

Mauritius

| <i>Selected Statistics and Indicators on Child Labor</i> | |
|---|---------------------------|
| Percent of children 5-14 estimated as working: | Unavailable |
| Minimum age of work: | 16 ²⁷⁵³ |
| Age to which education is compulsory: | 16 ²⁷⁵⁴ |
| Free public education: | Yes ²⁷⁵⁵ |
| Gross primary enrollment rate in 2005: | 102% ²⁷⁵⁶ |
| Net primary enrollment rate in 2005: | 95% ²⁷⁵⁷ |
| Percent of children 5-14 attending school: | Unavailable |
| As of 2001, percent of primary school entrants likely to reach grade 5: | 99% ²⁷⁵⁸ |
| Ratified Convention 138: | 7/30/1990 ²⁷⁵⁹ |
| Ratified Convention 182: | 6/8/2000 ²⁷⁶⁰ |
| ILO-IPEC participating country: | No ²⁷⁶¹ |

Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

While the incidence of child labor in Mauritius is low,²⁷⁶² children work as informal street traders; in agriculture and animal rearing; in garment making; and in bakeries, restaurants, gas stations, shops, woodworking workshops, and other small businesses.²⁷⁶³ Commercial sexual exploitation of girls as young as 13 years reportedly occurs in Mauritius. Some girls are forced

²⁷⁵³ Government of Mauritius, *Report of the Government of Mauritius on Worst Forms of Child Labour*, submitted in response to U.S. Department of Labor Federal Register Notice (December 5, 2006) "Request for Information on Efforts by Certain Countries to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labor", Washington, DC, January 29, 2007.

²⁷⁵⁴ Government of Mauritius, *Report on Worst Forms of Child Labour, Republic of Mauritius*, submitted in response to U.S. Department of Labor Federal Register Notice (December 5, 2006) "Request for Information on Efforts by Certain Countries to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labor", Washington, DC, February 20, 2007.

²⁷⁵⁵ U.S. Department of State, "Mauritius," in *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2006*, Washington, DC, March 6, 2007, Section 5; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2006/78747.htm>.

²⁷⁵⁶ UNESCO Institute for Statistics, *Gross Enrolment Ratio. Primary. Total*, accessed December 20, 2006; available from <http://stats.uis.unesco.org/>.

²⁷⁵⁷ UNESCO Institute for Statistics, *Net Enrolment Rate. Primary. Total*, accessed December 20, 2006; available from <http://stats.uis.unesco.org/>.

²⁷⁵⁸ UNESCO Institute for Statistics, *Survival Rate to Grade 5. Total*, accessed December 18, 2006; available from <http://stats.uis.unesco.org/>.

²⁷⁵⁹ ILO, *Ratifications by Country*, accessed December 14, 2006; available from <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/newratframeE.htm>.

²⁷⁶⁰ Ibid.

²⁷⁶¹ ILO, *IPEC Action Against Child Labour- Highlights 2006*, Geneva, October 2006, 29; available from http://www.ilo.org/iloroot/docstore/ipcc/prod/eng/20061019_Implementationreport_eng_Web.pdf.

²⁷⁶² U.S. Embassy- Port Louis, *reporting*, December 19, 2006.

²⁷⁶³ Government of Mauritius, *Comments from the Government of the Republic of Mauritius*, 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", Washington, D.C., September 27, 2004. See also U.S. Embassy- Port Louis, *reporting*, December 19, 2006. See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Mauritius," Section 6d. See also ILO, *Report of the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (C. 138)*, ILO Conference, 73rd session, Geneva, 2003; available from <http://webfusion.ilo.org/public/db/standards/normes/appl/index.cfm?lang=EN>.

into the commercial sex industry by family members, while others are exploited by prostitution rings.²⁷⁶⁴

Child Labor Laws and Enforcement

In December 2006, the Government of Mauritius raised the minimum age of employment from 15 to 16 years, in line with the minimum age of compulsory education.²⁷⁶⁵ It is illegal to employ a young person under age 18 in activities that are dangerous, harmful to health, or otherwise unsuitable, or to require a young person to work more than 10 hours per day or between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m.²⁷⁶⁶ In addition, young persons who have not been fully instructed or are inadequately supervised are prohibited from operating dangerous machinery. The law also provides for the health and safety of young persons working aboard ships.²⁷⁶⁷

The Ministry of Labor, Industrial Relations and Employment enforces child labor laws, and the U.S. Department of State reports that child labor inspections are frequent. Employers found in violation of child labor laws may be imprisoned for up to 1 year. No cases of child labor were found in 2006.²⁷⁶⁸ The government's Office of the Ombudsperson for Children investigates violations of child rights and is empowered to investigate cases of unlawful employment of children.²⁷⁶⁹

The law prohibits forced labor and slavery, and there is no system of military conscription.²⁷⁷⁰ Child pornography and causing, inciting, or allowing any child to engage in prostitution are crimes punishable by imprisonment of up to 8 years, or up to 15 years if the victim is mentally handicapped.²⁷⁷¹ The law also prohibits the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring, or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation, either outside Mauritius or within its borders. These crimes are punishable by up to 15 years of imprisonment.²⁷⁷² A dedicated unit within the

²⁷⁶⁴ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Mauritius," Section 5. See also ILO, *Report of the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (C. 182)*, ILO Conference, 76th session, Geneva, 2006; available from <http://webfusion.ilo.org/public/db/standards/normes/appl/index.cfm?lang=EN>. See also U.S. Department of State, "Mauritius (Tier 2)," in *Trafficking in Persons Report- 2006*, Washington, DC, June 5, 2006; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2006/65989.htm>.

