

Dominican Republic

Business Travel Guide

Compiled by:

Embassy of Switzerland in the Dominican Republic

Santo Domingo, March 2023

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Entry Requirements

This Business Travel Guide was published in March 2023. To receive the latest news and general information regarding entry regulations, please consult the website:

<https://www.godominicanrepublic.com/travel-to-dr/getting-here/>

The Dominican Republic has eight international airports, five cruise destinations to enter the country. All passengers entering and departing the country on commercial flights will be required to fill out and submit their digital forms through the **E-Ticket Portal** either before or upon their arrival in the country. It is recommended filling out the E-Ticket at least 72 hours before the trip and have the QR code printed out or in digital form. **Custom** declarations are also included within the E-Ticket; restrictions apply for tobacco, alcohol, gifts, medicine, and cash.

<https://eticket.migracion.gob.do/>

As of April 23, 2022, passengers do not need to present a **COVID-19** Vaccination Card, PCR, or antigen test to enter the Dominican Republic. The local authorities do not perform random COVID-19 testing upon arrival. The yellow fever vaccine is not mandatory to enter the Dominican Republic, although there are exceptions for people traveling from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and Brazil.

Visa

Swiss citizens are exempted from visa requirements to enter the Dominican Republic for touristic purposes. The stay as a tourist is 30 days. Staying beyond the 30-day period is possible, but requires paying a fee depending on the extension, which can be done at the General Directorate of Migration or at the migration post at the exit of the country. See also:

<https://migracion.gob.do/servicios/permisos/>

Entry to the Dominican Republic may be refused if travelers do not have proof of onward or return travel. Visitors from other nationalities can find information about the visa requirements using this tool:

<https://mirex.gob.do/condiciones-para-extranjeros-ingresar/>

The Dominican Republic also issues business, work, student, and residency visas. In general, passports must have a minimum validity of six (6) months. For work visas, it is necessary to comply with additional requirements:

- Apostilled birth certificate
- One (1) recent photograph, size 4×5 cm, white background
- Criminal record certificate of your country of origin
- Certificate of the working contract
- Receipt of the medical examination
- Proof of economic solvency
- Payment of the visa fee

Visa applications forms are available online. Please visit this site:

<https://migracion.gob.do/servicio/permiso-para-trabajadores-temporeros/> or contact your local consulate.

Transfer from the airport to the city center:

From Punta Cana International Airport to **Punta Cana**:

- **Taxi**
 - Various touristic taxi services, Uber, Cabify, etc.
 - Available 24/7
 - Prices depend on the hotel destination and can range between USD 20-40

<https://www.puntacanainternationalairport.com/>

From Las Américas International Airport to the center of **Santo Domingo**:

- **Taxi**
 - Taxi Sichala, Apolo Taxi, Uber, Cabify etc.
 - Available 24/7
 - Approximately USD 25-30

<https://aeropuertolasamericas.com/>

From Gregorio Luperón International Airport to the center of **Santiago de los Caballeros**:

- **Taxi**
 - Various local taxi services, Uber, Cabify, etc.
 - Available 24/7
 - Approximately USD 20-30

<https://aeropuertopuertoplata.com/>

From La Isabela International Airport to the center of **Santo Domingo**:

- **Taxi**
 - Taxi Finatur, Apolo Taxi, Uber, Cabify, etc.
 - Available 24/7
 - Approximately USD 10-20

<https://aeropuertolaisabela.com/>

Most airports have car rental services like Avis, Hertz, Sixt, National, Nelly, etc. See useful links:

<https://www.godominicanrepublic.com/travel-to-dr/recommended-links/>

HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

Vaccinations: As mentioned earlier, it is currently not mandatory to be vaccinated against COVID-19. Still, it is advised to consult the official sites from the Ministry of Health before traveling to the Dominican Republic to check for any other vaccinations and health recommendations:

<https://msp.gob.do/web/> and <https://digeписalud.gob.do/>

All passengers arriving in the Dominican Republic from the **Brazilian states** of Espiritu Santo, Minas Gerais, Rio de Janeiro, and São Paulo, must present their International Certificate of Vaccination or Prophylaxis (CIVP) showing proof of vaccination against yellow fever at least 10 days prior to their arrival in the country. Exempt from this provision are children under 10 months of age, pregnant women and travelers who have only transited for a period of less than 12 hours at an airport in any of the Brazilian states mentioned above.

