

# Dominica

## MINIMAL ADVANCEMENT

*In 2013, Dominica made a minimal advancement in efforts to prevent the worst forms of child labor. The Government ratified the Palermo Protocol, passed the Transnational Organized Crime (Prevention and Control) Act, and continued to implement programs to reduce poverty and ensure that education is a viable alternative to work for all children. Although no information suggests that the worst forms of child labor are a problem, critical gaps exist in the legal framework to prevent children from involvement in the worst forms of child labor. National legislation still does not prohibit child pornography, the minimum age for hazardous work falls below international standards, and the country lacks a comprehensive list of hazardous work prohibited to children, which leaves children vulnerable to the worst forms of child labor.*



### I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Research found no evidence that child labor exists in Dominica.(1) Table 1 provides key indicators on children’s work and education in Dominica. Data on some of these indicators are not available from the sources used in this report.

**Table 1. Statistics on Children’s Work and Education**

Children	Age	Percent
Working (% and population)	5-14 yrs.	Unavailable
Attending School (%)	5-14 yrs.	Unavailable
Combining Work and School (%)	7-14 yrs.	Unavailable
Primary Completion Rate (%)		104.0




Source for primary completion rate: Data from 2012 published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2014.(2)

Source for all other data: Understanding Children’s Work Project’s analysis, 2014.(3)

### II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

Dominica has ratified all key international conventions concerning child labor (Table 2).

**Table 2. Ratification of International Conventions on Child Labor**

Convention	Ratification
 ILO C. 138, Minimum Age	✓
ILO C. 182, Worst Forms of Child Labor	✓
 UN CRC	✓
UN CRC Optional Protocol on Armed Conflict	✓
UN CRC Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography	✓
 Palermo Protocol on Trafficking in Persons	✓

The Government has established relevant laws and regulations related to child labor (Table 3).

**Table 3. Laws and Regulations Related to Child Labor**

Standard	Yes/No	Age	Related Legislation
Minimum Age for Work	Yes	12/14/16	Employment of Children (Prohibition) Act, Employment of Women, Young Persons and Children Act, Education Act (4-6)
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	Yes	14	Employment of Women, Young Persons, and Children Act (5, 7-9)
List of Hazardous Occupations Prohibited for Children	No		
Prohibition of Forced Labor	Yes		Article 4 of the Constitution (11)
Prohibition of Child Trafficking	Yes		Transnational Organized Crime (Prevention and Control) Act (12, 13)
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	Yes		Children and Young Persons Act, Sexual Offenses Act (1, 14-17)
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities	No		
Minimum Age for Compulsory Military Recruitment	N/A*		
Minimum Age for Voluntary Military Service	N/A*		
Compulsory Education Age	Yes	16	Education Act (1, 6, 17)
Free Public Education	Yes		Education Act (1, 6, 17)

\* No conscription or no standing military.

The Government of Dominica ratified the Palermo Protocol and passed the Transnational Organized Crime (Prevention and Control) Act during the reporting period, but has yet to enact laws or regulations explicitly prohibiting child pornography.(12, 17, 19, 20)

The Employment of Women, Young Persons, and Children Act prohibits children under age 14 from working in certain industries, including mining, construction, and transportation, and it bars children under the age of 16 from working in those industries at night. However, Dominica does not have a list of work considered hazardous for children.(5, 9, 20)

The Government specified that it would raise the statutory minimum age to 15 when it ratified ILO C. 138, but has not done so.(8) The three different minimum ages for work in the two relevant statutes may create confusion over which protections apply to working children and may make the law difficult to enforce. In addition, the minimum age for hazardous work of 14 does not comply with international standards and leaves children age 14 and above vulnerable to the worst forms of child labor.(7-10)

Dominica has no national army.(18)

### III. ENFORCEMENT OF LAWS ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

The Government has established institutional mechanisms for the enforcement of laws and regulations on child labor, including its worst forms (Table 4).

**Table 4. Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement**

Organization/Agency	Role
Ministry of National Security, Labor, and Immigration (MNSLI)	Conduct inspections and enforce laws related to child labor. Inspectors report children found in exploitative labor situations to police and social services. In 2013, the MNSLI employed four labor inspectors. (1)
Welfare Division, Ministry of Social Services, Community Development, and Gender Affairs	Address the welfare aspects of child labor cases. (1)

**Table 4. Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement (cont)**

Organization/Agency	Role
Ministry of Health (MOH)	Enforce labor laws by reporting children found in exploitative labor situations to police and social services. In 2013, the MOH employed 19 health inspectors. (1)
Police Force	Enforce criminal laws, including those related to child labor. (1)

As there is no evidence of a problem, there appears to be no need for labor law enforcement actions to address child labor, including its worst forms.

As there is no evidence of a problem, there appears to be no need for criminal law enforcement actions to address child labor, including its worst forms.

#### IV. COORDINATION OF GOVERNMENT EFFORTS ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

As there is no evidence of a problem, there appears to be no need for coordinating mechanisms to address child labor, including its worst forms.

#### V. GOVERNMENT POLICIES ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

As there is no evidence of a problem, there appears to be no need for policies to address child labor. However, the Government has a policy that may have an impact on child labor, including its worst forms (Table 5).

**Table 5. Policies Related to Child Labor**

Policy	Description
Third Mid-Term Growth and Social Protection Strategy (2012–2014)	Includes goal of overall poverty reduction. (1, 7, 17)

#### VI. SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

In 2013, the Government of Dominica funded programs that include the goal of preventing child labor, including its worst forms (Table 6).

**Table 6. Social Programs to Address Child Labor**

Program	Description
Basic Needs Trust Fund	Caribbean Development Bank-implemented program to reduce poverty through livelihood services, improved infrastructure, capacity-building projects, and technical services.(1, 21)
Dominica Social Investment Fund	ALBA-funded program that includes the goal of poverty reduction.(1, 20)
Education Trust Fund‡	Government program that provides financial assistance to students in secondary school who would otherwise not be able to complete their education.(17, 22)
School Textbook Provision Scheme‡	Government program that subsidizes the cost of textbooks for primary and secondary school students.(17, 23, 24)
School Feeding Program‡	Government program that provides lunch to primary school students in targeted areas.(17, 23)
Shelter for Abused and Neglected Children‡	Government shelter that may accept children who are victims of the worst forms of child labor.(1)

‡ Program is funded by the Government of Dominica

#### VII. SUGGESTED GOVERNMENT ACTIONS TO ELIMINATE THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

Based on the reporting above, suggested actions are identified that would advance the continued prevention of child labor, including its worst forms, in Dominica (Table 7).

**Table 7. Suggested Government Actions to Prevent Child Labor, Including its Worst Forms**

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Laws	Harmonize all laws governing the minimum age to work to set the statutory minimum age for employment to at least 15.	2009 – 2013
	Raise the minimum age for hazardous work to comply with international standards.	2009 – 2013
	Adopt a list of hazardous work prohibited to children.	2011 – 2013
	Enact legislation to expressly prohibit child prostitution, as well as the use, procuring, or offering of a child for the production of pornography or for pornographic performances.	2011 – 2013

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