

SAINT LUCIA | PROFILE 2024

MIGRATION
GOVERNANCE
INDICATORS



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GOVERNANCE
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This 2023 MGI assessment for Saint Lucia was conducted with the support of many public sector, private sector and non-governmental organizations, as well as institutions and individuals. We wholeheartedly acknowledge the invaluable contributions of all stakeholders, including government ministries, departments and agencies; civil society organizations; and other partners who actively participated in the MGI assessment and in the interministerial consultative engagements, which were integral to the development of this MGI report. The timely provision of data and other essential information by these key stakeholders and partners played a pivotal role in enabling its production.

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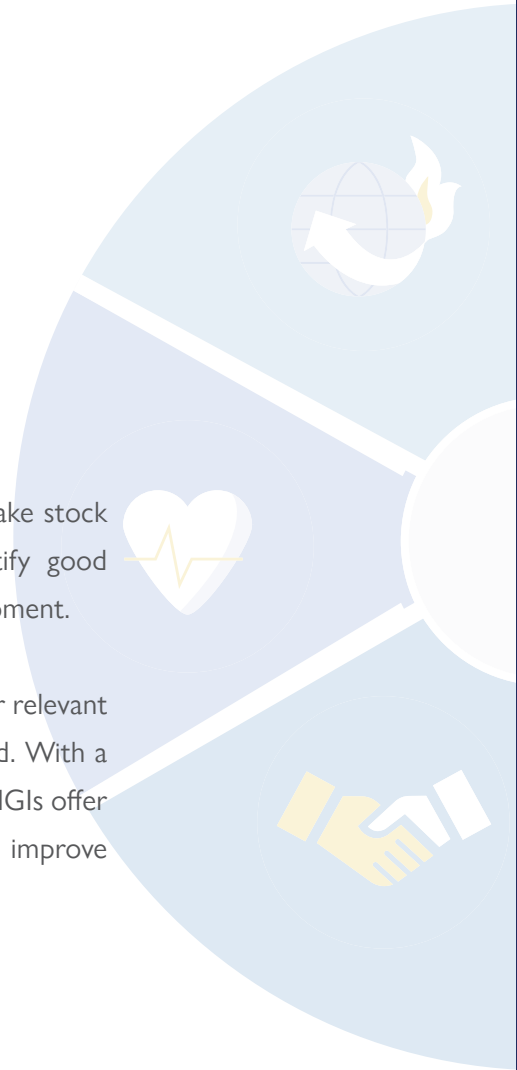
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OBJECTIVES

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 Saint Lucia, 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 23

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 25

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 can access Government-funded health services provided by the Ministry of Health, Wellness and Elderly Affairs and social protection provided by the National Insurance Corporation on the same basis as nationals. Regarding education, all migrants, regardless of their migration status, can access Government-funded primary and secondary education provided by the Ministry of Education, Sustainable Development, Innovation, Science, Technology and Vocational Training on the same basis as nationals, as per the Education Act (Chapter 18.01) (2005).

Only nationals holding a Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Skilled National Certificate⁵ and citizens of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) have equal access to employment as nationals. All other migrants must obtain a work permit, and there must be no citizen of Saint Lucia who is qualified and available to do the work for its issuance.

Whole-of-government approach

The Ministry of Public Service, Home Affairs, Labour and Gender Affairs, along with the Immigration Department that falls under it, is responsible for addressing immigration- and emigration-related issues at the national level, while the Diaspora Affairs Office under the Ministry of External Affairs, International Trade, Civil Aviation and Diaspora Affairs is responsible for engaging with the diaspora and providing assistance for their social, physical, moral and educational improvement.

The formulation of a migration strategy defined in a programmatic document and the establishment of a coordination mechanism to compile and harmonize migration data collected by different government agencies are areas with potential for further development.

Partnerships

Saint Lucia is a member State of OECS (1981) and CARICOM (1973), both of which have established mechanisms for formal intraregional mobility.

Members of the diaspora and expatriate communities are actively involved in agenda-setting and the implementation of development policy. However, engagement with civil society organizations and the private sector in agenda-setting and the implementation of migration-related issues is an area with potential for development.

Well-being of migrants

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

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 improvement.

⁵ Individuals eligible for the Certificate are university graduates, media workers, sportspersons, artists and musicians.

There are no specific measures that promote the ethical recruitment of migrant workers, nor any mechanisms to protect the rights of Saint Lucian nationals working abroad beyond the provision of consular services. Nonetheless, the Eastern Caribbean Liaison Service facilitates OECS migrant workers' (including Saint Lucians) access to employment opportunities under the Canada–Caribbean Seasonal Agricultural Workers Programme.

The country is not involved in promoting the creation of formal remittance schemes or in promoting the financial inclusion of migrants and their families.

Mobility dimension of crises

The national strategies on disaster risk reduction in Saint Lucia address the displacement impacts of disasters, as outlined in the Disaster Management Act (Chapter 14.06) (2006), the Hazard Mitigation Policy (2006) and the Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan (2006).

Communications systems provide real-time information on the evolving nature of crises through a smartphone app – CAP (Common Alerting Protocol) – and Facebook updates by the National Emergency Management Office.

The development of an emergency management framework with specific measures to provide assistance to migrants before, during and after crisis situations is an area with potential for further improvement.

Safe, orderly and regular migration

Saint Lucia has strategies in place to combat human trafficking. The Counter-Trafficking Act (Chapter 3.17) (2010) aims to prevent and combat trafficking in persons, with particular attention to women and children, while the National Task Force for the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons has provided resources to and worked with non-governmental organizations to design brochures distributed in post offices and airports.

There is no system in place to monitor visa overstays in Saint Lucia as the existing border management system captures only information related to the entry and exit of individuals from the national territory.

Areas with potential for further improvement include developing measures to ensure that migrant detention is used only as a measure of last resort and introducing measures to combat migrant labour exploitation.

