

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines does not appear to have a significant child labor problem; however, children are found working in agriculture and are possibly victims of commercial sexual exploitation. Significant gaps in the law and a lack of policy to combat the worst forms of child labor provide insufficient protection, which result in children being vulnerable to exploitation.

Statistics on Working Children and School Attendance

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



Prevalence and Sectoral Distribution of the Worst Forms of Child Labor

In Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, some children are engaged in the worst forms of child labor,⁴⁹⁸⁶ mainly in agriculture, which may put them at risk from applying harmful pesticides and carrying heavy loads.⁴⁹⁸⁷

There have been reports of trafficking in Saint Vincent, including children who are trafficked internally for the purposes of commercial sexual exploitation. However, the full extent of trafficking in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is unknown.⁴⁹⁸⁸ There are also reports that minors continue to work informally and seasonally in the cultivation of marijuana, although research has not revealed whether or not these children work voluntarily or if they have been coerced.⁴⁹⁸⁹

Laws and Regulations on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

The Employment of Women, Young Persons and Children (EWYP) Act sets the minimum age for

employment, including hazardous work, at 14.⁴⁹⁹⁰ Children below the age of 18 are prohibited from working at night.⁴⁹⁹¹

	C138, Minimum Age	✓
	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	✓
	Palermo Protocol on Trafficking in Persons	✓
	Minimum Age for Work	14
	Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	14
	Compulsory Education Age	16
	Free Public Education	Yes

The EWYP Act also authorizes the Governor-General to establish regulations regarding the health, welfare, and safety of young persons and children.⁴⁹⁹² However, there are no regulations prohibiting hazardous occupations or conditions for children.

The Constitution of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines prohibits forced or slave labor.⁴⁹⁹³ Causing or encouraging prostitution, commissioning sexual intercourse, or undertaking an indecent assault on a girl under the age of 15 is prohibited.⁴⁹⁹⁴ No laws specifically address trafficking, although related offenses may be prosecuted under other provisions in the Penal Code.

The law provides for free and compulsory education through the Education Act of 2006, which states that all children ages 5 to 16 must attend school.⁴⁹⁹⁵

Institutional Mechanisms for Coordination and Enforcement

Research found no evidence that the Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines has established a coordinating mechanism to combat the worst forms of child labor.

The Ministry of Labor is responsible for the enforcement of child labor laws.⁴⁹⁹⁶ Within the Ministry, five inspectors are responsible for monitoring all labor issues and complaints, including child labor. During the reporting period, no inspections were conducted related to child

labor nor were there any reports of child labor complaints.⁴⁹⁹⁷

The Police Force is responsible for investigating trafficking in persons cases and referring the cases to the Ministry of Social Development.⁴⁹⁹⁸ There were no cases of suspected trafficking in 2010.⁴⁹⁹⁹

Government Policies on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

Although the worst forms of child labor do not appear to occur significantly in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, research found no evidence of policies to address existing child labor, including children working in agriculture and child victims of commercial sexual exploitation.⁵⁰⁰⁰ Research has also not revealed whether the Government keeps official statistics on the prevalence and scope of the worst forms of child labor.

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

In 2010, the Children Against Poverty bridging program was launched with a total of 56 participating primary schools to develop children's skills through an engaging curriculum. The project goal was to use education as a means of breaking the cycle of poverty.⁵⁰⁰¹ The Ministry of Education also operates five multipurpose centers that offer technical and vocational education services to children ages 15 to 17 to prevent school dropouts.⁵⁰⁰² The question of whether these programs have an impact on the worst forms of child labor does not appear to have been addressed.

Based on the reporting above, the following actions would advance the reduction of the worst forms of child labor in Saint Vincent and Grenadines:

IN THE AREA OF LAWS AND REGULATIONS:

- Amend the Employment of Women, Young Persons, and Children Act to make 18 the minimum age for engaging in hazardous work.

