

WAVERLEY GATEWAY GUIDE

Connecting International Capital with Emerging & Frontier Markets

MARTINIQUE

America Caribbean

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WHERE AND HOW TO ENTER

KEY INVESTMENT LOCATIONS

Location / Region	Strategic Importance	Priority Sectors
Fort-de-France (capital)	Seat of the Collectivité Territoriale de Martinique (CTM), the island's main port, and its commercial and financial center	Financial services, commercial real estate, port-related logistics
Le Lamentin (airport & industrial zone)	Home to Martinique Aimé Césaire International Airport and the bulk of the island's industrial, warehousing and distribution capacity	Logistics, light manufacturing, warehousing, aviation-support services
South-coast tourism corridor (Les Trois-Îlets, Sainte-Anne, Le Diamant)	Martinique's principal beach-tourism belt, the one clearly positive sector in 2026, with hotel overnight stays up 3.7% and cruise passengers up 3.1%	Hotel renovation/development, hospitality management, marina and nautical tourism
Northern banana- and sugarcane-growing belt	Core of Martinique's agro-export economy (banana, sugarcane, rum), now operating under a 2026 law in which the French State has formally acknowledged responsibility for decades of chlordecone pesticide contamination of soil and water across these same growing areas	Agro-processing, rum value-addition, remediation-linked agricultural investment
Coastal fishing communities (Grand-Rivière, Le Prêcheur, Le Robert)	Fishing grounds affected by chlordecone's persistence in coastal waters, with restrictions on certain catches remaining in place pending full remediation	Fisheries diversification, aquaculture, chlordecone-monitoring-linked services
Water and sanitation infrastructure (archipelago-wide)	A network facing many of the same drought- and leak-related pressures documented across the French Antilles in 2026, including shared regional water-stress events with Guadeloupe	Water-infrastructure rehabilitation, sanitation engineering, resilience-infrastructure PPPs
EU-funded regional-development and digital-infrastructure projects	Projects financed under the current (2021-2027) EU outermost-region (RUP) funding envelope, administered by the CTM, now facing a genuine post-2027 funding-dilution risk at the EU level	EU-co-financed infrastructure, digital-divide-reduction projects, renewable energy

INVESTOR ENTRY ROUTES

- Direct incorporation as a French company (SAS/SARL) operating under full EU single-market rules, with Martinique treated as an EU outermost region (RUP) under Article 349 TFEU
- LODEOM-type overseas tax-incentive schemes (corporate and income-tax reductions for qualifying productive investment), subject to the same national budget negotiation affecting all French overseas departments
- EU outermost-region structural funds (FEDER-RUP, FSE+, FEADER/POSEI) administered via the Collectivité Territoriale de Martinique, under President Serge Letchimy, though the post-2027 EU budget framework now under negotiation threatens to dilute these instruments
- Financing or co-financing via Agence Française de Développement (AFD), Bpifrance or the European Investment Bank for qualifying infrastructure and enterprise projects

- Joint ventures with established French Antillean conglomerates in tourism, retail, distribution and agro-industry (notably rum and banana value chains)
- Engagement with the chlordecone remediation and compensation framework established by the June 2026 law, as implementation measures (decontamination contracts, affected-sector support) are rolled out

MARKET-ENTRY OBSERVATION

Martinique shares Guadeloupe's distinctive position in this series: as a French overseas department and EU outermost region, it offers full Euro-zone currency stability, French commercial law and EU single-market access, placing currency and sovereign-default risk effectively off the table. The economic picture in 2026 is one of contained fragility rather than acute crisis - inflation is low (1.1% year-on-year in March, below mainland France's 1.7%), unemployment claims are falling, and tourism is the clear bright spot, with hotel stays and cruise arrivals both growing. Construction and agri-food exports are weaker, pressured in part by the EU's carbon border mechanism raising input costs.

The more structural story is threefold. First, Martinique faces the steepest projected population decline of any French region - from roughly 369,000 residents in 2018 toward an estimated 212,000 by 2070 - driven by a negative birth-death balance and persistent youth outmigration to mainland France, with direct implications for the long-term labor force and consumption base. Second, a landmark June 2026 law formally acknowledged the French State's responsibility for decades of chlordecone pesticide contamination of Martinique's (and Guadeloupe's) soil, water and coastal fisheries, but implementation - a compensation mechanism, a qualifying-disease list, and funded remediation - remains undefined. Third, the 2024 "vie chère" cost-of-living movement, which triggered serious unrest, a death, and the first CRS riot-police deployment to Martinique in over 65 years, has cooled substantially by late 2026 but has an explicit ultimatum pending: the RPPRAC collective has given authorities and retailers until October 19, 2026 to show concrete results on prices or says it will "resume the fight."

