

Oman

Selected Statistics and Indicators on Child Labor²⁶¹⁰

Working children, 5-14 years (%):	-
Working boys, 5-14 years (%):	-
Working girls, 5-14 years (%):	-
Working children by sector, 5-14 years (%):	
- Agriculture	-
- Manufacturing	-
- Services	-
- Other	-
Minimum age for work:	15
Compulsory education age:	Not compulsory
Free public education:	Yes
Gross primary enrollment rate (%), 2006:	82
Net primary enrollment rate (%), 2006:	74
School attendance, children 5-14 years (%):	-
Survival rate to grade 5 (%), 2005:	100
ILO-IPEC participating country:	No

Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

Children in Oman work in family businesses and informal occupations involving agriculture and fishing.²⁶¹¹ Camel racing is part of the Bedouin cultural heritage; children as young as 7 years reportedly participate in competitive races.²⁶¹²

Because of limited data, it is difficult to ascertain whether child prostitution, pornography, or trafficking exists in Oman. The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child has noted that a large number of migrant workers enter Oman each year; trafficked children may be among them. The Committee has recommended that the Government conduct in-depth studies on the possible commercial sexual exploitation and trafficking of children.²⁶¹³

Child Labor Laws and Enforcement

The minimum age for admission to work in Oman is 15 years; however, for certain hazardous occupations the minimum age is 18 years.²⁶¹⁴ The minimum age provision and other child labor laws do not apply to children working in family businesses.²⁶¹⁵ Minors 15 to 18 years are only permitted to work 6 hours per day, and no more than 4 consecutive hours without a break. They are only permitted to work between the hours of 6 a.m. and 6 p.m., and may not work overtime, on holidays, or on rest days.²⁶¹⁶ Workplaces that employ minors are required to post certain items for display, including a copy of the provisions of the law regulating the employment of children; an updated log with the names, ages, and dates of employment of minors employed in the workplace; and a work schedule showing work hours, rest periods, and weekly holidays.²⁶¹⁷ A royal decree sets the maximum prison term at 1 month and/or a fine for employers who repeatedly use child labor.²⁶¹⁸ In August 2005, the Government began raising annually by one year the minimum legal age to work as a camel jockey until it reaches 18 years in 2009.²⁶¹⁹

Forced labor by children is prohibited by law.²⁶²⁰ The minimum age for voluntary military recruitment is 18 years.²⁶²¹ The crime of inciting a minor under 18 years into prostitution is punishable by not less than 5 years of imprisonment.²⁶²² Child pornography is not explicitly outlawed,²⁶²³ but the production, possession, or distribution of pornographic material in general is punishable by up to 1 year of imprisonment.²⁶²⁴

There is no specific legal provision prohibiting trafficking in persons;²⁶²⁵ however, the crime of enslaving a person carries a prison sentence of between 3 and 15 years.²⁶²⁶ Similarly, the crimes of receiving, possessing, acquiring, maintaining, or causing a person to enter or exit Oman in a state of servitude or slavery are punishable by 3 to 5 years of imprisonment.²⁶²⁷ During the reporting period,

the Government of Oman did not report any prosecutions for offenses related to acts of trafficking.²⁶²⁸ It is illegal to engage a minor under 18 years in illicit activities such as drug production or trafficking, or any other activity linked with narcotic drugs; such offenses are punishable by the death penalty.²⁶²⁹

The Ministry of Manpower (MOM) is responsible for the enforcement of child labor laws; however, USDOS reports that enforcement does not often extend to some small businesses, especially those engaged in agriculture and fishing.²⁶³⁰ In 2007, the MOM virtually doubled its capacity for monitoring private sector labor practices by hiring approximately 100 new labor inspectors.²⁶³¹ In practice, most employers ask each prospective employee for a certificate indicating that he or she has completed basic education through grade 10. Considering that children usually begin their basic education at age 6, this means that workers, in most cases, will be at least age 16 when they begin work.²⁶³²

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

In March 2006, the Governments of Oman and Pakistan signed an MOU to increase cooperation in combating organized crime and trafficking in persons.²⁶³³ Oman has also entered into bilateral and multilateral agreements with Saudi Arabia, India, and the Arab Gulf Cooperation Council aimed at combating various forms of child sexual exploitation.²⁶³⁴ The Government operates a 24-hour hotline to allow citizens to report claims of labor abuses, including trafficking.²⁶³⁵ In June 2007, the ILO trained 100 MOM inspectors on the requirements of core ILO conventions, as well as on how to recognize signs of trafficking.²⁶³⁶

²⁶¹⁰ For statistical data not cited here, see the Data Sources and Definitions section. For data on ratifications and ILO-IPEC membership, see the Executive Summary. For minimum age for admission to work, age to which education is compulsory, and free public education, see Government of Oman, *Royal Decree No. 35/2003: Oman Labour Law*, (May 3, 2003). See also U.S. Department of State, "Oman," in *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2007*, Washington, DC, March 11, 2008, section

5; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2007/100603.htm>.

²⁶¹¹ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Oman," section 5. Also see UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Consideration of Reports Submitted by States Parties Under Article 44 of the Convention: Concluding Observations: Oman*, CRC/C/OMN/CO/2, Geneva, September 29, 2006; available from http://www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/docs/co/CRC_C_OMN_CO_2.pdf.

²⁶¹² U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Oman," section 6d. See also U.S. Embassy- Muscat, *reporting*, March 3, 2008.

