

MOVEMENT OF PERSONS TO WORK/TRADE SERVICES IN THE CARIBBEAN UPDATES

The CARICOM Secretariat has advised of the following updates regarding the CSME Free Movement of Persons:

Barbados

Barbados has amended its *Skills Act* to *inter alia* provide legislative coverage for all ten (10) CSME Skills categories, as well as the two (2) additional categories of *Security Guards* and *Agricultural Workers*. Barbados is, therefore, the first CARICOM Member State to have given legislative coverage to all twelve (12) categories. The CSME Focal Point in Barbados has indicated that the *Barbados Accreditation Council* has not yet issued any CSME Skills Certificates in respect of *Security Guards* and *Agricultural Workers*.

Belize

Belize has amended its *Skills Act* to provide legislative coverage for all ten (10) CSME Skills categories. The amendments also allow for the removal of visa requirements for Haitian nationals. In addition, Belize has removed the reciprocity provision and legislated the establishment of its free movement committee, as well as the right for dependents, who are both CARICOM and non-CARICOM nationals, to live and work in Belize.

In light of the afore-mentioned developments, there are now five (5) CARICOM Member States which recognize all ten (10) categories of skilled workers. These are Barbados, Belize, Grenada, Guyana and Jamaica. The two (2) additional categories, that of *Security Guards* and *Agricultural Workers*, are to be signed off on by the *Council for Human and Social Development (COHSOD)* to allow for the free movement of both categories. It is noted however, that both Antigua and Barbuda and St. Kitts and Nevis have been granted an opt-out of facilitating the two additional categories. Further, following CARICOM's request for an Advisory Opinion on the matter, the CARICOM Court of Justice (CCJ) in November 2019, held that it is lawful for both Member States to opt-out of this Decision of CARICOM Heads.

With regard to Haitian nationals, Member States which have removed the visa requirements include Belize, Grenada, Guyana, Montserrat, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Suriname.