

Mauritius

Selected Statistics and Indicators on Child Labor²²²⁷

Working children, 5-14 years (%):	-
Working boys, 5-14 years (%):	-
Working girls, 5-14 years (%):	-
Working children by sector, 5-14 years (%):	
- Agriculture	-
- Manufacturing	-
- Services	-
- Other	-
Minimum age for work:	16
Compulsory education age:	16
Free public education:	Yes
Gross primary enrollment rate (%), 2005:	102
Net primary enrollment rate (%), 2005:	95
School attendance, children 5-14 years (%):	-
Survival rate to grade 5 (%), 2004:	97
ILO-IPEC participating country:	No

Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

Children in Mauritius work as informal street traders; in agriculture and animal rearing; and in restaurants, shops, woodworking workshops, gas stations, auto repair, and other small businesses.²²²⁸ The commercial sexual exploitation of young girls reportedly occurs in Mauritius. Some girls are forced into the commercial sex industry by family members, while others are exploited by prostitution rings.²²²⁹

Child Labor Laws and Enforcement

The minimum age for employment and apprenticeship in Mauritius is 16 years.²²³⁰ It is illegal to employ a young person under age 18 in activities that are dangerous, harmful to their health, or otherwise unsuitable; or to require a young person to work more than 10 hours per day or between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m.²²³¹ In addition, young

persons who have not been fully instructed or are inadequately supervised are prohibited from operating dangerous machinery. The law also provides for the health and safety of young persons working aboard ships.²²³² Employers found in violation of child labor laws may be imprisoned for up to 1 year and fined.²²³³

The Government's Office of the Ombudsperson for Children investigates violations of child rights and cases of unlawful employment of children.²²³⁴ The Ministry of Labor, Industrial Relations and Employment enforces child labor laws and employs 45 inspectors to investigate child labor. USDOS reports that child labor inspections are frequent.²²³⁵ At least 10 cases of child labor were found and 3 were prosecuted, leading to 2 convictions in 2007.²²³⁶

The law prohibits forced labor and slavery.²²³⁷ There is no system of military conscription and the minimum age for voluntary recruitment is 18 years.²²³⁸ Child pornography and causing, inciting, or allowing any child to engage in prostitution are crimes punishable by imprisonment of up to 8 years, or up to 15 years if the victim is mentally handicapped.²²³⁹ Acting as an accomplice to child prostitution is unlawful and violators are subject to 2 to 10 years in prison and a fine.²²⁴⁰ The law also prohibits the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring, or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation, either outside Mauritius or within its borders. These crimes are punishable by up to 15 years of imprisonment.²²⁴¹ A dedicated unit within the police force, the Minors Brigade, investigates cases of child prostitution and child trafficking.²²⁴² During the reporting period, eight cases of underage prostitution were reported and 22 arrests were made.²²⁴³ USDOS reports that despite the efforts of law enforcement officials, locating and arresting criminals involved in child prostitution remains a challenge because of the illicit nature of these activities and limited resources.²²⁴⁴ Additionally, it is reported that locating and providing services to victims has been difficult as they are hesitant to come forward and assistance is limited.²²⁴⁵

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

The Government of Mauritius is implementing a National Plan of Action to combat the commercial sexual exploitation of children.²²⁴⁶ Among other goals, the plan aims to develop indicators for monitoring child sexual exploitation and empower the public to protect children against the problem.²²⁴⁷ Under the plan, the Government is conducting training on commercial sexual exploitation of children and trafficking for police officers, community leaders, social workers, and schools; it also has initiated public awareness campaigns in the media and provided funds to a local NGO to educate the public on the issue.²²⁴⁸ The Government operates a drop-in center for children exploited in the commercial sex industry that provides counseling and educational services.²²⁴⁹ The Government also established a formal protocol to assist victims of commercial sexual exploitation, whereby they are accompanied by a child welfare officer to give a police statement and receive priority treatment at the hospital.²²⁵⁰

The Ministry of Women's Rights, Child Development and Family Welfare provides free legal assistance to children exploited in commercial sex, operates a hotline to respond to children in need of immediate support services, and administers a Child Watch Network to identify children at risk and refer them to authorities. The Ministry also oversees the National Children's Council; a group of governmental departments and NGOs coordinating child welfare and protection issues, including the commercial sexual exploitation of children. The Ministry launched a Community Child Protection Program to promote grass roots community involvement in child protection and prevention of commercial sexual exploitation of children.²²⁵¹

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²²²⁸ U.S. Embassy- Port Louis, *reporting*, November 30, 2007, para 2. See also Government of Mauritius, *Written communication submitted in response to U.S. Department of Labor Federal Register Notice (November 8, 2007)*, 6. See also U.S. Department of State, "Mauritius," in *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2007*, Washington, DC, March 11, 2008, section 6d; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2007/100494.htm>. See also ILO Committee of Experts, *Direct Request, Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182) Mauritius (ratification: 2000)*, [2006 [cited December 7, 2007], article 4 para 2; available from <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/newcountryframeE.htm>. See also ILO Committee of Experts, *Observation, Minimum Age Convention, 2003 (No. 138) Mauritius (ratification: 1990)*, [online] [cited September 19, 2006]; available from <http://webfusion.ilo.org/public/db/standards/normes/appl/index.cfm?lang=EN>.

²²²⁹ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Mauritius," section 5. See also U.S. Embassy- Port Louis, *reporting*, October 5, 2007. See also ECPAT, *Report on the Status of Action Against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children: Mauritius, 2007*, 11; available from http://www.ecpat.net/eng/A4A_2005/PDF/AF/Globa1_Monitoring_Report-MAURITIUS.pdf.

