

Guide to investing in the Caribbean

The most professional way to invest in
Punta Cana

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The case for investment

1

In the Caribbean. Punta Cana



The case for investment in the Caribbean.. Punta Cana

"A stable economic environment and a favourable legal framework make Punta Cana an attractive option for global investors."

The Dominican Republic, and Punta Cana in particular, has emerged as one of the most solid and strategic destinations for foreign investment in the Caribbean. The recognition by ECLAC as the main recipient of foreign direct investment in 2022 and 2023 underlines the country's privileged position in the region. The combination of a strategic location, a stable economic environment and a favourable legal framework makes Punta Cana an attractive option for global investors seeking to optimise their returns in emerging markets.

Strategic geographic location

The Dominican Republic is located in the centre of the Caribbean, which gives it a key geopolitical position. This location allows companies preferential access to more than 1.2 billion consumers through important trade agreements such as the DR-CAFTA with the United States and Central America, and the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) with the European Union. This direct access to key markets provides a competitive advantage for investment, enabling rapid expansion and facilitating international business operations.



Punta Cana, with its modern infrastructure, including one of the busiest airports in the Caribbean, the Punta Cana International Airport, guarantees efficient connections for the logistics of goods and services, both for tourism and other key sectors such as construction and real estate.



Strong fiscal framework and tax incentives

"Tax exemptions in strategic sectors such as tourism, renewable energy and real estate".

One of the main attractions for investors in the Dominican Republic is its solid legal framework, specifically designed to encourage Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). Local legislation guarantees foreign investors equal treatment with domestic investors, provides legal certainty and allows the repatriation of capital and profits without restrictions. In addition, a number of tax incentives are offered to improve the profitability of investments.

Companies investing in tourism and real estate development projects in Punta Cana can benefit from exemptions in the payment of income taxes, ITBIS and customs duties, ensuring a competitive return on investment in an environment with a low tax burden.

Wealth and diversity of natural resources

Known for its world-class beaches and hotel infrastructure, Punta Cana also offers investment opportunities in sectors related to agriculture, mining and renewable energy. The Dominican Republic is rich in natural resources, including fertile soil, a favourable climate and mineral deposits, creating a favourable environment for investment in various sectors.



Economic, social and political stability

“The strategic location, the solid legal framework, the tax incentives and the economic stability”

The Dominican Republic has maintained stable economic growth, with an average growth rate of 5.5% over the last 25 years, positioning itself as one of the most dynamic economies in Latin America. This dynamism, combined with a stable political environment and a predictable regulatory framework, has fostered the confidence of international investors who see Punta Cana as a safe and profitable destination for their capital.

In conclusion, Punta Cana's strategic location, solid legal framework, tax incentives and economic stability make it a focal point for foreign investment, especially in sectors such as tourism, real estate and energy. Backed by international recognition, Punta Cana continues to be a preferred option for investors seeking to maximise their profitability in the Caribbean.

Indicadores Macroeconómicos			
Indicador	2022	2023	Proyecciones 2024
PIB Total (millones de US\$)	114,004.6	121,691.7	124,232.9
Tasa de Crecimiento del PIB (%) - (Índices Encadenados) referencia 2007	4.9%	2.4%	5.0%
PIB Per Cápita USD\$	10,732.9	11,361.2	11,503.0
Flujo de Inversión Extranjera Directa (millones de USD\$)	4,098.8	4,390.2	4,500
Ingreso por Turismo (millones de USD\$)	8,395.3	9,751.0	N.D.
Remesas (millones de USD\$)	9,856.5	10,157.2	N.D.
Exportaciones de Bienes (millones de USD\$)	13,750.2	12,931.9	N.D.
Exportaciones Nacionales USD\$	12,931.9	4,967.0	N.D.
Exportaciones de Zonas Francas (millones de USD\$)	7,827.3	7,964.9	N.D.
Importaciones de Bienes USD\$	30,912.6	28,823.1	N.D.
Tasa de Inflación (%)	7.8%	3.6%	3.5%
Tasa de Desempleo (%)	5.3%	5.3%	N.D.
Tasa de Cambio Promedio (USD\$/RD\$)	55.1	56.2	60.0
Población Total (millones)	10.9	10.7	10.8

Fuente: base a datos del Banco Central de la República Dominicana



Economic outlook in Dominican Republic

2



Economic Outlook in Dominican Republic

“Eight international airports, of which the Punta Cana International Airport stands out”

The Dominican Republic has maintained a robust economic growth trajectory, consolidating its position as one of the most dynamic economies in the Caribbean and Latin America. In 2023, the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) reached US\$113.56 billion, with a GDP per capita of approximately US\$11,361, reflecting solid expansion driven by key sectors such as tourism, construction and telecommunications.

