

# Guyana

---

RISK & COMPLIANCE REPORT

DATE: March 2017

## Executive Summary - Guyana

<b>Sanctions:</b>	None
<b>FAFT list of AML Deficient Countries</b>	No longer on list
<b>Higher Risk Areas:</b>	US Dept of State Money Laundering Assessment Compliance with FATF 40 + 9 Recommendations Not on EU White list equivalent jurisdictions Corruption Index (Transparency International & W.G.I.) World Governance Indicators (Average Score)
<b>Medium Risk Areas:</b>	Weakness in Government Legislation to combat Money Laundering Failed States Index (Political Issues)(Average Score)

**Major Investment Areas:**

**Agriculture - products:**

sugarcane, rice, edible oils; beef, pork, poultry; shrimp, fish

**Industries:**

bauxite, sugar, rice milling, timber, textiles, gold mining

**Exports - commodities:**

sugar, gold, bauxite, alumina, rice, shrimp, molasses, rum, timber

**Exports - partners:**

US 30.8%, Canada 28.9%, UK 6.2% (2012)

**Imports - commodities:**

manufactures, machinery, petroleum, food

**Imports - partners:**

US 22.2%, Trinidad and Tobago 21.9%, China 12.3%, Cuba 6.1%, Suriname 4% (2012)

**Investment Restrictions:**

While maintaining a strong track record in attracting government-to-government development assistance, its record in attracting private sector investment has been inconsistent, though increased activity in extractive industries and energy could lead to large investments in coming years, driven by development in the hydroelectric, mining and oil and gas sectors. Overall, Guyana is open for investment, and poses few legal impediments to foreign investors, but needs to do more to facilitate investment and implement more transparent and accountable procedures.

The main investment agency, the Guyana Office for Investment (GO-INVEST), focuses primarily on agriculture and agro-processing, tourism, manufacturing, information and communication technology, seafood and aquaculture, as well as wood processing sectors.

Guyanese law permits foreign ownership of companies, and there is no mandatory screening of foreign investment.

The right of foreigners to own property or land in Guyana is specifically protected under the Constitution. Private entities may freely acquire and dispose of interests in business enterprises, although some newly privatized entities have limits on the number of shares that may be acquired by any one individual or entity (domestic or foreign). Similarly, the articles of association of some firms prohibit the issuance of more than a certain number of share transfers to any one individual or company in an effort to prevent attempts to gain control of such companies in the secondary market.

The Government of Guyana grants foreign and domestic firms the right to establish and own business enterprises and engage in all forms of remunerative activity. Licenses are required in the mining, telecommunications, forestry, banking, and tourism sectors.

## Contents

<b>Section 1 - Background</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Section 2 - Anti – Money Laundering / Terrorist Financing</b> .....	<b>5</b>
FATF status.....	5
CFATF Statement re AML Strategic Deficiencies: 30 May 2014 .....	5
Compliance with FATF Recommendations.....	6
US Department of State Money Laundering Assessment (INCSR) .....	6
Reports.....	10
International Sanctions.....	12
Bribery & Corruption.....	13
Corruption and Government Transparency - Report by US State Department .....	13
<b>Section 3 - Economy</b> .....	<b>15</b>
<b>Section 4 - Investment Climate</b> .....	<b>16</b>
<b>Section 5 - Government</b> .....	<b>31</b>
<b>Section 6 - Tax</b> .....	<b>32</b>
<b>Methodology and Sources</b> .....	<b>33</b>

## Section 1 - Background

Originally a Dutch colony in the 17th century, by 1815 Guyana had become a British possession. The abolition of slavery led to black settlement of urban areas and the importation of indentured servants from India to work the sugar plantations. The resulting ethnocultural divide has persisted and has led to turbulent politics. Guyana achieved independence from the UK in 1966, and since then it has been ruled mostly by socialist-oriented governments. In 1992, Cheddi JAGAN was elected president in what is considered the country's first free and fair election since independence. After his death five years later, his wife, Janet JAGAN, became president but resigned in 1999 due to poor health. Her successor, Bharrat JAGDEO, was reelected in 2001 and again in 2006. Donald RAMOTAR was elected president in 2011.



## Section 2 - Anti – Money Laundering / Terrorist Financing

### FATF status

Guyana is no longer on the FATF List of Countries that have been identified as having strategic AML deficiencies

### Latest FATF Statement - 21 October 2016

The FATF welcomes Guyana's significant progress in improving its AML/CFT regime and notes that Guyana has established the legal and regulatory framework to meet its commitments in its action plan regarding the strategic deficiencies that the FATF had identified in October 2014. Guyana is therefore no longer subject to the FATF's monitoring process under its on-going global AML/CFT compliance process. Guyana will work with CFATF as it continues to address the full range of AML/CFT issues identified in its mutual evaluation report.

### CFATF Statement re AML Strategic Deficiencies

As a result of not meeting the agreed timelines in its Action Plan, the CFATF recognises Guyana as a jurisdiction with significant AML/CFT deficiencies, which has failed to make significant progress in addressing those deficiencies and the CFATF considers Guyana to be a risk to the international financial system. Members are therefore called upon to implement further counter measures to protect their financial systems from the ongoing money laundering and terrorist financing risks emanating from Guyana. Also, the CFATF has referred Guyana to the FATF.

Countermeasures could entail, among others, the requirement of enhanced due diligence measures; introducing enhanced reporting mechanisms or systematic reporting of financial transactions; refusing the establishment of subsidiaries or branches or representative offices in the country concerned, or otherwise taking into account the fact that the relevant financial institution is from a country that does not have adequate AML/CFT systems and limiting the business relationships or financial transactions with the identified country or persons in that country.

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In November 2011 the CFATF brought to the attention of its Members certain jurisdictions including Guyana with significant strategic deficiencies in their AML/CFT regime. With a view to encouraging expeditious rectification of the identified strategic deficiencies Guyana and the CFATF developed an Action Plan with identified target dates to address the strategic deficiencies that exist in Guyana's national architecture to combat money laundering and the financing of terrorism.

The CFATF issued a [public statement in May 2013](#) recommending that Guyana took steps to ensure that it addressed its AML/CFT deficiencies. Additionally, in [November 2013](#) CFATF issued a further public statement calling upon its Members to consider implementing counter measures to protect their financial systems from the ongoing money laundering and terrorist financing risks emanating from Guyana. Guyana has failed to pass the relevant legislation necessary for it to significantly improve its AML/CFT regime and therefore has not substantially addressed the outstanding deficiencies from its mutual evaluation report. The CFATF urges Guyana to urgently, immediately and meaningfully address its AML/CFT deficiencies, in particular by: 1) fully criminalising money laundering and terrorist financing offences, 2) addressing all the requirements on beneficial ownership, 3) strengthening the requirements for suspicious transaction reporting, international co-operation, and the freezing and confiscation of terrorist assets, and 4) fully implementing the UN conventions. Please refer to the 6th follow-up report on Guyana, available at [www.cfatf-gafic-org](http://www.cfatf-gafic-org) for greater details.

