

Honduras

Selected Statistics and Indicators on Child Labor

Percent of children 5-14 estimated as working in 2002:	9.2% ²⁰³⁶
Minimum age for admission to work:	16 ²⁰³⁷
Age to which education is compulsory:	13 ²⁰³⁸
Free public education:	Yes ²⁰³⁹
Gross primary enrollment rate in 2004:	113% ²⁰⁴⁰
Net primary enrollment rate in 2004:	91% ²⁰⁴¹
Percent of children 5-14 attending school in 2002:	80.1% ²⁰⁴²
Percentage of primary school entrants likely to reach grade 5:	Unavailable
Ratified Convention 138:	6/9/1980 ²⁰⁴³
Ratified Convention 182:	10/25/2001 ²⁰⁴⁴
ILO-IPEC participating country:	Yes ²⁰⁴⁵

Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

In 2002, approximately 13.3 percent of boys and 5.0 percent of girls ages 5 to 14 years were working in Honduras.²⁰⁴⁶ The majority of working children were found in the agricultural sector (59.1 percent), followed by services (28.5 percent), manufacturing (10.9 percent), and other sectors (1.4 percent).²⁰⁴⁷ Children work on melon and sugarcane farms, as lobster divers, in

²⁰³⁶ UCW analysis of ILO SIMPOC, UNICEF MICS, and World Bank surveys, *Child Economic Activity and School Attendance Rates*, October 7, 2005.

²⁰³⁷ Government of Honduras, *Codigo de Trabajo de la Republica de Honduras y sus reformas, 1959*, Decreto No. 189; available from <http://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/docs/WEBTEXT/29076/64849/S59HND01.htm>.

²⁰³⁸ U.S. Department of State, "Honduras," in *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2006*, Washington, DC, March 6, 2007, Section 5; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2006/78896.htm>.

²⁰³⁹ *Constitución de la República de Honduras, 1982*, Article 171; available from <http://www.georgetown.edu/pdba/Constitutions/Honduras/hond82.html>.

²⁰⁴⁰ UNESCO Institute for Statistics, *Gross Enrolment Ratio. Primary. Total*, accessed December 20, 2006; available from <http://stats.uis.unesco.org/>.

²⁰⁴¹ UNESCO Institute for Statistics, *Net Enrolment Rate. Primary. Total*, accessed December 20, 2006; available from <http://stats.uis.unesco.org/>.

²⁰⁴² UCW analysis of ILO SIMPOC, UNICEF MICS, and World Bank surveys, *Child Economic Activity and School Attendance Rates*.

²⁰⁴³ ILO, *Ratifications by Country*, accessed December 28, 2006; available from <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/docs/declworld.htm>. See also ILO-IPEC, *Combating Child Labor in the Commercial Agriculture Sector in Central America and the Dominican Republic*, technical progress report, RLA/00/P54/USA, ILO-IPEC, Geneva, March 2004.

²⁰⁴⁴ ILO, *Ratifications by Country*. See also USAID Development Indicators Service, *Global Education Database*, [online] 2004 [cited October 10, 2004]; available from <http://quesdb.cdie.org/ged/index.html>.

²⁰⁴⁵ ILO-IPEC, *Ficha Pais: Honduras*, 2006; available from http://www.oit.org.pe/ippec/documentos/ficha_pais_hon.pdf.

²⁰⁴⁶ UCW analysis of ILO SIMPOC, UNICEF MICS, and World Bank surveys, *Child Economic Activity and School Attendance Rates*.

