

The right kind of long-term investment

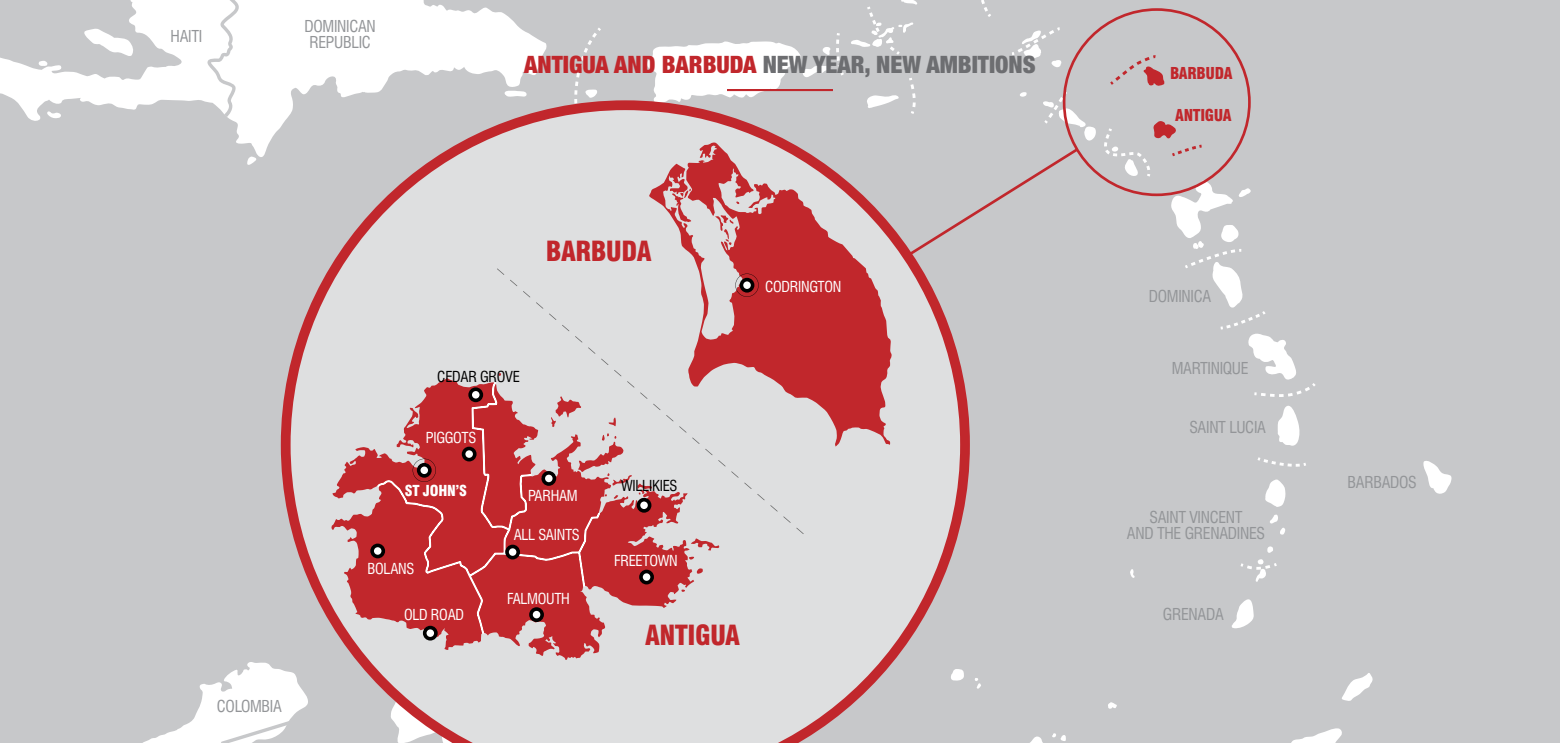
Investment and citizenship opportunities in one of the world's most beautiful, peaceful, and secluded climes offers individuals and families alike a path toward freedom, prosperity, and far greater flexibility