### Compliance with FATF Recommendations

The last Mutual Evaluation Report relating to the implementation of anti-money laundering and counter-terrorist financing standards in Guyana was undertaken by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) in 2011. According to that Evaluation, Guyana was deemed Compliant for 1 and Largely Compliant for 5 of the FATF 40 + 9 Recommendations. It was Partially Compliant or Non-Compliant for all 6 of the Core Recommendations.

### US Department of State Money Laundering Assessment (INCSR)

**Guyana is categorised by the US State Department as a Country/Jurisdiction of Primary Concern in respect of Money Laundering and Financial Crimes.**

#### OVERVIEW

Guyana's geographic location makes it attractive for transnational organized crime groups, including human and drug trafficking organizations. It continues to be a transit country for South American cocaine destined for Europe, the United States, Canada, West Africa, and the Caribbean.

There is a culture of using informal networks to move money between Guyana and the diaspora, and Guyana has a large cash-based economy. Many criminals use cash couriers or familial networks to move large sums of money between Guyana and the United States. Unregulated currency exchange houses also pose a risk, as they are used both for the exchange of currency and to transfer funds to and from the diaspora. Additionally, casinos are legal in Guyana and pose a risk for money laundering. Guyana has one casino.

In 2013, the CFATF issued a public statement noting significant strategic deficiencies in Guyana's AML regime and declaring Guyana a money laundering risk to the international

financial system. Subsequently, the government created an action plan to address noted deficiencies and, in mid-2015, passed amendments to update its AML legislation to include a definition of beneficial ownership and broaden the definition of property subject to confiscation, among other improvements. In 2016, the CFATF removed Guyana from its public statement.

## **VULNERABILITIES AND EXPECTED TYPOLOGIES**

The primary sources of laundered funds are believed to be narcotics trafficking and corruption. However, the laundering of proceeds from other illicit activities, such as human trafficking, contraband, illegal natural resource extraction, and tax evasion, is substantial. Common money laundering typologies include the use of fictitious agreements of sale for non-existing precious minerals to support large cash deposits at financial institutions; cross-border transport of small volumes of precious metals, declared as scrap or broken jewelry to avoid scrutiny by the relevant officials and the payment of relevant taxes and duties; TBML using gold; and the use of middle- and senior-aged cash couriers for the cross-border transport of large sums of U.S. dollars.

## **KEY AML LAWS AND REGULATIONS**

The Government of Guyana has legislation in place that could enable a more effective response to the threat of money laundering. In June 2015, Guyana passed and began to enforce the Anti- Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism (AMLCFT) Amendment Act, seeking to address remaining deficiencies in its AML regime, such as the availability of proportionate and dissuasive sanctions.

Guyana has comprehensive CDD and STR regulations. There is also a records exchange mechanism in place with the United States.

Guyana is a member of the CFATF, a FATF-style regional body.

## **AML DEFICIENCIES**

International experts recommended Guyana make the following major improvements to its AML regime: adequately criminalize money laundering; to establish a fully operational and effectively functioning FIU; institute effective measures for customer due diligence and enhanced financial transparency; and establish adequate STR requirements. To correct noted deficiencies, Guyana passed the Anti-Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism Regulations 2015; issued the Guidelines on Targeted Financial Sanctions 2015; and completed amendments to the AMLCFT Act in 2015 and 2016. Guyana's AML regime also extends to legal persons and provides for enhanced due diligence for PEPs.

Though created in 2003, the FIU was severely understaffed and ineffective. In June 2016, a new director of the FIU was appointed, and the functional capacity of the unit has been enhanced.

Guyana submitted a letter of interest to join the Egmont Group of FIUs in 2011, which is



still being considered.

## **ENFORCEMENT/IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES AND COMMENTS**

Guyana has ratified the 1988 UN Drug Convention.

The major agencies involved in anti-drug and AML efforts are the Office of the Attorney General, FIU, Ministry of Finance, Bank of Guyana, Guyana Police Force, Guyana Revenue Authority, the Customs Anti-Narcotics Unit, and the Serious Organized Crimes Unit (SOCU). Although the AML legislation gives the FIU authority to investigate alleged money laundering, the FIU does not have the capacity to conduct such investigations. The SOCU investigates those cases referred to it by the FIU. The effectiveness of these agencies at investigating money laundering is limited, as they lack adequate human resources, training to ensure successful prosecutions, and a strong interagency network. Additionally, lack of cooperation by the business community also hinders Guyana's AML efforts.

Despite its limited staffing capacity, in February, the SOCU seized roughly \$80,000 worth of local and foreign currency and arrested two persons suspected of money laundering. This was the first seizure under Guyana's updated AML legislation.

Guyana should raise awareness and understanding of AML laws and implementation procedures, through training and the publication of guidelines, within the judicial system and in agencies with the authority to investigate financial crimes. STR requirements, wire transfers, and customer due diligence regulations should be strengthened and additional resources extended to the FIU and SOCU.

### **Current Weaknesses in Government Legislation (2013 INCRS Comparative Tables):**

According to the US State Department, Guyana does not conform with regard to the following government legislation: -

**Arrangements for Asset Sharing** - By law, regulation or bilateral agreement, the jurisdiction permits sharing of seized assets with third party jurisdictions that assisted in the conduct of the underlying investigation.

**Criminalised Tipping Off** - By law, disclosure of the reporting of suspicious or unusual activity to an individual who is the subject of such a report, or to a third party, is a criminal offense.

### **EU White list of Equivalent Jurisdictions**

Guyana is not currently on the EU White list of Equivalent Jurisdictions

### **World Governance indicators**

[To view historic Governance Indicators Ctrl + Click here and then select country](#)

## **Failed States Index**

[To view Failed States Index Ctrl + Click here](#)

## **Offshore Financial Centre**

Guyana is not considered to be an Offshore Financial Centre

## US State Dept Narcotics Report 2017 (introduction):

### Introduction

Guyana is a transit country for cocaine destined for the United States, Canada, the Caribbean, Europe, and West Africa. Cocaine originating in Colombia is smuggled to Venezuela and onward to Guyana by sea or air. Smugglers also transit land borders with Brazil, Venezuela, and Suriname. Cocaine is often concealed in legitimate commodities and smuggled via commercial maritime vessels, air transport, human couriers, "go-fast" boats or various postal methods.

The influence of narcotics trafficking is evident in the country's criminal justice systems and other sectors. Traffickers are attracted by the country's poorly monitored ports, remote airstrips, intricate river networks, porous land borders, and weak security sector capacity.

### Conclusion

The United States would welcome increased levels of cooperation with the Government of Guyana to advance mutual interests against the threat of international drug trafficking. Guyana has shown strong interest in furthering collaboration under CBSI. The United States looks forward to tangible progress on investigations, prosecutions, extraditions, security sector capacity enhancement, the engagement of at-risk communities, and enforcement of laws against money laundering and financial crimes.

## US State Dept Trafficking in Persons Report 2014 (introduction):

Guyana is classified a Tier 2 (watch list) country - a country whose government does not fully comply with the Trafficking Victims Protection Act's minimum standards, but is making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance with those standards.