²⁶¹³ UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Concluding Observations: Oman*, section 65 and 66(a). See also UNODC, *Trafficking in Persons: Global Patterns*, Vienna, 2006, 19-20; available from http://www.unodc.org/pdf/traffickinginpersons_report_2006ver2.pdf.

²⁶¹⁴ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Oman," section 6d.

²⁶¹⁵ Government of Oman, *Labour Law*, (2003), article 2; available from <http://www.directory-oman.com/labourlaw.htm>.

²⁶¹⁶ Government of Oman, *Oman Labour Law*, articles 75-77.

²⁶¹⁷ *Ibid.*, article 78.

²⁶¹⁸ U.S. Embassy- Muscat, *reporting*, November 7, 2006.

²⁶¹⁹ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Oman," section 6d. See also U.S. Embassy- Muscat, *reporting*, March 3, 2008.

²⁶²⁰ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Oman."

²⁶²¹ U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, *The World Factbook-Oman*, [online] November 15, 2007 [cited November 30, 2007]; available from <https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/fields/2024.html>.

²⁶²² Government of Oman, *Penal Code*, (1974), article 220; available from <http://www.interpol.int/public/Children/SexualAbuse/NationalLaws/csaOman.asp>.

²⁶²³ ILO Committee of Experts, *Direct Request, Worst Forms of Child Labor Convention, 1999 (No. 182) Oman (ratification: 2001)*, [online] 2006 [cited November 26, 2007]; available from <http://webfusion.ilo.org/public/db/standards/normes/appl/appl-displayAllComments.cfm?conv=C182&ctry=2790&hdrof=f=1&lang=EN>.

²⁶²⁴ Government of Oman, *Penal Code*, article 34 and 224.

²⁶²⁵ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Oman," section 5.

²⁶²⁶ U.S. Embassy- Muscat, *reporting*, March 3, 2008.

²⁶²⁷ ILO Committee of Experts, *Direct Request Worst Forms of Child Labor Convention, 1999 (No. 182) Oman (ratification: 2001)*.

²⁶²⁸ U.S. Department of State, "Oman (Tier 3 Watch List)," in *Trafficking in Persons Report- 2007*, Washington, DC, June 23, 2007; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2007/>. See also U.S. Embassy- Muscat, *reporting, March 3, 2008*.

²⁶²⁹ ILO Committee of Experts, *Direct Request Worst Forms of Child Labor Convention, 1999 (No. 182) Oman (ratification: 2001)*.

²⁶³⁰ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Oman," section 6d.

²⁶³¹ U.S. Embassy- Muscat, *reporting, December 5, 2007*.

²⁶³² U.S. Embassy- Muscat, *reporting, August 23, 2004*.

²⁶³³ U.S. Department of State official, E-mail communication to USDOL official, March 14, 2006.

²⁶³⁴ ILO Committee of Experts, *Direct Request Worst Forms of Child Labor Convention, 1999 (No. 182) Oman (ratification: 2001)*.

²⁶³⁵ Sultanate of Oman- Ministry of Education, *National Report on Quality Education in Oman*, Muscat, 2004, 16, 25-28, and 41; available from <http://www.ibe.unesco.org/International/ICE47/English/Natreps/reports/oman.pdf>.

²⁶³⁶ U.S. Embassy- Muscat, *reporting, March 3, 2008*.

Pakistan

<i>Selected Statistics and Indicators on Child Labor</i> ²⁶³⁷	
Working children, 10-14 years (%), 1999-2000:	16.4
Working boys, 10-14 years (%), 1999-2000:	15.8
Working girls, 10-14 years (%), 1999-2000:	17.2
Working children by sector, 10-14 years (%), 1999-2000:	
- Agriculture	78.1
- Manufacturing	7.1
- Services	13.4
- Other	1.4
Minimum age for work:	14 in specified hazardous occupations
Compulsory education age:	Varies by province
Free public education:	No
Gross primary enrollment rate (%), 2005:	86
Net primary enrollment rate (%), 2005:	67
School attendance, children 10-14 years (%), 1999-2000:	64.9
Survival rate to grade 5 (%), 2004:	70
ILO-IPEC participating country.	Yes

Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

The majority of Pakistan's working children work in agriculture, most of it family-based.²⁶³⁸ Children also work in manufacturing, construction, transport, domestic service, and in small workshops and family businesses.²⁶³⁹ The country's rapid population growth and high rate of urbanization have increased the number of street children in urban areas. Street children work scavenging garbage and vending various products, among other activities.²⁶⁴⁰ In Balochistan and Northwest Frontier provinces, the children of Afghan refugees are particularly vulnerable to involvement in the worst forms of child labor.²⁶⁴¹ Children are employed in several hazardous activities across the country, including rag-picking, leather tanning, mining, deep-sea fishing, seafood processing, brick-making, and manufacturing of surgical instruments and glass bangles.²⁶⁴² Children working in carpet-weaving suffer injuries from sharp tools, eye disease and eye strain, respiratory disease due to wool dust, and skeletal deformation and pain due to cramped working conditions.²⁶⁴³ Many working children are vulnerable to physical and sexual abuse, particularly those working far from their families such as child miners and child domestics working in private homes.²⁶⁴⁴

There are reports of children being kidnapped, maimed, and forced to work as beggars.²⁶⁴⁵ Bonded child labor reportedly exists in Pakistan in the