The country has a modern infrastructure that facilitates international trade and tourism, fundamental pillars of the economy. The Dominican Republic has 8 international airports, of which Punta Cana International Airport and Las Américas International Airport in Santo Domingo stand out, both with high capacity and connections to more than 200 destinations worldwide.

The country also has 12 seaports that serve both commercial cargo and tourism. The Caucedo Multimodal Port, located near Santo Domingo, is one of the most important logistics centres in the Caribbean. With regard to cruise tourism, the country has 5 specialised terminals, the most notable being Amber Cove in Puerto Plata and La Romana Terminal, which attract a large number of international passengers each year.



“The Dominican Republic has established itself as the main recipient of FDI in Central America and the Caribbean.”

Foreign direct investment (FDI)

The flow of foreign direct investment (FDI) maintained a positive trend in 2023, reaching approximately \$3,750 million. This flow was mainly directed towards strategic sectors such as tourism, renewable energy and free zones. The Dominican government continues to encourage foreign investment through a legal framework that guarantees legal certainty and a favourable fiscal environment, with important exemptions in priority sectors.

Reasons for economic soundness

Economic and political stability, together with an efficient transport infrastructure and openness to foreign capital, have made the Dominican Republic a key destination for investors. Sustained GDP growth and the continued expansion of strategic sectors position the country as an attractive and competitive economy in the Caribbean and Latin America, with ample opportunities for international investment.



Investment flow via foreign

Direct Investment (FDI.)

3



Investment flow via Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)

“Main recipient of FDI in Central America and the Caribbean, attracting about 30% of the region's total FDI”.

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) is a key component of economic growth in the Dominican Republic. It refers to the flow of capital that foreign companies or individuals bring into the country to establish or expand commercial, industrial or service activities. FDI generates employment, promotes technology transfer and stimulates strategic sectors, thus contributing significantly to the development of the national economy. In this context, the Dominican Republic has established itself as the main recipient of FDI in Central America and the Caribbean, receiving approximately 30% of the total FDI in the region.

Foreign investment in the Dominican Republic offers a number of advantages and guarantees that make it highly attractive to international investors. The legal framework is designed to ensure that foreign investors enjoy the same conditions as national investors, facilitating the entry of capital and protecting their interests. In addition, incentives have been put in place that allow for the repatriation of capital, exchange rate stability and access to certificates that guarantee the safety of their investments, creating an environment of confidence for investors.



“Investors are free to repatriate their profits and invested capital without restriction”

Among the main advantages of choosing foreign investment in the Dominican Republic are:

- a) Legal equality: Foreign investors receive the same treatment and protection as national citizens, guaranteeing equality before the law in all commercial aspects.
- b) Repatriation of capital: Investors have the freedom to repatriate their profits and invested capital without restrictions, which provides financial flexibility.
- c) Convertible currency: The Dominican Republic allows free convertibility of its currency, facilitating transactions in US dollars or euros, which reduces exchange rate risk.
- d) Investment Certificate: Investors can obtain a guarantee certificate, which provides legal security and access to the benefits established in the legislation.
- e) Residence permit: Foreigners who invest a minimum of \$200,000 can obtain a residence permit, which facilitates their long-term stay and operation in the country.

Main investing countries

In 2023, investment flows to the Dominican Republic came mainly from the United States, Canada, Spain and Brazil, countries that have identified the country as an attractive destination for their capital due to its economic stability and favourable regulatory framework.

- The United States continues to be the main investment partner, accounting for around 31.5% of FDI. The North American country has directed much of its investment towards the tourism, telecommunications, energy infrastructure and free zones sectors.

