



# Diaspora engagement mapping

## DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

### Facts & figures

#### Political rights



Dual citizenship<sup>1</sup>



Right to vote in national elections  
for citizens residing abroad<sup>2</sup>



#### Remittances



Remittances as a share of GDP: **8.74%**  
Remittances inflow (USD million): **10,619**

#### Voting from abroad:

At embassies/consulates



#### Data disclaimer

As diaspora definitions vary widely, we have chosen to use comparable data on emigration as a proxy. This does not include all who consider themselves diaspora and is not necessarily aligned with national definitions of diaspora. Emigration data comes from UNDESA (2024) and remittances from the World Bank (2023).

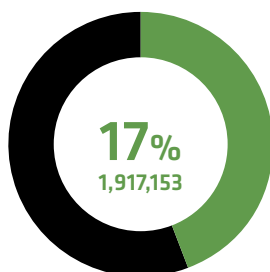
#### Emigration



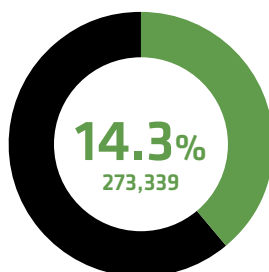
% of emigrants in  
total population



% of which  
in the EU



♂ 44.3%  
♀ 55.7%



♂ 38.9%  
♀ 61.1%

#### Top countries of destination



United States of America	1,483,418
Spain	202,074
Italy	50,413
Puerto Rico	42,387
Chile	18,210

1 Article 20 of the Dominican Constitution, <https://republica-dominicana.justia.com/nacionales/constitucion-de-la-republica-dominicana/titulo-i/capitulo-v/seccion-i/>

2 <https://acento.com.do/2016/especiales/8329993-el-voto-de-los-dominicanos-as-en-el-exterior/>

## Overview of the policy and legislative framework



- 2008** ● **Law No. 1-08 on the National Council for the Dominican Communities Living Abroad:** the law created the National Council for the Dominican Communities Living Abroad (Consejo Nacional para las Comunidades Dominicanas en el Exterior- CONDEX) led by the President. Justifying the creation of the council, the law mentions the need to develop policies that can utilise the contribution that Dominican communities abroad can have on the economic, political, social, and technological development in the country.<sup>3</sup> The INDEX and CONDEX are separate entities and do not always coordinate their efforts. There are two main differences: INDEX is subordinated to the Foreign Relations ministry, whereas CONDEX is led by the President's office with a council of advisors.
- 2015** ● **The Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Strategic Plan for 2015 – 2020** focuses on aligning the national development agenda with the country's international context. The MFA commits to develop the diaspora's national identity, facilitate the reinsertion of returnees, protect Dominicans while abroad, and promote the integration of Dominicans living abroad in the country's development.<sup>4</sup>
- 2015** ● **Presidential Decree No. 372-15** created the Institute for Dominicans Abroad (Instituto de Dominicanos y Dominicanas en el Exterior - INDEX). The decree commits INDEX to developing programmes that strengthen ties with Dominicans living abroad and integrate them into the economic, political, social, technological, and cultural development of the Dominican Republic.<sup>5</sup>
- 2016** ● **President Danilo Medina's Government Programme 2016-2020** commits to promoting links between citizens living abroad and the development of their communities in their country of origin. Additionally, the programme pledges to design and execute mechanisms to reduce the cost of and promote the productive use of remittances.<sup>6</sup>
- 2016** ● **Organic Law No. 630-16** delineates the MFA and its subdivisions' roles and responsibilities. The law also mentions the need to strengthen links with Dominicans abroad and include them in the country's operations and development.<sup>7</sup>

### » Trends

The Dominican state has shown commitment to create links between Dominicans living abroad and the national interests. INDEX and CONDEX are entrusted to foster these ties, yet the efforts are relatively new, making it hard to identify specific trends or patterns beyond the institutional interest in diaspora engagement for development.

INDEX has been increasingly active in engaging with the Dominican diaspora. To date, INDEX has played an important role in organising educational activities for Dominicans abroad<sup>8</sup> and in reaching agreements with educational institutions to provide scholarships, funding and other benefits to the diaspora.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, INDEX has also helped by channelling donations from the diaspora to local communities in the Dominican Republic.<sup>10,11</sup>

The Dominican diaspora is also actively seeking to engage with the government through organisations in Europe, France, Italy and Spain, as well as in the United States.