ANTIGUA & BARBUDA



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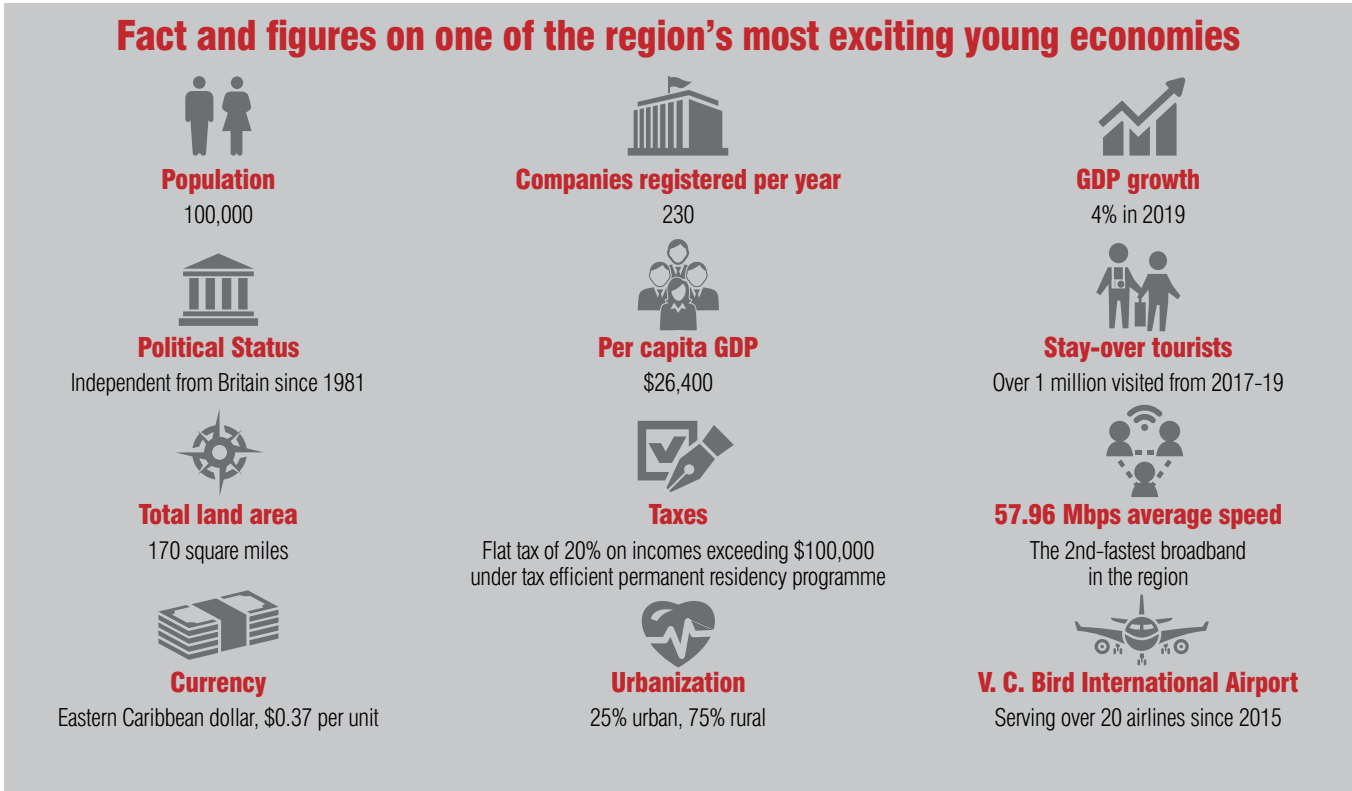


A small team very much worth joining

A leading pioneer in citizenship by investment since 2013, Antigua and Barbuda have one of the most flexible systems for individuals and families in search of second option. There's never been a better time to invest here

Economic overview

A series of three small islands in the Lesser Antilles, or Eastern Caribbean, Antigua and Barbuda have around 100,000 inhabitants. With an exquisite natural climate that hovers between the high 70s and low 80s all year round, tourism accounts for 60% of the island country's economy and 40% of investment. Still, only 25% of the country is urban, most of whom live in the capital of St John's (23,000), an idyllic port town of fisheries, boutique hotels, and financial planners. The rest work mostly in small-scale agriculture on Antigua island, where 97% of the country's population resides.



