

Trinidad and Tobago

<i>Selected Statistics and Indicators on Child Labor</i>	
Percent of children 5-14 estimated as working in 2000:	3.5% ⁴¹⁷⁵
Minimum age for admission to work:	16 ⁴¹⁷⁶
Age to which education is compulsory:	12 ⁴¹⁷⁷
Free public education:	Yes ⁴¹⁷⁸
Gross primary enrollment rate in 2004:	102% ⁴¹⁷⁹
Net primary enrollment rate in 2004:	92% ⁴¹⁸⁰
Percent of children 5-14 attending school in 2000:	97% ⁴¹⁸¹
As of 2003, percent of primary school entrants likely to reach grade 5:	100% ⁴¹⁸²
Ratified Convention 138:	9/3/2004 ⁴¹⁸³
Ratified Convention 182:	4/23/2003 ⁴¹⁸⁴
ILO-IPEC participating country:	Yes, associated ⁴¹⁸⁵

Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

Children in Trinidad and Tobago are reported to work in agriculture, scavenging, loading and stocking goods, gardening, car repair, car washing, construction, fishing, and begging.⁴¹⁸⁶ Children also work as handymen, shop assistants, cosmetologist assistants, domestic servants, and street vendors.⁴¹⁸⁷ These activities are usually reported as being part of family business.⁴¹⁸⁸ Children are also reported to be victims of commercial sexual exploitation.⁴¹⁸⁹

⁴¹⁷⁵ UCW analysis of ILO SIMPOC, UNICEF MICS, and World Bank surveys, *Child Economic Activity and School Attendance Rates*, October 7, 2005.

⁴¹⁷⁶ U.S. Embassy- Port of Spain official, E-mail communication to USDOL official, March 27, 2007. See also Government of Trinidad and Tobago, *Miscellaneous Provisions Act*, No.11 of 2006, Fifth session, Eighth Parliament (2006).

⁴¹⁷⁷ U.S. Department of State, "Trinidad and Tobago," in *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2006*, Washington, DC, March 6, 2007, Section 5; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2005/61743.htm>.

⁴¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁴¹⁷⁹ UNESCO Institute for Statistics, *Gross Enrolment Ratio. Primary. Total*, accessed December 20, 2006; available from <http://stats.uis.unesco.org/>.

⁴¹⁸⁰ UNESCO Institute for Statistics, *Net Enrolment Rate. Primary. Total*, accessed December 20, 2006; available from <http://stats.uis.unesco.org/>.

⁴¹⁸¹ UCW analysis of ILO SIMPOC, UNICEF MICS, and World Bank surveys, *Child Economic Activity and School Attendance Rates*.

⁴¹⁸² UNESCO Institute for Statistics, *Survival Rate to Grade 5. Total*, accessed December 18, 2006; available from <http://stats.uis.unesco.org/>.

⁴¹⁸³ ILO, *Ratifications by Country*, accessed October 18, 2006; available from <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/newratframeE.htm>.

⁴¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁴¹⁸⁵ ILO, *Alphabetical List of ILO Member Countries*, [online] October 5, 2006 [cited October 18, 2006]; available from <http://www.oit.org/public/english/standards/reim/country.htm>.

⁴¹⁸⁶ U.S. Embassy- Port of Spain, *reporting*, August 24, 2004.

⁴¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁴¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁴¹⁸⁹ Government of Trinidad and Tobago, *National Plan of Action on Children*, Port of Spain, 2006.

Child Labor Laws and Enforcement

The law sets the minimum age for employment in public or private industries at 16. However, children 14 to 16 may work in activities in which only family members are employed or that have been approved as vocational or technical training by the Minister of Education.⁴¹⁹⁰ Children under 18 are prohibited from working between 10 p.m. and 5 a.m. except in a family enterprise or within other limited exceptions.⁴¹⁹¹ One such exception enables children 16 to 18 to work at night in sugar factories.⁴¹⁹² Violation of these regulations is subject to fines.⁴¹⁹³

