

In 2015, Dominica made a minimal advancement in efforts to prevent the worst forms of child labor. The Government held consultations with labor unions and employers to discuss drafting a list of hazardous occupations for children and continued to support programs to reduce poverty and ensure access to education. Although research found no evidence that child labor, including its worst forms, exists in Dominica, no recent study of child labor has been done to confirm this. The Government's ability to prevent children from becoming engaged in exploitative work is limited due to exceptions to the minimum age for hazardous work and a lack of prohibitions against the use of children in prostitution, pornography, or pornographic performances or the use of children in illicit activities, including producing and trafficking of drugs.






I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Research found no evidence that child labor, including its worst forms, exists in Dominica.(1)

II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

Dominica has ratified all key international conventions concerning child labor (Table 1).

Table 1. Ratification of International Conventions on Child Labor

Convention	Ratification
 ILO C. 138, Minimum Age	✓
ILO C. 182, Worst Forms of Child Labor	✓
 UN CRC	✓
UN CRC Optional Protocol on Armed Conflict	✓
UN CRC Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography	✓
 Palermo Protocol on Trafficking in Persons	✓

The Government has established laws and regulations related to child labor, including its worst forms (Table 2).

Table 2. Laws and Regulations Related to Child Labor

Standard	Yes/No	Age	Related Legislation
Minimum Age for Work	Yes	16	Articles 2 and 46 of the Education Act 1997 (2)
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	Yes	18	Articles 2, 4, 5, and 7 of the Employment of Women, Young Persons, and Children Act (3)
Prohibition of Hazardous Occupations or Activities for Children	Yes		Articles 2, 4, 5, and 7 of the Employment of Women, Young Persons, and Children Act (3)
Prohibition of Forced Labor	Yes		Article 4 of the Constitution; Sections 2, 8, 10, and 13 of the Transnational Organized Crime (Prevention and Control) Act (4, 5)
Prohibition of Child Trafficking	Yes		Sections 2, 8, 10, and 13 of the Transnational Organized Crime (Prevention and Control) Act (5)
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	Yes		Sections 2, 10 and 13 of the Transnational Organized Crime (Prevention and Control) Act; Article 18 of the Sexual Offenses Act (5, 6)

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Table 2. Laws and Regulations Related to Child Labor (cont)

Standard	Yes/No	Age	Related Legislation
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities	No		
Minimum Age for Compulsory Military Recruitment	N/A†		
Minimum Age for Voluntary Military Service	N/A†		
Compulsory Education Age	Yes	16	Article 2 of the Education Act 1997 (2)
Free Public Education	Yes		Article 15 of the Education Act 1997 (2)

† No standing military.(7)

Article 46 of the Education Act prohibits the employment of children ages 5 to 16 during the school year, but allows students ages 14 and older to work during school vacations or in school-sponsored employment training programs without defining the conditions, specific activities, or number of hours permissible for light work.(2) Article 7 of the Employment of Women, Young Persons, and Children Act prohibits children under age 18 from working at night, unless they are working with members of their family, but includes exceptions for children over age 16 to perform night work in certain industries or in case of emergencies without including provisions to ensure that they receive proper training or that their health, safety and morals will be protected. (3) During the reporting period, the Government held consultations with labor unions and employers to discuss drafting a list of hazardous occupations for children.(1, 8) The Government of Dominica has yet to enact laws or regulations explicitly prohibiting the use of children in prostitution, pornography, pornographic performances, or illicit activities, including the production and trafficking of drugs.(9)

III. ENFORCEMENT OF LAWS ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

The Government has established institutional mechanisms for the enforcement of laws and regulations on child labor, including its worst forms (Table 3).

Table 3. Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement

Organization/Agency	Role
Ministry of National Security, Labor, and Immigration (MNSLI)	Conduct inspections and enforce laws related to child labor. Authorized to conduct unannounced inspections at any location with employees and take legal action against employers violating child labor laws. Report children found in exploitative labor situations to police and social services.(1, 10, 11)
Ministry of Health (MOH)	Conduct inspections and enforce laws related to child labor. Report children found in exploitative labor situations to police and social services.(10, 11)
Police Force	Enforce criminal laws, including those related to child labor.(11)
Social Welfare Division, Ministry of Social Services, Family, and Gender Affairs	Provide social services, including education, housing, counseling, and financial aid in child labor cases. (1, 10, 12)

Labor Law Enforcement

In 2015, labor law enforcement agencies in Dominica took actions to combat child labor, including its worst forms (Table 4).