²⁷⁶⁵ Government of Mauritius, *Report of the Government of Mauritius on Worst Forms of Child Labour*. See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Mauritius," Section 6d.

²⁷⁶⁶ Government of Mauritius, *Report of the Government of Mauritius on Worst Forms of Child Labour*.

²⁷⁶⁷ Government of Mauritius, *Comments from the Government of Mauritius*.

²⁷⁶⁸ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Mauritius," Section 6d. See also U.S. Embassy- Port Louis, *reporting, December 19, 2006*.

²⁷⁶⁹ U.S. Embassy- Port Louis, *reporting, December 19, 2006*.

²⁷⁷⁰ *Constitution of the Republic of Mauritius*, (March 12, 1968); available from <http://confinder.richmond.edu>. See also Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, "Mauritius," in *Child Soldiers Global Report 2004*, London, November 17, 2004; available from <http://www.child-soldiers.org/resources/global-reports>.

²⁷⁷¹ Government of Mauritius, *Report on Worst Forms of Child Labour, 2007*. See also *The Child Protection Act*, Article 4, Sections 14, 18, as cited in Interpol, *Legislation of Interpol Member States on Sexual Offences Against Children: Mauritius*, June 21, 2006; available from <http://www.interpol.int/Public/Children/SexualAbuse/NationalLaws/csaMauritius.asp>.

²⁷⁷² Government of Mauritius, *The Child Protection (Amendment) Act No. 34*, (December 16, 2005), Article 13A, Sections 1, 2; available from [http://supremecourt.intnet.mu/Entry/Act%202005/No.%20034-CHILD%20PROTECTION%20\(AMENDMENT\)%20ACT%202005.doc](http://supremecourt.intnet.mu/Entry/Act%202005/No.%20034-CHILD%20PROTECTION%20(AMENDMENT)%20ACT%202005.doc).

police force, the Minors Brigade, investigates cases of child prostitution.²⁷⁷³ During 2005, the most recent year for which data are available, six cases of underage prostitution were prosecuted. The U.S. Department of State reports that despite the efforts of law enforcement officials, locating and arresting criminals involved in child prostitution remains a challenge because of the illicit nature of these activities.²⁷⁷⁴

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

The Government of Mauritius is carrying out a National Plan of Action to combat the commercial sexual exploitation of children.²⁷⁷⁵ Among other goals, the plan aims to develop indicators for monitoring child sexual exploitation and empower the public to protect children against commercial sexual exploitation.²⁷⁷⁶ The government operates a drop-in center that provides counseling and educational services to children exploited in the commercial sex industry,²⁷⁷⁷ and it funds local NGOs to educate the public on the issue of commercial sexual exploitation of children.²⁷⁷⁸ The Ministry of Women's Rights, Child Development and Family Welfare operates a hotline to respond to children in need of immediate support services, a shelter for children, and a Child Watch Network to detect children at risk and refer them to appropriate authorities.²⁷⁷⁹

²⁷⁷³ U.S. Department of State, "Trafficking in Persons Report- 2006: Mauritius."

²⁷⁷⁴ Ibid.

²⁷⁷⁵ Government of Mauritius, *Report on Worst Forms of Child Labour, 2007*. See also UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Consideration of Reports Submitted by States Parties Under Article 44 of the Convention: Concluding Observations: Mauritius*, Geneva, March 17, 2006, para 64; available from [http://www.unhcr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/\(Symbol\)/CRC.C.MUS.CO.2.En?OpenDocument](http://www.unhcr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/(Symbol)/CRC.C.MUS.CO.2.En?OpenDocument).

²⁷⁷⁶ UN Economic and Social Council, *Rights of the Child: Report Submitted by Juan Miguel Petit, Special Rapporteur on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography*, Commission on Human Rights, 60th session, Geneva, 2004, para 52; available from <http://www.unhcr.org/home/RSDCOI/403e35df4.pdf>.

²⁷⁷⁷ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Mauritius," Section 5.

²⁷⁷⁸ U.S. Department of State, "Trafficking in Persons Report- 2006: Mauritius."

²⁷⁷⁹ Ministry of Women, Family Welfare, and Child Development of Mauritius, *Speech by Hon. Arianne Navarre Marie, Minister of Women's Rights, Child Development & Family Welfare at the Opening Ceremony of the Workshop on Children's Rights Observatory*, November 17, 2004; available from http://www.gov.mu/portal/site/women-site/menuitem.cd538e63b1742c5aa0a07651a0208a0c/?content_id=b9f8757ff0658010VgnVCM100000ca6a12acRCRD.