IN THE AREA OF COORDINATION AND ENFORCEMENT:

- Establish a coordinating mechanism to combat the worst forms of child labor, particularly in agriculture.

IN THE AREA OF POLICIES:

- Conduct a rigorous study to assess whether the worst forms of child labor are indicative of a small problem or a hidden problem that requires further follow up.
- Use the information obtained from the study to develop a national plan of action to address the worst forms of child labor, particularly for children in agriculture.

IN THE AREA OF SOCIAL PROGRAMS:

- Assess the impact that existing programs may have on addressing the worst forms of child labor.

⁴⁹⁸⁶ Data provided in the chart at the beginning of this country report are not available from the data sources that are used by USDOL. Reliable data on the worst forms of child labor are especially difficult to collect given the often hidden or illegal nature of the worst forms. For more information on sources used for these statistics, the definition of working children, and other indicators used in this report, please see the “Children’s Work and Education Statistics: Sources and Definitions” section.

⁴⁹⁸⁷ U.S. Embassy- Bridgetown, *reporting, January 28, 2011.*

⁴⁹⁸⁸ U.S. Department of State, “St. Vincent and the Grenadines,” in *Trafficking in Persons Report- 2010*, Washington, DC, June 14, 2010; available from <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/123357.pdf>.

⁴⁹⁸⁹ U.S. Embassy- Bridgetown, *reporting, January 28, 2011.*

⁴⁹⁹⁰ ILO Committee of Experts, *Individual Direct Request concerning Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) St. Vincent and the Grenadines (ratification: 2006) Submitted: 2010*, April 18, 2011; available from <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/cgi-lex/pdconv.pl?host=status01&textbase=iloeng&document=24850&chapter=9&query=Saint+Vincent+and+the+Grenadines%40ref&highlight=&querytype=bool&context=0>.

⁴⁹⁹¹ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁹² ILO Committee of Experts, *Individual Direct Request concerning Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182) St. Vincent and the Grenadines (ratification: 2001) Submitted: 2009*, April 18, 2011; available from <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/cgi-lex/pdconv.pl?host=status01&textbase=ilo>

[ng&document=23561&chapter=9&query=%28Saint+Vincent+and+the+Grenadines%29+%40ref&highlight=&querytype=bool&context=0](http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/cgi-lex/pdconv.pl?host=status01&textbase=iloeng&document=23561&chapter=9&query=%28Saint+Vincent+and+the+Grenadines%29+%40ref&highlight=&querytype=bool&context=0).

⁴⁹⁹³ Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, *Constitution of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines*, (October 27, 1979); available from <http://pdba.georgetown.edu/Constitutions/Vincent/stvincent79.html>.

⁴⁹⁹⁴ Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, *Criminal Code of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines*, (October 6, 1988).

⁴⁹⁹⁵ ILO Committee of Experts, *Individual Direct Request C138: St. Vincent and the Grenadines (2010)*.

⁴⁹⁹⁶ U.S. Embassy- Bridgetown, *reporting, January 28, 2011.*

⁴⁹⁹⁷ U.S. Department of State, “St. Vincent and the Grenadines,” in *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2010*, Washington, DC, April 8, 2011, section 7d; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2010/wha/154519.htm>. See also U.S. Embassy- Bridgetown, *reporting, January 28, 2011.*

⁴⁹⁹⁸ U.S. Embassy- Bridgetown, *reporting, February 16, 2011.*

⁴⁹⁹⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰⁰⁰ U.S. Embassy- Bridgetown, *reporting, January 28, 2011.*

⁵⁰⁰¹ “CAP Bridging Program Officially Launched Today”, NBC Radio, [online], July 7, 2010 [cited April 18, 2011]; available from <http://www.nbcsvg.com/profiles/blogs/cap-bridging-program>.

⁵⁰⁰² UNICEF, *A Study of Child Vulnerability in Barbados, St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines*, November 2006; available from http://www.unicef.org/barbados/cao_resources_vulnerability.pdf.