Security. This report is to include information about migration, informed by a public consultation process and research. Under Strategy 3, which is titled “Build assets for low-income families and economically disadvantaged communities”, the Government aims to facilitate migration for poor people and communities by reversing the disadvantages they may face in social participation, in available skills and leadership pools, as well as in village-level development and the establishment/maintenance of essential services. The Strategy also indicates that the Government intends to facilitate the integration of migrants through language training and integration courses, with an orientation focus on the standards of the State, particularly around business and labour, and to communicate the social values and traditional customs of the country.

²⁰ Information and forms related to work permits, residency, citizenships and Caribbean Community Skilled Nationals Certificates will be available on the website of the Ministry of Labour, Public Service Reform, Social Partnership, Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development (which is under construction as of February 2024). Applicants will be able to apply and pay for these services electronically on the Government’s e-services portal. Visas will continue to be administered through the Ministry of National Security and Legal Affairs.

²¹ A Certificate of Identity is a temporary travel document given to non-Dominicans who have encountered problems with lost or stolen passports.

²² The Bureau of Gender Affairs aims to promote gender equity and equality and empower individuals to reach their full potential.

Migration data are collected and published on an ad hoc basis. The Immigration Division of the Ministry of National Security and Legal Affairs and DDA collect data on passenger arrivals and departures and share these with the Central Statistics Office on a monthly basis. The Office makes available the following information upon request: intended length of stay; number of cruise passengers; number of cruise ship calls; number of hotels, guest houses and apartments; place of stay; and purpose of the visit. Although there are mechanisms in place to monitor visa overstays and the duration of work permits, “there are no designated staff responsible for the storage and management of the data generated. ... [T]here is no clear indication as to how the Division collects and manages information associated with immigration and emigration” (IOM, 2021a).



3

ENGAGE WITH PARTNERS TO ADDRESS MIGRATION AND RELATED ISSUES

3.1. Migration governance: Examples of well-developed areas

Dominica is a member State of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) since 1981, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) since 1968, and the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States (GRULAC) since 1978.²³ These organizations have established arrangements for formal intraregional mobility. Additionally, the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) is a regional governance framework aimed at enhancing intraregional trade through the removal of tariffs and other barriers to trade through policy harmonization as a way to enhance and strengthen regional integration. Within this framework, free-movement rights can be exercised under three provisions: the movement of skilled persons and services and the right of establishment. The OECS was established to promote the integration of Eastern Caribbean island States in facilitating the development of a common financial and economic space, characterized by the free movement of capital, goods and people. GRULAC is a non-binding dialogue organization in which subjects concerning regional and international matters are discussed. It provides a forum for member States to exchange opinions on international issues, carry out follow-ups on the topics being discussed by international organizations, build common positions on complex issues and prepare statements reflecting the joint position of the Group.

Dominica actively participates in the Caribbean Migration Consultations,²⁴ which serves as a regional forum where good practices in migration governance are discussed and efforts are made to enhance policy consistency and coordination within the region.

The Government has two memorandums of understanding on migration: with the European Union on the short-stay visa waiver, which was signed in 2015;²⁵ and a bilateral agreement on readmission with France, signed in 2006 and which has been in force since 2007. The first memorandum allows for visa-free travel between the European Union and Dominica. This arrangement permits a maximum stay of 90 days within any 180-day period in the respective territories. The second memorandum establishes streamlined and effective procedures for the identification and safe and orderly return of persons who do not fulfil the conditions to enter or remain in the territory of France or Dominica. Moreover, in 2022, China and Dominica signed an agreement on mutual visa exemption.

Dominica is party to regional agreements promoting labour mobility, including between the CARICOM member States and the OECS. In July 2001, Dominica became a signatory to the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas, establishing the 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 Dominica without applying for a work or residence permit. Dominica's OECS membership enables its participation in the Eastern Caribbean Economic Union (ECEU), which aims to promote the free movement of people and goods among its member States. As a result, residents of Dominica are able to travel and work in any member countries under the same conditions as nationals.²⁶

²³ Visit the OECS website for a list of its [member States](#).