Antigua and Barbuda: the Caribbean multicultural paradise gets back to what it does best

With some of the strictest health protocols and lowest infection rates on the planet, Antigua and Barbuda's 365 pristine beaches have never been more welcoming

Now that a partial end is in sight to the woes of the past year, people are returning to what they know and love best: friends, family, and beautiful foreign climes. With record-low cases in 2020 and some of the most successful pandemic-response measures on the planet, the island paradise of Antigua and Barbuda is not only open for business; it's welcoming the kind of smart travelers and remote workers who know how to take advantage of a good thing when they see it, too.

With many office places now a thing of the ancient past, all around the world a new breed of mobile employee is emerging: the kind who sees the forest for the trees. "Wherever you are," says Minister of Tourism and Investment Charles Fernandez, "you are just a few minutes from a beach. You could go for a swim on your break and return to work refreshed, having enjoyed some

Vitamin D and sea and sand." The minister is not joking. Though its largest island, Antigua, is merely a dozen miles across, the island nation enjoys nearly 100 miles of some of the Caribbean's most pristine beaches. Not for nothing is it called the 'land of 365 beaches.'

Paradise regained

Dotted with natural harbors and lagoons, these are one of the reasons visitors began flocking back to Antigua and Barbuda toward the end of 2020; paradise lost no longer. With direct flights from New York, London, Charlotte, Atlanta, Miami, and Montreal, North Americans from across the eastern seaboard can reach Antigua and Barbuda within 3-4 hours. "We like to think we are very close to the United States," says Minister Fernandez, addressing remote workers in particular. "If you had to go back for



Aerial view of English Harbour, a natural harbor in the far south of Antigua

any reason, it's a short flight."

Throughout all of 2020, Antigua and Barbuda's population of 100,000 suffered from merely 159 confirmed cases of Covid-19 and five related deaths — less than practically anywhere on the planet. Only 1 out of every 629 Antiguan or Barbudans were infected last year, compared to nearly 1 in 5 Americans.

The right measures

For foreigners traveling here, the government's extensive health protocols have maintained an ideal balance between fun and safety. You can still go snorkeling with sting rays and explore offshore islands, but only through certified, Covid-compliant operators. Moreover, every hotel — even on the luxury private island of Jumby Bay — must abide by the strictest public health protocols. What's

"In terms of tourism," Minister Fernandez said, "we have been able to guarantee the safety of our visitors and frontline personnel interacting with them." In talks with major carriers in Europe and North America, Antigua and Barbuda has also been working around the clock to become a regional flight hub. Not only is it readier than ever to reopen; with the lowest crime rate in the region, a very good climate, and arguably the friendliest people, as the minister reminds us, the rest of the world is ready to get back there, too.

"We could be entitled to brag a bit in terms of tourism," the minister says. "We have one of the most modern airports in the region." And size matters, in various ways. "We have managed to accomplish that thanks to the small size of our island. We are now putting the infrastructure

Top 10 reasons to visit Antigua and Barbuda

- 1 The country's 95 miles of spectacularly pristine shoreline are greatly indented with beaches, lagoons, and natural harbors
- 2 The country's 400-year-old capital of St John's is a delightful combination of cosmopolitan meets small-town charm
- 3 Barbuda Lagoon: one of the natural wonders of the Caribbean, this majestic body of water hosts one of the largest frigatebird colonies in the world
- 4 Mount Obama: the country's highest point, this 1,300-foot volcanic crater offers spectacular views of Antigua
- 5 Highest safety protocols: A&B has been praised by the world's leading public health organizations for its robust response
- 6 Lowest infection rates: only 5 people died from Covid-19 in 2020
- 7 Regional air hub: the country is fast attracting some of the Lesser Antilles' best carriers
- 8 Home to the friendliest people in the region
- 9 The best climate: year-round temperatures between 76-82 °F
- 10 The lowest crime rate in the Caribbean

Wherever you are, you are just a few minutes from a beach. You could go for a swim during a break and return to work, refreshed, having enjoyed some Vitamin D and sea and sand."

