

Jamaica

Selected Statistics and Indicators on Child Labor

Percent of children 5-14 estimated as working in 2002:	0.9% ²²²⁷
Minimum age for admission to work:	15 ²²²⁸
Age to which education is compulsory:	11 ²²²⁹
Free public education:	Yes ^{2230*}
Gross primary enrollment rate in 2004:	95% ²²³¹
Net primary enrollment rate in 2004:	91% ²²³²
Percent of children 5-14 attending school in 2002:	98.9% ²²³³
As of 2002, percent of primary school entrants likely to reach grade 5:	89% ²²³⁴
Ratified Convention 138:	10/13/2003 ²²³⁵
Ratified Convention 182:	10/13/2003 ²²³⁶
ILO-IPEC Member:	Yes ²²³⁷
*Must pay for school supplies and related items.	

Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

In 2002, approximately 1.2 percent of boys and 0.6 percent of girls ages 5 to 14 years were working in Jamaica.²²³⁸ The majority of working children were found in the services sector (52.4 percent), followed by agriculture (30.6 percent), manufacturing (7.6 percent), and other sectors (9.4 percent).²²³⁹ According to a joint ILO-IPEC Government of Jamaica survey, children work on plantations, farms, gardens, and construction sites, as well as in commercial fishing, shops, and markets.²²⁴⁰ Teenage girls as young as 14 are reported to engage in

²²²⁷ UNICEF MICS UCW analysis of ILO SIMPOC, and World Bank surveys, *Child Economic Activity and School Attendance Rates*, March 1, 2007, Article 10.

²²²⁸ Government of Jamaica, *Child Care and Protection Act of 2004*, (2004); available from http://www.cda.gov.jm/downloads/Child_Care_and_Protection_Act_2004.pdf.

²²²⁹ U.S. Embassy- Kingston, *reporting, January 9, 2007*. See also U.S. Department of State, "Jamaica," in *Country Report on Human Rights Practices- 2005*, Washington, D.C., March 8, 2006, Section 5; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2005/61733htm>.

²²³⁰ U.S. Embassy- Kingston, *reporting, January 9, 2007*.

²²³¹ UNESCO Institute for Statistics, *Gross Enrollment Ratios, Primary*; accessed December 20, 2006; available from <http://stats.uis.unesco.org>.

²²³² UNESCO Institute for Statistics, *Net Enrolment Rates. Primary*, December 20, 2006; available from <http://stats.uis.unesco.org>.

²²³³ UCW analysis of ILO SIMPOC, *Child Economic Activity and School Attendance Rates*.

²²³⁴ UNESCO Institute for Statistics, *Survival Rate to Grade 5. Total*, accessed December 18, 2006; available from <http://stats.uis.unesco.org>.

²²³⁵ ILO, *Ratifications by Country*, [cited October 18, 2006]; available from <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/cgi-lex/ratifice.pl?Jamaica>.

²²³⁶ Ibid.

²²³⁷ ILO, *Alphabetical list of ILO member countries*, October 5, 2006 [cited October 18, 2006]; available from <http://www.oit.org/public/english/standards/reim/country.htm>.

²²³⁸ UCW analysis of ILO SIMPOC, *Child Economic Activity and School Attendance Rates*.

²²³⁹ UNESCO Institute for Statistics, *Survival Rate to Grade 5. Total*.

²²⁴⁰ Kristin Fox, Statistical Institute of Jamaica (STATIN), Statistical Information and Monitoring Program and Child Labour (SIMPOC) of ILO, and UNICEF, *Report of Youth Activity Survey 2002*, June 2004., vii.

prostitution, especially in tourist areas such as Montego Bay, Kingston, Port Antonio, Ocho Rios, and Negril.²²⁴¹ Young girls are exploited in bars, casinos, and “go-go” dance clubs.²²⁴²

Jamaica is principally a source country for women and children trafficked within the country for the purposes of commercial sexual exploitation and forced labor. The majority of victims are Jamaican women and girls, and increasingly boys, who are trafficked from rural to urban and tourist areas for sexual exploitation. Some children are subjected to conditions of forced labor as domestic servants.²²⁴⁵

Child Labor Laws and Enforcement

The law prohibits the employment of children under 15 years, except by parents or guardians in domestic, agricultural, or horticultural work.²²⁴⁶ Children between 12 and 14 are allowed to work in family businesses; however, they are limited to work no more than 28 hours per week.²²⁴⁷ Children between 13 and 15 are permitted to engage in “light work,” defined as non-hazardous work that will not interfere with their education, health, or with physical, mental, spiritual, or social development.²²⁴⁸ The law also prohibits children under 15 from working at night or in any industrial undertaking.²²⁴⁹ The law provides for fines and 6 months to 1 year of imprisonment for the violation of child labor laws.²²⁵⁰ Children under 18 are prohibited from working in nightclubs, establishments that sell or serve alcohol or tobacco, and from begging on the streets.²²⁵¹ The employment of children in nightclubs, or knowingly renting or allowing one’s premises to be used for “immoral purposes,” is subject to fines or 1 year of imprisonment. Nightclubs employing children are also subject to the revocation of their operating licenses.²²⁵² The law prohibits procuring a child younger than 18 years for the purpose of prostitution and allows for punishments up to 3 years of imprisonment.²²⁵³ It also subjects those “carnally knowing” a girl under 12 years to punishment of imprisonment for life.²²⁵⁴ The law prohibits the sale or trafficking of any child and penalizes violators with a fine and or imprisonment up to ten