²⁴ According to IOM, CARICOM's Regional Consultative Mechanism on Migration is a non-binding forum that allows member countries to discuss topics related to migration in order to develop "consistent and coordinated regional efforts" to manage migration. The last meeting took place in 2020 as a webinar on IOM's suggested [Standard Operating Procedures for Front-line Border Officials at the Point of Entry in Response to COVID-19 Outbreak](#). More information regarding the CMC, including the countries that participate, can be found on the IOM website.

²⁵ As of February 2024, Dominican nationals need to apply for a visa to travel to the United Kingdom. Read this [article](#) from RIF Trust to know more.

²⁶ Members of the ECEU include Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

Formal bilateral labour agreements have been established between Dominica and other countries. In 2021, the Ministry of Public Health of Cuba and the Ministry of Health, Wellness and New Health Investment of Dominica signed a new cooperation agreement on medical expertise exchange through training, among others, provided to Dominica. Additionally, Dominica participates in the Canada–Caribbean Seasonal Agricultural Workers Programme, a labour scheme between Canada and member States of the OECS established in 1966 (amended in 2024).²⁷ The Programme allows citizens of OECS countries to work in Canada as seasonal workers in the agriculture sector. The implementation of this Programme includes the active involvement of national governments from sending countries. They collaborate in arranging the employment contracts and station government liaisons in Canada to ensure the well-being of and support for their nationals throughout the period of their working abroad.

Dominica engages members of the diaspora and expatriate communities in agenda-setting and the implementation of development policy. For example, during the development of the national Diaspora Policy (under review as of February 2024), diaspora members were consulted through webinars. Furthermore, the draft was presented during the 2022 Diaspora Dialogue, where consultations were held with local authorities, as well as members of the diaspora.²⁸ The purpose of these consultations was to address significant issues related to the topic and gather comments and observations from participants.

3.2. Areas with potential for further development

Formally engaging with civil society organizations (CSOs) in agenda-setting and the implementation of migration-related policies is an area with potential for development. Consultation processes on topics such as gender and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals have taken place at the national level. For example, the Government established a National Committee to support the preparation of the *Voluntary National Review of Dominica (2022)*, which included representatives from the public and private sectors, CSOs and United Nations agencies. Engagement with CSOs regarding specific migration issues could be further developed.

The Government engages with the private sector and social partners – including the Dominica Association of Industry and Commerce (DAIC), the Dominica Manufacturer’s Association (DMA), trade unions, and the Association of Banks and Financial Institutions – in agenda-setting and the implementation of migration-related policies, but only on an ad hoc basis. DAIC was established in 1973 and is considered a leading private-sector representative body in Dominica. For example, in 2020, it partnered with IOM and hosted the 2020 event Eggs and Issues Breakfast, an inclusive panel discussion focusing on migration and economic perspectives.²⁹ The Caribbean Manufacturers’ Association (CMA), established in 2020, aims to drive Caribbean integration through the processes of manufacturing, trade and investment. In 2023, DMA assumed chairpersonship of the CMA, with a key objective of developing labour schemes and facilitating population movements within the Caribbean region. Additionally, the Dominica Youth Business Trust – an initiative of the Commonwealth Youth Programme and the Government of Dominica, with support from the Organization of American States and the Caribbean Development Bank – focuses on a model by which young people are provided with the resources to establish sustainable businesses, including training programmes and mentorship.³⁰

²⁷ More information on the Programme is available on the Government of Canada website.

²⁸ More information regarding the 2022 Diaspora Dialogue is available in this article from *Dominica News Online*.

²⁹ The objectives of this event are as follows: to understand the make-up of the migrant population in Dominica, to discuss the effect of ongoing outward migration on Dominica’s development, to explore the contribution of inward migration to economic growth, to understand the challenges faced by migrants in Dominica and explore ways to sensitize the Dominican community for enhanced integration, and to explore communication mechanisms with migrants in emergency preparedness, response and recovery.

