
MEDIA RELEASE

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Immigrant Labour – Recruiting the Right Way

On May 17, 2019, The Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Industry and Commerce's Employment and Labour Relations Committee hosted a timely session titled "Immigrant Labour: Recruiting the Right Way".

The discussion panel included Mrs. Charmaine Gandhi-Andrews, Chief Immigration Officer, Ministry of National Security; Ms. Lynne Mohammed, Foreign Services Officer, Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs; Ms. Jennifer Marchand, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs; and Mr. Keith Scotland, Attorney-at-Law. The panellists tackled the issue from various angles and made sure that participants had a clear understanding of the existing legislation and required processes, from ensuring legal compliance to the need for improved supervision and administration of an immigrant labour force.

Migration is a worldwide occurrence; millions of people move in search of work and many, driven by poverty and insecurity, will accept any type of employment. It is expected that the number of migrants crossing borders in search of job security will rapidly increase in the coming decades as a result of globalisation and regional integration. The free movement of certain categories of workers within the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) is already a reality. Migrant workers contribute to the economies of both their host country and their country of origin, yet they continue to face discrimination and poor work conditions. Moreover, their limited access to social protection leaves them vulnerable to exploitation. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) recommends creating policies and mechanisms designed to better manage labour migration, so that it can contribute positively to the well-being of the migrants, as well as to the growth and development of both home and host societies.

Other notable suggestions included developing public education programmes, creating viable and attractive opportunities for the regional workforce, and focusing on education so that the skills taught in school are relevant to regional labour demands.

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