

# Russia

## Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

Statistics on the number of working children under the age of 15 in Russia are unavailable. However, reports indicate that child labor is a problem in the informal sector.<sup>3336</sup> The breakup of the Soviet Union and the transition to a market economy have increased poverty levels in Russia, and in 2002, the World Bank reported that children had a higher poverty rate than the population as a whole.<sup>3337</sup> Economic downturn, the deterioration of social services, increase in domestic violence<sup>3338</sup> and the breakdown of family structures have led to an increase in the number of street children in the country.<sup>3339</sup> Estimates of the number of street children range from 100,000 to 150,000, with possibly 4 million additional children at risk of living on the streets.<sup>3340</sup> Homeless children often receive no education, are more susceptible to substance abuse, and frequently engaged in criminal activities, including prostitution, to survive.<sup>3341</sup> Without educational opportunities or family support, youth form or join gangs or groups and turn to crime.<sup>3342</sup> In 2004, seven persons were sentenced for acts involving the recruitment and sexual exploitation of children.<sup>3343</sup>

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<sup>3336</sup> ILO-IPEC, *In-Depth Analysis of the Situation of Working Street Children in Moscow 2001*, Moscow, 2002, 36; available from [http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/ipecc/simpoc/russia/ra/street\\_m.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/ipecc/simpoc/russia/ra/street_m.pdf). See also U.S. Embassy- Moscow, *unclassified telegram no. 15120*, September 16, 2003.

<sup>3337</sup> World Bank, *Memorandum of the President of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the International Finance Corporation to the Executive Directors on a Country Assistance Strategy of the World Bank Group for the Russian Federation*, Report No: 24127-RU, Washington, D.C., May 14, 2002, 1, 3; available from [http://www.worldbank.org/eca/Russia.nsf/ECADocByUnid/B38DE4AEF2AEB41EC3256CB50033CC73/\\$FILE/Russia%20CAS%2024127-RU.pdf](http://www.worldbank.org/eca/Russia.nsf/ECADocByUnid/B38DE4AEF2AEB41EC3256CB50033CC73/$FILE/Russia%20CAS%2024127-RU.pdf).

<sup>3338</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2003: Russia*, Washington, D.C., February 25, 2004, Section 6d; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2003/27861pf.htm>.

<sup>3339</sup> *Ibid.* See also ILO-IPEC, *Analysis of the Situation of Working Street Children in Moscow*, 17. See also UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child: Russian Federation*, CRC/C/15/Add.110, United Nations, Geneva, November 1999, para. 12; available from [http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/\(Symbol\)/f60a0928c30f787980256811003b8d5d?Opendocument](http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/(Symbol)/f60a0928c30f787980256811003b8d5d?Opendocument).

<sup>3340</sup> World Bank, *Memorandum of the President*, 4. See also U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2003: Russia*, Section 5.

<sup>3341</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2003: Russia*, Section 5. See also Social and Cultural Rights UN Committee on Economic, *Concluding Observations of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights: Russian Federation*, E/C.12/1/Add.94, United Nations, Geneva, December 2003, para 37; available from [http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/\(Symbol\)/5192a0b3c292a7ecc1256e12003abf2d?Opendocument](http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/(Symbol)/5192a0b3c292a7ecc1256e12003abf2d?Opendocument). See also "Number of Orphans in Russia Has Nearly Doubled," *Rosbalt* (Moscow), May 13, 2004; available from <http://www.rosbaltnews.com/2004/05/28/66583.html>.

<sup>3342</sup> Pierella Paci, *Gender in Transition*, The World Bank, Washington, D.C., May 21, 2002, xvi, 78; available from [http://www-wds.worldbank.org/servlet/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2002/08/23/000094946\\_0208130410249/Rendered/PDF/multi0page.pdf](http://www-wds.worldbank.org/servlet/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2002/08/23/000094946_0208130410249/Rendered/PDF/multi0page.pdf).

<sup>3343</sup> U. S. Department of State, *Trafficking in Persons Report- 2004: Russia*, Washington, D.C., June 14, 2004; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2004/33192.htm>.