³⁰ IOM is a partner and funded grants as part of the effort to strengthen the support given to entrepreneurs, through the IOM Development Fund.



4

ADVANCE THE SOCIOECONOMIC WELL-BEING OF MIGRANTS AND SOCIETY

4.1. Migration governance: Examples of well-developed areas

The Government of Dominica has established formal criteria for the recognition of foreign qualifications through the National Accreditation Board (NAB). The NAB, established under Act No. 13 of 2006, serves as the primary body responsible for accrediting and recognizing post-secondary and tertiary educational and training institutions, programmes, and awards. The Act grants the NAB the authority to recognize qualifications obtained from institutions outside of Dominica. To initiate the recognition process for foreign qualifications, individuals are required to submit an application for a statement of recognition. This application must be completed by all applicants and includes personal data and details of the acquired qualification (such as the qualification earned, the institution name and the period of study). Additionally, in certain fields like medicine, law and engineering, specific criteria for the recognition of foreign qualifications are established by the respective professional associations.

As part of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Single Market and Economy (CSME), Dominica participates in the CARICOM Qualifications Framework. This framework serves as a standard reference tool for individuals, education and training providers, employers, and other stakeholders to compare various qualifications awarded at various levels in participating countries. Moreover, Dominica has also been involved in the Transnational Qualifications Framework for the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC) since 2006.³¹ This unified qualifications framework encompasses higher-education qualifications and post-secondary technical and vocational qualifications offered by nationally approved institutions in participating VUSSC countries. The VUSSC framework facilitates the classification of qualifications achieved across VUSSC member countries, based on predefined criteria for specified levels of learning. The objective is to enhance credit transfer and foster common accreditation mechanisms among the participating countries.

International students can pursue university education in Dominica, which is provided by private institutions. However, certain scholarships are exclusively available to nationals.³² In practice, students (both nationals and foreigners) who have undertaken primary and secondary education in Dominica have to pay only the administrative fees for tertiary education, but those who have studied abroad (including nationals) need to pay the tuition fees as well.

4.2. Areas with potential for further development

Dominica lacks a national mechanism for monitoring the labour market demand for immigrants, as well as the domestic labour supply and the effects of emigrants on the domestic labour market. As such, there is no defined programme for managing labour immigration into the country. In 2014, the International Labour Organization developed an assessment of a labour market strategy system in Dominica; however, it has not yet been implemented by the national Government as of February 2024.

³¹ The 33 member States of the VUSSC can be found on the Commonwealth of Learning website.

³² For instance, at St. Nicholas University, all students, regardless of nationality, are subject to fees. However, the 50 per cent tuition scholarship offered by the university is exclusively available to Dominican students. The American Canadian School of Medicine (set up in Dominica in 2023) also offers exclusive scholarships to Dominican nationals.

The Central Statistics Office (CSO) collects data on the labour market. However, it does not disaggregate the data by migration status and sex, nor does it publish said data regularly. The CSO's most recent publication on the employed and unemployed population by industry was in 2011 on its website. In addition, the CSO last conducted and published the Labour Force Survey in 1999.³³

The admission process in Dominica does not take into consideration the skills and capabilities of migrant workers. Nevertheless, the Caribbean Community Skilled Nationals Act (1995) aims to remove barriers for skilled individuals from qualifying CARICOM countries, such as university graduates, nurses, teachers, media personnel, sports personnel, artists and musicians who wish to enter Dominica. Additionally, the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas (2001) expanded the CSME space to encompass the free movement of skilled professionals.

There are no provisions in place to allow international students to work during the course of their study in Dominica. International students are required to apply for a student visa, which is valid for the duration of their course of study, at an embassy or consulate before entering the country. Student visas do not allow students to work. However, medical and veterinary students can undertake paid internships. In practice, students may nonetheless apply for a separate work permit.

