

*In 2011, Dominica made no advancement in efforts to prevent the worst forms of child labor. Although no information suggests that the worst forms of child labor are a problem, and the Government has several programs in place to encourage children to remain enrolled in school, critical gaps exist in the legal framework to prevent children from involvement in the worst forms of child labor. The minimum ages for work and hazardous work fall below international standards, and the country lacks a comprehensive list of hazardous work prohibited to children, which leave children vulnerable to the worst forms of child labor. Dominica likewise lacks prohibitions on trafficking.*



### Statistics on Working Children and Education

Children	Age	Percent
Working	5-14 yrs.	Unavailable
Attending School	5-14 yrs.	Unavailable
Combining Work and School	7-14 yrs.	Unavailable
Primary Completion Rate		83.8

**Sources:**

**Primary completion rate:** Data from 2010, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2012.(1)

**All other data:** Understanding Children's Work Project's analysis.(2)

### Prevalence and Sectoral Distribution of the Worst Forms of Child Labor

No information suggests that the worst forms of child labor are a problem in Dominica.(3)

### 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.(4, 5) The ILO Committee of Experts has urged the Government to raise the statutory minimum age to 15, as it specified it would do when it ratified ILO Convention 138.(6) In addition, the minimum age for hazardous work is 14, which does not comply with international standards, leaving children 14 and above vulnerable to the worst forms of child labor.(6, 7) Dominica does not have a list of work considered hazardous but is commencing the process of drafting one; the Employment of Women, Young Persons and Children Act prohibits children under age 14 from working

in certain industries, including mining, construction and transportation.(5, 8) The different minimum ages for work may create confusion over what protections apply to working children and make the law difficult to enforce.

	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

The law prohibits forced labor.(7) The Children and Young Persons Act provides for the care, supervision, and protection of all children, and the Sexual Offenses Act protects children from

commercial sexual exploitation and sexual offenses, including abduction with the intent of sexual intercourse.(9-11) However, there are no laws or regulations explicitly prohibiting trafficking in persons.(3)

Dominica has no military force, and the minimum age for voluntary recruitment to the police force is 18.(12)

The Education Act establishes compulsory and free education to age 16.(13)

## Institutional Mechanisms for Coordination and Enforcement

The Ministry of Labor is the main agency tasked with enforcing laws related to child labor, while the Welfare Division of the Ministry of Social Services, Community Development, and Gender Affairs is responsible for the welfare aspects of child labor cases.(3) 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.

The Government of Dominica employs six labor inspectors who inspect for compliance with all labor laws, including child labor. The Ministry of Health's 19 inspectors may also inspect

labor violations.(3) Because there were no reported cases of child labor violations during the reporting period, no child labor investigations were conducted.

## 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) aims to reduce poverty overall.(14)

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

There likewise appears to be no need for programs to address the worst forms of child labor because no evidence of a problem exists. 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.(15) 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.(16, 17)

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

Area	Suggested Actions	Year(s) Action Recommended
Laws and Regulations	Raise the statutory minimum age for employment to 15.	2009, 2010, 2011
	Raise the minimum age for hazardous work to comply with international standards.	2009, 2010, 2011
	Finalize and adopt the list of hazardous work.	2011
	Amend the legislation to expressly prohibit child prostitution and trafficking in persons, as well as the use, procuring, or offering of a child for the production of pornography or for pornographic performances.	2011

## REFERENCES

- UNESCO Institute for Statistics. *Gross intake ration to the last grade of primary. Total.*; accessed March 29, 2012; <http://www.uis.unesco.org/Pages/default.aspx?SPSLanguage=EN>. Data provided is the gross intake ratio to the last grade of primary school. This measure is a proxy measure for primary completion. For more information, please see the "Children's Work and Education Statistics: Sources and Definitions" section of this report.
- UCW. *Analysis of Child Economic Activity and School Attendance Statistics from National Household or Child Labor Surveys*. February 2, 2012. Reliable statistical data on the worst forms of child labor are especially difficult to collect given the often hidden or illegal nature of the worst forms. As a result, statistics on children's work in general are reported in this chart, which may or may not include the worst forms of child labor. For more information on sources used, 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 of this report.
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