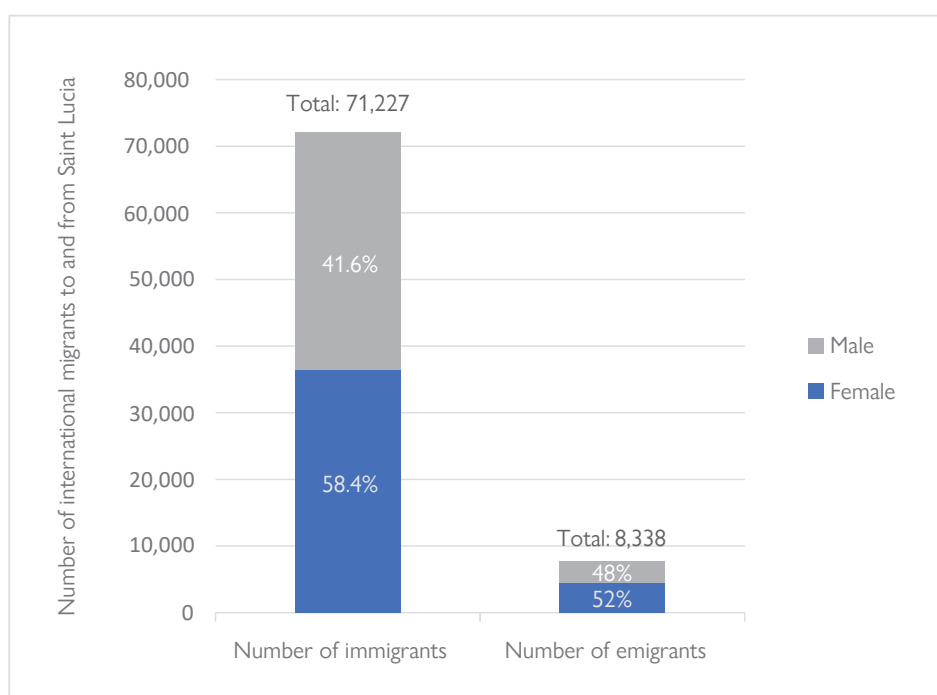


CONTEXT

Immigration to Saint Lucia has gradually decreased over the last two decades, after reaching its highest number in the year 2000 (9,871 people).⁶ United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) figures indicate that 8,300 international migrants were living in the country as of mid 2020, which represents 4.5 per cent of the country's total population (183,600). The distribution of immigrants by sex shows that 52 per cent are female and 48 per cent are male (see Figure 1). Contrary to its immigration data, Saint Lucia has experienced increasing emigration in recent decades, with numbers reaching 71,200 people in 2020, or 38.8 per cent of its total population, according to data estimates by DESA.⁷ Disaggregated data indicate that the share of female emigrants (58.4%) in 2020 is higher than the share of males (41.6%) (see Figure 1).

On the other hand, the difference in the share of migrants in the total population between 2000 and 2020 is -1.8 . In addition, data from the World Bank show that personal remittances received in Saint Lucia accounted for 2.6 per cent of its GDP in 2023.⁸ Finally, Figure 2 shows that the majority of immigrants in 2020 were 20 to 64 years old (63.8%), followed by people 19 years and younger, who made up 27.2 per cent of the total number of immigrants in the country.

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

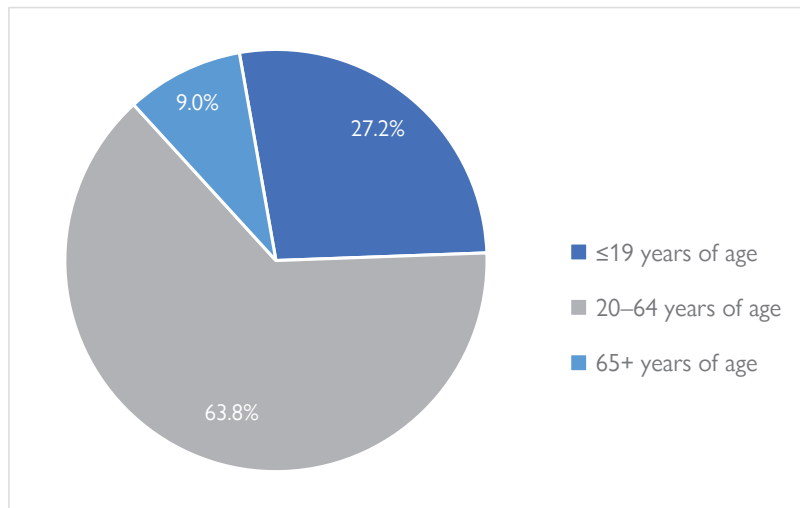


Source: DESA, [International Migrant Stock](#) (2020).

⁶ Visit the [Migration Data Portal](#) for more information.

⁷ See footnote 6.

⁸ See footnote 6.

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 (1980)
United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (also known as the Refugee Convention), 1951	No
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

All migrants have the same access to Government-funded health services as nationals in Saint Lucia. These health services are provided by the Ministry of Health, Wellness and Elderly Affairs. To receive health assistance, all individuals are required to present an identification document to register into the health information system upon the first encounter. Only primary health care can be accessed for free, while secondary and tertiary health-care services require a fee.⁹ However, emergency health-care services are accessible to all individuals, including migrants, regardless of their ability to pay. The National Social Protection Policy (2015, revised in 2022), developed by the Ministry of Social Transformation, Local Government and Community Empowerment, includes a special focus on the right to health, ensuring the inclusion of vulnerable people and guaranteeing available and affordable access to essential health services. While it does not specifically refer to migrants, they still have access to primary and secondary health care.

All migrants, regardless of their migratory status, can access Government-funded primary and secondary education provided by the Ministry of Education, Sustainable Development, Innovation, Science, Technology and Vocational Training on the same basis as nationals. Under the Education Act (Chapter 18.01) (2005), primary and secondary schooling is provided for free.¹⁰ The Act recognizes the right to education, explaining that “[s]ubject to available resources, all persons are entitled to receive an educational programme appropriate to their needs in accordance with this Act” (Section 14), and that school attendance is compulsory for all children aged 5 to 15 years (Section 27). It prohibits discrimination in admission to public education institutions on the basis of race and place of origin (Article 29).

⁹ This fee may be subsidized or covered by private insurance. It is important to note that the same fees apply to all individuals, regardless of their migration status or nationality. No patient can be denied access to health care based on their inability to afford the fees.

¹⁰ The Department of Education, Innovation and Gender Relations is the government entity with responsibility for the management and administration of the education sector in Saint Lucia.

Regular migrants in Saint Lucia have the same access as citizens to all forms of social protection provided by the National Insurance Corporation, the department responsible for social security benefits at the national level.¹¹ According to the National Insurance Corporation Act (Chapter 16.01) (2005), insured persons require a “domicile or residence in Saint Lucia” (Section 26(1)(d)). The 2015 Social Protection Policy of Saint Lucia provides social protection during disasters or pandemics by implementing an adaptive shock response and uses a rights-based approach to social protection. The Policy does not, however, have specific provisions addressing the unique needs of migrants.

Saint Lucia has agreements with Caribbean Community (CARICOM)¹² and Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS)¹³ countries regarding the portability of social security entitlements and benefits. The agreements allow individuals from these countries to transfer their entitlements and benefits when moving to Saint Lucia.¹⁴ The CARICOM Agreement on Social Security (1996) and the OECS Social Inclusion and Social Protection Strategic Framework for the period 2020–2024 (2020) aim to protect entitlements and provide equality of treatment for individuals moving within the respective regions. One of the strategic priorities of the OECS Framework is addressing the gap in short-term social security benefits between member States through the short-term social security portability measures. Furthermore, Saint Lucia has a specific agreement with Canada, established in 1987, which ensures the portability of social security entitlements. This agreement prohibits the reduction, modification, suspension, cancellation or confiscation of social security benefits for citizens residing in the respective countries, and it remains active as of March 2024.

Saint Lucia allows family reunification for permanent residents and citizens of CARICOM. The Immigration Act (Chapter 10.01) (1954, revised in 2018) entitles the dependants of permanent residents to enter and remain in Saint Lucia (Section 5(3)(b)). It considers as dependants the wives, children or stepchildren under the age of 16, adopted children under the age of 16, and other relatives who are wholly dependent on the resident for their subsistence. Under Section 6 of the CARICOM Skilled Nationals Act (Chapter 10.09) (1996), skilled nationals of CARICOM members may apply for an entry certificate, which is valid indefinitely. The entry certificate also applies to their spouse and dependent family members.

Foreign residents can accept public sector employment, including as civil servants and permanent staff, but excluding the positions of public authority. There are eligibility criteria for public service appointments, as per the 1983 Staff Orders for the Public Service of Saint Lucia, including being aged between 16 and 45 years, possessing educational qualifications as may be prescribed, being certified by a government medical practitioner as having sound health and mental fitness for employment, and producing two recent certificates of good character (Order 2.6).

