

Georgia

MODERATE ADVANCEMENT

In 2024, Georgia made moderate advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The government launched the National Action Plan on the Protection of Human Rights for Georgia, which improves children’s access to education and provides additional protections for vulnerable populations. Georgia also drafted a new National Action Plan on Trafficking in Persons for 2025–2026. Finally, the government improved access to education for children with disabilities and launched a specialized teacher training program. However, despite these efforts, Georgia’s minimum age for work law does not meet international standards because it does not apply to children working in the informal sector. In addition, the Criminal Code does not explicitly prohibit the use of children in illicit activities. Finally, social programs are not sufficient to address the full scope of the country’s child labor situation, including children working on the streets.

PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Statistics on Children’s Work and Education		
Children	Age	Percent and Population
Working	5 to 14	2.9% (13,547)
Hazardous Work by Children	15 to 17	Unavailable
Attending School	5 to 14	96.9%
Combining Work and School	7 to 14	3.7%

Working Children by Sector, Ages 5-14	
Sector/Industry	Percent of Population
Agriculture	95.5%
Industry	2.3%
Services	2.2%

Children in Georgia are subjected to the worst forms of child labor, including in commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking, as well as forced begging, street vending, and coerced criminality, such as theft. Children also engage in child labor in agriculture.

Overview of Children’s Work by Sector and Activity	
Agriculture	Farming† and seasonal agricultural work.†
Industry	Construction; working in food production factories.
Services	Street work, including begging, vending, carrying cargo, and collecting scrap metal. Domestic work. Working in hospitality (in restaurants and hotels, and at beaches and resorts), wholesale and retail, small advertising services, and food delivery services.
Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor‡	Commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking. Forced begging and street vending. Coerced criminality, such as theft.

† Determined by national law or regulation as hazardous and, as such, relevant to Article 3(d) of ILO C. 182.

‡ Child labor understood as the worst forms of child labor *per se* under Article 3(a)–(c) of ILO C. 182.

SUGGESTED GOVERNMENT ACTIONS TO ELIMINATE CHILD LABOR

The suggested government actions below would close gaps USDOL has identified in Georgia’s implementation of its international commitments to eliminate the worst forms of child labor.

Area	Suggested Action
Legal Framework	Ensure that the minimum age for work applies to all children, including those in informal work.
	Increase the compulsory education age from 15 to 16 to align with the minimum age for work.
	Ensure that the law’s light work provisions are sufficiently specific, including the list of activities in which light work is permissible for 15-year-old children, to prevent them from involvement in child labor.
	Ensure that the law criminally prohibits the use of children in illicit activities, including the use, procuring, and offering of children for the production and trafficking of drugs.
	Ensure that the law criminally prohibits the recruitment of children under age 18 by non-state armed groups.

Area	Suggested Action
Enforcement	Continue to increase communication among the Ministry of Internal Affairs' specialized investigators across the country, including with investigators from the Adjara region, to ensure coordinated human trafficking investigations.
	Provide training and additional law enforcement personnel for the Labor Inspectorate's Unit for Supervision of Forced Labor and Labor Exploitation to investigate cases of child trafficking and child commercial sexual exploitation.
	Ensure that law enforcement personnel expeditiously refer children rescued from exploitative labor conditions to protective services.
	Expand resources and trainings to employers on child labor issues, including the differences between child labor and working children, to more effectively help employers recognize and prevent child labor from occurring.
	Increase the number of routine, targeted, and unannounced labor inspections at all worksites.
	Organize trainings for front-line officials and other relevant stakeholders on national referral mechanisms to effectively and systematically implement such mechanisms for the identification of trafficking survivors so they are able to access shelters and other support services.
Coordination	Establish coordinating mechanisms to prevent and eliminate all forms of child labor, including in agriculture and other forms of informal work.
	Increase coordination among the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Prosecutor's General Office, the Agency for State Care, and other government agencies when assisting child victims of human trafficking.
	Increase transparency of the Interagency Anti-Trafficking Coordination Council and regularly publish timely assessments of the government's anti-trafficking efforts.
	Increase collaboration with civil society organizations to improve coordination and implementation of anti-trafficking responses.
Government Policies	Adopt a policy that addresses all relevant forms of child labor, including child labor in agriculture and other forms of informal work, and adopt a policy that specifically addresses the reduction of commercial sexual exploitation.
Social Programs	Collect and publish data on the extent and nature of child labor, including in the informal sector and in agriculture, to inform policies and programs. Also collect and publish data on children with disabilities who do not attend school. Ensure accessibility of infrastructure and teaching materials, and ensure a sufficient number of staff and teachers.
	Improve access to education for all vulnerable groups of children, including street children, children with disabilities, those who live in rural areas, and children from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Russia, and other countries.
	Continue efforts to provide Roma children with identity documents and to improve access to education for these children.
	Strengthen measures in the educational system to identify, track, and prevent truant children from leaving school, and enforce mandatory school attendance requirements to ensure that children are not engaged in child labor.
	Expand existing programs to address the full scope of the country's child labor problem, especially for street children, and increase resources available at the local level, including for the "Providing Shelter to Homeless Children" subprogram.

