

Ecuador

Selected Statistics and Indicators on Child Labor¹¹⁰³

Working children, 5-14 years (%), 2004:	10.2
Working boys, 5-14 years (%), 2004:	12.6
Working girls, 5-14 years (%), 2004:	7.8
Working children by sector, 5-14 years (%), 2004:	
- Agriculture	71
- Manufacturing	4.5
- Services	22.9
- Other	1.6
Minimum age for work:	15
Compulsory education age:	17
Free public education:	Yes
Gross primary enrollment rate (%), 2005:	117
Net primary enrollment rate (%), 2005:	97
School attendance, children 5-14 years (%), 2004:	91.1
Survival rate to grade 5 (%), 2004:	76
ILO-IPEC participating country:	Yes

Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

In Ecuador, the largest percentage of working children between the ages of 5 and 17 years are found in rural areas of the *sierra*, or highlands, followed by the Amazon, and urban coastal areas.¹¹⁰⁴ In rural and jungle areas, children perform agricultural work for their families or work in plantations. Their tasks in working with crops and animals often include the use of chemicals and sharp tools, and the transportation of heavy loads.¹¹⁰⁵ In urban areas, children beg on the streets, work in commerce selling candies and newspapers, or provide services as messengers, domestic servants, shoe shiners, garbage collectors, and recyclers.¹¹⁰⁶

There is commercial sexual exploitation of children occurring in Ecuador.¹¹⁰⁷ A 2003 ILO report estimated that 5,200 children were engaged in prostitution.¹¹⁰⁸ Colombian girls are trafficked to Ecuador for commercial sexual exploitation, and some Ecuadorian children are trafficked to

neighboring countries and Spain. However, most child victims are trafficked within the country, from coastal and border areas to urban centers.¹¹⁰⁹ Some trafficked children are sold by their extremely poor families into prostitution, forced labor agriculture, and begging.¹¹¹⁰ According to USDOS, Ecuador has been making significant progress in identifying and punishing trafficking.¹¹¹¹

Child Labor Laws and Enforcement

The law sets the minimum age for employment at 15 years. Child labor provisions do not apply to children involved in formative cultural or ancestral practices, as long as they are not exposed to physical or psychological harm. The law prohibits adolescents from working more than 6 hours per day or more than 5 days per week.¹¹¹² The law also prohibits adolescents from working in 15 activities, including mines, garbage dumps, slaughterhouses, and quarries; from working with hazardous materials; or in jobs that could be hazardous to the child's physical or mental health.¹¹¹³

The Labor Inspectorate and the municipalities oversee labor contracts and work permits for adolescents 15 years and older.¹¹¹⁴ The law prescribes sanctions for violations of child labor laws, such as monetary fines and the closing of establishments where child labor occurs.¹¹¹⁵

The law specifically calls for children in Ecuador to be protected in the workplace and against economic exploitation. The law also protects minors against trafficking, prostitution, pornography, and the forced use of illegal drugs and alcohol.¹¹¹⁶ Trafficking in persons for both sexual exploitation and for non-sexual purposes is prohibited and can carry a jail term of up to 35 years.¹¹¹⁷ Trafficking can be punishable by 9 to 12 years of prison if the victim is younger than 18 years, and 12 to 16 years in prison if the victim is under 14 years old.¹¹¹⁸ The law establishes 9 to 12 years imprisonment for promoting child sex tourism. Several state and municipal governments established anti-trafficking ordinances and action plans.¹¹¹⁹ The age of compulsory military service is

18 years, when male citizens are randomly selected to perform active military service.¹¹²⁰

The Government of Ecuador is investigating more than 100 trafficking cases; and under the Public Ministry, the Victim and Witness Protection Program is currently assisting 27 victims. The program coordinates Government and NGO services to victims of trafficking, providing psychological and medical care, shelter, economic and employment assistance, and police protection.¹¹²¹ Five shelters in El Oro, Pichincha, and Azuay provinces assist more than 120 victims of commercial sexual exploitation.¹¹²²

The Ministry of Labor has 28 child labor inspectors operating in 22 provinces that have received continuing training from the ILO.¹¹²³ Between April 2006 and March 2007, inspections were conducted in 2,242 workplaces, where 198 minors were found working in violation of labor laws. The Ministry issued 100 citations to employers, and all cases were referred to the corresponding legal authorities.¹¹²⁴

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

The Government of Ecuador has allocated USD 135,000 under its Social Action Agenda to combat child labor in garbage dumps and landfills, to combat trafficking of children for begging, and to improve the inspection system.¹¹²⁵ The work of the National Committee for the Progressive Elimination of Child Labor (CONEPTI) has been declared a political priority and focus at the Ministry of Labor.¹¹²⁶ CONEPTI continued the work of its Technical Secretariat, following up on projects, negotiating agreements, promoting awareness, training stakeholders on program goals, and making policy decisions regarding inspectors and social controllers.¹¹²⁷

The Ministry of Tourism continued the awareness raising campaign to prevent the commercial sexual exploitation of children related to tourism. The campaign has created posters and billboards to raise awareness among the general public and warn tourists that sexual tourism is punishable under Ecuadorian law.¹¹²⁸