As of October 15, 2021, all passengers arriving to the Dominican Republic from the **Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela** must present the Vaccination Card, evidencing that they have been vaccinated against yellow fever. This measure also applies to all passengers coming from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela arriving in the Dominican Republic from another country, and for those who have been in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela in the last 14 days or less. This measure applies to all passengers aged one (1) or over.

Further vaccinations against hepatitis A and B, tetanus, diphtheria, cholera, rabies, tuberculosis, and typhoid are recommended.

Mandatory medical insurance: There are no mandatory medical insurance regulations in place to enter the Dominican Republic. Nevertheless, all travelers should ensure that they have adequate travel health insurance. The cost for medical treatments are usually higher than in Europe, and hospitals require a financial guarantee (credit card/advance payment) before treatments. Take out additional insurance in case your health insurance does not cover these costs or of an eventual medical repatriation.

Further health advice: Travelers should ideally arrange an appointment with their health professional at least four to six weeks before travel. For those with pre-existing health conditions, an earlier appointment is recommended.

The entire Dominican Republic has high levels of solar irradiation, which is why it is advised to always use sunblock or hats. Water is not safe to drink from the tap, and should not be ingested from the shower or other sources. Bottled water is advised at all times for drinking.

PUBLIC SECURITY / RECOMMENDED PRECAUTIONS

Public security: The Dominican Republic can be described as stable, but the crime rate is high. Social, political and economic discontent is occasionally expressed in demonstrations. Great attention must be paid to **personal safety**. Rallies and large gatherings of people of any kind should be avoided, as riots cannot be ruled out.

The crime rate is high throughout the country. The possession and use of firearms and other weapons is widespread. For example, pickpocketing, robbery, breaking into cars, and burglaries of private and vacation homes are common. Robberies by armed persons on motorcycles also occur. Special attention has to be paid to tourist

swindles and fraud. To combat these risks, the Dominican police has created a unit specialized in helping tourists, called Politur.

Increasingly, violent gangs and common criminals, are attempting to extort money or enforce political demands through **kidnapping**. Before and during your trip, also inform yourself about the development of the situation in the media and stay in contact with your tour operator and local contact persons. Also, keep regular contact with your relatives during your trip. Contact them if something serious has occurred in your travel environment.

A simple complaint to the police can result in a provisional arrest of the accused person. This applies, for example, to violent crimes against women, non-payment of debts or causing damage (e.g. to rental vehicles). Offenses against the narcotics' law are punished severely (5 to 30 years in prison) even for the smallest amounts and for any type of drug. Prison conditions are precarious. Legal procedures and police investigations are different from those in Europe: long waiting periods must be expected, and local conditions must be taken into account.

Regional security:

Several urban areas of **Santo Domingo** register higher crime rates than the rest of the Dominican Republic. Neighborhoods that should be avoided, especially at night are Santo Domingo Este, Santo Domingo Norte, and settlements near the Ozama River.

Because of the difficult political and economic situation in **Haiti**, it is recommended to pay special attention to the personal safety near the border. Migration controls in the Dominican Republic have increased significantly. Travel to Haiti is not advised. The security situation cannot be guaranteed with the existing state structures. There is an increased risk of being a victim of violent crimes and armed kidnappings.

The Dominican Republic's economy depends heavily on the influx of tourists, as it generates almost 10 % of the GDP. This means that tourist areas, especially near **Punta Cana** and the other cruise ship ports, are quite safe. Still, basic travel precautions should not be neglected.

Natural risks:

The Dominican Republic is located in an **earthquake** zone. Tsunamis triggered by earthquakes cannot be ruled out in the Dominican Republic. **Hurricanes** could occur from June throughout November. Heavy rainfall can cause flooding, landslides and severe infrastructure damage. Travel may also be temporarily affected. Pay attention to weather forecasts, warnings, and instructions from local authorities.

