

Support for Saint Lucia to Implement the Gender-Responsive National Strategy for the Development of the Four Priority Services Sub-Sectors



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Market Pointer – Exporting “ICT” Services to the United Kingdom

Demand

The bulk of world ICT imports in 2019 were into the United States (\$43.7Bn.) followed by Germany (\$41.7Bn.); China (\$26.8Bn.); France (\$22.8Bn.); Japan (\$19.9Bn.); and the Netherlands (\$18.8Bn.). In terms of regional economic groupings, the EU28 accounted for \$183.5Bn.; and CARICOM accounted for \$235Mn.

United Kingdom ICT import demand decreased slightly in 2019 relative to 2018, from \$14.3Bn. in 2018 to \$13.3Bn. in 2019, or by -7.0%. When compared to the previous year (2017) there was a slight growth with 2017 reflecting imports of \$14.1Bn. The United Kingdom is a large market for imports of ICT services, and this portends good opportunity for Saint Lucian ICT service providers.

European Union member states have significant import demand for ICT services, however the main issue that may constrain Saint Lucian ICT suppliers in this market is language barriers. Germany was the world's second largest market for ICT imports in 2019 at \$41.9Bn. reflecting a growth of 2.7% relative to imports of \$40.8Bn. in 2018. France was the second largest EU market in 2019 with \$22.8Bn. representing a modest decline (-0.9%) over its 2018 level of \$23.0Bn. The Netherlands recorded \$18.8Bn. in 2019 reflecting a growth of 2.2% in relative to imports of \$18.4Bn. in 2018.

Market entry requirements

Saint Lucian passport holders do not require a visa for travel to United Kingdom if the purpose is for short stay visit or vacation without working in the UK. The route open to Saint Lucian doctors to work in the UK is to apply for a Tier 2 Visa. In addition, they need a job offer, certificate of sponsorship from an employer in the UK to apply for a Tier 2 visa. After getting the Tier 2 visa they can practice as a doctor in the UK.¹

However, prior to applying for the visa they need to get a registration and license in the UK. There are three types of registration: Full registration, Limited registration, and Specialist registration. Full registration is for those who want to take a job as a doctor who gets paid and is unsupervised in the UK. Limited registration is for those looking to work within the NHS at supervised training posts. They must ensure that their primary medical qualification is recognized by the GMC. Specialist registration is for those who are looking to work as a consultant for the NHS or who want to practice unsupervised in a private hospital or a clinic in the UK.²

Also, the government has announced a new fast-track visa scheme to give certain science, mathematics, and research-based talent easier access to the UK, the UK's new Global Talent scheme.³ This can cover certain activities of management consultants, engineering and architectural work.

Global Talent, which begun on 20 February 2020, aims to make it easier for skilled talent to enter the UK by removing the cap on the number of people who can enter the country to work via the exceptional talent route. It is a reformed version of the Tier 1 (Exceptional Talent) route for skilled applicants applying to work in the UK without a job offer. The Global Talent route will also waive the "absences" rules for researchers and their dependents if they are needed for work on other projects overseas, and will speed up the path to settlement for researchers and scientists who are endorsed via this route.⁴

Future trends

In the UK, looking at the biggest revenue generators, consumer spending on internet access will bring in the most revenue rising from £13Bn this year to £16bn by 2022. In 2018, for the first time, consumers spent more on mobile internet access than fixed broadband access. PwC now expects smartphone ownership in the UK to hit more than 70 million and, as a result, mobile internet access is forecast to account for more than half of overall internet access revenue in four years' time.⁵

PwC said advertising revenue will account for a quarter of total E&M revenue by 2022, with digital spend continuing to dominate growth. Internet advertising spend will grow from £10.5Bn in 2018 to £14.3Bn by 2022. Further, data consumption in the UK will grow by 22 per cent year-on-year till 2022 and PwC expects the UK's internet access revenue to overtake France in 2021 to become the biggest market in Western Europe. The report also found that The UK's virtual reality sector remains the fastest growing E&M segment with 34 per cent CAGR forecast over the next four years. With more than 7.8m

¹ <https://www.visaandmigration.com/blog/guide-to-uk-immigration-for-doctors/>

² <https://www.visaandmigration.com/blog/guide-to-uk-immigration-for-doctors/>

³ <https://www.computerweekly.com/news/252477801/Government-announces-fast-track-visa-scheme-for-scientists-and-researchers>

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ www.insider.co.uk

VR headsets forecast to be cumulatively sold in the UK by 2022, PwC expects the virtual reality industry will be worth £1.2Bn.