CHILDREN AT HIGHER RISK

In Georgia, children from ethnic minorities, other marginalized groups—including Roma, Kurdish, Azeri, or Armenian refugees internally displaced from Russian-occupied South Ossetia and Abkhazia—and children from neighboring countries face increased risks of child labor and forced labor. Poverty and homelessness make them vulnerable to forced begging, commercial sexual exploitation, and street work, including begging or selling items such as flowers, religious icons, or other small goods. Many children are coerced into labor by relatives. In addition, non-citizens often face heightened vulnerabilities to exploitation due to the absence of legal identification documents, notably Azeri children who live or work on the streets of Georgia. Finally, children from the Guria and Adjara regions are particularly vulnerable to seasonal labor migration, traveling to Türkiye during the summer to work in

agriculture, factories, and construction. Children are also employed as waiters or dishwashers in bars and restaurants run by citizens of Türkiye in Batumi, roles that often serve as a front for commercial sexual exploitation.

BARRIERS TO EDUCATION ACCESS

Children from disadvantaged groups in Georgia, such as street children, children with disabilities, those who live in rural areas, and children from abroad, notably Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Russia, face barriers in accessing education. Reports note that children with disabilities face barriers to attending school, including inaccessible infrastructure, a lack of qualified staff and teachers, and inaccessible or insufficient classroom material. There are limited data on children with disabilities, including dropout rates. In addition, children from Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Russia, children in the streets, and some Roma children may not attend school due to a lack of identity documents. Moreover, even though the government operates some mixed language schools with Georgian, Russian, and Azeri or Armenian languages, absenteeism and dropout rates are higher among Roma children, in part due to language and cultural barriers. Furthermore, some children systematically miss or drop out of school due to their involvement in seasonal work, household labor, or seasonal labor migration. School employees, such as teachers and administrative personnel, do not always record absenteeism by students or the reasons for it. As a result, many cases of potential child labor are not recorded or investigated.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR CHILD LABOR

Georgia has ratified all key international conventions concerning child labor. However, Georgia's laws do not meet international standards on the minimum age for work because they do not apply to the informal sector, nor do they prohibit the use of children in illicit activities, including the use, procuring, or offering of children for the production or trafficking of drugs.

Laws and Regulations on Child Labor			
Standard	Age	Meets International Standards	Legislation
Minimum Age for Work	16	X	Articles 10, 24(8), 24(9), 28(3), and 77 of the Labor Code of Georgia
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	18	✓	Article 10 of the Labor Code of Georgia; Articles 2 and 5 of the Law on Occupational Safety
Identification of Hazardous Occupations or Activities Prohibited for Children		✓	Article 10(4) of the Labor Code of Georgia; Articles 2 and 5 of the Law on Occupational Safety; Resolution 381 Approving the List of Dangerous, Heavy, Harmful, and Hazardous Works
Prohibition of Slavery, Debt Bondage, and Forced Labor		✓	Articles 143/1, 143/2, and 143/3 of the Criminal Code of Georgia; Article 3 of the Law of Georgia on Combating Human Trafficking; Article 55 of the Code on the Rights of the Child; Article 79 of the Labor Code of Georgia
Prohibition of Child Trafficking		✓	Articles 143/1, 143/2, and 143/3 of the Criminal Code of Georgia; Article 3 of the Law of Georgia on Combating Human Trafficking
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children		✓	Articles 143/1, 143/2, 143/3, 253–255, 255/1, and 255/2 of the Criminal Code of Georgia; Article 56 of the Code on the Rights on the Child
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities		X	Article 171 of the Criminal Code of Georgia
Minimum Age for Voluntary State Military Recruitment	18	✓	Article 10 of the Law of Georgia on Military Duty and Military Service
Prohibition of Compulsory Recruitment of Children by (State) Military		✓	Articles 9 and 21 of the Law of Georgia on Military Duty and Military Service

Laws and Regulations on Child Labor			
Standard	Age	Meets International Standards	Legislation
Prohibition of Military Recruitment by Non-state Armed Groups		X	Article 410 of the Criminal Code of Georgia; Article 59 of the Code on the Rights of the Child
Compulsory Education Age	15‡	✓	Articles 2 and 9 of the Law of Georgia on General Education
Free Public Education		✓	Article 22 of the Law of Georgia on General Education

‡ Age calculated based on available information.

