

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines does not appear to have a significant child labor problem; however, children are found working in agriculture and are possibly victims of commercial sexual exploitation. Significant gaps in the law and a lack of policy to combat the worst forms of child labor provide insufficient protection, which result in children being vulnerable to exploitation.

Statistics on Working Children and School Attendance

Children	Percent
Working	Unavailable
Attending School	Unavailable
Combining Work and School	Unavailable

Prevalence and Sectoral Distribution of the Worst Forms of Child Labor⁴³⁰⁷

In Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, some children are found working in the worst forms of child labor, mainly in the harvesting of bananas on farms where they may be at risk of carrying heavy loads and applying harmful pesticides.⁴³⁰⁸

There have been unsubstantiated reports of a small number of trafficking victims, including children who are trafficked internally for the purposes of commercial sexual exploitation. However, the full extent of trafficking in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is unknown.⁴³⁰⁹

Laws and Regulations on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

The Employment of Women, Young Persons and Children (EWYP) Act, sets the minimum age for employment, including hazardous work, at 14.⁴³¹⁰ Children below the age of 18 are prohibited from being employed at night.⁴³¹¹

The Act also authorizes the Governor-General to establish regulations regarding the health, welfare, and safety of young persons and children; however,



regulations do not exist to prohibit specific occupations or conditions hazardous for children.⁴³¹²

	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	14
	Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	14
	Compulsory Education Age	16
	Free Public Education	Yes

The Constitution of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines prohibits forced or slave labor.⁴³¹³ There are no laws that specifically address trafficking, though related

offenses may be prosecuted under provisions in the Penal Code. For example, kidnapping or detaining a woman against her will for the purpose of prostitution is an offense punishable with up to 14 years in prison.⁴³¹⁴

A person convicted of causing or encouraging the prostitution of children under the age of 15 may be incarcerated for up to 7 years.⁴³¹⁵

Institutional Mechanisms for Coordination and Enforcement

Research found no evidence that the Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines has established a coordinating mechanism to combat the worst forms of child labor.

The Ministry of Labor is responsible for the enforcement of child labor laws.⁴³¹⁶ Within the Ministry, there are five officers responsible for monitoring all labor issues and complaints including child labor. During the reporting period, no inspections were conducted related to child labor nor were there any reports of child labor complaints.⁴³¹⁷

The Police Force is responsible for investigating trafficking in persons cases and referring the cases to the Ministry of Social Development.⁴³¹⁸

Government Policies on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

Although the worst forms of child labor do not appear to be substantial in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, research found no evidence of any policies to address existing child labor, including children working in agriculture and trafficked for commercial sexual exploitation.⁴³¹⁹

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

In 2010, the Children Against Poverty bridging program was launched with a total of 56 participating primary schools to develop children's skills through a fun-filled curriculum.⁴³²⁰ A team of over 200 trained personnel including teachers, Ministry Officials, Police Officers, and Community Health Officers were the facilitators. The project goal was to use education as a means of breaking the cycle of poverty.⁴³²¹ The Ministry of Education also operates five Multi-purpose Centers offering full-time technical/vocational education to children age 15-17 to prevent school dropouts.⁴³²² The question of whether these programs have an impact on the worst forms of child labor does not appear to have been addressed.

Based on the reporting above, the following actions would advance the reduction of the worst forms of child labor in Saint Vincent and Grenadines:

IN THE AREA OF LAWS AND REGULATIONS:

- Amend the Employment of Women, Young Persons, and Children Act to make 18 the minimum age for engaging in hazardous work.
- Issue regulations to define a list of hazardous occupations and working conditions prohibited to children under the age of 18.

IN THE AREA OF COORDINATION AND ENFORCEMENT:

- Establish a coordinating mechanism to combat the worst forms of child labor, particularly in agriculture.

IN THE AREA OF POLICIES:

- Conduct a rigorous study to assess whether the worst forms of child labor are indicative of a small problem or of a hidden problem that requires further follow up.
- Use the information obtained from the study to develop a national plan of action to address the worst forms of child labor, particularly for children in agriculture.

IN THE AREA OF PROGRAMS:

- Assess the impact that existing programs may have on addressing the worst forms of child labor.

⁴³⁰⁷ Data provided in the chart at the beginning of this country report are not available from the data sources that are used by USDOL. 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. For more information on sources used for these statistics, 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.

⁴³⁰⁸ U.S. Embassy- Bridgetown, *reporting*, February 05, 2010.

⁴³⁰⁹ U.S. Department of State, “St. Vincent and the Grenadines (Tier 2 Watch List),” in *Trafficking in Persons Report- 2009*, Washington, DC, June 16, 2009; available from <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/123357.pdf>.

⁴³¹⁰ ILO Committee of Experts, *Individual Direct Request concerning Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (ratification: 2006) Submitted: 2010*, [on line] [cited September 3, 2010]; available from <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/cgi-lex/pdconv.pl?host=status01&textbase=iloeng&document=24850&chapter=9&query=Saint+Vincent+and+the+Grenadines%40ref&highlight=&querytype=bool&context=0>. See also International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), *Internationally Recognised Core Labour Standards in the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS)*, Geneva, 2007; available from http://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/OECS_report_final_carr_EN.pdf.

⁴³¹¹ ILO Committee of Experts, *Individual Direct Request, Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (ratification: 2006) 2010*

⁴³¹² ILO Committee of Experts, *Individual Direct Request concerning Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182) Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (ratification: 2001) Submitted: 2010*, [online] [cited September 7, 2010]; available from <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/cgi-lex/pdconv.pl?host=status01&textbase=iloeng&document=25353&chapter=9&query=Saint+Vincent+and+the+Grenadines%40ref&highlight=&querytype=bool&context=0>.

⁴³¹³ *Constitution of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, 1979*; available from <http://pdba.georgetown.edu/Constitutions/Vincent/Stvincent79.html>.

⁴³¹⁴ Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, *Criminal Code of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines*.

⁴³¹⁵ U.S. Department of State, “Trafficking in Persons Report- 2009.” See also Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, *Criminal Code of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines*.

⁴³¹⁶ U.S. Embassy- Bridgetown, *reporting*, February 05, 2010.

⁴³¹⁷ U.S. Department of State, “Saint Vincent and the Grenadines,” in *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2009*, Washington, DC, March 11, 2010; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2009/wha/136126.htm>. See also U.S. Embassy- Bridgetown, *reporting*, February 05, 2010.

⁴³¹⁸ U.S. Embassy- Bridgetown, *reporting*, February 05, 2010.

⁴³¹⁹ Ibid.

⁴³²⁰ NBC Radio - SVG, *CAP Bridging Program Officially Launched Today*, [2010 [cited September 7, 2010]]; available from <http://www.nbcsvg.com/profiles/blogs/cap-bridging-program>.

⁴³²¹ Ibid.].

⁴³²² UNICEF, *A Study of Child Vulnerability in Barbados, St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines*, November 2006; available from http://www.unicef.org/barbados/cao_resources_vulnerability.pdf.