

Dominica

The Government of Dominica has several programs in place to encourage children to remain enrolled in school instead of leaving to enter the workforce. No information suggests that the worst forms of child labor are a problem in Dominica. However, gaps exist in the legal framework to protect children against the worst forms of child labor since the minimum ages for work and hazardous work fall below international standards.

Statistics on Working Children and School Attendance

Children	Age	Percent
Working	5-14 yrs.	Unavailable
Attending School	5-14 yrs.	Unavailable
Combining Work and School	7-14 yrs.	Unavailable



Prevalence and Sectoral Distribution of the Worst Forms of Child Labor¹⁷²⁴

No information suggests that the worst forms of child labor are a problem in Dominica.¹⁷²⁵






Laws and Regulations on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

According to the Employment of Children (Prohibition) Act, the minimum age for employment is 12, but according to the Employment of Women, Young Persons and Children Act, it is age 14.¹⁷²⁶ The CEACR has urged the Government to raise the statutory minimum age to 15, in accordance with the provisions of ILO Convention 138.¹⁷²⁷ In addition, the minimum age for hazardous work is 14, which does not comply with international standards.¹⁷²⁸

The law prohibits forced labor.¹⁷²⁹

Dominica has no military force, and the minimum age for voluntary recruitment to the police force is 18.¹⁷³⁰

The Education Act establishes free and compulsory education through age 16.¹⁷³¹

	C138, Minimum Age	✓
	C182, Worst Forms of Child Labor	✓
	CRC	✓
	CRC Optional Protocol on Armed Conflict	✓
	CRC Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution, and Child Pornography	✓
	Palermo Protocol on Trafficking in Persons	No
	Minimum Age for Work	12/14
	Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	14
	Compulsory Education Age	16
	Free Public Education	Yes

Institutional Mechanisms for Coordination and Enforcement

The Ministry of Labor is the main agency tasked with the responsibility of enforcing laws related to

child labor, while the Welfare Department of the Ministry of Community and Social Development is responsible for cases related to child abuse. Because there is no documented evidence of the existence of the worst forms of child labor in Dominica, there does not appear to be a need for a coordinating mechanism to address the worst forms of child labor.¹⁷³²

The Government of Dominica employs four labor inspectors who cover all labor rights, including child labor. The Ministry of Health's six inspectors may also inspect labor violations. Because there were no reported cases of child labor violations during the reporting period, no child labor investigations were conducted.¹⁷³³

Government Policies on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

Because no evidence of a problem exists, there appears to be no need for policies to address the

worst forms of child labor. The Government's Growth and Social Protection Strategy (2006–2011) has a goal of overall poverty reduction.¹⁷³⁴

Social Programs to Eliminate or Prevent the Worst Forms of Child Labor

Because no evidence of a problem exists, there appears to be no need for programs to address the worst forms of child labor. The Government operates programs to ensure that quality education is a viable alternative to work for all children. The Government also sponsors an Education Trust Fund to provide financial assistance to students in secondary school who would not otherwise be able to complete their education.¹⁷³⁵ The School Text Book Provision Scheme subsidizes the cost of textbooks for primary and secondary school students, and a school feeding program provides lunch to primary school students in targeted areas.¹⁷³⁶

Based on the reporting above, the following actions would advance the reduction of the worst forms of child labor in Dominica:

IN THE AREA OF LAWS AND REGULATIONS:

- Raise the statutory minimum age for employment to 15.
- Raise the minimum age for hazardous work to comply with international standards.

¹⁷²⁴ Data provided in the chart at the beginning of this country report are not available from the data sources that are used by USDOL. Reliable data on the worst forms of child labor are especially difficult to collect given the often hidden or illegal nature of the worst forms. For more information on sources used for these statistics, the definition of working children, and other indicators used in this report, please see the “Children’s Work and Education Statistics: Sources and Definitions” section.

¹⁷²⁵ U.S. Embassy- Bridgetown, reporting, January 28, 2011, para 2D.

¹⁷²⁶ Government of Dominica, Employment of Children (Prohibition) Act, L.I. 5 of 1939, (December 29, 1939), article 2; available from <http://www.dominica.gov.dm/laws/chapters/chap90-05.pdf>. See also Government of Dominica, Employment of Women, Young Persons and Children Act, L.I. 5 of 1938, (February 1, 1939), article 2; available from <http://www.dominica.gov.dm/laws/chapters/chap90-06.pdf>.

¹⁷²⁷ ILO Committee of Experts, Individual Observation concerning Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) Dominica (ratification: 1983) Published: 2010, March 2, 2011, para 1; available from <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/iloquery.htm>.

¹⁷²⁸ U.S. Department of State, “Dominica,” in Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2010, Washington, DC, April 8, 2011, section 7d; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2010/wha/154502.htm>. See also ILO Committee of Experts, Individual Observation C138: Dominica (2010), para 3.

¹⁷²⁹ U.S. Department of State, “Country Reports- 2010: Dominica,” section 7c.

¹⁷³⁰ Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Labor, “Caribbean,” in Child Soldiers Global Report, London, 2008; available from http://www.childsoldiersglobalreport.org/files/country_pdfs/FINAL_2008_Global_Report.pdf.

¹⁷³¹ Government of Dominica, Education Act, No. 11 of 1997, (November 7, 1997), articles 2 and 16; available from <http://www.dominica.gov.dm/laws/1997/act11-1997.pdf>.

¹⁷³² U.S. Embassy- Bridgetown, reporting, January 28, 2011, sections 3C-1 and 3A-2. See also U.S. Embassy- Bridgetown, reporting, February 5, 2010, sections 2C-I: 1 and 2C-II: 1.

¹⁷³³ U.S. Embassy- Bridgetown, reporting, January 28, 2011, section 3D-6.

¹⁷³⁴ Government of Dominica, Medium-Term Growth and Social Protection Strategy, Roseau, Dominica, April 2006, 1; available from <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/scr/2006/cr06289.pdf>.

¹⁷³⁵ Government of Dominica, Education Trust Fund Act, 17 of 1981, (May 7, 1981), article 5; available from <http://www.dominica.gov.dm/laws/chapters/chap28-02.pdf>.

¹⁷³⁶ Government of Dominica, Economic and Social Review for Fiscal Year 2009/2010, July 2010, 55; available from <http://www.dominica.gov.dm/cms/index.php?q=node/1235>. See also Global Literacy Project, Overview: The Commonwealth of Dominica, [online] [cited March 2, 2011]; available from http://www.glpinc.org/Graphics/Project_Sites/Caribbean/Dominica/Dominica_Overview.htm.