Migration, Integration, and Diaspora Engagement in the Caribbean

A Policy Review

Valerie Lacarte
Jordi Amaral
Diego Chaves-González
Ana María Sáiz
Jeremy Harris

MPI
MIGRATION POLICY INSTITUTE

IDB

Migration, Integration, and Diaspora Engagement in the Caribbean

A Policy Review

Valerie Lacarte
Jordi Amaral
Diego Chaves-González
Ana María Sáiz
Jeremy Harris

March 2023

MPI
MIGRATION POLICY INSTITUTE

IDB

Contents

Foreword

International mobility has always been a feature of life in the Caribbean, but intraregional migration has increased noticeably in recent years. Mobility agreements have reshaped the pathways for international movement, while crises, sometimes tied to natural disasters and climate change, have created further incentives for movement across borders. Some Caribbean countries are also receiving significant arrivals of migrants from other parts of the world, and many have sizeable diasporas in other regions, notably North America and Europe.

To provide governments, stakeholders, and external partners interested in strengthening the region's capacity to accommodate changing patterns of migration, the Inter-American Development Bank and the Migration Policy Institute have partnered to produce this report, which provides a policy review on migration in the Caribbean.

Since the creation of its Migration Unit, the IDB has provided countries of Latin America and the Caribbean with knowledge, technical cooperation, and support to achieve the integration of the migrant population as a driver for the social and economic development of host communities.

MPI is an independent research organization that provides data, analysis, and policy ideas for managing migration across the world, including a particular commitment to Latin America and the Caribbean.

This document provides those interested in the Caribbean with a general overview of the region's migratory trends, institutional frameworks, and the challenges and opportunities that new migration flows present for its development and regional integration.

FELIPE MUÑOZ GÓMEZ
Chief of the Migration Unit at IDB

ANDREW SEELE
President of MPI

Executive Summary

Migration has long been part of the fabric of Caribbean nations. But while Caribbean migration is often discussed in the context of out-migration to the United States, Canada, and European countries, movement to and within the Caribbean is an equally important part of this story. In recent decades, due in great part to climate change, natural disasters, and shifts in global mobility patterns, the migration landscape in the Caribbean has also changed significantly. There were an estimated 859,400 intraregional and 745,700 extraregional immigrants living Caribbean countries in 2020. And the intraregional share of immigrants has grown over the years, increasing from 46 percent in 2000 to 56 percent in 2020.

While Caribbean migration is often discussed in the context of out-migration to the United States, Canada, and European countries, movement to and within the Caribbean is an equally important part of this story.

The intraregional share and origins of immigrants vary across countries. In the nine primary countries studied in this report—The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, the Dominican Republic, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago—immigrants from other Caribbean nations made up 63 percent of all immigrants in 2020. Intraregional migration was most common in countries such as the Dominican Republic, Barbados, and The Bahamas, and Haitians were by far the largest group of immigrants across these study countries, followed by Guyanese immigrants. In some countries, there are notable populations of immigrants from outside the region, with Venezuelans representing the second largest immigrant population across the nine countries of study and present in particularly large numbers in the Dominican Republic, Trinidad and Tobago, and Guyana. Immigrants from the United States, the United Kingdom, China, and Canada were also present in many of these nine countries.

Similar to patterns of migration worldwide, migrants within the Caribbean tend to originate in countries with lower standards of living and fewer opportunities and move to more advanced economies with more employment opportunities. As such, countries and territories with thriving tourism industries and higher incomes, such as The Bahamas, the British and U.S. Virgin Islands, the Turks and Caicos Islands, and Saint Kitts and Nevis, tend to attract nationals from Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Guyana, and Jamaica. Moreover, a smaller number of high-skilled workers from countries such as Jamaica, Cuba, and Trinidad and Tobago tend to migrate to countries where they will have greater employment opportunities and receive higher incomes.

Climate change and natural disasters have been important drivers of internal, intraregional, and extraregional displacement in the Caribbean, and experts have expressed concerns that the frequency and impact of climate-related events are only likely to grow in the years to come. In recent decades, the region has experienced several devastating hurricanes, which are likely the most impactful type of natural disaster in the region. For example, between 2017 and 2019, Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, Maria, Matthew, and Dorian wreaked havoc and caused the displacement of millions of Caribbean nationals, mostly Haitians, Dominicans, and Bahamians. Since 2000, the region has also experienced earthquakes, tropical storms, floods and drought, and—more rarely—volcanic eruptions, all of which have forced people to leave their homes. These disasters are among the contributing factors to the increased migration of Caribbean nationals, particularly Haitians, to both South and North America.

Regional agreements and other forms of cooperation have also emerged as prominent features of mobility in the region. The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), established in 1973 and 1981, respectively, have each created important pathways for intraregional migration. For instance, enhanced mobility and integration has taken place under CARICOM's Caribbean Single Market and Economy (CSME) and the OECS' Eastern Caribbean Economic Union (ECEU). Nationals of CSME Member States benefit from six-month stays without a visa in other Community countries. While these six-month stays do not come with work authorization, the CSME also includes a Skills Certificates regime that provides free mobility and work authorization for specific categories of workers. Regional commitments and coordination through the 2018 Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration and the Caribbean Migration Consultations, established in 2016 and launched in 2019, have also facilitated cooperation and exchange on issues ranging from migration governance to natural disasters. And finally, the region's public university system, the University of the West Indies, has facilitated migration for educational purposes, mainly within the anglophone Caribbean.

The region's unique free mobility regimes have to some extent been helpful for facilitating the movement of displaced people and response workers during times of environmental crisis. Yet a closer look at the Caribbean's migratory systems indicates that, in most of the countries of study, these migratory regimes are out of date, and this limits societies' capacity to manage migration and successfully integrate new immigrants. For example, there is a notable lack of institutions and regulatory frameworks for asylum and refugee protection throughout the region. Caribbean countries have instead tended to adopt an ad hoc approach in response to massive movements of people, as exemplified by the temporary measures and regularization plans put in place for Haitians after the 2010 earthquake, nationals of Dominica following Hurricane Maria in 2017, and Venezuelans fleeing political and economic upheaval in more recent years. In addition, the existence of mechanisms for regular migration and free mobility within the Caribbean—while valuable—has not prevented irregular migration from countries outside of the region. In recognition of this fact, Belize, Curaçao, the Dominican Republic, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago have all enacted special regularization measures to convey status to certain groups of irregular migrants living within their borders.

In Caribbean countries—as in countries around the world—equitable rights and access to basic services constitute important steps toward the integration and well-being of immigrants and the vitality of the broader communities in which they live. Yet, universal access to primary and secondary education and to basic health care is far from guaranteed in practice, even when it is granted by laws or policies. Social cohesion is another important aspect of immigrant integration, and one requiring an inclusive approach that accounts for receiving communities' needs and perceptions of migrants. Data on discrimination and xenophobia in the region are scarce, but some studies conducted in the past decade have drawn conclusions from qualitative research, such as interviews and focus groups. With the more recent arrivals of intraregional migrants, there is a need for up-to-date public polling data to gauge receiving communities' willingness and capacity to integrate immigrants and to inform government policies and programs.

A final, crucial dimension of migration policy in the Caribbean is diaspora engagement in efforts to further the region's economic development. Emigrants and their descendants are well-recognized for their role in channeling much-needed financial support to their families in the Caribbean through remittances, but their engagement with their countries of origin or ancestry can also take the form of business development and job creation, direct investments, and the strengthening of social and professional networks. Moreover, the

Caribbean diaspora has contributed to the region via the transfer of knowledge and skills, including through targeted initiatives that seek to counter the decades-old problem of brain drain.

As Caribbean nations continue to face important migration and development challenges, dialogue through the region's established institutions provides a path towards adapting Caribbean migratory systems, while ensuring that migration policies account for the concerns of sending and receiving countries.

1 Introduction

The Caribbean is commonly viewed as a region of emigration to North America and the United Kingdom, and rightly so: the diasporas of countries such as Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica, and Suriname represent more than one-third of the population in their respective countries.[1] Yet, immigration—particularly from other countries within the region—is also part of the Caribbean's ethos and has evolved with time. Long before most Caribbean countries became independent, the region was characterized by intraregional migration and close connections, and efforts towards regional integration and free mobility have existed for decades. Following independence, the 1973 Treaty of Chaguaramas, which established the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), and the 1981 Treaty of Basseterre, which established the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), created new mechanisms for regional integration and coordination that remain strong to this day and that have continued to develop over the years. Migration has also moved up the region's list of priorities in recent years, as demonstrated by growing free mobility and integration under CARICOM's Caribbean Single Market and Economy and the OECS' Eastern Caribbean Economic Union and by regional commitments and coordination through the 2018 Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration and the Caribbean Migration Consultations, established in 2016.

Historically, labor migration was the prevailing form of movement in the Caribbean, but the landscape has become more complex in recent years.

Historically, labor migration was the prevailing form of movement in the Caribbean, but the landscape has become more complex in recent years, particularly since 2015. Climate change and natural disasters have spurred migration and will likely continue to do so with growing intensity in the years to come. In addition, dual economic and political crises in Venezuela have driven many from the country to migrate into the region. The Caribbean also serves as a point of transit—such as for migrants traveling through The Bahamas to the United States, through Guyana and Suriname to Brazil and other South American countries, and more recently for extracontinental migrants traveling through South America and toward the United States.

While research on Caribbean migration has typically focused on emigration, it is crucial to strengthen understanding of intraregional migration and the region's migration systems and trends, given the changing patterns and composition of people on the move. Furthermore, understanding migration within the region is important for identifying and cultivating opportunities for Caribbean countries to harness both high- and low-skilled migration for development. In this, it is important to consider legal pathways for immigration, institutional design, and policies and programs that promote immigrant integration.

1 See Section 7 and Appendix of this report for more on diaspora size and engagement.

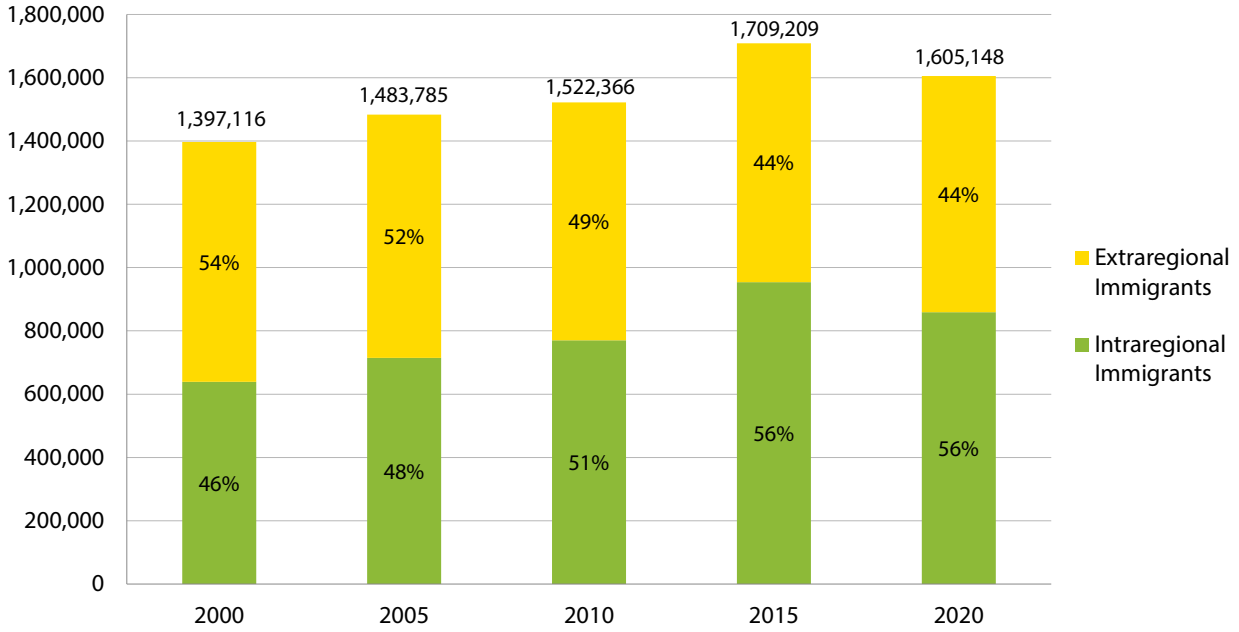
This report offers a panoramic view of migration in the Caribbean. It is based on a review of documents, data, and other resources from regional governments, multilateral organizations, and academia, as well as semi-structured interviews with ten stakeholders and experts on the region. The primary countries of study are The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, the Dominican Republic, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago. To a more limited extent, the study also covers Aruba, Curaçao, the OECS, and the remaining CARICOM Member States. The report begins with an overview of immigrant populations, legal pathways, institutional arrangements, and other key features of migration in the region. It then explores different countries' efforts to integrate their resident immigrant populations as well as to leverage their diasporas and remittances for development. The report closes with recommendations for key Caribbean stakeholders and external partners interested in strengthening the region's capacity to accommodate changing patterns of migration.

2 The Immigration Landscape

Both intra- and extraregional migration are prevalent across the Caribbean. Looking at the most recent data available, there were an estimated 859,400 intraregional and 745,700 extraregional immigrants in Caribbean countries in 2020 (see Figure 1). The intraregional share of immigrants has increased substantially in the last two decades, from 46 percent in 2000 to 56 percent in 2020. This trend reflects the recent growth in regional integration and free mobility regimes as well as increased movement caused by natural disasters.

FIGURE 1

Number and Share of Intra- and Extraregional Immigrants in the Caribbean, 2000–20



Note: For the purpose of this report, "intraregional" means intra-Caribbean, with the Caribbean region composed of Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bermuda, Bonaire, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Cuba, Curaçao, Dominica, Dominican Republic, French Guiana, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Martinique, Montserrat, Puerto Rico, Saba, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sint Eustatius, Sint Maarten, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Turks and Caicos Islands, and U.S. Virgin Islands.
Source: Tabulation of data from United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, "International Migrant Stock 2020—Destination and Origin," accessed October 25, 2020.

In 2020, a total of 625,700 intraregional immigrants were living in the nine core countries of study—The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, the Dominican Republic, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago—representing 63 percent of all immigrants in these countries (see Table 1). Six out of the top ten countries of origin for immigrants in the countries of study were other Caribbean countries: Haiti, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Grenada, and Cuba (highlighted in the table).

TABLE 1

Top Countries of Origin for Immigrants in Selected Caribbean Countries, 2020

Countries of Study		
The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, the Dominican Republic, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago	Total number of immigrants:	987,703
	Number of intraregional immigrants:	625,728
	Intraregional share of immigrant population:	63.35%
	Immigrant share of total population:	2.15%

Country of Origin	Number of Immigrants	Share of All Immigrants
Haiti	525,833	53.24%
Venezuela	164,315	16.64%
United States	45,790	4.64%
Guyana	32,600	3.30%
China	13,872	1.40%
United Kingdom	12,932	1.31%
Jamaica	11,578	1.17%
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	10,731	1.09%
Grenada	9,623	0.97%
Cuba	9,253	0.94%
Other countries	151,176	15.31%

Note: The highlighted rows indicate Caribbean countries.
Sources: Tabulation of data primarily from the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB), "DataMIG," accessed October 19, 2022. In the few cases where data are missing from DataMIG, the latest data available were taken from United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, "International Migrant Stock 2020" or United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, "World Population Prospects 2019—Total Population - Both Sexes," accessed December 20, 2021; World Bank, "The World by Income and Region," accessed December 20, 2021.

The length of permits granted to migrants in the Caribbean varies by country. Some Caribbean countries facilitate greater access to long-term migration and pathways to permanence, while others limit immigrants to shorter-term, temporary stays.[2] For example, according to a 2021 study by the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) and Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), an average of 54 percent of all residence permits granted in Suriname between 2015 and 2019 were permanent, in contrast to an average of 3 percent in Barbados over the same period.[3]

2 See Section 4.D. on "Pathways to Permanency" for greater discussion of this topic.

3 Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) and Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), *Migration Flows in Latin America and the Caribbean: Statistics on Permits for Migrants* (Washington, DC: IADB and OECD, 2021), 15, 17.

It bears mentioning that irregular migration occurs frequently throughout the Caribbean and is seldom captured in official data. When looking at migration in the Caribbean and considering both irregular immigration to and within the region and irregular emigration to other regions, such as North and South America, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) notes that "it is suspected that the total size of irregular migration is exceeding the size of regular migration flows."[4] In Trinidad and Tobago, the International Labor Organization (ILO) estimated that in 2012, approximately 80 percent of all immigrants in the country were irregular, and that 61 percent of irregular migrants were from Guyana.[5] In Suriname, meanwhile, many irregular migrants initially enter the country through regular pathways, either visa-free entry or tourist visas, and then overstay.[6] For example, between 2012 and 2014, an estimated 54,900 persons overstayed their visas or other means of legal entry; 15,900 were Brazilian nationals, while Dutch, French Guianese, and Guyanese passport holders also represented significant shares.[7]

A. Intraregional Migration among Caribbean Nations

Looking at data from 2020, intraregional migration was most common in countries such as the Dominican Republic, Barbados, and The Bahamas, which have upper-middle-income and high-income economies that attract labor from neighboring islands (for country-level data, see Table 2). Belize, by contrast, had by far the fewest intraregional immigrants from the Caribbean, largely because of its location in Central America and farther from many other Caribbean countries. Still, relative to its total population, Belize along with The Bahamas had notably large foreign-born populations, with immigrants representing more than 15 percent of the total population in both countries. In Jamaica, by contrast, immigrants make up less than 1 percent of the total population, and emigration has instead played the dominant role in the country's migration history, resulting in a large diaspora abroad.

Intraregional migration was most common in countries such as the Dominican Republic, Barbados, and The Bahamas, which have upper-middle-income and high-income economies that attract labor from neighboring islands.

As people move from countries with lower standards of living and fewer opportunities to those where employment opportunities are more readily available, some clear patterns have emerged. For example, countries and territories typically characterized by thriving tourism industries and higher incomes, such as The Bahamas, the British and U.S. Virgin Islands, the Turks and Caicos Islands, and Saint Kitts and Nevis, tend to attract nationals of Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Guyana, and Jamaica. At the same time, high-skilled workers from countries such as Jamaica, Cuba, and Trinidad and Tobago often move to other

4 International Organization for Migration (IOM), *Migration in the Caribbean: Current Trends, Opportunities and Challenges* (San José, Costa Rica: IOM, 2017), 8.

5 International Labor Organization (ILO), *Labour Migration in Latin America and the Caribbean: Diagnosis, Strategy and ILO's Work in the Region* (Lima: ILO, 2017), 34–35. It is important to mention that since 2012 the migratory panorama in Trinidad and Tobago has changed considerably with the arrival of Venezuelan migrants in the islands.

