

## 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 the United Kingdom

### Demand

The ITC data for United Kingdom is available until 2019 for professional and management consulting services. United Kingdom imported \$28.4Bn. USD in professional and management consulting services in 2019, significantly more than the 2018 value of \$25.6Bn. USD, or a growth of 10.9%. Moreover, that growth trend has been strong even in the previous period (2017 to 2018) during which imports increased from \$18.7Bn. in 2017 to \$25.6Bn. in 2018 or by 36.9%. therefore, there is a strong demand trend for professional services in the United Kingdom that portends significant opportunity for Saint Lucian professional services providers.

EU member states are also strong markets for exports of professional and management consulting services. However, the major obstacle that will be faced by Saint Lucian services exporters is the language barrier for Germany, Spain, France & the Netherlands. In Germany, the market grew 3.9% from \$33.5Bn. in 2018 to \$34.8Bn. in 2019; in Spain the market grew 9.4% from \$6.4Bn. in 2018 to \$7.0Bn. in 2019; in France the market declined -7.0% from \$25.6Bn. in 2018 to \$23.8Bn. in 2019; and in the Netherlands the market declined -1.2% from \$40.4Bn. in 2018 to \$39.9Bn. in 2019.

In the *United Kingdom* there are good opportunities. The United Kingdom has aggressively sought to align its domestic services sector with international projects and support consortia building to ensure a high rate of contract award. Opportunities – and hence potentially demand – are generally enhanced through the commitments undertaken by the UK side in the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA). In particular, Article 83 of the EPA offers facilitated market access inter alia for some professional services providers under “Mode 4” when providing their services into the UK as contractual service providers or independent professionals (i.e. as natural persons travelling to the UK to provide the services). Under the EPA market access was granted for professionals without reservations as follows: accounting and bookkeeping – 13 states; architectural services - 12 states; engineering – 12 states; and management consulting – 14 states. But it should be noted that in some EU Member States there are “minimum wage” regulations in the traditional professions. This can reduce the prospects for Saint Lucian professionals in some countries. The best option may be to associate with European firms to execute projects in third countries.

### 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.<sup>1</sup>

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.<sup>2</sup>

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.<sup>3</sup> 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.<sup>4</sup>

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

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

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

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.