Children work in informal retail services, sell goods on the street, wash cars, make deliveries, collect trash,<sup>3344</sup> and beg.<sup>3345</sup> Children are trafficked globally for sexual exploitation from Russia,<sup>3346</sup> and are trafficked internally generally from rural to urban areas.<sup>3347</sup> There were reports of kidnapped or purchased children being trafficked for sexual exploitation, child pornography, or harvesting of body parts.<sup>3348</sup> There are confirmed cases of sex trafficking of children and child sex tourism in Russia, a major producer and distributor of child pornography over the internet.<sup>3349</sup>

There are reports that rebel forces in Chechnya recruit and use child soldiers. These forces also are using children to plant landmines and other explosives.<sup>3350</sup>

Although no law makes education compulsory, the Constitution holds parents responsible for ensuring their children receive basic education. Federal law stipulates free education to all children up to grade 11, but the Law on Education allows a child to finish school at the age of 14 with parental and government approval.<sup>3351</sup> In 2001-2002, the gross primary enrollment rate was 114 percent.<sup>3352</sup> Net enrollment rates are unavailable for Russia.<sup>3353</sup> Gross enrollment ratios are based on the number of students formally registered in primary school and therefore do not necessarily reflect actual school attendance. Recent primary school attendance statistics are not available for Russia.<sup>3354</sup> Most families pay additional fees for books and school supplies.<sup>3355</sup> Children of unregistered persons, asylum seekers, and migrants are frequently denied access to

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<sup>3344</sup> ILO-IPEC, *Analysis of the Situation of Working Street Children in Moscow*, 36.

<sup>3345</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2003: Russia*, Sections 6c, 6d.

<sup>3346</sup> *Ibid.*, Section 6f.

<sup>3347</sup> Donna M. Hughes, *Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation: The Case of the Russian Federation*, No. 7, IOM, Geneva, June 2002, 17; available from <http://www.iom.int/documents/publication/en/mrs%5F7%5F2002.pdf>. See also U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2003: Russia*, Section 6f. See also U. S. Department of State, *Trafficking in Persons Report- 2004: Russia*.

<sup>3348</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2003: Russia*, Section 6f.

<sup>3349</sup> *Ibid.* See also "American Doctor Suspected of Child Sex Abuse Arrested in St. Petersburg," *Rosbalt* (St. Petersburg), April 29, 2004; available from <http://www.rosbaltnews.com/2004/05/28/66499.html>. [cited May 28, 2004]

<sup>3350</sup> UN General Assembly Security Council, *Children and Armed Conflict: Report of the Secretary-General*, A/58/546-S/2003/1053, November 10, 2003, 11. Chechen and Ingush guerrillas took as hostage children from Beslan School #1 on September 1, 2004. Hundreds of children, parents and teachers, as well as the guerrillas, died when guerrillas blew up the school on September 3, 2004. See also Peter Baker, "A Stricken Town Seeks Scapegoats," *Washington Post* (Beslan), October 17, 2004, A16; available from <http://www.washingtonpost.com/ac2/wp-dyn/A38750-2004Oct16?language=printer>.

<sup>3351</sup> See U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2003: Russia*, Section 5. See also U.S. Embassy- Moscow, *unclassified telegram no. 15215*, October 2002.

<sup>3352</sup> UNESCO Institute for Statistics, *Global Education Digest 2004*, [CD-ROM] 2004 [cited November 9, 2004]; available from [http://portal.unesco.org/uis/TEMPLATE/html/HTMLTables/education/gerner\\_primary.htm](http://portal.unesco.org/uis/TEMPLATE/html/HTMLTables/education/gerner_primary.htm). For an explanation of gross primary enrollment and/or attendance rates that are greater than 100 percent, please see the definitions of gross primary enrollment rate and gross primary attendance rate in the glossary of this report.

<sup>3353</sup> While school enrollment is high, truancy is a growing problem in poorer regions of the country. See U.S. Embassy- Moscow, *unclassified telegram no. 15215*.