6 IOM, *Suriname Needs Assessment on Migration Governance* (San José, Costa Rica: IOM, 2021), 10.

7 IOM, *Suriname Needs Assessment on Migration Governance*, 10.

Caribbean countries, including The Bahamas, where they may have more opportunities to put their skills to work and earn higher incomes.[8]

Haitians are by far the largest immigrant population, representing 53 percent of the total immigrant stock among the primary countries of study in 2020 (see Table 1). Many Haitians (496,100) were settled in the Dominican Republic, although a significant population (29,600) was present in The Bahamas. An estimated 10,000 Haitians also lived in the Turks and Caicos Islands, representing more than one-quarter of the archipelago's total population.[9] Several factors push Haitians to migrate. These include the country's large and high-density population (the third largest in the region after Cuba and the Dominican Republic, though its territory is considerably smaller), a struggling economy characterized by high income inequality,[10] severe natural disasters, insecurity, and political and institutional challenges.

Guyanese intraregional migration is another common trend in the region. Across the primary countries of study, Guyanese made up about 3 percent of all immigrants and 5 percent of intraregional immigrants in 2020. They represented the largest immigrant population in both Suriname and Barbados, as well as the second largest in Trinidad and Tobago. Between 2015 and 2019, Guyanese migrants averaged 1,500 new legal residence permits per year in Barbados and 700 in Suriname.[11]

Belize is both a Caribbean and a Central American country, making its immigrant population unique in the region. Most immigrants in the country are Central American, and Caribbean intraregional movement is limited. Indeed, just 1 percent of Belize's immigrant population came from the Caribbean, while the neighboring countries of Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras accounted for 77 percent in 2020 (see Table 2).

Suriname similarly plays a more limited role in Caribbean intraregional movement, both as a sending and receiving country. In 2020, just 2,800 Surinamese nationals lived in the other eight primary countries of study, 97 percent of whom resided in Guyana. Immigration to Suriname from countries beyond the Caribbean, meanwhile, is prevalent, with Brazil, China, and the Netherlands the origin countries of 52 percent of all immigrants in Suriname. In fact, IOM data from 2014 show that 78 percent of all work permits were granted to Dutch or Chinese nationals.[12]

8 IOM, *Migration Governance in the Caribbean: Report on the Island States of the Commonwealth Caribbean* (San José, Costa Rica: IOM, 2018), 13; Berta Fernández-Alfaro and Gerard Pascua, "Migration Management Challenges in the Caribbean," in *Intra-Caribbean Migration and the Conflict Nexus*, eds. Taryn Lesser, Berta Fernández-Alfaro, Lancelot Cowie, and Nina Bruni (Ottawa: Human Rights Internet, 2006), 71.

9 Tabulation of data from Fernández-Alfaro and Pascua, "Migration Management Challenges in the Caribbean," 80; United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, "World Population Prospects 2019—Total Population - Both Sexes," accessed December 20, 2021.

10 Haiti is the only lower-middle-income country in the region. See World Bank, "The World by Income and Region," accessed December 31, 2021.

11 IADB and OECD, *Migration Flows in Latin America and the Caribbean*, 24.

12 IOM, *Suriname Needs Assessment on Migration Governance*, 26.

B. Immigrants from Countries Outside the Caribbean

Although only present in large numbers in a few Caribbean countries, Venezuelans were the second largest immigrant population across the primary countries of study, making up 17 percent of all immigrants in 2020 (see Table 1). The Venezuelan diaspora is the second largest globally, with migration and displacement driven by acute economic and political crises in the country.[13] The largest number of Venezuelans in the Caribbean can be found in the Dominican Republic, where the 144,500 Venezuelans represented 23 percent of all immigrants in 2020. Venezuelans also have an important presence in Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana, both countries in which they were the largest immigrant group in 2020, representing 76 percent and 34 percent of all immigrants in each country, respectively. In the greater Caribbean, a significant number of Venezuelan immigrants could also be found in Aruba (17,000) and Curaçao (14,200), where Venezuelans made up 16 percent and 9 percent of each country's total population, respectively.[14] Although Venezuelans in Haiti (2,500) represented 14 percent of the country's immigrant population in 2020, immigrants from all countries represented just 0.15 percent of the country's population.

The largest number of Venezuelans in the Caribbean can be found in the Dominican Republic, where the 144,500 Venezuelans represented 23 percent of all immigrants in 2020.

After Venezuelans, U.S. nationals were the second largest extraregional immigrant population—and the third largest immigrant population overall—across the primary countries of study, with slightly less than 5 percent of the total immigrant stock in 2020. Immigration from the United States is largely driven by tourism, investment, and family members following Caribbean nationals who are deported from the country. China and the United Kingdom also had small but noteworthy presences in the Caribbean, with UK immigration spurred by similar causes as U.S. immigration and Chinese immigration a reflection of an increasing Chinese economic and political presence in the region, including in the form of growing investments. U.S. nationals represented significant shares of the immigrant populations of certain countries, including Jamaica (30 percent in 2020), The Bahamas (17 percent), Trinidad and Tobago (9 percent), Haiti (9 percent), and Belize (7 percent), as shown in Table 2. Meanwhile, British nationals represented 23 percent of all immigrants in Jamaica and 12 percent in Barbados. Chinese immigrants are more present in Suriname, where they comprised 19 percent of all immigrants in 2020, but they also have smaller communities in the Dominican Republic and Belize.

13 As May 5, 2022, there were more than 7.1 million Venezuelan migrants and refugees across the globe. See Regional Inter-Agency Coordination Platform for Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela (R4V), "Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela," updated September 5, 2022.

14 Tabulation of data from R4V, "Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela"; United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, "World Population Prospects 2019."

TABLE 2

Immigrant Populations in Selected Caribbean Countries, 2020

The Bahamas	Total number of immigrants:	62,427
	Number of intraregional immigrants:	42,212
	Intraregional share of immigrants:	67.62%
High-Income Country	Immigrant share of total population:	15.88%
Country or Territory of Origin	**Number of Immigrants**	**Share of All Immigrants**
Haiti	29,629	47.46%
United States	10,359	16.59%
Jamaica	8,042	12.88%
United Kingdom	2,135	3.42%
Canada	1,679	2.69%
Turks and Caicos Islands	1,655	2.65%
Guyana	1,430	2.29%
Other countries	7,498	12.01%

Barbados	Total number of immigrants:	20,597
	Number of intraregional immigrants:	15,705
	Intraregional share of Immigrants:	76.25%
High-Income Country	Immigrant share of total population:	7.18%
Country or Territory of Origin	**Number of Immigrants**	**Share of All Immigrants**
Guyana	6,667	32.37%
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	3,148	15.28%
United Kingdom	2,537	12.32%
Saint Lucia	2,200	10.68%
Trinidad and Tobago	1,506	7.31%
United States	1,044	5.07%
Jamaica	1,004	4.87%
Other countries	2,491	12.09%

Belize	Total number of immigrants:	60,464
	Number of intraregional immigrants:	621
	Intraregional share of immigrants:	1.03%
Lower-Middle-Income Country	Immigrant share of total population:	15.19%
Country or Territory of Origin	**Number of Immigrants**	**Share of All Immigrants**
Guatemala	26,767	44.27%
El Salvador	10,016	16.57%
Honduras	9,784	16.18%
United States	4,647	7.69%
Mexico	3,997	6.61%
China	2,323	3.84%
Canada	914	1.51%
Other countries	2,016	3.33%

TABLE 2 (cont.)

Immigrant Populations in Selected Caribbean Countries, 2020

Dominican Republic	Total number of immigrants:	675,462
	Number of intraregional immigrants:	504,543
	Intraregional share of immigrants:	74.70%
Upper-Middle-Income Country	Immigrant share of total population:	6.23%
Country or Territory of Origin	**Number of Immigrants**	**Share of All Immigrants**
Haiti	496,112	73.45%
Venezuela	114,500	16.95%
United States	14,626	2.17%
Spain	7,272	1.08%
Puerto Rico	4,780	0.71%
Italy	4,375	0.65%
China	3,942	0.58%
Cuba	3,402	0.50%
Other countries	26,453	3.92%

Guyana	Total number of immigrants:	30,636
	Number of intraregional immigrants:	4,342
	Intraregional share of immigrants:	14.17%
Upper-Middle-Income Country	Immigrant share of total population:	3.89%
Country or Territory of Origin	**Number of Immigrants**	**Share of All Immigrants**
Venezuela	23,326	76.14%
Suriname	2,714	8.86%
Brazil	1,260	4.11%
United States	740	2.42%
China	676	2.21%
Trinidad and Tobago	519	1.69%
United Kingdom	337	1.10%
Other countries	1,064	3.47%

TABLE 2 (cont.)

Immigrant Populations in Selected Caribbean Countries, 2020

Haiti		
	Total number of immigrants:	17,462
	Number of intraregional immigrants:	5,088
	Intraregional share of immigrants:	29.14%
Low-Income Country	Immigrant share of total population:	0.15%
Country or Territory of Origin	**Number of Immigrants**	**Share of All Immigrants**
Venezuela	2,488	14.25%
Dominican Republic	2,377	13.61%
United States	1,586	9.08%
Puerto Rico	1,526	8.74%
Spain	1,280	7.33%
Italy	1,210	6.93%
Cuba	1,185	6.79%
Other countries	5,810	33.27%

Jamaica		
	Total number of immigrants:	21,113
	Number of intraregional immigrants:	6,449
	Intraregional Share of immigrants:	30.55%
Upper-Middle-Income Country	Immigrant share of total population:	0.71%
Country or Territory of Origin	**Number of Immigrants**	**Share of All Immigrants**
United States	6,349	30.07%
United Kingdom	4,832	22.89%
Trinidad and Tobago	2,343	11.10%
Cuba	1,825	8.64%
Canada	1,338	6.34%
India	1,148	5.44%
The Bahamas	674	3.19%
Other countries	2,604	12.33%

Suriname		
	Total number of immigrants:	28,045
	Number of intraregional immigrants:	13,557
	Intraregional share of immigrants:	48.34%
Upper-Middle-Income Country	Immigrant share of total population:	4.78%
Country or Territory of Origin	**Number of Immigrants**	**Share of All Immigrants**
Guyana	13,557	48.34%
Brazil	5,566	19.85%
China	5,446	19.42%
Netherlands	3,476	12.39%

TABLE 2 (cont.)
Immigrant Populations in Selected Caribbean Countries, 2020

Trinidad and Tobago	Total number of immigrants:	71,497
	Number of intraregional immigrants:	33,211
	Intraregional share of immigrants:	46.45%
High-Income Country	Immigrant share of total population:	5.11%

Country or Territory of Origin	Number of Immigrants	Share of All Immigrants
Venezuela	24,001	33.57%
Guyana	10,923	15.28%
Grenada	8,913	12.47%
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	7,141	9.99%
United States	6,439	9.01%
United Kingdom	2,629	3.68%
Cuba	2,412	3.37%
Other countries	9,039	12.64%

Notes: Highlighted rows indicate Caribbean countries and territories that are included as intraregional migrants for the purposes of this analysis. The categorization of countries by income level is based on the designations used by the World Bank in its data on countries by income and region. All figures in this table are based on official data from the United Nations and other official sources; they do not necessarily account fully for irregular immigrant populations, which can be difficult to estimate, particularly considering the lack of robust data and investigation on the topic in the Caribbean region.
Sources: Tabulation of data primarily from the IADB, "DataMIG," accessed October 22, 2020. In the few cases when data are missing from DataMIG, the latest data available were taken from United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, "International Migrant Stock 2020" or United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, "International Migrant Stock 2019"; United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, "World Population Prospects 2019"; World Bank, "The World by Income and Region."

C. Refugee Populations and Movements

Although asylum and other forms of humanitarian protection are rarer in the Caribbean than other world regions, people who have been displaced and are seeking safety do move through the region. This includes migrants from Venezuela, Cuba, Haiti, and Central American countries, as well as LGBTQ+ persons from various countries.

Analysis of data on humanitarian populations from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) indicates that, in 2020, Trinidad and Tobago, Belize, Suriname, the Dominican Republic, and Curaçao received the highest numbers of asylum seekers (see Table 3). In Trinidad and Tobago, more than 19,900 asylum seekers were recorded, with top countries of origin including Venezuela (16,700) and Cuba (2,300). Furthermore, several Caribbean countries and territories, most geographically proximate to Venezuela, hosted large numbers of Venezuelans who had been displaced but had not filed asylum claims. There were almost 114,100 displaced Venezuelans in the Dominican Republic in 2020, and the numbers were also significant (relative to the total population) in Guyana, Aruba, Curaçao, and Trinidad and Tobago.

TABLE 3

Humanitarian Populations in Selected Caribbean Countries, 2020

Country	Total Number of Refugees under UNHCR Mandate	Total Number of Asylum Seekers	Total Number of Displaced Venezuelans	Other Humanitarian Populations*
Aruba	0	0	17,000	0
The Bahamas	15	13	-	-
Barbados	0	5	-	0
Belize	29	2,249	-	3,390
Cuba	222	10	-	0
Curaçao	68	318	16,691	0
Dominican Republic	162	625	114,050	0
Grenada	0	0	234	0
Guyana	23	72	23,307	0
Haiti	0	5	-	0
Jamaica	27	5	67	0
Saint Kitts and Nevis	0	0	19	0
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	0	0	14	0
Suriname	19	1,988	-	0
Trinidad and Tobago	3,179	19,926	4,663	393

* The rightmost column includes internally displaced populations, stateless persons, and other populations of concern.
Note: "-" indicates that data were unavailable.
Source: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), "Refugee Data Finder," accessed October 25, 2022.

Focusing specifically on refugee populations resettled under the UNHCR mandate, apart from Trinidad and Tobago, all other core countries in this study received fewer than 200 refugees in 2020 (see Table 4). Notably, Central American protection seekers were present in Belize, Cuban refugees were primarily in Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana, and Haitians were resettled in the Dominican Republic and Jamaica.

However, the Caribbean has relatively few institutions or regulations for humanitarian protection, and with limited capacity in protection systems, access to refugee status is limited. As a result, only a limited number of individuals are granted protection and legal status as refugees in the region, and many other migrants with protection needs utilize other migration channels, both regular and irregular.

TABLE 4

Refugees under UNHCR Mandate in Caribbean Countries of Study, 2020

Country	Total Number of Refugees	Countries of Origin (Number of Refugees)
The Bahamas	15	Colombia (5) Cuba (5) Jamaica (5)
Barbados	0	N/A
Belize	29	El Salvador (24) Honduras (5)
Dominican Republic	162	Haiti (162)
Guyana	23	Cuba (18) Pakistan (5)
Haiti	0	N/A
Jamaica	27	Haiti (27)
Suriname	19	Venezuela (12) Cuba (7)
Trinidad and Tobago	3,179	Venezuela (2,841) Cuba (171) Syria (66) Jamaica (37) Guyana (19) Colombia (12) Pakistan (9) Bangladesh (8) Mexico (6) Nigeria (5) Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (5)

Sources: UNHCR, "Refugee Data Finder."

3 Migratory Institutions

The institutions responsible for migration governance vary considerably in their form across the Caribbean (see Table 5). Oftentimes, the institution in charge of migration is found within a multisectoral ministry. In other countries, security-oriented and foreign affairs ministries are charged with overseeing migration governance.

TABLE 5

National Institutions Charged with Migration Governance in Caribbean Countries, as of October 2022

Country	National Institutions
The Bahamas	Department of Immigration, located in the Ministry of Labor and Immigration
Barbados	Immigration Department, located in the Ministry of Home Affairs and Information
Belize	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade, and Immigration, which supervises the Nationality and Passport Department, Border Management and Immigration Services, and Refugees Department
Dominican Republic	General Directorate of Immigration (Dirección General de Migración) and National Institute of Migration of the Dominican Republic (Instituto Nacional de Migración de la República Dominicana), located in the Ministry of Interior and Police; Ministry of Foreign Affairs through its Vice Ministry of Consular and Immigration Matters (Viceministerio para Asuntos Consulares y Migratorios)
Guyana	Immigration Support Services, located in the Ministry of Home Affairs; Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation
Haiti	Department of Immigration and Emigration (Direction de l'Immigration et de l'Émigration), located in the Ministry of the Interior and Territorial Communities (Ministère de l'Intérieur et des Collectivités Territoriales); National Office for Migration (Office National de la Migration)
Jamaica	Passport, Immigration, and Citizenship Agency, an executive agency that is self-financing; Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade
Suriname	No dedicated migratory institution; Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Business, and International Cooperation coordinates and guides migration policy, while the Ministry of Justice and Police implements the policy
Trinidad and Tobago	Immigration Division, located in the Ministry of National Security

Note: Responsibility for immigration has changed in many of these countries in recent years, with government transitions and ministerial shuffles common in parliamentary systems. Future readers may wish to seek out the latest information as further changes are likely.

Sources: Government of The Bahamas, Department of Immigration, "The Minister Responsible for Labour and Immigration," accessed October 25, 2022; Government of Belize, "Government of Belize Ministries and Departments," accessed October 25, 2022; Julia Rawlins-Bentham, "Minister Abrahams Outlines Priority Areas for Ministry," Barbados Government Information Service, October 19, 2020; Presidencia de la República Dominicana, "Inicio," accessed October 25, 2022; Department of Public Information, Guyana, "Government Ministries," accessed October 25, 2022; Republic of Haiti, "Le gouvernement," accessed October 25, 2022; Jamaican Passport, Immigration, and Citizenship Agency, "About PICA," accessed October 25, 2022; International Organization for Migration (IOM), *Suriname Needs Assessment on Migration Governance* (San José, Costa Rica, IOM: 2021), 6; Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, Ministry of National Security, "Immigration Division," accessed October 25, 2022.

In terms of labor migration governance, the institutions in charge are usually either a country's ministry of labor or its immigration authorities. Jamaica, Grenada, Saint Lucia, and Suriname are in the former camp, while The Bahamas, Belize, the Dominican Republic, and Trinidad and Tobago are in the latter.[15]

Many Caribbean countries have limited budgets and human resources, making it difficult to prioritize immigration and allocate sufficient funds to migration governance. Many migratory institutions in the region are underfunded, and oftentimes ministries are not solely dedicated to migration, instead managing a broader portfolio of issues. These competing priorities are a major obstacle to comprehensive migration

15 María Gabriela Párraga Espinoza, *Mechanisms for Labour Migration in the Caribbean* (San José, Costa Rica: IOM, 2021), 7.

governance, with fully funded institutions dedicated to addressing migration issues that are also key to the region's economic development (e.g., climate change resilience, infrastructure to improve connectivity and address labor shortages). Even still, there has been a slow but increasing push toward prioritizing migration, as seen with the Caribbean Migration Consultations (see Box 1). IOM has been working in the region to develop stronger institutions and systems, including by helping CARICOM's Implementation Agency for Crime and Security develop model counter-smuggling legislation and working closely with the governments of Guyana and Belize to develop comprehensive, whole-of-government approaches to migration governance.[16] Belize and the Dominican Republic have also taken part in a growing level of dialogue on migration within the Central American Integration System, including on comprehensive migration governance (see Section 4 for more information).[17]

Many migratory institutions in the region are underfunded, and oftentimes ministries are not solely dedicated to migration, instead managing a broader portfolio of issues.