²⁰⁴⁷ Ibid.

garbage disposal sites, the *maquila* sector, and as domestic servants.²⁰⁴⁸ Children have been involved in the sale of drugs in Olancho and Comayagua.²⁰⁴⁹

Honduran children are trafficked internally for commercial sexual exploitation.²⁰⁵⁰ Children from rural areas are trafficked to urban and tourist centers such as San Pedro Sula, the North Caribbean Coast, and the Bay Islands.²⁰⁵¹ Between 20 and 30 children, mostly girls, are trafficked daily across the border with Guatemala for sexual exploitation. A national NGO reported that there were 10,000 child trafficking victims during 2006.²⁰⁵²

Child Labor Laws and Enforcement

The law sets the minimum age for employment at 16 years.²⁰⁵³ Children 14 to 15 years are permitted to work with parental consent and the Ministry of Labor's permission.²⁰⁵⁴ The law prohibits a child younger than 14 years from working, even with parental permission.²⁰⁵⁵ If children 14 or 15 years are hired, an employer must certify that they have finished or are finishing compulsory schooling.²⁰⁵⁶ Individuals who allow or oblige children to work illegally face fines as well as prison sentences of 3 to 5 years.²⁰⁵⁷ Children under 16 are prohibited from working at night and in clubs, theaters, circuses, cafes, bars, in establishments that serve alcoholic beverages, or in jobs that have been determined to be unhealthy or dangerous.²⁰⁵⁸ No child under age 16 is allowed to work in hazardous conditions, which are defined by Honduran law to include standing on high scaffolding; exposure to toxic substances; diving underwater; working in tunnels or underground; working with wood-cutting machines, ovens, smelters, or heavy presses; and exposure to vehicular traffic, high-voltage electrical currents, and garbage.²⁰⁵⁹ Children under 17 years may only work 6 hours per day and for no more than 30 hours per week.²⁰⁶⁰

According to the U.S. Department of State, enforcement of child labor laws by the Ministry of Labor is not effective outside the *maquila* sector. Violations occur mostly in the agricultural export sector, family farming, small-scale services, and commerce.²⁰⁶¹

²⁰⁴⁸ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Honduras," Section 6d.

²⁰⁴⁹ National Commission for the Eradication of Child Labor, *Plan de Acción Nacional Para la Erradicación Gradual y Progresiva del Trabajo Infantil en Honduras*, Tegucigalpa, December 2001, 97.

²⁰⁵⁰ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Honduras," Section 5.

²⁰⁵¹ U.S. Department of State, "Honduras (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/2006/65989.htm>.

²⁰⁵² U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Honduras," Section 5.

²⁰⁵³ *Código de Trabajo de la República de Honduras y sus Reformas, 1959*, Decreto No. 189, Artículos 128-129; available from <http://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/docs/WEBTEXT/29076/64849/S59HND01.htm>. See also *Constitución de la República de Honduras, 1982*, Capítulo 5, Artículo 128, Número 7.

²⁰⁵⁴ *Código de Trabajo*, Artículos 133 and 128. See also *Código de la Niñez y de la Adolescencia, 1996*, Artículo 119; available from http://www.bvs.hn/bva/fulltext/Leyes_honduras.PDF. See also *Constitución de la República de Honduras, 1982*, Capítulo 5, Artículo 128, Número 7.

²⁰⁵⁵ *Código de la Niñez y de la Adolescencia, 1996*, Artículos 119 and 120.

²⁰⁵⁶ *Código de Trabajo*, Artículo 133.

²⁰⁵⁷ *Código de la Niñez y de la Adolescencia, 1996.*, Artículo 134.

²⁰⁵⁸ *Código de Trabajo*, Artículos 128 and 129.

²⁰⁵⁹ U.S. Embassy- Tegucigalpa, *reporting*, August 25, 2004.

²⁰⁶⁰ *Constitución de la República de Honduras, 1982*, Capítulo 5, Artículo 128, Número 7.

²⁰⁶¹ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Honduras." Section 6d.