General precautions:

- Always watch your surroundings, especially in the evening
- Check with local contacts or your hotel regarding local conditions
- Do not carry valuables (watches, jewelry, etc.) outside the guarded zones. Deposit them in a safe together with your identification documents. However, always carry a photocopy of your passport
- Use your credit card with caution, as misuse does occur
- Use ATMs inside bank buildings or shopping malls
- Do not give any information about yourself or your relatives (addresses, telephone numbers, etc.) to strangers
- Keep car windows closed and doors locked. Park in busy areas and preferably in gated parking lots. Do not remain in a parked car
- Book excursions with recognized travel agencies
- Do not resist in the event of a robbery
- Be aware that corruption occurs in both the private and public sectors. Great caution should be exercised in financial transactions (e.g. investments in real estate). It is recommended to consult a trustworthy lawyer.

- Do not accept drinks or food from strangers
- Use only taxi apps (Uber, Cabify, etc.) or official taxi services
- Due to the risk of accidents and theft, public buses, shared and motorcycle cabs are not recommended

Further information, documents, and travel advice:

<https://www.eda.admin.ch/countries/dominican-republic/de/home/reisehinweise/vor-ort.html>

TIME ZONE

Time difference between Switzerland and

Santo Domingo	Central European Time -5
Santiago de los Caballeros	Central European Time -5
Punta Cana	Central European Time -5

BUSINESS HOURS

	Weekdays	Saturdays	Sundays and Holidays
Government Offices	08:00 – 16:00	Closed	Closed
Banks	08:30 – 17:00	09:00 – 12:30	Closed
Shops	08:30 – 20:00	08:30 – 19:00	09:00 – 16:00
Supermarkets	07:00 – 22:00	08:00 – 22:00	09:00 – 20:00

These opening hours can vary quite considerably. Within cities, the above-mentioned hours depend on their location, e.g. if they are located within a shopping mall. Additionally, it is recommended to take into consideration if the area is touristic. Shops and supermarkets in rural or touristic areas can have shorter opening hours than in Santo Domingo or Santiago de los Caballeros.

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

The Dominican Republic celebrates 12 official public holidays. The most important holidays are Easter and Christmas, which often stretch into a long weekend.

New Year's Day	January 1
Three Kings' Day	January 6
Our Lady of Altagracia Day	January 21
Juan Pablo Duarte Day	January 26
Independence Day	February 27

Good Friday (Holy Easter Week)	April 7
Labor Day	May 1
Corpus Christi Day	June 8
Restoration of Independence Day	August 16
Our Lady of Mercedes Day	September 24
Constitution Day	November 6
Christmas Day	December 25

The main holiday season takes place from the end of December until April because of the multiple public holiday weekends and the favorable weather conditions. Business trips should be avoided in case of political unrest, extreme weather events or health restrictions (COVID-19, Cholera, etc.). The **Atlantic hurricane season** lasts from June 1 through November 30, with September considered as the most active month. The Dominican Republic is located within the storm belt, but the probability of a major hurricane hitting is low. In case of tropical storms, it is recommended to get in contact with the airline.

NATIONAL TRADE FAIR CALENDAR

The dates of the main trade fairs are accessible here:

<https://www.ntradeshows.com/dominican-republic/> and <https://presidencia.gob.do/taxonomy/term/187>

Most of the bigger trade fairs in the Dominican Republic take place during the summer. They are strongly concentrated in the tourism and in the export sectors, like fruits, cigars, and rum. Worth mentioning are the Expolit (April 2023), the International Pineapple Symposium (May 2023). The Americas GHI Conference (June 2023), and the Caribbean Tourism Fair (expected to be held in October 2023).

COMMUNICATION: TELEPHONE AND INTERNET

The country codes are: +1-809, +1-829, and +1-849

Local SIM card can be bought at: Claro, Altice and Viva. Claro leads the market and its services are available in almost all municipalities of the country. In urban areas, all operators have good coverage and internet speeds. Other internet providers are Wind and Aster, although their market share is smaller. There are no government restrictions on access to the internet or reports that the government monitors e-mails or chat rooms without judicial oversight.