BOX 1
The Caribbean Migration Consultations

The Caribbean Migration Consultations (CMC) is a mechanism through which countries in the region meet to discuss and coordinate on migration governance issues. Established in 2016 and launched in 2019 with the support of CARICOM, IOM, UNHCR, and other international organizations, the CMC is composed of Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Cayman Islands, Cuba, Curaçao, Dominica, the Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Montserrat, Saint Lucia, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Martin, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, and Turks and Caicos.

Through meetings, workshops, and events, the CMC aims to "create a nonbinding forum that allows 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 emphasis in sharing good practices related to migration governance; [and] develop policies with a rights-based approach aimed at an effective comprehensive migration governance in the region." The COVID-19 pandemic and a lack of capacity and funds have to date impeded the CMC from reaching its full potential, even as the pandemic and increasingly frequent natural disasters have increased the need for regional cooperation. With sufficient political will and investment, the CMC could serve as a robust coordinating mechanism between states, promoting the alignment of policies and the strengthening regional integration and free movement initiatives, and ultimately ensure more-connected and better-managed migration governance across the Caribbean:

Sources: IOM, "Caribbean Migration Consultations (CMC)," accessed December 20, 2021; authors' interview with international organization staff with expertise on migration systems, October 14, 2021.

16 Information gathered from authors' interviews with experts on the Caribbean region and economy, October 12–28, 2021; IOM, *Belize Needs Assessment on Migration Governance* (San José, Costa Rica: IOM, 2021), 6.

17 IOM, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and Central American Integration System (SICA), *Hallazgos del estudio de línea base sobre migración y desplazamiento en la región del SICA* (San José, Costa Rica: IOM, UNHCR, and SICA, 2019), 41.

A. Asylum and Refugee Protection

Although much of the Caribbean has signed and ratified the 1951 UN Refugee Convention and the 1967 Protocol,[18] there is a lack of institutions and regulatory frameworks for asylum and refugee protection in the region. Among the principal countries of study in this report, only Belize and the Dominican Republic have full asylum procedures and institutions dedicated to humanitarian protection through a robust legal framework (see Table 6).

Initially adopted in 1991, Belize's *Refugees Act* establishes the country's refugee governance. The Refugees Department within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade, and Immigration provides recommendations to the minister of immigration on the recognition of individuals as refugees.[19]

In the Dominican Republic, Presidential Decree Number 1569 of 1983, which was subsequently amended by Decree Number 2330 of 1984, outlines the asylum process, which is run by the country's National Commission for Refugees (CONARE). CONARE is composed of representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Labor, the Office of the Attorney General of the Republic, the National Police, the General Directorate of Immigration, the National Department of Investigations, and the Office of the Legal Counsel of the Executive Branch.[20]

Among the principal countries of study in this report, only Belize and the Dominican Republic have full asylum procedures and institutions dedicated to humanitarian protection through a robust legal framework.

Three other countries have developed policies to process refugees despite the absence of clear legislation. Even though The Bahamas has no refugee legislation or legal framework, the country conducts refugee status determination (RSD) processing on an ad hoc basis through the Refugee Administration Unit, a branch of the Department of Immigration.[21] While neither Jamaica nor Trinidad and Tobago have legislative frameworks in place, both countries have developed refugee policies (in 2009 and 2014, respectively) and conduct their own RSD processes.[22]

18 Barbados, Grenada, Guyana, and Saint Lucia have not. See Diego Acosta and Jeremy Harris, *Migration Policy Regimes in Latin America and the Caribbean: Immigration, Regional Free Movement, Refuge, and Nationality* (Washington, DC: IADB, 2022); IOM, *Migration in the Caribbean*, 33; IOM, *Migration Governance in the Caribbean*, 41; IOM, *Guyana Needs Assessment on Migration Governance* (San José, Costa Rica: IOM, 2021).

19 Government of Belize, *Refugees Act*, Chapter 165, Revised Edition 2000 (December 31, 2000); UNHCR, "Submission by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights' Compilation Report Universal Periodic Review: 3rd Cycle, 31st Session: Belize" (brief, UNHCR, March 2018); IOM, *Belize Needs Assessment on Migration Governance*, 18–19.

20 National Institute of Migration of the Dominican Republic, "El refugio en la República Dominicana," updated January 10, 2018.

21 UNHCR, "Submission by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights' Compilation Report - Universal Periodic Review: Commonwealth of the Bahamas" (brief, UNHCR, June 2012); Government of The Bahamas, Department of Immigration, "Refugee Information," accessed December 20, 2021.

22 Government of Jamaica, "Refugee Policy of 2009," March 11, 2009; UNHCR, "Submission by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights' Compilation Report - Universal Periodic Review: Jamaica" (brief, UNHCR, April 2010); Government of Trinidad and Tobago, "Statement by the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago to the 67th Session of the Executive Committee of the UNHCR" (statement, October 2016); Government of Trinidad and Tobago, "A Phased Approach towards the Establishment of a National Policy to Address Refugee and Asylum Matters in the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago" (working document, National Legislative Bodies, 2014); IOM, *Migration Governance in the Caribbean*, 41.

Barbados, Guyana, and Haiti do not have legal frameworks or institutions for refugee governance. In these cases, UNHCR conducts RSD.[23] Suriname also lacks these features, but the country does offer some protections for refugees in its *Aliens Act of 1991*. Suriname is reportedly "working towards the creation of a formal refugee status determination framework in order for the government to eventually carry out this task independently" of UNHCR, which currently conducts RSD in the country.[24]

TABLE 6

Institutions and Regulatory Frameworks for Asylum and Refugee Protection in the Caribbean, as of October 2022

Country	Legislative Framework?	Institution for Asylum and Refugee Protection	Conducts Own Refugee Status Determinations?
The Bahamas	No	Refugee Administration Unit, located in Department of Immigration	Yes
Barbados	No	None	No, UNHCR does
Belize	Yes	Refugees Department, located in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade, and Immigration	Yes
Dominican Republic	Yes	National Commission for Refugees (Comisión Nacional para los Refugiados, or CONARE), composed of representatives from several ministries	Yes
Guyana	No	None	No, UNHCR does
Haiti	No	None	No, UNHCR does
Jamaica	No, but has a refugee policy	No clear dedicated institution, but handled by the Passport, Immigration, and Citizenship Agency	Yes
Suriname	No	None	No, UNHCR does
Trinidad and Tobago	No, but has a refugee policy	Refugee Unit, located in the Immigration Division within the Ministry of National Security	Yes

Source: Compilation by the authors.

23 UNHCR, "Submission by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights' Compilation Report - Universal Periodic Review: Barbados" (brief, UNHCR, July 2012); UNHCR, "Submission by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights' Compilation Report Universal Periodic Review: 3rd Cycle, 35th Session: Guyana" (brief, UNHCR, July 2019); IOM, *Guyana Needs Assessment on Migration Governance*; UNHCR, "Haiti" (fact sheet, UNHCR, March 2017); IOM, *Migration Governance in the Caribbean*, 41.

24 UNHCR, "Submission by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights' Compilation Report Universal Periodic Review: 2nd Cycle, 25th Session: Suriname" (brief, UNHCR, September 2015); IOM, *Suriname Needs Assessment on Migration Governance*, 18.

The general lack of institutions and regulatory frameworks for asylum and refugee protection have been linked to the small scale of the issue in the region, given that many protection seekers originate from the region and seek protection elsewhere. This has disincentivized investment by Caribbean governments faced with limited financial capacity, high rates of unemployment, and limited land and integration capacity.[25]

B. Border Management

The region's border management systems are an important aspect of institutional infrastructure for migration governance. Among the Commonwealth Caribbean islands, only Jamaica has its own locally maintained border management system. In all other countries within the subregion, a private-sector company handles border management. This company is Canadian Bank Note, Ltd., in all except Barbados, where DPM Systems Barbados Ltd. plays this role. Saint Lucia, however, does not currently maintain any border management system.[26] In the broader region, Belize—like Jamaica—maintains its own border management system, known as the Migration Information and Data Analysis System (MIDAS).[27]

Border management is key to tackling the growing challenge of crime organizations transiting through the Caribbean, primarily to traffic drugs and guns.[28] These networks can also be used to smuggle migrants, often in dangerous conditions. The limited capacity of many Caribbean countries to manage their national borders and the complexity of trafficking routes, which often involve multiple countries, further strengthen the case for regional coordination on migration policy. CARICOM's Implementing Agency for Crime and Security (IMPACS) is one example of a mechanism that facilitates the identification of strategies to counter bad actors that engage in transnational crime, while upholding the principle of free mobility for CARICOM nationals.

4 Free Mobility Pathways and Multilateral Agreements

Caribbean countries have been pursuing regional integration and free mobility for decades, dating back to the Federation of the West Indies, which existed from 1958 to 1962. In 1973, the original Treaty of Chaguaramas—founding CARICOM with the original Member States of Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago—professed an interest in freer movement of capital and labor[29] that was later advanced by the establishment of free mobility regimes and increasing regional integration under CARICOM's Single Market and Economy (CSME) and the OECS' Economic Union (ECEU). Today, CARICOM has extended its membership to reach 11 additional Member States: Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Haiti, Montserrat, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Suriname. CARICOM also has five Associated Members: Anguilla, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, and Turks and Caicos Islands.

25 Janice Marshall, "Effectively Identifying, Protecting, and Finding Durable Solutions for Refugees," in *Intra-Caribbean Migration and the Conflict Nexus*, eds. Taryn Lesser, Berta Fernández-Alfaro, Lancelot Cowie, and Nina Bruni (Ottawa: Human Rights Internet, 2006), 95–96; authors' interviews with experts on the Caribbean region and economy, October 12–28, 2021.
26 IOM, *Migration Governance in the Caribbean*, 34–36.
27 IOM, *Belize Needs Assessment on Migration Governance*, 10–11.
28 IOM, *Migration Governance in the Caribbean*, 34–36.
29 CARICOM, "Treaty Establishing the Caribbean Community," July 4, 1973.

The CSME came into force in 2006 through the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas. Its members include Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago. As outlined in Article 45 of the Revised Treaty, CSME Member States "commit themselves to the goal of free movement of their nationals within the Community."[30] Complete free mobility has yet to be achieved, but nationals of CSME Member States are entitled to partial free movement in the form of six-month visa-free stays in other Member States. This stay does not include work authorization, though, and may be restricted due to national security concerns or if a CARICOM national could become "a charge on the public funds."[31] Many CSME countries have implemented measures to facilitate these six-month stays administratively but not fully incorporated them into their national migration laws, at times resulting in inconsistent operationalization.[32] In an interview conducted for this study, an expert on regional economics suggested that complete free mobility is unlikely in the near future, largely as a result of public pushback in certain countries about the possibility of migrants accessing jobs—through regular or irregular channels.[33] High unemployment in the region, particularly for low-skilled workers, results in more competition for jobs and less open attitudes towards free mobility or expanding immigration.

The uneven implementation of CSME's free mobility provisions mean that some Caribbean nationals are able to move more freely than others.

The uneven implementation of CSME's free mobility provisions mean that some Caribbean nationals are able to move more freely than others. The Bahamas, despite being a member of CARICOM, is not party to the CSME. Montserrat and Haiti are partially but not fully integrated into the regime,[34] but their nationals do have the CSME right to a six-month stay in other Member States, as affirmed by the Caribbean Court of Justice in the case of *Shanique Myrie versus Barbados*.[35] Even still, Haitians have often been denied access to free mobility, with only 6 of 12 CSME Member States honoring Haitians' right to free mobility through the six-month stay: Belize, Grenada, Guyana, Montserrat, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Suriname.[36]

It is difficult to access national data on the movement of Caribbean nationals under the six-month stay regime. Yet overall, official data show 2,040,750 free mobility movements occurring between the inception of the regime in 2006 and 2017.[37] Based on the latest year for which data were available, Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana had the greatest outflows of their nationals to other CSME Member States under the free mobility regime in 2017, while Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago received the greatest inflows by far (see Table 7).

30 CARICOM, "Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas Establishing the Caribbean Community, Including the CARICOM Single Market and Economy," July 5, 2001, Article 45.
31 CARICOM, *Single Market and Economy: Free Movement - Travel and Work*, 3rd ed. (Georgetown, Guyana: CARICOM, 2017).
32 For a country-by-country breakdown, see Estela Aragón and Briana Mawby, *Free Movement of Persons in the Caribbean: Economic and Security Dimensions* (San José, Costa Rica: IOM, 2020), 48–49.
33 Authors' interview with Dr. Andrew Downes, Professor Emeritus of Economics at the University of the West Indies, October 18, 2021.
34 *Jamaica Observer*, "Caricom Wants Haiti to Play Greater Role in CSME," *Jamaica Observer*, September 18, 2020; Aragón and Mawby, *Free Movement of Persons in the Caribbean*, 53.
35 Aragón and Mawby, *Free Movement of Persons in the Caribbean*, 52.
36 Aragón and Mawby, *Free Movement of Persons in the Caribbean*, 52.
37 Aragón and Mawby, *Free Movement of Persons in the Caribbean*, 33.

TABLE 7

CSME Free Mobility Outflows and Inflows, 2017

Country	Registered Outflows	Outflows as a Share of Resident Population	Registered Inflows	Inflows as a Share of Resident Population
Trinidad and Tobago	90,795	6.56%	124,314	8.98%
Guyana	72,913	9.41%	51,829	6.69%
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	63,430	57.75%	23,122	21.05%
Jamaica	40,632	1.39%	44,532	1.52%
Barbados	36,577	12.78%	147,072	51.38%
Saint Lucia	29,270	16.18%	-	-
Grenada	25,935	23.39%	-	-
Dominica	25,272	35.37%	-	-
Antigua and Barbuda	18,887	19.79%	48,203	50.51%
Suriname	17,464	3.06%	-	-
Saint Kitts and Nevis	10,429	20.04%	-	-
The Bahamas	9,341	2.45%	N/A	N/A
Haiti	5,936	0.05%	N/A	N/A
Belize	3,013	0.80%	256	0.07%
Montserrat	2,476	49.68%	N/A	N/A

Notes: "-" indicates that data were unavailable. No data are available on inflows for Dominica, Grenada, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, and Suriname. All CARICOM nationals are eligible to the six-month stay in CARICOM Member States that also participate in the CSME. The Bahamas, Haiti, and Montserrat are marked with "N/A" because they do not receive CSME inflows. Note that the data represent flows, and not individuals, such that individuals' movements may count as both inflows and outflows, and that withing a single year, individuals may have multiple inflows and outflows.

Sources: Tabulation of data from Estela Aragón and Briana Mawby, *Free Movement of Persons in the Caribbean: Economic and Security Dimensions* (San José, Costa Rica: IOM, 2020), 33; United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, "World Population Prospects 2019."

In addition to the right to a six-month stay, the CSME has a Skills Certificates regime, through which specific categories of workers are able to get a certificate that allows them free movement to and work authorization in other participating countries. As initially established in Article 46 of the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas, the certificates were only available to university graduates, artists, musicians, media workers, and sportspersons.[38] However, less than 15 percent of CARICOM nationals had a university degree as of 2017.[39] This narrow level of inclusion reflects a system that "was originally seen as an elitist regime where only high-skilled workers had access," but over time more categories have been added, resulting in greater inclusion and expanded access for less-skilled workers.[40] As of early 2020, seven new categories had been established, five of which were being facilitated in practice: teachers, nurses, people who hold an associate degree or equivalent qualification, artisans with a Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ), household domestic workers with a CVQ or equivalent qualification, agricultural workers (not yet in practice), and security guards (not yet in practice). Only Grenada, Guyana, and Jamaica admit workers under all ten

38 CARICOM, "Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas."

39 Ravin Singh, "Education Woes," *Guyana Chronicle*, July 6, 2017.

40 Wanya Illes, "Labour Migration in the Caribbean: Mechanisms, Challenges, and Good Practices" (remarks by a representative of the CARICOM Secretariat, CSME Unit, during public event, IOM, September 1, 2021).

categories; Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Suriname facilitate the admission of teachers, nurses, and accredited artisans, and Trinidad and Tobago does so for teachers and nurses. Although not codified in law, Saint Kitts and Nevis issues Skills Certificates to migrants who are accredited household domestic workers.[41]

To receive a Skills Certificate, one must apply to a given country's dedicated CSME focal point, typically found in the foreign affairs or trade ministry, which then approves the certificate, providing the recipient with work authorization and the right to indefinite stay. The application process is conducted online or on paper, depending on the country.[42] At times, Skills Certificate applications can take an extended period of time to be approved, leading some potential recipients to opt for less-comprehensive work permits instead. Furthermore, there is limited public awareness in many countries of the regime, and some individuals may apply for another work permit because they are unaware of their eligibility for a Skills Certificate.[43] Indeed, just three CSME Member States issue Skills Certificates to more foreign workers than long-term work permits: Barbados, Belize, and Trinidad and Tobago.[44] And even then, Skills Certificates only represented approximately 2 percent of all permits that Barbados granted between 2015 and 2019.[45] Data on the distribution of Skills Certificates across the region to CARICOM nationals indicate that in 2017, more than 70 percent of Skills Certificates went to university graduates, and a further 11 percent went to associate degree holders, suggesting that this regime is still largely used by workers with higher skill levels.[46]

At times, Skills Certificate applications can take an extended period of time to be approved, leading some potential recipients to opt for less-comprehensive work permits instead.