There are no measures promoting the ethical recruitment of migrant workers or addressing migrant labour exploitation in Dominica. The Recruiting of Workers Act (1943, amended in 2017) states that in general, all workers must be presented before a magistrate, who shall confirm that the worker has not been subjected to pressure or recruited by misrepresentation or mistake (Section 5), while the Labour Standards Act (No. 2 of 1977, amended in 2017) provides for the fixing of wages (Section 8) and working hours (Section 10). However, neither of these Acts specifically mention migrants. The national Constitution (1978, amended in 2017) includes provisions to prohibit slavery, servitude, and forced labour and to protect persons from such violations, without specific references to migrants (Section 4).

Dominica is not actively involved in promoting the creation of formal remittance schemes. According to the 2022 *Voluntary National Review of Dominica*, migrants are a vulnerable group at risk of being left behind. It therefore reinforces the need to protect labour rights and promote a human security approach (in the economic, environmental and community spheres) for the development and social inclusion of migrants, but makes no specific reference to remittances. The national Diaspora Policy (2010) includes references to the relevance of remittances at the national level, but it does not call for the creation of formal remittance schemes. Furthermore, a 2 per cent stamp duty on outbound money transfers through money service businesses will also be imposed effective from February 2024 as per the budget address for fiscal year 2023/2024 (2023).

³³ These surveys provided statistical data on various aspects of the labour force, including the following: the estimated non-institutional population by age and sex; employed persons by level of education, participation rate and sex; distribution of employed persons by occupation for which they trained; distribution of employed persons by status in employment and sex; distribution of employed persons by occupation and sex; distribution of employed persons by industry and sex; distribution of employed persons by actual and usual hours worked per week and sex; distribution of employed persons working less than 32 hours per week; and distribution of multiple-job holders by main and secondary status in employment.



5

EFFECTIVELY ADDRESS THE MOBILITY DIMENSIONS OF CRISES

5.1. Migration governance: Examples of well-developed areas

The National Emergency Planning Organization (NEPO), established in 1987 under the Emergency Powers (Disaster) Act (No. 20 of 1987) and led by the Prime Minister, is responsible for disaster management, and its provisions apply to all residents of Dominica, including migrants.³⁴ At the community level, ad hoc measures are implemented to address the specific needs of migrants, ensuring access to shelters and food supplies. NEPO has established a National Advisory Committee, which meets regularly to develop and recommend policies, plans, and guidelines to strengthen preparedness, response and recovery measures in Dominica.³⁵ Additionally, the agency has set up the Office of Disaster Management (ODM), which takes proactive and timely action to prevent and reduce the impacts of disasters on the economy and the population.

The National Disaster Plan (NDP) formulated in 2001 serves as a guide for disaster management and preparedness at the national level, outlining various threats arising from natural and human-induced hazards that Dominica faces. Furthermore, the Plan mandates NEPO to establish, operate and maintain a National Emergency Operations Centre. As of February 2024, the NDP is being reviewed through consultations with different stakeholders, including IOM.

Dominica has established frameworks, including the Climate Resilience and Recovery Plan (CRRP) 2020–2030 (2020) and the national Resettlement Strategy (2015), with specific provisions for preventing and addressing the displacement impacts of disasters. The CRRP 2020–2030 aims to “translate Dominica’s vision of becoming the world’s first climate-resilient nation into specific activities that can be shared with key stakeholders” through climate-resilient systems, prudent disaster risk management systems, and effective disaster response and recovery. The Plan also seeks to enhance the nation’s housing system to withstand extreme weather and relocate families residing in physically vulnerable areas, although it makes no reference to migrants or other at-risk communities. Some policy documents in Dominica, such as the 2015 Dominica Resettlement Strategy, register a practical intent to relocate people or families in the context of disasters, guiding the process of resettling communities and families that cannot continue living in a given location. Additionally, Dominica has a contingency plan to manage large-scale population movements in the context of a volcanic eruption – the “Evacuation plan for area one, two and three: SOPs for national task forces” (2010) – aiming to provide for the safe and rapid transportation of residents across the country to designated shelters in a controlled manner.