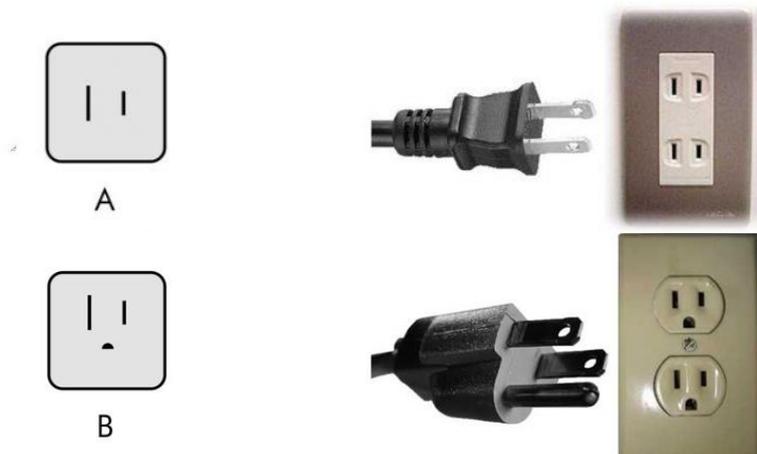
Important phone numbers:

Police	+1-809 682-2151 or 911
Fire department	+1-809 682-2000 or 911
Medical emergency	911
Tourist Police (POLITUR)	+1-809 222-2026 or 911
National Information Service	1411

For all kinds of emergencies, it is possible to call **911**, and they will connect you with the respective department. Keep also in mind that the cellphone network stability and internet access might be reduced in rural areas and in remote touristic areas.

ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

Electricity plug and socket: **Type A and Type B**



The voltage in the Dominican Republic is 110-120 V with a frequency of 60 Hz.

Travelers coming from Europe or other regions operating at 220 volts should bring adapters and/or converters. Major resorts have generators to cope with any street power outages. If staying outside of resort areas, in a small hotel, or in the countryside, keep in mind that there can be frequent power irregularities and surges. This means you should protect your electronic appliances, unless they have a built-in surge protector. See here for more information:

<https://www.enchufesenelmundo.com/enchufes-y-voltaje-en-republica-dominicana/>

METHODS OF PAYMENT

National currency in the Dominican Republic is the Dominican Peso (DOP).

Exchange rate as of March 16, 2023: CHF 1 = DOP 59.19

When entering or leaving the country with USD 10'000 or its equivalent in another currency or more in cash or other monetary instruments, the money must be declared in writing to the custom office.

Taxes and tipping:

Restaurant bills automatically include a 10 % service charge – apart from the 18 % sales tax called ITBIS. It is customary, however, to leave an additional 10 % to ensure the server gets a tip. Of course, this can vary depending on the service you received. Taxis do not receive gratuity, but it is good practice to reward the service if you received exceptional attention or had a specific situation in which the driver helped. The latter recommendation can be generalized for all kinds of services (supermarket clerks, parking services, etc.) that you consider satisfactory.

Acceptance of methods of payment:

	everywhere	almost everywhere	limited	not accepted
Cash (DOP)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cash (USD)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cash (Euro)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
MasterCard	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Visa	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
American Express	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Diner	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maestro	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Apple Pay/Wallet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Google/Samsung Pay	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

USD and Euros can be exchanged in banks, or in authorized exchange offices around the country. ATMs are widely available from a variety of established banks, including Scotiabank, Banreservas, and Banco Popular. They are safe to use for withdrawals in the local currency, especially when you choose an indoor location and stick to daytime use. In shopping malls and touristic places, it is usually possible to pay by card. However, it is always helpful to carry some amounts of DOP to be able to pay local services and necessities.

DOMESTIC TRAVEL, LOCAL TRANSPORT

The most commonly used kind of public transport in **Santo Domingo** is the bus, metro, and cable car. The quality of the bus services is not good, although they depend on the area. Neighborhoods in the west of the city have formalized bus systems. Local buses, known as Guagua and moto taxis are not recommended because of the risk of accidents and theft. The metro and cable car are modern and offer cheap transportation, but they do not connect all neighborhoods. Within the capital, we recommend using ride-hailing applications.

Traveling **outside of Santo Domingo** by bus is relatively safe when using private bus services like Caribe Tours or Metro Tours. The road condition of the main roads and expressways can be described as good, which is why domestic flights are not that common. However, off the main roads, many roads are not paved. The unpredictable and aggressive behavior of many road users, stray animals and the frequent disregard for traffic regulations pose a significant risk of accidents.

