

In 2012, Montserrat made no advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. While the Government continued to participate in the UK-sponsored Safeguarding Children in the Overseas Territories (SCOT) Program to enhance child protection efforts, no institutional mechanisms to coordinate efforts have been created to combat commercial sexual exploitation. Further, the laws do not protect boys from prostitution, and the Employment Act does not protect children ages 15 to 18 from performing dangerous work. Although limited, there is evidence that some children in Montserrat are involved in commercial sexual exploitation in exchange for money and material goods.

Prevalence and Sectoral Distribution of the Worst Forms of Child Labor

There are reports that some children in Montserrat are engaged in commercial sexual exploitation in exchange for money and material goods.(1, 2) Information about the nature and prevalence of the problem remains limited.

Laws and Regulations on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

The minimum age for employment under the Montserrat Employment Act is 14. Children younger than age 15 are prohibited from industrial undertakings, unless the work is not dangerous and only family members are employed in the same undertaking by the company.(3) Therefore, the law does not protect children ages 15 through 17 from dangerous activities, and research found no evidence of a comprehensive list prohibiting children from hazardous work.

The Montserrat Penal Code prohibits the prostitution of girls.(4) The prostitution of boys is not specifically prohibited under the law. Child pornography is illegal in Montserrat.(4)

The Constitution of Montserrat prohibits slavery and forced labor.(5) Abduction and kidnapping are punishable under the Penal Code; these provisions may be used to prosecute traffickers.(4) No information was found on whether laws exist regarding the use of children for drug trafficking or other illicit activities.

Defense of Montserrat is the responsibility of the United Kingdom (UK). There is no military conscription, and the minimum age for voluntary military recruitment is 16.(6, 7)

The Education Act of 2004 makes education compulsory to age 16. The Government provides free education from nursery through secondary school.(8, 9)

Institutional Mechanisms for Coordination and Enforcement

Research found no evidence that the Government of Montserrat has established a coordinating mechanism to combat commercial sexual exploitation of children. The Royal Montserrat Police Service has primary responsibility for enforcing laws involving children. The Department of Social Services employs social workers who work on child protection issues.(10)

Government Policies on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

Research found no evidence that the Government has established a policy to combat the commercial sexual exploitation of children in Montserrat.

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

During the reporting period, the Government of Montserrat continued to participate in the SCOT Program, which concluded at the end of 2012. The Program was sponsored by the UK's Department for International Development.(11, 12) Through the SCOT Program, participating governments received capacity building and advisory support to implement policies, procedures, and best practices to ensure children's health and safety.(11) The question of whether the SCOT Program had an impact on the commercial sexual exploitation of children does not appear to have been addressed. Research found no evidence that the Government has carried out programs targeting the worst forms of child labor, specifically commercial sexual exploitation.

Montserrat

Based on the reporting above, the following actions would advance the elimination of the worst forms of child labor in Montserrat:

Area	Suggested Actions	Year(s) Action Recommended
Laws and Regulations	Raise the minimum age for all types of dangerous work to 18 and establish a list of hazardous work that children are prohibited from engaging in.	2011, 2012
	Ensure that laws against commercial sexual exploitation protect all children, regardless of gender.	2009, 2011, 2012
	Clarify whether laws exist regarding the use of children for drug trafficking or other illicit activities.	2011, 2012
Coordination and Enforcement	Establish a coordinating mechanism to combat the commercial sexual exploitation of children.	2010, 2011, 2012
Policies	Establish a policy to combat the commercial sexual exploitation of children in Montserrat.	2012
Social Programs	Collect, analyze, and disseminate information regarding the prevalence and nature of the commercial sexual exploitation of children to inform the establishment of policies and programs to address the problem.	2009, 2010, 2011, 2012
	Assess the impact the SCOT Program may have on addressing commercial sexual exploitation of children.	2010, 2011, 2012
	Implement programs to address the worst forms of child labor, specifically commercial sexual exploitation.	2011, 2012

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