Charles Fernandez, Minister of Tourism and Investment

more, vaccinating the country's population of 100,000 should not be a terrible hurdle, either. It received 24,000 doses of AstraZeneca/Oxford in early April through COVAX and is expected to receive another 16,000 by the end of May. Though this is still shy of the mark for herd immunity, which is thought to be around 70% of the population, it is still a very good start.

in place to ensure that we have the most modern cruise port in the region," he told Prisma Reports. "We are just completing our cargo port, which will also be amongst the most modern in the region." The government's vision is for Antigua and Barbuda to become the beating heart and hub of the Caribbean. "All we need to do is put the ingredients in place," said Fernandez.

Minister of Tourism and Investment discusses how to stay one step ahead of the pandemic

Charles Fernandez discusses the successful series of measures his country has taken to prevent infections and keep the doors open to intrepid sun-seekers from around the world

PR: How would you summarize your role at handling the pandemic and the protocols put in place to resume tourism?

CF: Our tourism is based on three pillars: air arrival, cruise arrivals, and yacht arrivals. The entire industry shut down around the third week of March 2020 — however, the yachts that were here stayed on. Whereas they would normally come around November and December and travel back to their place of origin in April or May, that didn't happen. At that point, the pandemic was raging in bigger countries and source markets; as a result, a lot of them opted to stay in place. A number of others that were in-between ports decided to come here, too: we moved very quickly in order to allow for those yachts to come in. Even though flights and cruises were shut down, a number of the yachts, especially the cruisers, were able to enter Antigua.

One of the first things we did as a country in the tourism sector was work on bringing a level of medical technology into the Ministry of Tourism. While the Ministry of Health was focusing on COVID-prevention protocols, we were looking to put protocols in place for the resumption of cruises, flights, and yachts. We were able to put all these in place and hand them over to the Ministry of Health, which could either tweak or approve them. We also used some of our personnel to assist them.

We then set out with their blessing to train all our stakeholders and front-line people, not just in the medical profession but those working in immigration, customs, redcaps, taxi operators and dispatchers, hotel employees, tour operator employees, etc — we trained all of these people over a period of about three months. Every property — Airbnb's and hotels, bars, restaurants, and tour operators — had to be inspected and certified before they could open for business. For



Charles Fernandez
Minister of Tourism and Investment

example, if you had a catamaran with 150 people on it, according to Ministry of Health protocols, and state that in order to be certified, you may only be allowed to carry 75, or 60, depending on the layout.

The Caribbean as a whole is very similar. But Antigua and Barbuda's biggest advantages include having the lowest crime rate in the region, a very good climate, and arguably the friendliest people."

Charles Fernandez, Minister of Tourism and Investment

We did a number of things to ensure that when we reopened, we would be ready for our visitors. The aim was not just to keep visitors safe but also to ensure that our people meeting and interacting with them would be, too. We made all of our hotels register their medical doctors with us; ensure there was always a nurse on duty; and always set aside one or two rooms for anyone who came in with flu-like symptoms, to test and/or isolate them.