Provisions in the Labor Code related to the minimum age for work are not in compliance with international standards because they do not apply to the informal sector; some employers hire children informally specifically because they are not covered by the Labor Code. Georgia's law on education allows children to leave school at age 15, rendering them vulnerable to the worst forms of child labor because they are no longer required to be in school but are not legally permitted to work full time until they are 16 years old. Article 10 of the Labor Code specifies conditions under which children ages 14 and 15 may perform light work, and Article 24 prescribes the number of hours that may be worked, but the law does not specify the activities in which light work is permissible. Article 10 of the Labor Code stipulates that children under age 14 are allowed to work only in sports, the arts, and cultural activities, as well as some advertising activities. Lastly, Georgia's laws do not criminally prohibit the use of children in illicit activities, including the use, procuring, or offering of children for the production or trafficking of drugs.

ENFORCEMENT OF LAWS ON CHILD LABOR

In 2024, labor and criminal law enforcement agencies in Georgia took actions to address child labor. However, insufficient communication between the Ministry of Internal Affairs' specialized investigators across the country, including investigators from the Adjara region, may have hindered enforcement efforts.

Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement
<p>Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons, Labor, Health, and Social Affairs (MoLHSA): The Labor Inspectorate under MoLHSA operates as a semi-autonomous legal entity of public law. It enforces labor laws related to forced labor, labor exploitation, and occupational safety and health norms through routine targeted and unannounced inspections. Labor inspectors may inspect any facility or economic activity, including private farms and private residential houses where economic activity takes place. The Labor Inspectorate has a group of specialized labor inspectors to identify instances of forced labor and human trafficking for labor exploitation. The Labor Inspectorate operates branch offices in Batumi and Kutaisi to increase its operational presence in western Georgia. In addition, under a Memorandum of Cooperation, the Labor Inspectorate and the Ministry of Internal Affairs can carry out joint inspections to counter trafficking of minors and identify children working on the street. The Inspectorate receives complaints through the Child Protection and Social Programs sub-department and refers complaints of child labor violations to criminal law enforcement agencies for investigation. It operates a hotline in eight languages (Georgian, English, Russian, Turkish, Azeri, Armenian, Arabic, and Persian). In 2024, labor inspectors conducted informational meetings with employers and employees on labor rights and labor security, risks related to forced labor and labor exploitation, existing legal mechanisms, and services available for trafficking in persons victims, and distributed brochures with information on the identification of forced labor.</p>
<p>Criminal Law Enforcement Agencies: The Ministry of Internal Affairs enforces criminal laws related to the worst forms of child labor, including child trafficking. Through the Human Rights Protection and Investigation Quality Monitoring Department, ensures prompt responses to human trafficking crimes, and suggests recommendations for investigations and for legislation implementation. Identifies human traffickers and collates data on traffickers across various agencies through the Information-Analytical Department. Within the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Central Criminal Police Department leads criminal investigations of human trafficking, including the trafficking of children, through the Division for Combating Human Trafficking and Illegal Migration. It also operates a hotline that is available in Georgian, Russian, and English. Mobile task force units within the Ministry of Internal Affairs proactively interview individuals in vulnerable occupations and demographics, including hospitality workers and children living and working on the streets, to identify possible cases of labor exploitation and to advise them of their</p>

Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement

legal rights and available government services. The Prosecutor's General Office of Georgia (POG), an independent entity, separate from the Ministry of Justice, prosecutes criminal cases involving child exploitation, forced labor, and human trafficking. The 2022–2027 Prosecutor's Office Strategy ensures a victim-centered approach when identifying and effectively prosecuting child trafficking and labor exploitation. The Ministry of Internal Affairs maintains five specialized prosecutors dedicated to human trafficking cases. It manages an interagency working group on child labor and human trafficking issues under the framework of the POG operational strategy. In 2024, the parliament elected a new Prosecutor General who announced that the protection of minors who are victims or witnesses would be his priority.

Enforcement Mechanisms and Efforts

Has a Labor Inspectorate	Yes
Able to Assess Civil Penalties	Yes
Routinely Conducted Worksite Inspections	Yes
Unannounced Inspections Permitted	Yes
Has a Complaint Mechanism	Yes
Imposed Penalties for Child Labor Violations	Yes
Conducted Criminal Investigations for Worst Forms of Child Labor Crimes	Yes
Imposed Penalties for Worst Forms of Child Labor Crimes	Yes

In 2024, **123** labor inspectors conducted about **4,500** worksite inspections, finding **30** child labor violations. The government also conducted **6** investigations into suspected cases of the worst forms of child labor, initiated **9** prosecutions, and convicted **10** perpetrators. The Russian-occupied regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia are not under the control of Georgian central authorities, who are prevented from carrying out inspections and law enforcement there.

