

Suriname

<i>Selected Statistics and Indicators on Child Labor</i>	
Percent of children 5-14 estimated as working in 2002:	Unavailable
Minimum age for admission to work:	14 ³⁹⁴⁴
Age to which education is compulsory:	12 ³⁹⁴⁵
Free public education:	Yes ^{3946*}
Gross primary enrollment rate in 2003:	120% ³⁹⁴⁷
Net primary enrollment rate in 2003:	92% ³⁹⁴⁸
Percent of children 5-14 attending school:	Unavailable
Percent of primary school entrants likely to reach grade 5:	Unavailable
Ratified Convention 138:	No ³⁹⁴⁹
Ratified Convention 182:	4/12/2006 ³⁹⁵⁰
ILO-IPEC participating country:	Yes, associated ³⁹⁵¹
* Must pay for school supplies and related items.	

Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

According to an ILO survey, children in Suriname work in agriculture, mining, fishing, timber production, domestic service, construction, the furniture industry, and as street vendors, rice and lumber mill workers, and shop assistants.³⁹⁵² A large proportion of working children work more than 5 hours per day without adult supervision.³⁹⁵³ Informal sector child labor also occurs in such areas as Nickerie and Saramacca.³⁹⁵⁴ Children are victims of commercial sexual exploitation in Suriname, especially in gold mining areas in the interior.³⁹⁵⁵ Boys in particular

³⁹⁴⁴ U.S. Department of State, "Suriname," in *Country Report on Human Rights Practices- 2006*, Washington, DC, March 6, 2007, Section 6d; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2006/78906.htm>.

³⁹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, Section 5. See also U.S. Embassy- Paramaribo, *reporting*, December 21, 2006.

³⁹⁴⁶ *Constitution of Suriname 1987, with 1992 Reforms*, Article 39; available from <http://www.georgetown.edu/pdba/Constitutions/Suriname/english.html>. See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Suriname," Section 5.

³⁹⁴⁷ UNESCO Institute for Statistics, *Gross Enrolment Ratio. Primary. Total*, accessed December 20, 2006; available from <http://stats.uis.unesco.org/>.

³⁹⁴⁸ UNESCO Institute for Statistics, *Net Enrolment Rate. Primary. Total*, accessed December 20, 2006; available from <http://stats.uis.unesco.org/>.

³⁹⁴⁹ ILO, *Ratifications by Country*, accessed October 18, 2006; available from <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/cgi-lex/ratfice.pl?Suriname>.

³⁹⁵⁰ ILO, *Ratifications by Country*, [cited October 18, 2006]; available from <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/cgi-lex/ratfice.pl?El+Salvador>.

³⁹⁵¹ ILO, *IPEC Action Against Child Labor- Highlights 2006*, [online] February, 2007 [cited March 29 2007], 29; available from http://www.ilo.org/iloroot/docstore/ipec/prod/eng/20070228_Implementationreport_en_Web.pdf.

³⁹⁵² Marten Schalkwijk and Wim van den Berg, *Suriname- The Situation of Children in Mining, Agriculture, and other Worst Forms of Child Labour: A Rapid Assessment*, ILO Subregional Office for the Caribbean, Port-of-Spain, November 2002, 30, 46, 52; available from http://www.ilocarib.org.tt/system_links/link6tst.html. See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Suriname," Section 6d. Also see U.S. Embassy- Paramaribo, *reporting*, December 21, 2006.

³⁹⁵³ Schalkwijk and van den Berg, *Suriname- The Situation of Children*, 49.

³⁹⁵⁴ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Suriname."

³⁹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, Section 5. See also ECPAT International CSEC Database, *Suriname*, accessed September 13, 2006; available from <http://www.ecpat.net>.

are being targeted by the sex tourism industry.³⁹⁵⁶ Children are reported to be trafficked internally for sexual exploitation.³⁹⁵⁷

Child Labor Laws and Enforcement

The law sets the minimum age for employment at 14 years, although children from 12 to 14 years may work in family or special vocational settings if the work is not too physically or mentally demanding, or hazardous.³⁹⁵⁸ Children under 15 years are prohibited from working on fishing boats.³⁹⁵⁹ Children under 18 years are prohibited from night work and hazardous work, defined as work dangerous to their life, health, and decency.³⁹⁶⁰ The Minister of Labor is authorized to determine what constitutes hazardous work. Employers are required to maintain a Register of Young Persons.³⁹⁶¹ The minimum age for work is inconsistent with the age to which schooling is compulsory (12).³⁹⁶² This inconsistency may result in children being employed illegally. Employing a child under 14 is punishable by fines and up to 12 months in prison.³⁹⁶³ Parents who permit their children to work, in violation of child labor laws, may be prosecuted.³⁹⁶⁴

The law prohibits forced labor, slavery, and practices similar to slavery.³⁹⁶⁵ The penalty for trafficking of children under age 16 was increased in 2006 to a minimum of 10 years imprisonment.³⁹⁶⁶ Sexual offenses against girls under 12 years of age are punishable with 12 years imprisonment and with 8 years imprisonment for the same offense against girls ages 12 to 14.³⁹⁶⁷ Procurement of a minor for illicit sexual purposes is prohibited and is punished by up to 3 years imprisonment. The penalty is increased when the perpetrator makes a living by committing the offense or when the perpetrator is the parent, guardian, or employer of the minor.³⁹⁶⁸ The law also prohibits brothel operation.³⁹⁶⁹

³⁹⁵⁶ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Suriname," Section 5.