Guyana is a source and destination country for men, women, and children subjected to sex trafficking and forced labor. Guyanese and foreign women and girls—including from Venezuela, Suriname, and Brazil—are subjected to prostitution in Guyana. While the full extent of forced labor is unknown, there have been reports of forced labor in the mining, agriculture, and forestry sectors, as well as in domestic service and shops. Traffickers are attracted to Guyana's interior mining communities where there is limited government control, but Guyanese and foreign nationals are also vulnerable to trafficking in urban centers and elsewhere in the country. Children are particularly vulnerable to forced labor. Guyanese nationals are subjected to human trafficking in other countries in the Caribbean region.

The Government of Guyana does not fully comply with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking; however, it is making significant efforts to do so. The government's Ministry of Labour, Human Services, and Social Security (human services ministry) demonstrated concrete efforts to assist trafficking victims. Despite these efforts, the

government did not demonstrate evidence of overall increasing efforts to address human trafficking over the previous reporting period; therefore, Guyana is placed on Tier 2 Watch List. Guyana has an adequate trafficking law and achieved three trafficking convictions during the reporting period; however, all three convicted traffickers were released on bail pending the appeal of their convictions. The Government of Guyana did not provide information regarding the basis on which the defendants sought to appeal their convictions or on which the court determined to grant them bail. The inability to hold traffickers accountable creates an enabling environment for human trafficking. Trafficking victims have accused police officers and other government employees of cooperating with traffickers.

## International Sanctions

None Applicable

## Bribery & Corruption

Index	Rating (100-Good / 0-Bad)
Transparency International Corruption Index	34
World Governance Indicator – Control of Corruption	23

## Corruption and Government Transparency - Report by US State Department

Allegations of corruption remain common. According to Transparency International's 2013 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI), Guyana is ranked 136rd out of 177 countries for perceptions of corruption– rising by three slots from 133 the previous year. Guyana ranks 28th in the Western Hemisphere, out of 32 countries. Guyana has ratified the IACAC, and bribery is established as a criminal offense under Guyanese law. Although the government passed legislation in 1997 that requires public officials to disclose their assets to an Integrity Commission prior to assuming office, the Integrity Commission has never been constituted and remains inoperative. Public Officials' compliance with the legislation has therefore been uneven.

The Procurement Act of 2003 provides for the establishment of a National Procurement and Tender Administration Board (NPTAB). The Minister of Finance appoints the members of this board. The Public Procurement Commission, a constitutionally mandated independent body that is to ensure transparency and accountability throughout the government procurement process including in regards to the NPTAB's operations, has never been established.

Widespread concerns about inefficiencies and corruption at the ministerial, regional, or national level exist regarding the awarding of contracts particularly relating to concerns of collusion and non-transparency. The Auditor General in his annual reports has noted continuous disregard for the procedures, rules, and the law that govern public procurement systems.

The Criminal Law Act classifies both corruption and bribery as illegal. Offences carry a penalty of GY\$390,000 and three to seven years imprisonment.

On April 16, 2008, Guyana ratified the United Nations Convention against Corruption. Guyana is neither a member of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) nor a signatory to OECD Anti-Bribery Convention. Guyana is a member of the Organization of American States (OAS) and ratified the Inter-American Convention against Corruption on December 11, 2000.

The World Economic Forum, "Global Competitiveness Report 2013-2014," identified corruption as the largest obstacle, followed by tax rates, to doing business in Guyana.

Corruption discourages potential foreign direct investments and foreign investors, and it also undermines economic development and growth.

### Section 3 - Economy

The Guyanese economy exhibited moderate economic growth in recent years and is based largely on agriculture and extractive industries. The economy is heavily dependent upon the export of six commodities - sugar, gold, bauxite, shrimp, timber, and rice - which represent nearly 60% of the country's GDP and are highly susceptible to adverse weather conditions and fluctuations in commodity prices. Guyana's entrance into the Caricom Single Market and Economy (CSME) in January 2006 has broadened the country's export market, primarily in the raw materials sector. Guyana has experienced positive growth almost every year over the past decade. Inflation has been kept under control. Recent years have seen the government's stock of debt reduced significantly - with external debt now less than half of what it was in the early 1990s. Chronic problems include a shortage of skilled labor and a deficient infrastructure. Despite recent improvements, the government is still juggling a sizable external debt against the urgent need for expanded public investment. In March 2007, the Inter-American Development Bank, Guyana's principal donor, canceled Guyana's nearly \$470 million debt, equivalent to 21% of GDP, which along with other Highly Indebted Poor Country (HIPC) debt forgiveness brought the debt-to-GDP ratio down from 183% in 2006 to 60% in 2013. Guyana had become heavily indebted as a result of the inward-looking, state-led development model pursued in the 1970s and 1980s. Much of Guyana's growth in recent years has come from a surge in gold production in response to global prices, although downward trends in gold prices may threaten future growth. In 2013, production of sugar dropped to a 23-year low.

#### **Agriculture - products:**

sugarcane, rice, edible oils; beef, pork, poultry; shrimp, fish

#### **Industries:**

bauxite, sugar, rice milling, timber, textiles, gold mining

#### **Exports - commodities:**

sugar, gold, bauxite, alumina, rice, shrimp, molasses, rum, timber

#### **Exports - partners:**

US 30.8%, Canada 28.9%, UK 6.2% (2012)

#### **Imports - commodities:**

manufactures, machinery, petroleum, food

#### **Imports - partners:**

US 22.2%, Trinidad and Tobago 21.9%, China 12.3%, Cuba 6.1%, Suriname 4% (2012)



## Executive Summary

Guyana's investment climate took a downward turn in 2013 as political gridlock and infighting hampered the country's development efforts on several fronts. The Amaila Falls Hydropower Project, which would have been the largest capital project in the country's history, fell apart after a decade of planning when U.S. developer and equity partner Sithe Global withdrew from the multinational development team in August 2013. The company had concerns related to political risk following objections to the venture by the country's largest opposition party. Guyana's failure to crack down on money laundering — including parliament's inability to pass legislation strengthening Anti-Money Laundering/Countering the Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT) laws — has resulted in the country being blacklisted by the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force (CFATF). Further action by the international Financial Action Task Force could result in increased costs and delays in processing international financial and trade transactions. The government continues to encourage foreign investment, but has had limited success in attracting that investment outside of the gold mining sector. Perceptions of corruption, inefficient government, inadequate infrastructure, and crime remain barriers to attracting foreign investment.

### 1. Openness To, and Restrictions Upon, Foreign Investment

The Government of Guyana publicly encourages foreign direct investment (FDI). While its track record in attracting government-to-government development assistance is strong, its long-term record in attracting private-sector investment remains poor.

The Government of Guyana supports a traditional investment agency, the Guyana Office for Investment (GO-INVEST). GO-INVEST focuses primarily on agriculture and agro-processing, tourism, manufacturing, information and communication technology, seafood and aquaculture, and wood processing. Potential investors should note that GO-INVEST is the first approval of many required to obtain necessary permits and tax concessions. GO-INVEST often determines that many prospective investors' proposals lack sufficient capital; these inquiries generally do not further progress. Due to the state's major role in the domestic economy and the Government of Guyana's tendency to centralize decision-making, relatively large foreign investments receive intense political attention, often from the highest political level. Over the past decade, the government enacted new laws or amended existing ones to encourage foreign direct investment, with mixed levels of success.