Taxi fare for a 15 minutes journey: DOP 200-500 / USD 3-6

Journey with the metro: DOP 60 (cost of the card) and DOP 20 per trip

Main ride hailing apps: Uber and Cabify

Main method of payment for taxi and metro: Cash and credit/debit card

Car rental can be arranged at numerous companies:

- Europcar: <https://www.europcar.com.do/>
- Sixt: <https://www.sixt.global/es/alquiler-coches/republica-dominicana>

- Nelly: <https://nellyrac.do/>
- Hertz: <https://www.hertz.com/rentacar/reservation/>
- Avis: <https://avis.com.do/>

ACCOMMODATION, TEMPORARY OFFICE SPACE

The Dominican Republic has several options for accommodations. The hotel sector in particular is well organized, modern, and available all around the country. Moreover, it is possible to find rooms and apartments on platforms like Airbnb or Vrbo. Co-working spaces are available in the business center of Santo Domingo, and they have become more common in the last couple of years.

Finding temporary office spaces depends on the market situation and the respective real estate agents. A company named Pyhex offers office spaces, auditoriums, and photo studios in Santo Domingo and Punta Cana. More information can be found here:

<https://pyhex.com/>

LANGUAGES USED FOR BUSINESS

The Dominican Republic's official language is **Spanish** and is therefore the main language for business. English is also understood in multinational or large Dominican companies. Nevertheless, it is always recommended to know some words in Spanish. English levels outside of Santo Domingo and the touristic areas are quite low. In the 2022 English proficiency index, the Dominican Republic ranked only 53rd, which is lower than similar countries in Central America and the Caribbean.

BUSINESS PRACTICES

Tips for initiating business contacts

In general, it is recommended to get in touch with the bilateral chamber of commerce in Santo Domingo:

www.camaradominicosuiza.org

Furthermore, it is helpful to attend and make use of respective industry events, trade fairs, and other networking opportunities. Platforms like LinkedIn can also help establish first business contacts. Still, it is preferable to build personal ties with prospective contacts because of the local business culture.

Scheduling Meetings:

Business appointments are important and can often be scheduled on short notice; however, it is best to make them two to three weeks in advance by telephone or email. It is advised to reconfirm the schedule, meeting time and place at least once before the meeting and in some cases even several times. This will reduce misunderstandings, and it is also a subtle way to constantly stay in touch with your business contacts. Arriving punctual to events is crucial, even though it is not unusual that they start with a 15-45 min delay in the Dominican Republic. On one hand, punctuality is a sign of respect and on the other hand, it is an ideal possibility to engage in informal networking before an event or meeting.

Formal business lunches or dinners are a formidable idea to schedule meetings. Dominicans like to discuss business openly. It is customary for Dominicans to meet in nice restaurants and to chat over a relaxing drink. One should avoid showing up without being acquainted with the surroundings. It is best to first introduce yourself to the group and then to extend the invitation to the group. People are keen to get acquainted, and so it would be wise to follow suit.

Business attire:

In the Dominican Republic, finesse is all-important. It is very important for you to maintain a standard of dresses that is appropriate throughout your business discussions. Dressing appropriately to get the right

attention is helpful. For men, it is recommended to wear good quality, conservative, dark-colored business suits. For women, it is advised to wear stylish suits or elegant dresses, which can be accompanied by make-up and jewelry.

These recommendations depend of course on the event or prior agreements between the parties. Because of the warm weather, it is not always necessary to follow through the typical dress codes. One example in the Dominican Republic is the common use of so-called Chacabana, which are elegant and light shirts.

Introducing yourself:

Making a good first impression is key in the Dominican Republic. A handshake, with direct eye contact and a welcoming smile, is standard. Maintaining eye contact is crucial as it indicates interest. When shaking hands, use the appropriate greeting for the time of day in Spanish. Small talk helps establish a rapport. It is recommended to not immediately begin discussing business since it could be deemed as inappropriate. Business cards are exchanged during introductions without formal ritual. Have one side of your business card translated into Spanish. It is advised to treat business cards with respect. When receiving a card, it is a sign of appreciation to place it in a business card case.