We also ensured that all of the protocols were observed, i.e. washing stations; temperature checks for incoming guests; and special seals showing incoming guests that their rooms have been totally sanitized and cleaned in between guests. We worked with a number of these ini-



Cruise ships from around the Caribbean dock in St. John's beloved pristine harbor

tiatives, and I can tell you, there is no evidence yet of any spread from a visitor to our community in Antigua and Barbuda. That is because we were so careful in terms of training our personnel who were on the frontline interacting with visitors. We have seen a number of spikes now, which we believe is due to a number of Antiguan and Barbudans coming home for the holidays over Christmas and New Year. They should have been staying in isolation for 14 days upon return, but a lot of them ignored that, took their masks off, and went around in the communities, which created something of a problem for us. Antigua was one of the first places in the

have everything that is approved by the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO): ventilators, oxygenators, and various other medical equipment and medicine related to COVID relief. We have now got between 50 and 75 rooms specifically designed for that purpose. We have worked incredibly hard not only to prevent, but if necessary, also care for those suffering from COVID, be they locals or visitors.

PR: As part of the island's commitment to safe travel and tourist experience, you have created a new app called 'Explore Antigua'. What is this?

CF: That type of technology reduces the person-to-person contact, so you don't have to interact with anyone to find out just about any information. Previously, you might be out driving in the countryside and stop at the side of the road to ask someone from a village how to get to a particular place: technology is reducing that kind of interaction, which in turn reduces the possibility of infection.

PR: What are your plans to attract new airlines to the island?

CF: Before the pandemic, we had discussions with a number of airlines like Frontier and were hoping they could start working with us in the fourth quarter of 2020. Obviously, that couldn't happen, but we haven't given up. We have had open discussions with other airlines such as Aer Lingus to see what we might do to attract them. The government also invested in restarting the regional airline LIAT, which is very important for connectivity. We want Antigua to be an airline hub for the Caribbean and for the big airlines to be able to land here, drop off people, and pick up passengers



A telephone cabin on Antigua & Barbuda's beautiful beach of Dickenson

for other small islands. LIAT would act as a feeder airline for Antigua, which has one of the most modern airports in the region. We are also one of very few airports that offers jet bridges. LIAT is a very important component of us retaining bragging rights as an important hub for the region.

PR: You are interested in bringing more digital nomads into your country — what are Antigua and Barbuda's competitive advantages?

CF: I would say that the Caribbean as a whole is very similar. But Antigua and Barbuda's biggest advantages include having the lowest crime rate in the region, a very good climate, and arguably the friendliest people. In addition, the government is now ramping up our technology and internet connectivity with heavy investments, which is an important component of working virtually from Antigua and Barbuda. Wherever you are, you are just a few minutes from a beach — so you could go for a swim during a break and return to work, refreshed, having enjoyed some Vitamin D and sea and sand. We are three hours from Miami and four from New York by air. We like to think we are very close to the United States — if you had to go back for any reason, it's a short flight. The government has invested a lot of money in technology related to COVID care at the Infectious Disease Centre, so if you came here and had some illness, especially COVID, you can be assured that we also offer first-rate healthcare. This is what makes us a desirable destination for those who want to come and work remotely.

PR: Infrastructure and construction is another important engine.

Is there room for investment from the U.S.? How would you advise investors?

CF: We have had a number of interested parties from the U.S. — at least two hotels were supposed to be built this year, though they were unfortunately postponed due to the pandemic. One hotel investor had his plans approved and was ready to go; he was all set to have his top architect and engineer fly in every two weeks to supervise proceedings. The pandemic has made this very challenging, and those plans had to be put on hold. We are still continuing with negotiations. Just a week ago, the Prime Minister and myself held a meeting with another major hotelier about bringing in another major brand to Antigua.

There is still a fair amount of interest in construction. For example, we just completed our fifth berth a few months ago after signing an agreement with Global Ports Holding for the cruise port. There was about \$30 million invested in that, which also means we are now in a position to handle larger ships such as those in the Oasis-class. We are now in the process of working on the channel and turning basin, since apart from being able to hold ships, you also need the depth for them to be able to come through. We are confident that this will be completed within the next couple of months.

PR: Lonely Planet's "First In Travel" Awards named Antigua and Barbuda 2021's Emerging Sustainable Destination of the Year. What can you tell us about the Green Corridor programme?