The law prohibits the procurement of minors under 16 for prostitution or sexual offenses with penalties of imprisonment up to 15 years.⁴¹⁹⁴ Procurement is considered an offense whether committed in Trinidad and Tobago or elsewhere.⁴¹⁹⁵ The operation of a brothel is punishable by imprisonment for 5 years,⁴¹⁹⁶ and exploiting minors under 16 for commercial sexual purposes in a brothel is subject to imprisonment for 10 years.⁴¹⁹⁷ Any person responsible for a girl younger than 16 who causes or encourages commercial sexual exploitation of the minor is subject to imprisonment for 2 years.⁴¹⁹⁸ There is no compulsory military service in Trinidad & Tobago, and the minimum age for voluntary military service is 16.⁴¹⁹⁹

The Ministry of Labor and Small and Micro-Enterprise Development and the Ministry of Social Development are currently responsible for enforcing child labor provisions.⁴²⁰⁰ Labor inspectors have the authority to enter, inspect, and examine at all reasonable hours any premises when there is reasonable cause to believe that violations are taking place.⁴²⁰¹ Laws concerning the worst forms of child labor, traditionally considered to be crimes, are enforced by the Police Service.⁴²⁰² According to the U.S. Department of State, enforcement of child labor laws is weak because there is no comprehensive government policy on child labor and there are no established

⁴¹⁹⁰ U.S. Embassy- Port of Spain official, E-mail communication to USDOL official, March 27, 2007. See also Right to Education, *Constitutional Guarantees: Trinidad and Tobago*, [online] [cited July 5, 2006]; available from http://www.right-to-education.org/content/age/trin_and_tob.html. See also Clive Pegus, *A Review of Child Labour Laws of Trinidad and Tobago- A Guide to Legislative Reform*, ILO Subregional Office for the Caribbean, June 2005, 26.

⁴¹⁹¹ Right to Education, *Constitutional Guarantees: Trinidad and Tobago*. See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Trinidad and Tobago," Section 6d.

⁴¹⁹² U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Trinidad and Tobago," Section 6d.

⁴¹⁹³ Clive Pegus, *A Review of Child Labour Laws of Trinidad and Tobago - a Guide to Legislative Reform*, ILO Subregional Office for the Caribbean, June 2005, 35.

⁴¹⁹⁴ Interpol, *Legislation on Sexual Offences Against Children*, [online] [cited October 22, 2006]; available from <http://www.interpol.int/Public/Children/SexualAbuse/NationalLaws/csaTrinidadTobago.pdf>.

⁴¹⁹⁵ The Protection Project, "Trinidad and Tobago," in *2005 Human Rights Report on Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children*, 2005; available from <http://www.protectionproject.org/trinidad.doc>.

⁴¹⁹⁶ Interpol, *Legislation on Sexual Offences Against Children*.

⁴¹⁹⁷ The Protection Project, "Trinidad and Tobago."

⁴¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁴¹⁹⁹ Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, "Trinidad and Tobago," in *Child Soldiers Global Report 2004*, London, 2004; available from http://www.child-soldiers.org/document_get.php?id=838. See also, Clive Pegus, *A Review of Child Labour Laws of Trinidad and Tobago*, 32.

⁴²⁰⁰ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Trinidad and Tobago," Section 6d.

⁴²⁰¹ Clive Pegus, *A Review of Child Labour Laws of Trinidad and Tobago*, 37.

⁴²⁰² Ibid., 40.

mechanisms for receiving, investigating, and addressing child labor complaints.⁴²⁰³ In general, the government's capacity to carry out its commitment to protect the rights and welfare of children is limited by lack of funds and expanding social needs.⁴²⁰⁴

Current Government Policies and Programs to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labor

In August 2006, the Ministry of Social Development published the Revised National Plan of Action for Children, which includes specific goals for combating commercial sexual exploitation of children and exploitive child labor.⁴²⁰⁵ The National Steering Committee for the Prevention and Elimination of Child Labor, with the advice and support of the ILO, is participating in a project to withdraw and rehabilitate child laborers at two landfill sites in Trinidad and Tobago.⁴²⁰⁶

⁴²⁰³ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Trinidad and Tobago," Section 6d.

⁴²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, Section 5.

⁴²⁰⁵ Government of Trinidad and Tobago, *National Plan of Action on Children*.

⁴²⁰⁶ U.S. Embassy- Port of Spain, *reporting*, August 26, 2005.