People communicate in a very direct and loud manner. This may come across as disrespectful, but that is not the case; it is simply a matter of style of communication in the Dominican Republic. Showing the Dominican flag, e.g. with a pin on the vest, is welcomed and a part of doing business in the Dominican Republic. Meetings and informal chats are often interrupted, and several people may speak at the same time. Further, it is suggested to be informed about facial expression and bodily movements - gestures are context-sensitive and do not always translate well between business cultures.

Building trust and personal relationships:

Trust is crucial to developing relationships. It is important that you treat business colleagues with respect and not do anything to cause them loss of face. The first meeting is often quite formal; having all written material available in both English and Spanish is welcomed. Relationships are typically viewed as more influential than business documents. The Dominican Republic is a country where knowing the right person is often more significant than technical knowledge.

Patience is crucial when doing business in the Dominican Republic. It takes several meetings to reach some form of an agreement. It is necessary to plan sufficient time for negotiation and consultation. There are regularly long bureaucratic delays in reaching decisions. Rushing the process is frowned upon and might end up in rude responses. Avoiding high-pressure sales tactics is advised.

It is essential to leave personal matters outside when engaging in business practices. It is furthermore recommended to be conservative when talking about money matters. Likewise, it is also important to bear in mind that Dominicans are emotional people, and so they generally wear their hearts on their sleeves. It is expected that they will go off-topic, but it is good to avoid engaging in arguments. Attempts at speaking Spanish are a good sign of respect for the local people.

Offering and accepting gifts and invitations:

If invited to dinner at a Dominican's home, bring a gift such as chocolates or pastries. If possible, it is better to avoid gifts that are black or purple because they are considered mourning colors. Gifts are usually opened when received. Accepting expensive gifts and invitations is a sensitive topic and should be handled discretely whenever possible. Bringing gifts from Switzerland or e.g. the USA is highly appreciated and will surely boost popularity.

Sensitive topics:

Primarily, talking about politics is always a sensitive topic and requires extensive local knowledge to avoid irritating Dominicans. Populist forces dominate and have dominated political affairs in the Dominican Republic for several decades, which makes engaging in such discussions a daunting task. Due to the ongoing political and migratory crisis in the neighboring country Haiti, it is better not to talk about this relationship. This issue remains very complex and Dominicans often find their position to be misunderstood by foreigners. In this context, it could also come across as insensitive to discuss topics that could be related to Haiti, such as the recent Cholera outbreak or migration flows.

Secondly, religion is another contested area for discussions. The Dominican constitution guarantees freedom of religion, and over 90 % of the population is nominally Roman Catholic. Nevertheless, for most people, religious practice is limited and formalist. Talking about religious practices is considered personal and could cause misunderstandings, especially in groups with various generations.

Thirdly, gender issues could also arise as sensitive discussion topics. Similarly, like politics and religion, people have strong opinions on gender issues and talking about their stances are prone to be a difficult conversation. A related example here is abortion. Of course, the recommendations regarding these topics should not be generalized onto the entire population, but taken as key points to pay attention to when engaging in business activities and daily life in the Dominican Republic.

Other considerations:

Diplomatic relations between Switzerland and the Dominican Republic are harmonious. The economic exchange between the two countries has intensified in recent years. This means that foreign investors are welcomed and will encounter attractive business opportunities. Swiss products, e.g. from Nestlé, are known in the Dominican Republic and help maintain a positive image for all other Swiss brands and investors. Dominican businesspersons are usually curious to learn about foreign culture and countries.

BUSINESS RISKS

Corruption is without a doubt the main risk when doing business in the Dominican Republic. Different mechanisms of corruption have evolved over the years, and these practices can be commonly found in every sector of the economy. The Dominican society has become somewhat used to corruption, which also explains the fact that the country only ranks 94th out of 196 countries in the 2022 Global Corruption Index (see <https://risk-indexes.com/global-corruption-index/>). The Dominican Republic scored only 46.4 points in this report; 0 being the lowest risk and 100 being the highest risk of corruption. Furthermore, the Swiss Export Risk Insurance (SERV) gives the Dominican Republic a score of 4 out of 7 (highest risk) in their corruption index CRC (see <https://www.serv-ch.com/coverpractice/list#>).