- Spain, with 13.1% of FDI, has concentrated its capital in the hotel and tourism sector, particularly in destinations such as Punta Cana and the eastern part of the country, where world-class resorts have been developed.

- Canada accounts for around 8.6% of investment, mainly in the mining sector, particularly in gold and silver, such as the Pueblo Viejo mine, one of the largest in Latin America.

-Brazil has become more important in recent years, with 7.9% of FDI, focusing on energy infrastructure and telecommunications projects, key sectors for the modernisation of the country.



“The most attractive aspect of this law is the unrestricted repatriation of capital and profits.”

Main export products and destinations

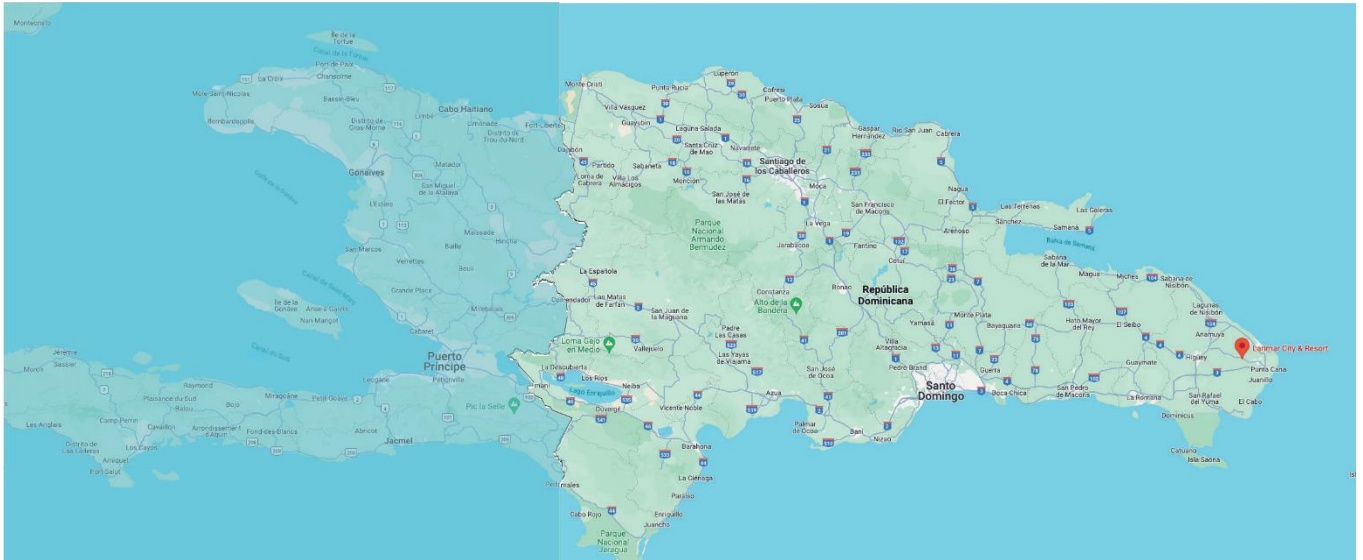
The Dominican Republic has diversified its exports, specialising in products such as gold, cigarettes, medical equipment and electrical products. These products have allowed the country to access competitive international markets and continue to strengthen its trade balance.

- Gold is the largest export product, accounting for 14.6% of total exports in 2023, mainly to the United States and Switzerland.
- Cigars, with 7.9%, position the Dominican Republic as one of the world's largest exporters of this product, with the United States and Europe as its main destinations.
- Medical equipment and electrical products, with 6.6% and 6.9% respectively, have also found strategic markets in the United States and Puerto Rico.
- These sectors are important pillars of the Dominican economy and reflect the positive impact of foreign direct investment on the country's productive capacity, while promoting competitiveness in international markets.

Foreign Investment Law N° 16-95

Foreign Investment Law No. 16-95, enacted in 1995, has been a key factor in the sustained growth of FDI in the Dominican Republic. This legislation establishes a legal framework that provides legal certainty and guarantees equal treatment between national and foreign investors. The law facilitates free access to all sectors of the economy, except those related to national security, allowing for broad participation of foreign capital in key sectors such as tourism, mining and telecommunications.