<sup>3354</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3355</sup> *Ibid.*

education by country and regional authorities.<sup>3356</sup> Poor regions struggle to maintain basic education requirements and receive little assistance from the Ministry of Education. Vocational education graduates often lack basic learning skills that would enable them to continue to learn and problem solve effectively.<sup>3357</sup>

## Child Labor Laws and Enforcement

The Labor Code sets the minimum age for regular employment at 16 years,<sup>3358</sup> and regulates the working conditions of children under 18, including bans on overtime, hazardous work, and night work.<sup>3359</sup> Children may work at ages 14 and 15 with parental approval, as long as such work does not threaten their health and welfare.<sup>3360</sup> The Constitution prohibits forced labor.<sup>3361</sup>

The government passed comprehensive legislation in December 2003 that criminalizes human trafficking, forced labor, the distribution of pornography, the recruitment of prostitutes, and the organization of a prostitution business.<sup>3362</sup> As of June 2004, investigations under this new legislation were being carried out, but there were no convictions reported.<sup>3363</sup> Articles 131, 132, 134 and 135 of the Penal Code prohibit forcing a minor under the age of 14 to engage in sex or any acts of perversion, while Article 151 of the Code prohibits involvement of a minor in prostitution.<sup>3364</sup> Article 152 prohibits Trade in Minors, defined as the purchasing or selling of a minor, or business regarding transfer or ownership of a minor and is punishable by compulsory work for 180 to 240 hours, correctional labor for 1 to 2 years or to 5 years of imprisonment.<sup>3365</sup> Article 135 has been used to prosecute child pornographers.<sup>3366</sup> There were reports of corrupt government officials facilitating human trafficking,<sup>3367</sup> including one organized crime group in the

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<sup>3356</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2003: Russia*, Section 1d, 5.

<sup>3357</sup> World Bank, *Project Appraisal Document on a Proposed Loan in the Amount of US\$100 Million to the Russian Federation for an E-Learning Support Project*, 27757-RU, Washington, D.C., January 20, 2004, 5, 8; available from [http://www-wds.worldbank.org/servlet/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2004/02/12/000012009\\_20040212103556/Rendered/PDF/276500RU.pdf](http://www-wds.worldbank.org/servlet/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2004/02/12/000012009_20040212103556/Rendered/PDF/276500RU.pdf).

<sup>3358</sup> *Labor Code*, (February 1, 2002), Article 63.

<sup>3359</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2003: Russia*, Section 6d. The new labor code came into force on February 1, 2002. See U.S. Department of State official, electronic communication to USDOL official, November 29, 2002.

<sup>3360</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2003: Russia*, Section 6d.

<sup>3361</sup> *Constitution of the Russian Federation*, Article 37; available from <http://www.friends-partners.org/oldfriends/constitution/russian-const-ch2.html>. [cited May 21, 2004]

<sup>3362</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2003: Russia*, Section 6f.

<sup>3363</sup> U. S. Department of State, *Trafficking in Persons Report- 2004: Russia*. Criminals were prosecuted under other laws against sexual exploitation of children, however; see above.

<sup>3364</sup> U.S. Embassy- Moscow, *unclassified telegram no. 15215*. See also Kristi Severance, "Russia," in *Survey of Legislative Frameworks for Combating Trafficking in Persons* Washington, D.C.: American Bar Association, 2003, 130, 32; available from [http://www.abanet.org/ceeli/publications/conceptpapers/humantrafficking/16\\_russia.pdf](http://www.abanet.org/ceeli/publications/conceptpapers/humantrafficking/16_russia.pdf). See also Interpol, *Legislation of Interpol Member States on Sexual Offences Against Children- Russia*, Interpol, n.d. [cited May 21, 2004]; available from <http://www.interpol.int/public/children/sexualabuse/nationallaws/csaRussia.asp>.

<sup>3365</sup> Severance, "Legislative Frameworks for Combating TIP," 130.