Two other avenues for free movement in the CSME are the right of establishment and the right to movement of service providers. Under the right of establishment, self-employed persons may move on a permanent basis in order to establish and manage a business in a participating country; any technical, supervisory, or managerial staff of said business may move under this regime as well. Although the regime has yet to be formally regulated through legislation in any CSME Member State, Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Guyana, Jamaica, and Saint Lucia facilitate the right to establishment administratively.[47] Use of the regime has reportedly been low to date but is growing, although accessible data to track this trend are lacking.[48]

The movement of service providers is established in Article 30 of the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas. It allows for the temporary free movement of accredited CARICOM nationals for the purpose of providing

41 Aragón and Mawby, *Free Movement of Persons in the Caribbean*, 27, 54–56.
42 Aragón and Mawby, *Free Movement of Persons in the Caribbean*; Illes, "Labour Migration in the Caribbean."
43 Illes, "Labour Migration in the Caribbean."
44 IOM, *Belize Needs Assessment on Migration Governance*, 26; Aragón and Mawby, *Free Movement of Persons in the Caribbean*, 36.
45 IADB and OECD, *Migration Flows in Latin America and the Caribbean*, 24–26.
46 For more data, see Aragón and Mawby, *Free Movement of Persons in the Caribbean*, 36–38. It should be noted that data should be interpreted with caution, as the data are limited and not available for all countries.
47 Aragón and Mawby, *Free Movement of Persons in the Caribbean*, 59–60.
48 Illes, "Labour Migration in the Caribbean."

a service, pending a contract or letter of invitation to provide said service. However, IOM noted in a 2020 study that the movement of service providers had yet to be implemented within the CSME.[49]

Contingent rights—the ability of a migrant's spouse and immediate dependent children to migrate alongside their partner or parent—is an unsettled issue within the CSME regime, despite being established through the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas. Indeed, not a single CSME country has a provision in its immigration laws protecting the contingent rights of migrants' spouses and immediate dependent family members, although many facilitate this movement administratively.[50] In the case of Jamaica, though, this is only being partially facilitated, as spouses and dependents who are not CARICOM nationals are reportedly being treated according to their nationality and not granted contingent rights. Moreover, IOM reports that "a number of Member States have yet to create legislation that allows spouses to work."[51] Dr. Andrew Downes, Professor Emeritus of Economics at the University of the West Indies, notes that governments have been wary of providing contingent rights due to financial constraints and worries about the strain it may put on public services and jobs opportunities.[52]

The Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), established in 1981 by the Treaty of Basseterre, is another major mechanism through which mobility is facilitated in the region. The OECS is composed of Protocol Members Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, and Saint Vincent and The Grenadines, as well as Associate Members Anguilla, the British Virgin Islands, Martinique, and Guadeloupe. The Revised Treaty of Basseterre, signed in 2010, created the OECS Economic Union (ECEU), which establishes complete free movement for nationals of Protocol Member States, including work authorization without the need for a work permit.[53] This free mobility within the OECS has been particularly helpful in the wake of natural disasters and emergencies, such as Hurricane Maria in Dominica in 2017. In an interview, an expert on the Caribbean economy indicated that free mobility has facilitated both the movement of people fleeing these emergency situations as well as temporary labor migration in the aftermath to help with the rebuilding process.[54] Although data are scarce on the use of the ECEU free movement regime, IOM noted in a 2021 study that "key informants have reported that its implementation has been highly successful."[55]

Two Caribbean nations—Belize and the Dominican Republic—are also members of the Central American Integration System (Sistema de la Integración Centroamericana, or SICA), along with Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama. Despite their membership in SICA, Belize and the Dominican Republic do not necessarily take part in all of the multilateral organization's agreements. Most noteworthy in terms of mobility is these two countries' lack of participation in the Central American Agreement for Free Mobility (CA-4), which establishes free movement between El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua. In 2017, however, the Dominican Republic, along with El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras, eliminated visa requirements for each other's nationals, effectively establishing free movement between

49 Aragón and Mawby, *Free Movement of Persons in the Caribbean*, 58–59.
50 No information is available for Haiti and Montserrat. See Aragón and Mawby, *Free Movement of Persons in the Caribbean*, 61.
51 Aragón and Mawby, *Free Movement of Persons in the Caribbean*, 60–61.
52 Authors' interview with Dr. Andrew Downes.
53 Aragón and Mawby, *Free Movement of Persons in the Caribbean*, 29.
54 Authors' interview with Dr. Ralph Henry, Chairman of Kairi Consultants Ltd., October 12, 2021.
55 Párraga Espinoza, *Mechanisms for Labour Migration in the Caribbean*, 17.

the four countries, albeit without permission to work.[56] In addition, Belize and the Dominican Republic have taken part in a growing level of dialogue on migration within SICA, exemplified by the development of the Regional Comprehensive Migration Policy (Política Migratoria Regional Integral). The policy is geared toward comprehensive migration governance, addressing key topics such as labor migration, integration, protection, tourism, development, and coordination.[57] The SICA Member States, including Belize and the Dominican Republic, have notably expressed interest in promoting labor migration within the region. This can be seen in the Declaration of the Forum of Employment Directors in 2013, which included pledges for the coordination of orderly labor migration, and a 2015 memorandum of understanding with the ILO and the Council of Ministers of Central America and the Dominican Republic to work together on the dynamics of migration, among other commitments.[58]

In sum, free mobility regimes and other migration facilitation and coordination mechanisms established through multilateral bodies have been a hallmark of the Caribbean's approach to integration and intraregional movement. While the ECEU has championed full free mobility, the CSME has worked to facilitate the movement of certain workers, and Belize and the Dominican Republic have participated in some of SICA's migration-related initiatives, promoting cooperation between these Caribbean states and countries in the broader region.

A. Labor Migration

Although the focus when discussing Caribbean labor migration is often on emigration to North America and Europe, migration within the Caribbean is also typically driven by economic factors. Caribbean countries generally require migrants to have a job offer first in order to get a work permit, however, and many countries lack permits that would help attract labor in specific sectors.[59] This not only makes work permits difficult to obtain for many migrants but also ties migrants to a specific employer, limiting their ability to change jobs while maintaining legal status. Free mobility options, such as the CSME six-month stay, may not come with work authorization, but they can facilitate the process of securing a job offer.

Legislation in a number of countries also places restrictions on the employment of immigrants. To get a work permit in the region, the hiring firm is generally required to prove that no qualified national can take the job. The Bahamas, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, and Suriname all have such a requirement, while Belize broadly indicates that firms must prioritize hiring Belizean nationals over foreigners.[60] Furthermore, the Dominican Republic uniquely sets a quota that no more than 20 percent of a firm's employees may be noncitizens and additionally limits foreign workers' employment in the public sector.[61]

56 IOM, UNHCR, and SICA, *Hallazgos del estudio de línea base sobre migración y desplazamiento en la región del SICA*, 133.
57 IOM, UNHCR, and SICA, *Hallazgos del estudio de línea base sobre migración y desplazamiento en la región del SICA*, 41.
58 ILO, *Labour Migration in Latin America and the Caribbean*, 92–93.
59 Párraga Espinoza, *Mechanisms for Labour Migration in the Caribbean*.
60 IOM, *Migration in the Caribbean*, 7; IOM, *Migration Governance Indicators: Profile 2019 | Jamaica* (Geneva: IOM, 2019), 12; IOM, *Suriname Needs Assessment on Migration Governance*, 26; IOM, UNHCR, and SICA, *Hallazgos del estudio de línea base sobre migración y desplazamiento en la región del SICA*, 98.
61 IOM, UNHCR, and SICA, *Hallazgos del estudio de línea base sobre migración y desplazamiento en la región del SICA*, 95, 98.

A 2021 comprehensive study by the IOM of labor migration mechanisms in the Caribbean found that 13 are currently in force, though not all are operational.[62] The study also notes that the creation of formal mechanisms for labor migration has been on the rise over the last two decades, often within multilateral frameworks. Two bilateral agreements have also been established—a 2002 agreement between the Dominican Republic and Spain and a 2014 agreement between Belize and Guatemala—but are not currently implemented, although a 2019 memorandum of understanding between the Dominican Republic and Spain for "[consolidating] collaborative work in trade, investment, and production chains, including labor" has entered into force and is active.[63]

Of the six temporary labor migration agreements identified by the IOM study, all relate to the movement of Caribbean workers to countries outside the region (see Table 8). This reflects both the emigration-heavy nature of Caribbean labor migration and the limited legal pathways for temporary labor migration within the region, aside from the recently established free mobility regimes. As a result, some Caribbean nationals find alternative routes to migrate for work. In some cases, they may use tourist visas and asylum applications, particularly for informal labor.[64] Some informal workers may also use the CSME six-month stay similarly, although a lack of data makes this difficult to prove. The relatively limited options to move legally within the region for work and the use of these alternative routes can promote visa overstay, increasing the population of irregular migrants, and make migrants more likely to take up informal work, which can increase their vulnerability to exploitation and abuse.

The relatively limited options to move legally within the region for work and the use of these alternative routes can promote visa overstay, increasing the population of irregular migrants, and make migrants more likely to take up informal work, which can increase their vulnerability to exploitation and abuse.

62 Párraga Espinoza, *Mechanisms for Labour Migration in the Caribbean*, 26.
63 Párraga Espinoza, *Mechanisms for Labour Migration in the Caribbean*, 14–15.
64 Párraga Espinoza, *Mechanisms for Labour Migration in the Caribbean*, 24.

TABLE 8

Active Labor Migration Mechanisms in the Caribbean, as of 2021

Name	Participating States	Type of Regime	Type of Movement	Description
Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas (ratified 2002–06)	Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago	Multilateral free movement	Intraregional	This revised treaty created the Caribbean Community (CARICOM)'s Caribbean Single Market and Economy (CSME)
Revised Treaty of Basseterre (ratified 2014)	Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	Multilateral free movement	Intraregional	This revised treaty created the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS)'s Eastern Caribbean Economic Union (ECEU)
Canada's Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program (ratified 1974)	Canada with Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica, Montserrat, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago	Temporary Work Program	Extraregional emigration	Bilateral agreements between Canada and participating countries allow for temporary agricultural work in Canada for a maximum of eight-month terms
United States' H-2A Visa Program for Temporary Agricultural Workers (ratified 1986)	United States with Barbados, Grenada, Jamaica, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	Temporary Work Program	Extraregional emigration	Visas for temporary agricultural work in the United States
United States' H-2B Visa Program for Non-Agricultural Workers (ratified 1986)	United States with Barbados, Grenada, Jamaica, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	Temporary Work Program	Extraregional emigration	Visas for temporary nonagricultural work in the United States (such as hospitality and services)
United States' J1 Visa Exchange Visitor Program (ratified 1961)	United States, available to citizens of almost all countries	Temporary Work Program	Extraregional emigration	Visas for medium- and high-skilled workers who apply through a sponsor to work temporarily in the United States in defined professions and programs

TABLE 8 (cont.)

Active Labor Migration Mechanisms in the Caribbean, as of 2021

Name	Participating States	Type of Regime	Type of Movement	Description
Japan Exchange and Teaching Program (ratified 1987)	Japan with Barbados, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	Temporary Work Program	Extraregional emigration	Program allowing temporary migration to Japan for teachers, sportspersons, and medium- and high-skilled workers
Mexico's Visitor Card Program for Cross Border Workers (TVTF) (ratified 2012)	Mexico with Guatemala and Belize	Temporary Work Program	Extraregional emigration	Program allowing the temporary labor migration (mainly in construction, agriculture, and services) of Guatemalans and Belizeans to southern Mexico (Campeche, Chiapas, Tabasco, and Quintana Roo)
Agreement between CARICOM and the Government of the Republic of Costa Rica (signed 2005, entry-into-force dates vary by country)	Costa Rica with most CARICOM Member States (Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago)	Commercial Agreement	N/A	Some labor-related clauses in Chapter XI to facilitate the temporary entry of workers in countries party to the agreement
Economic Partnership Agreement between the Caribbean Forum (CARIFORUM) Member States and the European Union (EU) (signed and entered into force in 2008 for all countries except Haiti)	European Union with Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti,* Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago	Commercial Agreement	N/A	Some labor-related clauses in Chapter 4, Articles 80–84 to facilitate the temporary entry of workers in countries party to the agreement * While Haiti signed the CARIFORUM-EU agreement in 2009, it has yet to ratify and implement it.

Source: María Gabriela Párraga Espinoza, *Mechanisms for Labour Migration in the Caribbean* (San José, Costa Rica: IOM, 2021).

Informal workers' vulnerability to exploitation is exacerbated by several additional factors. One is the lack of a gender-differentiated approach within Caribbean labor migration mechanisms,[65] which would help identify and intervene in sectors where workplace abuse of vulnerable migrant workers (often women in domestic services) is more likely. Another factor is the sectors in which migrant laborers often work. Migrants are more likely to work in sectors that are undesirable to a country's nationals and in which exploitation is more common, including agriculture, construction, and domestic work, with migrant women particularly prevalent in the last of these sectors.[66] In the Dominican Republic, almost 90 percent of Haitians work in agriculture, construction, commerce, or "other services," which is typically informal, low-income, and unstable work, according to the ILO.[67] Haitian workers in The Bahamas are primarily concentrated in these same sectors as well.[68] Improving access to labor migration pathways and regularization efforts through which irregular migrants in a country can apply for status may help address migrant workers' vulnerability by enabling them to access the formal labor market and reducing fears of deportation, which can keep migrants from reporting labor exploitation.

Some Caribbean countries have legal pathways that provide a regular status to migrant workers in immigrant-dense sectors, which can reduce opportunities for abuse. In Belize, Central American migrants, principally from Guatemala, are typically recruited from border communities to work in the agricultural sector. Indeed, 79 percent of foreign labor in Belize is in the agriculture, hunting, and forestry sectors. Belize grants Temporary Employment Permits to many of these workers, and this regular status can help protect workers to some extent from exploitation. However, the fact that the permit is specifically linked to a worker's employer may still keep some workers from reporting abusive labor practices.[69]

The overall dearth of formal labor migration pathways and quality, safe jobs for migrants is likely due in part to the socioeconomic context in many Caribbean countries. The region is generally plagued by high levels of unemployment, disproportionately so among the youth, with more than 30 percent of the region's young women and 20 percent of young men unemployed as of 2015.[70] The lack of job opportunities is thus both a driver of intraregional migration and an obstacle to formal labor markets becoming more open to migrant workers.

When intraregional labor migration does occur, it is essentially due to private-sector demand for labor and a scarcity of local workers, often linked to rapid economic growth and small native populations. This has been seen most notably in the burgeoning tourism sectors of small Caribbean islands, including Antigua and Barbuda, Anguilla, Saint Kitts and Nevis, and Turks and Caicos.[71] The development of the oil industry in Guyana has created similar conditions, with the country expected to have an overall labor shortage of 160,000 workers in the coming years.[72]

65 Párraga Espinoza, *Mechanisms for Labour Migration in the Caribbean*, 28–30.
66 IOM, *Migration Governance in the Caribbean*, 75.
67 ILO, *Labour Migration in Latin America and the Caribbean*, 32.
68 Fernández-Alfaro and Pascua, "Migration Management Challenges in the Caribbean," 80.
69 IOM, *Belize Needs Assessment on Migration Governance*, 26; ILO, *Labour Migration in Latin America and the Caribbean*, 29.
70 Párraga Espinoza, *Mechanisms for Labour Migration in the Caribbean*, 18.
71 Authors' interview with Dr. Ralph Henry.
72 Camila Idrovo, Jermaine Grant, and Julia Romani Yanoff, "Discovery of Oil Could Bring Migrant Labor Opportunities and Climate Displacement Challenges for Guyana," *Migration Information Source*, July 27, 2022.

Although a scarcity of high-skilled workers is also a notable driver of intraregional labor migration, low-skilled labor is by far the prevailing mode of work. Indeed, roughly two-thirds of all labor conducted in the Caribbean is low-skilled work in the service industry, with women overrepresented in this field.[73] As a result, temporary short- and long-term work permits are utilized more frequently than special pathways for higher-skilled workers such as CSME's Skills Certificates. Among countries studied in an IOM report, Antigua and Barbuda granted 1,685 long-term work permits (both to Caribbean nationals and extraregional migrants) in 2017, the most in the CARICOM region. By comparison, among the principal countries of study of the present report, Jamaica granted 220 Skills Certificates in 2017, followed by Trinidad and Tobago (133 certificates), Guyana (43), and Barbados (35).[74]

Government-led initiatives to identify labor gaps and needs can be a crucial way to facilitate both labor migration and economic development. Although some initiatives of this kind exist in the region, they are often limited. For example, Suriname has a Labor Market Information System, but the ILO points to a need to strengthen it in order to better "identify the type of skills and occupations needed in the labor market."[75] To aid understanding of how migration can help fill labor gaps, the ILO, IADB, and others have been working to provide funding for labor needs information systems in the region.

B. Educational Migration

Founded in 1948, the University of the West Indies (UWI) is a public university system serving the anglophone Caribbean. It is unique among higher education institutions around the world for its geographical scope, serving several countries and thus facilitating movement in the Caribbean. With campuses in Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados, and Antigua and Barbuda, UWI has both contributed to and, over time, reduced the level of educational migration in the region.[76]

With campuses in Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados, and Antigua and Barbuda, UWI has both contributed to and, over time, reduced the level of educational migration in the region.

The UWI system has expanded considerably over time. From its beginnings with just a Jamaica campus, the system added campuses in Trinidad and Tobago and Barbados in the 1960s and a campus in Antigua and Barbuda in 2019. Then in 2007, UWI launched a virtual Open Campus, with roots in the UWI Distance Education Centre that was established in 1996. As this expansion has brought higher education closer to home for many Caribbean residents, or made virtual learning an option, this has resulted in less desire to migrate for educational purposes.[77] Technological developments and the launch of UWI's Open Campus have played a particularly important role in expanding access to education for those living on smaller islands that would not be able

73 Párraga Espinoza, *Mechanisms for Labour Migration in the Caribbean*, 4.
74 Aragón and Mawby, *Free Movement of Persons in the Caribbean*, 36–37.
75 IOM, *Suriname Needs Assessment on Migration Governance*, 26.
76 Authors' interview with Dr. Richard Bernal, former Ambassador of Jamaica to the United States and Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Global Affairs at the University of the West Indies, October 14, 2021.
77 Authors' interview with Dr. Andrew Downes.

to host a full campus.[78] Similarly, the establishment and expansion of national universities in Caribbean countries has decreased the need to migrate in order to study, as different subjects and general access to higher education have become more widespread.[79]

Outside of the UWI system, migration for higher educational purposes is generally limited in the Caribbean. For its part, though, the Dominican Republic has grown as a destination for higher education in recent years, with international enrollment steadily increasing. The country received 3,600 international higher education students in 2006, 7,300 in 2011, and 10,700 in 2015, according to official government data.[80] Although the United States and Dominica represented the top countries of origin for international students in the Dominican Republic between 2006 and 2009, Haitians represented the majority starting in 2010, a shift partially caused by the earthquake in that country in the same year.[81] It is noteworthy that student visas in the Dominican Republic require students to leave the country and return home on a monthly basis, or otherwise to pay a fine of 800 RD (approximately USD 15).[82] Whether they take on the additional financial and academic costs of monthly travel or pay the fine, this provision creates an added burden for many already financially burdened international students.