The Government implements ad hoc measures to support its nationals residing abroad during times of crisis. For instance, during the COVID-19 pandemic, a database was established by the Ministry of Education, Human Resource Planning, Vocational Training and National Excellence (MEHRD) to monitor Dominican students living abroad. The students were contacted to ensure their well-being, and they were informed about the availability of assistance from consulates and embassies abroad if needed. In addition, MEHRD facilitated the repatriation of approximately 100 students who were residing in other countries back to Dominica. In the event of emergencies or when support is required, nationals can seek assistance from a

³⁴ NEPO members include representatives from both governmental and non-governmental organizations, as well as from private voluntary organizations, along with individual volunteers.

³⁵ More details about the NEPO Advisory Committee are available on the Office of Disaster Management website.

foreign country's embassy,³⁶ even if that country does not have an embassy of Dominica. Additionally, there are designated national focal points within Dominica that can be contacted by nationals living abroad in the event of emergencies or when there is need for support.

There are communications systems in place to receive information on the evolving nature of crises and how to access assistance. As soon as there is a warning of a disaster situation, information is instantly communicated to the population via radio, social media and other online resources. For instance, the meteorological service provides instant warning information and updates about a specific event every hour through online bulletins.³⁷ NEPO is activated whenever there is a risk of disaster at the national level, and as a result, its Central Command Office starts its response operation. Dominica has District and Community Emergency Committees and Operations Centres that are activated in the wake of a disaster to disseminate information and guidance. Community meetings are conducted, and information is often disseminated house-to-house. District and community centres disseminate information alongside the national dissemination networks. Moreover, IOM in collaboration with the Local Government Division developed the Emergency Shelter Management Manual (2019), which was translated in Spanish, as well as other communication materials that were translated in four languages (English, Spanish, Mandarin and Haitian Creole).

5.2. Areas with potential for further development

Dominica does not have a specific emergency management framework with measures to provide assistance to migrants before, during and after crises. The Emergency Powers (Disaster) Act (1987, amended in 2017)³⁸ aims to safeguard the welfare and safety of the community in cases of disasters and related matters, but it contains no migrant-specific provisions.

There is no comprehensive strategy in place to address migration linked to environmental degradation and climate change in Dominica. The CRRP 2020–2030 includes measures related to disaster risk management systems and effective disaster response and recovery, such as enhancing the resilience of the national housing system to extreme weather. However, the Plan does not make any specific reference to migrants. While the Third National Communication on Climate Change (2020) acknowledges the nexus between climate change, natural disaster and human mobility, it does not include concrete actions to address the distinct dimensions of human mobility in relation to environmental degradation, climate change and related natural disasters. Nonetheless, the *National Resilience Development Strategy: Dominica 2030* (2020) highlights that it is necessary to adopt gender-sensitive and age-inclusive disaster risk reduction policies and processes to prevent the emergence of new and increased risk, and to ensure the resilience of migrants, among other vulnerable groups.

The Local Government Division, operating under the Ministry of Culture, Youth, Sports and Community Development, collects data on disasters but does not publish them. These data include information about the affected individuals, such as their name, age and sex, as well as the number of deaths, injuries and missing persons. The Division utilizes templates provided by the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency for this purpose. However, the collection of data on the number of evacuated or displaced persons is not being implemented. ODM maintains an online catalogue that covers major events that have impacted Dominica, from 1975 to 2022.³⁹ However, the catalogue does not provide data on the number of individuals displaced or forced to relocate as a result of these events.

³⁶ Dominican embassies overseas provide a lifeline to Dominican citizens in foreign countries and assistance in the event that medical, financial and legal difficulties are encountered. Dominica has embassies in the following continents: Africa (Morocco), Americas (Cuba and the United States of America), Asia (China and the United Arab Emirates) and Europe (Belgium and the United Kingdom). Whereas the embassy in Belgium integrates the Eastern Caribbean States and its Mission to the European communities, the country also has a Permanent Mission Office to the United Nations in New York City, as well as a Permanent Mission Office to the Organization of American States in Washington, D.C.