3 [http://legalia.com.do/serve/listfile\\_download.aspx?id=1007&num=1](http://legalia.com.do/serve/listfile_download.aspx?id=1007&num=1)

4 <https://www.mirex.gob.do/pdf/planestrategico.pdf>

5 [https://index.mirex.gob.do/images/reglamento\\_index\\_decreto\\_303-17.pdf](https://index.mirex.gob.do/images/reglamento_index_decreto_303-17.pdf)

6 [https://presidencia.gob.do/sites/default/files/Plan\\_Gobierno\\_Danilo\\_Medina\\_2016-2020\\_v2.pdf](https://presidencia.gob.do/sites/default/files/Plan_Gobierno_Danilo_Medina_2016-2020_v2.pdf)

7 <https://dgii.gov.do/legislacion/leyesTributarias/Documents/Otras%20Leyes%20de%20Inter%C3%A9s/630-16.pdf>

8 <https://index.gob.do/cierre-del-primer-diplomado-de-gestion-estrategica-para-asociaciones-de-dominicanos-en-el-exterior/>

9 <https://index.gob.do/index-y-cef-santo-domingo-acuerdan-ofrecer-becas-de-estudios-a-dominicanos-radicados-en-el-exterior/>

10 <https://index.gob.do/a-traves-del-index-dominicanos-en-boston-llevar-donativos-a-sus-compueblanos-en-cabrera/>

11 <https://index.gob.do/index-canaliza-donaciones-de-utiles-deportivos-y-escolares-desde-miami-hacia-la-comunidad-de-bajos-de-haina/>



## Achievements

During 2023, INDEX has reached a series of strategic agreements with various institutions to benefit the Dominican diaspora. These agreements include collaborations with educational institutions such as the Centro de Estudios Financieros and the Universidad a Distancia de Madrid, as well as the Spain Business School, with the aim of promoting the training and continuing education of Dominicans living abroad. It has also established agreements with the National Institute of Migration and the National Association of Savings and Loans for Housing to promote the development of research capacities, provide financial education and support the diaspora in academic and economic aspects. In addition, INDEX has signed agreements with the Centros APEC de Educación a Distancia (CENAPEC) to expand academic offerings through virtual programmes and facilitate educational scholarships. More recently, it has established a collaboration with the Directorate of Strategic Projects and Special Programmes of the Presidency (Propeep) to establish cultural centres abroad, thus strengthening the diaspora's connection with Dominican culture and promoting its social integration.<sup>12</sup>

Dominican consulates in Europe expanded outreach and improved services between 2022 and 2024. A pilot plan to modernise consular offices<sup>13</sup> was launched to make them more efficient and transparent, with Barcelona (Spain) among the first locations in 2023.

## Obstacles



- **Commitment:** The government's specific attention to linking the diaspora with the country's development plans is recent. It will take time to create relationships with diaspora and develop mechanisms to reach out to them. Furthermore, although there are mentions in the legislation and policy to link the diaspora with the country's operations and interests, there is no detailed plan on how to do so.
- **Resources:** Within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' strategic plan, specific weaknesses are mentioned that may result in challenges for diaspora engagement. The MFA stated that its structure is obsolete and that there are insufficient funds to meet the promises made. Weaknesses such as insufficient funds can lead to embassies and consulates focusing on immediate needs rather than new projects such as the mapping of diaspora groups, as identified by other agencies, like Condex. Furthermore, the Ministry has stated that there is a lack of supervision and control of personnel working abroad.<sup>14</sup>

## SPOTLIGHT: effective practices

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### City Juan Bosch (Cuidad Juan Bosch) - Currently Active

This public-private-partnership coordinated by the President's Ministry and executed through the Public Matrix's Trust for the Construction of Low-Cost Housing Dominican Republic assists all Dominicans, including those abroad, access housing. Dominicans living abroad are able to access benefits such as the ITBIS bond and the Land Bond, which may provide between 8-12% of the value of housing within City Juan Bosch. When the banks associated with this project analyse a participants' ability to pay, they take income supported by remittances into account.

HOUSING

<sup>12</sup> <https://index.gob.do/index-firma-acuerdo-con-instituciones-academicas-para-beneficiar-a-dominicanos-residentes-en-el-exterior-2/>

<sup>13</sup> <https://presidencia.gob.do/noticias/presidente-abinader-dice-que-la-diaspora-dominicana-es-prioridad-en-politica-exterior-del#:~:text=Asimismo%2C%20estableció%20que%20se%20ha,Chile%2C%20Buenos%20Aires%20y%20Beijing>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.mirex.gob.do/pdf/planestrategico.pdf>

## SocialiSation Workshop for the Processes of the Dominican Diaspora Integration into the Local Development Processes in the Dominican Republic 2019

### OUTREACH

Through this workshop, the Ministry of Economics, Planning, and Development in coordination with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) strategised on how to include the Dominican diaspora for the development of the country, including new methods for the sending and receipt of remittances. As an outcome, a community based pilot diagnostic (not yet implemented by the government) to identify the key areas of engagement of the diaspora will be conducted. Subsequently, a Working Group for Local Development will be created and will include the diaspora as participants. The plan is to then institutionalise the resulting structures and actions in order to replicate this process in communities beyond the pilot community. At this workshop, IOM presented its proposal for an International Guarantee Fund (FIG DOMEX) which would support saving and access to credit in the country of destination for investment in the Dominican Republic.<sup>15</sup>

## Dominican Sisters 2022

### NETWORKING

The Dominican Sisters women's network is an INDEX initiative designed to promote the development and projection of Dominican women abroad. This network is made up of professional Dominican women with leadership skills and the ability to influence other women. It seeks to empower and unite successful women of the diaspora through training programmes on topics of interest to them and networking spaces. In 2023, Dominican Sisters together with INDEX made a joint donation of paediatric medical supplies and equipment to the San Vicente de Paúl Hospital in San Francisco de Macorís, Dominican Republic, valued at over RD\$400,000 (about 6336€).<sup>16</sup>

## Sole Consular Power of Attorney 2023

### CONSULAR SERVICES + INVESTMENT

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in collaboration with financial entities, presented the "Sole Consular Power of Attorney" to simplify the procedures for the purchase of homes in the Dominican Republic from abroad. This document, available at Dominican consulates, allows citizens abroad to authorise a local representative to facilitate the purchase of property, eliminating the need for multiple documents and streamlining the process. This instrument provides facilities for the diaspora who wish to invest in real estate in their country of origin.


