# Dominica

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

The government is seeking resources to improve childhood development.[764] In November 1995, Dominica began implementing the Basic Education Reform Project (BERP), a comprehensive reform of the compulsory education sector. The project, jointly funded by the government and the Work Bank, involves school rehabilitation, the provision of textbooks and learning materials, and training.[765] BERP is complemented by the Eastern Caribbean Education Reform Project, which is a sub-regional project that was funded by the Canadian Agency for International Development.[766] The government also funds a Youth Skills Training Program with its own funds and with assistance from the Organization of American States. [767]

## Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

Statistics on the number of working children below the age of 15 in Dominica are unavailable. However, some children are reported to work on a seasonal basis with their families in agriculture.[768]

Education in Dominica is compulsory from ages 5 to 16.[769] The gross primary enrollment rate was 100.4 percent in 1991 and 98.2 percent in 1998, and the net primary enrollment rate was 88.7 percent in 1991 and 88.8 percent in 1998.[770] Primary school attendance rates are unavailable for Dominica. While enrollment rates indicate a level of commitment to education, they do not always reflect children's participation in school.[771] Poor physical conditions in many primary schools affect the quality of education, and some schools are overcrowded, limiting access to primary education, particularly for children living in urban areas around the capital.[772] Poverty and

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[764] U.S. Embassy—Bridgetown, unclassified telegram no. 1126, June 2000 [hereinafter unclassified telegram 1126].

[765] UNESCO, *The Education for All (EFA) 2000 Assessment: Country Reports—Dominica* [hereinafter *EFA 2000 Assessment: Country Reports*], at http://www2unesco.org/wef/countryreports/dominica/rapport_2html on 11/6/01.

[766] Ibid.

[767] Ibid.

[768] Unclassified telegram 1126.

[769] *EFA 2000 Assessment: Country Reports.*

[770] UNESCO, *Education for All: Year 2000 Assessment* (Paris, 2000) [CD-ROM].

[771] For a more detailed discussion on the relationship between education statistics and work, see *Introduction* to this report.

[772] *EFA 2000 Assessment: Country Reports* at 9.

work on family banana farms during the harvest season can affect school attendance, but other employment does not pull minors out of school.[773]  There is a significant Carib Indian population on Dominica, and schools on the Carib reservations are reported to have fewer resources.[774]

## Child Labor Laws and Enforcement

The minimum age for employment in Dominica is 15 years.[775]  There are no laws that specifically prohibit trafficking in persons or child pornography,[776] but the Sexual Offenses Act of 1998 prohibits the prostitution of minors.[777]  Dominica has no military; therefore, the use of child soldiers is not considered a problem.[778]

Dominica ratified ILO Convention 138 in September 27, 1983 and ILO Convention 182 on January 4, 2001.[779]

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[773] Unclassified telegram 1126.

[774] El Barometer North America, North America and the Caribbean: Dominica, at America.html" http://www.ei-ie.org/pub/english/BarometreNorth America.html on 6/6/00.

[775] *EFA 2000 Assessment: Country Reports.*

[776] *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2000—Dominica* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of State, 2001), Section 6f, at http://state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrpt/2000/wha/index.cfm?docid'757. *See also* Sexual Offenses Act of 1998, as cited on NATLEX database at http://www.natlex.ilo.org/scripts/natlexorgi.exe?lang'E on 11/6/01.

[777] DMA-1998-L-49696, NATLEX database at http://natlex.ilo.org/Scripts/natlexcgi.exe?lang'E&doc'query on 10/2/01.

[778] Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, *Global Report 2001: Dominica,* at http://www.child-soldiers.org/report2001/countries.caribbean.html on 10/9/01.

[779] ILO, Ratifications of the ILO Fundamental Conventions, at http://webfusion.ilo.org/public/db/standards/normes/appl/atif8conv.cfm?Lang'EN.

*NOTE: Hard copies of all Web citations are on file.*