Investors should note that Guyana launched its Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS) on June 8, 2009 as a plan to transform Guyana's economy, conserve its forests, and adapt to global warming while reducing carbon emissions. Initially relying on donor assistance, with plans to eventually draw on private investment in a global market for carbon credits, the Government of Guyana intends to channel forest conservation payments into human capital development, climate change adaptation, and strategic investments in low-carbon economic sectors like business process outsourcing, hydropower, sustainable forestry and wood products processing, ecotourism, biofuels, aquaculture, and other high-value, export-oriented agriculture. Guyana established the Office for Climate Change as well as a Project

Management Unit within the Office of the President to attract and vet potential foreign investors in sectors complimentary to the LCDS.

Following the launch of the LCDS, the Government of Norway entered into an agreement to protect Guyana's tropical forest for its carbon storage and other ecological services. Norway has contributed \$70 million to date and will provide a total of up to US\$250 million by 2015 if Guyana demonstrates continued low rates of deforestation and forest degradation. The Government of Guyana believes this financial commitment and inclusion of incentives for forest conservation in the 2009 Copenhagen Accord will lead to higher levels of LCDS investment in coming years. Thus far, however, no other international donors have stepped forward in any substantial way to pay for Guyana's ecosystem services, and the Norway payments are likely to be reduced following recent verification that Guyana's deforestation rate has increased.

Sufficient legislation exists in Guyana to enable foreign investment in the country, but implementation of the legislation continues to be inadequate. The objectives of the Investment Act of 2004 are to stimulate socioeconomic development by attracting and facilitating foreign investment. Other relevant laws include the Income Tax Act, the Customs Act, the Procurement Act of 2003, the Companies Act of 1991, the Securities Act of 1998, and the Small Business Act. Regulatory actions are still required for much of this legislation to be effectively implemented.

The judicial system is generally perceived to be slow and ineffective in enforcing legal contracts. Suspected corrupt practices and long delays make the courts an unattractive option for settling investment or contractual disputes, particularly for foreign investors unfamiliar with Guyana. In order to redress this obstacle to investment, the Government of Guyana, with support from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), established a Commercial Court in June 2006.

Foreign ownership of companies is permitted. There is no mandatory screening of foreign investment. The government, however, conducts de facto screenings of most investments to determine which businesses are eligible for special tax treatment, access to licenses, land, and approval for investment incentives. In spite of recent efforts to remove discretionary power from the various ministries, ministers still retain significant authority to determine how relevant laws, such as the Investment Act, Small Business Act, and Procurement Act, are applied.

In general, international investors receive the same treatment as local investors in Guyana. One exception is the special approval required for local financing. Foreign borrowers applying for a loan of more than GY\$2 Million (US\$10,000) must request permission from the Minister of Finance. This requirement reflects Guyana's preference for foreign investors to bring capital into the country.

Another exception exists in the mining sector, where ownership of property for small and medium-scale mining is restricted to citizens of Guyana. Foreigners may enter into joint-venture arrangements under which the two parties agree to jointly develop a mining property. There are no restrictions on the percentage of the investment shouldered by the foreign investor; these arrangements are strictly by private contract. However, such

relationships are highly risky, and appropriate due diligence of potential joint venture partners is required.

Foreign investors generally have equal access to privatization opportunities. For some larger operations, foreign investment is openly preferred. Since 1992, the Government of Guyana has privatized 16 of 21 government entities. Only Guyana Oil Company Limited, Guyana National Printers Limited, Guyana Sugar Corporation, the National Communication Network (NCN) and Guyana Power & Light (GPL) remain as major state-owned enterprises (SOE). The head of the Privatization Unit/National Industrial and Commercial Investments Limited also serves as Chairman of Guyana Power and Light. There is little Government of Guyana impetus for further privatization of these SOEs.

Most large-scale investments in Guyana's infrastructure are government projects financed by international lending institutions, with the IDB as the largest lender. U.S. firms are generally given equal access to these projects.

In evaluating the ease of doing business in Guyana, a [World Bank and International Finance Corporation Report "Doing Business 2014"](#) ranked Guyana 115 out of 189 countries. According to the report, the process to start a business in Guyana is challenging. For example, an entrepreneur can expect to go through 8 procedures requiring an average of 20 working days total in order to launch a business. To enforce a contract, 36 procedures are required with an expected timeline of 581 days to complete the process. Registering property requires 6 procedures with an expected timeline of 75 days.

In assessing Guyana's competitiveness, the World Economic Forum publication, "[The Global Competitiveness Report 2013 - 2014](#)" ranked Guyana 102 out of 148. The report identified the following as the most problematic factors for doing business in Guyana: corruption, tax rates, inefficient government bureaucracy, inadequate infrastructure, and crime and theft.

According to the [2014 Index of Economic Freedom](#), Guyana's economy underperformed its global and regional counterparts. Guyana is ranked 121st out of 186 countries globally, and ranked 22nd out of 29 countries in the South and Central America/Caribbean region. Its overall economic freedom score of 55.7, remains below the world average of 59.7, and the regional average of 60.3. The economic indicators used to determine Guyana's economic freedom were business freedom (64.3), trade freedom (72), fiscal freedom (68.4), government spending (71.8), monetary freedom (78.1), investment freedom (45.0), financial freedom (30.0), property rights (30.0), freedom from corruption (24.4), and labor freedom (72.6). Guyana's overall score is 1.9 points higher than last year, reflecting notable score increases in control of government spending and investment freedom. Over the 20-year history of the Index, Guyana has advanced its economic freedom score by 10 points. This overall increase has been achieved by enhancements in seven of the 10 economic freedoms, notably the management of public spending, freedom from corruption, and monetary freedom—all of which have improved by 10 points or more.

**Table 1:** Guyana's International Index Rankings

Year	Measure	Index/Ranking
------	---------	---------------

2013	TI Corruption Index	136
2014	Heritage Economic Freedom	121
2014	World Bank Doing Business	115
FY 2014	MCC Government Effectiveness	0.25 (73%)
FY 2014	MCC Rule of Law	-0.05 (45%)
FY 2014	MCC Control on Corruption	-0.18 (23%)
FY 2014	MCC Fiscal Policy	-3.4 (42%)
FY 2014	MCC Trade Policy	72.0 (33%)
FY 2014	MCC Regulatory Quality	-0.31 (31%)
FY 2014	MCC Business Start-Up	0.936 (58%)
FY 2014	MCC Land Rights and Access	0.78 (77%)
FY 2014	MCC Natural Resource Protection	30.0 (38%)

**Source:** Transparency International (TI), Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), Heritage Economic Freedom, World Bank Doing Business Report

## 2. Conversion and Transfer Policies

The Guyana dollar is fully convertible and transferable. According to the Bank of Guyana Annual Report 2012, the average exchange rate is US\$1 to GY\$204.50 at the end of December 2012 (<http://www.bankofguyana.org.gy/bog/>). No limits exist on inflows or repatriation of funds, although there are spot shortages of foreign currency. Regulations also require that all persons entering and exiting Guyana declare all currency in excess of US\$10,000 to Customs authorities at the port of entry. There is no limit to the acquisition of foreign currency, although the government limits the amount that a number of state-owned firms may keep for their own purchases. Regulations on foreign currency denominated bank accounts in Guyana allow funds to be wired in and out of the country electronically without having to go through cumbersome exchange procedures. Foreign companies operating in Guyana have experienced no government induced difficulties in repatriating earnings in recent years.

