

In 2013, Georgia made a moderate advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The Government participated in two projects to address child labor; the first includes original data collection and analysis on child labor, and the second focuses on improving the Government's ability to enforce labor laws and adhere to international labor standards, including those related to child labor. The Government also formed the Inter-Ministerial Coordination Council on Childcare to oversee the implementation of the 2012–2015 Child Action Plan, which aims to serve vulnerable children, including those living and working on the street. It continued to work with international organizations on a program to identify children living and working on the streets. It also continued a reform of its system of orphanages and similar institutions to provide better care to vulnerable children, including street children. However, children in Georgia continue to engage in child labor in agriculture and in the worst forms of child labor in forced begging. Gaps remain in enforcement and in the collection and dissemination of data, which hinders effective targeting of the policies and programs to address the worst forms of child labor.



I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Limited evidence suggests that children in Georgia are engaged in child labor in agricultural work, particularly on farms, and in the worst forms of child labor in forced begging.(1-3) Table 1 provides key indicators on children's work and education in Georgia.

Table 1. Statistics on Children's Work and Education

Children	Age	Percent
Working (% and population)	5-14 yrs.	29.1 (172,378)
Attending School (%)	5-14 yrs.	92.1
Combining Work and School (%)	7-14 yrs.	31.5
Primary Completion Rate (%)		108.1

Source for primary completion rate: Data from 2012, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2014.(4)

Source for all other data: Understanding Children's Work Project's analysis of statistics from Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 3 Survey, 2005.(5)

Based on a review of available information, Table 2 provides an overview of children's work by sector and activity.

Table 2. Overview of Children's Work by Sector and Activity

Sector/Industry	Activity
Agriculture	Activities unknown* (1, 2)
Services	Street work including begging, washing cars,* and collecting glass and scrap metal* (2, 6, 7)
Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor‡	Commercial sexual exploitation as a result of human trafficking* (8) Forced begging* (3)

* Evidence of this activity is limited and/or the extent of the problem is unknown.




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

Many children engaged in agricultural activities work on farms.(1, 2) Limited evidence suggests that agricultural work disrupts school participation among some ethnic minority children.(7)

II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

Georgia has ratified all key international conventions concerning child labor (Table 3).

Table 3. Ratification of International Conventions on Child Labor

Convention	Ratification
 ILO C. 138, Minimum Age	✓
ILO C. 182, Worst Forms of Child Labor	✓
 UN CRC	✓
UN CRC Optional Protocol on Armed Conflict	✓
UN CRC Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography	✓
 Palermo Protocol on Trafficking in Persons	✓

The Government has established relevant laws and regulations related to child labor, including its worst forms (Table 4).

Table 4. Laws and Regulations Related to Child Labor

Standard	Yes/No	Age	Related Legislation
Minimum Age for Work	Yes	16	Article 4 of the Labor Code of Georgia (9)
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	Yes	18	Article 4 of the Labor Code of Georgia (9, 10)
List of Hazardous Occupations Prohibited for Children	Yes		Order No. 147/N, 3 May 2007 of the Minister of Labor, Health and Social Affairs 2007 "On Approving the List of Heavy, Harmful and Hazardous Work" (2, 11, 12)
Prohibition of Forced Labor	Yes		Article 30 of the Constitution of Georgia (13)
Prohibition of Child Trafficking	Yes		Articles 143 and 172 of the Criminal Code of Georgia; The Law of Georgia on Combating Human Trafficking (2, 14, 15)
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	Yes		Article 171 of the Criminal Code of Georgia (2, 15)
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities	Yes		Article 172 of the Criminal Code of Georgia (2, 15)
Minimum Age for Compulsory Military Recruitment	Yes	18	Articles 9 and 21 of the Law of Georgia on Military Duty and Military Service (16, 17)
Minimum Age for Voluntary Military Service	No		
Compulsory Education Age	Yes	15	The Law on General Education (11, 18)
Free Public Education	Yes		Legislation title unknown (2)

Information was unavailable regarding the specific activities on the list of Heavy, Harmful and Hazardous Work.(19) There does not appear to be protection in the law for children engaged in dangerous activities in streets.(2) In addition, the Government does not consider children's work in the agriculture sector to be hired work. This leaves children working in the agricultural sector without the same legal protections afforded to hired laborers as outlined in the Labor Code.(9, 20)

The Law on General Education makes education compulsory for nine years and does not specify a start or end age.(11, 18) Most children begin school at age 6. Education is free through high school.(2) The compulsory education age leaves children ages 15 to 16 vulnerable to the worst forms of child labor, as they are not required to be in school but are not legally permitted to work either.

III. ENFORCEMENT OF LAWS ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

The Government has established institutional mechanisms for the enforcement of laws and regulations on child labor, including its worst forms (Table 5).

