

Mauritius

Selected Statistics and Indicators on Child Labor²⁴⁴³

Population, children, 5-14 years:	-
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 (%), 2007:	101.4
Net primary enrollment rate (%), 2007:	95.4
School attendance, children 5-14 years (%):	-
Survival rate to grade 5 (%), 2006:	99.0
ILO Convention 138:	7/30/1990
ILO Convention 182:	6/8/2000
CRC:	7/26/1990**
CRCOPAC:	No
CRCOPSC:	No
Palermo:	9/24/2003**
ILO-IPEC participating country:	No

*In practice, must pay for various school expenses

**Accession

Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

In Mauritius, children work in agriculture, commerce, and domestic service. Children also work as informal street traders, shop merchants, household workers, and in small businesses.²⁴⁴⁴ Children, especially young girls, are trafficked within Mauritius for the purpose of commercial sexual exploitation.²⁴⁴⁵ Some are exploited by prostitution rings.²⁴⁴⁶

Child Labor Laws and Enforcement

The minimum age for employment and apprenticeship in Mauritius is 16 years.²⁴⁴⁷ It is illegal to employ young persons under 18 years in activities that are dangerous, harmful to their

health, or otherwise unsuitable, including operating lifting machines; working in confined spaces; working with explosives, asbestos, and heavy metals; and being exposed to ionizing radiation, benzene, and harmful solvents.²⁴⁴⁸ In addition, young persons who have not been fully instructed or adequately supervised are prohibited from operating dangerous machinery.²⁴⁴⁹ The health and safety of young persons working aboard ships is also provided for by law.²⁴⁵⁰ Young persons cannot be required to work more than 10 hours per day or between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m.²⁴⁵¹ Employers found employing a child under 16 years may be imprisoned for up to 1 year and fined.²⁴⁵² Cases of child employment can result in the prosecution of employers.²⁴⁵³

Child labor laws are enforced, and frequent child labor inspections are conducted by the Ministry of Labor, Industrial Relations, and Employment. USDOS reports that of the 1,050 labor inspections conducted in 2008, four cases of child labor were found and are currently being prosecuted.²⁴⁵⁴

Forced labor and slavery are prohibited.²⁴⁵⁵ There is no system of military conscription, and the minimum age for voluntary recruitment is 18 years.²⁴⁵⁶ 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.²⁴⁵⁷ Acting as an accomplice to child prostitution is unlawful, and violators are subject to 2 to 10 years in prison and a fine.²⁴⁵⁸ The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring, or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation outside or within Mauritius is prohibited.²⁴⁵⁹ These crimes are punishable by up to 15 years of imprisonment.²⁴⁶⁰ The Minors Brigade within the police force is dedicated to investigating cases of child prostitution and child trafficking.²⁴⁶¹ The Attorney General's Office and the Office of the Ombudsperson for Children also play an important role in anti-trafficking efforts.²⁴⁶² In 2008, investigations were still ongoing for two reported child prostitution cases, for which four people were arrested. USDOS reports that even

with law enforcement officials' efforts, locating and arresting criminals involved in child prostitution remains a challenge because of the illicit nature of this activity.²⁴⁶³

During 2008, the Government of Mauritius passed the Judicial Provisions Act, which provides for heavier penalties, including increased fines, and allows for sentencing discretion for a number of offenses, including child trafficking.²⁴⁶⁴

Current Government Efforts to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labor

During 2008, the Government of Mauritius implemented a National Plan of Action to combat the commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC).²⁴⁶⁵ As part of this plan, the Government is developing CSEC monitoring indicators and empowering the public to protect children against child sexual exploitation.²⁴⁶⁶ Local NGOs that educate the public on the issue of commercial sexual exploitation are also funded by the Government.²⁴⁶⁷

To prevent the employment of underage children, the Ministry of Labor developed vocational training programs.²⁴⁶⁸ The Ministry of Women's Rights, Child Development and Family Welfare operates a hotline to respond to children in need of immediate support services and administers a Child Watch Network, which detects children at risk and refers them to the appropriate authorities. The Child Development Unit funds a drop-in center, providing counseling, psychological treatment, and educational services for children exploited in the commercial sex industry.²⁴⁶⁹ The drop in center promotes its activities through bumper stickers, its toll-free number, and outreach in schools and the wider community.²⁴⁷⁰