For students completing their degree in another Caribbean country, there is a general lack of policies to facilitate their transition from study to permanent residence. However, a regional expert suggested in an interview that those who wish to stay in their countries of study after graduation tend to have built roots and networks there, and that some remain in the country even without a permit to do so, thus turning educational migration into irregular stay.[83]

C. Other Migration Pathways

Migration of Health-Care Professionals

In terms of other types of migration within and from the region, the movement of health-care workers is particularly noteworthy. Most Caribbean countries face challenges related to the emigration of health-care professionals, often to countries in the Global North, such as the United States and United Kingdom. This results in a shortage of personnel in many Caribbean countries' health-care systems, most notably of nurses. For example, 40 percent of vacant nursing positions in the anglophone Caribbean in 2015 were reportedly left vacant because of out-migration.[84] And the problem is not going away: among 573 Caribbean health-care professionals surveyed by the Pan American Health Organization in 2018, three in five reported they

78 Authors' interview with Dr. Andrew Downes; authors' interview with Dr. Richard Bernal.
79 Authors' interview with Dr. Andrew Downes.
80 IOM and National Institute of Migration of the Dominican Republic, *Perfil Migratorio de República Dominicana* (Santo Domingo: IOM and National Institute of Migration of the Dominican Republic, 2017), 131.
81 IOM and National Institute of Migration of the Dominican Republic, *Perfil Migratorio de República Dominicana*, 131, 133.
82 Jenny Miner, "Migration for Education: Haitian University Students in the Dominican Republic" (senior thesis, paper no. 89, Pomona College, Claremont, CA, 2013), 36.
83 Authors' interview with Dr. Richard Bernal.
84 Joy Jacobson, "The Complexities of Nurse Migration American," *Journal of Nursing* 115, no. 12 (2015); Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), *Health in the Americas+, 2017 Edition* (Washington, DC: PAHO, 2017); Párraga Espinoza, *Mechanisms for Labour Migration in the Caribbean*, 4; Shamel Rolle Sands, Kenchera Ingraham, and Bukola Oladunni Salami, "Caribbean Nurse Migration—A Scoping Review," *Human Resources for Health* 18, no. 19 (2020).

would emigrate if given the opportunity.[85] Interestingly, after the United States, United Kingdom, and Canada, the principal destinations for nurses leaving Caribbean countries are within the regional: The Bahamas and the Cayman Islands.[86]

The migration of health-care professionals has thus become both a form of brain drain from the region and, in some cases, a means of filling labor gaps through intraregional migration. Many Caribbean countries have turned to Cuba, in particular, as a source of health-care professionals. Indeed, most Cuban migration to the anglophone Caribbean has been of workers in the health sector. Belize has established bilateral agreements with Cuba to facilitate the immigration of Cuban health-care professionals, as has Suriname, which has also recruited health-care workers from the Philippines.[87] There has also been a fair amount of exchange between Guyana and Cuba, with Guyanese doctors studying in Cuba and Cuban doctors working in Guyana.[88]

The migration of health-care professionals has thus become both a form of brain drain from the region and, in some cases, a means of filling labor gaps through intraregional migration.

National, regional, and international actors (including the Pan American Health Organization) established further migration pathways for health-care workers through the creation of the Managed Migration Program of the Caribbean in 2001. This program has facilitated the temporary migration of health-care professionals among participating countries in a way that is similar to medical tourism programs that seek to encourage members of a country's diaspora to temporarily return and other health-care professionals to visit for a certain period in order to help fill labor shortages and facilitate knowledge transfer.[89]

Investor Visas

Investor visas have become increasingly common in recent years but are still not a significant source of migration in the region. Several Caribbean countries have created opportunities for foreigner nationals to immigrate if they invest a certain amount of money in the country, generally upwards of USD 100,000. In the anglophone Caribbean, Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, Saint Kitts and Nevis, and Saint Lucia all have citizenship-by-investment programs, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is considering creating such a program.[90] To date, investment-based migration is a pathways that has mainly been used by extraregional migrants, typically to expand their access to visa-free movement to other countries; it has not been a significant pathway for intraregional migration.

85 PAHO, *Health Workers Perception and Migration in the Caribbean Region* (Washington, DC: PAHO, 2019), 13.
86 Rolle Sands, Ingraham, and Oladunni Salami, "Caribbean Nurse Migration."
87 IOM, *Belize Needs Assessment on Migration Governance*, 26; IOM, *Suriname Needs Assessment on Migration Governance*, 27.
88 IOM, *Guyana Needs Assessment on Migration Governance*, 23.
89 See Rolle Sands, Ingraham, and Oladunni Salami, "Caribbean Nurse Migration"; Marla E. Salmon, Jean Yan, Hermi Hewitt, and Victoria Guisinger, "Managed Migration: The Caribbean Approach to Addressing Nursing Services Capacity," *Health Services Research* 42, no. 3 (2007): 1354–1372.
90 Kristy A. Belton, *Comparative Regional Report on Citizenship Law: Anglophone Caribbean* (Fiesole, Italy: European University Institute, 2020), 20–21, 28–29.

Family Reunification

An individual's migration does not occur in a vacuum, as immigrants often have family members and dependents who may wish to move with them. As a result, the right to family reunification is a crucial migration pathway. As discussed previously, contingency rights are technically a part of the CSME regime, although access to family reunification varies in practice and is not legally guaranteed.[91]

While the extent to which family reunification is facilitated varies by country, most Caribbean nations allow it to some degree.

While the extent to which family reunification is facilitated varies by country, most Caribbean nations allow it to some degree. Belize, Guyana, and Trinidad and Tobago provide wide-ranging access to family reunification, including for any members of an immigrant's extended family who are dependents. In the Dominican Republic, spouses and minor children have access to family reunification, as do adult children with disabilities. Similarly, Barbados allows family reunification for any extended family who is a dependent due to a disability or age, although family reunification is only an option for specific categories of immigrants, including those who have established themselves successfully in Barbados in a profession, trade, business, or agricultural enterprise, and those who are retirees with sufficient means. The Bahamas and Suriname also restrict which categories of migrants are allowed to bring family members to join them, with only permanent residents and citizens able to reunify with their spouse and children. In Jamaica, meanwhile, there is no legal framework or explicit right to family reunification for non-CARICOM nationals.[92]

D. Pathways to Permanency

The path to permanency in a country through permanent residence or citizenship is an important aspect of migration governance, particularly from an integration- and development-oriented perspective. In addition to CSME and ECEU pathways to indefinite stay, immigrants with a regular status have relatively broad access to permanent residency in Caribbean countries, and their spouses and immediate dependent children are generally granted permanent residency as a contingent right (see Table 9).

91 Acosta and Harris, *Migration Policy Regimes in Latin America and the Caribbean*.
92 Acosta and Harris, *Migration Policy Regimes in Latin America and the Caribbean*.

TABLE 9

Pathways to Permanent Residency and Citizenship in Caribbean Countries

Country	Permanent Residency Requirements	Citizenship Requirements
The Bahamas	The Immigration Board has discretion over permanent residency, and there is no requirement for a minimum period of time spent in the country prior to seeking permanent residency. The requirements to be considered are that the individual is at least 18 years old and demonstrates good character and the intention of residing permanently in the country.	10+ years of residence
Barbados	5+ years of residence	8+ years of residence, but discretionary
Belize	Available to adults who have resided continuously in the country for at least one year—including temporary employment permit holders and student permit holders—and who can prove they can sustain themselves and any dependents financially. Any minor who has resided in the country for at least ten years, including those who entered the country irregularly, may apply for permanent residency.	5+ years of permanent residence
Dominican Republic	5+ years of residence, but investors, retirees, and pensioners can apply without waiting	2+ years of permanent residence
Guyana	Does not grant permanent residency, although migrant workers and students may apply for renewable permits that last three years, and businesspersons for permits that last five years	7+ years of residence, but 5+ years of residence for Commonwealth citizens
Jamaica	3+ years of employment and residence, but spouses of a Jamaican citizen, dependents of a permanent resident or citizen, and retirees can apply without waiting	7+ years of residence, but 5+ years of residence for Irish and Commonwealth citizens; some level of discretion from the minister responsible for immigration
Suriname	5+ years of residence	5+ years of residence, but also granted to those who turn 18 if they resided in the country for the three years immediately preceding, except in the case of children of foreign diplomats
Trinidad and Tobago	5+ years of residence, although the minister responsible for immigration may apply discretion and consider a case so long as the applicant has at least one year of residence. Applicants must demonstrate that they have "established or [are] likely to be able to establish [themselves] successfully in Trinidad and Tobago in a profession, trade, self-operating business, or agricultural enterprise and who [have] sufficient means of support to maintain [themselves] and [their] immediate family in Trinidad and Tobago," such as through education or occupational qualifications.	8+ years of residence, but 5+ years of residence for Irish and Commonwealth citizens, British protected persons, and those who have had service under the government

Sources: Diego Acosta and Jeremy Harris, *Migration Policy Regimes in Latin America and the Caribbean: Immigration, Regional Free Movement, Refuge, and Nationality* (Washington, DC: IADB, 2022); IOM, "Migration Governance Snapshot: Dominican Republic" (country snapshot, IOM, Geneva, May 2018), 2; IOM, *Suriname Needs Assessment on Migration Governance*, 7; IOM, *Belize Needs Assessment on Migration Governance* (San José, Costa Rica: IOM, 2021), 7; IOM, *Guyana Needs Assessment on Migration Governance* (San José, Costa Rica: IOM, 2021), 6–7; Government of Trinidad and Tobago, "Immigration Act," Chapter 18, Part 1, Section 6 (December 31, 2016).

5 Climate Change, Natural Disasters, and Migration

Climate change is a pressing issue with implications for when and under what conditions people move, both within and across borders. The Caribbean is one of the world regions most affected by climate change, and the countries of the OECS are among "the top ten most disaster-prone countries in the world when considering disasters per land area or percentage of population."[93] Similarly, Puerto Rico, Haiti, and Dominica ranked in 1st, 3rd, and 10th place, respectively, in the Global Climate Risk Index's cumulative analysis for 1999 to 2018.[94]

Natural disasters are an important driver of movement in the Caribbean, including in terms of displacement within countries, into neighboring countries, and to countries outside of the region.[95] Between 2008 and 2017, there were 6,616,620 total incidents of Caribbean nationals being internally displaced, with Cuba (4,185,000), Haiti (2,012,500), and the Dominican Republic (242,900) the Caribbean countries with the greatest number of displacements during the period.[96] Hurricanes are perhaps the most impactful type of natural disaster in the region and are becoming more frequent and more powerful. For instance, in just one month in 2017, Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria displaced approximately 3 million people, including 2 million who were displaced within a two-week period by Hurricane Irma.[97] In the years shortly before and after, Hurricanes Matthew (2016) and Dorian (2019) displaced an estimated 175,000 Haitians and 9,840 Bahamians.[98]

Natural disasters are an important driver of movement in the Caribbean, including in terms of displacement within countries, into neighboring countries, and to countries outside of the region.

Between 2000 and 2021, the Caribbean experienced nine earthquakes, with the 2010 earthquake in Haiti by far the most impactful. The 220,000 lives lost in Haiti represented 98 percent of all deaths caused by earthquakes over a 20-year period throughout Latin America and the Caribbean.[99] The earthquake also resulted in at least 2 million internal displacements, plus significant emigration, principally to the Dominican Republic, Brazil, and Chile.[100]

93 Belton, *Comparative Regional Report on Citizenship Law*, 28.

94 David Eckstein, Vera Künzel, Laura Schäfer, and Maik Winges, "Global Climate Risk Index 2020" (briefing paper, Germanwatch, Bonn, Germany, 2019).

95 For the purposes of this report, displacement is defined as forced movement. Internal displacement more specifically is "the forced movement of people within the country they live in," as defined by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, "Internal Displacement," accessed December 20, 2021.

96 These numbers are of displacement incidents and not unique individuals who were displaced. Furthermore, "practical limitations in the data collection methods suggest that the true figure for overall internal displacements in the context of rapid-onset disasters is likely to be higher." It should be noted that Belize is considered a part of Central America and not the Caribbean in these data. See David James Cantor, *Cross-Border Displacement, Climate Change, and Disasters: Latin America and the Caribbean* (N.p.: Platform on Disaster Displacement and UNHCR, 2018), 13, 74–75.

97 Ama Francis, *Free Movement Agreements and Climate-Induced Migration: A Caribbean Case Study* (New York: Columbia Law School, Sabin Center for Climate Change Law, 2019), 3; IOM, *Migration Governance in the Caribbean*, 42.

98 John Marazita, *Displacement in Paradise: Hurricane Dorian Slams the Bahamas* (Geneva: Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, 2020); Alice Thomas, *Two Steps Back: Haiti Still Reeling from Hurricane Matthew* (Washington, DC: Refugees International, 2017).

99 United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), *Natural Disasters in Latin America and the Caribbean, 2000-2019* (Panama: OCHA, 2020), 9.

100 Caitlyn Yates, "Haitian Migration through the Americas: A Decade in the Making," *Migration Information Source,* September 30, 2021.

Haiti was struck by another severe earthquake on August 14, 2021. This earthquake affected the south of the country and resulted in at least 2,200 deaths,[101] and it was followed immediately by Tropical Storm Grace. In addition to historic levels of migration to the United States and Dominican Republic, this storm and its aftermath (including limited access to services, violence, and insecurity) increased migration from Haiti.

The region has been experiencing increases in the average air temperature and increasingly frequent and intense extreme events. Along with the devastation that natural disasters inflict, countries are dealing with saltwater intrusion due to rising sea levels and increased coastal flooding. The Dominican Republic was among the ten countries most affected by floods in Latin America and the Caribbean between 2000 and 2019, with close to 3 million people affected.[102] Flooding caused by 2010 Tropical Storm Nicole also seriously damaged infrastructure in Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.[103]

Drought is another climatic condition that can act as a push factor for migration in the region, particularly on the island of Hispaniola, shared by Haiti and the Dominican Republic. Between 2000 and 2019, more than 4.6 million Haitians were affected by drought.[104] The Dominican Republic has struggled with both drought and soil erosion, which have had negative effects on food security and the country's agriculture sector, a major driver of the economy.[105]

Although more rare, the Caribbean has also experienced volcanic eruptions. There are active volcanoes in Guadeloupe, Martinique, Montserrat, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and a highly active submarine volcano near Grenada and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.[106] Volcanic eruptions between 1995 and 1997 in Montserrat displaced about two-thirds of the island's 11,500 residents, 4,000 of whom moved to the United Kingdom.[107]

The Region's Response to Climate-Related Displacement

Generally, national policies related to emergencies do not explicitly include migrant-focused provisions and thus do not consider their unique vulnerabilities and needs, such as language barriers. Furthermore, there is a lack of a link in policy between environmental disaster-reduction and mobility and a lack of a proactive approaches to the issue. This stands in contrast to the approach taken by some Pacific Island nations, where the government has purchased land in relatively disaster-safe parts of the country to facilitate the

101 Caitlyn Yates, "Haitian Migration through the Americas."
102 OCHA, *Natural Disasters in Latin America and the Caribbean*, 16.
103 IOM, *Migration Governance in the Caribbean*, 43.
104 OCHA, *Natural Disasters in Latin America and the Caribbean*, 14–15.
105 IOM, UNHCR, and SICA, *Hallazgos del estudio de línea base sobre migración y desplazamiento en la región del SICA*, 77; Cantor, *Cross-Border Displacement, Climate Change, and Disasters*, 17.
106 OCHA, *Natural Disasters in Latin America and the Caribbean*, 12.
107 BBC News, "Montserrat Evacuation Remembered," BBC News, September 12, 2005.

movement of their nationals.[108] Instead, Caribbean policies have generally been reactive, with governments facilitating the movement of those displaced by natural disasters on an ad hoc basis.

The region's response to displacement caused by Haiti's 2010 earthquake was exemplary of this ad hoc approach. The governments of The Bahamas, Jamaica, and Turks and Caicos temporarily suspended deportations of Haitians, while Dominica "[allowed] Haitians already in the country to extend their stay automatically for six months, regardless of their immigration status."[109] The Dominican Republic also provided special protection, suspending deportations of Haitians, allowing special entry to certain groups of Haitians, and granting humanitarian visas to allow relatives to visit Haitians in the Dominican Republic who had been affected by the earthquake and were receiving medical attention.

In addition, the region's free mobility regimes—the ECEU and CSME's six-month stay—have been helpful for facilitating the movement of displaced people during times of environmental crisis. Following Hurricane Maria in 2017, for example, Trinidad and Tobago accepted many Dominicans through the CSME six-month stay, as did Antigua and Barbuda, Grenada, Saint Lucia, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines through the ECEU.[110] These free mobility regimes also facilitate the movement of people engaged in rebuilding efforts in the aftermath of such disasters. As climate change persists and future natural disasters strike, these free mobility regimes will continue to be important pathways to facilitate movement and responses in the region.

The region's free mobility regimes—the ECEU and CSME's six-month stay—have been helpful for facilitating the movement of displaced people during times of environmental crisis.

Yet, even as intraregional migration offers some adaptive capacity, it may not match the scale of the challenge. The Caribbean is particularly vulnerable to the adverse consequence of climate change due to its geographic location, lack of resilient infrastructure, and lack of resources and development to build resilience.[111] Without external funding and assistance in developing climate-adaptation measures, climate change is and will continue to be a major cause of emigration from the Caribbean to North America and elsewhere.[112]

108 Authors' interview with Dr. Natalie Dietrich Jones, Research Fellow at the University of the West Indies, October 28, 2021. For further discussion of migration as an adaptation strategy in response to climate change, see Adelle Thomas and Lisa Benjamin, "Policies and Mechanisms to Address Climate-Induced Migration and Displacement in Pacific and Caribbean Small Island Developing States," *International Journal of Climate Change Strategies and Management* 10, no. 1 (2018). The Bahamas, though, have notably had some success relocating communities away from the shoreline in order to reduce displacement risk and build resilience. See Michela Macchiavello and Pablo Escribano, "Labour Migration as a Climate Change Adaptation Strategy in the Caribbean" (presentation, IOM, March 6, 2019).

109 Cantor, *Cross-Border Displacement, Climate Change, and Disasters*, 61.

110 Francis, *Free Movement Agreements and Climate-Induced Migration*, 4.

111 Pablo Escribano, "Labour Migration in the Caribbean: Mechanisms, Challenges, and Good Practices" (intervention by Regional Thematic Specialist in Migration, Environment, and Climate Change, IOM Regional Office for Central America, North America, and the Caribbean during public event, IOM, September 1, 2021); OCHA, *Natural Disasters in Latin America and the Caribbean*, 11.

112 Authors' interview with Dr. Ralph Henry.

6 Immigrant Integration

Understanding the Caribbean's diverse migration pathways and the opportunities migrants have to access other nations' economies are core to understanding the region's migration systems. Another central dimension is the experience of immigrants once they arrive in a receiving country. This section explores how Caribbean governments have developed measures to address migrants in irregular status and to support migrants' access to basic education and health services. The section concludes with insights into the social dimensions of immigrant integration, particularly how perceived differences in social class between migrants and members of receiving countries affect social cohesion.

A. Regularization Measures

Despite the various mechanisms for regular migration and free mobility—and, perhaps, due to their limitations, which cause many to overstay—irregular migration is prevalent in the Caribbean. This has prompted some countries to conduct regularization measures. Since 2000, five of the countries at the heart of this study have enacted special measures to grant a regular status to irregular migrants in their territory: Belize, Curaçao, the Dominican Republic, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago. There have been seven such special measures during the period, each regularizing between a few thousand to hundreds of thousands of individuals. This has been important, particularly in smaller countries, but irregularity remains widespread.

