

# Moldova

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

The Government of Moldova is beginning to take steps to prevent trafficking.<sup>1642</sup> Moldova participates in the Southeast European Cooperative Initiative Human Trafficking Task Force, which is intended to coordinate regional efforts by governments to combat trafficking in persons.<sup>1643</sup> The Government of Moldova is also working with IOM and OSCE to launch an information campaign on the issue, strengthen reintegration programs for victims of trafficking, and improve the capacity of law enforcement officials.<sup>1644</sup> The UNDP is operating an anti-trafficking center in the capital city of Chisinau to assist victims and educate law enforcement officials and other Moldovan authorities.<sup>1645</sup> UNICEF coordinates with the government to assist vulnerable children and to promote children's rights.<sup>1646</sup>

## Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

In 2000, UNICEF estimated that 37.1 percent of children between the ages of 5 and 14 in Moldova were working.<sup>1647</sup> Moldova is a primarily agricultural country, and child labor often involves work with parents on family farms.<sup>1648</sup> Increasing numbers of street children in urban areas are reported to be vulnerable to commercial sexual exploitation.<sup>1649</sup> Moldova is a source country for

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<sup>1642</sup> *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2000—Moldova* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of State, 2001) [hereinafter *Country Reports 2000*], Section 6f, at <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2000/eur/index.cfm?docid=870>.

<sup>1643</sup> “Stability Pact for Southeastern Europe: Task Force on Trafficking in Human Beings” at [www.osce.org/odihr/attf/index.php3?sc=Introduction](http://www.osce.org/odihr/attf/index.php3?sc=Introduction) on November 7, 2001.

<sup>1644</sup> IOM, “Moldova: Counter-Trafficking Initiatives Launched This Spring,” *IOM in Eastern Europe and Central Asia*, no. 3 (April-June), 2001.

<sup>1645</sup> “UNDP-Moldova: List of On-Going Projects” at [www.un.md/UNDP/proj/projects-ongoing.htm](http://www.un.md/UNDP/proj/projects-ongoing.htm) on 11/1/01. See also U.S. Department of State, “Fact Sheet: State Department Programs to Combat Trafficking in Persons,” at [www.usinfo.state.gov/topical/global/traffic/01060101.htm](http://www.usinfo.state.gov/topical/global/traffic/01060101.htm) on October 4, 2001.

<sup>1646</sup> The UN Development Assistance Framework, “The UN in Moldova,” February 2001, at [www.un.md/resident/UNDAF\\_feb2001.doc](http://www.un.md/resident/UNDAF_feb2001.doc) on November 1, 2001.

<sup>1647</sup> The total number of “working” children included “children who have done any paid or unpaid work for someone who is not a member of the household or who did more than 4 hours of housekeeping chores in the household or who did other family work.” Ten percent of children between the ages of 5 and 14 had unpaid jobs for someone other than a household member, and 2 percent were engaging in paid work. See Republic of Moldova, Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS2) (UNICEF, 2000), 24, at [http://www.childinfo.org/MICS2/natlMICSrepz/Moldova/MICS\\_Mol.pdf](http://www.childinfo.org/MICS2/natlMICSrepz/Moldova/MICS_Mol.pdf) on December 12, 2001.

<sup>1648</sup> U.S. Embassy—Chisinau, unclassified telegram no. 1400, September 2001 [hereinafter unclassified telegram 1400].

<sup>1649</sup> *Looking Back, Thinking Forward: The Fourth Report on the Implementation of the Agenda for Action Adopted at the First World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in Stockholm, Sweden, 28 August 1996, 1999-2000* (Bangkok: ECPAT International, 2000), 131.

trafficking of girls for purposes of prostitution into Turkey, Greece, Italy, Israel, and Kosovo.<sup>1650</sup>

Education for children is compulsory for nine years, beginning at age 7.<sup>1651</sup> While the Constitution guarantees free public education, families face significant additional expenses, including textbooks and transportation costs.<sup>1652</sup> In 1996, the gross primary enrollment rate was 97.4 percent.<sup>1653</sup> While the enrollment rate is high, agricultural labor is reported to interfere with school attendance in rural areas.<sup>1654</sup> Primary school attendance rates are unavailable for Moldova.

## Child Labor Laws and Enforcement

The Labor Law sets the minimum age for employment at 16 years, and children under 18 years are prohibited from participating in hazardous work, including work underground, and work related to alcoholic beverage production, transportation, and sales.<sup>1655</sup> In addition, children who are 15 can work with the consent of the Trade Union Committee.<sup>1656</sup> However, the Law on Children's Rights allows minors to work at age 14 with the permission of a parent or guardian, if the employment does not interfere with school.<sup>1657</sup> According to the Criminal Code, the sale and trafficking of children are illegal,<sup>1658</sup> and the Law on Children's Rights protects children under 18 years of age from prostitution or sexual exploitation.<sup>1659</sup> Forced labor is prohibited by the Constitution.<sup>1660</sup>

The Ministry of Labor, Social Protection, and the Family is responsible for enforcing child labor legislation.<sup>1661</sup> The Government of Moldova ratified ILO Convention 138 on September 21, 1999, but has not ratified ILO Convention 182.<sup>1662</sup>

<sup>1650</sup> *Country Reports 2000*, Section 6f.

<sup>1651</sup> UNESCO, *Education for All: Year 2000 Assessment*, Statistical Document (Paris, 2000), at [www2.unesco.org/wef/countryreports/moldova/rapport\\_2.html](http://www2.unesco.org/wef/countryreports/moldova/rapport_2.html) on October 29, 2001.

<sup>1652</sup> Constitution of the Republic of Moldova, Article 35, July 29, 1994 [hereinafter Constitution of the Republic of Moldova], at <http://confinder.richmond.edu/moldova3.htm#T1> on October 26, 2001. See also unclassified telegram 1400.

<sup>1653</sup> Net enrollment and gross and net attendance statistics for Moldova are not available. See *World Development Indicators 2001* (Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 2001).

<sup>1654</sup> *Country Reports 2000*. Section 5

<sup>1655</sup> Article 183 of the Labor Law, as cited in unclassified telegram 1400.

<sup>1656</sup> Article 181 of the Labor Law, as cited in unclassified telegram 1400.

<sup>1657</sup> Article 11 of the Law on Children's Rights, as cited in unclassified telegram 1400.

<sup>1658</sup> The punishment for selling or trafficking children is three to eight years in prison. Article 113/1 of the Criminal Code, as cited in unclassified telegram 1400.

<sup>1659</sup> Unclassified telegram 2236.

<sup>1660</sup> Constitution of the Republic of Moldova.

<sup>1661</sup> In 2000, the Ministry of Labor finalized a proposal to restructure the labor protection inspectorate. The proposal was adopted by Parliament in 2001. Under the new system, which went into effect January 1, 2002, the inspection office will have expanded responsibilities, including monitoring working conditions of children. See *Country Reports 2000*, Section 6d. See also unclassified telegram 1400.

<sup>1662</sup> ILO, ILOLEX database at <http://ilolex.ilo.ch:1567/english/> on October 29, 2001.

NOTE: Hard copies of all Web citations are on file.