Dominican law penalizes corruption; nonetheless, as seen above, several indices confirm that there is an existing problem with institutionalized corruption. Current President Abinader runs on a platform of anti-corruption. Since taking office in August 2020, he has empowered his newly appointed prosecutors to pursue corruption cases, and taken concrete action, including the suspension of officials who do not declare their assets. It remains to be seen if these cases will conclude successfully. Nevertheless, it is encouraging that the Dominican Republic makes an institutionalized effort to combat corruption.

In the 2020 version of the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business report, the Dominican Republic ranked as number 115. The lowest performances were registered in the sub-categories of **paying taxes, protecting minority investors, and enforcing contracts**. Tax matters can be quite time-consuming and the Dominican Republic scores especially low in the post filing index, meaning the time to comply with VAT refund, time to obtain a VAT refund, and time to comply with a corporate income tax correction. Also, way below the regional averages are shareholder's rights, governance safeguards protecting shareholders, and corporate transparency on ownership stakes, compensation, audits and financial prospects. Additionally, the quality of judicial processes has a lot of potential to improve, particularly concerning costs, case management, and court automation.

Across the Caribbean, there is a concerning trend regarding the growth of **cybercrime**. The Dominican Republic has long-established laws and regulations aimed at fighting cybercrime like card cloning, phishing scams, illegal electronic money transfers, telephone fraud, electronic blackmail and identity theft. Nevertheless, cybercrime in the Dominican Republic has increased considerably since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Further, Ponzi and pyramid schemes cropped up in the last years.

The Copyrights Law and Industrial Property Law have been amended in order to comply with the Central American - Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA-DR). Further, the 2010 constitution and several international treaties reconfirmed the right to **intellectual property**. In reality, however, the compliance within this legal framework is low and represents a serious business risk. International pharmaceutical companies especially continue to complain about serious counterfeiting and breach of intellectual property laws. Legal certainty in this field is reduced.

The DOP has performed quite well with regard to **currency volatility** in 2022. It ranks among the more stable and strong currencies in the region, which in turn makes it cheaper to buy imported goods and attracts foreign investment. The annual currency value change of the DOP to the USD was about +2 % in 2022, which is considerably better than the Euro, Japanese Yen, and the British Pound Sterling. In a relatively short time, the DOP strives to reach pre-pandemic levels again. FDI flows have never been as high as in 2022, which underscores the resilient business environment.

Finally, other business risks include the **lack of bilateral investments treaties**. The promotion and protection of bilateral investments has still a lot of potential. Fortunately, since 2006 Switzerland is one of around ten countries with whom the Dominican Republic has a ratified investment treaty. Other European countries with such laws include Italy, the Netherlands, Finland, France, and Spain.

Swiss Export Risk Insurance SERV insures political and *del credere* risks involved in exporting goods and services.

[Products for exporters](#)

[Product for service providers](#)

[Products for financial institutions](#)

The full range of services and products offered by SERV can be obtained at www.serv-ch.com.

Your contact in **Zurich**

SERV Schweizerische Exportrisikoversicherung

Genferstrasse 6, 8002 Zürich

Telefon: +41 58 551 5555

Fax: +41 58 551 5500

E-Mail: info@serv-ch.com

Your contact in **Lausanne**

SERV Assurance suisse contre les risques à l'exportation

Avenue d'Ouchy 47, 1001 Lausanne

Telefon: +41 21 613 3584

Fax: +41 58 551 5500

E-Mail: inforomandie@serv-ch.com

IMPORT OF SAMPLES AND CATALOGUES

The Dominican Republic does not accept ATA carnets. The Customs or Import for catalogues to the Dominican Republic is classified under books, newspapers, and magazines. The tax is applied on the total sum of item cost, insurance, and shipment cost. All duties and taxes are collected in DOP.

