

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 “Professional” Services to Latin America & Europe

Demand

In Latin America there are similar opportunities to those in the US and Canada, but with less price advantage and less anchorage in diaspora community. Business-links between Saint Lucia and Latin America are generally increasing, which provides opportunities for professionals to project themselves via their local clients. However, language (Spanish, Portuguese-speaking clients) will continue to act as a barrier in the short term in some areas (e.g. law and management consulting), but less in others (e.g. accounting and photography). In addition, Spanish language capabilities in Saint Lucia have significantly improved in recent years, as Spanish is taught in school and young professionals are increasingly exposed directly to Spanish-speaking environments in partner countries such as Cuba, Mexico, and Venezuela.

Market entry requirements

The requirements for other European countries are similar as for the UK, but in some ways more stringent for Saint Lucians. As an example, to work in Germany a medical doctor will need the EU Blue Card. It is a prestigious work permit with various benefits compared to the normal work permit, including making the path to a permanent resident permit faster and easier. However, there are various

conditions attached, for example the applicant needs a concrete job offer with a minimum salary of €38,688 per year, and the medical degree must be recognized in Germany. In addition, the applicant needs a medical license, the 'Approbation' is the medical license issued by the German state that permits doctors to work in their profession. It is valid across Germany and lasts a lifetime.¹

However, there are various requirements attached to getting it. First, foreign doctors need to have a concrete job offer before applying. They also need medical German at C1 level (for normal, everyday German, B2 is sufficient). Second, any qualifications gained abroad must be deemed equivalent to comparable German qualifications. Especially for medical diplomas issued in non-European countries, evaluation of academic qualification can take a long time. With a definite job offer, the applicant can start by applying for a 'Berufserlaubnis' (temporary medical license), which allows them to work in Germany while their eligibility for the 'Approbation' is being checked by the authorities.²

Third, there is a requirement to speak and understand German. In Germany, the relationship between doctor and patient is based on trust and respect, and medical diagnoses will need to be communicated in a comprehensible and sensitive way. Also, since medical professions are regulated in Germany, the applicant needs to prove that they have at least B2-level general German. In many federal states they will need C1-level medical German as well. Finally, to get the 'Approbation', the applicant may need to pass an exam called the Fachsprachenprüfung. Some language schools offer courses to prepare for this special exam, which tests oral and written German medical knowledge.³

France recently introduced a special visa for entrepreneurs, engineers, and investors. The French Tech Visa – a new program for foreign tech talent that will make it easier for foreign professionals and their family to get a four-year visa to France.⁴ It targets great designers, engineers, entrepreneurs or a VCs, that are foreigners who require a French Visa. They can apply for a French Tech Visa and get a fast-track processing for themselves and their family.

¹ <https://www.howtogermany.com/pages/international-doctors.html>

² <https://www.howtogermany.com/pages/international-doctors.html>

³ Ibid.

⁴ <https://www.schengenvisainfo.com/news/france-creates-special-visa-entrepreneurs-engineers-investors/>