

Oman

Government Policies and Programs to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labor

UNICEF is working with various government agencies to establish a National Plan of Action for Children to promote children's rights and improve the quality of education in the country.¹⁸⁷¹ The Ministry of Education is implementing a basic education program intended to extend the length of primary education until the age of 16 years.¹⁸⁷² The Ministry of Education is also working to increase net enrollment among children and improve the education curriculum.¹⁸⁷³

Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

In 1999, the ILO estimated that less than 1 percent of children between the ages of 10 and 14 in Oman was working.¹⁸⁷⁴ Children are reported to work in small family businesses, particularly in the agriculture and fishing sectors.¹⁸⁷⁵ It has been reported that some children work as camel jockeys.¹⁸⁷⁶

Education is free but not compulsory in Oman.¹⁸⁷⁷ In 1997, the gross primary enrollment rate was 97.5 percent,¹⁸⁷⁸ and in 1996 the net primary enrollment rate was 68.7 percent.¹⁸⁷⁹

¹⁸⁷¹ As part of the National Plan of Action for Children, Oman established a National Committee for the Care of the Child, which is authorized to conduct studies and research related to children. See "Youth in the UN," Country Profiles, Oman [hereinafter "Youth in the UN"], at www.esa.un.org/socdev/unyin/countrya.asp?countrycode=om on 11/8/01. See also UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Initial Reports of States Parties Due in 1999: Oman*, UN Document CRC/C/78/Add. 1 (Geneva, July 18, 2000) [hereinafter *Initial Reports of States Parties*], at paras. 25, 28, and 86.

¹⁸⁷² Government of Oman, Ministry of Information, "Oman 2000" (Muscat, 2000), at www.omanet.com/oman2000/oman2000.htm on 11/8/01. See also *Initial Reports of States Parties*.

¹⁸⁷³ "Youth in the UN: Oman," at <http://esa.un.org/socdev/unyin/country>.

¹⁸⁷⁴ According to the ILO, 0.1 percent of children between 10 and 14 were working in 1999. *World Development Indicators 2001* (Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 2001) [hereinafter *World Development Indicators 2001*].

¹⁸⁷⁵ *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2000 – Oman* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of State, 2001) at Section 6d [hereinafter *Country Reports 2000*].

¹⁸⁷⁶ UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child: Oman*, UN Document CRC/C/15/Add. 161, October 12, 2001 [hereinafter *Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child*], para. 51.

¹⁸⁷⁷ *Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child* at para. 172.

¹⁸⁷⁸ UNESCO, *The Education for All 2000 Assessment: Country Reports—Oman*, at http://www.unesco.org/wef/countryreports/oman/rapport_2_2.html.

¹⁸⁷⁹ *World Development Indicators 2001*.

Child Labor Laws and Enforcement

The 1973 Labor Law sets the minimum age for employment at 13 years.¹⁸⁸⁰ The Labor Law also prohibits the employment of children between the ages of 13 and 16 in arduous, night, or overtime work without the authorization of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor.¹⁸⁸¹ The Labor Law and the 1996 Basic Charter prohibit forced labor.¹⁸⁸² Prostitution caused by coercion or intimidation is illegal under the Penal Code,¹⁸⁸³ and while no laws specifically criminalize trafficking in children, the Penal Code prohibits abduction as well as deportation of any person for the purposes of forced labor or slavery.¹⁸⁸⁴ The Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor is responsible for enforcing child labor legislation.¹⁸⁸⁵ Oman has not ratified ILO Convention 138, but ratified ILO Convention 182 on June 11, 2001.¹⁸⁸⁶

¹⁸⁸⁰ The government is in the process of increasing the minimum age for employment to 16 years to coincide with the Basic Education Plan, which will provide schooling for children until age 16. See “The Effective Abolition of Child Labor: Oman,” *Review of Annual Reports under the Follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work*, ILO Document GB.277/3/2 (Geneva, March 2000) [hereinafter “The Effective Abolition of Child Labor”], 327. See also *Initial Reports of States Parties*, paras. 23, 51.

¹⁸⁸¹ “The Effective Abolition of Child Labor” at 327.

¹⁸⁸² See *Country Reports 2000* at Section 6c. See also Basic Charter, Article 12, November 6, 1996, at www.uni-wuerzburg.de/law/mu00000_.html on 11/8/01.

¹⁸⁸³ If the law is violated against a person less than 18 years of age, the punishment is imprisonment for at least 5 years. See Omani Penal Code, Article 220, as cited in “Sexual Offences Laws,” Oman, Interpol, at www.interpol.int/Public/Children/SexualAbuse/NationalLaws/csaOman.asp on 11/8/01. See also *Initial Reports of States Parties* at para. 235b.

¹⁸⁸⁴ Omani Penal Code, Articles 256-261, as cited in *Initial Reports of States Parties* at para. 238.

¹⁸⁸⁵ See *Country Reports 2000* at Section 6d.

¹⁸⁸⁶ ILO, ILOLEX database: Oman at www.iloex.ch on 11/8/01.

NOTE: Hard copies of all Web citations are on file.