³⁹⁵⁷ U.S. Department of State, "Suriname (Tier 2)," in *Trafficking in Persons Report- 2006*, Washington, DC, June 5, 2006; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2006/65990.htm>.

³⁹⁵⁸ Clive Pegus, *A Review of Child Labour Laws of Suriname - a Guide to Legislative Reform*, ILO Subregional Office for the Caribbean, June 2005, 25. See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Suriname," Section 5.

³⁹⁵⁹ Clive Pegus, *A Review of Child Labour Laws of Suriname*, 25.

³⁹⁶⁰ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Suriname," Section 6d.

³⁹⁶¹ Clive Pegus, *A Review of Child Labour Laws of Suriname*, 27.

³⁹⁶² U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Suriname," Section 5.

³⁹⁶³ U.S. Embassy- Paramaribo, *reporting*, August 27 2004.

³⁹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁹⁶⁵ *Constitution of Suriname*, Article 15. See also Clive Pegus, *A Review of Child Labour Laws of Suriname*, 29.

³⁹⁶⁶ Government of Suriname, *Written Replies by the Government of the Suriname Concerning the List of Issues Received by the Committee on the Rights of the Child Relating to the Consideration of the Second Periodic Report of Suriname*, CRC/C/SUR/Q/2/Add.1, November 29, 2006, 31; available from <http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G06/458/35/PDF/G0645835.pdf?OpenElement>. See also Clive Pegus, *A Review of Child Labour Laws of Suriname*, 29.

³⁹⁶⁷ Clive Pegus, *A Review of Child Labour Laws of Suriname*, 29. See also UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Committee on the Rights of the Child: Consideration of Reports Submitted by Suriname*, CRC/C/SUR/2, prepared by Government of Suriname, November 24, 2005, 19.

³⁹⁶⁸ Protection Project, *2005 Human Rights Report on Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children*, [online]; available from <http://www.protectionproject.org/>.

³⁹⁶⁹ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Suriname," Section 5.

The Ministry of Labor's Department of Labor Inspections enforces laws relating to the minimum age for employment and hazardous work through its 40 inspectors in the formal sector.³⁹⁷⁰ Police officers are responsible for enforcing child labor laws in the informal sector.³⁹⁷¹ According to the U.S. Department of State, the Ministry of Labor and the police sporadically enforce child labor laws.³⁹⁷² No investigations of exploitive child labor cases were done in rural areas during 2006.³⁹⁷³ Laws concerning worst forms of child labor are considered crimes and, as such, are enforced by the Ministry of Justice and Police, in conjunction with the Youth Police Department.³⁹⁷⁴ The Youth Police are authorized to remove children from the worst forms of child labor and prosecute offenders.³⁹⁷⁵ Although the U.S. Department of State reports that the country's law against brothels is not enforced, a special police anti-trafficking unit has conducted limited investigations and raids, including random checks of brothels, to ensure that minors are not working on those premises.³⁹⁷⁶

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

In late 2006, the Government of Suriname established a National Commission on Child Labor, consisting of representatives from various ministries, labor unions, the private sector, and NGOs.³⁹⁷⁷ The Commission is tasked to guide the government on the issue of child labor, review labor legislation, make recommendations, and develop a list of worst forms of child labor.³⁹⁷⁸ The Government continues to participate in ILO-IPEC's initiatives to address child domestic labor, commercial sexual exploitation, and child labor in agriculture.³⁹⁷⁹

According to the U.S. Department of State, the Ministries of Labor and Social Affairs refer to reducing child labor in their annual policy documents. Also, Suriname government officials often emphasized the importance of reducing this problem.³⁹⁸⁰

³⁹⁷⁰ Ibid., Section 6d. See also Clive Pegus, *A Review of Child Labour Laws of Suriname*, 33. See also U.S. Embassy- Paramaribo, *reporting, December 21, 2006*.

³⁹⁷¹ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Suriname," Section 6d.

³⁹⁷² Ibid.

³⁹⁷³ Ibid.

³⁹⁷⁴ Clive Pegus, *A Review of Child Labour Laws of Suriname*, 33.

³⁹⁷⁵ Ibid.

³⁹⁷⁶ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Suriname."

³⁹⁷⁷ U.S. Embassy- Paramaribo, *reporting, December 21, 2006*.

³⁹⁷⁸ Ibid.

³⁹⁷⁹ ILO-IPEC, *¿Dónde Trabaja IPEC?*, [online] 2005 [cited October 22, 2006]; available from <http://www.oit.org.pe/ipec/pagina.php?seccion=27&pagina=164>. See also ILO-IPEC official, E-mail communication to USDOL official, November 16, 2006.

³⁹⁸⁰ U.S. Embassy- Paramaribo, *reporting, December 21, 2006*.