Saint Lucia keeps records of nationals living abroad through a voluntary registry system. As of March 2024, a regulation for the establishment of a common database is being drafted to ensure that information about nationals living abroad, their skill level and their academic background is accurately recorded. Several national offices located abroad have implemented registration systems for Saint Lucian citizens.¹⁵

¹¹ Social protection covers sickness benefit, employment injury, maternity benefit, hospitalization benefit, funeral grant, death benefit, invalidity benefit, retirement grant, survivors benefit and disability pension.

¹² CARICOM is an intergovernmental organization of 20 countries and areas (15 members and 5 associated members) that have formed a community to shape policies for the region and encourage economic growth through trade.

¹³ OECS is a regional organization established with the aim of promoting the integration of Eastern Caribbean island States and areas.

¹⁴ CARICOM members include Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, and Montserrat. The five associated members are Anguilla, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, and the Turks and Caicos Islands. The OECS members include Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Montserrat.

¹⁵ Examples of national offices abroad having systems in place include Saint Lucia’s Consulate in New York, which developed a Register of Nationals in the Diaspora on its website to facilitate the timely and efficient sharing of information on relevant matters; and the Consulate General of Saint Lucia in Toronto, which has a section for the registration of Saint Lucian nationals on its website, as well as of students and businesses.

In addition, to foster social and economic engagement, the Saint Lucia Diaspora Affairs Office issued a public invitation in September 2022, urging all diaspora associates and family members residing abroad to connect through various social media platforms.¹⁶ This initiative aims to facilitate the exchange of relevant information, publications and notices regarding Saint Lucia's Government.

1.3. Areas with potential for further development

Tuition fees for tertiary education are higher for migrants who are not citizens of a member State of OECS¹⁷ than Saint Lucian nationals, as per the Education Act (Chapter 18.01) (Article 16).¹⁸

Foreign residents who possess a CARICOM Skilled National Certificate¹⁹ and citizens of OECS with freedom of movement and employment across member States are the only individuals able to access private sector employment under the same conditions as nationals. According to the Foreign Nationals and Commonwealth Citizens (Employment) Act (No. 5 of 1971) and the Labour Act (Chapter 16.04) (2021), all other migrants must obtain a work permit issued by the Work Permit Unit (Department of Labour) under the Ministry of Public Service, Home Affairs, Labour and Gender Affairs. As per requirements of the Ministry, in order to hire a migrant worker, there must be no citizen of Saint Lucia who is qualified and available to do the work. To demonstrate this to the Government, the employer must declare whether any person belonging to Saint Lucia has applied and explain the reason for their non-acceptance.

Temporary residents are entitled to apply for permanent residency, but conditions vary according to nationality. As per Section 8 of the Citizenship of Saint Lucia Act (Chapter 1.04) (1979), migrants are eligible for naturalization (and consequently permitted to reside in the country indefinitely) after living in the country for at least seven years. Other conditions include the applicant being of good character, having adequate knowledge of the English language and of the duties of a citizen of Saint Lucia, residing in the country for at least 12 months immediately prior to the application, and having intent to reside in Saint Lucia (Section 8). The Residency Guidelines from the Saint Lucia Department of Home Affairs states that nationals of CARICOM members are eligible for permanent residency after continuously living in Saint Lucia for at least five years.

Saint Lucian citizens living outside the country cannot vote in national elections in absentia. To vote, citizens must be registered to be on the Voters List and be present in Saint Lucia.²⁰ Pursuant to Section 7 of the Elections Act (Chapter 1.02) (1979), a person is eligible to vote if they are a citizen of Saint Lucia or a Commonwealth citizen who has resided continuously in Saint Lucia for not less than seven years immediately preceding the qualifying date, are at least 18 years of age and have resided continuously in their constituency for at least two months before the qualifying date.

Saint Lucia's Registry of Civil Status, under the Department of Justice, does not offer civil registration services to migrants without proof of legal identity. Under the Civil Status Act (Chapter 4.02) (1879, revised in 2005), only citizens and residents can apply for birth and death certificates through the Government's web-based platform digiGov.²¹ Birth certificates are automatically issued to all children born within national borders, even when migrant parents are not duly regularized and/or do not present adequate documentation.

¹⁶ Visit the website of the Consulate General of Saint Lucia in Toronto to read more on the [2022 invitation to connect with the Saint Lucia Diaspora Affairs Unit via their social media platforms](#).

¹⁷ The Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States is a regional organization established with the aim of promoting the integration of Eastern Caribbean island States and areas.

¹⁸ The Education Act (Chapter 18:01 of 2005) states that there are no tuition fees for national students enrolled in public schools.

¹⁹ Individuals eligible for the Certificate are university graduates, media workers, sportspersons, artists and musicians.

²⁰ Individuals are automatically placed on the Voters List when they turn 18.

²¹ Visit the [digiGov](#) platform to know more.



2

FORMULATE POLICY USING EVIDENCE AND WHOLE-OF-GOVERNMENT APPROACH

2.1. Migration governance: examples of well-developed areas

The Immigration Department is housed under the Ministry of Public Service, Home Affairs, Labour and Gender Affairs. The Ministry is responsible for addressing immigration- and emigration-related issues at the national level, including promoting sustainable and economic development through innovative solutions in work processes, the handling of vital records, providing services to families and promoting the rule of law without prejudice and compromise to the rights of individuals or society, as guaranteed under the Constitution of Saint Lucia (Chapter 1.01) (1978, revised in 2006).

Saint Lucia's Diaspora Affairs Office under the Ministry of External Affairs, International Trade, Civil Aviation and Diaspora Affairs is responsible for engaging with the diaspora and providing assistance for their economic, social, physical, moral and educational improvement. In 2019, the Office held a meeting on returning/returned diaspora to discuss the country's development, diaspora members' opportunities and skills, and relevant government achievements.²² Additionally, the Ministry organizes a quarterly virtual diaspora engagement to share updated information about the diaspora, explain priority areas for investments and sensitize the diaspora.²³ The Ministry also plans to launch the Diaspora Week event in December 2023, to offer multiple activities related to knowledge and skills transfer.²⁴

Saint Lucia's national Diaspora Policy (2014) defines the rights, privileges and obligations of Saint Lucian citizens in the diaspora, and it gives embassies and consulates abroad the responsibility for the dissemination of information about issues affecting Saint Lucians living abroad, collaboration with diaspora associations in the development and maintenance of a diaspora database/skills bank, and assisting Saint Lucians in the diaspora to participate in public policy discussions in their host country as these relate to policies affecting them and the developmental needs of Saint Lucia.

The Immigration Act (Chapter 10.01) (1954, revised in 2018) and its subsequent amendments govern all issues related to migration in Saint Lucia. The Act provides for distinct migration categories, stipulating who can enter the territory without prohibition and the respective purposes.²⁵ The free movement agreements developed under the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) and the Caribbean Community – the Revised Treaty of Basseterre establishing the OECS Economic Union (2016, revised in 2020) and the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas (2001), respectively – offer the basis for travel and entry and stay in the country for citizens from other Eastern Caribbean States.

