

The Republic of Serbia

Selected Statistics and Indicators on Child Labor

Percent of children 5-14 estimated as working:	Unavailable
Minimum age for admission to work:	15 ³⁷⁵¹
Age to which education is compulsory:	15 ³⁷⁵²
Free public education:	Yes ³⁷⁵³
Gross primary enrollment rate:	Unavailable
Net primary enrollment rate:	Unavailable
Percent of children 5-14 attending school:	Unavailable
Percent of primary school entrants likely to reach grade 5:	Unavailable
Ratified Convention 138:	11/24/00 ³⁷⁵⁴
Ratified Convention 182:	7/10/03 ³⁷⁵⁵
ILO-IPEC participating country:	No ³⁷⁵⁶

Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

Children in the Republic of Serbia can be found working in rural areas on family farms or other family businesses. Children also work in the informal sector, selling small items or washing car windows. Children from poor, rural communities, Roma children and children living with foster families are at the highest risk for entering exploitive child labor including begging, theft, prostitution, dealing narcotics and hard physical labor, according to a study released in March 2006 by the Ministry of Labor, Employment and Social Policy and the NGO Children's Rights Center.³⁷⁵⁷ Roma children are particularly vulnerable to trafficking, both abroad and internally, for forced begging and theft rings.³⁷⁵⁸

There have been cases of girls trafficked to Serbia from Moldova and the Ukraine.³⁷⁵⁹ Trafficking children for sexual exploitation has reportedly increased.³⁷⁶⁰

³⁷⁵¹ U.S. Department of State, "Serbia," in *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2006*, Washington, DC, March 6, 2007, Section 6d; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2006>.

³⁷⁵² Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, *Thematic Review of National Policies for Education: Serbia*, CCNM/DEELSA/ED(2001)11, June 22, 2001, 6; available from [http://www.oecd.org/OLIS/2001DOC.NSF/LINKTO/CCNM-DEELSA-ED\(2001\)11](http://www.oecd.org/OLIS/2001DOC.NSF/LINKTO/CCNM-DEELSA-ED(2001)11).

³⁷⁵³ ILO, *Report of the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (CEACR): Individual Direct Request Concerning Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) Serbia and Montenegro (ratification: 2000) Submitted: 2006 092006SCG138*, Geneva, 2006; available from <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/newcountryframeE.htm>.

³⁷⁵⁴ ILO, *Ratifications by Country*, [accessed November 2, 2006]; available from <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/newratframeE.htm>.

³⁷⁵⁵ Ibid.

³⁷⁵⁶ ILO, *IPEC Action Against Child Labour: Highlights 2006*, Geneva, February 2007; available from <http://www.ilo.org/iloroot/public/english/standards/ipec/doc-view.cfm?id=3159>.

³⁷⁵⁷ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Serbia," Section 5.

³⁷⁵⁸ U.S. Department of State, "Serbia and Montenegro (Tier 2 Watch List)," in *Trafficking in Persons Report- 2006*, Washington, DC, June 5, 2006; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2006/65987.htm>. See also Barbara Limanowska, *Trafficking in Human Beings in South Eastern Europe 2004 - Focus on Prevention in: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Moldova, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, the UN Administered Province of Kosovo* UNDP, New York, March 2005, 64, 117; available from <http://www.unicef.org/ceecis/Trafficking.Report.2005.pdf>.

³⁷⁵⁹ U.S. Department of State, "Trafficking in Persons Report- 2006: Serbia and Montenegro."

³⁷⁶⁰ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Serbia," Section 5.

Child Labor Laws and Enforcement

The minimum age of employment is 15 years.³⁷⁶¹ However, it is not clear if the minimum age for employment applies to self-employed children.³⁷⁶² Children under 18 are prohibited from hazardous work and can only enter work upon written approval of a parent or guardian and under conditions that do not “jeopardize their health, morals and education,” including work that involves strenuous physical activity; work underground, underwater, or at dangerous heights; or exposure to toxic, carcinogenic substances, extreme temperatures, noise, or vibrations.³⁷⁶³ Further, children under 18 are not allowed to work overtime hours or at night,³⁷⁶⁴ and are allowed to work no more than 35 hours per week.³⁷⁶⁵ The law provides for monetary penalties for violation of these provisions.³⁷⁶⁶ According to the U.S. Department of State, the government is effectively enforcing child labor laws.³⁷⁶⁷

Forced labor is prohibited.³⁷⁶⁸ Males are eligible for conscription into the armed forces at 18, but they can be recruited for voluntary service in the year of their 17th birthday.³⁷⁶⁹ The criminal law addresses prostitution and pornography. Prostitution involving a minor is punishable by 1 to 10 years of imprisonment. Showing pornographic materials to minors is a criminal offense.³⁷⁷⁰ The penal code addresses all forms trafficking.³⁷⁷¹ From 2005 to 2006, 15 traffickers were convicted, with sentences ranging from 2 to 8 years of imprisonment. A group of traffickers was attempting to traffic Ukrainian girls into Serbia at a border crossing in February 2006 and was interdicted by police following extensive training of police and border guards.³⁷⁷² According to the U.S. Department of State, there were reports of corruption among some police complicit in a prostitution ring in Novi Pazar, but the government has not responded to these allegations or taken action against public officials allegedly complicit in trafficking.³⁷⁷³

³⁷⁶¹ ILO, *Report of the Committee of Experts*.

³⁷⁶² ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (CEACR), *CEACR: Individual Direct Request concerning Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) Serbia and Montenegro (ratification: 2000) Submitted: 2006 092006SCG138*, Geneva, 2006; available from <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/newcountryframeE.htm>.

³⁷⁶³ Ibid.

³⁷⁶⁴ Ibid.

³⁷⁶⁵ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Serbia," Section 6d.

³⁷⁶⁶ ILO, *Report of the Committee of Experts*.

³⁷⁶⁷ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Serbia," Section 6d.

³⁷⁶⁸ Ibid., Section 6c.

³⁷⁶⁹ Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, "Serbia and Montenegro," in *Child Soldiers Global Report 2004*, London, 2004.

³⁷⁷⁰ OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights Legislationline, *Serbia: Children*; accessed January 30, 2007, available from <http://www.legislationline.org/?tid=197&jid=44&less=false>.

³⁷⁷¹ U.S. Department of State, "Trafficking in Persons Report- 2006: Serbia and Montenegro."

³⁷⁷² Ibid. See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Serbia," Section 5.

³⁷⁷³ U.S. Department of State, "Trafficking in Persons Report- 2006: Serbia and Montenegro."

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

The Ministry of Labor, Employment and Social Issues includes child labor prevention in its regular protection programs for children and families.³⁷⁷⁴ The National Council submitted an anti-trafficking strategy for 2006-2009 to the Serbian Government for approval, and the government is implementing elements of the plan. To prevent trafficking, the government's officers have refused more than 4,000 visa applications from countries of known origin of trafficking.³⁷⁷⁵

³⁷⁷⁴ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Serbia," Section 6d.

³⁷⁷⁵ U.S. Department of State, "Trafficking in Persons Report- 2006: Serbia and Montenegro."