CF: The "Green Corridor" is a route on the South Western side of the island — that part of the island tends to



Dow's Hill Interpretation Centre gives excellent primers on the island's history

get a lot more rain than other parts of the island, so if you drive there, you feel almost as if you're in a different country. It is very green and tropical; there are lots of mango trees and a lot of different types of fruit available. We have made a huge commitment to ensuring that we protect that area as a green zone.

PR: You previously served as Minister of Foreign Affairs and Immigration. Have your priorities evolved since then?

CF: Both roles are different but important. The main difference, I find, is that in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs,

the island. In foreign affairs, our motto was 'enemies of none, friends of all'. In tourism, things are a lot more difficult: you have to get the whole population to understand that, for example, service is not servitude. At the same time, you have to do a lot more in terms of training and making sure everyone gets involved.

PR: What lessons has your government learned in the last year?

CF: First, that people with underlying issues such as obesity and non-communicable diseases suffered more readily, which means the most important thing for us is to prioritize

"We are three hours from Miami and four from New York. We like to think we are very close to the United States — if you had to go back for any reason, it's a short flight. But rest assured, we also offer first-rate healthcare."

Charles Fernandez, Minister of Tourism and Investment

it is very difficult to measure your success. In the Ministry of Tourism, on the other hand, it is very easy to measure your success or lack thereof. For example, in 2019, the number of visitors to Antigua and Barbuda passed the 'one million mark,' a new record for us and something we were very proud of. What's more, in both January and February of 2020, we saw double digit increases over 2019, which had also been a record year.

We were also looking for 2020 to break records until the pandemic hit. In terms of foreign affairs, most of it deals with external matters, involving lots of interaction with foreign governments and treaties, etc., whereas in tourism you not only have to deal with stakeholders, airlines, and cruise lines, but with tour operators, the general public, and wider perceptions of

healthy lifestyles. This will translate to more productivity and fewer sick days; the economy and country in general will benefit.

PR: What is your final message to readers?

CF: Considering that we are a small developing island state, the most important thing right now is getting vaccines, an issue that most developing countries have also seen. People need to understand that unless everybody benefits from the vaccine, COVID-19 will not go away. In the meantime, we also run the risk of creating and spreading different variants. So my last words are an appeal to developed countries. They must understand that they are not in this alone — they cannot resolve this by only vaccinating their own people.

Citizenship by Investment Unit CEO explains the perks of Antigua and Barbuda

Charmaine Quinland-Donovan explains the personal and professional benefits of taking up citizenship in paradise

PR: What are the benefits of your programme?

CD: It is very important that readers understand that the benefits of programmes such as the Antigua and Barbuda Citizenship by Investment Programme are twofold. Yes, benefits accrue to the country in which investments are being made — though applicants also have a great deal to gain. Prior to joining this industry and working with the Citizenship by Investment Unit, I had not realised how great a social good these programmes were for many people. There are millions of people who, by virtue of where they are born, are restricted in many ways, including their ability to travel. Most require travel visas to a significant number of jurisdictions, which severely impedes their ability to conduct business. Many also have restrictions on the type of business they can engage in, which impacts wealth creation and their financial status. The advent of these programmes provides flexibility and enhanced lifestyle choices that inevitably lead to happier and fuller lives and freedom.

However, we go beyond simply issuing citizenship to individuals who may be in need of greater mobility. We also understand that we have an obligation to the wider community of nations. This is why we undertake this process with keen attention to whom we grant the privilege of citizenship to. We want to make sure that those who hold our citizenship are people of good repute. As a result, our due diligence process is very robust; we have several different tiers of due diligence and a number of compliance professionals working on our team to ensure we have a keen eye on the backgrounds and characteristics of the people applying to the programme. We are big on due diligence and transparency: we were the first programme to require that reports on the programme be made in parliament twice a year. Our Unit is



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Charmaine Quinland-Donovan
CEO, Citizenship by Investment Unit
Antigua and Barbuda

committed to upholding international and ethical standards.

