

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 CARICOM

Demand

With regards to the import demand in CARICOM for “professional and management consulting services” reliable data are available up to 2018. These data show a somewhat declining trend in the overall import demand, even though it is quite significant for supplying the market by Saint Lucia professionals.

There are opportunities for professional and management consulting services from Saint Lucia within the rest of CARICOM, with largely the same caveats and opportunities as in Saint Lucia. The Economic Union of the OECS is providing better opportunities for movement of persons and recognition of qualifications for work. Among the subsectors identified in the Services Incentives Act there are opportunities for provision of the following services via *Mode 1*: Accounting; Management Consulting; Architecture; Engineering; and Printing & Publishing. Via *Mode 2*, all the preceding services can be exported, plus Photography; Veterinary; Medical and Dental services. With regards to *Mode 3*, Saint Lucians can deliver all the identified services with ease, as there are no restrictions on establishing a commercial presence in the other CARICOM countries. The same applies for *Mode 4* delivery.

Market entry requirements

Visa requirements have been eliminated for all Caribbean Community nationals travelling to other Member States. Non-Community spouses and dependents of Community nationals, as well as nationals of Haiti, would require visas where applicable.¹

Persons who qualify to exercise their right to “free movement” under the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas are permitted entry into Trinidad and Tobago. Such persons are not required to have a Work Permit but must be able to present a valid travel document, a Police Certificate of Good Character and meet other entry requirements, as detailed below, at the port of entry.²

The Revised Treaty establishes the right of university graduates, media workers, sports persons, artistes, and musicians to carry on economic activities in any part of the CSME. It also provides for the movement of these individuals into, and within, jurisdictions without restrictions or the imposition of impediments.³

Skilled CARICOM nationals holding Skills Certificates issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Trinidad & Tobago, are permitted entry for an indefinite duration. Persons in possession of Certificates issued by any other CARICOM State are allowed entry for a period of six (6) months, during which time they should apply for a Certificate issued in Trinidad and Tobago. Pursuant to the Revised Treaty, persons in possession of Skilled Certificates are not required to obtain Work Permits. In addition to the Skills Certificate, skilled CARICOM nationals are also required to present completed medical forms to the Immigration Officer.⁴

Like all skilled nationals, university graduates, media workers, sports persons, artistes, and musicians, must obtain a Certificate of Recognition from the appropriate administering authority of the receiving Member State. Upon initial entry to that Member State, they are to be granted a reasonable period in which to apply for certification, typically six (6) months.⁵

4 Future trends

The import demand for professional services continues to increase in every major market. Saint Lucians with professional skills will become the most sought-after class of potential immigrants to key developed country markets. Also, with opportunities under trade agreements like the CSME and the CARIFORUM-EU EPA it would be relatively easy to render professional services either through Modes 1 & 4 or through outright immigration to the destination market.

¹ Trinidad & Tobago Immigration Manual Volume 1: Guidelines on policies and procedures for Immigration Officers, Ministry of National Security, Immigration Division (2008) p.96

² Ibid. p.96

³ Ibid. p.97

⁴ Ibid. p.97

⁵ Ibid. p.97