The Government of Ecuador supports education programs that contribute to the withdrawal or prevention of children from exploitive labor. One program reintegrates working children and adolescents from the ages of 8 to 15 years into the school system to complete the basic education cycle. Another program provides vocational training and alternative recreational activities to working children between 8 and 17 years, and raises the awareness of parents on the dangers of exploitive labor. Adolescents 10 to 17 years who have not completed primary schooling and are more than 3 years behind their peers, can enroll in an accelerated learning program to complete the equivalent of basic education.¹¹²⁹

The Government of Ecuador and the other government members and associates of MERCOSUR are conducting the “Niño Sur” (“Southern Child”) initiative to defend the rights of children and adolescents in the region. The initiative includes unified public campaigns against commercial sexual exploitation, trafficking, and child labor; mutual technical assistance in adjusting legal frameworks to international standards on those issues; and the exchange of best practices related to victim protection and assistance.¹¹³⁰

A USD 4 million Timebound Program, funded by USDOL and implemented by ILO-IPEC through 2008, complements the Government’s plan to eliminate the worst forms of child labor in the country. This project targets 2,120 children for withdrawal and 2,880 children for prevention from exploitive labor in the banana and flower sectors, and commercial sexual exploitation.¹¹³¹ In addition, the Government of Ecuador participates in a USD 3 million USDOL-funded 4-year program implemented by Catholic Relief Services to combat exploitive child labor through access to quality education. This project targets 619 children for withdrawal and 9,701 children for prevention from work in the banana and cut flower industries.¹¹³²

An ongoing USD 4 million USDOL-funded project, initiated in 2005 by World Learning, combats child labor within the indigenous population through the provision of education services. This project targets 2,124 indigenous children for withdrawal and 4,054 indigenous children for prevention from exploitive work in the Sierra, Amazon, and Quito.¹¹³³ This project targets an additional 146

children to be withdrawn from trafficking for begging, and is providing technical assistance to the National Institute for Childhood and Family (INNFA) with the implementation of government programs targeting children involved in the same type of exploitation in the sierra provinces.¹¹³⁴ Ecuador also participates in a USD 2.1 million global SIMPOC project funded by Canada with technical assistance from ILO-IPEC.¹¹³⁵ To address trafficking in persons, including children, USDOS' Trafficking in Persons Office and USAID fund six programs in Ecuador with a total cost of nearly USD 1.3 million.¹¹³⁶

¹¹⁰³ 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 Ecuador, *Código de la Niñez y Adolescencia*, N 2002-100, (January 3, 2003), article 82; available from <http://www.oit.org.pe/spanish/260ameri/oitreg/activid/proyectos/ippec/boletin/documentos/cna.doc>. See also U.S. Department of State, "Ecuador," 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/2007/100638.htm>. See also Catholic Relief Services, *SOY! Project*, technical progress report, Quito, September 15, 2007.

¹¹⁰⁴ ILO-IPEC, INDEC, *Mintrabajo e INFFA presentan resultados preliminares de Encuesta Nacional: 38.6% de niños y niñas entre 5 y 17 años trabajan en el area rural de Ecuador*, [online] February 2002 [cited December 3, 2007]; available from <http://www.oit.org.pe/ippec/boletin/noticias/vernoticia,36.php>.

¹¹⁰⁵ World Learning, *Project Document, Wiñari Project*, September 30, 2005, 38-40.

¹¹⁰⁶ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Ecuador," section 6d. See also ECPAT International CSEC Database, *Ecuador*, accessed December 3, 2007; available from <http://www.ecpat.net/>.

¹¹⁰⁷ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Ecuador," section 5. See also ECPAT International CSEC Database, *Ecuador*.

¹¹⁰⁸ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Ecuador," section 5.

¹¹⁰⁹ U.S. Department of State, "Ecuador (Tier 2)," in *Trafficking in Persons Report- 2007*, Washington, DC, June 5, 2007; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2007/82805.htm>.

¹¹¹⁰ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Ecuador," section 5.

¹¹¹¹ U.S. Department of State, "Trafficking in Persons Report- 2007: Ecuador." See also U.S. Department of State, *Trafficking in Persons Interim Assessment*, [online] 2006 [cited January 31, 2007]; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/rpt/78948.htm>.

¹¹¹² Government of Ecuador, *Código de la Niñez y Adolescencia*, article 81-95.

¹¹¹³ *Ibid.*, article 87. See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Ecuador," section 6d.

¹¹¹⁴ Government of Ecuador, *Código de la Niñez y Adolescencia*, article 88-93.

¹¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, article 81, 82, 95.

¹¹¹⁶ Government of Ecuador, *Constitución Política de la República de Ecuador*, (1998), article 50; available from <http://pdba.georgetown.edu/Constitutions/Ecuador/ecuador98.html>.

¹¹¹⁷ Government of Ecuador, *Ley Reformatoria al Código Penal que tipifica los delitos de explotación sexual de los menores de edad*, chapter V; available from <http://www.interpol.int/Public/Children/SexualAbuse/NationalLaws/csaEcuador.pdf>.

