

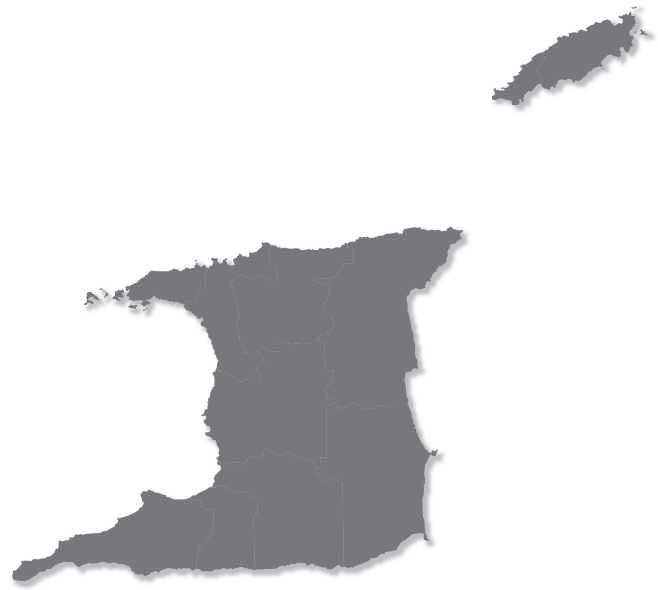
# Trinidad and Tobago

*The Government of Trinidad and Tobago continues to implement its national plan of action for children. However, children are found working in agricultural and domestic service. Gaps remain in the legislation to protect children from the worst forms of child labor, including a lack of a minimum age for hazardous work.*

## Statistics on Working Children and School Attendance

Children	Age	Percent
Working	5-14 yrs.	3.0*
Attending School	5-14 yrs.	97.8
Combining Work and School	7-14 yrs	3.3

\* Population of working children: 5,975



## Prevalence and Sectoral Distribution of the Worst Forms of Child Labor<sup>5778</sup>

Available information indicates that the worst forms of child labor are not a large problem in Trinidad and Tobago. However, some children engage in the worst forms of child labor, primarily in the small-scale agricultural sector, which commonly involves activities such as the use of potentially dangerous machines, tools, and pesticides and carrying heavy loads. Children also work in domestic service, which may involve long hours and put them at risk of physical and sexual exploitation.<sup>5779</sup> Although evidence is limited, children may be engaged in prostitution.<sup>5780</sup>

## Laws and Regulations on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

Trinidad and Tobago's Miscellaneous Provisions (Minimum Age for Admission to Employment) Act 2007 sets the minimum age for employment at 16.<sup>5781</sup> It also prohibits children younger than age 18 from working between 10:00 p.m. and 5:00 a.m., except in family enterprises.<sup>5782</sup> No current law establishes a minimum age for hazardous work.<sup>5783</sup>

	C138, Minimum Age	✓
	C182, Worst Forms of Child Labor	✓
	CRC	✓
	CRC Optional Protocol on Armed Conflict	No
	CRC Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution, and Child Pornography	No
	Palermo Protocol on Trafficking in Persons	✓
	Minimum Age for Work	16
	Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	No
	Compulsory Education Age	12
	Free Public Education	Yes

Education is free and compulsory but only through age 12.<sup>5784</sup> This standard makes children ages 12 to 15 particularly vulnerable to the worst forms of child labor as they are not required to be in school but are not legally permitted to work.