The national Population and Housing Census, last conducted in 2020 by the Central Statistical Office, includes a section specifically dedicated to international migration. The 2010 questionnaire asked about household members who moved abroad within the intercensal period (2001 to 2011) and the main reasons for departure or return. In contrast, the 2020 census questionnaire focused on household members who have moved abroad since May 2010. It gathered information regarding the highest education level attained at the time of migration, gender, age, occupation and destination country. Additionally, Saint Lucia collected data on its emigrant population, disaggregated by education level and sex, as part of its 2020 Population and Housing Census; however, these data are not yet available online.

²² More information is available in this [2019 article on the Diaspora Affairs Office reaching out to returning nationals](#), from the website of the Government of Saint Lucia.

²³ As of March 2024, four meetings have been conducted, and each included around 175 attendees.

²⁴ Preparations for the Diaspora Week are currently under way as of March 2024, and they are included in the work programme of the Ministry of External Affairs, International Trade, Civil Aviation and Diaspora Affairs.

²⁵ Provisions on the topic include, among others, the enumeration of prohibited immigrants, the issue of passports, the list of prohibited immigrants, temporary permits detention, and exemptions.

2.2. Areas with potential for further development

The establishment of an interministerial coordination mechanism on migration issues is an area for further development. With the support of the Prime Minister, the Ministry of Public Service, Home Affairs, Labour and Gender Affairs has led the National Task Force for the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons, which was established based on the Counter-Trafficking Act (Chapter 3.17) (2010). According to the Act, the Task Force comprises representatives from the Ministry of Legal Affairs; the Ministry of External Affairs, International Trade, Civil Aviation and Diaspora Affairs; the Ministry of Public Service, Home Affairs, Labour and Gender Affairs; law enforcement agencies; and non-governmental organizations. The primary functions of the National Task Force are to prosecute and prevent human trafficking, as well as respond to the needs of trafficking survivors. Moreover, the Division of Gender Relations under the Ministry of Public Service, Home Affairs, Labour and Gender Affairs – the body responsible for promoting gender equality in the country – is also part of the National Task Force and addresses gender equality and diversity in migration-related issues on an ad hoc basis.

Saint Lucia does not have a migration strategy defined in a programmatic document or manifesto. The country's Medium Term Development Strategy 2020–2023 (2020), developed by the Ministry of Finance, Economic Development and the Youth Economy, seeks to optimize the interconnected nature of development planning by ensuring that economic, social and environmental considerations are incorporated and mainstreamed into Saint Lucia's national planning framework. It makes generic references to rural–urban migration (“with urban poverty increasing in prevalence on account of rural urban migration”), as well as to the migration of skilled and educated labour (“crime may lead to the loss of human capital via outward migration of a skilled and educated labour force”), without any specific measures related to the distinct dimensions of human mobility.

At the time of the research, there was no coordination mechanism to compile and harmonize migration data collected by different government agencies, although national agencies and departments usually share information as needed or when requested. Additionally, the Central Statistical Office receives data pertaining to border records (e.g. data on port of entry and exit, purpose of visit, and place and length of stay) from the Immigration Department on a regular basis.



3

ENGAGE WITH PARTNERS TO ADDRESS MIGRATION AND RELATED ISSUES

3.1. Migration governance: examples of well-developed areas

Saint Lucia engages members of the diaspora and expatriate communities in agenda-setting and the implementation of development policy. The national Diaspora Policy (2014) states that consulates and overseas missions must encourage the participation of overseas nationals in discussions in which developmental matters are being deliberated. Whenever there is a call for public contribution to a policy, the Ministry of External Affairs, International Trade, Civil Aviation and Diaspora Affairs reaches out to diaspora members. In 2023, a new communication channel was created under the Saint Lucia Tourism Authority, called Lucian Links, which is a comprehensive new diaspora membership programme that has been rolled out in Saint Lucia's various diaspora centres and aims to connect more people of Saint Lucian origin across the world.²⁶ For instance, members of the diaspora have been called on to contribute to the health policy that is being drafted in the country as of March 2024.

The Seasonal Agricultural Workers Programme, established in 1966, enables citizens of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) to work in Canada as seasonal workers in the agriculture sector. Furthermore, the J-1 exchange visitor visa of the Government of the United States of America is available to all Caribbean countries, allowing temporary workers with medium and high skill levels to access temporary employment in certain professions and programmes. In addition, the United States' H-2A and H-2B visas are available to nationals of Saint Lucia. The H-2A visa permits non-immigrants to work in the agricultural sector for a limited time, while the H-2B visa allows United States employers meeting certain requirements to temporarily hire foreign nationals for non-agricultural jobs.²⁷

Saint Lucia is party to two commercial multilateral agreements with clauses that contain provisions for temporary movement with labour purposes. The agreement between the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the Government of Costa Rica (2005) permits the temporary entry of persons, including intracompany transfers, business visitors and those providing aftersales services directly related to the export of goods. It also allows spouses and children of visitors to enter. The Economic Partnership Agreement between the Caribbean Forum (CARIFORUM) States²⁸ and the European Union member States (2008)²⁹ allows for the temporary entry of contractual services suppliers, independent professionals, business services sellers, intracorporate transferees and visitors for business purposes.

Saint Lucia is party to two regional agreements promoting labour mobility – CARICOM and OECS. In July 2001, Saint Lucia became a signatory to the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas, establishing the CARICOM Single Market and Economy, 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 Saint Lucia without applying for a work or residence permit. Saint Lucia's OECS membership, since the organization's founding in 1981, enables it to participate in the Eastern Caribbean Economic Union, which aims to promote the free movement of people and goods among its members.³⁰ As a result, residents of Saint Lucia are able to travel and work in any member country under the same conditions as nationals.

²⁶ Read more on [Lucian Links](#) on the website of the Saint Lucia Tourism Authority.

²⁷ More information about H-2A and H-2B visas can be found on the website of the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services.

²⁸ The CARIFORUM comprises the 15 Caribbean Community members in addition to the Dominican Republic.

²⁹ The [Economic Partnership Agreement](#) was signed in 2008 between CARIFORUM and European Union countries.

³⁰ Members include Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Montserrat.

The Government actively participates in the Caribbean Migration Consultations (CMC),³¹ established in 2016. The CMC serves as a non-binding forum that enables member countries to openly discuss migration topics in order to develop consistent and coordinated regional efforts for the effective management of migration; coordinate and promote information exchange between member States, with an emphasis on sharing good practices related to migration governance; and develop policies with a rights-based approach aimed at effective comprehensive migration governance in the region.

Saint Lucia has memorandums of understanding (MoUs) related to migration with various countries. The MoU between Saint Lucia and the United States (1994) relating to the right of establishment within Saint Lucian territory aims to facilitate temporary protection under the auspices of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. In 2006, Saint Lucia signed a bilateral readmission agreement with France to manage migratory flows between the two countries, including facilitating readmission and exchanges between the countries' authorities. Saint Lucia's MoU with Cuba, last renewed in 2022, relates to the Cuban medical programme and allows Cuban doctors to work in Saint Lucia.³² Additionally, in 2018, Saint Lucia and Cuba signed an MoU to allow Saint Lucians to travel to Cuba for educational purposes as part of the Yes I Can programme, aimed at promoting literacy.³³

3.2. Areas with potential for further development

Formally engaging civil society organizations (CSOs) in agenda-setting or the implementation of migration-related policies is an area with potential for further development. Although ad hoc consultation processes have taken place at the national level, the absence of migrant associations, combined with a lack of capacity, hinders the formal involvement of CSOs in such matters. Nonetheless, CSOs participate in task force meetings on counter-trafficking on an as-needed basis.