One of the most attractive aspects of the law is the unrestricted repatriation of capital and profits, which gives foreign investors the confidence to operate in the country. Similarly, there is no requirement to register foreign investments with the government, which reduces bureaucracy and allows greater flexibility in the investment process.



Evolution and growth of FDI

“Nerve centre for foreign investment in the Caribbean and Central America”

Since the promulgation of Law No. 16-95, foreign direct investment in the Dominican Republic has experienced remarkable growth. Over the last ten years, the country has attracted an average of more than \$3 billion in FDI per year, allowing it to consolidate as one of the most open and dynamic economies in the region. Tourism has been one of the main beneficiaries, with massive investment in hotel infrastructure and resorts, followed by free zones, which have boosted manufacturing for export.

In 2023, FDI reached \$3.75 billion, an increase over the previous year and confirming the positive trend of recent years. This growth is the result of a combination of favourable government policies, tax incentives and an expanding economy that continues to attract major investors from around the world.

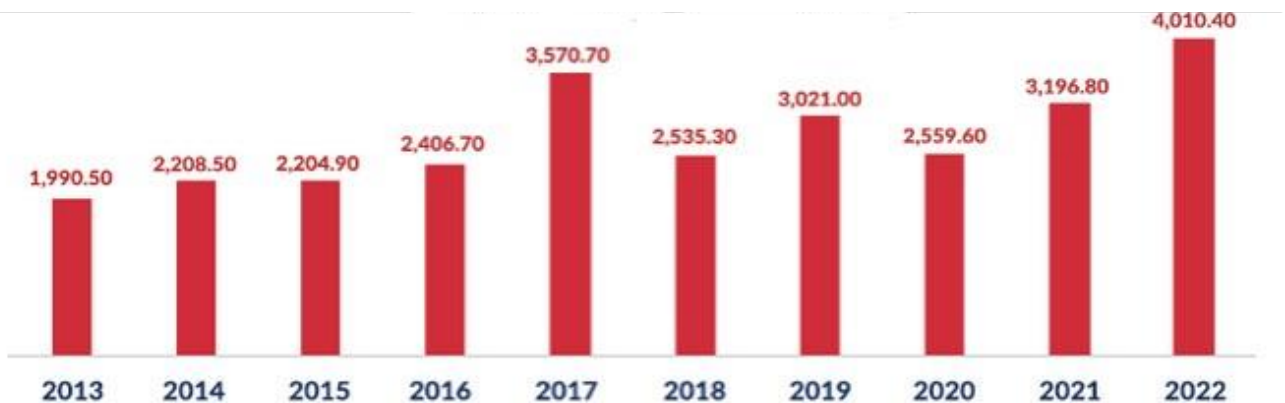
The Dominican Republic has managed to position itself as a nerve centre for foreign investment in the Caribbean and Central America. Thanks to the solidity of its legal framework, its strategic location and the diversification of its key sectors, the country continues to attract a significant portion of the region's foreign capital. Law No. 16-95, together with trade agreements and political stability, have been key factors in ensuring that the Dominican Republic remains a preferred destination for international investment, with a positive and lasting impact on its economy.



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Main

Investment vehicles

4



Main investment vehicles

“The Dominican Republic offers a clear and efficient regulatory framework for the incorporation of companies.”

The Dominican Republic offers a clear and efficient legal framework for the incorporation of companies, which has allowed it to attract numerous foreign investors wishing to establish their businesses in the country. This legal environment favours direct investment by providing legal certainty and transparency in the process of setting up companies.

Regulatory and constitutional processes

The regulations governing the incorporation of companies in the Dominican Republic are contained in the General Law of Commercial Companies and Individual Limited Liability Companies No. 479-08. This legislation, as subsequently amended, establishes the rules for the creation, management, supervision, transformation and dissolution of commercial companies in the country.

There are several types of commercial companies available to investors, the most common being

- Limited Liability Company (SRL): Ideal for family or small businesses. This company limits the liability of the shareholders to their contributions, i.e. they are not personally liable for the company's debts.



“A safe and favourable environment for foreign investors”

- Public Limited Company (SA): Designed for large companies that require greater corporate control. These companies can draw on public savings to finance their operations.
- Simplified public limited company (SAS): It offers greater flexibility in its organisational structure, making it suitable for medium or large companies that wish to manage their structure with contractual freedom.

