

In 2012, Saint Lucia made a minimal advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The Government adopted the amended Labor Act of 2006, raising the minimum age for employment to 15. In addition, the Government continued to support an afterschool program for underprivileged youth. Despite these efforts there is no evidence of any policies to address the worst forms of child labor and there is no indication that research has been conducted by the Government to assess the scope of the problem. Although information on the prevalence of the worst forms of child labor in Saint Lucia is limited, children are reported to be engaged in dangerous activities in agriculture.

Statistics on Working Children and Education

Children	Age	Percent
Working	5-14 yrs.	Unavailable
Attending School	5-14 yrs.	Unavailable
Combining Work and School	7-14 yrs.	Unavailable
Primary Completion Rate		93.2

Sources:

Primary completion rate: Data from 2011, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2013.(1)

All other data: Understanding Children's Work Project's analysis, 2013.(2)

Prevalence and Sectoral Distribution of the Worst Forms of Child Labor

Although information on the prevalence of the worst forms of child labor in Saint Lucia is limited, children are reported to be engaged in dangerous activities in agriculture.(3-5) There is some information that children in rural areas harvest bananas after school and during the holidays.(3-5) Children working in agriculture may be engaged in dangerous activities. They may use dangerous tools, carry heavy loads, and apply harmful pesticides.(6, 7)

There are reports of children working on the streets, but specific information on hazards is unknown.(4, 5, 8)

Laws and Regulations on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

In 2012, the Government adopted the amended Labor Act of 2006, which repeals the Employment of Women, Young Persons, and Children Law Revised Ordinances of 1957.(9-11) The amended Act sets the minimum age for employment at 15 and prohibits the employment of children who have



International Conventions and Selected Laws on Child Labor and Education

	C138, Minimum Age	No
	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	No
	Minimum Age for Work	15
	Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	18
	Compulsory Education Age	15
	Free Public Education	Yes

not yet reached the minimum age for compulsory education.(9-11) The Labor Act of 2006 and the Education Act of 1999 both prohibit the employment of children under the age of 16 during the school week, unless for vocational training, but allows children above the age of 13 to be engaged in light work during the weekends and on holidays.

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The Government has identified, among other occupations, car washing, delivering newspapers, cake sales, and other fundraising school activities to constitute light work.(9, 12)

The Occupational Health and Safety Act prohibits the employment of persons under age 18 in industrial undertakings.(3, 13, 14) This includes, but is not limited to, cleaning, lubricating, or adjusting any machinery while in motion; working on a steam boiler, a kiln, an oven, and other equipment that involves high temperature exposure; working on machine tools and other high speed machinery; and operating cranes, winches, and other lifting appliances. Young persons—those who have attained the age of 16 but not yet 18—are also prohibited from engagement in these hazardous activities unless they are being supervised as part of an apprenticeship or vocational training program.(3, 13, 14) Research found no evidence that there are prohibitions on hazardous work in other sectors of the economy.

Saint Lucia does not have a military force, as the police force is responsible for the security of the country. The minimum age for recruitment to the police force is 18.(15, 16)

The Constitution prohibits slavery, servitude, and forced labor for children of all ages.(17) The Criminal Code bans prostitution and the procurement of or engagement in sexual relations with any male or female under age 18.(18) The Counter-Trafficking Act No. 7 criminalizes the trafficking of children for labor and commercial sexual exploitation.(3, 19) However, the Government lacks adequate protections for children used in child pornography and drug trafficking.(14)

The Education Act No. 41 (1999) mandates compulsory primary and secondary schooling from ages 5 to 15.(11, 12) Under the Act, tuition is free for children attending public institutions; however, other unspecified charges can be applied if approved by the Minister.(12) Although school is compulsory for all children under the age of 15, the Ministry of Education reports that truancy has led to child labor in the informal sector. In an effort to keep children from entering the labor force and in school, an additional Truancy Officer has been hired.(11) It is unknown whether this is sufficient to address the problem.(11)

Institutional Mechanisms for Coordination and Enforcement

Research found no evidence of a specific coordinating mechanism to combat the worst forms of child labor in Saint Lucia.

Child labor law enforcement is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education, Human Resource Development and

Labor, and the Ministry of Health, Wellness, Human Services and Gender Relations.(3, 4) The Department of Labor, within the Ministry of Education, Human Resource Development and Labor, conducts workplace inspections to ensure compliance with the labor law.(11) Seven labor inspectors are in charge of all aspects of labor violations, including child labor. Inspectors conduct spot investigations, check records to verify compliance with the law, and take legal action against employers found employing underage workers.(3) Ministry representatives noted that the current number of inspectors is insufficient to carry out their responsibilities. The amount of funding allocated for child labor inspections is unknown.(3) During the reporting period, there were no reports of inspections being conducted regarding child labor or of penalties and citations issued for child labor violations.(3, 11)

Enforcement of all criminal laws, including those involving the worst forms of child labor, is the responsibility of the Royal Saint Lucia Police Force. They have a Vulnerable Persons Unit to investigate all cases of child abuse and neglect, including child labor, and work in collaboration with the Division of Human Services.(3, 4) The Vulnerable Persons Unit did not receive specific child labor training during the reporting period. (3)

The Government of Saint Lucia had previously established the National Coalition against Trafficking in Persons, which was meant to detect, investigate trafficking cases, and protect victims. Research found no evidence that the Coalition was in place during the reporting period.(20) No formal training was provided to the Saint Lucia police, immigration authorities, health workers, or child protection officials in recognizing trafficked victims.(21)

Government Policies on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

Research found no evidence of any policies to address the worst forms of child labor, including in dangerous activities in agriculture or street work, nor of any research conducted by the Government to assess the scope of these problems.

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

The Government supported efforts that may indirectly address child labor through initiatives to keep children in school. In particular, it continued to support an afterschool pilot program initiated in 2009 to target underprivileged children between ages 8 and 16.(22) Enacted by the Ministry of Social Transformation, Youth, and Sports, the program engages

children in three poor communities in various afterschool activities. As of the writing of this report, it was expected to continue until 2013.⁽²²⁾ The impact of the program on child labor is unknown.

Research found no evidence that the Government of Saint Lucia carried out programs during the reporting period to assist children involved in dangerous forms of agriculture or street work.

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

Area	Suggested Actions	Year(s) Action Recommended
Laws and Regulations	Enact prohibitions on hazardous work in sectors other than industrial undertakings for children under age 18.	2009, 2010, 2011, 2012
	Draft and adopt legislation to prohibit procuring or offering a child for the production of pornography or for pornographic performances.	2011, 2012
	Draft and adopt legislation to prohibit procuring or offering a child for illicit activities, including drug trafficking and production.	2011, 2012
Coordination and Enforcement	Increase the number of labor inspectors so that child labor laws are adequately enforced.	2011, 2012
	Establish a specific coordinating mechanism to combat the worst forms of child labor.	2009, 2010, 2011, 2012
	Provide child labor and human trafficking training to relevant authorities working with vulnerable populations, including child laborers.	2012
	Make information on inspections for child labor and results of those inspections publically available.	2012
Policies	Conduct a comprehensive study to assess the nature and extent of the worst forms of child labor in the country.	2009, 2010, 2011, 2012
	Adopt policies to combat the worst forms of child labor in dangerous forms of agriculture and street work.	2010, 2011, 2012
Social Programs	Determine the impact of the Ministry of Social Transformation, Youth, and Sports afterschool program on child labor.	2011, 2012
	Use the results of any studies conducted on the worst forms of child labor to assess the need for social programs to assist children working in agriculture and other identified worst forms.	2009, 2010, 2011, 2012

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