<sup>3366</sup> U.S. Embassy- Moscow, *unclassified telegram no. 15215*.

<sup>3367</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2003: Russia*, Section 6f.

Ministry of Interior accused of protecting a prostitution business.<sup>3368</sup> The government has successfully prosecuted several criminals engaged in the production and distribution of child pornography.<sup>3369</sup>

The Ministry of Health and Social Development and the Ministry of Interior are responsible for the enforcement of child labor laws, but fail to do so effectively. The ministry reported that 12,000 child labor violations were registered in 2001,<sup>3370</sup> and that 36 children died in work-related accidents in 2002. The police attempt to address the issue of street children. In 2001, for example, 253,000 parents were cited for leaving children unsupervised. Some of these children were returned to their families and provided assistance from social workers, while in other cases, parents were denied custody or faced criminal charges.<sup>3371</sup>

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

The Ministry of Health and Social Development continues to work with UNICEF to establish a number of regional child rights ombudsmen.<sup>3372</sup> The government has established a commission headed by the Minister of Health and Social Development to focus on child labor and education issues.<sup>3373</sup> The government has engaged in various awareness-raising efforts on the problem of trafficking, but has not provided budgetary support to trafficking prevention programs. Government officials collaborated with a local NGO to develop guidelines for Ministry of Interior employees working with children.

Selected Child Labor Measures Adopted by Governments		
Ratified Convention 138	05/03/1979	✓
Ratified Convention 182	03/25/2003	✓
ILO-IPEC Associated Member		✓
National Plan for Children		✓
National Child Labor Action Plan		
Sector Action Plan		

In 2004, the Government of Russia announced it would develop a central coordinating authority for all anti-trafficking policies.<sup>3374</sup> The government is also a member of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation and works with other members to combat organized crime, including criminal activities concerning trafficking

<sup>3368</sup> U. S. Department of State, *Trafficking in Persons Report- 2004: Russia*.

<sup>3369</sup> U.S. Embassy- Moscow, *unclassified telegram no. 15120*.

<sup>3370</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2003: Russia*, Section 6d.

<sup>3371</sup> U.S. Embassy- Moscow, *unclassified telegram no. 15120*.

<sup>3372</sup> Such positions have been established in the cities of Moscow, St. Petersburg, and Yekaterinburg, and in the regions of Arzamas Volkskiy, Novgorod, Chechnya, Ivanovo, and Volgograd. Ombudsmen only have the authority to request enforcement actions from government agencies. See U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2003: Russia*, Section 5.

<sup>3373</sup> In addition to government efforts to assist children at risk of working or living on the street, USAID is working with international and local NGOs on an "Assistance to Russian Orphans" project that seeks to prevent child abandonment, promote policy change and increase public awareness of the problems of orphans. See U.S. Embassy- Moscow, *unclassified telegram no. 15215*.

<sup>3374</sup> U. S. Department of State, *Trafficking in Persons Report- 2004: Russia*.

in human beings and sexual exploitation of women and children.<sup>3375</sup> The government did not pass trafficking victim protection legislation in 2004. However, progress was made on draft legislation for a witness protection program. Currently, no specific legislation provides trafficking victims with assistance, protection, or referrals to assistance programs.<sup>3376</sup>

The Government of Russia is participating in the second phase of an ILO-IPEC project to rehabilitate working street children in St. Petersburg.<sup>3377</sup> The program has included awareness-raising workshops for local government officials and the development of policy recommendations for city government.<sup>3378</sup> The government is also participating in a new ILO-IPEC action program to provide at-risk children in the Leningrad Region with social, psychological, and educational services.<sup>3379</sup>

The Government of Russia's Education for All plan seeks to improve the quality and accessibility of education to create better standards of living and increase the global competitiveness of Russia's population.<sup>3380</sup>

The World Bank loaned Russia USD 30 million to implement an Education Reform Project that began in 2001 and will end in 2006. This project promotes better use of scarce funding for education, modernizes the structure of the education system, and improves the general quality and standards of education.<sup>3381</sup>