International Investment Treaties in the Dominican Republic

The country has signed a number of Agreements for the Promotion and Reciprocal Protection of Investments (APPRIs), which aim to create a safe and favourable environment for foreign investors. These agreements establish key principles such as national treatment and most-favoured-nation treatment, which guarantee foreign investors fair and equitable terms, including protection against expropriation without adequate compensation and dispute settlement mechanisms.

Some of the more notable agreements include

- Agreement with the United States through DR-CAFTA, which provides preferential access to the US market.
- Agreements with the European Union through the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), allowing for the expansion of operations into European markets.
- Agreements with international organisations such as the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA) and the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC), which insure investments against political risks.

These agreements have been fundamental in consolidating the Dominican Republic as an attractive destination for foreign investment, providing greater legal security and promoting a favourable investment climate.



Foreign investment incentives

5



Foreign investment incentives.

“They offer tax exemptions, customs facilities and legal protection.”

The Dominican Republic has implemented a series of strategic incentives to attract foreign investment, consolidating itself as one of the most important destinations for capital in the Caribbean and Central American region. These incentives are part of an active government policy to promote economic development, improve infrastructure and create quality jobs. The mechanisms put in place offer tax exemptions, customs facilities and legal protection, guaranteeing investors favourable conditions for their projects in various key sectors.

The country has structured its incentives based on the economic sectors with the greatest potential for growth and long-term benefits. This is complemented by the creation of a digital platform known as the Single Window for Foreign Trade (VUCE), a system that facilitates and speeds up procedures related to investment and exports, centralising all the necessary documentation in a single virtual point. The main sectors benefiting from these incentives are described below.



“Companies operating in these sectors enjoy complete tax exemption.”

Waste and environmental incentives

One of the emerging sectors in the Dominican Republic is solid waste management and environmental sanitation. The country has introduced incentives to attract investment in waste collection projects, waste treatment and clean energy generation.

These investments are exempt from paying income tax, ITBIS and customs duties on the importation of equipment and technology required for their operation. In addition, subsidies are available for projects that contribute to environmental sanitation and the conservation of natural resources.

Incentives for the film industry

The film sector is another strategic pillar for foreign investment. Law 108-10 establishes a framework of tax incentives to attract film productions and the construction of related infrastructure, such as studios and cinemas. The incentives include the ITBIS exemption on equipment and materials, as well as a transferable tax credit equal to 25% of the expenses incurred in productions carried out in the country.

This programme has positioned the Dominican Republic as an attractive destination for international productions, stimulating job creation and promoting the country globally.

Incentives in Free Zones

Free Zones are one of the most dynamic sectors of the Dominican economy. Under Law 8-90, companies operating in these zones enjoy total tax exemptions for a period of up to 15 years, including income tax, ITBIS, customs duties, municipal taxes and other levies.

In addition, exports from free zones are tax exempt, making this regime a key driver of international competitiveness. Free zones have been particularly successful in sectors such as manufacturing, technology and medical products, with steady growth in job creation and increased exports.



“Foreigners have the right to own property in the Dominican Republic without restrictions.”

Procedures and permits

In order to carry out a property transaction, it is necessary to follow a series of clearly defined steps, which include

1. Bill of sale: This is a preliminary agreement between the buyer and the seller, setting out the terms of the sale.
2. Verification of title: It is essential to check the legal status of the property, ensuring that the title is free from any encumbrances or charges.
3. Sales contracts: Once the parties are in agreement, the final contract of sale is signed, which must be registered at the Property Registry to guarantee its legality.

4. Payment of taxes: A property transfer tax of 3% of the value of the property must be paid.
In addition, foreigners have the right to acquire property in the Dominican Republic without restrictions, which has encouraged international investment in the property market, especially in tourist areas such as Punta Cana, Bávaro and Puerto Plata.

Analysis and development of the hotel and accommodation sector

The hotel and accommodation sector has been one of the main drivers of growth in the real estate sector, driven by the continuous increase in tourism in the country.