In practice, many large foreign investors in Guyana use subsidiaries outside Guyana to handle earnings generated by the export of primary products, including timber, gold, and bauxite. Those companies then advance funds to their local entities to cover operating costs.

Guyana has a floating exchange rate that is determined by supply and demand, which is predominantly driven by activities of Guyana's three largest commercial banks. The government has intervened in support of the Guyana dollar with some success. The government will likely continue to intervene in defense of the Guyana dollar and its international reserves.

The Guyana dollar is generally stable, depreciating marginally by 0.37 percent against the U.S. dollar in 2012. The relative stability of the currency is underpinned by a sufficient flow of foreign exchange to the market. The exchange rate is expected to remain relatively stable since there is more than an adequate supply of foreign exchange in the system to meet balance of payments needs.

Guyana is neither an important regional nor an offshore financial center, nor does it have any free trade zones. Money laundering is perceived as a serious problem, and has been linked to drug trafficking (principally cocaine), firearms, corruption, and fraud, as well as to the influx of foreign currency. Guyana has a large informal economy in which cash is preferred by both buyers and sellers for most transactions, making it highly vulnerable to money laundering. On November 20, 2013, the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force (CFATF) issued a statement classifying Guyana among **"jurisdictions with strategic AML/CFT deficiencies that have not made sufficient progress in addressing the deficiencies or have not complied with their Action Plan developed with the CFATF to address these deficiencies. The CFATF calls on its members to consider implementing counter measures to protect their financial systems from the ongoing money laundering and terrorist financing risks emanating from each jurisdiction."**

### **3. Expropriation and Compensation**

On August 16, 2001, the National Assembly approved the Acquisition of Lands for Public Purposes Bill 2001. This Act cleared the way for the government to acquire private parcels of land at prices below market value. Since its inception, the government exercised the Act in a limited capacity, mainly for development purposes deemed to be in the national interest (e.g., clearing the way to build the Berbice River Bridge) and in breach of contract cases.

Evidence of discrimination against U.S. investments, companies, or representatives in the application of expropriation laws has not been identified.

The forestry sector operates at greater risk for expropriatory or similar actions. Some forestry companies and individuals have been subject to action under the aforementioned 2001 Act, due to alleged breach of contracts with the government, non-use of their concessions and/or owing debts to the government.

### **4. Dispute Settlement**

Guyana is a signatory to the Convention on the Settlement of Investment Disputes between States and Nationals of Other States. International arbitration decisions are enforceable under the Arbitration Act of 1931. Guyana is also a member of the International Center for the Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID).

There are three ongoing investment disputes involving U.S. interests in Guyana.

American firm Atlantic Tele Network (ATN), which owns 80% of Guyana Telephone and Telegraph (GT&T), has expressed concern over the Government of Guyana's stated intentions to terminate GT&T's contractually guaranteed monopoly on land-line and international telecommunications prior to its expiration. The government's intention to do so is linked to its desire to introduce legislation that would fully liberalize the telecommunications sector. ATN and the Government of Guyana are in ongoing discussions with the aim of finding a mutually acceptable agreement on the issue. Absent such an agreement, the government has not unilaterally moved forward with passage of the telecommunications liberalization legislation.

American company Caribbean Telecommunications Ltd. has filed a lawsuit against Guyana Telephone and Telegraph (GT&T), alleging that GT&T engaged in unfair trade practices in order to have Caribbean Telecommunications Ltd.'s license to provide cellular services in Guyana cancelled.

## **5. Performance Requirements and Investment Incentives**

Although no explicit government policy regarding performance requirements exists, some are written into contracts with foreign investors and could include the requirement of a performance bond. Some contracts require a certain minimum level of investment. Investors are not required to source locally, nor must they export a certain percentage of output. Foreign exchange is not rationed in proportion to exports, nor are there any requirements for national ownership or technology transfer.

The Status of Aliens Act allows a non-resident of Guyana to acquire and dispose of assets and moveable and immoveable property in the same manner as a citizen of Guyana. The government treats domestic and foreign investors alike with regard to investment incentives. Guyana offers incentives based on specific criteria such as location of an investment or investment in specific government-targeted sectors.

The Fiscal Enactments Act of 2003 allows the Minister of Finance to grant exemptions from Corporate Tax for a period of five years to an investor if the activity demonstrably creates new employment in certain regions of the country (primarily hinterland regions one, eight, nine, and 10). In the case of new economic activity, the Minister may grant a tax holiday of up to 10 years if the activity falls under the following categories: non-traditional agro processing (excluding sugar refining, rice milling and chicken farming); tourist hotels or eco-tourist hotels; information and communications technology (excluding retailing and distributing); petroleum exploration, extraction, or refining; and mineral exploration, extraction, or refining. The Minister maintains final discretion over which investors receive corporate tax exemptions.

The Income Tax Act of 1998 provides for accelerated depreciation of plant and equipment pending approval of the Minister of Finance on a case specific basis. The Government of Guyana previously utilized the Act to provide export tax allowances for manufacturing or processing of non-traditional products exported to countries outside of the Caribbean Community; and tax allowances for research and development.

The Minister of Finance maintains authority to approve exemptions and waivers from customs duty, excise tax and value added tax on plant, equipment, machinery and spare parts.

Though not required, the government expects investors to submit business proposals to GO-INVEST that outline the proposed project, the value of the investment, and employment to be generated from the investment. GO-INVEST reviews proposals and makes recommendations to the Guyana Revenue Authority (GRA) in accordance with the Customs Duties Order of 2003. The GRA determines whether imports comply with regulation and whether those materials are eligible for tax relief. GRA makes the final recommendation to the Minister of Finance whether to grant exemptions and waivers from customs duty, excise tax, and value added tax.

Similarly, the policy provides for a tax allowance for non-traditional exports to non-CARICOM countries. Traditional products include rice, sugar, bauxite, gold, diamonds, timber, petroleum, lumber, shrimp, molasses, and rum. The allowance ranges between 25 percent and 75 percent and at least 10 percent of sales must be exported to qualify.

In certain circumstances, Guyana also offers duty-free imports and tax holidays to investors on request. A key factor in the determination of duty-free status and value added tax waiver is value addition. The authorities note that blanket approvals are not given; instead each import consignment is reviewed individually. When granted, GRA lowers or waives the duty and value added tax completely, based on the industry and item. The authorities note that tax holidays are less likely to be granted than duty-free status or a value added tax waiver.

A number of companies/businesses both foreign and domestic have benefited from investment incentives such as corporate tax exemption, income tax (In Aid of Industry) exemption, export tax exemption on non-traditional exports and, exemption from customs duty, excise tax and value added tax.

## **6. Right to Private Ownership and Establishment**

Guyana's constitution specifically protects the right of foreigners to own property or land in Guyana. Private entities may freely acquire and dispose of interests in business enterprises, although some newly privatized entities have limits on the number of shares that may be acquired by any one individual or entity (domestic or foreign). Similarly, the articles of association of some firms prohibit the issuance of more than a certain number of share transfers to any one individual or company in an effort to prevent attempts to gain control of such companies in the secondary market.