The Constitution prohibits forced or compulsory labor of children.<sup>5785</sup> The Sexual Offences Act and the Children Act prohibit the commercial sexual exploitation of children, including prostitution.<sup>5786</sup> Traffickers can be prosecuted under kidnapping and immigration laws.<sup>5787</sup>

Trinidad and Tobago has no compulsory military service, and the minimum age for recruitment to the armed forces is 18. However, children between ages 16 and 18 willing to join the armed forces may do so with written approval from a parent or guardian.<sup>5788</sup>

### **Institutional Mechanisms for Coordination and Enforcement**

The Government has established a multiagency Human Trafficking Task Force to draft legislation, develop victim assistance policies and raise public awareness. Trafficking legislation is currently being drafted based on the Task Force recommendations accepted by the Cabinet during the reporting period.<sup>5789</sup>

The Children's Authority is responsible for ensuring the well-being of children but is not currently operational. The Government established the Child Protection Task Force in October 2010 to protect children and educate communities about child abuse, including child labor, until the Children's Authority is active.<sup>5790</sup>

The Ministry of Labor and Small and Micro-Enterprise (MLSME), the Ministry of the People and Social Development, the police and the family courts are responsible for monitoring and enforcing child labor laws.<sup>5791</sup> The Labor Inspectorate Unit (LIU) of MLSME investigates child labor violations in the workplace. It enforces hazardous labor laws through the Occupational Safety and Health Authority and forced child labor laws together with the Ministry of the People and Social Development.<sup>5792</sup> LIU employed

15 inspectors. According to government officials, this number is insufficient and LIU requested funding for 40 additional inspectors.<sup>5793</sup> During the reporting period, LIU conducted 935 labor inspections and identified no cases of child labor.<sup>5794</sup> However, the Government has not established mechanisms for monitoring informal work in sectors such as agriculture and domestic service, in which most children are working.<sup>5795</sup>

The police services handle crimes, such as trafficking of children for the purposes of commercial sexual exploitation and selling drugs.<sup>5796</sup> No investigations or prosecutions were carried out for any such crimes.<sup>5797</sup>

### **Government Policies on the Worst Forms of Child Labor**

The Ministry of the People and Social Development continued implementing a 4-year National Plan of Action for Children (2006-2010), which includes specific goals for combating commercial sexual exploitation of children and exploitative child labor.<sup>5798</sup>

Research found no evidence of efforts to collect data on the nature and incidence of the worst forms of child labor, which could be used to guide policy and inform programs.

### **Social Programs to Eliminate or Prevent the Worst Forms of Child Labor**

The Public Sector Investment Program received funding for 2010 to create a comprehensive public awareness campaign focusing on child labor.<sup>5799</sup> However, research found no evidence that a general public awareness campaign was ever implemented.<sup>5800</sup>

There is no evidence of programs to address the two most common worst forms of child labor—agriculture and domestic work.

**Based on the reporting above, the following actions would advance the reduction of the worst forms of child labor in Trinidad and Tobago:**

**IN THE AREA OF LAWS AND REGULATIONS:**

- Legally specify a minimum age for hazardous employment.
- Raise the age of compulsory education to 16, the established minimum age for work.

**IN THE AREA OF POLICIES:**

- Collect data on the nature and incidence of the worst forms of child labor to guide policy and enforcement.
- Establish mechanisms for monitoring the worst forms of child labor in informal work, including in agriculture and domestic service.

**IN THE AREA OF PROGRAMS:**

- Implement the planned public awareness campaign.
- Implement programs to address the worst forms of child labor, including in agriculture and domestic service.

<sup>5778</sup> Data provided in the chart at the beginning of this country report are based on UCW analysis of ILO SIMPOC, UNICEF MICS, and the World Bank surveys, child Economic Activity, School Attendance, and Combined Working and Studying Rates, 2005-2011. Data on working children and school attendance are from 2006. Data on children combining work and school are from 2008. Reliable data on the worst forms of child labor are especially difficult to collect given the often hidden or illegal nature of the worst forms. As a result, statistics and information on children's work in general are reported in this section, which may or may not include the worst forms of child labor. For more information on sources used, the definition of working children, and other indicators used in this report, please see the "Children's Work and Education Statistics: Sources and Definitions" section of this report.

<sup>5779</sup> U.S. Embassy- Port of Spain, reporting, March 25, 2011, 2.