Table 5. Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement

Organization/Agency	Role
Ministry of Labor, Health and Social Affairs (MoLHSA)	Oversee child welfare issues and address labor matters.(2) Through the Child Protection and Social Programs sub-department, receive and forward complaints of child labor violations to law enforcement agencies for investigation and prosecution.(21)
The Department of Labor and Employment within MoLHSA	Address labor and employment issues, and revise existing laws and policies to be in accordance with international standards.(11)
Social Service Agency (SSA) within MoLHSA	Administer social benefits such as targeted social assistance, health care, and vouchers for day care. Employ social service agents who identify qualifying families for services and social workers who oversee child protection and family welfare cases.(6)
Ministry of Internal Affairs (MoIA)	Investigate child labor cases, including NGO and civilian reports of potential child labor violations.(2, 6) Enforce criminal laws related to child labor and child trafficking.(6)
Ministry of Justice (MOJ)	Enforce criminal laws related to child labor and child trafficking.(6)
MoIA's Special Operations Department	Lead criminal investigations of trafficking in persons, including the trafficking of children, and turn actionable cases over to MOJ for prosecution.(22, 23)
The Prosecutor's Office	Investigate large-scale cases of child trafficking.(2)
Police and district inspectors	Maintain contact with district inhabitants to obtain information on the children vulnerable to crime and abuse and to take protective measures.(24)
The Technical Oversight Inspection Agency	Conduct labor inspections in occupations classified as hazardous. These inspections only target violations of child labor laws and hazardous work conditions.(2) Report to the Ministry of Economic Development.(2)
Joint Child Referral Mechanism	Ensure interagency coordination of the enforcement of child labor laws and enumerate the procedures for referring children subject to any form of violence—including labor exploitation—to child protective services.(6) Comprised of the Minister of Labor, Health, and Social Affairs; the Minister of Internal Affairs; and the Minister of Education and Science.(25)

Criminal law enforcement agencies in Georgia took actions to combat child labor, including its worst forms. However, research found no evidence that labor law enforcement agencies took such action.

Labor Law Enforcement

Research did not uncover the number of inspectors or inspections conducted during the reporting period. Despite being responsible for labor law enforcement, research found the Ministry of Labor, Health and Social Affairs (MoLHSA) to be a policymaking and implementing body without inspectors or other means to enforce labor law. The Labor Inspectorate, within the former Ministry of Labor, Health and Social Security, was abolished under the 2006 Labor Code, leaving Georgia without any means to actively monitor workplaces for violations of child labor laws.(20, 21)

Criminal Law Enforcement

In 2013, five cases were investigated under Article 255 of the Criminal Code, which relates to the production and sale of pornography. According to the Interagency Anti-Trafficking Coordination Council for the Implementation of Measures against Human Trafficking, MoIA initiated three investigations on minors subjected to trafficking for the purpose of commercial sexual exploitation.(6, 26) The MoIA also investigated six allegations of minors involved in “anti-social activities,” which included begging and commercial sexual exploitation. As a result of investigations, one child victim was placed in a shelter.(6, 26) In 2013, there were no cited violations of child labor law.

Law enforcement training includes modules on trafficking of minors. Trafficking in persons trainings were held throughout the year, including a training on victim identification and effective investigation attended by five prosecutors and 19 police investigators.(6, 8)

IV. COORDINATION OF GOVERNMENT EFFORTS ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

The Government has established mechanisms to coordinate its efforts to address child labor, including some of its worst forms (Table 6).

Table 6. Mechanisms to Coordinate Government Efforts on Child Labor

Coordinating Body	Role & Description
Inter-Ministerial Coordination Council on Childcare	Implement the 2012–2015 Child Action Plan, which aims to serve vulnerable children, including those living and working on the street. Comprised of representatives of the MoLHSA, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Finance, MoIA, MOJ, the Public Defender’s Office, and UNICEF.(6)
The Interagency Anti-Trafficking Coordination Council for the Implementation of Measures against Human Trafficking (ICC)	Coordinate government efforts against trafficking in persons and children, including those to protect and rehabilitate victims. Chaired by the Minister of Justice and comprised of representatives from state agencies and non-state entities.(14, 23) Refer child victims to shelters to receive social services.(6)

In 2013, the Government formed the Inter-Ministerial Coordination Council on Childcare to oversee the implementation of the 2012–2015 Child Action Plan, which aims to serve vulnerable children, including those living and working on the street. The Council convened for the first time in October.(6) Various governmental bodies in Georgia are involved in child protection. While the Government of Georgia has established the Inter-Ministerial Coordination Council on Childcare and the Interagency Anti-Trafficking Coordination Council (ICC), research found no evidence of coordinating mechanisms to combat child labor, including in all its worst forms.

V. GOVERNMENT POLICIES ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

The Government of Georgia has established policies related to child labor, including its worst forms (Table 7).