Foreign and domestic firms possess the right to establish and own business enterprises and engage in all forms of remunerative activity. Enterprises in mining, telecommunications, forestry, banking, and tourism sectors require licenses. Obtaining necessary licenses can be a time-consuming task. According to GO-INVEST's Investor's Roadmap, the estimated processing time to obtain the approvals to lease state or government owned lands may take one year; some investors report much longer processing times.

## **7. Protection of Property Rights**

Upon independence in 1966, Guyana adopted British law on intellectual property rights (IPR). Guyana's Copyright Act is dated 1956 and its Trademark Act and Patents and Design Act are dated 1973. Numerous attempts to pass comprehensive legislative updates to this legislation have been unsuccessful. Piecemeal modernization amendments contained in the Geographic Indication Act of 2005, the Competition and Fair Trading Act 2006, the Business

Names Registration Act 2000, and the Deeds Registry Authority Act 1999 have offered additional protection to local products and companies. No such modern legislation exists to protect the foreign-registered rights of investors. Guyana joined the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and acceded to the Bern and Paris Conventions in late 1994. Guyana has not ratified a bilateral intellectual property rights agreement with the United States.

Registering a patent or trademark can take six months or longer, but no effective enforcement mechanisms exist to protect intellectual property rights. Patent and trademark infringement continues to be common. Local television stations, including the state-owned and operated National Communication Network (NCN), pirate and rebroadcast TV satellite signals with impunity. Most music, videos and software for sale are pirated. Book piracy is also rampant, especially foreign textbooks; some estimates say illegally photocopied textbooks account for nearly one-third of local sales.

As recently as September 2012, both local and international media reported that the Education Ministry invited seven pre-selected local firms to supply photocopies of primary and secondary level textbooks published by Trinidad and Tobago-based Royards Publishing Company. In response, Royards Publishing submitted a bid to supply the government with the original textbooks. However, it was only after legal threats from Royards that the government came to purchase the textbooks legally. The government's initial willingness to sanction textbook piracy generated international and local criticism for its apparent indifference to IPR. Guyana does not have a ratified intellectual property rights agreement with the United States.

The Ministry of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation and the Ministry of Legal Affairs drafted Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) legislation in 2001, but the draft still lies dormant and unused.

For additional information about treaty obligations and points of contact at local IP offices, please see WIPO's country profiles at <http://www.wipo.int/directory/en/>.

Embassy point of contact: Frisco McDonald [McDonaldFJ@state.gov](mailto:McDonaldFJ@state.gov) and Wynette Oudkerk [OudkerkW@state.gov](mailto:OudkerkW@state.gov)

Local attorneys list: <http://georgetown.usembassy.gov/emergency-services.html>

## **8. Transparency of the Regulatory System**

Guyana does not possess anti-trust legislation. In April 2006, Parliament passed a Competition and Fair Trading Act, which targets offenses such as price fixing, conspiracy, bid-rigging, misleading advertisements, anti-competitiveness, abuse of dominant position, and resale price maintenance. A Competition Commission with authority to review anti-competitive business practices has been established but remains understaffed.

Historical factors, Guyana's small population, and limited economy have led many sectors to be dominated by one or two firms. Bureaucratic procedures appear cumbersome and often require the involvement of multiple ministries. Investors often receive conflicting messages from various officials, causing difficulty in determining where the authority for decision-making lies. In the current absence of adequate legislation, much decision-making remains



centralized. An extraordinary number of issues continue to be resolved in Cabinet or in the Office of the President, a process that is commonly perceived as non-transparent and often results in delays. Attempts to reform Guyana's many bureaucratic procedures have failed to reduce red tape.

Generally, draft pieces of legislation are available in the Parliament Library for public review.

## **9. Efficient Capital Markets and Portfolio Investment**

Guyana's banking system remains underdeveloped. Inefficiencies and delays periodically plague the foreign currency market. Businesses report that currency shortages can result in significant delays in converting Guyana dollars to U.S. dollars at some banks. Because Guyana has yet to develop an effective interbank trading system, some banks may be short of foreign exchange while others have currency available.

The Financial Institutions Act of 2004 gives the Central Bank power to take temporary control of financial institutions in trouble. This Act provides legal ability for the Central Bank to take a more proactive role in helping insolvent local banks.

Interest rates on capital loans typically range from 10% to 20%. The Minister of Finance must grant permission for a foreign investor to borrow more than US\$10,000 (GY\$2 million) from local banks. The government sells Government of Guyana Treasury Bills at auction to finance the public debt, and other government-controlled rates move with the Treasury Bill rate. Past private attempts at bond financing failed, and no private companies have made large bond offers in recent years.

The banking system in Guyana is liquid. Local bank statements reveal that deposits continue to increase even as loans remain flat; a trend that suggests the existence of a large informal, cash-only economy. Analysts estimate that the informal economic activity accounts for 50 percent or more of Guyana's total economic activity. Eager to lend money, but skeptical of Guyana's legal system, banks claim an inability to find suitable local applicants for loans at prevailing interest rates.

Guyana adopted the Credit Reporting Act No. 9 of 2010, which guarantees consumers' right to access their data. The first credit reporting bureau license was granted to Creditinfo with effect from July 15, 2013, and was open for business to the public starting December 1, 2013. The credit reporting bureau has been working with banks and utility companies to compile reliable credit information for use by lenders. Lack of access to capital remains a serious barrier to entrepreneurship and business expansion in the country.

The Guyana Association of Securities Companies and Intermediaries Inc. (GASCI) was formed in 2003 and operates the Guyana Stock Exchange. GASCI consists of four member firms, all of which trade on the stock exchange. The Guyana Stock Exchange is an electronic exchange and currently trades shares in companies that are either listed on the "official list" or on the "secondary list." Inclusion on the official list is a time consuming and expensive process. Thus far, only a single company, Trinidad Cement Ltd., has been placed on the "official list." The "secondary list" consists of those companies that have not been admitted to the "official list," but are registered with the Guyana Securities Council (GSC) and thus eligible for trading. The "secondary list" consists of 16 companies. Total market capitalization of listed companies in March 2014 was US\$749 million. Trade volume on the Guyana Stock

Exchange remains very light due both to the limited number of companies and shares on offer. Companies appear to prefer to utilize the very liquid local banking sector to finance investments rather than share or bond issuance.

The Guyana Securities Council (GSC) is the regulatory body for the securities industry. Since its creation in 2001, it has struggled to obtain required disclosure information from listed, local firms.

## **10. Competition from State-Owned Enterprises**

Private enterprises compete with public enterprises under the same terms and conditions of market access, credit and other business operations, and licenses. Six SOEs exist in Guyana: Guyana Sugar Corporation (GUYSUCO), Guyana Gold Board, Guyana Oil Company Limited, Guyana Power and Light Inc., National Communications Network, and the Guyana National Printers. The corporate governance structure of Guyanese SOEs requires that the senior management report to the chief executive officer, who reports to the board of directors, who in turn report to a government minister. Political interventions occur in the management of SOEs, since their boards of directors are filled through political appointments directed by the Office of the President.

The National Industrial and Commercial Investments Limited (NICIL), a private limited company, acts as subscriber and manager of the government's shares, stocks, and debentures of any company, cooperative societies or other corporate body. It also manages government-owned real estate properties, including their acquisition, disposal or rental. Managing the government's shareholdings and minimizing conflict of interests is NICIL's main function.