Belize has implemented and maintained a series of regularization initiatives, including a pathway to permanency for irregular migrants who arrived in the country as children. Most recently, the country operated a Special Regularization Period from October 1 to December 31, 2021, for "migrants who entered the country legally and who require Visitors Permit extensions to remain in Belize and who have not been able to maintain a regular status between April 2020 and September 2021."[113] Belize has also implemented nonextraordinary regularization programs, such as the extension of temporary work permits to irregular migrants already working in the country and the regularization of dependents of regular migrants and spouses, children, and parents of Belizean nationals.[114]

Since December 7, 2021, Belize has been developing an amnesty process for irregular migrants whose registration process began between August 2, 2022, and February 28, 2023. The process is aimed at those who have resided in the country since before 2017 and meet the educational, work, or family reunification requirements.[115] The beneficiaries will be able to obtain permanent resident status, with the option of obtaining citizenship. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade, and Immigration expects that this process may benefit the estimated 40,000 to 60,000 migrants in irregular status in the country.[116]

113 Government of Belize, "Regularization of Foreign Nationals" (press release, September 28, 2021). The new regularization effort is set to affect more than 40,000 migrants.
114 See IOM, *Regional Study: Migratory Regularization Programmes and Processes* (San José, Costa Rica: IOM, 2021), 22–26.
115 Government of Belize, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade, and Immigration, "Amnesty 2022: Who Qualify?," accessed February 9, 2023.
116 Government of Belize, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade, and Immigration, "Amnesty 2022: Background Information," accessed February 9, 2023.

The Dominican Republic's National Plan for the Regularization of Foreigners, the country's first regularization program, was established in 2013. This program was open for 18 months and sought to regularize all irregular migrants who had entered the country prior to October 2011.[117] In total, approximately 250,000 migrants regularized their status through this program, 98 percent of whom were Haitians.[118]

A few years earlier, in 2009 and 2010, Suriname conducted its first-ever regularization program as well. Although approximately 18,000 migrants registered for this program—entitled Project Illegals I—only 7,000 ultimately submitted completed applications. This program was followed by Project Illegals II in 2014, which regularized more than 2,000 irregular migrants who had entered the country before the end of 2013, the majority of whom were Haitians.[119]

Extraordinary regularization measures have also been used as a key tool to respond to influxes of Venezuelan migration in recent years. In June 2019, Trinidad and Tobago conducted a campaign to register all Venezuelans living in the country at the time, regularizing 16,523 adults and approximately 2,500 children by the end of 2020. These migrants were then able to re-register and extend their regular status in March and April 2021.[120] In March 2020, those who registered for the amnesty in 2019 were granted an additional year to live and work in Trinidad and Tobago, and additional one-year extensions have since been granted.[121]

In 2021, the Dominican Republic announced a regularization program for the estimated 100,000 Venezuelan irregular migrants in the country, although the process was limited to those who had entered the country legally between January 2014 and March 2020. During the first period of the process, 42,952 Venezuelans registered.[122] In the case of Curaçao, the government implemented a regularization measure in 2021 to grant temporary residence for one year to all foreigners who had legally entered the country before COVID-19 was officially declared a pandemic in March 2020. At least 9,000 irregular migrants were estimated to be in the country, and 3,000 to 4,000 were expected to be regularized.[123] The program later extended the registration period until the end of 2021.[124]

While regularization programs are unlikely to reach all migrants in an irregular status, they afford beneficiaries the opportunity, albeit with limitations, to access jobs and basic services to sustain themselves and their families. Such measures also improve a government's information about the country's total population and the gaps between needs for and the delivery of services to vulnerable segments of the population.

117 See IOM, *Regional Study*, 56–58, 82–88.
118 IOM and National Institute of Migration of the Dominican Republic, *Perfil Migratorio de República Dominicana*, 138.
119 Marieke Heemskerk and Celine Duijves, *Suriname Migration Profile: A Study on Emigration from, and Immigration into Suriname* (Georgetown, Guyana: IOM, 2015), 79–80; Acosta and Harris, *Migration Policy Regimes in Latin America and the Caribbean*.
120 R4V, "Integration Background Notes – Caribbean" (background notes, R4V, May 2021), 5.
121 The most recent extension allowed Venezuelans to live and work in the country until December 31, 2022. See Trinidad and Tobago Newsday, "Venezuelans Get One-Year Work Permit Extension," Trinidad and Tobago Newsday, March 8, 2022. As of writing, another extension has not been announced.
122 See Jordi Amaral, "Regularization Initiatives for Venezuelan Migrants in the Dominican Republic and Curaçao Are Step Towards Inclusion," Migration Policy Institute (MPI) Latin America and the Caribbean Migration Portal, July 2021.
123 See Amaral, "Regularization Initiatives for Venezuelan Migrants."
124 Government of Curaçao Admission Office, "Trayekto Integrashon Responsabel a keda prolongá" (news release, October 5, 2021); R4V, "Caribbean" (situation report, R4V, September 2021).

B. Access to Education

Access to education is a crucial part of integration for immigrant children and a key building block for long-term, inclusive development. Across Caribbean countries, migrants and refugees generally have a right to an education, but there are gaps between policy and practice, and noncitizens may at times find it difficult to exercise this right.

Across Caribbean countries, migrants and refugees generally have a right to an education, but there are gaps between policy and practice.

In Guyana, access to education is universal from nursery to secondary school, allowing all migrants and refugees, regardless of legal status, to attend school.[125] The Bahamas, too, provides universal access to education regardless of status,[126] and within the ECEU (the OECS's free movement regime), all OECS nationals have full, equal access to education.[127] By contrast, Trinidad and Tobago's legal frameworks do not grant migrant and refugee minors a right to an education. Although some such children have access to education despite this lack of legal protection, it is well documented that Venezuelan children in the country have very limited access.[128]

In the Dominican Republic, all migrant and refugee children have a right to access an education, regardless of migratory status. This universal access is protected in both the country's *Education Law* and Article 63 of its constitution.[129] However, a 2019 study from IOM, UNHCR, and SICA notes that irregular Haitian migrants still struggled to access education: 52 percent of Haitian children were attending primary school in comparison to 82 percent of other immigrant children and 79 percent of children born in the Dominican Republic to immigrant parents.[130] Belize, too, guarantees migrant children's right to education regardless of status, including them in provisions that make education mandatory until age 14.[131] The Belizean government has also established a bilateral agreement with Guatemala to facilitate the daily pendular migration of nationals from both countries in order to attend pre-primary, primary, or secondary school.[132] Despite this, a 2020 report published by IADB concluded that "Belize schooling falls below regional averages for both migrant and native households."[133]

125 IOM, *Guyana Needs Assessment on Migration Governance*, 30.

126 Jones Bahamas, "Education Continues for Migrant Children," *The Bahama Journal*, March 3, 2020; U.S. Department of State, "2020 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: The Bahamas," updated March 30, 2021.

127 Aragón and Mawby, *Free Movement of Persons in the Caribbean*, 41.

128 Acosta and Harris, *Migration Policy Regimes in Latin America and the Caribbean*; R4V, "Integration Background Notes – Caribbean"; Sunita Maharaj-Landaeta, "The Educational Experiences of Teachers Who Deal with Children of Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Migrant Children on the Move in Trinidad & Tobago," *West East Journal of Social Sciences* 8 (2019); Government of Trinidad and Tobago, Ministry of Social Development, "Response of the Ministry of Social Development Re: Request for Information from the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights: Human Rights Council Resolution 12/6 – 'Human Rights of Migrants: Migration and the Human Rights of the Child'," 2010; Melanie Teff, *Forced into Illegality: Venezuelan Refugees and Migrants in Trinidad and Tobago* (Washington, DC: Refugees International, 2019).

129 IOM, "Migration Governance Snapshot: Dominican Republic" (country snapshot, IOM, Geneva, May 2018), 2.

130 IOM, UNHCR, and SICA, *Hallazgos del estudio de línea base sobre migración y desplazamiento en la región del SICA*, 110.

131 Emma Naslund-Hadley, Alison Elias, Eduardo Café, and Haydee Alonzo, "Schools at a Crossroads: Integration of Migrant Students in Belize" (technical note, IADB, Washington, DC, November 2020).

132 IOM, UNHCR, and SICA, *Hallazgos del estudio de línea base sobre migración y desplazamiento en la región del SICA*, 85; Governments of Guatemala and Belize, "Acuerdo entre la República de Guatemala y Belice sobre el paso de escolares en puestos terrestres migratorios," December 14, 2017; Jeanelly Vásquez, "Guatemala y Belice crean acuerdo para facilitar desplazamiento de estudiantes," *La Hora*, June 3, 2021.

133 Naslund-Hadley, Elias, Café, and Alonzo, "Schools at a Crossroads."

Although Suriname's constitution declares in Article 38 that "anyone has a right to education," including immigrants, this right is limited for those who are irregular. In these cases, children must have someone who is a legal resident act as their legal guardian to sign them up for school. Beyond the middle-school level, it also becomes more difficult for irregular migrants to attend school.[134] Similarly, although Aruba and Curaçao both provide migrants, regardless of status, with access to primary and secondary schools, Aruba requires a "local guarantor" for the child's registration. Additionally, in both countries, registration involves paying a mandatory school insurance,[135] which some families may be unable to afford, particularly irregular migrants who are excluded from the formal labor market.

Whether migrants and refugees have a right to access an education in Jamaica is unclear, as the country's immigration and education laws are silent on this point.[136] Although the same is true in Barbados,[137] there are laws in place that require foreigners to provide proof of regular migration status and pay fees in order to attend school. In practice, though, some irregular migrants are able to circumvent these legal restrictions and still attend school.[138]

Across the region, it is important to note that even when access to education is guaranteed by law, realities on the ground can differ. Children who are immigrants or have immigrant parents may find their participation limited by any number of factors, including discrimination, fear of deportation, and a lack of knowledge about their rights. For example, Human Rights Watch notes that the education of Venezuelan migrants and refugees in Curaçao has been limited by fear of deportation, as the state has conducted immigration raids at schools.[139]

Administrative requirements, such as for identification documents or proof of residence, may also restrict access and compound fears of deportation. Furthermore, once children enroll in a school, language or cultural barriers may make their integration within the classroom challenging. Although many Caribbean countries are English-speaking, some speak French, Spanish, Dutch, and different creoles or pidgins. This can make attending a new school a difficult experience, both academically and socially, particularly considering few schools have mechanisms to support these children's inclusion.[140] In Belize, for example, IOM notes that "schoolteachers do not receive any training in providing education responsive to the needs of migrants,"[141] and one survey conducted among school teachers in the country found that the greatest educational need of migrant students was for specialized help to improve their English.[142] To this end, the IADB has extended a loan to the country to help with English as a Second Language instruction for migrants. Schools should also consider the languages spoken by Indigenous migrant communities in efforts to overcome potential language barriers. For example, according to UNHCR, an estimated 2,500 Warao from Venezuela had settled in areas of Guyana close to the two countries' border as of late 2021, and approximately half of them were

134 Heemskerk and Duijves, *Suriname Migration Profile*, 107–108; IOM, *Suriname Needs Assessment on Migration Governance*, 30.
135 R4V, *Caribbean RMRP Mid Year Review 2020* (N.p.: R4V, 2020), 5.
136 Acosta and Harris, *Migration Policy Regimes in Latin America and the Caribbean*.
137 Acosta and Harris, *Migration Policy Regimes in Latin America and the Caribbean*.
138 Natalie Antoinette Dietrich Jones, "The Ma(r)king of Complex Border Geographies and Their Negotiation by Undocumented Migrants: The Case of Barbados" (PhD thesis, University of Manchester, 2013), 262–270.
139 José Miguel Vivanco, "Letter to Curaçaoan and Dutch Authorities on Venezuelan Asylum Seekers" (public letter, Human Rights Watch, Washington, DC, October 2018).
140 IOM, *Migration Governance in the Caribbean*, 77.
141 IOM, *Belize Needs Assessment on Migration Governance*, 30.
142 Naslund-Hadley, Elias, Café, and Alonzo, "Schools at a Crossroads."

thought to be school-age children.[143] The sum of these many barriers—administrative, discriminative, and linguistic—is that true access to education may be much more limited than what is described in many Caribbean countries' laws and official policies.

C. Access to Health Care

Access to health care is another key aspect of integration. Although universal health-care systems dominate in the Caribbean, not all migrants and refugees are included in this universality. Depending on their status and the country in which they live, they may have more ready or more limited access to care.

In Guyana, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago, all migrants and refugees regardless of status are granted equal access to the countries' universal health-care systems.[144] And, as with access to education, all OECS nationals moving within the ECEU also have full, equal access to other Member States' health-care systems.[145] The Dominican Republic, too, provides access to health care regardless of legal status,[146] but the country's National Migration Council announced in September 2021 that it would take steps to avoid admitting irregular migrants who are at least six months pregnant into the country and providing them with care, arguing that it is a strain on public finances.[147]

In The Bahamas, meanwhile, regular migrants have equal access to the country's universal health-care system, but the situation for irregular migrants is unclear, as the *Immigration Act* is silent on access to health care.[148] Regular immigrants are covered by the universal health-care system in Aruba,[149] but in spite of exceptions made during the COVID-19 pandemic, the country does not allow irregular migrants to access the system, as seen most notably in the case of Venezuelans.[150] The same is true in Curaçao.[151] In Barbados, the country's universal health-care system is only accessible to citizens and permanent residents; irregular migrants as well as some migrants with legal status may thus find it difficult to access care, due to the potentially prohibitive cost of health care outside of the universal system.[152] However, migrants and tourists are able to receive health care in certain cases, such as emergencies, prenatal care, vaccinations, and treatment for HIV, according to the Pan American Health Organization.[153]

Belize and Suriname are unique cases in terms of access to health care. In Belize, one must possess a social security card—indicating regular status—to access the country's free primary health-care services (and reduced-cost extra health services). In practice, though, irregular migrants are not denied health

143 UNHCR, "UNHCR Concerned about Difficult Conditions of Indigenous Venezuelans in Guyana" (briefing note, November 26, 2021).
144 IOM, *Guyana Needs Assessment on Migration Governance*, 22; IOM, *Migration Governance Indicators: Profile 2019 | Jamaica*, 12; IOM, *Migration Governance in the Caribbean*, 64; R4V, *Caribbean RMRP Mid Year Review 2020*.
145 Aragón and Mawby, *Free Movement of Persons in the Caribbean*, 41.
146 IOM, "Migration Governance Snapshot: Dominican Republic," 2.
147 Pedro Martín Sánchez, "RD evitará ingreso de extranjeras embarazadas con seis meses o más," *Diario Libre*, September 28, 2021. Some experts on Caribbean regional migration interviewed between October 12 and 28, 2021, suggested that this policy is directed at Haitian women who go to the Dominican Republic to give birth.
148 IOM, *Migration Governance in the Caribbean*, 64; Acosta and Harris, *Migration Policy Regimes in Latin America and the Caribbean*.
149 PAHO, *Health in the Americas+, 2017 Edition*, 68.
150 R4V, "Notas informativas sobre el sector de Salud - Caribe" (informational note, R4V, July 2021); R4V, "Aruba and Curaçao" (situation report, R4V, March 2020).
151 R4V, "Notas informativas sobre el sector de Salud - Caribe"; PAHO, *Health in the Americas+, 2017 Edition*.
152 IOM, *Migration Governance in the Caribbean*, 64.
153 PAHO, *Health in the Americas+, 2017 Edition*, 76.

care due to lack of documentation, meaning many have access despite the legal barriers.[154] Suriname, meanwhile, requires individuals to pay into the National Basic Health Insurance, which is only available to legal residents. Furthermore, although Surinamese citizens under the age of 16 and over the age of 60 are granted the insurance for free, foreign nationals are required to pay into the system at all ages. As a result, irregular migrants and low-income migrants are generally excluded from the health-care system due either to legal or financial barriers.[155] Moreover, as membership in the insurance system is required for all legal residents by law, IOM reports that "health insurance expenses have discouraged some migrants from pursuing their residency application."[156]

Much like access to education, a legal right to health care does not guarantee true access. Obstacles such as language barriers, discrimination, a lack of knowledge about migrants' rights, and fear of deportation create a gap between policy and practice. Indeed, the Pan American Health Organization notes that across the Western Hemisphere, including in the Caribbean, "most health system workers are unaware of the health rights of migrants, and health services are not in a position to guarantee the migrants' right to the highest standard of physical and mental health care, as established in international legislation on human rights."[157] More broadly, the region's health-care systems have limited funding and capacity, particularly in remote and rural areas, and COVID-19 has further exacerbated the strain on these systems. In Guyana, for example, health-care capacity is limited outside of the capital and regional hospitals, meaning that those outside of urban settings—both immigrants and receiving communities—have limited access to care.[158] Although language barriers are a problem in some situations, particularly for Venezuelan migrants and refugees,[159] some countries are working to overcome them. The Bahamas, for example, has taken steps to bridge these gaps in some cases, such as by providing Haitian Creole interpreters to facilitate HIV/AIDS health care in Nassau.[160]

D. Social Cohesion

The rights migrants have and their access to public services are important aspects of integration, but so too is social cohesion. To foster this sense of cohesion, and the benefits it brings to both immigrants and receiving communities, it is important for governments and other stakeholders to create conditions that promote trust and acceptance in receiving communities, while having communities' concerns heard and addressed.

