

Dominica

The Government of Dominica has several programs in place to encourage children to remain enrolled in school instead of leaving to enter the work force. There is no available information on the extent and nature of the worst forms of child labor in Dominica and there were no reports of child labor in Dominica during the reporting period. However, gaps exist in the legal framework to protect children against the worst forms of child labor since the minimum ages for work and hazardous work fall below international standards.

Statistics on Working Children and School Attendance

Children	Percent
Working	Unavailable
Attending School	Unavailable
Combining Work and School	Unavailable








Prevalence and Sectoral Distribution of the Worst Forms of Child Labor

There is no available information on the extent and nature of worst forms of child labor in Dominica.¹⁴⁶⁰ In addition, there were no reports of worst forms of child labor in Dominica during the reporting period.¹⁴⁶¹

Laws and Regulations on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

According to the Employment of Children (Prohibition) Act, the minimum age for employment is 12,¹⁴⁶² but according to the Employment of Women, Young Persons and Children Act, it is age 14.¹⁴⁶³ The CEACR has urged the Government to raise the statutory minimum age to 15, in accordance with the provisions of ILO Convention 138,¹⁴⁶⁴ however the Government has not done this. In addition, the minimum age for hazardous work is 14, which does not comply with international standards.¹⁴⁶⁵ Dominica has no military force, and the minimum age for voluntary recruitment to the police force is 18.¹⁴⁶⁶

	C138, Minimum Age	✓
	C182, Worst Forms of Child Labor	✓
	CRC	✓
	CRC Optional Protocol on Armed Conflict	✓
	CRC Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution, and Child Pornography	✓
	Palermo Protocol on Trafficking in Persons	No
	Minimum Age for Work	12/14
	Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	14
	Compulsory Education Age	16
	Free Public Education	Yes

Institutional Mechanisms for Coordination and Enforcement

The Ministry of Labor is the main agency tasked with the responsibility of enforcing laws related to child labor, while the Welfare Department of the Ministry of Community and Social Development is responsible for cases related to child abuse.¹⁴⁶⁷ Given that there is no documented evidence of the existence of the worst forms of child labor in Dominica, no agency or task force has been identified as charged with monitoring national child labor trends and issues.

The Government of Dominica employs six labor inspectors who cover all labor violations, including child labor. No child labor investigations were conducted as there were no reported cases of child labor violations.¹⁴⁶⁸

Government Policies on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

The Government's Growth and Social Protection Strategy (2006-2011) has a goal of overall poverty reduction.¹⁴⁶⁹ There is no evidence of the impact that this strategy may have on the worst forms of child labor.

Social Programs to Eliminate or Prevent the Worst Forms of Child Labor

The Government operates programs to ensure that quality education is a viable alternative to work for all children. The Government also sponsors an Education Trust Fund to provide financial assistance to students in secondary school who would not otherwise be able to complete their education.¹⁴⁷⁰ The School Text Book Provision Scheme subsidizes the cost of textbooks for primary and secondary school students, and a school feeding program provides lunch to primary school students in targeted areas.¹⁴⁷¹

Based on the reporting above, the following actions would advance the prevention of worst forms of child labor in Dominica:

IN THE AREA OF LAWS AND REGULATIONS:

- Raise the statutory minimum age for employment to 15.
- Raise the minimum age for hazardous work to 18.

IN THE AREA OF POLICIES:

- Collect, analyze, and disseminate data on the prevalence and sectoral distribution of the worst forms of child labor in Dominica.

¹⁴⁶⁰ Data provided in the chart at the beginning of this country report are not available from the data sources that are used by USDOL. Reliable data on the worst forms of child labor are especially difficult to collect given the often hidden or illegal nature of the worst forms. For more information on sources used for these statistics, the definition of working children, and other indicators used in this report, please see the “Children’s Work and Education Statistics: Sources and Definitions” section.

¹⁴⁶¹ U.S. Embassy- Bridgetown, *reporting*, February 5, 2010, para 1.

¹⁴⁶² Government of Dominica, *Employment of Children (Prohibition) Act*, (December 29, 1939), article 2; available from <http://www.dominica.gov.dm/laws/chapters/chap90-05.pdf>.

¹⁴⁶³ Government of Dominica, *Employment of Women, Young Persons and Children Act*, (February 1, 1939); available from <http://www.dominica.gov.dm/laws/chapters/chap90-06.pdf>.

¹⁴⁶⁴ ILO Committee of Experts, *Individual Observation concerning Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) Dominica (ratification: 1983)*, [online] 2010 [cited July 7, 2010]; available from <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/cgi-lex/pdconv.pl?host=status01&textbase=iloeng&document=11754&chapter=6&query=%28Dominica%29+%40ref+%2B+%23YEAR%3E2004&highlight=&querytype=bool&contxt=0>.

¹⁴⁶⁵ U.S. Department of State, “Dominica,” in *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2009*, Washington, DC, March 11, 2010, section 7d; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2009/wha/136109.htm>. See also ILO Committee of Experts, *Individual Observation C138: Dominica (2010)*.

¹⁴⁶⁶ Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, “Caribbean,” in *Child Soldiers Global Report 2008*, London, 2008; available from http://www.childsoldiersglobalreport.org/files/country_pdfs/FINAL_2008_Global_Report.pdf.

¹⁴⁶⁷ U.S. Embassy- Bridgetown, *reporting*, February 5, 2010, sections 2C-I: para 1 and 2C-II: para 1.

¹⁴⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, section 2C-1: para 5.

¹⁴⁶⁹ IMF, *Dominica: Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper*, August 2006, 1; available from <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/scr/2006/cr06289.pdf>.

¹⁴⁷⁰ Government of Dominica, *Education Trust Fund Act*, (May 7, 1981), 5; available from <http://www.dominica.gov.dm/laws/chapters/chap28-02.pdf>.

¹⁴⁷¹ Government of Dominica, *National Report and Executive Summary on the Nuevo León Mandates and Relevant Mandates from the Quebec City Plan of Action*, December 30, 2004; available from <http://www.dominica.gov.dm/cms/?q=node/7>. See also Government of Dominica, “Government continues to invest heavily in Human Resource Development”, July 28, 2010 [cited August 16, 2010]; available from <http://www.dominica.gov.dm/cms/index.php?q=node/1240>.