The scale of modern slavery

According to the 2023 Global Slavery Index, an estimated 1.8 in every thousand people were in modern slavery in Canada at any point in 2021. In other words, 69,000 people experienced forced labour or forced marriage in Canada in 2021. In terms of prevalence of modern slavery, Canada ranks 144th globally and 25th within the Americas.
Modern slavery in Canada
Global Slavery Index 2023
Country Snapshot

Vulnerability to modern slavery
How vulnerable a country’s people are to modern slavery is dependent on a range of factors which reflect the strength of governance, access to basic needs, inequality, disenfranchised groups, and effects of conflict. On a scale of 0 to 100, with 100 being the highest vulnerability to modern slavery, Canada is rated as 11 and has below average vulnerability for the region. Vulnerability is highest in terms of access to basic needs.

Figure 3.
Vulnerability of Canada to modern slavery by dimension, compared to the regional average

Government response to modern slavery
The government of Canada scored 60 out of 100 in their response to modern slavery. This places the government’s response above the average regional response. Of the five areas of response assessed (milestones), the government has taken most action on addressing risk factors of modern slavery and least action on addressing risk in government and business supply chains.

Figure 4.
Government of Canada’s responses to modern slavery by milestone, compared with the regional average

Importing risk of modern slavery
Canada imported US$20 billion worth of goods at-risk of modern slavery. This includes:

Priority Recommendations for the government of Canada

1. Criminalise forced labour in line with international conventions.
2. Increase the legal age of marriage for males and females to 18 years without exceptions.
3. Ensure support services are available for all victims of modern slavery, regardless of gender, age, nationality, or sexuality.