Mauritius

Populations: 1.303,717 (July 2011 est.)
Population Growth Rate: 0.729% (2011 est.)
Birth Rate: 13.97 births/1,000 population (2011 est.)
Life Expectancy: total population: 74.48 years; male: 71.01 years; female: 78.12 years (2011 est.)
Literacy Rate: total population: 84.4%; male: 88.4%; female: 80.5% (2000 est.)
Net Migration Rate: -0.0 migrants/1,000 population (2011 est.)
Unemployment Rate: 7.5% (2010 est.)
Gross Domestic Product per Capita: $13,500 (2010 est.)
Religions: Hindu 48%, Roman Catholic 23.6%, Muslim 16.6%, other Christian 8.6%, other 2.5%, unspecified 0.3%, none 0.4%
Languages: Creole 80.5%, Bhojpuri 12.1%, French 3.4%, other 3.7%, unspecified 0.3%; official language is English, spoken by less than 1% of the population (2000 census)
Ethnic Groups: Indo-Mauritian 68%, Creole 27%, Sino-Mauritian 3%, Franco-Mauritian 2%
Capital: Port Louis

Trafficking Routes

Mauritius is a source country for trafficking in persons domestically, as well as to other states. The government recognizes the increasing number of children involved in the sex industry. Young girls are coerced into prostitution by close friends and family, and are sometimes tempted with the promise of a different employment opportunity.

Factors That Contribute to the Trafficking Infrastructure

Poverty, broken families, domestic violence, unemployment, school dropout levels, drug addiction, rape, engagement of mothers in prostitution, as well as sexual

4 Supra note 2.
abuse and incest—mostly by fathers and other close relations—are causes that lead to the commercial and sexual exploitation of children in Mauritius. Close links have been drawn between the abandonment and abduction of children and child trafficking.

**Forms of Trafficking**

Sex trafficking among children has been the most highly reported issue in Mauritius. There have also been reports of migrant workers in Mauritius having their passports taken, being paid much lower wages than promised, if paid at all, and being prevented from speaking out about their conditions.

**Government Responses**

In 2009, the government passed the Combating of Trafficking in Persons Act of 2009, thereby allowing for penalties of up to 15 years’ incarceration for trafficking offenders and prohibiting all forms of trafficking.

The Child Protection (Amendment) Bill 2005 provides for a new Section 13A, which deals explicitly with the problem of trafficking in children. The law provides Mauritian courts jurisdiction over trafficking offenses for the purpose of exploitation committed within and outside Mauritius. It also makes provision for the unlawful transferring of a child. Offenders found guilty of child trafficking are punishable by imprisonment for up to 15 years. The amendment also addresses the physical, psychological, and social recovery of victims of harm or trafficking. Violators shall be liable to a maximum fine not exceeding RS100,000 and imprisonment for a term not exceeding one year. The government has been running a drop-in center for child victims of sexual exploitation since 2003.

**Nongovernmental and International Organization Responses**

In March 2010, the International Organization for Migration held a workshop in Beau-Bassin, Mauritius aimed at improving the technical capacity in dealing with trafficking and child prostitution issues for the Ombudsperson for Children’s Office, the.

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5 Supra note 3.
6 Id. note 3.
10 Id. note 8.
11 Id. note 8, §5, 21.
12 Id. Note 8, §3, 13A(5).
Brigade pour la Protection des Mineurs, the Ministry of Women’s Rights, Child Development and Family Welfare (and the Drop-In Center for child victims of sexual abuse), Rehabilitation Youth Centers (RYC), Probation Officers and some NGOs including the Mauritius Family Planning Association, and Chryzalide.

**Multilateral Initiatives**

On January 26, 2011, the US Embassy in Mauritius organized a conference titled: “An Assessment of Trafficking in Persons in Mauritius” in Port Louis in which Johan Moutou-Leckning, Principal State Counsel of the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, Inspector Maneeraj Bundree, Officer in Charge of the Police Brigade for the Protection of Minors, Mrs. Karoona Chooramun, Head of the Child Development Unit of the Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare and Mrs. Rita Venkatasawmy, Director of the Centre d’Éducation et de Développement pour les Enfants Mauriciens (CEDEM), presented the work conducted by the government to identify, investigate, and prosecute incidences of trafficking in the country.


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14 INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION (IOM). Capacity-Building Workshop on Counter-Trafficking Thursday, 18-03-2010 to Friday, 19-03-2010. Available at: http://www.iom.int/jahia/Jahia/events/eventAF/cache/offonce?entryId=27128.


22 Id.