<sup>5780</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Trinidad and Tobago," in Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2010, Washington, DC, April 8, 2011, section 6; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2010/wha/154521.htm>.

<sup>5781</sup> Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, Miscellaneous Provisions (Minimum Age for Admission to Employment), Act No. 3 of 2007, (February 26, 2007); available from <http://www.ttparliament.org/legislations/a2007-03.pdf>.

<sup>5782</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2010: Trinidad and Tobago," section 7d. See also U.S. Embassy- Port of Spain, reporting, March 25, 2011, 3.

<sup>5783</sup> ILO Committee of Experts, Individual Direct Request concerning Worst Forms of Child Labor, 1999 (No. 182) Trinidad and Tobago (ratification: 2003) Submitted: 2009, February 7, 2011, para 4; available from <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/iloquery.htm>.

<sup>5784</sup> Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, Education Act, (1966), article 76; available from [http://www.vision2020.info.tt/pdf/Policies%20and%20Procedures/strategic\\_Corporate%20Plan/Education%20Act.pdf](http://www.vision2020.info.tt/pdf/Policies%20and%20Procedures/strategic_Corporate%20Plan/Education%20Act.pdf).

<sup>5785</sup> Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, The Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago with Reforms Through 2000, (August 1, 1976); available from <http://pdba.georgetown.edu/Constitutions/Trinidad/trinidad76.html>.

<sup>5786</sup> Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, Sexual Offences Act, Act 27 of 1986, (1986), article 17; available from [http://rgd.legalaffairs.gov.tt/Laws2/Alphabetical\\_List/lawspdfs/11.28.pdf](http://rgd.legalaffairs.gov.tt/Laws2/Alphabetical_List/lawspdfs/11.28.pdf). See also U.S. Embassy- Port of Spain, reporting, March 25, 2011, 3.

<sup>5787</sup> U.S. Embassy- Port of Spain, reporting, March 2, 2011, section 4-C.

<sup>5788</sup> Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, "Trinidad and Tobago," in Child Soldiers Global Report 2008, London, 2008; available from [http://www.childsoldiersglobalreport.org/files/country\\_pdfs/FINAL\\_2008\\_Global\\_Report.pdf](http://www.childsoldiersglobalreport.org/files/country_pdfs/FINAL_2008_Global_Report.pdf).

<sup>5789</sup> U.S. Embassy- Port of Spain, reporting, March 25, 2011, 4. See also U.S. Department of State, "Trinidad and Tobago," in Trafficking in Persons Report- 2010, Washington, DC, June 14, 2010; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2010/>.

<sup>5790</sup> Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, Act No. 14 of 2008: An Act to Amend the Children's Authority Act, 2000, First Session, Ninth Parliament (2008), article 9; available from <http://www.ttparliament.org/legislations/a2008-14.pdf>. See also U.S. Embassy- Port of Spain, reporting, March 25, 2011, 4.

<sup>5791</sup> U.S. Embassy- Port of Spain, reporting, March 25, 2011, 4.

<sup>5792</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>5793</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>5794</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>5795</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>5796</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>5797</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>5798</sup> Ministry of Social Development, Caribbean Sub-Regional Meeting to Assess the Implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD)- 15 Years After Its Adoption, Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, St. John's, Antigua and Barbuda, 2009, 8; available from [http://www.cepal.org/celade/noticias/paginas/6/37126/ICPD15\\_CR\\_TrinTob.pdf](http://www.cepal.org/celade/noticias/paginas/6/37126/ICPD15_CR_TrinTob.pdf). See also U.S. Embassy- Port of Spain, reporting, March 25, 2011, 8-9.

<sup>5799</sup> U.S. Embassy- Port of Spain, reporting, February 17, 2010, 8.

<sup>5800</sup> U.S. Embassy- Port of Spain official, E-mail communication to USDOL official, April 5, 2011.