

Covid-19 and (Im)mobility in the Americas

THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

1. **Poverty rate:** 23% out of the total population.¹
2. **Migration data**
 - a. Sending country: About 1.6 Dominicans or 15% of the population live abroad, mainly in the US (75%), Spain (11%), and Italy (3%).
 - b. Destination country: About 600.000 immigrants, representing 6% of the total population live in the Dominican Republic. The main countries of origin are Haiti (87%), the US (3%), and Spain (1.3%).
3. **Impact of COVID-19³ (as of July 14, 2020)**
 - a. Registered cases: 46,305
 - b. % of cases out of the total population: 0,42%
 - c. Number of deaths: 910
4. **State measures**
 - The government declared a state of emergency and curfew that prohibits all transit and movement of people from 5 pm to 6 am.
 - Border closures. Ports and airports are only open for merchandise trade.
 - The cruises' arrival has been suspended in all ports and shores.
 - The Ministry of Defense of the Dominican Republic in support of the Public Health measures has arranged border controls with Haiti.
 - At docks, military personnel take the temperature of anyone who enters the country through these routes in order to diagnose and establish subsequent supervision.
 - A telephone line was set to answer COVID-19 related questions.
 - Public transportation has suspended service.
 - All events and public gatherings of all kinds have been suspended.
 - The government announced a considerable increase in temporary subsidies that deliver a Solidarity card to 811,000 low-income families to pay for food, gas, and electricity.
 - This economic measure does not favor Haitians.
 - So far, no explicit measures have been taken to support Dominican migrants abroad.
5. **At risk populations**
 - *Irregularized migrants mainly from Haiti* (this population is extremely vulnerable to COVID-19)

¹ <https://forbescentroamerica.com/2019/09/12/la-pobreza-en-republica-dominicana-ha-disminuido/>

² <https://datosmacro.expansion.com/demografia/migracion/inmigracion/republica-dominicana>

<https://datosmacro.expansion.com/demografia/migracion/emigracion/republica-dominicana>

³ John Hopkins University (2020). "Coronavirus Resource Centre". <https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/map.html>

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- Before the pandemic:
 - Irregularized migrants lived under constant threat of deportation and detention and had limited access to health services and social protection.
 - They were the target of abuse and of multiple kinds of violence along the way.
 - **The situations for irregularized migrants in transit have NOT changed during the pandemic. Risks have possibly been exacerbated, directly affecting the lives of irregularized migrants in the Dominican Republic**
- During the pandemic:
 - Irregularized migrants face threat of contagion for COVID-19 and the sanitary measures and economic slowdown directly impacts Haitian migrants.
 - Most of them work in the informal economy.
 - The economic impact has been "very strong" at the border area, where the source of income comes from the trade between the two countries.
 - The construction sector, where the majority of Haitians work, has stopped completely.
 - Haitians have suffered job losses and in many cases, they turned out to be in a street situation without any type of social protection.

6. Social responses

- *Migrant struggles.*

- Migration in reverse or return migration. More than a thousand Haitians have returned temporarily to their country of origin.

Sources:

<https://www.lavanguardia.com/vida/20200323/4870676243/un-millar-de-haitianos-abandona-republica-dominicana-por-el-coronavirus>.

<https://www.telemundo47.com/historias-destacadas/haitianos-los-olvidados-en-la-republica-dominicana-en-lucha-contra-covid-19/2038568/>

<https://www.lavanguardia.com/vida/20200323/4870676243/un-millar-de-haitianos-abandona-republica-dominicana-por-el-coronavirus>.

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*For more detail go to the digital archive that we created:

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1o00O4-LalYs9FNi0PIRRz99hinvqvWgT>

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