³⁷ Visit the [weather bulletin's Facebook page](#) to know more.

³⁸ Any order made under this Act may provide for, among other things, the requisitioning and regulation of the supply and distribution of food, clothing, water, fuel, light and other basic necessities (Section 5(2)).

³⁹ The [online catalogue](#) can be found on the Office of Disaster Management website.

Dominica does not have a travel advisory service to provide citizens with regularly updated travel warnings and recommendations about safety and security conditions in destinations around the world. However, recommendations about safety and (health) security conditions were provided during the COVID-19 pandemic, and the Government kept up-to-date information on its official website, including the number of active cases, the establishment of sanitary protocols and vaccinations.

The establishment of specific provisions to make exceptions to the immigration procedures for migrants whose country of origin is experiencing a crisis is an area for further development. Population movements towards Dominica tend to happen within the context of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), which encompass free-movement regimes, facilitating the movement of individuals during disasters. However, for individuals from non-CARICOM or non-OECS countries, there are no formalized provisions in place to enable them to extend their stay in Dominica in situations of crisis.

Dominica has not yet developed a comprehensive migration policy to address the sustainable reintegration of migrants in the aftermath of a crisis.



6

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

6.1. Migration governance: Examples of well-developed areas

The Government is implementing specific strategies to combat human trafficking in Dominica. In May 2013, it ratified the 2000 Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons (Palermo Protocol). As a result, the Transnational Organized Crime (Prevention and Control) Act (No. 13 of 2013)⁴⁰ was adopted in 2013, giving effect to the Palermo Protocol. While the Constitution (1978) does not explicitly address human trafficking, it does include provisions in Chapter 1, Section 4, that prohibit holding individuals in slavery or servitude or forced labour. Additionally, the Sexual Offences Act (No. 1 of 1998, amended in 2017) addresses trafficking offenses involving minors. It stipulates severe penalties, including imprisonment for up to 25 years, for those who procure or induce minors to engage in sexual activities within Dominica or elsewhere. Furthermore, the visa application process in Dominica includes inquiries about engagement in illicit activities, such as export prostitution, human smuggling, or subversive or terrorist activities.

Dominica has a mixed paper-based and online system for applying for specific types of visas prior to arrival. The application for a work permit⁴¹ can be made by completing a form together with the submission of the following list of documents: a valid passport and two (recent) passport-size photographs; bank statement from bank or sponsor; employment letter (if employed) or proof of self-employment; invitation letter; marriage/birth certificate, where applicable; application fee payable to the Accountant General; and signature of the applicant(s) to be notarized or sworn to before a Commissioner of Oaths, whose full contact information must be provided. In addition, all relevant details must be provided in English. Information about how to apply for a visitor visa, with access to the Visa Application Form, is available on the national Government's web portal.⁴² All application forms for permanent residency, work permits, student visas and other visas are available on the websites of the Ministry of National Security and Legal Affairs⁴³ and the Ministry of Labour, Public Service Reform, Social Partnership, Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development.

6.2. Areas with potential for further development

There is no dedicated body specifically responsible for integrated border control and security in Dominica. Instead, border security officers, operating under the Immigration Division within the Ministry of National Security and Legal Affairs, handle the responsibilities associated with border control and security to ensure the implementation of effective border control measures. In addition, Dominica actively participates in the Regional Security System (RSS), which was established in 1982 to address threats to regional stability

⁴⁰ Under Part III, Section 8, the Act outlines that a person commits the offense of trafficking in persons when they, for the purpose of the exploitation of another person, organize or facilitate any of the following:

- (a) the entry or proposed entry of the other person into Dominica;
- (b) the exit or proposed exit of the other person from Dominica;
- (c) the receipt of the other person into Dominica by any of the following means:
 - (i) threats or use of force or other forms of coercion;
 - (ii) abduction;
 - (iii) deception or fraud;
 - (iv) the abuse of:
 - a. power;
 - b. a position of vulnerability;
 - (v) the giving or receiving of payments or of a benefit in order to obtain the consent of a person who has control over another person.