USEFUL LOCAL WEBSITES, E-MAIL, AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Business news <https://eldinero.com.do/>

Customs hotline <https://www.aduanas.gob.do>

+1 809 547 7070 info@aduanas.gob.do

Foreign Ministry <https://mirex.gob.do/>

+1 809 987 7001 reexteriores@mirex.gob.do

ProDominicana <https://prodominicana.gob.do/>

+1 809 530 5505 servicios@ProDominicana.gob.do

Banco Central <https://bancentral.gov.do/>

+1 809 221 9111 info@bancentral.gov.do

Industrial Ministry <https://micm.gob.do/>

+1 809 685 5171 info@micm.gob.do

Association of Dominican industries <https://aird.org.do/>

+1 809 472 0000 info@aird.org.do

Adozona	https://adozona.org/en/	+1 809 472 0251	info@adozona.org
Swiss Club Santo Domingo	Sr. Mario Torroni	+1 809 224 4721	club.suizo.do@gmail.com
Swiss Club Las Terrenas	Sr. Peter Maurer	+1 829 633 9903	clubsuizo@outlook.com
Francophone Association	https://www.saintdomingueaccueil.org/	+1 849 205 6342	sdablognew@gmail.com

ADDRESSES OF EMBASSY AND CONSULATES OF SWITZERLAND

Embassy of Switzerland in Santo Domingo

Ambassador Rita Hämmerli-Weschke
Edificio Corporativo 2010, Piso 10
Av. Gustavo Mejía Ricart 102, esq. Av. Abraham
Lincoln, Ens. Piantini, Santo Domingo D.N.
Tel.: +1 809 533 3781
E-Mail: santodomingo@eda.admin.ch
santodomingo.consular@eda.admin.ch
santodomingo.visa@eda.admin.ch
santodomingo.estadocivil@eda.admin.ch
Web: www.eda.admin.ch/santodomingo

Opening hours:

Consular section:
Monday to Friday: 09:00 – 12:00
Visa section:
Monday to Friday only with appointment

Consulate in the Commonwealth of Dominica

Andy Burkard (Honorary Consul)
Guillet/Savanne Paille
Portsmouth, Dominica
Tel. : +1 767 445 4501
E-Mail: dominica@honrep.ch

Consulate in Antigua & Barbuda

Patricia Gyger (Honorary Consul)
McCoy Road, Piccadilly
St. Paul / Antigua, West Indies
Tel.: +1 268 464 0425
E-Mail: stpaul@honrep.ch

Consulate General in St. Kitts & Nevis

Ernest Amory (Honorary Consul General)
Victoria Road, P.O. Box 64
Basseterre, St. Kitts
Tel.: +1 869 662 8005
Fax: +1 869 465 7973
E-Mail: basseterre@honrep.ch

ADDRESSES BILATERAL, NATIONAL AND LOCAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Bilateral Chamber of Commerce: **Cámara de Comercio y Turismo Dominic-Suiza**
Calle Rafael Augusto Sanchez #86
Roble Corporate Center, Piso 7

E-Mail: Piantini, Santo Domingo, D.N.
info@camaradominicosuiza.org
Website: www.camaradominicosuiza.org

National Chamber of Commerce: **ICC Dominican Republic**
Av. 27 de Febrero 228 esq., Ave. Tiradentes, Torre FRIUSA
La Esperilla, Santo Domingo, D.N.
E-Mail: ebrache@camarasantodomingo.do
Website: <https://www.camarasantodomingo.do/>

Local Chambers of Commerce: **Santiago de los Caballeros**
Av Las Carreras 7, Santiago De Los Caballeros
enlace@camarasantiago.com
Puerto Plata
Calle Beller # 17, San Felipe de Puerto Plata
auribel@camarapuertoplata.org
La Romana
Calle madre teresa toda, No. 12, Maria Rubio
rberas1164@hotmail.com
Federación Dominicana de Cámaras de Comercio
<https://www.fedocamaras.do/Socios/ListadoCamaras>

ADDRESSES OF THE EMBASSY AND CONSULATES OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC IN OR FOR SWITZERLAND

Embassy of the Dominican Republic

Ambassador Pablo Aramis Valentín Rosario
Weltpoststrasse 4, 3015 Bern, Switzerland
Tel.: +41 31 351 1585
Fax: +41 31 351 1587
E-Mail: info@embajadadominicana.ch
Web: www.embajadadominicana.ch

Opening hours:

Monday to Friday: 10:00 – 16:00

Consulate General in Zürich

Delano Marte Ramírez (Consul General)
Löwenstrasse 65, 8001 Zürich, Switzerland
Tel.: +41 43 818 9344
E-Mail: conzurich@mirex.gob.do
Web: <https://www.consuladordzurich.com/>