According to the Central Bank of the Dominican Republic, more than 8 million tourists arrived in the country by air alone in 2023, an increase of 13.5% compared to 2022. This flow of tourists has generated a growing demand for quality accommodation, especially in destinations such as Punta Cana, which received 67.6% of all international passengers.



“Broad tax exemptions for tourism projects, including hotels, resorts, golf courses, marinas”

Incentives for retirees and pensioners

The Dominican Republic has developed a special programme to attract foreign retirees and renters, offering significant tax benefits to those who transfer their residence to the country.

People who can prove a minimum monthly income of US\$1,500 from a pension or passive income can obtain Dominican residency quickly and benefit from a tax exemption on the importation of their personal property, including vehicles. They also receive tax exemptions on the purchase of their first property in the country, which encourages investment in the real estate sector.

Tourism incentives

Tourism is one of the most important sectors of the Dominican economy and the authorities have introduced a number of incentives to continue to attract foreign capital. Law 158-01, as amended by Law 195-13, offers extensive tax exemptions for tourism projects, which include hotels, resorts, golf courses, marinas and other related infrastructure.

These incentives can last up to 15 years and cover income tax, ITBIS, import duties and property rights. In addition, investment in emerging destinations within the country is encouraged, promoting the development of new tourist areas beyond the traditional destinations of Punta Cana and Bávaro.

Incentives for the development of infrastructure and energy projects

In the area of infrastructure and renewable energy, the Dominican Republic offers important incentives to investors. Law 57-07 on Renewable Energy Incentives provides tax exemptions for projects focused on the generation of energy from renewable sources such as solar, wind or biomass.

This includes exemption from customs duties on imported equipment and a tax credit for investors. Modernising the country's energy infrastructure is a priority, and these types of incentives have boosted investment in clean energy and energy efficiency projects.



Single Window for Foreign Trade (VUCE)

“A digital platform that centralises all the necessary procedures for foreign investment”

To facilitate the investment process, the Dominican Republic has implemented the Single Window for Foreign Trade (VUCE), a digital platform that centralises all the necessary procedures for foreign investment. Through the VUCE, investors can manage their requests for permits, licences and registrations, reducing bureaucratic time and costs. This system allows companies to simplify the procedures for importing and exporting products, consolidating the Dominican Republic as an efficient and accessible destination for international investors.

Incentives for foreign investment in the Dominican Republic are designed to promote economic and social development, attracting capital to strategic sectors ranging from waste and energy management to tourism and film production. The existence of a clear legal framework and an efficient management platform, such as the VUCE, consolidates the country as an attractive destination for international investors seeking legal certainty, stability and profitability for their projects.



Real Estate Sector

6



Real Estate Sector

“A set of laws designed to ensure the legality of transactions and protect the rights of investors”

The real estate sector in the Dominican Republic has experienced sustained growth in recent years, driven mainly by the rise in tourism, foreign direct investment and the development of key infrastructure. The combination of a strategic geographical location, favourable government policies and a stable investment climate has made the country an attractive destination for the acquisition of property and the development of large-scale real estate projects..

Regulation of the property sector

The legal framework of the real estate sector in the Dominican Republic is based on a series of laws that guarantee the legal security of transactions and the respect of the rights of local and foreign investors. The main law that regulates real estate activities is Law No. 108-05 on the Real Estate Registry, which establishes the rules for the purchase, sale and transfer of real estate.

The General Directorate of Cadastre and Property Registry is the body responsible for managing the property registration system. The purpose of this system is to ensure that all property transactions are duly recorded, thus providing security and transparency to the transactions.



“Offers tax exemptions for hotel and accommodation projects, facilitating the expansion of the sector”

Hotel expansion

The Dominican Republic has a diverse range of hotels, from boutique hotels to large luxury all-inclusive resorts. The Punta Cana-Bávaro area is the main focus of hotel development, with a wide range of international resorts attracting millions of tourists each year. This growth has been supported by Law 158-01 on Tourism Development Incentives, which offers tax exemptions for hotel and accommodation projects, facilitating the expansion of this sector. Several major hotel projects have been developed for the period 2020-2023, with both local and foreign investment amounting to billions of dollars. Hotels from international chains such as Marriott, Hilton and Hard Rock have expanded their presence in the country, building luxury resorts and holiday complexes that attract high-net-worth tourists, mainly from the United States and Europe.