Guyana underwent a significant privatization process during the 1990s, divesting many of its holdings in the banking, telecommunications, agriculture, and manufacturing sectors. Since then the pace of privatization has slowed. Since 2003, the government has privatized only two entities: National Bank for Industry and Commerce, which now does business as Republic Bank; and National Edible Oil Company, acquired by a biofuels company. Furthermore, the state reduced its participation in two of Guyana's leading bauxite mining companies, the Aroaima Mining Company and Linmine Bauxite.

The Public Corporation Act requires public corporations to publish an annual report no later than six months after the expiry of each calendar year. The Public Corporations Act also requires that the accounts of a public corporation be audited annually by an independent auditor.

## **11. Corporate Social Responsibility**

Compared to corporate social responsibility (CSR) norms in North America and Europe, Guyana-based businesses lag in adopting CSR policies and activities. Though many businesses engage in charitable acts, the totality of these deeds does not constitute good CSR practices. Guyanese consumers generally are not aware of CSR principles and do not demand them from local businesses they patronize. The Guyanese government has expressed the hope that large multinational companies will lead the way on CSR practices, setting an example for smaller local firms to follow, particularly in the extractive industries sector.

## 12. Political Violence

Political violence has occurred in Guyana; however, U.S. companies and individuals have not been singled out as targets of such politically motivated violence.

Political protests in Guyana have a history of turning violent. In October 2012, protests in the Agricola suburb of Georgetown degenerated into rioting. Public anger over perceived injustice in the case of a police officer accused of murdering a local teenager prompted the protests. In August 2013 hundreds of persons gathered outside of Parliament to protest a range of political and social issues, ranging from Amerindian land title rights to the removal of the Town Clerk in the Mayor of Georgetown's office. The protest became mildly violent between the protestors and police on guard.

Increased violence between the Indo-Guyanese and Afro-Guyanese communities has historically occurred at the time of national elections. The 2011 national elections, however, were the second in which such communal violence was greatly reduced. The 2011 election period saw one incident in which the police used force to quell a peaceful march, but no one was seriously injured.

Long overdue local elections are projected to occur in August 2014. Political violence may occur during the local election period.

Crime continues to be a major problem in Guyana, and has a severe dampening effect on the economy and investment. Serious crime, including murder and armed robbery, continues to be a major problem. According to the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime, the murder rate in Guyana was three-times higher than the murder rate in the United States.

The U.S. Embassy encourages U.S. citizens to maintain a high level of vigilance, consider security issues when planning activities throughout Guyana, and avoid traveling at night, when possible. More information for business travelers visiting Guyana is available at: <http://travel.state.gov>.

## 13. Corruption

Allegations of corruption remain common. According to Transparency International's 2013 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI), Guyana is ranked 136rd out of 177 countries for perceptions of corruption– rising by three slots from 133 the previous year. Guyana ranks 28th in the Western Hemisphere, out of 32 countries. Guyana has ratified the IACAC, and bribery is established as a criminal offense under Guyanese law. Although the government passed legislation in 1997 that requires public officials to disclose their assets to an Integrity Commission prior to assuming office, the Integrity Commission has never been constituted and remains inoperative. Public Officials' compliance with the legislation has therefore been uneven.

The Procurement Act of 2003 provides for the establishment of a National Procurement and Tender Administration Board (NPTAB). The Minister of Finance appoints the members of this board. The Public Procurement Commission, a constitutionally mandated independent body that is to ensure transparency and accountability throughout the government procurement process including in regards to the NPTAB's operations, has never been established.

Widespread concerns about inefficiencies and corruption at the ministerial, regional, or national level exist regarding the awarding of contracts particularly relating to concerns of collusion and non-transparency. The Auditor General in his annual reports has noted continuous disregard for the procedures, rules, and the law that govern public procurement systems.

The Criminal Law Act classifies both corruption and bribery as illegal. Offences carry a penalty of GY\$390,000 and three to seven years imprisonment.

On April 16, 2008, Guyana ratified the United Nations Convention against Corruption. Guyana is neither a member of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) nor a signatory to OECD Anti-Bribery Convention. Guyana is a member of the Organization of American States (OAS) and ratified the Inter-American Convention against Corruption on December 11, 2000.

The World Economic Forum, "Global Competitiveness Report 2013-2014," identified corruption as the largest obstacle, followed by tax rates, to doing business in Guyana. Corruption discourages potential foreign direct investments and foreign investors, and it also undermines economic development and growth.

#### 14. Bilateral Investment Agreements

Guyana does not have a Bilateral Investment Treaty with the United States. Negotiations began in 1993, but broke down in 1995 due to disagreements on formal investment rules. The two nations conducted no subsequent negotiations since 1995.

Double taxation treaties are in force with Canada (1987), the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland (1992), and CARICOM (1995). Other double taxation agreements remain under negotiation with India, Kuwait, and the Seychelles. The CARICOM-Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement provides for the negotiation of a double taxation agreement, but no significant developments occurred since March 2009.

**Table 2:** Guyana has bilateral investment treaties

Partner	Date of Signature	Entry into Force
United Kingdom	27 October 1989	11 April 1990
Germany	06 December 1989	08 March 1994
Cuba	22 October 1999	
China	27 March 2003	26 October 2004
Switzerland	13 December 2005	
South Korea	31 July 2006	

Indonesia	30 January 2008	
-----------	-----------------	--

**Source:** Organization of American States' Foreign Trade Information System and Ministry of Foreign Affairs

### **15. OPIC and Other Investment Insurance Programs**

The Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) renewed its support for U.S. investors in Guyana in 2000 following the settlement of a long-standing dispute between an OPIC client, Green Mining, Inc., and the Government of Guyana.

The Export Import Bank of the United States (EX-IM) offers insurance and financing to support American exports to Guyana. EX-IM will currently consider financing exports to both private and public sector entities in which the total term of the financing is either less than one year or between one and seven years.

### **16. Labor**

The World Bank estimates that in 2012 Guyana's labor force comprised 308,766 persons. The unemployment rate for 2012 is estimated at 21 percent, however the government does not track either unemployment or job creation rates.

Approximately 22 percent or 67,928 workers are unionized. Guyana currently has 18 trade unions. 13 of these unions fall under the umbrella of the Guyana Trade Union Congress. Four of these unions are members of the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Guyana. The Trade Union Recognition Act of 1997 requires businesses operating in Guyana to recognize and collectively bargain with the trade union selected by a majority of its workers. Guyana adheres to the International Labor Organization (ILO) Convention protecting worker rights.

Guyana provides education and skills development through primary, secondary, and technical schools, as well as at the University of Guyana and privately-owned institutions of higher learning. Individual companies mount various programs to develop human resources specific to their needs.

Emigration, particularly of skilled labor, poses a serious problem to employers in Guyana. Guyana's net emigration rate in 2012 was estimated at 12.78 percent – the seventh highest in the world. An International Monetary Fund study in 2005 found that 89 percent of university-educated Guyanese eventually leave the country due to better employment options abroad; this represents the highest percentage of "brain drain" of any country. Large private sector companies report a turnover of about 20 percent to 25 percent of their workforce annually and experience difficulty in recruiting and retaining qualified employees. Skilled workers generally migrate to the United States, Canada, the Caribbean, and Europe.