The Government engages with the private sector on an ad hoc basis with regard to migration-related issues. For instance, the Government engages in discussions on issues related to adaptation to climate change with Saint Lucia's business membership organizations, including the Saint Lucia Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture; the Saint Lucia Hospitality and Tourism Association; the Saint Lucia Industrial and Small Business Association; the Saint Lucia Employers' Federation; the Saint Lucia Coalition of Service Industries; and the Saint Lucia Manufacturers' Association.³⁴

³¹ The CMC comprises 17 members: Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba, the Bahamas, Belize, the Cayman Islands, Cuba, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Montserrat, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Martin, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, and the Turks and Caicos.

³² More information about this relation can be found in this [2019 article on Cuba and Saint Lucia celebrating 40 years of friendship](#), from *The Voice*.

³³ More information about this relation can be found in this [2018 article on Saint Lucia receiving Cuban cooperation in education](#), from the website of Cuba's Representative Office Abroad.

³⁴ The Caribbean Manufacturers' Association (CMA) – comprising Barbados, Dominica, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, and Trinidad and Tobago – was established in 2020. It aims to drive Caribbean integration through manufacturing, trade and investment. CMA has built strong strategic relationships with several regional and international organizations, but its mandate does not address migration-related issues. See: Government of Saint Lucia, 2020a.



4

ADVANCE THE SOCIOECONOMIC WELL-BEING OF MIGRANTS AND SOCIETY

4.1. Migration governance: examples of well-developed areas

Saint Lucia has the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Skilled Nationals Act (Chapter 10.09) (1996), which eliminates entry restrictions for skilled nationals from qualifying CARICOM members and holding a CARICOM Skilled National Certificate.³⁵

The Ministry of Education, Sustainable Development, Innovation, Science, Technology and Vocational Training has formalized criteria for recognizing foreign qualifications through its Department of Education, Innovation, Science, Technology and Vocational Training. The Department's Human Resource Development Division is responsible for managing national and regional assessments and examinations for students' academic accreditation and school placement. The verification process entails a thorough and in-depth examination of academic and professional certificates presented to the Division. Such examination ensures that the awarding body/institution of the certificates is registered or accredited. This process takes a minimum of three working days and a maximum of five working days.³⁶

As part of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (1973), Saint Lucia participates in the CARICOM Qualifications Framework. The Framework serves as a standardized reference tool for individuals, education and training providers, employers, and other stakeholders. It allows them to compare qualifications awarded at various levels in participating countries. The CARICOM *Human Resource Development 2030 Strategy – Unlocking Caribbean Human Potential* (2017) refers to developing and implementing a seamless Human Resource Development system “to facilitate ease of access at all levels, to multiple pathways to personal achievement and employment opportunities”. Additionally, Saint Lucia is involved in the Transnational Qualifications Framework for the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC).³⁷ This unified qualifications framework covers higher education 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 main objective is to enhance credit transfer and foster common accreditation mechanisms among the participating countries.

There are general provisions dealing with discrimination in the workplace that apply equally to citizens and migrants in the country. The Constitution of Saint Lucia (Chapter 1.01) (1978, revised in 2006) lists prohibited grounds for discrimination, including sex, race, place of origin, political opinions, colour or creed (Article 13(3)). The Labour Act (Chapter 16.04) (2021) provides for equal remuneration, stipulating that employers and persons acting on behalf of employers shall pay equal remuneration to men and women

³⁵ Under Article 8, the qualification requirements are “(i) a degree of the University of the West Indies or of the University of Guyana designated as a Bachelor’s, Master’s or Doctor’s degree; (ii) a degree of Doctorandus, Meester, Licentiatu or Doctor of the University of Suriname; (iii) any University degree which is by common repute at least comparable in academic standing with a qualification in sections (1)(a) and (1)(b); (iv) any qualification or combination of qualifications certified by the Secretary General; (v) any qualification or combination of qualifications in a list compiled by any authority designated by the Minister as an accrediting authority and prescribed by the Minister by order as a list of qualifications and combinations of qualifications satisfying the qualification requirements of the Act; (vi) a qualification or combination of qualifications possessed by an applicant under section 6 which is certified by an authority, designated by the Minister by order as an accrediting authority, as satisfying the conditions for recognition of Caribbean Community skills qualification, whether or not any such qualification or combination of qualifications is listed under section 8(1)(e); or (vii) any qualification or combination of qualifications prescribed under section 15(1)”.

³⁶ Visit the [Human Resource Development web page](#) of the Department of Education, Innovation, Science, Technology and Vocational Training to know more.

³⁷ Countries participating in the Transnational Qualifications Framework for VUSSC include Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Botswana, Brunei Darussalam, Cyprus, Dominica, Eswatini, Fiji, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Kiribati, Lesotho, Maldives, Malta, Mauritius, Namibia, Papua New Guinea, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.

performing work of equal value (Section 270). It also states that any act of sexual harassment against an employee committed by an employer, managerial employee or co-employee constitutes unlawful discrimination based on sex (Section 272).

4.2. Areas with potential for further development

There is no national assessment in place for monitoring the labour market demand for immigrants and the domestic labour supply, along with the effects of emigrants on the domestic labour market in Saint Lucia. The Central Statistical Office provides labour force statistics obtained through the Labour Force Survey, conducted quarterly and covering the period from 2011 to 2022.³⁸ These statistics include data on the employed and unemployed population, categorized by age, sex, sector, occupation and demographic status, as well as on the labour participation rate. However, none of these statistics are disaggregated by nationality or migration status. As regards women migrant workers, the only information available is obtained through the Department of Labour and pertains to work permits issued by industry occupation and sex up to 2017. The information is shared upon request and not published.

Developing measures to promote the ethical recruitment of migrant workers in Saint Lucia is an area with potential for further improvement. Part VI of the 2006 Labour Act (Chapter 16.04), which regulates work relations, addresses the recruitment of employees for overseas employment and work permits. The Code states that a person shall not perform the functions of an employment agent unless they are the holder of an employment agent's licence issued by the Labour Commissioner and comply with said licence (Section 305(1)), and it presents restrictions on the recruitment of children and young persons, stating that “[a] person shall not recruit a person aged [16] years or under for employment to be performed outside of Saint Lucia”, except with the written consent of their parent or guardian (Section 304). However, the Labour Act makes no reference to the recruitment of migrant workers. Additionally, since 2021, Saint Lucia has implemented the Live It programme, which permits migrants to stay in the country with the option of working remotely. This programme is designed for digital nomads and grants them a 12-month, multiple-entry visa and permission to work remotely.³⁹

The development of specific mechanisms to protect the rights of Saint Lucian nationals working abroad beyond the provision of consular services, such as the granting of a personal document and an initial legal orientation, is an area for improvement. The national Diaspora Policy (2014), when listing the role of embassies and consulates, states that “[f]ull and uniform protection should be ensured to all Saint Lucian citizens throughout the Diaspora. While it may not be feasible to have national or regional embassies and consulates throughout the world, mechanisms to ensure such protection should be addressed.” Nonetheless, the Eastern Caribbean Liaison Service (ECLS) facilitates the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States' migrant workers' (including Saint Lucians) access to employment opportunities under the Canada–Caribbean Seasonal Agricultural Workers Programme. The ECLS harmonizes guidelines for ministries of labour to administer the programme, including the review of employment contracts and working conditions before the signing of these contracts.