The police training school held specialized training courses on trafficking, and the police initiated awareness campaigns for students and school administrators.²⁴⁷¹ The police have held awareness sessions in schools and villages.²⁴⁷²

A formal protocol to assist victims of commercial sexual exploitation was established, whereby a child welfare officer accompanies victims when

they give police statements and receive priority treatment at the hospital.²⁴⁷³

²⁴⁴³ For statistical data not cited here, see the Data Sources and Definitions section. For ratifications and ILO-IPEC membership, see the Introduction. For minimum age for admission to work, see Government of Mauritius, *Labour Act*, (December 30, 1975), part 2, section 5; available from <http://www.gov.mu/portal/goc/labour/file/labour%20act%20updated.doc>. See also Government of Mauritius, *Written communication*, submitted in response to U.S. Department of Labor Federal Register Notice (December 19, 2008) "Request for Information on Efforts by Certain Countries to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labor." Washington, DC, February 11, 2009, para 1(a). For age to which education is compulsory, see Government of Mauritius, *Education Act*, (December 28, 1957); available from www.gov.mu/portal/goc/educationsite/file/act2001.pdf. For free public education, see Ministry of Education and Scientific Research, *The Development of Education: National report of Mauritius*, September 9, 2004, 2; available from <http://www.ibe.unesco.org/International/ICE47/English/Natreps/reports/mauritius.pdf>. See also Government of Mauritius, *Written communication submitted in response to U.S. Department of Labor Federal Register Notice (December 19, 2008)*, para 4(c).

²⁴⁴⁴ U.S. Embassy- Port Louis, *reporting*, January 15, 2009, para 2. See also U.S. Department of State, "Mauritius," in *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2008*, Washington, DC, February 25, 2009; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/af/119014.htm>. See also ILO Committee of Experts, *Individual Direct Request, Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182) Mauritius (ratification: 2000)*, [online] 2006 [cited January 29, 2009], article 4, para 2; available from <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/cgi-lex/pdconv.pl?host=status01&textbase=iloeng&document=18896&chapter=9&query=Mauritius%40ref&highlight=&querytype=bo ol&context=0>.

²⁴⁴⁵ U.S. Embassy- Port Louis, *reporting*, February 24, 2009, para 2C. See also ILO Committee of Experts, *Observation, Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182) Mauritius (ratification 2000)*, 2007, para 2; available from <http://webfusion.ilo.org/public/db/standards/normes/appl/appl-displayAllComments.cfm?hdroff=1&ctry=1370&conv=C182&Lang=EN#2007>.

²⁴⁴⁶ U.S. Embassy- Port Louis, *reporting, January 15, 2009*, para 2. See also ECPAT International, *Report on the Status of Action Against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children: Mauritius*, 2007, 11; available from

http://www.ecpat.net/A4A_2005/PDF/AF/Global_Monitoring_Report-MAURITIUS.pdf.

²⁴⁴⁷ Government of Mauritius, *Written communication submitted in response to U.S. Department of Labor Federal Register Notice (December 19, 2008)*, para 1(a). See also Government of Mauritius, *Labour Act*, part 1, article 2, part 2, article 7.

²⁴⁴⁸ Government of Mauritius, *Labour Act*, part 2 and 7(a). See also Government of Mauritius, *The Occupational Safety and Health Act 2005*, (October 28, 2005), articles 8 and 51(6); available from <http://ioshm.intnet.mu/oshact05.pdf>.

²⁴⁴⁹ U.S. Embassy- Port Louis, *reporting*, June 2, 2008, para 3. See also Government of Mauritius, *The Occupational Safety and Health Act 2005*, article 51(6).

²⁴⁵⁰ Government of Mauritius, *Labour Act*, part I, 2(c), part III, 15 3(a), 12.