Table 4. Labor Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Labor Law Enforcement	2014	2015
Labor Inspectorate Funding	Unknown (10)	Unknown (1)
Number of Labor Inspectors	4 (10)	5 (1)
Inspectorate Authorized to Assess Penalties	Yes (10)	Yes (1)
Training for Labor Inspectors		
■ Initial Training for New Employees	No (13)	No (13)
■ Training on New Laws Related to Child Labor	N/A	N/A
■ Refresher Courses Provided	No (13)	No (13)

Table 4. Labor Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor (cont)

Overview of Labor Law Enforcement	2014	2015
Number of Labor Inspections	Unknown (10)	Unknown
■ Number Conducted at Worksite	Unknown	Unknown
■ Number Conducted by Desk Reviews	Unknown	Unknown
Number of Child Labor Violations Found	0 (10)	0 (1)
Number of Child Labor Violations for Which Penalties Were Imposed	N/A	N/A
■ Number of Penalties Imposed That Were Collected	N/A	N/A
Routine Inspections Conducted	Yes (13)	Yes (13)
■ Routine Inspections Targeted	No (10)	No (1)
Unannounced Inspections Permitted	Yes (10)	Yes (1)
Unannounced Inspections Conducted	Yes (13)	Yes (13)
Complaint Mechanism Exists	Yes (14)	Yes (1, 14)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Labor Authorities and Social Services	Yes (11)	Yes (1)

In addition to the 5 labor inspectors employed by the Ministry of National Security, Labor, and Immigration (MNSLI), the Ministry of Health (MOH) employs 17 health and safety inspectors and 12 fire inspectors who also inspect for labor violations.(1) Government officials report that while the number of labor inspectors is sufficient to inspect labor violations, too few technical officers are available to effectively enforce labor laws.(1)

Criminal Law Enforcement

In 2015, criminal law enforcement agencies in Dominica did not take actions to combat the worst forms of child labor (Table 5).

Table 5. Criminal Law Enforcement Efforts Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor

Overview of Criminal Law Enforcement	2014	2015
Training for Investigators		
■ Initial Training for New Employees	No (10)	No (1, 10)
■ Training on New Laws Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor	N/A	N/A
■ Refresher Courses Provided	No (10)	No (1)
Number of Investigations	0 (10)	0 (1)
Number of Violations Found	0 (10)	0 (1)
Number of Prosecutions Initiated	0 (10)	0 (1)
Number of Convictions	0 (10)	0 (1)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Criminal Authorities and Social Services	Yes (10)	Yes (1)

IV. COORDINATION OF GOVERNMENT EFFORTS ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

As there is no evidence of a problem, there appears to be no need for mechanisms to coordinate efforts to address child labor, including its worst forms.

V. GOVERNMENT POLICIES ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

As there is no evidence of a problem, there appears to be no need for policies to address child labor, including its worst forms.

VI. SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS CHILD LABOR

As there is no evidence of a problem, there appears to be no need for programs to address child labor, including its worst forms; however, a review found no evidence of current research on the worst forms of child labor in Dominica.(10, 14) In 2015, the Government of Dominica funded and participated in programs that may contribute to the prevention or elimination of child labor (Table 6).

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Table 6. Social Programs to Address Child Labor

Program	Description
Basic Needs Trust Fund (1979–2015)	Caribbean Development Bank-implemented program to reduce poverty through livelihood services, improved infrastructure, capacity-building projects, and technical services.(14, 15)
Education Trust Fund†	Ministry of Education (MOE) program that provides financial assistance for textbooks, transportation, and registration and exam fees to students in secondary school who would otherwise be unable to complete their education.(11, 16)
School Textbook Provision Scheme†	MOE program that subsidizes the cost of textbooks for primary and secondary school students.(11, 17)
School Feeding Program†	MOE program that provides lunch to primary school students in targeted areas.(11, 18)
CHANCES†	Ministry of Social Services, Family, and Gender Affairs program, supports an emergency residential shelter to provide short-term services to abused and neglected children. May accept victims of the worst forms of child labor.(1, 10, 13, 19)
Break the Silence Awareness Program† (2013–2015)	Ministry of Social Services, Family, and Gender Affairs program, raises awareness and encourages reporting of child abuse cases.(1) Managed by the Child Abuse Prevention Unit in the Social Welfare Division.(19)

† Program is funded by the Government of Dominica.

VII. SUGGESTED GOVERNMENT ACTIONS TO ELIMINATE THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

Based on the reporting above, the following actions would advance the continued prevention of child labor, including its worst forms, in Dominica (Table 7).

Table 7. Suggested Government Actions to Prevent Child Labor, Including its Worst Forms

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Legal Framework	Define the conditions, activities, and number of hours permissible for light work.	2014 – 2015
	Ensure that the minimum age for night work is 18 for all children or that children receive adequate training and that the health, safety, and morals of children are protected.	2015
	Enact legislation to expressly prohibit child prostitution and the using, procuring, or offering of a child for the production of pornography or pornographic performances.	2011 – 2015
	Prohibit the use of children in illicit activities, including the production and trafficking of drugs.	2014 – 2015
Enforcement	Make information for the MNSLI and the MOH regarding the annual funding levels and number of labor inspections publicly available.	2014 – 2015
	Employ a sufficient number of technical officers to provide adequate labor law enforcement.	2015
	Ensure that labor inspectors and criminal investigators receive training on the worst forms of child labor.	2015
Social Programs	Conduct research to determine whether any of the worst forms of child labor exist in Dominica.	2014 – 2015

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