Establishing formal remittance programmes and promoting the financial inclusion of migrants and their families are areas with potential for further development. The Diaspora Policy recognizes the significance of remittances and their impact on the economy. It acknowledges the necessity to explore options for remittance flows but lacks any specific measures to actively promote the creation of remittance schemes.

³⁸ More information about the latest [Labour Force Survey](#) can be found on the website of the Central Statistical Office of Saint Lucia.

³⁹ Visit the website of the [Saint Lucia Tourism Authority](#) to know more. It is important to note that as of March 2024, the Live It programme is suspended because of restrictions in the existing legislation on immigration.

In Saint Lucia, international students are granted access to university education, but they are required to pay fees that are higher than those of nationals.⁴⁰ Furthermore, international students are ineligible for the scholarships provided by the Ministry of Education, Sustainable Development, Innovation, Science, Technology and Vocational Training. It is important to note that there is only one national institution in Saint Lucia, the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College, and all other institutions are offshore campuses.

⁴⁰ The tuition fees are different according to three categories of students: (a) nationals and citizens from Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States countries, (b) citizens from Caribbean Community member States and (c) international students.



5

EFFECTIVELY ADDRESS THE MOBILITY DIMENSIONS OF CRISES

5.1. Migration governance: examples of well-developed areas

In the aftermath of a disaster, Saint Lucia does not discriminate in the provision of assistance, which is provided to all residents, including migrants. Under the Disaster Management Act (Chapter 14.06) (2006), the National Emergency Management Office (NEMO) is established as the body responsible for notifying the public of hazards and emergencies, as well as facilitating assistance during disaster and emergency situations in the country. The National Emergency Management Advisory Committee is tasked with creating additional district committees to support NEMO in fulfilling its objectives and functions (Parts I, II, III and IV of the Disaster Management Act).⁴¹ The Emergency Powers (Disasters) Act (Chapter 14.07) (1995) outlines the hierarchy of responsibilities and actions to be taken following the proclamation of an emergency. The Hazard Mitigation Policy (2006) and the Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan (2006) guide the efforts of the national Government in planning and implementing measures to reduce the impacts of and vulnerability to disasters in Saint Lucia. The Emergency Shelter Policy for Saint Lucia (2001) identifies the contextual circumstances that warrant the establishment and subsequent provision of emergency shelters within the national emergency management system. Finally, the Emergency Housing Management Policies and Guidelines for Saint Lucia (2006) focuses on the establishment of a mechanism to provide emergency housing assistance for households displaced in the context of disasters.⁴² As of March 2024, there are discussions to update the Emergency Housing Management Policies and Guidelines through a programme called the Distress Fund. This fund is a part of the yearly national budget for non-declared emergency situations and is accessible to migrants, though they are not explicitly mentioned.⁴³

National strategies on disaster risk reduction in place address the impacts of displacement caused by disasters. The Disaster Management Act acknowledges human mobility by defining “evacuation” to include displacement and planned relocation. Its goal is to relocate and evacuate individuals at risk or affected by disaster to safer areas. The Hazard Mitigation Policy and the Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan outline measures to reduce impacts and vulnerability to disasters in Saint Lucia, but they refer to “displacement” only with regard to the impact of flood hazards on the displacement of people and the destruction of property. Additionally, the Plan reiterates the need and commitment to relocate human settlements from vulnerable areas and to enforce codes and ensure standard infrastructure as critical measures to address hazard impact. The goal of the Emergency Shelter Policy is to, inter alia, extend adequate and prompt support in the form of temporary shelters to persons who have been rendered homeless or displaced by disaster. These measures are also accessible to migrants.

Human mobility considerations are incorporated into the environmental and climate change policies of the country. In the *Third National Communication on Climate Change for Saint Lucia* (2017), the country identifies adaptation options for coastal zones that encompass providing economic resources, technical knowledge and land for individuals who may have been displaced. Additionally, *Saint Lucia’s National Adaptation Plan (NAP): 2018–2028* (2018) explicitly acknowledges the effect of loss and damage on the displacement and migration of communities. It raises concerns about the potential for an increase in rural–urban migration due to climate change impacts. However, despite the concerns expressed, the national Government states clearly in the NAP that it does not recognize migration as an acceptable form of adaptation strategy.

⁴¹ The members of the [Committee](#) include the Permanent Secretaries, the National Chairs, the Director General of the Saint Lucia Red Cross, the Chief Engineer, the Director of Information Services, the General Manager of the Saint Lucia Air and Sea Ports Authority, the Chief Medical Officer, the Chief Fire Officer, the Chief of Ports Police, the Chief of Police, the Head of the Special Services Unit, and other political parties.

⁴² The Hazard Mitigation Policy, the Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan, the Emergency Shelter Policy, and the Emergency Housing Management Policies and Guidelines for Saint Lucia were drafted by the National Emergency Management Office, with the support of the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency.

⁴³ More information about the fund can be found in this [2023 article on Saint Lucia securing USD 1 million from Taiwan for the Distress Fund](#), from Loop News.

In times of crisis, assistance is provided on an ad hoc basis to nationals living abroad. For instance, during the COVID-19 pandemic, measures were implemented to aid Saint Lucian nationals abroad, including organizing their safe repatriation in March 2020. Additionally, consulates maintain voluntary registers of nationals in the diaspora to facilitate the timely and efficient sharing of information, particularly during crisis situations.

There are communications systems in place to receive information on the evolving nature of crises and how to access assistance. In 2017, NEMO released a smartphone application, CAP,⁴⁴ which provides up-to-date information on the evolving nature of crisis at the national level. The Office also publishes information about emerging crisis situations on its social media page and has a mechanism to send warning messages in English via smartphones. Instant information is sent from NEMO to national radio stations and TV channels to raise awareness and inform the population about an impending disaster. However, information on how to access assistance is limited to evacuation routes and available shelters.

5.2. Areas with potential for further development

The development of the country's emergency management framework, including specific measures to assist migrants before, during and after crisis situations, is an area with potential for further improvement. Also, established communications systems during crises do not take into consideration the specific vulnerabilities faced by migrants.

The Government collects data on impacts of disasters on an irregular basis, but these do not cover displacement and are published only on request. NEMO uses two templates (the Local Situation Report – Initial (LSR-I) and the Local Situation Report – Complementary Assessment (LSR-CA) forms) to collect such data. The LSR-I form enables the collection of data disaggregated by age and disability, and it accounts for the initial number of deaths, injured people and evacuated people. The LSR-CA form incorporates data disaggregated by age, sex and disability, and it includes the number of deaths, injured people and missing people. The information gathered through the LSR-I form is available to the public, while that from the LSR-CA form is available only to government agencies and departments.

Exceptions to immigration procedures for migrants whose country of origin is experiencing a crisis are made only on an ad hoc basis. For instance, in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria in 2017, as part of the general Caribbean Community members' response, entry requirements were suspended for Dominicans without identification documents, while Haitians were exempt from visa requirements following the 2010 earthquake. According to a 2021 IOM report, *Migration, Environment, Disaster and Climate Change Data in the Eastern Caribbean – Regional Overview*, the free-movement arrangements of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) were instrumental in providing the legal basis to the right of entry of OECS citizens affected by the 2017 hurricanes.