INVESTOR RISK & MARKET ACCESS

KEY ENTRY BARRIERS

Issue	Potential Impact	Possible Mitigation
Pending "vie chère" ultimatum (October 19, 2026)	The RPPRAC cost-of-living collective, which led serious 2024 unrest (one death, CRS riot-police deployment, road and port blockades), has set an October 19, 2026 deadline for visible price reductions, warning it will otherwise "resume the fight," even as its recent mobilization has notably weakened (roughly 30 attendees at a late-September 2026 protest versus hundreds to thousands in 2024)	Monitor the ultimatum's outcome directly before committing to retail-, logistics- or consumer-facing investment; maintain contingency plans for possible renewed blockades of ports and roads
Unimplemented chlordecone compensation framework	The June 2026 law acknowledges State responsibility for chlordecone contamination but leaves the compensation mechanism, qualifying-disease list and remediation funding undefined, creating prolonged legal and reputational uncertainty for the agricultural and fisheries sectors	Engage directly with sector associations and the interministerial strategy process as it develops; favor agricultural investment in areas and crops verified as unaffected by residual contamination
Steepest demographic decline of any French region	Martinique's population is projected to fall from about 369,000 in 2018 to roughly 212,000 by 2070, with the working-age population nearly halving, pressuring both labor supply and the long-term domestic consumer base	Favor export-oriented and tourism-sector investment over purely domestic-demand-driven ventures; plan workforce strategies around a shrinking resident labor pool
Weak construction sector and rising input costs	Construction-linked imports (tiles, metal elements, cement) all declined in early 2026, compounded by the EU's carbon border mechanism (MACF) raising the cost of imported building materials	Source materials with contingency for cost inflation; sequence construction-dependent projects around realistic cost assumptions
Post-2027 EU outermost-region (RUP) funding uncertainty	As with Guadeloupe, the European Commission's 2028-2034 budget proposal would dissolve dedicated RUP instruments, pooling French overseas regions into a much larger, thinner shared funding pool	Time multi-year, EU-co-financed projects to the current 2021-2027 envelope; monitor year-end negotiations before assuming funding continuity beyond 2027
Household and business financial strain	Household overindebtedness filings rose 12.3% quarter-on-quarter in early 2026 and business failures rose 8.8% year-on-year, even as financial-vulnerability indicators show some underlying improvement	Underwrite consumer-facing ventures conservatively; favor export-oriented or EU-funded projects over purely domestic-demand-driven ones

Issue	Potential Impact	Possible Mitigation
Weakening but unresolved agri-export performance	Rum exports fell 9.1% and banana exports fell 0.8% in early 2026, despite rising rum production at the start of the sugarcane season, reflecting continued pressure on Martinique's signature agro-export sector	Pair agro-export investment with value-addition and brand-differentiation strategies rather than relying on volume growth alone

INVESTOR RISK NOTE

Martinique's risk profile closely mirrors Guadeloupe's within this series: sovereign, currency and legal risk are effectively eliminated by French and EU membership, and the near-term economic data shows contained fragility rather than crisis, anchored by resilient tourism and low inflation. The genuine structural risks are slower-moving but serious: Martinique faces the steepest population decline projected for any French region, a landmark but still-unimplemented chlordecone compensation framework that leaves agricultural and fisheries liability unresolved, and a cost-of-living protest movement that, while currently quiet, has an explicit and imminent ultimatum (October 19, 2026) attached to it, with a documented history of serious unrest when such grievances go unaddressed. None of this threatens the currency or basic legal order; it does argue for monitoring the RPPRAC ultimatum specifically through October 2026, and for treating chlordecone-linked agricultural and fisheries exposure, and post-2027 EU funding assumptions, as open variables rather than settled facts.

MARKET ACCESS

As an EU outermost region, Martinique gives investors full access to the EU single market under the Euro, with goods, services and capital moving under the same rules as mainland France, subject to the specific adaptations permitted under Article 349 TFEU. It sits within the French legal and regulatory system, including EU state-aid-compliant overseas tax-incentive schemes, and functions as a logistical and commercial link between the EU and the wider Caribbean/CARICOM space, with which Martinique maintains observer-level and cooperative ties despite not being a full CARICOM member.

WHO SHOULD THE INVESTOR MEET?

INSTITUTIONAL LANDSCAPE

Actor	Why It Matters	Waverley Engagement Angle
Collectivité Territoriale de Martinique (CTM), under President Serge Letchimy	The unified territorial government administering EU structural-fund programming, regional economic-development strategy and engagement with Paris on Martinique's development priorities	Primary counterpart for EU co-financed projects, regional economic-development incentives and policy direction
Prefecture of Martinique (French State representation)	The State's representative, responsible for security, public order (including any renewed RPPRAC-related unrest) and implementation of national overseas policy	Primary counterpart for regulatory matters, public-order coordination and State-level authorizations
RPPRAC (Rally for the Protection of Afro-Caribbean Peoples and Resources)	The cost-of-living advocacy collective that led the 2024 unrest and has set an October 19, 2026 ultimatum for price reductions	Key actor to monitor directly for social-stability risk, though not a formal investment counterpart
IEDOM (Institut d'Émission des Départements d'Outre-Mer)	The overseas monetary-institute branch producing authoritative economic statistics and analysis for Martinique, akin to a regional central-bank research function	Primary source for economic due diligence and sector-level data
Office parlementaire d'évaluation des choix scientifiques et technologiques (OPECST)	Tasked under the June 2026 chlordecone law with assessing implementation progress, including a first report due within one year of the law's promulgation	Key reference point for tracking chlordecone compensation and remediation implementation
Agence Française de Développement (AFD) / Bpifrance	French public development-finance institutions active in co-financing infrastructure, enterprise and resilience projects across the French Antilles	Potential co-financing partner for qualifying infrastructure and enterprise investment
European Commission (DG REGIO) / French Senate overseas-affairs committees	Shaping the post-2027 EU budget framework that will determine the future scale and structure of outermost-region funding shared with Guadeloupe and other French RUPs	Relevant for monitoring the medium-term EU-incentive landscape before committing to multi-year, EU-co-financed structures