COORDINATION, POLICIES, AND PROGRAMS

Georgia established a mechanism to coordinate its efforts to address child labor. However, it lacks sufficient scope to address all forms of child labor, including in agriculture and other forms of informal work.

Key Mechanism to Coordinate Government Efforts on Child Labor

Interagency Anti-Trafficking Coordination Council for the Implementation of Measures Against Human Trafficking (A-TIP Council): Coordinates government efforts against human trafficking, including efforts to protect and rehabilitate survivors. Drafts national action plans and other strategic government programs to address human trafficking, and publishes biannual statistics on human trafficking, including sexual and labor exploitation of minors. Refers child survivors to shelters to receive social services. Chaired by the Minister of Justice and comprises representatives from state agencies and non-state entities. The A-TIP Council was active during the reporting period, monitoring the implementation of the 2023–2024 National Action Plan on Trafficking in Persons and publishing information, reports, and statistics on anti-trafficking efforts.

Georgia established policies related to child labor. However, these policies do not cover all forms of child labor, including in agriculture and other informal work sectors in which child labor is known to occur.

Key Policies Related to Child Labor

National Action Plan on Trafficking in Persons (2023–2024): Aimed to prevent human trafficking with improved detection mechanisms and effective criminal prosecution; promoted reintegration of survivors, including child survivors, into society; and improved interagency coordination to eliminate human trafficking. During the reporting period, a project took place to raise awareness among students in Tbilisi and other regions about human trafficking issues. As part of the National Action Plan, the Ministry of Justice worked in close collaboration with the International Center for Migration Policy Development to analyze the legislative and institutional framework on the role of the business sector in the prevention of forced labor. In addition, a new National Action Plan on Trafficking in Persons (2025–2026) was drafted during the reporting period.

Key Policies Related to Child Labor

Code on the Rights of the Child: Seeks to establish and implement measures to protect children from violence and hazardous child labor. In 2024, mayors of 18 municipalities, whose role in child protection is granted to them by the Code, met to review the progress in implementation of the needs-based social programming at municipal levels. The Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure, UNICEF and the National Association of Local Authorities organized the meeting with support from the EU.

National Action Plan on the Protection of Human Rights for Georgia for 2025–2026:* Improves coordination and policy development related to children’s rights, including improving their access to education and protection for vulnerable populations. The plan also aligns with the National Human Rights Strategy for 2022–2030, which covers all fundamental human rights and freedoms.

* Policy was approved during the reporting period.

† The government had other policies that may have addressed child labor issues or had an impact on child labor.

Georgia funded and participated in programs that include the goal of eliminating child labor. However, these social programs are not sufficient to address the full scope of the country’s child labor problem, including children working on the streets.

Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor

Programs Administered by the Agency for State Care and Assistance for the (Statutory) Victims of Human Trafficking:‡ Agency for State Care, a legal public entity housed under MoLHSA, administers social benefits, including targeted social assistance for survivors of child labor and human trafficking, as well as for disabled and orphan populations. Operates six shelters for children living and working on the street and six crisis centers and three anti-trafficking shelters in Tbilisi and Batumi that provide victim assistance programs for human trafficking victims. It also operates eight mobile groups to identify children working and living in the streets, two hotlines for potential victims of human trafficking with assistance available in eight languages, and continuously operates a child-tailored hotline. In 2024, the government increased support to the Social Rehabilitation and Childcare and Youth Support Program to \$27 million from \$24.6 million in 2023. The program continued to identify and provide psychosocial rehabilitation and integration assistance to homeless children at high risk of abandonment or separation, and provided placement of abandoned children into foster care, guardianship, or small group homes.

Programs Overseen by the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture, and Sport (MoES):‡ MoES oversees national primary education curriculum and vocational training programs. Funds programs that promote the inclusion of vulnerable children in education. Initiatives include a program designed to increase participation in school by street children, children forced into begging, and children who are seasonal agricultural workers, and a program to distribute free textbooks to public school students and fund transportation for school children in remote areas. Conducts anti-trafficking activities in elementary schools, high schools, and institutions of higher education. Follows the government’s Unified Strategy of Education and Science (2022–2030), aiming to ensure equal access to education for all children, including children with disabilities, minorities, marginalized children, and those who are at risk of dropping out. MoES launched a specialized teacher training program in the 2024–2025 academic year, in collaboration with four domestic and foreign universities and civil society. The program includes developing training courses for future teachers on inclusive education.

Targeted Social Assistance Program and Child Benefit Program:‡ Social Services Agency-administered ongoing social assistance program designed to eliminate poverty, especially child poverty. The agency also provides a variety of services, including support for impoverished families and daycare for vulnerable children.

‡ Program is funded by the Government of Georgia.

† The government had other social programs that may have included the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor.

For references, please visit dol.gov/ChildLaborReports