In 2004, Russia secured a loan for USD 100 million from the World Bank for an E-Learning Support Project." The project will develop a system to electronically distribute and store learning materials for

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<sup>3375</sup> The Russian Federation is a signatory to the *Agreement Among the Governments of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) Participating States on Cooperation in Combating Crime, In Particular in its Organized Forms*. Participating states include the Republic of Albania, the Republic of Armenia, the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Republic of Bulgaria, Georgia, the Hellenic Republic, the Republic of Moldova Romania, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Turkey, and Ukraine. See Black Sea Economic Cooperation, *Agreement among the Governments of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Participating States on Cooperation if Combating Crime, in Particular in its Organized Forms*, October 2, 1998; available from [www.bsec.gov.tr/cooperation.htm](http://www.bsec.gov.tr/cooperation.htm).

<sup>3376</sup> U. S. Department of State, *Trafficking in Persons Report- 2004: Russia*, U.S. Embassy- Moscow, *unclassified telegram no. 4732*, April 04, 2004.

<sup>3377</sup> U.S. Consulate- St. Petersburg, *unclassified telegram no. 1504*, July 17, 2002.

<sup>3378</sup> The action committee consists of trade union, police, academic, employers, religious and other NGO representatives. See *Ibid*. The project has also established teacher training in schools with high dropout rates, directed families with at-risk children to existing services, and provided rehabilitation, food, health care, and other necessities to street children. See U.S. Embassy- Moscow, *unclassified telegram no. 15215*.

<sup>3379</sup> ILO-IPEC, *News*, ILO-IPEC, St. Petersburg, 2004; available from [http://www.unoffice.spb.ru/ipec/index\\_en.html](http://www.unoffice.spb.ru/ipec/index_en.html). [cited May 21, 2004]

<sup>3380</sup> Government of the Russian Federation, *Education for All: Russia's National Framework for Action*, UNESCO, October 2, 2003, 18, 19; available from [http://portal.unesco.org/education/fr/file\\_download.php/8e40598bc1035e1ff54dfb4cc1a9e0fcEFARussia.doc](http://portal.unesco.org/education/fr/file_download.php/8e40598bc1035e1ff54dfb4cc1a9e0fcEFARussia.doc).

<sup>3381</sup> World Bank, *Project Appraisal Document on a Proposed Loan in the Amount of US\$30 Million to the Russian Federation for an Education Reform Project*, 21782-RU, Washington, D.C., April 30, 2001; available from <http://web.worldbank.org/external/projects/main?pagePK=104231&piPK=73230&theSitePK=40941&menuPK=228424&Projectid=P050474>. See also World Bank, *Documents and Reports: Russia- Education Reform Project*, World Bank, Washington, D.C., May 26, 2001; available from [http://www-wds.worldbank.org/servlet/WDS\\_IBank\\_Servlet?pcont=details&eid=000094946\\_01051604004481](http://www-wds.worldbank.org/servlet/WDS_IBank_Servlet?pcont=details&eid=000094946_01051604004481).

general education students,<sup>3382</sup> from grade 1 through 11,<sup>3383</sup> across Russia. It will support the training of teachers and administrators in new technologies and generate additional teacher training materials. Finally, this project will create a network of interschool resource centers to introduce vocational training in technology and allow centers to communicate with each other to support the e-learning system. This first phase of the government's educational modernization program will last until 2008.<sup>3384</sup>

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<sup>3382</sup> World Bank, *Russia: World Bank Supports E-Learning Programs*, press release, World Bank, Washington, D.C., March 2, 2004; available from <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/NEWS/0,,contentMDK:20171404~menuPK:34463~pagePK:64003015~piPK:64003012~theSitePK:4607,00.html#>. [cited August 31, 2004]

<sup>3383</sup> World Bank, *Project Appraisal Document on a Proposed Loan in the Amount of US\$100 Million to the Russian Federation for an E-Learning Support Project*, 3.

<sup>3384</sup> World Bank, *Russia: World Bank Supports E-Learning Programs*, "press release".