

Saint Lucia

2012 Report on Child Labour

The information contained in St Lucia's Report on Child Labour in 2010 remains almost unchanged in 2012. The following details the changes that have occurred during the period under review:

i. Prevalence and Sectoral Distribution of the worst forms of Child Labor-

Since the drastic decline in the banana industry the number of children working on family owned farms is decreasing. However the Department of Labor is of the view that an actual study needs to be undertaken to ascertain the real extent of the problem. It is hoped that the Department will engage the International Labor Organization for assistance for a study on the matter.

ii. Laws and Regulations on the worst forms of Child Labour-

The Labour Code No. 37 of 2006 was eventually implemented in August 2012 thus repealing all other legislation concerning the employment of women, young persons and children. This Act takes cognizance of the I.L.O convention on child Labour (C 182) and is in compliance with convention 138 with respect to the minimum age for admission of young persons in employment. It is envisaged that the government of Saint Lucia will ratify Convention 138 later this year.

iii. Institutional Mechanisms for co ordination and enforcement-

The Department of Labour is charged with the responsibility of conducting workplace inspections to ensure compliance with the legislation. The inspectors report that there is very little evidence of the problem of Child Labour in the formal sector although it is believed that it exists in clandestine forms. The New Labour Code applies harsh penalties to violators (a maximum of \$10,000.00 EC or imprisonment for a term of two years or both). However the Department acknowledges that while there exists such provisions in law it needs greater enforcement capacity for the purpose of prosecution.

While the Education Act No. 41 of 1991 mandates compulsory education up to age 15 the Ministry of Education reports that truancy at schools will invariably result in children moving into the workforce. The government

has seen the need to increase its effort to combat this problem by employing an additional Truancy Officer. However it appears that even in the face of such improvement more is needed to deal with this issue.