PR: There are many places that offer this kind of programme. Yet you've been a pioneer in your set of offerings. Can you tell us about the fourth category that has been approved?

CD: This is a very dynamic programme — it is constantly under review, and we are always looking at the industry and determining the needs of our clients. We ensure that we remain flexible enough to create options that could help more people, constantly looking at the needs of various people in different jurisdictions to see how best we can create products and services that are in line with what they need. We started with three options. Most countries would have offered the donation option — the National Development Fund — as well as the opportunity to purchase real estate; but we saw that there was an opportunity for us to attract people to develop businesses here as well.

We want to diversify our economy, and we saw the CIP as a vehicle to facilitate this. We want people to focus more on agriculture and agro-processing. We also want to invite people who are experts in the technological field — our experience with the



Five Islands Campus University of the West Indies, a CIP Investment Option

ongoing global pandemic crystalizes how important technology is and will be to the emergence and re-emergence of markets, which is why we continue to invite investors who wish to establish technology-based companies in our country. Opportunities also abound in Antigua and Barbuda for marine development, remote education, and manufacturing. The investment in business options allows for this type of economic diversification and expansion to take place. So far, most of the business investments have been focused on real estate — we have a number of hotels — but we are still encouraging people to utilise the other opportunities available.

Being the pioneers that we are, we wanted to bring the fourth campus of the University of the West Indies to Antigua and Barbuda. UWI is in the top 5% of the world's universities. It was founded over 70 years ago,

of school or university age, so we wanted to create an option that helps include them, too. So if you apply under the University of the West Indies option, one of your dependents of university age will be able to attend the university, tuition free, for one year. The proceeds of this investment option will go towards expanding the university here in Antigua, as well as continually providing the financing it needs to be sustainable. We pride ourselves on being a responsive and responsible programme.

PR: The Prime Minister said 366 applications were received in 2020, generating \$115.7 million, a target set to double this year. What are your goals and expectations for 2021?

CD: We intend to deliver on this mandate, but we know we have a reasonable government cognisant

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Charmaine Quinland-Donovan, CEO, Citizenship by Investment Unit

and I am proud to count myself an alum. Campuses exist in Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, and Jamaica. Antigua and Barbuda was the first of the smaller islands to be able to host the campus. As one of the pull factors of the programme for families was its cost effectiveness; the government looked at our CIP offerings—we are one of the favourites for families of four and above — and created an attractive option for them. Most families have children or dependents

of the challenges being experienced worldwide. Several changes, including an expansion in the definition of 'dependents,' were made last year to support the programme's growth. This means an applicant is now able to include unmarried siblings, grandchildren, and children up to the age of 30 in their application. This has been very welcomed by the industry, and we have been getting a lot of interest. That, plus the changes made to our processes internally, will help us to



Panoramic view of historic St. John's, the 400-year old capital of Antigua & Barbuda and its environs

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attract even more applications than last year. We are cautiously optimistic about the 100% increase; we recognise this mandate and are working hard to ensure that we can deliver it to the government.

PR: Transparency is so important. How are you working with anti-money laundering and financial counter-terrorism professionals to protect the country's image?

CD: Since the programme's inception, our focus has been to ensure that successful applicants are individuals whom we would be proud to call citizens. Over time we have expanded and reinforced our vetting process. We have on board with us a number of due diligence agencies who provide background checks and similar services to Fortune 500 companies. They are very well-versed in confirming the identities of the persons who apply, looking into their background, and making sure that whatever information they submitted on their application is true and accurate, and that these persons are of good repute. We also have connections with intelligence agencies that provide us with information that is not necessarily widely available in the public domain. We utilise information we obtain through 'open source' checks, and compile all the information collected from the various sources previously mentioned in order to make an assessment of the application.

As I said before, we have a number of certified anti-money laundering and financial counter-terrorism professionals on staff; I am one of them. Together we ensure that each applicant and their dependents are thoroughly vetted, so that by the end of the process, we can be rea-

sonably assured that the successful applicants have been deemed fit to receive citizenship.

