

The Aliens Landholding Act 1962

The Aliens Landholding Act 1962 specifies that only citizens of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago may purchase houses and freehold land in the country. The act is presently under review by the government, which has always tended to allow for some flexibility. However, foreign investors should acquaint themselves thoroughly with this legislation before undertaking investment.

Banking and Finance

The Central Bank of Trinidad and Tobago is responsible for monitoring and regulating the activities of commercial banks and other financial institutions. It is also the note-issuing authority. The Trinidad and Tobago dollar is pegged against the U.S. dollar. (US\$1 = TT\$4.25)

The Exchange Control Act of 1970 governs all transactions in foreign currencies. The Central Bank administers the act on behalf of the Ministry of Finance. All transactions between residents and non-residents that involve the payment of foreign currency require prior approval by the Central Bank.

Commercial Banks are governed by the Banking Act 1964, as well as the Central Bank. Eight commercial banks account for a total of 118 branches throughout both islands. Five of the eight have foreign affiliates. Canada has long been active in Trinidad and Tobago's banking industry. Canadian banks active on the islands include the Bank of Nova Scotia (Scotiabank), the Bank of Commerce and the Royal Bank of Trinidad and Tobago.

Other financial institutions include 10 finance houses, six trust companies, four thrift institutions, a stock exchange, 40 insurance companies, two private mortgage companies, two merchant banks, a unit trust, and a national insurance agency.

For the protection of depositors, membership in the Deposit Insurance Corporation Fund is mandatory for all banks and financial institutions.

The Trinidad and Tobago Stock Exchange, established in 1981 and regulated by the Securities Industries' Act, provides a marketplace for stockbrokers and shareholders to meet. The Exchange consists of eight firms which provide brokerage services.