

Barbados

Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

Statistics on the number of working children under the age of 15 in Barbados are unavailable,³⁷⁶ and there is limited information on the nature and extent of children's work. According to the Ministry of Labor, Sports, and Public Sector Reform, there were no known cases or evidence of child labor and the worst forms of child labor in Barbados.³⁷⁷ A rapid assessment conducted in 2002 by the ILO's Caribbean office found that children in Barbados worked selling fruit, braiding hair, grooming horses, and helping in shops.³⁷⁸ The rapid assessment also found that most children who worked did so part-time, after school and on weekends.³⁷⁹ The report also indicated evidence of commercial sexual exploitation of children and other worst forms of child labor, such as involvement in drug sales and hazardous activities such as construction.³⁸⁰ According to the World Bank, children are becoming involved in commercial sexual exploitation in order to pay for basic needs, such as school-related fees and food.³⁸¹

Education is free of charge in government institutions and compulsory for children ages 5 to 16 years. Laws provide strict penalties designed to encourage school attendance. Parents can be fined, and school attendance officers fined and/or imprisoned for up to 3 months for failure to enforce attendance.³⁸² In 2001, the gross primary enrollment rate was 108.3 percent and the net primary enrollment rate was 99.8 percent.³⁸³ Gross and net enrollment ratios are based on the number of students formally registered in

³⁷⁶ LABORSTAT, 1A- Total and economically active population, by age group (Thousands) [Database], Geneva, 2004; available from <http://laborsta.ilo.org>.

³⁷⁷ See U.S. Embassy- Bridgetown, *unclassified telegram no. 1126*, September 11, 2001. See also The World Bank, *World Development Indicators 2004* [CD-ROM], Washington, D.C., 2004.

³⁷⁸ Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade Government of Barbados, *No. IR/2005/09*, submitted in response to U.S. Department of Labor Federal Register Notice (July 14, 2004) "Request for Information on Efforts by Certain Countries to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labor", Bridgetown, January 17, 2005.

³⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁸⁰ International Labor Organization, *Child Labour in Barbados*, [Summary of Research Findings based on a Rapid Assessment Study conducted by the International Labour Organization, Caribbean Office] 2002 [cited February 3, 2005]; available from http://64.233.161.104/search?q=cache:khAaHt6qIDgJ:www.ilocarib.org.tt/infosources/child_labour/fact_sheets/BarbdosFS.pdf+apid+assessment+barbados&hl=en.

³⁸¹ The World Bank, *Project Appraisal Document on a Proposed IDA Grant in the Amount of SDR 6.1 Million Equivalent to the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) for The Pan Caribbean Partnership Against HIV/AIDS Project*, The World Bank, Washington, D.C., March 4, 2004; available from http://www-wds.worldbank.org/servlet/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2004/03/09/000160016_20040309103136/Rendered/INDEX/272670LCR.txt.

³⁸² See U.S. Embassy- Bridgetown, *unclassified telegram no. 1126*. See also UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Consideration of Reports Submitted by States Parties under Article 44 of the Convention*, CRC/C/3/Add.45, United Nations, Geneva, February 1997, para. 173.

³⁸³ The World Bank, *World Development Indicators 2004*. Most children complete primary school at the age of 11, at which point they must take a standardized test, which determines whether the children qualify for formal secondary school or a trade school. The government notes that the population figures used to determine the net and gross education rates were extrapolated from the 1990 census and therefore may skew the enrollment rates. See Mr. Glenroy Cumberbatch, *EFA in the Caribbean: Assessment 2000, Barbados Country Report*, 2000 [cited June 28, 2003]; available from http://www2.unesco.org/wef/countryreports/barbados/rapport_2.html. For an explanation of gross primary enrollment

primary school and therefore do not necessarily reflect actual school attendance. Recent primary school attendance statistics are not available for Barbados, though the rapid assessment found that most children attended school on a regular basis.³⁸⁴

Child Labor Laws and Enforcement

The Miscellaneous Provisions of the Employment Act set the minimum age for employment in Barbados at 16 years, and children are not permitted to work during school hours.³⁸⁵ The Employment Act stipulates that young people ages 16 to 18 cannot perform work during the night if it is likely to harm their health, safety, or morals.³⁸⁶ Vocational training and apprenticeships are the only permissible types of work that young people can engage in during the night.³⁸⁷ In addition, the Ministry of Labor must authorize apprenticeships and vocational training. A child or young person undertaking an apprenticeship must have a certificate from a medical professional certifying that the apprentice or trainee is fit to meet the requirements of the job.³⁸⁸ The Employment Act further prohibits children or young people from working in industrial activities or on ships, except when children's employment is in a family business or authorized by the Ministry of Education.³⁸⁹ The Police Force and the Department of Labor have jurisdiction over the monitoring and enforcement of child labor legislation,³⁹⁰ and labor inspectors conduct spot checks of businesses and check records to verify compliance with the law.³⁹¹

The Constitution prohibits forced labor.³⁹² Procurement of any person for prostitution is illegal and punishable by up to 15 years imprisonment.³⁹³

and/or attendance rates that are greater than 100 percent, please see the definitions of gross primary enrollment rate and gross primary attendance rate in the glossary of this report.

³⁸⁴ Government of Barbados, *No. IR/2005/09*.

³⁸⁵ The Employment Act stipulates that no person may employ children of compulsory school age during school hours. See U.S. Embassy- Bridgetown, *unclassified telegram no. 1126*. See also UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Consideration of Reports*, para. 202.

³⁸⁶ Government of Barbados, *No. IR/2005/09*.

³⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, Section 8 of the Employment Act, Chapter 346.

³⁸⁸ The Employment Act, Sections 2, 20, 29, and 30 also establishes guidelines and penalties to ensure that the apprenticeship or training does not become exploitative. See U.S. Embassy- Bridgetown, *unclassified telegram no. 1126*.

³⁸⁹ Government of Barbados, *No. IR/2005/09*. Sections 10-12 of the Employment Act.

³⁹⁰ According to the Employment Act, Section 17 and 19, police have the authority to enter any business under suspicion of using child laborers in order to inspect the facilities. According to the Employment Act, Section 15, the penalty for violating child labor legislation is imprisonment for up to 12 months and/or a fine of up to USD 1,000. See U.S. Embassy- Bridgetown, *unclassified telegram no. 1126*.

³⁹¹ U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2003: Barbados*, Washington, D.C., February 25, 2004, Section 6d; available from www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2003/27885pf.htm. It has been reported that the government is willing to investigate and inspect cases of child labor if incidents of child labor should arise. See U.S. Embassy- Bridgetown, *unclassified telegram no. 1126*.

³⁹² *Constitution of Barbados*, (1966), Chapter III, Section 14 (2); available from <http://www.georgetown.edu/LatAmerPolitical/Constitutions/Barbados/barbados.html>.

³⁹³ *Criminal Code*, Article 13; available from <http://209.190.246.239/protectionproject/statutesPDF/Barbadosf.pdf>. Any adult who has sexual intercourse with a child under 16 years of age may be imprisoned for 15 years. If the child is over the age of 16 years the person may be imprisoned for 10 years. See *Criminal Code*.

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

In 2004, the Ministry of Labor and Social Security established a National Child Labor Committee. The National Child Labor Committee's immediate objectives include improving inter-agency cooperation, raising the awareness of key stakeholders, and coordinating relevant legislation.³⁹⁴

In 2004, the World Bank, in partnership with CARICOM and other international donor organizations, launched a regional HIV/AIDS prevention project in the Caribbean, including Barbados. This project contains a component focused on prevention of HIV transmission among young people. It will provide support to orphans, increase access to HIV/AIDS prevention and services for out of school youth, integrate HIV/AIDS information into reproductive health programs, and promote peer counseling for youth, parents and teachers.

In June 2004, Barbados hosted a meeting of Caribbean experts to launch a new IOM research initiative that will provide information on the extent of trafficking in persons and build capacity of local government to address trafficking in persons issues in the Caribbean.³⁹⁵

In 2001, the World Bank approved a loan to the Government of Barbados for USD 15.15 million to finance multi-sector technical assistance to address the proliferation of HIV/AIDS in Barbados. This project involves multiple ministries, including the Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs, and Sports.³⁹⁶ Over the next 5 years³⁹⁷ it will reach youth by incorporating sex education into school curricula, training teachers, funding youth groups and centers, developing peer education programs, and sponsoring cultural events to promote awareness.³⁹⁸

In 1998, the Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs, and Sports received USD 213 million in financing for a 7-year Education Sector Enhancement Program. Government funding for the project was supplemented by financing from the IDB and the Caribbean Development Bank.³⁹⁹ The Education Sector Enhancement

Selected Child Labor Measures Adopted by Governments	
Ratified Convention 138 01/04/2000	✓
Ratified Convention 182 10/23/2000	✓
ILO-IPEC Associated Member	✓
National Plan for Children	
National Child Labor Action Plan	
Sector Action Plan	

³⁹⁴ Government of Barbados, *No. IR/2005/09*.

³⁹⁵ Jean-Philippe Chauzy, *Barbados- Trafficking in Women and Children in the Caribbean*, press release, International Organization for Migration, June 8, 2004; available from <http://www.iom.int/en/news/pbn080604.shtml>.

³⁹⁶ The World Bank, *Project Appraisal Document for Proposed Loans in the Amount of US\$15.15 Million to Barbados*, The World Bank, Washington, D.C., June 5, 2001; available from http://www.wds.worldbank.org/servlet/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2001/07/11/000094946_01061204004344/Rendered/PDF/multi0page.pdf.

³⁹⁷ The World Bank, *Caribbean HIV/AIDS I-Barbados*, previously online, The World Bank, Washington, D.C., August 17, 2004; available from http://www.wds.worldbank.org/servlet/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2001/08/04/000094946_0107704151672/Rendered/PDF/multi0page.pdf [hard copy available].

³⁹⁸ The World Bank, *WB: Project Appraisal Document for Proposed Loans in the Amount of US\$15.15 Million to Barbados*.

³⁹⁹ The Inter-American Development Bank, *Education Sector Enhancement Program*, The Inter-American Development Bank, Washington, D.C., 1998; available from <http://www.iadb.org/exr/doc98/apr/ba1154e.pdf>.

Program, known as “Edutech,” is designed to rehabilitate school buildings, ensure that primary and secondary schools are equipped with computers, and train teachers to help children become computer literate.⁴⁰⁰ As part of the Edutech initiative, the Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs, and Sports will train teachers, rehabilitate school facilities, improve technological infrastructure, and update the curriculum.⁴⁰¹

⁴⁰⁰ Mr. Glenroy Cumberbatch, *EFA 2000 Report: Barbados*, Part II, Analytic Section

⁴⁰¹ Ministry of Education Youth Affairs and Sports, *Edutech: The Learning Revolution*, Government of Barbados, [online] n.d. [cited August 17, 2004]; available from <http://www.edutech2000.gov.bb>.