## Diaspora technical training

### CAPACITY BUILDING

Launch of the diaspora technical training initiative by INFOTEP and INDEX (July 2023). Dominican authorities expanded free virtual courses for diaspora members worldwide. The Dominican government launched programmes to build diaspora capacity. In August 2022, INDEX and the National Institute of Technical Training (INFOTEP) rolled out a "Programa de Capacitación Técnica" for the Dominican diaspora, initially spanning 12 countries in the Americas and the Caribbean. By July 2023, this programme was expanded to Europe: a total of 42 free technical courses and diplomas became available online to Dominicans abroad, regardless of location.

<sup>15</sup> <https://programamesoamerica.iom.int/en/news/iom-supports-efforts-dominican-republic-diaspora-integration-and-crisis-management>

<sup>16</sup> <https://index.gob.do/el-index-y-dominican-sisters-club-donan-insumos-medicos-al-hospital-san-vicente-de-paul-en-san-francisco-de-macoris/>



### Lleva un Libro en la Maleta

This project, led by Dominican-Spanish educator Virginia Read, encourages diaspora travellers to carry children's books to the Dominican Republic and donate them to rural libraries and schools.

## Annex:

# List of Actors

### Diaspora related institutions

- **National institutions**
  - At ministerial level

#### **Ministry of Foreign Affairs** 2016

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs develops foreign affairs policy linking the national development agenda with international affairs in order to benefit the Dominican Republic.

#### **Vice-Minister for the Dominican Communities Living Abroad** 2016

The basic functions of this Vice-Minister is to link Dominicans living abroad with their country of origin, promote their inclusion in country development and operations, promote the culture and identity of Dominicans living abroad, and promote education abroad for Dominicans to increase their capacity and skills.

#### **National Institute for Migration (Instituto Nacional de Migracion-INM RD)** 2011

This entity is in charge of the design and promotion of migration studies as well as the organisation and programming of technical activities both in the country and abroad relating to migration. INM RD's mission is to contribute to migration management through proposals of public policy that lead to sustainable development and strengthen migration governance.

#### **Institute for Dominicans Abroad (Instituto de Dominicanos y Dominicanas en el Exterior-INDEX)** 2015

Located within the Foreign Affairs Ministry, INDEX's objective is to develop programmes for Dominicans living abroad and seeks their economic, political, social, and cultural integration to their communities of origin.

#### **National Council for the Dominican Communities Living Abroad (Consejo Nacional para las Comunidades Dominicanas en el Exterior- CONDEX)** 2008

CONDEX is in charge of executing a participative process to create policies and programmes that link and integrate Dominicans living abroad to national policy. CONDEX is also tasked with recommending policies that promote the strengthening of ties between communities living abroad with communities in the Dominican Republic to facilitate the execution of joint projects and activities. Furthermore, in order to do so, the council is to recommend policies that promote sustained and direct communication with Dominicans living abroad.

Explore the institutionalisation of diaspora engagement worldwide via the [typology of 430+ institutions](#)



## Diaspora organisations in Europe

Although Spain and Italy are amongst the top five destination countries for Dominicans, 75% of the Dominicans living abroad are located in the United States. With this being the case, it is not surprising to find a limited number of diaspora organisations in Europe.

Read more about diaspora organisations in "[Starting guide: What is a diaspora organisation](#)"



### **ASOCIACIÓN ESPAÑOLA DE DOMINICANAS Y DOMINICANOS DE ULTRAMAR (ADU)** Spain



#### Development activities

This Association seeks to defend Dominicans from Ultramar, fight for their social, economic, and cultural interests, as well as maintain contact with their country of origin. This group provides remittances services, leadership workshops for women, and assists with legalization paperwork, amongst others.

### **Asociacion de Mujeres Dominicanas en España (AMDE)** Spain

AMDE is an NGO that creates spaces for cultural exchange between Dominicans, and orients and informs Dominican women on the best ways to integrate in Spanish culture. It promotes the conscious understanding of their double condition as "women and migrants."

### **La Asociacion Socio - Cultural - DOMINICANOS EN ITALIA - (A.S.C.D.I.)** Italy

This NGO was created to help Dominicans living in Italy with social and migration related orientation. ASCDI assists migrants with their documentation processes and promotes the values, traditions, and culture of Dominicans.

Written by: **Dr Manuel Orozco**  
 Edited by: **EUDiF**  
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