
More Than 68,000 Foreigners Sign Up for Legalization in Dominican Republic

30/09/2014



The government launched on June 2 a National Plan to regularize the status of undocumented residents, most of them migrants from neighboring Haiti.

“The initiative has exceeded the expectations,” Gonzalez said about the level of enrollment.

The government has established 21 registration offices across the country and plans to open three more.

In the next few days, the minister said, the government will start issuing the first 200 identification cards under the plan, which was enacted in compliance with a Constitutional Court ruling last year setting parameters for acquiring Dominican nationality.

Gonzalez said the national registry is also important because authorities do not have reliable statistics about the number of undocumented foreigners living in the Dominican Republic.

In the past, the Dominican government cited unofficial estimates of around 1 million Haitians living in the country, most of them illegal immigrants working in agriculture and construction.

The Dominican Republic and Haiti share the Caribbean island of Hispaniola, with Haiti in the western portion.

Though both countries are poor, Haiti is destitute, and Haitians cross the border to do work that many Dominicans will not do, such as harvesting sugar cane.

Haitians have been the target of mob violence numerous times in recent years and the Dominican government has been widely criticized for its treatment of the migrants.