The Medium Term Development Strategy 2020–2023 (2020) does not contain measures regarding displacement. It seeks to enhance the interconnected nature of development planning by ensuring that economic, social and environmental considerations are incorporated and mainstreamed into Saint Lucia's national planning framework. It makes general references to rural–urban migration, as well as migration of the skilled and educated labour force, without any specific measures related to the distinct dimensions of human mobility.

Recovery strategies in Saint Lucia do not address migration-related issues, but they provide for other dimensions of human mobility, such as displacement. Under the Disaster Management Act, evacuation encapsulates the resettlement of “persons and their belongings from a specific well defined endangered

⁴⁴ The smartphone application CAP was developed in 2017 under the United Nations Development Programme's [Early Warning Systems](#) project, and it stands for Common Alerting Protocol.

area, under the threat or impact of a hazard, disaster or emergency, to another safer place”. The Hazard Mitigation Policy and the Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan set objectives and activities to advance the disaster risk reduction agenda; however, they refer to displacement only once and do not mention migration. The Emergency Housing Management Policies and Guidelines supports the goals outlined in the Emergency Shelter Policy and focuses on the establishment of a mechanism to provide emergency housing assistance for households displaced in the context of disasters.



6

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

6.1. Migration governance: examples of well-developed areas

The web portal of the Government of Saint Lucia and the website of the Ministry of External Affairs, International Trade, Civil Aviation and Diaspora Affairs provide information on how to apply for a non-immigrant visa.⁴⁵ Both platforms offer details about the process, requirements and fees. The web portal of the Government also provides general information about business and tourist visas. For individuals interested in the Citizenship by Investment programme, relevant information about entry and stay options in Saint Lucia is available on the Ministry's website. All the provided information is available only in English.

The Saint Lucia International Association (SLIA) addresses the needs of returnees in the country. The website of the Consulate General of Saint Lucia in New York mentions a North and South Group of Returned Nationals, which primarily aims to support returning nationals who are members of SLIA. The Consulate's website provides general information to returning nationals, assisting them with their return and reintegration process.⁴⁶ Additionally, in 2019, the Government received technical assistance from the Africa, Caribbean and the Pacific–European Union (ACP-EU) Migration Action in support of involuntary returning migrants.⁴⁷ As part of this assistance, a draft national policy as well as a draft plan of action were presented to the Department of Home Affairs and National Security to aid involuntary returning migrants bound for Saint Lucia.⁴⁸ Additionally, a case management database focusing on the readmission and reintegration of these returnees was also developed. The Diaspora Policy (2014) further emphasizes the importance of supporting returning nationals, highlighting the need to review and strengthen national initiatives that facilitate the reintegration process.

There is a comprehensive strategy to combat human trafficking, primarily governed by the Counter-Trafficking Act (Chapter 3:17) (2010). The primary objective of this Act is to prevent and combat trafficking in persons, with particular attention to women and children.⁴⁹ It regulates the enforcement of punishment for criminal offences and the misuse of commercial transportation, the management of related provisions such as assistance and protection of victims of trafficking, and the prevention of trafficking in persons. Under the guidance of the Prime Minister, the Ministry of Public Service, Home Affairs, Labour and Gender Affairs leads the National Task Force for the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons. This Task Force was established in 2019 in accordance with the Counter-Trafficking Act and includes representatives from various government ministries, such as the Ministry of Legal Affairs; the Ministry of External Affairs, International Trade, Civil Aviation and Diaspora Affairs; as well as non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Their collaborative efforts have resulted in the development of informative brochures distributed in post offices and airports. Moreover, the Task Force organized an online meeting in June 2021 for the public sector to discuss strategies to combat child sex trafficking. They have also actively promoted the Saint Lucia National Human Trafficking Hotline to provide support to victims and survivors of trafficking.

⁴⁵ Visit the [web portal of the Government of Saint Lucia](#) and the website of the [Ministry of External Affairs, International Trade, Civil Aviation and Diaspora Affairs](#). In addition, various websites of consulates and embassies abroad also provide visa information, including those in France, Taiwan Province of the People's Republic of China, and Brussels and three in the United States (Washington, D.C., Miami and New York City).

⁴⁶ Information on the [website of the Consulate](#) includes the [Returning Nationals Information Booklet](#) (2014), the updated quarantine policy and support plan for returning nationals in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic (2020), the [returning national declaration](#) and the [returning nationals customs and excise information](#).

⁴⁷ The [ACP-EU Migration Action](#) funded by the European Union provides technical assistance to the African, Caribbean and Pacific groups of States. The programme, which was implemented by IOM, provided assistance on five thematic areas of migration: remittances, visas, readmission, trafficking in human beings and the smuggling of migrants.

⁴⁸ The draft national policy and draft plan of action are still in draft form at the time of this assessment.

⁴⁹ The Act seeks to protect women and children through protecting and assisting victims of trafficking, taking into account their human rights; facilitating the efficient investigation of cases of trafficking in persons; enabling the effective punishment of individuals and organizations involved in trafficking in persons; and promoting cooperation between Saint Lucia and other States in order to prevent and suppress trafficking in persons and punish offenders (Article 4).

In 2017, the Government, with support from IOM, developed a standard operating procedure to guide stakeholders in identifying and protecting any potential or confirmed victim of trafficking in Saint Lucia. At the regional level, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Implementation Agency for Crime and Security was established in 2006 to address the trafficking of humans for sexual or labour exploitation. CARICOM has also taken steps to create and engage with a regional network of NGOs to establish an Observatory on Human Trafficking and Smuggling in the Region. This initiative aims to provide aid to victims and support policy and strategy development in the fight against human trafficking.

The Government has an official website dedicated to its counter-trafficking efforts, called Anti-trafficking Saint Lucia.⁵⁰ This website provides valuable information about the governmental agencies and other stakeholders involved in counter-trafficking activities at the national level, detailing their actions, and the relevant policies and legislation. The website mentions the Ministry of Public Service, Home Affairs, Labour and Gender Affairs' intensive training, workshops and seminars, which play a significant role in counter-trafficking efforts. The training initiatives, which are supported by IOM and its Development Fund, aim to provide front-line officials with critical information to better identify, refer and protect victims of trafficking. The website also aims to deliver an operational database to manage and process trafficking cases, as well as a full-scale national campaign to raise awareness about trafficking in persons. Furthermore, it facilitates access to the National Hotline, which provides tips about potential situations involving all forms of sex and labour trafficking and promotes the reporting to specialized human trafficking task forces, federal authorities, local law enforcement and service providers throughout the country.

Saint Lucia has formal cooperation agreements with France (2004)⁵¹ and the United States⁵² to prevent and counter the smuggling of migrants. Saint Lucia cooperates with France on security-related issues through a bilateral agreement to enhance border control and joint patrol, which includes combating smuggling. The Franco–Saint Lucian Joint Security Committee was established in 2004 to address shared issues related to maritime security, extraditions, human and drug trafficking, natural disasters, risk management and the promotion of judicial cooperation.⁵³ Saint Lucia also has a cooperation agreement with the United States that funds activities related to fighting human trafficking in addition to participation in the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI).⁵⁴ Additionally, as a member of the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, Saint Lucia has worked towards the reduction of illicit trafficking in the Caribbean.⁵⁵ Finally, CARICOM, of which Saint Lucia is a member State, has a focus on disrupting trafficking networks through enhanced international cooperation, strengthened intelligence gathering and sharing, and placing emphasis on raising awareness of human trafficking.