Rental market and alternative accommodations

In addition to the growth of hotels, there has been a significant increase in demand for alternative accommodation, such as tourist apartments and private villas. Platforms such as Airbnb have seen significant growth in the country, particularly in coastal destinations and cities such as Santo Domingo and Santiago. These accommodations offer a flexible and often more affordable alternative for tourists, which has created new investment opportunities in the real estate sector, within a global tourism concept in transition.

The holiday rental market has been an important addition to the tourism sector, facilitating the diversification of accommodation. Foreign investors, mainly from the United States, Canada and Europe, have acquired properties in the country to use for tourist rentals, taking advantage of the high occupancy rates recorded in destinations such as Las Terrenas and Puerto Plata.



“Political stability, sustained economic growth and fiscal stimulus have contributed to this growth.”

Evolution of the sector and future projections

The real estate sector in the Dominican Republic, particularly hotel and lodging projects, has experienced a favourable development over the last decade. The country has managed to position itself as one of the most attractive destinations in the Caribbean, not only for tourism but also for real estate investment. Political stability, sustained economic growth and fiscal incentives have contributed to this growth.

The boom in the sector is expected to continue in the coming years, supported by government initiatives to improve tourism infrastructure and attract new investment. The post-pandemic recovery has been successful, and the diversification of the tourism market, with greater attention to luxury, eco and health tourism, will continue to drive demand for large-scale real estate projects.

In addition, the growth of emerging tourist areas such as Miches, Pedernales and Samaná represents an important opportunity for new property development. The Dominican government has identified these areas as priority investment areas and is offering additional incentives to encourage the development of hotel and residential infrastructure.

The real estate sector in the Dominican Republic continues to be one of the most dynamic in the region, with steady growth supported by the expansion of tourism, the development of infrastructure and the attraction of foreign investment. Clear regulations and fiscal incentives provide investors with a safe and profitable environment for their projects. With forecasts of continued growth and new opportunities in emerging tourist areas, the Dominican property market is consolidating as a preferred destination for international investment.



“New opportunities in the real estate sector, promoting the growth of tourist property”

Evolución del sector y proyecciones futuras

In recent years, there has been a change of trend in the real estate investment sector. Foreign direct investment (FDI) in the Dominican Republic's tourism sector has undergone a significant change in focus, from a clear predominance of traditional hotel projects to a growing interest in tourist accommodation. Before the pandemic, 90% of tourism investment was directed towards the construction of "all-inclusive" hotels, a model that has become iconic for the country. After the pandemic, however, this trend changed drastically, with a 60% drop in hotel investment in favour of alternative tourist accommodation projects, such as villas, apartments and tourist residences.

This change is due to a shift in the preferences of travellers, who are now looking for more personalised and exclusive experiences rather than the mass offers of traditional hotels. It has also opened up new opportunities in the property sector, encouraging the growth of tourist property. The acquisition of properties for rental to tourists not only diversifies the country's offer, but also strengthens its attractiveness as a long-term investment destination, consolidating FDI in real estate and attracting both foreign buyers and developers interested in mixed-use projects.



Investment considerations

7



“One of the most attractive destinations for foreign direct investment (FDI) in the Caribbean”

Investment considerations

Investment in the Dominican Republic, particularly in the real estate and tourism sectors, has evolved considerably in recent years, consolidating the country as one of the most attractive destinations for foreign direct investment (FDI) in the Caribbean. This evolution has been marked by a significant change in investor preferences and tourism market demands, from a predominant focus on traditional hotel projects to a growing interest in alternative tourist accommodation such as villas and apartments.

The favourable legal framework, fiscal incentives and economic and political stability have been fundamental pillars in attracting foreign capital. In addition, the country has shown a solid post-pandemic recovery, with a diversification of investment opportunities in tourism real estate, which has led to an increased interest in short-term rental projects, in line with new trends in the market.

This context offers significant opportunities for both foreign investors seeking attractive returns and those interested in long-term projects. With the expansion of new emerging tourist areas and a greater demand for personalised experiences, the Dominican Republic is positioned as a safe and profitable investment destination with broad growth prospects for the future.



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