Polling and data on public opinion of foreigners are scarce in the Caribbean, and there is a general lack of research on the topic. However, LAPOP, a research lab at Vanderbilt University, conducted surveys in several Caribbean countries between 2014 and 2019, and in nearly all countries, less than 1 percent of respondents identified migration as the most serious problem their country faced. In The Bahamas, that percentage was closer to 5 percent.[161] Still, it bears mentioning that some of the available data are relatively old, and public

154 IOM, *Belize Needs Assessment on Migration Governance*, 22.
155 IOM, *Suriname Needs Assessment on Migration Governance*, 22.
156 Heemskerk and Duijves, *Suriname Migration Profile*, 110–111.
157 PAHO, *Health in the Americas+, 2017 Edition*, 15.
158 IOM, *Guyana Needs Assessment on Migration Governance*, 22; R4V, "Notas informativas sobre el sector de Salud - Caribe."
159 R4V, "Notas informativas sobre el sector de Salud - Caribe."
160 IOM, *Migration Governance in the Caribbean*, 65.
161 See LAPOP Lab, "The AmericasBarometer," accessed August 5, 2022.

opinion may have changed in recent years. This is particularly relevant in the case of Trinidad and Tobago, where Venezuelan migration has grown greatly in the years since 2014, when the LAPOP survey was last conducted. A different set of surveys in Latin American countries, the Latinobarómetro surveys, found that 53 percent of Dominican respondents in 2020 believed that immigrants were harmful to the country, while just 30 percent believed they were beneficial.[162]

According to focus groups conducted by Kairi Consultants Ltd., immigrants from higher-income countries such as Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago were less likely to experience discrimination than immigrants from lower-income countries such as Guyana and Haiti, as the former group were more likely to be skilled professionals or business owners and the latter more likely to work lower-skilled jobs.[163] This trend can also be seen in the fact that extraregional migrants are reportedly treated better than intraregional immigrants due to perceptions of their greater wealth. But among extraregional immigrants, Africans were reportedly treated worse due to perceptions of lower socioeconomic class, while Chinese migrants were treated better due to perceptions of wealth.[164] Other studies in the region have found similar perceptions linked to labor skills, particularly for Haitian immigrants, who are often targeted due to their frequent employment in low-skilled, low-paying jobs across the region.[165] Discrimination was also found in some cases to be based on ethnicity, according to Kairi Consultants' focus groups. This was most notable in the case of Guyanese immigrants, among whom Afro-Guyanese experienced easier integration into other Caribbean countries than Indo-Guyanese immigrants.[166]

Linked to concerns over economic issues, many receiving communities in the Caribbean hold fears that immigrants will take jobs from nationals and put strain on social services.[167] In interviews, regional experts suggested that smaller countries face more acute concerns over limited resources, and that the already-limited capacity of public services in many countries in the region results in greater fears over competition for these services.[168] Furthermore, xenophobia tends to be most prevalent in times of economic turmoil, with a lack of employment opportunities spurring narratives of migrants "stealing" jobs from locals.[169] In this sense, strain on social cohesion is often more closely linked to economic concerns than to ethnic or national tensions.

Linked to concerns over economic issues, many receiving communities in the Caribbean hold fears that immigrants will take jobs from nationals and put strain on social services.

While social cohesion is shaped by a wide range of societal factors and can be difficult to influence via official measures, anti-discrimination laws can play a part in affecting behavior and facilitating stronger

162 Corporación Latinobarómetro, "Latinobarómetro," accessed October 25, 2022.
163 Kairi Consultants Ltd., *Human Mobility in the Caribbean: Circulation of Skills and Immigration from the South* (Brussels: ACP Observatory on Migration and IOM, 2013).
164 Kairi Consultants Ltd., *Human Mobility in the Caribbean*.
165 IOM, *Migration in the Caribbean*; James Ferguson, *Migration in the Caribbean: Haiti, the Dominican Republic and Beyond* (London: Minority Rights Group International, 2003).
166 Kairi Consultants Ltd., *Human Mobility in the Caribbean*.
167 Kairi Consultants Ltd., *Human Mobility in the Caribbean*; authors' interview with Dr. Richard Bernal.
168 Authors' interviews with Dr. Richard Bernal and Dr. Ralph Henry.
169 Authors' interview with Dr. Natalie Dietrich Jones.

social bonds. Laws rarely protect individuals against discrimination on the basis of their migration status. The lack of protection can be especially problematic in the workplace, where discrimination and exploitation of migrant workers can go unpunished, particularly among irregular migrants. Still, countries often have measures that protect against discrimination on grounds of nationality, which provide migrants with some level of protection.[170] Although anti-discrimination laws are not the be-all, end-all for promoting social cohesion, it is important for government regulations and communication to disincentivize social divisions and discrimination.

7 Leveraging Diaspora for Development

Intraregional migration is an important trend and undercurrent in the Caribbean, but emigration has historically been, and will continue to be, just as important. The IOM reports that 4.67 million Caribbean migrants were living in other countries in 1990, and that this figure more than doubled to 10.18 million by 2019. In 2019, 91 percent of Caribbean migrants resided outside the region and the remaining 9 percent were living in another Caribbean country.[171] Engaging this large diaspora—both emigrants and the descendants of emigrants—in development efforts is a critical and fruitful opportunity for countries across the Caribbean.

Diasporas have been known to play a significant role in the economic development of their countries of origin or ancestry, with the potential to have a strong impact on both the living standards of individuals and on the financial stability of broader communities and countries.[172] A 2013 report from the Migration Policy Institute (MPI) observed that "while some policymakers continue to see their nationals abroad as a loss, more and more are realizing that an engaged diaspora can be an asset—or even a counterweight to the emigration of skilled and talented migrants."[173] Beyond the sending of remittances, members of a country's diaspora may also promote trade and foreign direct investment, create businesses and entrepreneurship opportunities, and contribute to the exchange of knowledge and skills.

Beyond the sending of remittances, members of a country's diaspora may also promote trade and foreign direct investment, create businesses and entrepreneurship opportunities, and contribute to the exchange of knowledge and skills.

The Caribbean has a robust diaspora across the world, most notably in the United States, United Kingdom, and Canada. Indeed, 76 percent of migrants from the primary countries of study—The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominican Republic, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago—were living in

170 IOM, *Migration Governance in the Caribbean*, 78; IOM, *Suriname Needs Assessment on Migration Governance*, 6; IOM, *Belize Needs Assessment on Migration Governance*, 18.
171 Michele Klein-Solomon, "New Trends in the Caribbean Region Migration Profile" (IOM Regional Office for Central America, North America, and the Caribbean, San José, Costa Rica, 2020).
172 Kathleen Newland and Sonia Plaza, *What We Know about Diasporas and Economic Development* (Washington, DC: MPI, 2013).
173 Newland and Plaza, *What We Know about Diasporas and Economic Development*, 1.

one of those three destination countries in 2020.[174] Looking exclusively at the six anglophone countries, the share of their emigrants living in the United States, United Kingdom, or Canada rises to 92 percent. The Dominican Republic and Suriname are unique in this group due to their Spanish and Dutch colonial pasts, respectively. Slightly more than 11 percent of emigrants from the Dominican Republic resided in Spain in 2020 (while 73 percent were in the United States), and two-thirds of Surinamese emigrants were living in the Netherlands. Meanwhile, Haiti's colonization by the French and location on a shared island with the Dominican Republic have led its nationals to emigrate to more varied destinations. (See this report's appendix for a detailed breakdown of emigrant populations by country.)

Among Caribbean nationals residing abroad in 2019, 47 percent were male and 53 percent females. This over-representation of women among emigrants may reflect the transnational labor demand for nurses, teachers, and maids and Caribbean workers' role in filling that demand. Among the countries of study, Haiti is the singular exception to this pattern, with 54 percent of emigrants being male and 46 percent female.[175]

Given its diaspora's magnitude, the region has one of the highest levels of dependence on the diasporic economy in the world. In particular, the Caribbean diaspora is essential for development because its members are engaged in occupations and command skills that can benefit development. For example, a 2018 study found that Caribbean diasporas contribute to the region through investment and entrepreneurship; the creation of markets and demand for Caribbean's exports, including tourism; skills and knowledge transfers; and a plethora of community social and economic projects by hometown associations.[176] Another study of diaspora engagement in Latin America the Caribbean, this one from 2015, noted that diaspora networks provide "non-economic remittances in the forms of social, political, cultural, and technical contributions to their homelands" and that these "play important roles in entrepreneurship and economic development."[177] Increasingly, CARICOM countries are establishing diaspora-focused governmental units, hosting annual conferences, providing incentives, and in other ways seeking to engage their diasporas, with the intent of having them invest in these countries or otherwise provide development assistance.

A. Remittances

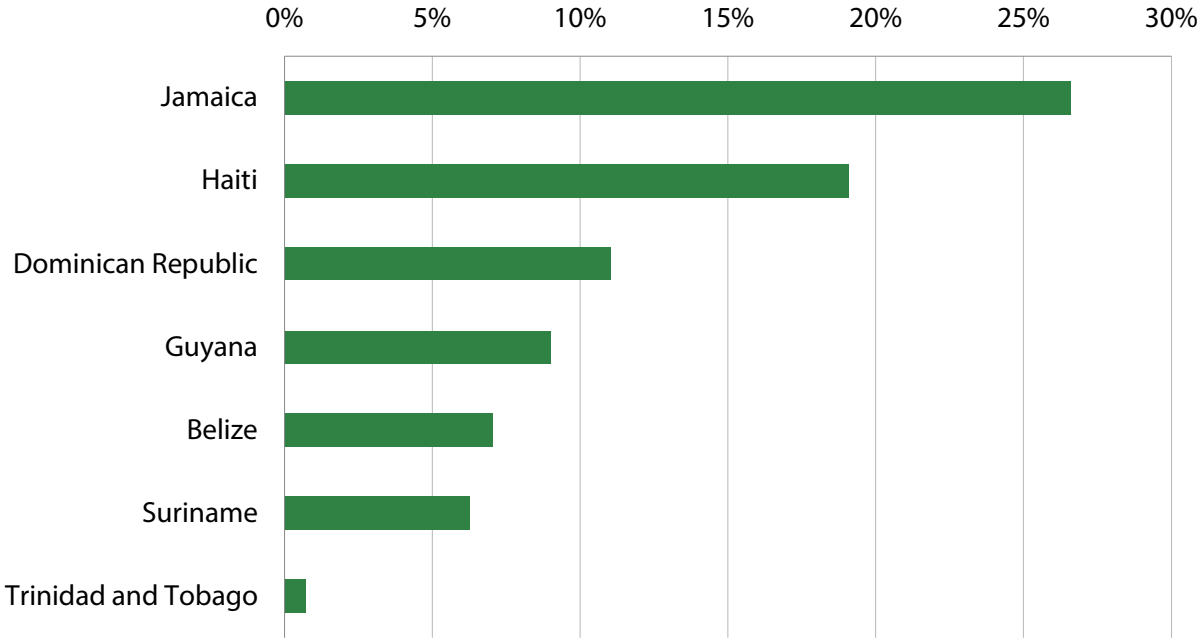
With significant diaspora communities in high-income countries, many Caribbean nations receive fairly large remittance inflows, which often represent a sizeable share of their GDP. Central banks provide reasonably good statistics, but remittances are still difficult to calculate, particularly when sent through informal routes. What is clear, however, is that remittances are a crucial component of Caribbean economies and help bolster household consumption, while also offering potential opportunities for development.

174 Tabulation of data from IADB, "DataMIG," accessed October 19, 2022; United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, "World Population Prospects 2019." See the appendix of this report for more details.
175 Klein-Solomon, "New Trends in the Caribbean Region Migration Profile."
176 George Danns and Donna Danns, "The Impact of the Diaspora on Caribbean Economies," in *Dynamics of Caribbean Diaspora Engagement: People Policy, Practice* (Georgetown, Guyana: University of Guyana Press, 2018).
177 Nir Kshetri, Diana Rojas-Torres, and Marleny Cardona Acedvedo, "Diaspora Networks, Non-Economic Remittance and Entrepreneurship Development: Evidence from Some Economies in Latin America," *Journal of Developmental Entrepreneurship* 20, no. 1 (2015): 1550005.

According to available data, remittances to the Caribbean have grown steadily since 2013. They remained resilient during 2020–21, despite the COVID-19 pandemic, growing 18 percent in 2020 and a further 20 percent in 2021 at a regional level.[178] Remittances are principally sent from the United States, with the World Bank noting that the United States–Dominican Republic remittance corridor was among the top 25 globally in 2015.[179] In 2021, the Dominican Republic received a whopping USD 10.4 billion in remittances from all countries, and remittances represented 11 percent of the country's GDP (see Figure 2). The Haitian diaspora plays a critical role in Haiti's access to financial flows, with remittances totaling close to 4 billion dollars in 2021 and representing 19 percent of the country's GDP. Jamaica has long been even more dependent on remittances, which totaled USD 3.6 billion and made up more than one-quarter of the country's GDP. In Guyana, Belize, and Suriname, remittances represented between 6 percent and 9 percent of national GDP in 2021. Trinidad and Tobago sits on the other end of the spectrum, having received remittances that represented less than 1 percent of the country's GDP that year.[180]

FIGURE 2

Remittances as a Share of GDP in Selected Caribbean Countries, 2021



Source: Tabulation of data from IADB, "Remittances to Latin America and the Caribbean in 2021," accessed October 25, 2022.

These remittances are of considerable importance. To put the magnitude of their impact into perspective, it is worth mentioning that, as a 2017 study by the Center for Global Development notes, "remittances sent from the United States to Latin America and the Caribbean ($32 billion per year) are more than five times the combined U.S. economic and military assistance to the same countries (less than $6 billion per

178 Jeremy Harris and René Maldonado, "Remittances to Latin America and the Caribbean in 2021: Migrant Efforts during the COVID-19 Crisis," IADB, July 2022.
179 World Bank, *Migration and Remittances Factbook 2016*, 3rd ed. (Washington DC: World Bank, 2016), 16.
180 IADB, "Remittances to Latin America and the Caribbean in 2021," accessed October 25, 2022.

year)."[181] Likewise, a 2014 study published by the University of the West Indies found that remittances in some Caribbean territories had outstripped the earnings from key export sectors, including tourism.[182] The diaspora continues to send remittances despite the transaction costs involved, which are on average 10 percent for amounts lower than 200 dollars (typical for poorer migrants) and up to 15 to 20 percent in smaller migration corridors.[183]

Remittances and other economic flows associated with the diasporic economy make substantial contributions to economic development, poverty reduction, international trade, and a more favorable balance of payments when compared to traditional forms of external capital and development assistance such as foreign aid, debt financing, and foreign direct investment. In the Caribbean, remittances are largely used for household consumption, helping to supplement household incomes and put food on the table, pay for housing, and purchase goods and services. But they also offer opportunities for development, and Caribbean households at times utilize their remittances to invest in education, small businesses, and to build homes. In other cases, diaspora members have come together to make group-based remittance investments. Although on a much smaller scale, remittances have also been used for certificates of deposit and stocks.[184]

B. Diaspora Engagement and Private-Sector Development

As mentioned above, remittances are just one of the means by which diasporas contribute to the economy of their country of origin or heritage. The diaspora's role extends beyond its financial contributions, including philanthropic giving to projects in Caribbean countries; members of the diaspora may also play the role of "social investors, policy advocates, and partners for human development in countries of origin, heritage, and destination."[185] Partnerships between governments (in both sending and receiving countries) and diasporas can foster more inclusive development that builds on migrant communities' social, cultural and linguistic capital.

Some Caribbean countries have sought to harness diasporas' potential to support development. To do so, countries can tap into the human capital of emigrants and their descendants and promote knowledge and technological transfer, particularly in STEM industries, as the Chinese and Indian models of diaspora engagement have done.[186] Within the Caribbean, the potential of such initiatives in the health-care sector has been of particular interest, with many countries promoting "medical tourism" through initiatives that aim to bring back and retain medical practitioners to help set-up and provide health-care services.[187] In

181 Kathleen Newland, "Leveraging the Links between Migration and Development: US Government Policy, Practice, and Potential" (policy paper, Center for Global Development, Washington, DC, 2017), 1.
182 Keith Nurse and Claremont Kirton, *Caribbean Diasporic Entrepreneurship Analytical Report* (Kingston, Jamaica: UWI Consulting, University of the West Indies, 2014).
183 Dilip Ratha, "Remittances: Funds for the Folks back Home," accessed October 25, 2022.
184 Authors' interview with Dr. Richard Bernal.
185 Constance Formson-Lorist, "Consolidating and Showcasing Diaspora Entrepreneurship for Development" (good practice note, African Diaspora Policy Center, The Hague, December 2014). The IOM has developed a toolkit of strategies for measuring different diaspora contributions, including philanthropic giving. See IOM, *Contributions and Counting: Guidance on Measuring the Economic Impact of Your Diaspora beyond Remittances* (Geneva: IOM, 2020).
186 Authors' interview with Dr. Ralph Henry.
187 Authors' interview with Dr. Richard Bernal.

addition, diaspora funding has in some cases specifically targeted health-care needs, as has been seen in Jamaica and the eastern Caribbean.[188]

Emigrants and their descendants can also be key markets for a country's exports, as illustrated by the case studies in Boxes 2 and 3. Although the space for government action in the promotion of specific exports is limited, the government can contribute by providing an environment in which the diaspora and the country's business and professional communities can actively network. Evidence from African countries such as Ghana and Ethiopia, where diaspora-targeted initiatives have been successful because of commitment on the part of origin-country governments, point to the value of developing policies and legislation that are favorable to engagement and to diaspora-led investments.[189]

BOX 2
Case Study of Presidente Beer from the Dominican Republic

Presidente beer, a product from the Dominican Republic, is well known not only in its homeland but also among the Dominican diaspora. It was first introduced to the U.S. market in Miami in 1990, and over the next decade, the beer was sold in more than ten cities in the United States. To expand its customer base, the company sponsored merengue and salsa events, particularly in cities with large Dominican diaspora communities. By 2002, Presidente beer had penetrated The Bahamian market, and today, it is available in nine more Caribbean nations: Puerto Rico, Haiti, the U.S. Virgin Islands, the Turks and Caicos Islands, Curaçao, Aruba, Tortola (British Virgin Islands), and Sint Maarten.

The success of Dominican beer and other iconic brands sold abroad in places with large diaspora communities is an area that could be further leveraged as part of the agri-food sector's export strategy. One observer argues, for example, that "Presidente beer, like Brugal rum, is a small symbol that makes Dominicans outside their country feel as if they still have a connection to their homeland, their roots, and their heritage."

Source: DR1.com, "Presidente Beer in the Dominican Republic," accessed July 31, 2019.

BOX 3
Case Study of the Marshall & Brown Company from Jamaica

In 2018, Carlton Brown, a first-generation immigrant born in the United Kingdom, attended the Jamaica 56 Diaspora Conference in Kingston. Through contacts made there with investors and suppliers, as well as support from the Jamaican Promotions Corporation (JAMPRO), Brown launched Marshall & Brown, a company selling high-end food products from Jamaica, tailored to the British market. As of 2022, Marshall & Brown products are available through more than 50 retailers in the United Kingdom and Ireland. The sale of these products not only boosts the value of Jamaica's "brand" in these countries, which can promote greater tourism, but they also generate exports—and export-oriented jobs—in Jamaica. Initiatives such as the Diaspora Conference that bring together emigrants and their descendants with businesspeople in the country of origin can plant the seeds for ventures like this, while business support services such as those offered by JAMPRO can help them grow and flourish.

Source: Marshall and Brown, "Home," accessed August 5, 2022.

188 Authors' interview with Dr. Natalie Dietrich Jones.
189 Peter Mudungwe, *Leveraging the African Diaspora for Development* (The Hague: African Diaspora Policy Centre, 2017).