Honduran law requires recruits to be 18 in order to enlist voluntarily in the armed forces. There is no compulsory conscription.²⁰⁶²

In Honduras, the child and adolescent code states that children are protected against sexual exploitation, child prostitution, and child pornography; violators face 3 to 5 years of imprisonment.²⁰⁶³ The penal code indicates that those who promote or facilitate child prostitution are punished with 7.5 to 12 years of imprisonment and fines.²⁰⁶⁴ A new anti-trafficking law increased penalties and defined new offenses in relation to trafficking in persons. The law establishes fines and prison terms of 4 to 20 years for prostitution, incest, lechery, knowingly infecting someone with HIV/AIDS, abuse, and pornography related to trafficking.²⁰⁶⁵ A criminal code reform that includes the classification of the conducts related to the commercial sexual exploitation of children was approved in 2006.²⁰⁶⁶ The U.S. Department of State reports that enforcement of the new law has been limited.²⁰⁶⁷ However, the Office of the Special Prosecutor for Children has cooperated with the Governments of Mexico, Guatemala, Belize, and Nicaragua to locate and repatriate children who were trafficking victims. As a result of this international cooperation, 53 trafficked children have been returned to Honduras.²⁰⁶⁸

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

Honduras is implementing a National Plan of Action to Eradicate Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children.²⁰⁶⁹ The Government of Honduras is educating government officials and the tourism industry about anti-trafficking law reforms.²⁰⁷⁰

The Government of Honduras is currently participating in a number of ILO-IPEC implemented projects including a USD 8.7 million 2002-2009 USDOL-funded regional project that works to combat the commercial sexual exploitation of children. The project targets 713 children for withdrawal and 657 children for prevention from trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation in the region.²⁰⁷¹ As part of an effort to build capacity to improve labor law compliance among the CAFTA-DR partners, USDOL is providing USD 2.85 million for a project to strengthen

²⁰⁶² Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, "Honduras," in *Child Soldiers Global Report 2004*, London, 2004; available from http://www.child-soldiers.org/document_get.php?id=830.

²⁰⁶³ *Código de la Niñez y de la Adolescencia*, 1996, Artículos 134 and 141.

²⁰⁶⁴ Government of Honduras, *Legislation of Interpol member states on sexual offences against children: Honduras*, [database online] 2004 [cited June 22, 2005], Article 148; available from <http://www.interpol.int/Public/Children/SexualAbuse/NationalLaws/csaHonduras.asp>.

²⁰⁶⁵ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Honduras," Section 6d.

²⁰⁶⁶ ILO-IPEC, *Stop the Exploitation: Contribution to the Prevention and Elimination of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in Central America, Panama and the Dominican Republic*, technical progress report, March 15, 2006.

²⁰⁶⁷ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Honduras," Section 5.

²⁰⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, Section 5.

²⁰⁶⁹ ILO-IPEC, *Ficha País: Honduras*.

²⁰⁷⁰ U.S. Department of State, "Trafficking in Persons Report- 2006: Honduras."

²⁰⁷¹ ILO-IPEC, *Stop the Exploitation: Contribution to the Prevention and Elimination of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in Central America, Panama and the Dominican Republic*, 2002.

outreach efforts in the agriculture sector in the region, where child labor is a serious problem.²⁰⁷² Another ILO-IPEC implemented USD 500,000 project, funded by the Netherlands, works to combat child domestic work through education and training. A USD 2.7 million ILO-IPEC project funded by Italy combats child labor in garbage dumps. The Government of Honduras participates in a USD 500,000 ILO-IPEC project funded by Canada that focuses on combating child labor through strengthening labor ministries and workers. Honduras also participates in a USD 14 million ILO-IPEC regional project funded by Spain.²⁰⁷³

In addition, the Government of Honduras is participating in a 2004-2008 USD 5.7 million USDOL-funded regional project implemented by CARE to combat child labor through education. The project targets 470 children for withdrawal and 1,410 children for prevention from exploitive child labor.²⁰⁷⁴

²⁰⁷² Social Accountability International, *Project CULTIVAR: Advancing Labor Rights in Agriculture in Central America*, project document, New York, August 8, 2007.

²⁰⁷³ ILO-IPEC, *IPEC Projects from All Donors Except USDOL*, November 3, 2006.

²⁰⁷⁴ U.S. Department of Labor, *Project Primero Aprendo*, project summary. , 2004.