

# Guyana

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

The Government of Guyana seeks to discourage children from joining the workforce by offering school welfare subsidies to poor families.<sup>1147</sup> The government drafted a five-year National Educational Plan that includes improving strategies for access to education, and several government education projects target rural populations.<sup>1148</sup> UNICEF is also implementing an education development program that includes teacher training.<sup>1149</sup>

## Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

Statistics on the number of working children under the age of 15 in Guyana are unavailable. However, children work in agriculture (mainly on family farms), domestic service, saw-mills, street vending, river mining, and textile factories.<sup>1150</sup> The prostitution of children also occurs, particularly in tourist areas.<sup>1151</sup>

Primary education is free and compulsory for 6 years, beginning at the age of 5 years, 9 months.<sup>1152</sup> In 1996, the gross primary enrollment rate was 96.4 percent, and in 1995, the net primary enrollment rate was 87.3 percent.<sup>1153</sup> Attendance rates are slightly lower among rural populations.<sup>1154</sup>

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<sup>1147</sup> Earl Boatwain, Guyana Ministry of Education, interview by USDOL official.

<sup>1148</sup> *Guyana Human Development Report 1996*, UNDP, at <http://www.sdn.org.gy/undp-docs/ghdr/> on 10/18/01. Projects include the Parent Education Participation Project and the Escuela Nueva Project. The government also implemented a Primary Education Improvement Project with a loan from the IDB. See also UNESCO, *The Education for All (EFA) 2000 Assessment: Country Reports—Guyana* [hereinafter *EFA 2000 Assessment*], at [http://www2.unesco.org/wef/countryreports/guyana/rapport\\_2html](http://www2.unesco.org/wef/countryreports/guyana/rapport_2html) on 10/18/01.

<sup>1149</sup> *The Education for Development News Bulletin*, November 1999, vol. 10, no. 2, at [http://www.unicef.org/pdeduc/education/pdf/edev\\_nov99\\_ccrc\\_eng.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/pdeduc/education/pdf/edev_nov99_ccrc_eng.pdf) on 10/18/01.

<sup>1150</sup> UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, *Implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Initial Reports Submitted by States Parties Under Articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant, Addendum, Guyana, para 62*, E/1990/5/Add. 27, June 7, 1995.

<sup>1151</sup> *Human Rights Report on the Trafficking of Women and Children: Guyana*, The Protection Project Database [hereinafter *Human Rights Report*], at <http://www.protectionproject.org>. See also “CSEC Overview: Guyana,” ECPAT Database, at [http://www.ecpat.net/eng/Ecpat\\_inter/projects/monitoring/online\\_database/index.asp](http://www.ecpat.net/eng/Ecpat_inter/projects/monitoring/online_database/index.asp) on 10/18/01.

<sup>1152</sup> Guyana, *National Development Strategy, Vol. 3: The Social Sectors*, at <http://www.guyana.org/NDS/NDS.htm> on 10/18/01.

<sup>1153</sup> *World Development Indicators 2001* (Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 2001) [CD-ROM].

<sup>1154</sup> UNESCO reported that attendance rates in the “hinterland” regions are about 10 to 15 percent lower than the national average, which is attributable to inaccessibility of schools, particularly during the rainy season. See *EFA 2000 Assessment*.

## Child Labor Laws and Enforcement

The Employment of Young Persons and Children Act of 1999 sets the minimum age for employment at 15 years. Children under the age of 18 are prohibited from work that could jeopardize their health, safety, or morals.<sup>1155</sup> The Constitution prohibits forced labor.<sup>1156</sup> While there are no laws that specifically prevent trafficking in persons or prostitution, the Criminal Code of Guyana prohibits procuring a female for the purpose of prostitution.<sup>1157</sup> The Criminal Law Offenses Act establishes a relatively young age of consent for sexual relations at 13 years.<sup>1158</sup> The Ministry of Labor is responsible for the enforcement of child labor legislation through inspections.<sup>1159</sup> Guyana ratified ILO Convention 138 on April 15, 1998 and ILO Convention 182 on January 15, 2001.<sup>1160</sup>

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<sup>1155</sup> U.S. Embassy— Georgetown, unclassified telegram no. 999, October 2001 [hereinafter unclassified telegram 999].

<sup>1156</sup> Constitution of Guyana (1980), Article 140(2), at <http://www.guyanaguide.com/constitution/> on 10/18/01.

<sup>1157</sup> Criminal Code, Article 73, as cited in *Human Rights Report*.

<sup>1158</sup> Criminal Law Offences Act at Chapter 8.01, Section 61, as cited in Interpol, “Sexual Offences Laws: Guyana,” at <http://www.interpol.int/Public/Children/SexualAbuse/NationalLaws/csaGuyana.asp> on 10/18/01.

<sup>1159</sup> Unclassified telegram 999.

<sup>1160</sup> ILOLEX database: Guyana at <http://ilolex.ilo.ch:1567/english/> on 10/18/01.

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