PR: Covid-19 has tested governments and communities around the world. What lessons are there to be learned?

CD: The key lesson that not only Antigua and Barbuda — but all governments — have learned is that there are always alternative ways to accomplish your goals. We have been accustomed to commuting to work

people here in Antigua in terms of advancing the quality and use of graphic design and designing payment platform applications for bills and goods and services. What's more, quite a few of them have also turned to farming.

We have also seen persons turning their hobbies into businesses. For example, I recently met a young lady who loved facials and massages but who, due to the lockdown, no longer could. So she decided to create her own related products for resale. What

"Americans would find it very rewarding to apply to our programme and interact with us. I don't want to sound cliché, but we really do live in a paradise. I invite them to come and do the same. We will welcome you with both hands, readily, willingly, and warmly."

Charmaine Quinland-Donovan, CEO, Citizenship by Investment Unit

every day, but now we know we can connect remotely to the network via a virtual private network to work from home and conduct virtual meetings. Our strategic planning enabled us to ensure that everyone had access to a device and stable internet connection so that when the country went into lockdown, we continued to serve our clientele. Indeed, the pandemic has taught us to be more creative and flexible in our broader thinking across many different contexts.

I do not think that going forward we will be so close-minded as to think we need to simply stick to the status-quo because "That is the way we've always done things." I also see that this pandemic has given young people a huge opportunity to launch themselves — especially since they tend to be savvier. I have seen a lot of innovative developments from young

this pandemic teaches us is that we are all creative, if we just look inward and allow ourselves the capacity to create, explore, and evolve. What we will see post-pandemic is that we will no longer be focused on one way to complete a task or get things done; we will be a little more open-minded and innovative in our thinking.

PR: How long does the online application take to complete?

CD: Our governing legislation mandates that we complete an application in 90 days. This year, we have been able to turn around applications in 8-10 weeks on average. We have taken the time to work on the process, get through the paperwork more quickly, and get the information we need to complete each applicant's assessment. Of course, there are exceptions; in some instances, ap-

plicant information is missing, which can cause delays. Overall, though, we are very excited and optimistic about the state of our process right now.

PR: What is your final message to potential applicants from the U.S.?

CD: I would like to say that we really do welcome these applications and are heartened to receive them. Processing U.S. applications is generally seamless, which leads to a very efficient turnaround time, so we encourage submission of these. I wish to underscore that while we do not circumvent or shortcut any of our processes, since the information on U.S. citizens is so readily available, we are able to process their files in a very timely manner. As you might be aware, in the U.S. much of the information required is accessible electronically, which facilitates a more efficient assessment of the application. So I would like to invite all American citizens who desire to apply to the Antigua and Barbuda programme to do so.

We have had a long history of diplomatic relations with our neighbor to the north, not to mention an equally long history welcoming tourists from the U.S. market, so we understand their culture and are very adaptable.

They would find it very rewarding to apply to our programme and interact with us, or if it caught their fancy, even move here or work remotely in this beautiful twin-island nation with its white and pink sand beaches and turquoise blue water. I do not want to sound cliché, but we really do live in a paradise, and I invite Americans to come and do the same. We will welcome you with both hands, readily, willingly and warmly.

YOU HAVE *Options*

In this turbulent period, are you satisfied with your options of where to go or where to live? Antigua and Barbuda can provide the safety and security you and your family need in these uncertain times. Become a citizen through our **Citizenship by Investment Programme**. With visa-free access to over 150 countries across the globe, flexibility for your wealth management needs, no tax on your worldwide income nor inheritance tax, you can rest assured that your family's best interest is served both now and in the future. For more information on this unmatched opportunity, visit:

CIP.GOV.AG



CITIZENSHIP BY INVESTMENT UNIT
ANTIGUA & BARBUDA

University of the West Indies
Five Islands Campus, Five Islands, Antigua