6.2. Areas with potential for further development

There is currently no system to monitor visa overstays in Saint Lucia. The country's existing border management system, which is operated by the Immigration Department, captures only information related to individuals' entry into and exit from the national territory, without monitoring visa overstays in a consistent manner.

⁵⁰ Visit the [Anti-trafficking Saint Lucia website](#) to know more.

⁵¹ More information is available in this [2019 article on the Franco–Saint Lucia joint security committee session](#), from the Government of Saint Lucia website.

⁵² Read more on the [United States Department of State's page on Saint Lucia](#).

⁵³ The [Committee](#) includes the Minister of Home Affairs, Justice and National Security and the Ambassador of France.

⁵⁴ The CBSI, launched in 2010, is a United States security cooperation partnership with 13 Caribbean countries: Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Dominica, the Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago.

⁵⁵ As a member of the [Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs](#), Saint Lucia has committed to "counter and reduce narcotics trafficking, the trafficking of small arms and light weapons, and the trafficking in persons; make criminal organizations that carry out these acts of illicit trafficking and fuel the criminal violence disrupting our societies the focus of our joint efforts; and take steps to counter and reduce money laundering in order to effectively combat trafficking organizations". Member countries include Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay, and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

There is no dedicated body responsible for integrated border control and security in Saint Lucia. Instead, border control functions are carried out by the Immigration Department, regulated by the Immigration Act (Chapter 10.01) (1954, revised in 2018), in collaboration with the Customs and Excise Department under the Ministry of Finance, Economic Development and the Youth Economy, which in turn is regulated by the Customs (Control and Management) Act (Chapter 15.05) (1990). However, collaboration between these departments takes place only on an ad hoc basis. Despite the lack of a dedicated body, Saint Lucia participates in the Regional Security System, a regional arrangement established in 1982 to enhance the defence and security of the Eastern Caribbean region. Saint Lucia, along with Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Saint Kitts and Nevis, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, signed the Treaty Establishing the Regional Security System (1996), which aims to provide for mutual assistance on request with regard to the prevention of smuggling, search and rescue, immigration control, fisheries protection, customs and excise control, maritime policing duties, protection of offshore installations, pollution control and natural disasters.

There is no policy or strategy in place to ensure that migrant detention is used only as a measure of last resort. The Immigration Act (Chapter 10.01) addresses the detention of migrants in Section 20, which allows immigration officers to arrest prohibited immigrants and present them before a District Court Magistrate, who may decide to detain them in custody.

Saint Lucia has general measures in place to combat labour exploitation, which apply to migrants but are not specific to them. The national Constitution (Chapter 1.01) (1978, revised in 2006) states that no person shall be held in slavery or servitude or required to perform forced labour (Section 4). Saint Lucia's 2021 Labour Act (Chapter 16.04) calls for the prohibition of forced labour (Section 6), child labour (Section 122), and discrimination and sexual harassment in the workplace (Section 272). However, neither the Constitution nor the Code makes specific reference to migrants.

The establishment of formal cooperation agreements with other countries to trace and identify missing migrants is an area for further development. The Royal Saint Lucia Police Force under the Ministry of Public Service, Home Affairs, Labour and Gender Affairs is tasked with ensuring safety and security and is in charge of locating missing persons within the national territory.



ANNEXES

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 100 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](#).

After the MGI assessment

IOM would like to thank the Government of Saint Lucia 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).



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



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



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

Summary of the recommendations as proposed by the Government during the national consultation on the Migration Governance Indicators (MGI) process in Saint Lucia (28–29 August 2023)

The national consultation on the MGI process in Castries, Saint Lucia, took place on 28–29 August 2023 and involved around 25 representatives from the Saint Lucian Government. The participants assessed the priorities identified and reviewed the draft report, and identified and shared good practices in migration governance in the country across the six domains. They also formulated the recommendations below to address the gaps.

Recommendations

Strengthen interministerial coordination and partnerships

- (a) Establish a formal coordination mechanism on migration issues that would also foster partnerships with different stakeholders, such as civil society and private sector representatives.
- (b) Create more synergies between different governmental entities before adopting migration-related policies. For example, reevaluate the Live It programme together with all concerned entities to ensure that the modalities are in place for the implementation, or make necessary changes in the legislation to allow its implementation.
- (c) Strengthen regional cooperation to exchange best practices and align national legislation with regional frameworks.
- (d) Proactively seek targeted memorandums of understanding and bilateral labour agreements with countries of interest.

Legislative and policy changes

- (a) Consider the ratification of treaties and conventions, such as the following:
 - (i) International Labour Organization (ILO) Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143)
 - (ii) International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (ICRMW), 1990
 - (iii) Four key ILO gender equality conventions: Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100); Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111); Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156); and Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183)
 - (iv) The Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption (1993)
 - (v) International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1965)
- (b) Reconsider the voting regulations to allow diaspora members the possibility of accessing voting rights.
- (c) Consider revising the Immigration Act (Chapter 10.01) (1954, revised in 2018) to accommodate proposed programmes or policy changes, such as the length of stay for certain visa categories in the case of the Live It programme.
- (d) Update the Emergency Housing Management Policies and Guidelines for Saint Lucia (2006) to also include migrants.
- (e) Develop a social integration strategy for migrants to combat hate crimes, discrimination and xenophobia.

Build capacities and knowledge

- (a) Strengthen existing immigration regulations so that they are streamlined with other migration-related regulations in place, such as concerning education.
- (b) Continue strengthening collaboration between members of the National Task Force for the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons.
- (c) Establish a community of practice and increase regular training opportunities in counter trafficking, gender sensitivity, victim identification and prosecution for the law enforcement agencies involved.
- (d) Revise the Counter-Trafficking Act (2010) and develop an action plan on counter-trafficking to ensure the non-prosecution of survivors of human trafficking, witness protection for all (including migrants) and adequate penalties for related offences.
- (e) Regularly collect, report and publish data on counter-trafficking activities.
- (f) Ensure regular data collection, analysis and publication through data-sharing among different agencies, especially with the Central Statistical Office, that collect migration data.
- (g) Continue collecting displacement data, disaggregated by migratory status, to be able to respond to the specific needs of migrants during crises.

Migrants' rights

- (a) Although migrants have access to health care de facto, review legislation and policies to specifically include and detail migrants' access to these services, to ensure that they are not discriminated against. For example, review the Primary Health Care Operations Manual.
- (b) Ensure migrants have access to social security regardless of the availability of formal identification documents. For example, consider the practices implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic to overcome the barrier of requiring legal migratory status.
- (c) Mainstream gender in existing migration-related policies and include migrants in them.
- (d) Explore alternatives to migrant detention in respect of human rights.

Develop long-term strategies

- (a) Continue to develop measures for the protection of all Saint Lucian migrant workers abroad beyond the services offered by the Eastern Caribbean Liaison Service.
- (b) Develop a social integration strategy for migrants (to combat discrimination).
- (c) Update the national Diaspora Policy (2014).
- (d) Conduct a diaspora mapping to establish a centralized diaspora database.



KEY

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

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