⁴¹ Visa applications are made through the Ministry of National Security and Legal Affairs. Applications for work permits, residence permits, citizenships and CARICOM National Skills Certificates are made through the Ministry of Labour, Public Service Reform, Social Partnership, Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development.

⁴² Visit the Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica's website to know more on [applying for a visitor's visa](#).

⁴³ Visit the Ministry of National Security and Legal Affairs' website for more information on the [Commonwealth of Dominica visa application](#).

in the Eastern Caribbean. The RSS serves as a platform for defence and security cooperation among participating countries. By engaging with the RSS, Dominica strengthens its efforts to enhance security measures and effectively respond to security challenges within the region.

There is no system in place to automatically monitor visa overstays in Dominica, as the existing border management system does not consistently capture such information. According to a 2019 IOM report, *Free Movement of Persons in the Caribbean: Economic and Security Dimensions*, national agencies and departments often lack access to data or information about visa overstays. Additionally, in cases where information on entries and exits was available, the data were often not stored in a way that was accessible or useful, as of February 2024.

Dominica's border staff receive general training, though not necessarily in migration and related topics. For example, in May 2018, the Caribbean Community Implementation Agency for Crime and Security (IMPACS), in collaboration with the Ministry of National Security and Legal Affairs, conducted a five-day training workshop for border security officers, including customs officers, which addressed actions with the potential to threaten national security, lessons about different systems and/or protocols that would enhance the country's ability to secure its borders, and measures to avert cross-border crimes.

There is no policy or strategy to ensure that migrant detention is used only as a measure of last resort in Dominica. The Immigration and Passport Act (1941, amended in 2017) allows for detention in various locations, including quarantine stations and places convenient under the circumstances, without strict limitations on its use as a last resort. Section 16(2) of the Immigration (Restrictions) Regulations (1942, amended in 2017) further specifies that a person can be detained for the necessary period for inquiries or until arrangements for removal are completed. The production of a removal order serves as authority for delivering the person to the designated escort for removal (Section 16(3)).

There is no evidence of a formal government programme or dedicated policy that focuses on attracting nationals who have migrated or facilitating the reintegration of returning nationals. Nonetheless, the Diaspora Policy (2010) made specific references to the topic: "The provision of fiscal incentives for returning nationals and the publication of the Returning Residents Information Manual." The Returning Residents Information Manual (2011), published by the Ministry of Employment, Trade, Industry and Diaspora Affairs,⁴⁴ contains information that could facilitate the resettlement of Dominicans living abroad into Dominican society, including information on tax concessions on household and personal effects, tools of trade, and vehicles; investment incentives; importing dogs and cats; importing plants; importing human remains; health care; and banking.

Dominica does not publish any information about its counter-trafficking activities, although IMPACS publishes information about its regional counter-trafficking activities on an annual basis.

The establishment of procedures to ensure the protection of migrant children, unaccompanied and separated children, children in need of international protection, and children without parental care as a result of mobility patterns is an area for development. Dominica passed several family-related bills in 2023 for the safety, protection, and security of all children, women and other vulnerable groups, including the Domestic Violence Act (No. 14 of 2023), the Children (Care and Adoption) Act (No. 12 of 2023), the Maintenance of Children Act (No. 11 of 2023) and the Status of Children Act (No. 10 of 2023), among others. However, these do not refer specifically to migrant, unaccompanied and/or separated children.

⁴⁴ This Ministry no longer exists in the current national administrative structure.

After the MGI assessment

IOM would like to thank the Government of Dominica for its engagement in this process. IOM hopes that the results of this assessment can feed into the Government's strengthening of its 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.