²²³⁰ Government of Mauritius, *Written communication submitted in response to U.S. Department of Labor Federal Register Notice (November 8, 2007)*, 1, 3. See also Government of Mauritius, *Labour Act*, part I, article 2 and part II article 7. See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Mauritius," section 6d.

²²³¹ Government of Mauritius, *Labour Act*, part 3, article 15. See also U.S. Embassy- Port Louis, *reporting*, November 30, 2007, para 4.

²²³² U.S. Embassy- Port Louis, *reporting*, November 30, 2007, para 4.

²²³³ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Mauritius," section 6d.

²²³⁴ U.S. Embassy- Port Louis, *reporting*, November 30, 2007, para 6.

²²³⁵ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Mauritius," section 6d.

²²³⁶ U.S. Embassy- Port Louis, *reporting*, March 3, 2008, para 28f, 30b. See also Government of Mauritius, *Written communication submitted in response to U.S. Department of Labor Federal Register Notice (November 8, 2007)*, 6.

²²²⁷ For statistical data not cited here, see the Data Sources and Definitions section. For data on ratifications and ILO-IPEC membership, see the Executive Summary. For minimum age for admission to work, age to which education is compulsory, and free public education, see Government of Mauritius, *Labour Act*, (December 30, 1975), section 4; available from <http://www.gov.mu/portal/goc/labour/file/labour%2>

²²³⁷ Government of Mauritius, *Constitution of the Republic of Mauritius*, (March 12, 1968), chapter II, article 6; available from <http://www.gov.mu/portal/site/AssemblySite/menuitem.ee3d58b2c32c60451251701065c521ca/>. See also Government of Mauritius, *Written communication*, submitted in response to U.S. Department of Labor Federal Register Notice (July 29, 2005) "Request for Information on Efforts by Certain Countries to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labor", Washington, DC, August 17, 2005, 2.

²²³⁸ Government of Mauritius, *Written communication submitted in response to U.S. Department of Labor Federal Register Notice (November 8, 2007)*, 1. See also U.S. Embassy- Port Louis, *reporting, November 30, 2007*, para 7.

²²³⁹ Government of Mauritius, *Written communication*, submitted in response to U.S. Department of Labor Federal Register Notice (December 5, 2006) "Request for Information on Efforts by Certain Countries to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labor", Washington, DC, February 20, 2007, 2. See also U.S. Embassy- Port Louis, *reporting, November 30, 2007*, para 7. See also ECPAT, *Report on the Status of Action*, 19.

²²⁴⁰ ECPAT, *Report on the Status of Action*, 19.

²²⁴¹ Government of Mauritius, *The Child Protection (Amendment) Act No. 34*, (December 6, 2005), article 13; available from http://supremecourt.intnet.mu/Entry/dyn/GuestGetDoc.Aspx?Doc_Idx=2977961&Mode=Html&Search=No. See also U.S. Department of State, "Mauritius (Tier 2)," Washington, DC, June 12, 2007; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2007/82806.htm>. See also U.S. Embassy- Port Louis, *reporting, November 30, 2007*, para 7. See also ECPAT, *Report on the Status of Action*, 20.

²²⁴² Government of Mauritius, *The Mauritius Police Force: Police Family Protection Unit*, [online] March 29, 2007 [cited December 10, 2007]; available from <http://www.gov.mu/portal/site/police/menuitem.fd3503a43d26d778455084e80fb521ca/>. See also U.S. Embassy- Port Louis, *reporting, November 30, 2007*, para 7.

²²⁴³ U.S. Embassy- Port Louis, *reporting, March 3, 2008*, para 28f.

²²⁴⁴ U.S. Embassy- Port Louis, *reporting, November 30, 2007*, para 7.

²²⁴⁵ U.S. Embassy- Port Louis, *reporting, March 3, 2008*, para 27d.

²²⁴⁶ U.S. Embassy- Port Louis, *reporting, November 30, 2007*, para 8. See also Government of Mauritius, *Written communication submitted in response to U.S. Department of Labor Federal Register Notice (December 5, 2006)*, 7.

²²⁴⁷ ECPAT, *Report on the Status of Action*, 13.

²²⁴⁸ Government of Mauritius, *Written communication submitted in response to U.S. Department of Labor Federal Register Notice (November 8, 2007)*, 4. See also U.S. Embassy- Port Louis, *reporting, November 30, 2007*, para 6. See also ECPAT, *Report on the Status of Action*, 13.

²²⁴⁹ Government of Mauritius, *Written communication submitted in response to U.S. Department of Labor Federal Register Notice (November 8, 2007)*, 4. See also U.S. Embassy- Port Louis, *reporting, November 30, 2007*, para 8.

²²⁵⁰ U.S. Embassy- Port Louis, *reporting, March 3, 2008*, para 29b.

²²⁵¹ U.S. Embassy- Port Louis, *reporting, November 30, 2007*, para 8, 11. See also ECPAT, *Report on the Status of Action*, 14, 15, 17. See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Mauritius," section 5.

Moldova

Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

In Moldova, children often work on family farms or perform other work for their families. It has been reported that two-thirds of rural children have engaged in agricultural work by the age of 14.²²⁵² According to the Government of Moldova, the number of registered cases of the worst forms of child labor increased between 2001 and 2004, the most recent period for which such information is

available.²²⁵³ The Ministry of Internal Affairs reported that in 2003 there were 3,681 children living or working in the streets.²²⁵⁴

Moldova is a major country of origin for children trafficked abroad for sexual exploitation, forced labor, and begging.²²⁵⁵ Russia is reported to be the primary destination for children trafficked internationally from Moldova for commercial sexual exploitation and begging. Turkey is also a