### **17. Foreign Trade Zones/Free Ports**

Guyana currently does not maintain any duty-free zones, although the Government of Guyana announced the possibility of establishing such zones in the Lethem area, on the border with Brazil.

### **18. Foreign Direct Investment and Foreign Portfolio Investment Statistics**

Total FDI in Guyana decreased by 27.1 percent, from US\$293.8 million in 2012 to US\$214.0 million in 2013. Following is a list of foreign direct investment by sector compiled by the Guyana Office for Investment for 2007-2013 (the latest for which statistics are available).

**Table 3: Foreign Direct Investment by Sector 2007-2010 (Value in US\$ Million)**

Sector	2007	2008	2009	2010	2012	2013
Agro, Forestry, Fishing	22.6	41.2	15.0	17.2	22.6	95.2
Energy	7.0	1.3	8.2	13.0	14.6	14.3
Mining and Quarrying	42.1	22.0	42.1	64.0	80.0	6.2
Manufacturing	5.0	14.9	7.8	15.5	85.2	63.3
Tourism and Hospitality	5.4	23.7	12.5	16.0	43.9	9.5
Transport and Telecommunication	51.2	53.3	64.0	54.0	33.2	11.2
Others	19.2	5.1	14.4	18.3	14.3	14.4
Total	152.5	161.5	164.0	198.0	293.7	214.0

Source: Bank of Guyana

**Table 4: Total Investment 1999-2012**

Years	Private (Local & FDI)	Public (Government)	Total Investment
<b>Value in US\$ Million</b>			
1999	157.0	81.0	238.0
2000	152.0	98.5	250.5
2001	166.0	91.0	257.0
2002	162.0	101.5	263.5

2003	155.5	97.0	<b>252.5</b>
2004	152.5	98.0	<b>250.5</b>
2005	157.0	109.5	<b>266.5</b>
2006	205.0	209.0	<b>414.0</b>
2007	222.5	211.5	<b>434.0</b>
2008	259.5	209.0	<b>468.5</b>
2009	285.5	265.0	<b>550.5</b>
2010	281.5	303.0	<b>584.5</b>
2011	313.9	299.8	<b>613.7</b>
2012	380.0	330.1	<b>710.1</b>

**Source:** Bank of Guyana Annual Reports

## Section 5 - Government

### Chiefs of State and Cabinet Members:

For the current list of Chief of State and Cabinet Members, please access the following - [Central Intelligence Agency online directory of Chiefs of State and Cabinet Members of Foreign Governments](#)

### Legal system:

common law system, based on the English model, with some Roman-Dutch civil law influence

### International organization participation:

ACP, AOSIS, C, Caricom, CD, CDB, CELAC, FAO, G-77, IADB, IBRD, ICAO, ICRM, IDA, IFAD, IFC, IFRC, ILO, IMF, IMO, Interpol, IOC, IOM, ISO (correspondent), ITU, LAES, MIGA, NAM, OAS, OIC, OPANAL, OPCW, PCA, Petrocaribe, UN, UNASUR, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNIDO, UPU, WCO, WFTU (NGOs), WHO, WIPO, WMO, WTO



## Section 6 - Tax

### Exchange control

For more information - <http://gina.gov.gy/wp/>

### Treaty and non-treaty withholding tax rates

Guyana has double taxation treaties with the United Kingdom, Canada and Caricom Countries. The withholding taxes applicable for each territory are as follows:

On dividends and interest 15%

On other payments 10%.

## Methodology and Sources

### Section 1 - General Background Report and Map

(Source: [CIA World Factbook](#))

### Section 2 - Anti – Money Laundering / Terrorist Financing

	Lower Risk	Medium Risk	Higher Risk
<a href="#">FATF List of Countries identified with strategic AML deficiencies</a>	Not Listed	AML Deficient but Committed	High Risk
<a href="#">Compliance with FATF 40 + 9 recommendations</a>	>69% Compliant or Fully Compliant	35 – 69% Compliant or Fully Compliant	<35% Compliant or Fully Compliant
<a href="#">US Dept of State Money Laundering assessment (INCSR)</a>	Monitored	Concern	Primary Concern
<a href="#">INCSR - Weakness in Government Legislation</a>	<2	2-4	5-20
<a href="#">US Sec of State supporter of / Safe Haven for International Terrorism</a>	No	Safe Haven for Terrorism	State Supporter of Terrorism
<a href="#">EU White list equivalent jurisdictions</a>	Yes		No
<a href="#">International Sanctions UN Sanctions / US Sanctions / EU Sanctions</a>	None	Arab League / Other	UN , EU or US
<a href="#">Corruption Index (Transparency International) Control of corruption (WGI) Global Advice Network</a>	>69%	35 – 69%	<35%
<a href="#">World government Indicators (Average)</a>	>69%	35 – 69%	<35%
<a href="#">Failed States Index (Average)</a>	>69%	35 – 69%	<35%
<a href="#">Offshore Finance Centre</a>	No		Yes

### **Section 3 - Economy**

General Information on the current economic climate in the country and information on imports, exports, main industries and trading partners.

(Source: [CIA World Factbook](#))

### **Section 4 - Foreign Investment**

Information on the openness of foreign investment into the country and the foreign investment markets.

(Source: [US State Department](#))

### **Section 5 - Government**

Names of Government Ministers and general information on political matters.

(Source: [CIA World Factbook](#) / <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/world-leaders-1/index.html>)

### **Section 6 - Tax**

Information on Tax Information Exchange Agreements entered into, Double Tax Agreements and Exchange Controls.

(Sources: [OECD Global Forum on Transparency and Exchange of Information for Tax Purposes](#) [PKF International](#))

## **DISCLAIMER**

Part of this report contains material sourced from third party websites. This material could include technical inaccuracies or typographical errors. The materials in this report are provided "as is" and without warranties of any kind either expressed or implied, to the fullest extent permissible pursuant to applicable law. Neither are any warranties or representations made regarding the use of or the result of the use of the material in the report in terms of their correctness, accuracy, reliability, or otherwise. Materials in this report do not constitute financial or other professional advice.

We disclaim any responsibility for the content available on any other site reached by links to or from the website.

## **RESTRICTION OF LIABILITY**

Although full endeavours are made to ensure that the material in this report is correct, no liability will be accepted for any damages or injury caused by, including but not limited to, inaccuracies or typographical errors within the material, Neither will liability be accepted for any damages or injury, including but not limited to, special or consequential damages that result from the use of, or the inability to use, the materials in this report. Total liability to you for all losses, damages, and causes of action (in contract, tort (including without limitation, negligence), or otherwise) will not be greater than the amount you paid for the report.

## **RESTRICTIONS ON USE**

All Country Reports accessed and/or downloaded and/or printed from the website may not be distributed, republished, uploaded, posted, or transmitted in any way outside of your organization, without our prior consent. Restrictions in force by the websites of source information will also apply.

We prohibit caching and the framing of any Content available on the website without prior written consent.

Any questions or queries should be addressed to: -

Gary Youinou

Via our [Contact Page](#) at KnowYourCountry.com