ANNEXES

Summary of recommendations as proposed by the Government during the national consultation on the Migration Governance Indicators (MGIs) process in Dominica (August 2023)

The national consultation on the MGI process in Roseau, Dominica, took place in August 2023 and involved around 25 representatives from the Ministry of National Security and Legal Affairs; the Ministry of Labour, Public Service Reform, Social Partnership, Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development; the Local Government Division of the Ministry of Culture, Youth, Sports and Community Development; the Ministry of Finance, Economic Development, Climate Resilience and Social Security; and the Central Statistics Office of Dominica. Participants assessed the priorities identified and reviewed the draft report, and they identified and shared good practices in migration governance in Dominica across the six domains. They also formulated the recommendations below to address gaps:

Recommendations

Strengthen interministerial coordination and partnerships

- Increase interministerial cooperation on migration issues to involve all representatives, including those dealing with gender, health and immigration, among others. Consider if existing working groups can be formed instead of setting up a new group and establish sub-working groups for different thematic areas.

Legislative and policy changes

- There is a need for an overall migration policy that addresses the gaps in the legislative framework.
- Consider a legislative and policy review to reflect the challenges of emerging migration issues, such as on nationality pre-independence. The Advisory Committee that deals with the revision of the laws could undertake this task.
- Consider legislative amendment to allow international students to obtain a work permit, as it is not clear whether they can hold two separate permits simultaneously.
- Review the Work in Nature Extended Stay Visa programme, which allows foreigners to work remotely in Dominica for up to 18 months, now that the COVID-19 pandemic is over.
- Following the International Labour Organization (ILO) assessment of a labour market strategy system in Dominica (2019), conduct an up-to-date labour market assessment to be implemented with the support of ILO.
- Ensure that migrants and their needs are specifically mentioned in policy documents and protocols on disaster risk reduction and management to ensure that they have access to emergency assistance, based on lessons learned during Hurricane Maria in 2017.

Capacity-building and training

- Organize training involving different ministries that work on cross-cutting migration issues. For example, the Immigration Division of the Ministry of National Security and Legal Affairs and the Ministry of Finance, Economic Development, Climate Resilience and Social Security, working on migrant children's regularization.
- While migrants are able to access health care, there is a need to ensure that language and cultural sensitivity training is provided to all health workers for the fair provision of services.

- Include training in migration data collection, analysis and management for statistical officers and relevant ministries, such as the Ministry of Labour, Public Service Reform, Social Partnership, Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development and the Immigration Division of the Ministry of National Security and Legal Affairs.
- Conduct training in counter-trafficking and awareness-raising campaigns for different stakeholders, including those concerned with social security.

Education

- Clarify the issue on tuition fees for Dominican students coming from abroad to access tertiary education and streamline the application process. While non-nationals pay the same tuition as nationals, it is not clear if students who have undertaken primary and secondary education in Dominica (both nationals and foreigners) have to pay only the administrative fees for tertiary education, but those who have studied abroad (including nationals) need to pay the tuition fees as well.

Migrant children/unaccompanied children protection

- Put in place standard operating procedures or a national referral mechanism for migrant/unaccompanied children. Also consider the issues of regularization and citizenship once they reach adulthood.
- Consider more collaboration between the Immigration Division of the Ministry of National Security and Legal Affairs and the Ministry of Finance, Economic Development, Climate Resilience and Social Security on this issue.
- Explore the possibility for specific bilateral agreements – for example, with Haiti.

Enhanced data collection and management and information-sharing

- Ensure consistent collection, analysis and sharing/coordination of migration data among various government stakeholders, especially the Ministry of Labour, Public Service Reform, Social Partnership, Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development and the Immigration Division of the Ministry of National Security and Legal Affairs, in collaboration with the Central Statistics Office.
- Build a data repository that can be managed by the Central Statistics Office and shared upon request.

Migration, environment, climate change and disaster response

- Include information on non-nationals present on the island State during response after disasters to better understand/attend to their specific needs.
- Develop an early warning system that also takes into consideration migrants' specific needs.

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 [Migration Data Portal](#) and the [IOM Publications Platform](#).



KEY SOURCES*

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

Caribbean Community (CARICOM)

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