²²⁴¹ U.S. Department of State, “Jamaica,” in *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2006*, Washington, D.C., March 6, 2007, Section 5; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2006/78897.htm>. See also ECPAT International, *Jamaica*, [database online] [cited September 13, 2006]; available from http://www.ecpat.net/eng/Ecpat_inter/projects/monitoring/online_database/index.asp.

²²⁴² ECPAT International, *Jamaica*.

²²⁴⁵ U.S. Department of State, E-mail communication to USDOL official, July 26, 2007.

²²⁴⁶ *The Education Act* available from <http://www.moj.gov.jm/laws/statutes/The%20Education%20Act.pdf>. See also U.S. Department of State, “Country Reports- 2006: Jamaica,” Section 6d.

²²⁴⁷ U.S. Embassy- Kingston, *reporting, January 9, 2007*.

²²⁴⁸ Ibid.

²²⁴⁹ U.S. Department of State, “Country Reports- 2006: Jamaica,” Section 6d. See also U.S. Embassy- Kingston, *reporting, January 9, 2007*.

²²⁵⁰ U.S. Embassy- Kingston, *reporting, January 9, 2007*.

²²⁵¹ U.S. Department of State, “Country Reports- 2006: Jamaica,” Section 5. See also U.S. Embassy- Kingston, *reporting, January 9, 2007*.

²²⁵² U.S. Embassy- Kingston, *reporting, January 9, 2007*.

²²⁵³ *Offenses Against the Person Act*, Article 58.

²²⁵⁴ Ibid., Article 48.

years.²²⁵⁵ Minors of at least 17.5 years may voluntarily enlist for military training with parental consent, but they must be 18 years old upon graduating from training.²²⁵⁶ In 2007, the government passed comprehensive anti-trafficking legislation that specifically prohibits the trafficking of children for labor or commercial sexual exploitation. Penalties include fines and up to 10 years imprisonment.²²⁵⁸

The police are authorized to conduct child labor inspections.²²⁵⁹ However, the lack of officers dedicated to this task contributes to the challenge of effective enforcement, as does the fact that child labor is likely to occur more often in informal sectors. The Child Development Agency (CDA) is responsible for carrying out investigations of abuse and finding places of safety for children subject to exploitation; it makes efforts to prevent child labor violations by conducting public education and community outreach.²²⁶⁰ A police anti-trafficking unit has been established to oversee trafficking policy coordination, and an anti-trafficking coordinator has been appointed in the Office of the Prime Minister. The government is conducting investigations of several trafficking cases and has charged a night club owner for operating a brothel employing children for sexual exploitation.²²⁶¹ While the police have conducted raids of night clubs, few convictions have resulted.²²⁶²

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

The Government of Jamaica has undertaken a high-profile anti-trafficking campaign to coincide with the 2007 Cricket World Cup.²²⁶³ In addition, a comprehensive assessment of trafficking is being implemented to ascertain the extent of the problem.²²⁶⁴ Moreover, in conjunction with the IOM, the government has trained police officers, immigration officers, and other government employees on trafficking investigations.²²⁶⁵ The CDA has been operating shelters for child trafficking victims and has established a mechanism for reporting exploitation.²²⁶⁶

²²⁵⁵ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Jamaica," Section 5. See also U.S. Embassy- Kingston, *reporting*, March 2, 2005. See also *Child Care and Protection Act* Article 10.

²²⁵⁶ Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, "Jamaica," in *Global Report 2004*; available from http://www.child-soldiers.org/document_get.php?id=831.

²²⁵⁸ U.S. Department of State, E-mail communication, July 26, 2007.

²²⁵⁹ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Jamaica." Section 6d. See also *Labour Officers (Powers) Act*, Section 3.

²²⁶⁰ Jamaica Information Service, *CDA Holds Community Outreach in Rocky Point*, [online] September 25, 2006 [cited October 21, 2006]; available from <http://www.jis.gov.jm/>. See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Jamaica," Section 6d. See also Jamaica Information Service, *Jamaica Making Strides in Safeguarding Children's Rights*, [online] February 22, 2005 [cited October 21, 2006]; available from <http://www.jis.gov.jm/>.

²²⁶¹ U.S. Embassy- Kingston, *reporting*, February 28, 2006.

²²⁶² U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Jamaica," Section 5.

²²⁶³ U.S. Embassy- Kingston, *reporting* March 1, 2007.

²²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

²²⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

²²⁶⁶ Office of the Press Secretary White House Press Release, "Presidential Determination with Respect to Foreign Governments' Efforts Regarding Trafficking in Persons," (Washington, DC), September 21, 2005. See also U.S. Embassy- Kingston, *reporting*, March 2, 2005.