Table 7. Policies Related to Child Labor

Policy	Description
The 2012–2015 Action Plan for Child Welfare and Protection	Establishes an overarching framework to improve the welfare of children, including highly vulnerable groups like street children. Identifies the institutions responsible for carrying out activities, funding sources, and expected outcomes in a broad range of areas such as education, health, childcare, public awareness campaigns, and rehabilitation programs.(6, 11, 27) In 2013, the Government closed all of its large, state-run childcare institutions for children without disabilities. Children previously receiving care from these institutions were either reintegrated with their biological families, or placed in foster care or in small group homes.(6)
Education Strategy for 2010–2015*	Research did not uncover information about this strategy.
Anti-trafficking Action Plan for 2013–2014†	Supports implementation activities to address human trafficking, including the exploitation of children.(3) Approved in 2013 by the President and fully implemented during the year.(8)

* The impact of this policy on child labor does not appear to have been studied.

† Policy was launched during the reporting period.

VI. SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

In 2013, the Government of Georgia funded and participated in programs that include the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor, including its worst forms (Table 8).

Table 8. Social Programs to Address Child Labor

Program	Description
Global Research on Child Labor Measurement and Policy Development (MAP)†	USDOL-funded research project implemented by the ILO in 10 countries, including Georgia, to increase the knowledge base around child labor by collecting new data, analyzing existing data, and building capacity to conduct research in this area.(28)
Improved Compliance with Labor Laws in the Democratic Republic of Georgia†	\$2 million USDOL-funded grant implemented by the ILO to work with the Government to improve their ability to enforce labor laws and adhere to international labor standards.(29)
Strengthening Childcare Services and Systems Project (2010–2013)*	\$5.4 million USAID-funded project to assist Georgia’s children by improving access to social benefits for vulnerable groups, providing alternative care and expanding family support services, and strengthening policy, oversight, and accountability in the childcare system.(30, 31)

Table 8. Social Programs to Address Child Labor (cont)

Program	Description
Child Care Reform*	MoLHSA and SSA program to reform child care efforts. Supported by UNICEF.(25)
Reaching Highly Vulnerable Children in Georgia with a Focus on Children Living or Working on the Streets‡	MoHLSA program to assist children and youth living or working on the streets. Supported by UNICEF and implemented by World Vision, Caritas, and Child and Environment; EU, UNICEF, and World Vision funding a pilot program.(2, 25, 32) Aims to reach more than 500 children and includes the development of a database to house data on children working or living in the streets.(11, 25) Aims to create sustainable, state-financed, community-based mechanisms for the development and social integration of vulnerable children.(6) In 2013, the program was operational and met its goal of operating day care centers and 24-hour crisis centers. Received some government funding.(6)
The State Fund for Protection and Assistance of (Statutory) Victims of Human Trafficking (SFVPA)‡	MoHLSA program to protect, assist, and rehabilitate trafficking victims, including minors.(8) Implements the Government's Rehabilitation and Reintegration Strategy, which includes operating two trafficking shelters in Batumi and Tbilisi, each staffed with a social worker to further assist victims. Funds the Assistance to Victims of Trafficking in Persons Hotline and a related Web site.(6, 23, 25) In 2013, 620 people were employed under the State Fund, 30 of whom focused on trafficking in persons.(6)
Free text book program‡*	Government program that distributes free textbooks to extremely vulnerable children.(25) In 2013, \$21 million was allocated for free textbooks for all secondary school children.(6)
The Georgian Language for Future Success Program*	Government program that commissions teachers who are native speakers of Georgian to teach subjects in the Georgian language in ethnic minority classes. These teachers also assist local teachers in improving their abilities in the Georgian language.(19)
Pension program and Targeted Social Assistance (TSA)*	SSA administered program that provides financial assistance to the poorest 10 percent of the population.(33)

* The impact of this program on child labor does not appear to have been studied.

† Program was launched during the reporting period.

‡ Program is funded by the Government of Georgia.

The Government has worked largely in cooperation with international organizations, NGOs, and foreign aid agencies to improve the welfare of children and address the plight of street children. Research found no evidence of any programs to assist children engaged in agriculture.

In 2013, the Government introduced universal healthcare and funded the “Mother and Child Healthcare” program, which may impact the overall wellbeing of the children served, including those in child labor.(6) The Government also conducted anti-trafficking training and awareness raising campaigns, including for school-aged children.(8)

VII. SUGGESTED GOVERNMENT ACTIONS TO ELIMINATE THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

Based on the reporting above, suggested actions are identified that would advance the elimination of child labor, including its worst forms, in Georgia (Table 9).

Table 9. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor, Including its Worst Forms

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Laws	Provide legal protection for all children working on the streets and in agriculture.	2012 – 2013
	Increase the age of compulsory education to 16, the minimum age for work.	2009 – 2013
Enforcement	Reestablish the Labor Inspectorate, or establish an equivalent body, to enforce child labor legislation.	2009 – 2013
Coordination	Establish coordinating mechanisms to combat child labor, including in all its worst forms.	2009 – 2013
Government Policies	Assess the impact of education and child welfare reform policies on children engaged in child labor, including in agriculture, on the streets, and in the worst forms of child labor in commercial sexual exploitation.	2011 – 2013
Social Programs	Assess the impact that the childcare, education, and social assistance programs may have on preventing and removing children from child labor.	2009 – 2013
	Expand and develop social programs to assist children engaged in or at risk of entering child labor.	2009 – 2013

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