²⁴⁵¹ *Ibid.*, part III, 15. See also U.S. Embassy- Port Louis, *reporting*, June 2, 2008, para 3.

²⁴⁵² U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2008: Mauritius," section 6c.

²⁴⁵³ U.S. Embassy- Port Louis, *reporting*, January 15, 2009, paras 5 and 6.

²⁴⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, para 5.

²⁴⁵⁵ Government of Mauritius, *Constitution of the Republic of Mauritius*, (March 12, 1968), chapter 2, article 6; available from <http://www.gov.mu/portal/site/AssemblySite/menuitem.ee3d58b2c32c60451251701065c521ca/>. See also U.S. Embassy- Port Louis, *reporting*, January 15, 2009, para 6.

²⁴⁵⁶ Government of Mauritius, *Written communication submitted in response to U.S. Department of Labor Federal Register Notice (December 19, 2008)*, para 1(b).

²⁴⁵⁷ Government of Mauritius, *The Child Protection (Amendment) Act*, No. 34, (December 6, 2005), article 4(a)(i); available from http://supremecourt.intnet.mu/Entry/dyn/GuestGetDoc.Asp?Doc_Idx=2977961&Mode=Html&Search=No. See also U.S. Embassy- Port Louis, *reporting*, January 15, 2009, para 6.

²⁴⁵⁸ ECPAT International, *Report on the Status of Action*, 19.

²⁴⁵⁹ U.S. Embassy- Port Louis, *reporting*, January 15, 2009, para 6.

²⁴⁶⁰ Government of Mauritius, *The Child Protection (Amendment) Act*, article 13. See also ECPAT International, *Report on the Status of Action*, 20.

²⁴⁶¹ Government of Mauritius, *The Mauritius Police Force: Police Family Protection Unit*, [online] January 5 2009 [cited January 28 2009]; available from <http://www.gov.mu/portal/site/police/menuitem.fd3503a43d26d778455084e80fb521ca/>. See also U.S. Embassy- Port Louis, *reporting*, January 15, 2009, para 6.

²⁴⁶² U.S. Embassy- Port Louis, *reporting*, March 3, 2008, para C.

²⁴⁶³ U.S. Embassy- Port Louis, *reporting*, January 15, 2009, paras 5 and 6.

²⁴⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, para 4. See also Government of Mauritius, *Judicial Provisions Bill (No. XXXV of 2008)- Explanatory Memorandum*, (November 7, 2008); available from <http://www.gov.mu/portal/goc/assemblysite/file/bill3508.pdf>.

²⁴⁶⁵ U.S. Embassy- Port Louis, *reporting*, January 15, 2009, para 7.

²⁴⁶⁶ ECPAT International, *Report on the Status of Action*, 13. See also U.S. Embassy- Port Louis, *reporting*, January 15, 2009, para 7.

²⁴⁶⁷ U.S. Embassy- Port Louis, *reporting*, January 15, 2009, para 7.

²⁴⁶⁸ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2008: Mauritius," section 6c.

²⁴⁶⁹ U.S. Embassy- Port Louis, *reporting*, January 15, 2009, para 7.

²⁴⁷⁰ U.S. Embassy- Port Louis, *reporting*, February 24, 2009, para 6A.

²⁴⁷¹ U.S. Embassy- Port Louis, *reporting*, January 15, 2009, para K. See also U.S. Embassy- Port Louis, *reporting*, February 24, 2009, para 6A.

²⁴⁷² U.S. Embassy- Port Louis, *reporting*, February 24, 2009, para D.

²⁴⁷³ U.S. Embassy- Port Louis, *reporting*, January 15, 2009, para C.

Moldova

Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

Children in Moldova work on family farms or perform other work for their families. A 2007 ILO report notes that two-thirds of rural children worked on farms by age 14 years.²⁴⁷⁴ Children also work in factories, theaters, car washes,

carpentry, and the trade and transportation sectors.²⁴⁷⁵ Children also sell alcohol and tobacco.²⁴⁷⁶ According to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, children also work on the streets.²⁴⁷⁷

Moldova is a country of origin for children trafficked abroad for commercial sexual