

## East Timor

### *Selected Statistics and Indicators on Child Labor*

Percent of children ages 5-14 estimated as working:	Unavailable
Minimum age for admission to work:	15 <sup>1388</sup>
Age to which education is compulsory:	Not defined <sup>1389</sup>
Free public education:	Yes <sup>1390*</sup>
Gross primary enrollment rate in 2003:	146% <sup>1391</sup>
Net primary enrollment rate:	Unavailable
Percent of children 5-14 attending school:	Unavailable
Percent of primary school entrants likely to reach grade 5:	Unavailable
Ratified Convention 138:	No <sup>1392</sup>
Ratified Convention 182:	No <sup>1393</sup>
ILO-IPEC participating country:	No <sup>1394</sup>
*Guaranteed by law, but no system has been established to ensure that education is available.	

### Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

In East Timor, many children work in agriculture;<sup>1395</sup> some children work in the streets of the capital, Dili, selling items and washing cars.<sup>1396</sup> There are unconfirmed reports of children used to smuggle goods across the border into Indonesia.<sup>1397</sup>

Authorities have recognized that child trafficking is a problem, but there is little information about the nature of the trafficking. Most trafficked children are brought to East Timor for prostitution. There have been reports of girls trafficked into East Timor, but their countries of origin are unknown.<sup>1398</sup> Although East Timor was not previously considered a source country, starting in 2006, there is evidence that East Timorese girls are targeted for trafficking.<sup>1399</sup> There

<sup>1388</sup> U.S. Department of State, "East Timor," in *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2006*, Washington, DC, March 6, 2007, section 6d; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2006/78772.htm>.

<sup>1389</sup> Ibid., section 5. See also Government of East Timor, *Constitution of the Democratic Republic of East Timor*, (2002), article 59; available from

<http://www.eastimorlawjournal.org/LAWSINDEPENDENCE/ConstitutionofRDTLinEnglish.html>.

<sup>1390</sup> U.S. Department of State, "East Timor," in *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2005*, Washington, DC, March 8, 2006, section 5; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2005/61607.htm>. See also Government of East Timor, *Constitution of East Timor*, Article 59.

<sup>1391</sup> UNESCO Institute for Statistics, *Gross Enrolment ratio. Primary. Total*, December 20, 2006; available from <http://stats.uis.unesco.org/>.

<sup>1392</sup> ILO, *Ratifications by Country*, accessed March 21, 2007; available from <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/newratframeE.htm>.

<sup>1393</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1394</sup> ILO, *IPEC Actions Against Child Labour: Highlights 2006*, Geneva, October 2006; available from [http://www.ilo.org/iloroot/docstore/ipcc/prod/eng/20070228\\_Implementationreport\\_en\\_Web.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/iloroot/docstore/ipcc/prod/eng/20070228_Implementationreport_en_Web.pdf).

<sup>1395</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: East Timor," section 6d.

<sup>1396</sup> ILO, *East Timor: An New Labour Code for the World's Newest Country*, [online] 2002 [cited February 6, 2007]; available from <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/inf/magazine/43/timor.htm>.

<sup>1397</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2005: East Timor," section 6d.

<sup>1398</sup> Ibid. See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: East Timor," section 5.

<sup>1399</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: East Timor," section 5.

are reports of internal trafficking of girls from rural areas to the capital, Dili, for commercial sexual exploitation.<sup>1400</sup>

### **Child Labor Laws and Enforcement**

The law sets the minimum age for employment at 15 years and prohibits work by a child between 15 and 18 years that would jeopardize their health, safety or morals. However, the official minimum age of 15 does not apply to family-owned businesses, and children working in vocational schools are exempted.<sup>1401</sup> Further, the law allows for light work for children older than 12.<sup>1402</sup> According to the U.S. Department of State, enforcement of the labor code is limited, especially outside of the capital, Dili.<sup>1403</sup>

The law forbids compulsory work.<sup>1404</sup> Trafficking is prohibited, and the penalty for trafficking minors is imprisonment of 5 to 12 years.<sup>1405</sup> The U.S. Department of State also reports no enforcement efforts or prosecutions of traffickers during 2006. In fact, the U.S. Department of State has stated that credible reports suggest that police and customs officials have colluded with traffickers.<sup>1407</sup>

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

Research has not identified any policies or programs by the Government of East Timor to address exploitive child labor.

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<sup>1400</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Trafficking in Persons Report - 2006: East Timor," Washington, D.C., 2006; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2006/65988.htm>.

<sup>1401</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2005: East Timor." See also Government of East Timor, *Labour Code of the Democratic Republic of East Timor*, (May 1, 2002), section 11.3; available from <http://www.doingbusiness.org/Documents/LawLibrary/Timor-Leste-Labour-Code.pdf>.

<sup>1402</sup> Government of East Timor, *Labour Code of East Timor*, section 11.

<sup>1403</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: East Timor," section 5.

<sup>1404</sup> Government of East Timor, *Constitution of East Timor*, section 50.

<sup>1405</sup> Government of East Timor, *Immigration and Asylum Law* (May 6, 2003), article 81; available from <http://www.eastimorlawjournal.org/LAWSINDEPENDENCE/9of2004immigrationasylum.html>.

<sup>1407</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Trafficking in Persons Report - 2006: East Timor."