In the Caribbean context, a few governments have taken steps to formalize and strengthen relationships with members of their diasporas. One important example is Haiti, which in 1994 created the Ministry of Haitians Living Abroad (Ministère des Haïtiens Vivant à l'Etranger), a ministry that is solely dedicated to diaspora affairs and that works closely with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.[190] Prior to this, a series of government initiatives to engage with the diaspora began in 1988 with the Commission for Haitians Abroad, which turned into a secretariat attached to the presidency in 1991 and eventually became the abovementioned ministry. Its mission is to foster the participation of the diaspora in Haiti's social, political, and economic affairs by providing a framework for this relationship. This includes facilitating diaspora involvement in building Haiti's democratic institutions, identifying and engaging with diaspora organizations, and working to eliminate discrimination towards Haitians living abroad.

Another notable example of a Caribbean government seeking to create such a favorable environment is the creation by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Guyana of a Diaspora Unit in "recognition of the important role the diaspora can play as a contributor to Guyana's national development."[191] This unit will, among other things, allow for "structured engagement aimed at strengthening relations and dialogue, to foster national development." According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the unit's objectives also include creating and managing a database that will offer a profile of the Guyanese diaspora in different countries and regions, and creating a one-stop-shop for overseas Guyanese wishing to engage in investment, trade, business, or philanthropy or to make contributions to Guyanese communities. In addition to the Diaspora Unit, other Guyanese initiatives to engage the country's diaspora include efforts by GOINVEST (Guyana's Office of Investment), the Ministry of Business and Tourism, and collaborations with IOM and with other economies in the region.[192] In parallel, the University of Guyana has established the Center for Caribbean Diaspora Engagement, with the aim of playing a leading role in outreach to Guyana's and the region's diasporas.

Jamaica has been strategic with its diaspora engagement, including in its Vision 2030 long-term development plan. Yet, the country's recognition of the need to tap into the benefits of diaspora engagement is hardly new. In 1993, the Charter for Long-Term Returning Residents was implemented to lighten the administrative burden on those seeking return to work, invest, retire, or exchange knowledge, though a lack of information on the steps returnees need to complete to properly settle in Jamaica has plagued the charter's implementation. Other initiatives include the drafting of an International Migration and Diaspora policy and the creation of a Diaspora and Consular Affairs Department. Meanwhile, the Jamaica Diaspora Foundation (JDF) and its operational arm, the Jamaica Diaspora Institute (JDI), have the goals of "building and connecting diaspora communities through the development of web portals and databases; facilitating partnerships between Jamaica and its diaspora; and conducting research on Jamaican migration and diaspora issues."[193] Although the Jamaican government supports the JDI through the Ministry of Trade and Foreign Affairs, the JDI operates independently of the government.

190 Marc Evens Lebrun, "Le Ministère des Haïtiens Vivant à l'Etranger (MHAVE)," Challenges, April 18, 2018.
191 Government of Guyana, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, "Diaspora Affairs Unit," accessed September 15, 2022.
192 Danns and Danns, "The Impact of the Diaspora on Caribbean Economies."
193 Government of Jamaica, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, "Jamaica Diaspora Foundation, Jamaica Diaspora Institute & Joint Select Committee on Diaspora Affairs," accessed September 15, 2022.

Jamaica has also sought to improve communication between policymakers and the country's diaspora. The Diaspora Advisory Board, part of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, includes stakeholders from countries with large Jamaican immigrant populations (the United States, United Kingdom, and Canada) who meet with government board members to discuss concerns, issues, and the interests of Jamaicans living in these countries. Separately, a Joint Select Committee of the Houses of Parliament on Diaspora Affairs was established in 2009. This committee aims to represent diaspora interests in Parliament and recommend foreign policies that could further those interests and encourage investments in Jamaica.[194]

These examples illustrate the steps governments can take to create an environment in which diaspora engagement—in all of its forms—can stimulate development.

These examples illustrate the steps governments can take to create an environment in which diaspora engagement—in all of its forms—can stimulate development. At the same time, it is important to note that destination countries may have policies and programs that affect—intentionally or unintentionally—the relationship between immigration and the development of migrants' countries of origin.[195] In the United States, for instance, there are programs that work directly to link migration and development through remittances, knowledge networks, and diaspora engagement. One such program is the Leveraging Effective Action for Direct Investments (LEAD) initiative, which is run by the U.S. Agency for International Development and seeks to "increase the development impact of remittances in Haiti by opening channels for members of the Haitian diaspora to invest part of their remittance transfers into viable small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and philanthropic ventures."[196] Another example is the Fulbright Program, which awards scholarships to students and scholars from a range of countries to conduct research or lecture in the United States before requiring them to return to their countries of origin at the end of their award period, thus supporting the circulation of human capital. Additionally, the State Department opened a formal dialogue with U.S.-based diasporas in 2011, hosting the first Global Diaspora Forum with the objective of networking and exchanging ideas, information, and inspiration. Furthermore, Italy has integrated diaspora communities into its development cooperation programs through consultative mechanisms and other activities and helped strengthen the capacity of migrant organizations. Partnerships with local authorities and civil-society organizations have strengthened ties between communities in Italy and migrants' countries of origin.[197]

194 Amanda Sives, "Formalizing Diaspora–State Relations: Processes and Tensions in the Jamaican Case," *International Migration* 50, no. 1 (2012): 120.
195 Newland, "Leveraging the Links between Migration and Development."
196 Newland, "Leveraging the Links between Migration and Development," 4.
197 OECD, "Empowering the Immigrant Diaspora for Sustainable Development," accessed October 25, 2022.

8 Recommendations

As intraregional migration remains strong in the Caribbean and the region places greater priority on migration through regional integration and coordination mechanisms such as the CMC, there are a number of ways to support effective migration governance, integration measures, and diaspora engagement. These include:

- **Building on existing networks and mechanisms for regional coordination, cooperation, and integration.** CARICOM's CSME, OECS' ECEU, and the CMC all serve as effective platforms for coordination and cooperation on migration governance and facilitate regional integration in the Caribbean. These mechanisms should continue to be developed and implemented through regional dialogue with all Member States to promote migration governance best practices while facilitating human mobility and access to legal pathways for migrants in the region.
- **Exploring ways to enhance subregional labor mobility.** The numbers of migrants moving within the Caribbean under the CSME Skills Certificates regime remains relatively low. It is worth studying whether this is due to supply or demand constraints, or if the procedures for authorization remain sufficiently onerous that they limit use. Further expanding the system to other, less-skilled, professions—even if subject to quotas—could improve regional mobility and create legal pathways for workers with a variety of in-demand skills.
- **Financing new and existing initiatives to strengthen institutional capacity for migration governance.** Migration governance institutions in the Caribbean often lack robust capacity, particularly when it comes to addressing humanitarian issues such as asylum and refugee protection. Amid competing policy priorities and limited budgets, national efforts to develop stronger migration-related institutions are likely to be sidelined without sufficient funding and other forms of support.
- **Funding new and existing initiatives to identify labor gaps and needs.** Doing so can help decisionmakers craft policies and programs that facilitate targeted labor migration in the region while also promoting robust economic development by providing support to key industries with labor shortages.
- **Investing in resilience to climate change and natural disasters.** Climate change and natural disasters are leading drivers of movement in the Caribbean and will likely continue to worsen in the years to come. It is crucial to invest in resilient infrastructure and adaptation strategies, such as strengthening existing regional mechanisms' capacity and resources to address climate-related intraregional migration, displacement, and humanitarian needs.

- **Funding further research and strengthening the research capacity of Caribbean institutions.** There is a lack of emphasis on the Caribbean when it comes to migration research, yet a stronger evidence base on both intraregional and extraregional migration is needed to support effective policymaking. In particular, topics such as integration,[198] the impact of climate change and natural disasters on protection needs and migration, remittances, and the migration-development nexus all merit further research. One key intervention in this area could involve creating a network of academic institutions and policy-focused research centers, led by Caribbean stakeholders and in partnership with international development partners and relevant international experts. The objectives of this network could include: (1) identifying important issues in migration research, such as data collection and disaggregation for Caribbean countries; (2) identifying and conducting outreach to experts in the field of migration to create a community of practice relevant to the Caribbean; (3) studying linkages between development funding in the Caribbean and intraregional migration; and (4) raising awareness about the importance of regional cooperation in Caribbean migration studies.
- **Improving data collection and dissemination.** To facilitate research and effective policymaking, it is vital to expand and improve data collection and to ensure effective dissemination and transparency. For example, making sure data are disaggregated by nationality could support research and understanding of remittances and integration-related indicators, such as access to education and health care and economic inclusion (including unemployment rates, types of employment, and income). There is also notably a lack of data on irregular migrants, leaving questions such as what share of migrants are irregular and how many irregular migrants participate in the labor force unanswered. Finally, it is crucial to ensure data are accessible and transparent through public, online means. Data on skills and labor needs and the recognition of skills and qualifications earned abroad, for example, will be critical to efforts to leverage diasporas for development.[199]
- **Further developing infrastructure and transport and travel networks within the Caribbean.** To advance regional integration, it is crucial to develop infrastructure and maritime and air transport and travel networks, such as ports and airports. This can benefit trade and economic development while additionally supporting the tourism industry and facilitating human mobility in the region.
- **Conducting research to support measures that address the issue of the high cost of remittances, particularly for smaller transactions such as those typical made by poorer migrants.** This research would be geared towards understanding the complex structure of remittances networks, including the pricing strategies of national banks, money transfer operators, telecommunication companies, and national post offices.[200]

198 For a discussion of integration and assessing the socioeconomic integration of migrants and refugees in South America, see Diego Chaves-González, Jordi Amaral, and María Jesús Mora, *Socioeconomic Integration of Venezuelan Migrants and Refugees: The Cases of Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru* (Washington, DC and Panama City: MPI and IOM, 2021). Possible dimensions of further research in the Caribbean could include economic inclusion, education, health care, and social cohesion. A greater understanding of social cohesion is particularly needed, and developing public opinion surveys related to migration could help researchers and policymakers gain a better understanding of discrimination and how to combat it.

199 OECD, *Harnessing the Skills of Migrants and Diasporas to Foster Development: Policy Options* (Paris: OECD Publishing and French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2012).

200 Global Knowledge Partnership on Migration and Development (KNOMAD), "Migration and Remittances: Recent Developments and Outlook" (Migration and Development Brief 31, World Bank Group, Washington, DC, April 2019).

- **Helping governments provide an environment in which diaspora members and a country's business and professional communities can engage with one another.** While leveraging diasporas for development is extremely important, governments often lack the knowledge or capacity to engage them effectively. Among the many options for doing so, governments could start by establishing a special department or unit to promote diaspora engagement and develop policies and legislation to advance this aim.

The Caribbean has a strong foundation of regional agreements and cooperation mechanisms that lay out important principles of free movement for CARICOM nationals. To ensure that these benefits materialize in both sending and receiving countries, regional dialogue that incorporates critical migration and development issues must continue to ensure the relevance of the region's institutional framework and to further the development of its migration systems.

Regional dialogue that incorporates critical migration and development issues must continue to ensure the relevance of the region's institutional framework and to further the development of its migration systems.

Appendix. Diaspora Populations for Selected Caribbean Countries, 2020

The Bahamas	Total number of emigrants:	53,793
	Emigrant share of country's total population:	13.69%
Destination	**Emigrants**	**Share of Emigrants**
United States	46,921	87.23%
United Kingdom	2,442	4.54%
Canada	1,759	3.27%
Jamaica	674	1.25%
Australia	332	0.62%
Other countries	1,665	3.10%

Barbados	Total number of emigrants:	99,611
	Emigrant share of country's total population:	34.71%
Destination	**Emigrants**	**Share of Emigrants**
United States	51,738	51.94%
United Kingdom	26,622	26.73%
Canada	15,177	15.24%
Trinidad and Tobago	1,184	1.19%
Jamaica	541	0.54%
Other countries	4,349	4.37%

Belize	Total number of emigrants:	52,756
	Emigrant share of country's total population:	13.26%
Destination	**Emigrants**	**Share of Emigrants**
United States	42,970	81.45%
Canada	2,146	4.07%
Mexico	2,127	4.03%
United Kingdom	1,694	3.21%
Bolivia	1,007	1.91%
Other countries	2,812	5.33%

Dominican Republic		
	Total number of emigrants:	1,608,567
	Emigrant share of country's total population:	14.83%

Destination	Emigrants	Share of Emigrants
United States	1,167,738	72.59%
Spain	184,832	11.49%
Italy	48,083	2.99%
Puerto Rico	47,905	2.98%
Chile	36,485	2.27%
Other countries	123,524	7.68%

Guyana		
	Total number of emigrants:	438,413
	Emigrant share of country's total population:	55.71%

Destination	Emigrants	Share of Emigrants
United States	241,573	55.10%
Canada	94,421	21.54%
United Kingdom	28,074	6.40%
Suriname	13,557	3.09%
Trinidad and Tobago	10,923	2.49%
Other countries	49,865	11.37%

Haiti		
	Total number of emigrants:	1,769,671
	Emigrant share of country's total population:	15.52%

Destination	Emigrants	Share of Emigrants
United States	705,361	39.86%
Dominican Republic	496,112	28.03%
Chile	236,912	13.39%
Canada	100,672	5.69%
France	85,042	4.81%
Other countries	145,572	8.23%

Jamaica	Total number of emigrants:	1,118,931
	Emigrant share of country's total population:	37.79%
Destination	**Emigrants**	**Share of Emigrants**
United States	792,370	70.81%
Canada	148,982	13.31%
United Kingdom	128,772	11.51%
Cayman Islands	11,540	1.03%
The Bahamas	8,042	0.72%
Other countries	29,225	2.61%

Suriname	Total number of emigrants:	273,209
	Emigrant share of country's total population:	46.54%
Destination	**Emigrants**	**Share of Emigrants**
Netherlands	182,922	66.95%
France	27,892	10.21%
French Guiana	26,064	9.54%
United States	21,498	7.87%
Belgium	4,694	1.72%
Other countries	10,139	3.71%

Trinidad and Tobago	Total number of emigrants:	330,519
	Emigrant share of country's total population:	23.63%
Destination	**Emigrants**	**Share of Emigrants**
United States	208,075	62.95%
Canada	70,035	21.19%
United Kingdom	29,508	8.93%
Venezuela	2,646	0.80%
Jamaica	2,343	0.71%
Other countries	17,912	5.42%

Sources: Tabulation of data from IADB, "DataMIG"; United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, "World Population Prospects 2020."

About the Authors

VALERIE LACARTE

Valerie Lacarte is a Senior Policy Analyst with the Migration Policy Institute (MPI) U.S. Immigration Policy Program, where she contributes to research design and conducts data analysis on a range of issues, including native-immigrant gaps in socioeconomic outcomes and access to public benefits for vulnerable immigrant and humanitarian populations. Prior to joining MPI, she was a Postdoctoral Fellow at the Institute for Women's Policy Research. She has also worked at the Organization of American States and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), where she gained expertise on regional integration, with a focus on the Caribbean.

Dr. Lacarte earned a PhD in economics from American University. For her dissertation, she used a mixed-methods approach to study the integration of Caribbean immigrants into the U.S. labor market and the intersectionality of race, ethnicity, and cultural gender norms.

JORDI AMARAL

Jordi Amaral is a former Research Consultant at MPI, where he worked with the Latin America and Caribbean Initiative. He is currently a Research Analyst at Hxagon and a freelance researcher and writer specializing in Latin America and the Caribbean, migration, politics, human rights, security and rule of law, and development. Previously, he worked with the Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA), the Atlantic Council, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the Central American Resource Center (CARECEN DC), and ONG Rescate.

Mr. Amaral holds a BA in international affairs and Latin American and hemispheric studies from the George Washington University, where he graduated Phi Beta Kappa and summa cum laude.

DIEGO CHAVES-GONZÁLEZ

Diego Chaves-González is the Senior Manager for the Latin America and Caribbean Initiative at MPI. Previously, he was an expert consultant on migration for organizations such as the World Bank Group, U.S. Agency for International Development, United Nations Development Program, and Organization of American States. In these roles, he supported governments in adjusting their capacity to manage large-scale migration and comply with international standards, and coordinated programs for Venezuelan migrants and receiving communities in Latin America. Mr. Chaves-González also worked for the United Nations, supporting the Office of Border Management of the Presidency of the Republic of Colombia in

its efforts to register and regularize Venezuelan migrants with irregular status. He has also coordinated the Displacement Tracking Matrix in Latin America to collect information on Venezuelan migration.

Mr. Chaves-González has a master's degree in economics and social development from Cardiff University, a master's degree in public policy from Tecnológico de Monterrey, and an undergraduate degree in political science and specialization in international relations from the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana in Bogotá.

ANA MARÍA SÁIZ

Ana María Sáiz is a Senior Sector Specialist in the Migration Unit of the Social Sector of the IDB. She joined the IDB in 2005, initially working for the Department of Development Effectiveness and Strategic Planning. Since then, she has worked in various sectors of the IDB and in the Country Department for Central America, Haiti, Mexico, Panama, and the Dominican Republic. She was based in Haiti from January of 2013 to September 2018, leading the Housing and Urban Development Division's portfolio, and joined the Migration Unit in April 2021 in Headquarters, where she oversees migration-related work in the Caribbean and Southern Cone countries and is the focal point for Gender and Diversity related projects.

Ms. Sáiz holds a BA in economics from the Universidad de los Andes from Colombia, a master's degree in criminal justice from Boston University, and is pursuing a master's in urban and regional planning at Georgetown University.

JEREMY HARRIS

Jeremy Harris has worked at the IDB for more than 20 years as an Economist and Trade Specialist in the Integration and Trade Sector, and in the Migration Unit since 2018. At the IDB, he has participated in the design and development of various databases and computer systems, including the DataMIG platform of the Migration Unit. Outside the IDB, he has worked as a consultant to the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Caribbean Community (CARICOM), UK Department for International Development (DFID), and German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ).

Dr. Harris holds a PhD in economics from the University of Maryland.

Acknowledgments

The authors of this report thank Andrew Selee, President of the Migration Policy Institute (MPI), and Felipe Muñoz Gómez, Chief of the Migration Unit at the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) for their strategic advice and guidance in the design of this research. At MPI, the authors also thank Michelle Mittelstadt for her tremendous support in the publication and dissemination process, María Jesús Mora for her administrative support, and Lauren Shaw for her careful editing of this report. At the IDB, the authors thank the Migration Unit experts for sharing their knowledge of migration data in the broader Latin American and Caribbean region.

In addition, the authors are grateful to the experts and stakeholders, many based in the Caribbean, who agreed to be interviewed as part of this study. Their reflections about the future of Caribbean migration were invaluable to this research.

Design: Sara Staedicke, MPI
Layout: Yoseph Hamid, MPI
Cover photo: © IOM/Alejandro Cartagena

Suggested citation: Lacarte, Valerie, Jordi Amaral, Diego Chaves-González, Ana María Sáiz, and Jeremy Harris. 2023. *Migration, Integration, and Diaspora Engagement in the Caribbean: A Policy Review*. Washington, DC: Inter-American Development Bank and Migration Policy Institute.


MPI
MIGRATION POLICY INSTITUTE


IDB