

Barbados

In 2011, Barbados made a minimal advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The Government passed the Transnational Organized Crime (Prevention and Control) Act, which prohibits the trafficking of children and enforces the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons. However, remaining gaps in the legislative framework leave some children without adequate protection against all forms of exploitative work. For example, Barbados lacks a list of hazardous occupations for children. Although Barbados does not appear to have a widespread child labor problem, some children are victims of commercial sexual exploitation and drug trafficking.

Statistics on Working Children and Education

Children	Age	Percent
Working	5-14 yrs.	Unavailable
Attending School	5-14 yrs.	Unavailable
Combining Work and School	7-14 yrs.	Unavailable
Primary Completion Rate		101.2

Sources:

Primary completion rate: Data from 2010, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2012.(1)

All other data: Understanding Children's Work Project's analysis.(2)

Prevalence and Sectoral Distribution of the Worst Forms of Child Labor

Although Barbados does not appear to have a widespread child labor problem, some children may be engaged in the worst forms of child labor, namely drug trafficking and as victims of commercial sexual exploitation.(3-5)

Laws and Regulations on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

The Employment (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act sets the minimum age for employment at age 16 for certain sectors including mines, quarries, manufacturing, construction and demolition work. Other sectors, particularly agriculture, are not covered.(6)

The Employment (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act also prohibits children under age 18 from engaging in any work likely to harm their safety, health or morals. The Act does not specify the types of work this prohibition refers to and research found no indications of such a list elsewhere in the country's laws or regulations. While some reports suggest that the Ministry of



Labor (MOL) adopted a hazardous work list, research found no evidence of such a list being officially promulgated.(5-7)

	C138, Minimum Age	✓
	C182, Worst Forms of Child Labor	✓
	CRC	✓
	CRC Optional Protocol on Armed Conflict	No
	CRC Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography	No
	Palermo Protocol on Trafficking in Persons	No
	Minimum Age for Work	16
	Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	18
	Compulsory Education Age	16
	Free Public Education	Yes

The Constitution prohibits forced and compulsory labor.(8) The Transnational Organized Crime (Prevention and Control) Act, passed in February 2011, makes enforceable provisions under international protocols such as the 2000 UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons and explicitly prohibits trafficking of children.(9, 10) The Offenses Against the Person Act penalizes slavery, including importing and exporting a person as a slave.(11) The Sexual Offences Act

makes it a crime to take a person away or detain a person for sexual relations.(12) The Protection of Children Act makes it a crime to take or allow others to take indecent photographs of a child under age 18.(13) These laws do not prohibit all forms of child prostitution and the distribution of child pornography, however.

There is no conscription and the Barbados Defence Act sets the minimum age for voluntary recruitment at age 18; however, a person under age 18 can enlist with parental consent.(5, 14) The Drug Abuse (Prevention and Control) Act prohibits the use of children for drug trafficking.(15)

Education is free and compulsory to age 16.(5, 16, 17)

Institutional Mechanisms for Coordination and Enforcement

The MOL established a Child Labor Committee in 2004 that is responsible for coordinating efforts to abolish child labor in the country. Committee members include government agencies, nongovernmental organizations and civil society organizations.(5, 18) However, it has not been active for several years.(5)

Child labor subcommittees exist to support interagency cooperation so they can harmonize legislation, develop a child-labor survey instrument and implement educational and mass media program on child labor.(4)

The MOL is responsible for enforcing child labor laws.(5, 7) It has 19 inspectors to investigate possible labor violations. Labor inspectors did not receive training on child labor in 2011.(5) During the reporting period, no child labor inspections were conducted and no cases of child labor violations were reported.(5)

The Royal Barbados Police Force (RBPF) has taken the lead in investigating trafficking complaints.(19) There were no known cases and thus no investigations or prosecutions during the reporting period.(20) The RBPF is also responsible for enforcing cases involving commercial sexual exploitation.(19)

Government Policies on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

While the worst forms of child labor do not appear to be a widespread problem in Barbados, the Government does not have a policy framework to combat commercial sexual exploitation or the use of children in drug trafficking.(5)

The Government has recognized the need to conduct research and analysis to obtain more detailed information on the worst forms of child labor.(5, 7, 21, 22) Moreover, the Government has acknowledged specifically that commercial sexual exploitation is a concern, although the full extent of the problem is unknown.(4, 21) However, the Government does not appear to have undertaken such research.

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

The Ministry of Social Care, Constituency Empowerment and Community Development planned to begin implementing the Identification, Stabilization, Enablement, and Empowerment (ISEE) Bridge Program, designed to reduce poverty by addressing seven aspects of family life, including employment and education in 2011; however, as of the end of the reporting period, the Program was set to begin in June 2012.(23-26) The Government continues to implement a school meal program for low-income children, to encourage school attendance.(5) The question of whether this program has an impact on child labor does not appear to have been addressed.

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

Area	Suggested Actions	Year(s) Action Recommended
Laws and Regulations	Amend the Employment Act to establish a minimum employment age of 16 for all sectors of economic activity, including agriculture.	2009, 2010, 2011
	Officially incorporate into the legal framework and make publicly available the Ministry of Labor's list of occupations and activities considered hazardous and likely to jeopardize the health, safety or morals of young persons.	2011
	Amend legislation to prohibit all forms of child prostitution and the distribution of child pornography.	2011

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Area	Suggested Actions	Year(s) Action Recommended
Coordination and Enforcement	Reactivate the Child Labor Committee to coordinate government efforts to combat the worst forms of child labor.	2011
	Ensure that child labor inspections are carried out to prevent the worst forms of child labor, especially the commercial sexual exploitation of children and the use of children in drug trafficking.	2010, 2011
Policies	Conduct a comprehensive study to update and assess the nature and extent of the worst forms of child labor, especially the commercial sexual exploitation of children and the use of children in drug trafficking.	2009, 2010, 2011
	Use the results of the study to develop a national plan of action to address the worst forms of child labor, especially the commercial sexual exploitation of children and the use of children in drug trafficking.	2009, 2010, 2011
Social Programs	Begin implementing the ISEE Bridge Program.	2011
	Assess the impact that the existing school meals programs may have on addressing the worst forms of child labor, especially the commercial sexual exploitation of children.	2010, 2011

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