

Although research found no evidence that child labor exists in Dominica, in 2021, the government made minimal advancement in efforts to prevent the worst forms of child labor. The government funded and participated in programs that may contribute to preventing child labor, including a program that improved school infrastructure and others that provided meals to students. However, Dominica's legal framework does not protect children from exploitative work outside of the school year, and the government has not determined the types of hazardous work prohibited for children. During the reporting period, the government did not respond to requests for information related to its efforts to address child labor.



I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Research found no evidence that child labor exists in Dominica. (1)

Table 1. Statistics on Children's Work and Education

Children	Age	Percent
Primary Completion Rate (%)		113.9

Data from 2016 published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2022. (2)







Based on a review of available information, Table 2 provides an overview of children's work by sector and activity.

Children from the Kalinago community face barriers to secondary education which could make them more vulnerable to the worst forms of child labor. Because there is no secondary school in the Kalinago territory, students encounter transportation and social integration challenges as they travel outside of the territory to attend school. (3-5) Schools have reopened after a year and a half of online learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic. (1)

II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR CHILD LABOR

Dominica has ratified all key international conventions concerning child labor (Table 2).

Table 2. 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 (Table 3). However, gaps exist in Dominica's legal framework to adequately protect children from the worst forms of child labor, including the minimum age for hazardous work.

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Table 3. Laws and Regulations on Child Labor

Standard	Meets International Standards	Age	Legislation
Minimum Age for Work	Yes	16	Articles 2 and 46 of the Education Act 1997 (6)
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	No		
Identification of Hazardous Occupations or Activities Prohibited for Children	No		
Prohibition of Forced Labor	No		Article 4 of the Constitution; Sections 2, 8, 10, and 13 of the Transnational Organized Crime (Prevention and Control) Act (7,8)
Prohibition of Child Trafficking	No		Sections 2, 8, 10, and 13 of the Transnational Organized Crime (Prevention and Control) Act (8)
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	No		Sections 2, 8, 10, and 13 of the Transnational Organized Crime (Prevention and Control) Act; Article 18 of the Sexual Offenses Act (8,9)
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities	No		
Minimum Age for Voluntary State Military Recruitment	N/A†		
Prohibition of Compulsory Recruitment of Children by (State) Military	N/A†		
Prohibition of Military Recruitment by Non-state Armed Groups	No		
Compulsory Education Age	Yes	16	Article 2 of the Education Act 1997 (6)
Free Public Education	Yes		Article 15 of the Education Act 1997 (6)

† Country has no standing military (10)

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. (6)

Pursuant to Section 7(1) of the Employment of Women, Young Persons, and Children Act, children under age 18 are prohibited from working at night, unless they are working with family members. The law does not otherwise prohibit the employment of children in work that is likely to jeopardize their health, safety, or morals. (11) Specifically, Dominica does not have national laws or regulations that define the types of hazardous work prohibited for children. The government also has not established a minimum age for hazardous work. (8) Dominica's laws related to forced labor are not sufficient because they do not criminally prohibit forced labor except when it results from human trafficking. In addition, laws related to child trafficking are not sufficient because they are limited to international human trafficking. (8) The government has not enacted laws or regulations explicitly prohibiting the use of children in pornography, pornographic performances, or illicit activities, including the production and trafficking of drugs. (5)

III. ENFORCEMENT OF LAWS ON CHILD LABOR

As there is no evidence of a problem, there appears to be no need for enforcement actions to address child labor, including its worst forms. However, the government has established institutional mechanisms for the enforcement of laws and regulations on child labor (Table 4).

Table 4. Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement

Organization/Agency	Role
Labor Division, Ministry of Justice, Immigration and National Security	Conducts inspections and enforces laws related to child labor. (1,3) Authorized to conduct unannounced inspections at any location with employees and to take legal action against employers violating child labor laws. (12) Reports to police and social services those cases in which children are found in exploitative labor situations. (1)
Ministry of Health and Social Services	Helps enforce laws related to child labor. Reports any children who are found to be in exploitative labor situations to the police. (1)
Police Force	Enforces criminal laws, including those related to child labor. (3)

IV. COORDINATION OF GOVERNMENT EFFORTS ON 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.

V. GOVERNMENT POLICIES ON CHILD LABOR

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

VI. SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS CHILD LABOR

In 2021, the government funded and participated in programs that may contribute to eliminating or preventing child labor (Table 5). However, gaps exist in these social programs, including lack of implementation.