CURRENT INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS CHANNELS

Formal engagement in Martinique runs through French-standard institutional channels: the Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie de Martinique for business registration and networking, the CTM for EU-fund-eligible projects, and the Prefecture for regulatory and security matters. Because Martinique operates under full French administrative and legal norms, standard EU/French corporate, tax and labor-law advisory channels apply directly, simplifying compliance relative to independent Caribbean jurisdictions but requiring fluency in French-language bureaucratic process and sensitivity to the island's cost-of-living political climate.

INVESTOR PROFILE BEST SUITED

Martinique suits investors who prioritize legal, currency and institutional certainty over headline growth: tourism and hospitality developers targeting the resilient cruise/stopover market, agro-processing and rum-sector investors able to navigate the chlordecone liability overhang through verified-clean sourcing, infrastructure investors in water, sanitation and digital-divide-reduction projects, and patient-capital investors comfortable waiting out the October 2026 cost-of-living ultimatum and the 2026-2027 EU-budget uncertainty before committing to incentive-dependent structures. It is less suited to investors seeking rapid, low-regulation entry, consumer-facing ventures dependent on a growing domestic market, or anyone unwilling to monitor acute social-stability risk through October 2026.

FROM INTELLIGENCE TO ENGAGEMENT

STEP 1: Monitor the October 19, 2026 RPPRAC ultimatum directly

Track the outcome of the cost-of-living ultimatum before finalizing any retail-, logistics- or consumer-facing investment with exposure to potential blockades or unrest.

STEP 2: Verify agricultural and fisheries sourcing against chlordecone zones

For any agro-processing or fisheries investment, confirm sourcing from areas and products verified as unaffected by residual chlordecone contamination.

STEP 3: Engage the CTM and relevant State services early

For any EU-co-financed or infrastructure-adjacent project, open dialogue with the Collectivité Territoriale de Martinique and Prefecture before finalizing project design.

STEP 4: Plan workforce strategy around demographic decline

Build long-term labor-supply assumptions around Martinique's projected working-age population decline rather than historical norms.

STEP 5: Build realistic timelines around EU-funding uncertainty

Treat the post-2027 EU budget negotiation as an open variable; avoid underwriting multi-year EU-co-financed projects on current-envelope assumptions alone.

WAVERLEY'S ROLE

- Independent monitoring of the RPPRAC cost-of-living ultimatum and broader social-stability conditions through October 2026 and beyond
- Due diligence on chlordecone-related agricultural and fisheries liability, and tracking of compensation-framework implementation
- Direct engagement and introductions across the CTM, Prefecture and relevant EU-funding bodies for incentive- and infrastructure-linked projects
- Ongoing assessment of demographic trends and their labor-market and consumption implications for long-horizon investors

INVESTOR CALL TO ACTION

Martinique pairs EU/French institutional certainty with a live, imminent social-stability test and a long-term demographic challenge - Waverley can help investors time entry around both.

Currency/legal certainty (EU/France) → October 2026 cost-of-living ultimatum and chlordecone-liability monitoring → patient, resilience- and demographic-aware investment structuring

WAVERLEY INVESTOR INTELLIGENCE & OPPORTUNITY PIPELINE

Near-term opportunities concentrate in tourism-corridor hospitality assets (the clearest-performing sector in 2026), water and sanitation infrastructure rehabilitation, and agro-processing value-addition in verified chlordecone-free zones. Pipeline visibility on EU-co-financed and chlordecone-remediation-linked projects will sharpen once the post-2027 EU budget negotiations conclude and the chlordecone law's implementing decrees are issued, while broader consumer-facing investment should await the resolution of the October 19, 2026 cost-of-living ultimatum.

POSITIONING

Martinique, like Guadeloupe, is French and EU territory in every institutional sense, which removes currency, sovereign and legal risk from the equation entirely. What remains is a genuinely distinctive structural story: a tourism sector performing well, set against the

steepest demographic decline projected for any French region, an unresolved decades-long pesticide-contamination liability only now being formally acknowledged, and a cost-of-living movement whose current calm carries an explicit expiration date.

Waverley's view is that this rewards patient, carefully monitored capital over opportunistic entry: the October 19, 2026 ultimatum and the chlordécone implementation process are the two nearest-term signals to watch, while the demographic trend argues for favoring export-oriented and tourism investment over bets on domestic consumer growth.

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