¹¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, chapter III.

¹¹¹⁹ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Ecuador," section 5. See also Government of Ecuador, *Reforma al Código Penal*, chapter IV.

¹¹²⁰ Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, "Ecuador," in *Child Soldiers Global Report 2004*, London, 2004; available from http://www.child-soldiers.org/document_get.php?id=824. See also Government of Ecuador, *Constitución Política de la República de Ecuador*, article 188.

¹¹²¹ U.S. Department of State, "Trafficking in Persons Report- 2007: Ecuador."

¹¹²² U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Ecuador," section 5.

¹¹²³ ILO-IPEC, *Supporting the Timebound Program for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor in Ecuador*, Technical Progress Report, Geneva, September 30, 2007.

¹¹²⁴ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Ecuador," section 6d.

¹¹²⁵ ILO-IPEC, *Technical Progress Report*. See also World Learning, *Project Wiñari Technical Progress Report*, September 6, 2007.

¹¹²⁶ ILO-IPEC, *Technical Progress Report*.

¹¹²⁷ Embassy of Ecuador, *Actions Undertaken by the State of Ecuador to Prevent and Eradicate Child Labor*, 2006.

¹¹²⁸ Ministry of Tourism, *Boletín #18- Prevención y Erradicación de la explotación sexual comercial en niñas y niños y adolescentes, asociadas a viajes y turismo*, [online] 2007 [cited December 3, 2007]; available from http://www.turismo.gov.ec/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=225&Itemid=43.

¹¹²⁹ INNFA, *Proyectos*, [online] 2007 [cited December 3, 2007]; available from <http://www.innfa.org/innfa/>

index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=141&Itemid=148&lang=es.

¹¹³⁰ CRIN, MERCOSUR, [online] 2007 [cited December 26, 2007]; available from <http://www.crin.org/espanol/RM/mercosur.asp>. See also Ministry of Justice and Human Rights of Argentina, *Iniciativa Niñ@ Sur*, [online] [cited December 7, 2007]; available from <http://www.derhuman.jus.gov.ar/direcciones/asistencia/ninosur.htm>.

¹¹³¹ ILO-IPEC, *Supporting the Time-Bound Program for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor in Ecuador*, Project Document, ECU/03/P50/USA, Geneva, August, 2003.

¹¹³² U.S. Department of Labor, *ILAB Technical Cooperation Project Summary: Project SOY!- Combating the Worst Forms of Child Labor through Education in Ecuador*, 2004.

¹¹³³ U.S. Department of Labor, *ILAB Technical Cooperation Project Summary: Project Wiñari- Combating the Worst Forms of Child Labor through Education in Ecuador*, 2005.

¹¹³⁴ World Learning, Technical Progress Report.

¹¹³⁵ ILO-IPEC, *IPEC Projects from all Donors except USDOL*, December 10, 2007.

¹¹³⁶ U.S. Embassy Official- Quito, E-mail communication to USDOL Official, August 7 2007.

Egypt

*Selected Statistics and Indicators on Child Labor*¹¹³⁷

Working children, 5-14 years (%), 2005:	6.7
Working boys, 5-14 years (%), 2005:	9.5
Working girls, 5-14 years (%), 2005:	3.7
Working children by sector, 5-14 years (%), Year:	
- Agriculture	-
- Manufacturing	-
- Services	-
- Other	-
Minimum age for work:	14
Compulsory education age:	For 9 years
Free public education:	Yes
Gross primary enrollment rate (%), 2005:	102
Net primary enrollment rate (%), 2005:	94
School attendance, children 6-14 years (%), 2005:	88.1
Survival rate to grade 5 (%), 2004:	94
ILO-IPEC participating country:	Yes

Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

A large proportion of working children in Egypt are found in the agricultural sector, where children

are hired each year for the cotton harvest.¹¹³⁸ Children work in a number of hazardous sectors, including leather tanning, pottery making, fishing, glassworks, blacksmithing, working metal and copper, construction, carpentry, mining and quarrying, auto repair, textile manufacturing, and domestic labor.¹¹³⁹ There are between 600,000 and 1 million street children in Egypt.¹¹⁴⁰ Street children, primarily boys, work collecting garbage, begging, assisting minibuses, and vending.¹¹⁴¹ Street children are particularly vulnerable to becoming involved in illicit activities, including pornography and prostitution.¹¹⁴²

Reports indicate a widespread practice of poor, rural families arranging to send their daughters to cities to work as domestic servants in the homes of wealthy residents. Child domestic workers are excluded from the protections of the labor code and are highly susceptible to exploitation, including physical and sexual abuse, as well as harsh working conditions.¹¹⁴³ Urban areas are also host to street children who have left their homes in the countryside to find work, and often to flee hostile conditions at home.¹¹⁴⁴ It has been reported that wealthy men from the Gulf region travel to Egypt for the purpose of *temporary marriages*, a form of commercial sexual exploitation, with minor girls. Girls are sold to men for short-term marriages that are akin to prostitution.¹¹⁴⁵ Often, the girls are sold by their parents.¹¹⁴⁶