Table 5. Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor

Program	Description
Basic Needs Trust Fund	Caribbean Development Bank-implemented program supervised by the Ministry for Ecclesiastical Affairs, Family, and Gender Affairs that aims to reduce poverty through livelihood services, improved infrastructure, capacity-building projects, and technical services. (13) During the reporting period, upgrades on 3 schools, costing an estimated \$2.3 million, were underway. (14)
Education Trust Fund†	Government-funded program implemented by the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development to provide financial assistance for textbooks, transportation, registration, and exam fees to students in secondary school who would otherwise be unable to complete their education. (15) Although the program was active during the reporting period, research could not determine what activities were implemented throughout 2021. (16)
School Feeding Program†	Government-funded program implemented by the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development to provide lunch to primary school students in targeted areas. (17) The program was active during the reporting period. (16)
Climate Resilience Agency of Dominica (CREAD) and Climate Resilience Act	Launched in 2018 in partnership with the Clinton Foundation. Funds, designs, procures, implements, and coordinates climate resilience projects, which include rebuilding and repairing major roads and infrastructure, including approximately 20 schools and 27 health facilities damaged by Hurricane Maria in 2017, and provides support for 8,500 farmers across the island. (18-20) In 2021, Dominica's former attorney general Francine Baron became CREAD's new chief executive officer. (21)
Chances†	Government-funded program implemented by the Ministry of Youth Development and Empowerment, Youth at Risk, Gender Affairs, Seniors Security, and Dominicans with Disabilities that supports an emergency residential shelter to provide short-term services to abused and neglected children. The shelter can accept victims of the worst forms of child labor. (22,23) The program was active during the reporting period, with 22 youths reported to be housed at the facility as of May 2021; however, research could not determine what activities were implemented throughout 2021. (16,24)

† Program is funded by the Government of Dominica

The Organization of Eastern Caribbean States and UNICEF published a National Child Protection Action Plan in May 2018 effective through early 2021 to guide the implementation of recommendations for Dominica's child justice framework. (25) Although the program was active during the reporting period, research was unable to determine whether Dominica has completed the recommendations or adopted the action plan. (16)

Although the government had existing social programs in 2021 that could address child labor, research was unable to determine whether activities were undertaken to implement most programs during the reporting period. (1,5)

VII. SUGGESTED GOVERNMENT ACTIONS TO ELIMINATE CHILD LABOR

Based on the reporting above, the following actions would advance the continued prevention of child labor in Dominica (Table 6).

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Table 6. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Legal Framework	Define the conditions, activities, and number of hours permissible for light work.	2014 – 2021
	Ensure that the minimum age for hazardous work is age 18 for all children.	2015 – 2021
	Determine and codify the types of hazardous work prohibited for children, in consultation with employers' and workers' organizations.	2018 – 2021
	Criminally prohibit forced labor.	2019 – 2021
	Criminally prohibit domestic child trafficking.	2019 – 2021
	Enact legislation to specifically prohibit using, procuring, or offering of a child for the production of pornography or pornographic performances.	2011 – 2021
	Prohibit the use of children in illicit activities, including in the production and trafficking of drugs.	2014 – 2021
Social Programs	Ensure that the law criminally prohibits the recruitment of children under age 18 by non-state armed groups.	2016 – 2021
	Enhance efforts to eliminate barriers and make education accessible for all children, including members of the Kalinago community who are vulnerable to the worst forms of child labor, by ensuring access to secondary education within the Kalinago territory.	2018 – 2021
	Adopt a national policy to improve Dominica's child justice framework as recommended by the National Child Protection Action Plan published in 2018 by the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States and UNICEF.	2020 – 2021
	Ensure that activities are undertaken to implement key social programs to address child labor during the reporting period and make information about implementation measures publicly available.	2020 – 2021

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