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Argentina

Selected Statistics and Indicators on Child Labor[139]	
Working children, 10-14 years (%), 1997:	20.7
Working boys, 10-14 years (%), 1997:	25.4
Working girls, 10-14 years (%), 1997:	16
Working children by sector, 5-14 years (%):	
- Agriculture	-
- Manufacturing	-
- Services	-
- Other	-
Minimum age for work:	14
Compulsory education age:	18
Free public education:	Yes
Gross primary enrollment rate (%), 2004:	113
Net primary enrollment rate (%), 2003:	99
School attendance, children 5-14 years (%), 1997:	96.6
Survival rate to grade 5 (%), 2003:	97
ILO-IPEC participating country:	Yes

Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

In rural areas of Argentina, children work in family and third-party farms in the production of flowers, tomatoes, and strawberries, often handling pesticides without proper protection.[140] In urban areas, children are engaged in domestic service, food preparation, street sales, trash recycling, and garment production.[141] They also work in small and medium businesses and workshops, and they perform odd jobs such as opening taxi doors, washing car windshields, and shining shoes.[142] Some children in Argentina are exploited in prostitution, sex tourism, and drug trafficking.[143]

Child Labor Laws and Enforcement

The law sets the minimum age for employment at 14 years. The Government authorizes children under 14 years to work in family businesses under special circumstances.[144] Children 14 to 18 years must present medical certificates that attest to their ability to work and must undergo periodical medical checkups.[145] In addition, a Government regulation specifically prohibits the employment of children under 14 years in domestic service.[146] Children who have not completed compulsory schooling may obtain permission to work in cases for which their income is necessary for their family's survival, as long as they continue their studies.[147] Children 14 to 18 years are prohibited from working more than six hours a day and 36 hours a week, and between the hours of 8 p.m. and 6 a.m. In some cases, however, children 16 to 18 years can work additional hours.[148]

The law provides for 6 to 15 years of imprisonment for facilitating the prostitution of children under 13 years of age, and 4 to 10 years when it involves children 13 to 17 years old.[149] The publication and

distribution of pornography that features minors carries penalties of 6 months to 4 years of imprisonment.[150] In 2007, the Buenos Aires City Legislature increased penalties for enabling the commercial sexual exploitation of children. The promotion, publication, provision of assistance, websites, or services to third parties involving children and adolescents in sexual activities are punished by fines, arrests up to 90 days, and business closures.[151] Argentine law establishes penalties for the smuggling of minors that range from 5 to 20 years imprisonment.[152] The lack of anti-trafficking laws prevents the Government's systematic collection of data and statistics related to efforts to combat trafficking. However, USDOS reports some progress during the April 2006 to March 2007 period, including two cases involving trafficking of minors which resulted in sentences of 14 years and 4 years in prison.[153] Argentine law sets the minimum age for volunteering for the Argentine Armed Forces at 18 years.[154]

The Government has trained hundreds of labor inspectors and other social actors in identifying child labor, developing an interdisciplinary approach to the child labor problem.[155] However, statistics on the number of child labor investigations are not officially kept at the national or provincial levels.[156]

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

The National Commission for the Eradication of Child Labor (CONAETI), conducted seminars with the 19 provincial Commissions for the Eradication of Child Labor (COPRETIS) to provide training to provincial authorities responsible for enforcing labor laws and raising awareness regarding exploitive child labor.[157] CONAETI continued with the implementation of the National Plan to Combat Child Labor, which calls for the national consolidation of data, awareness raising, inter-institutional collaboration, stronger inspection mechanisms, mainstreaming of child laborers into the formal education system, research, coordination of child labor laws, and a national program for the prevention and eradication of child labor in rural and urban settings.[158] The purpose of the plan is to prevent school dropout, provide psychological and health assistance to children, and strengthen families.[159] CONAETI provides technical assistance to action programs implemented by NGOs addressing child labor in the tobacco and trash-picking sectors, including workshops with tobacco producers to encourage corporate social responsibility on child labor issues.[160] The Government works with several NGOs in addressing CSEC in the triborder area with Brazil and Paraguay. The effort involves disseminating information on prevention and available assistance for victims. A trinational network has been established involving local government and civil society to help coordinate the efforts to combat trafficking.[161]

The Government of Argentina and other associate and member governments 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 the legal framework to international standards on those issues, and the exchange of best practices related to victims protection and assistance.[162]

The Ministry of Education's Integral Program for Educational Equality strengthens the provision of basic education in urban schools that serve vulnerable populations.[163] The Ministry of Education also provides scholarships to reintegrate children who have dropped out of school to work, and supports children who work and attend school. The program provides children's parents with job search assistance and job training.[164]

Since September 2007, the IDB is funding a project for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labor in Migrant Families. The project, implemented by the IOM, works with families engaged in garbage scavenging and recycling; providing them with services and regularizing their immigration status.[165] Argentina participates in a USD 2.1 million regional ILO-IPEC child labor survey funded by Canada. The country is also part of a 460,000 Euros ILO-IPEC global initiative funded by the Netherlands to combat child domestic work.[166]

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[139] 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 Argentina, *Ley de Contrato de Trabajo*, Ley No. 20.744, (May 13, 1976), article 189; available from http://www.trabajo.gov.ar/legislacion/ley/index.html. See also U.S. Department of State, "Argentina," in *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2007*, Washington, DC, March 11, 2008, section 6d; available from http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2007/100625.htm. See also Government of Argentina, *Ley de Educación Nacional*, No. 26.206, (2006), article 11; available from http://www.me.gov.ar/doc_pdf/ley_de_educ_nac.pdf.

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[141] U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Argentina," section 6d. See also CONAETI, *Trabajo infantil urbano,* [online] [cited January 26, 2007]; available from http://www.trabajo.gov.ar/conaeti/que_es/urbano.htm.

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