

Eritrea

Selected Statistics and Indicators on Child Labor¹³³⁸

Population, children, 5-14 years:	-
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:	14
Compulsory education age:	13 or 14
Free public education:	Yes*
Gross primary enrollment rate (%), 2006:	62.2
Net primary enrollment rate (%), 2006:	46.5
School attendance, children 5-14 years (%):	-
Survival rate to grade 5 (%), 2005:	73.7
ILO Convention 138:	2/22/2000
ILO Convention 182:	No
CRC:	8/3/1994
CRCOPAC:	2/16/2005**
CRCOPSC:	2/16/2005**
Palermo:	No
ILO-IPEC participating country:	No

*In practice, must pay for various school expenses

**Accession

Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

Children in Eritrea work in agriculture, on the streets, and as domestic servants.¹³³⁹ Children in rural areas of Eritrea work on farms and in fields gathering firewood, hauling water, and herding livestock.¹³⁴⁰ In urban areas, they work as vendors selling items such as cigarettes, newspapers, and chewing gum.¹³⁴¹ Children under the legal age work in towns as apprentices in shops,

workshops, and garages.¹³⁴² Children are also involved in commercial sexual exploitation.¹³⁴³

In order to graduate, all secondary school students are required to complete their final, 12th year of schooling at a facility adjacent to the Sawa Military Training Camp (Sawa) in remote western Eritrea. Students who do not attend Sawa are not eligible to take their final examinations or to graduate.¹³⁴⁴ According to USDOS, students receive initial military training at Sawa. There is no specific age required to complete the final year of school and thus children as young as 14 may be trained.¹³⁴⁵

Child Labor Laws and Enforcement

Eritrean law sets the minimum age of employment and apprenticeship at 14 years.¹³⁴⁶ Young persons between 14 and 18 years may not work between the hours of 6 p.m. and 6 a.m. or more than 7 hours per day.¹³⁴⁷ Children under 18 years cannot engage in hazardous work, including transporting goods/passengers; heavy lifting; working with toxic chemicals, and dangerous machines; and working underground such as in mines, quarries, sewers, and tunnel digging.¹³⁴⁸ The First Instance Labor Court hears and determines violations of the law.¹³⁴⁹

Forced labor is prohibited by the Constitution.¹³⁵⁰ The recruitment of children under 18 years into the armed forces is prohibited; however, at age 17 the law requires them to register for mandatory military or civilian service.¹³⁵¹ Child prostitution is prohibited and punishable by a fine and up to 5 years imprisonment.¹³⁵² Trafficking in persons is prohibited with penalties of fines and up to 10 years in prison. Information on trafficking, including child trafficking is limited, and there were no reports of trafficking in 2008.¹³⁵³ The Ministry of Labor and Human Welfare (MLHW) is responsible for enforcing child labor and

trafficking laws. Due to limited resources, labor inspectors from the MLHW conduct infrequent inspections.¹³⁵⁴

Current Government Efforts to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labor

The Government of Eritrea, in collaboration with UNICEF, has a national plan of action focused on reintegrating child workers into families and communities.¹³⁵⁵ The Government also runs awareness campaigns concerning child labor and sexual exploitation of children.¹³⁵⁶

The Government of Eritrea continues to participate in the 2-year, USD 460,000 regional anti-trafficking technical assistance project implemented by the UNODC's Regional Office for Eastern Africa and funded by Norway and Sweden. The project aims to bolster coordination among the 11 EAPCCO countries through the Regional Action Plan to Prevent and Combat Human Trafficking in Eastern Africa, and harmonize national legislation with the Palermo Protocol.¹³⁵⁷

¹³³⁸ For statistical data not cited here, see the Data Sources and Definitions section. For ratifications and ILO-IPEC membership, see the Introduction. For minimum age for admission to work, see Government of Eritrea, *Proclamation No.118/2001: The Labour Proclamation of Eritrea*, (2001), section 2, article 68(1). See also ILO Committee of Experts, *Individual Direct Request, Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) Eritrea (ratification: 2000)*, [online] 2004 [cited January 27, 2009], para 3; available from <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/cgi-lex/pdconv.pl?host=status01&textbase=iloeng&document=15755&chapter=9&query=%28Eritrea%29+%40ref&highlight=&querytype=bool&context=0>. For age to which education is compulsory and free public education, see ILO-IPEC, *Country Baselines Under the ILO Declaration Annual Review (2000-2008): Eritrea*, ILO-IPEC, Geneva, 2008; available from http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---declaration/documents/publication/wcms_decl_cl_er_i.pdf. See also Division of Policy and Practice UNICEF, Statistics and Monitoring Section, *Education statistics: Eritrea*, May 2008, 3; available from http://www.childinfo.org/files/ESAR_Eritrea.pdf. See also U.S. Department of State, "Eritrea," in *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2008*, Washington,

DC, February 25, 2009, section 5; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/af/119000.htm>.

¹³³⁹ UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Consideration of Reports Submitted by State Parties under Article 44 of the Convention, Second and third periodic reports of States parties due in 2006: Eritrea*, CRC/C/ERI/3, United Nations, Geneva, October 23, 2007, para 341; available from <http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G07/447/18/PDF/G0744718.pdf?OpenElement>. See also U.S. Embassy- Asmara, *reporting*, October 9, 2008, para 9.

¹³⁴⁰ U.S. Embassy- Asmara, *reporting*, October 9, 2008, para 9. See also Muluberhan Hagos, *Harmonisation of laws relating to children: Eritrea*, The African Child Policy Forum, 2007, 98; available from <http://www.africanchild.info/documents/Eritrea%20Report%20final%20Sarah.doc>.

¹³⁴¹ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2008: Eritrea," section 6d. See also Hagos, *Harmonisation of laws relating to children: Eritrea*, 98.

¹³⁴² ILO Committee of Experts, *Individual Direct Request, Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) Eritrea (ratification: 2000)*, para 12.

¹³⁴³ U.S. Embassy- Asmara, *reporting*, February 18, 2009, section 23.

¹³⁴⁴ Kaleyesus Bekele, "Politics - Woes of Eritrean Refugees," *UNHCR Refugees Daily*, October 8, 2007; available from <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/refdaily?pass=463ef21123&id=470b1e938>. See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2008: Eritrea," section 5. See also Human Rights Watch, *Essential Background: Overview of Human Rights Issues in Eritrea*, Washington, DC, January 2004; available from <http://hrw.org/english/docs/2004/01/21/eritre6987.htm>.

¹³⁴⁵ U.S. Embassy- Asmara, *reporting*, February 18, 2009, para 5.

¹³⁴⁶ Government of Eritrea, *The Labour Proclamation of Eritrea*, articles 9(1) and 68(1). See also ILO Committee of Experts, *Individual Direct Request, Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) Eritrea (ratification: 2000)*, para 3.

¹³⁴⁷ Government of Eritrea, *The Labour Proclamation of Eritrea*, articles 3 and 68(2).

¹³⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, article 69. See also ILO-IPEC, *Country Baselines Under the ILO Declaration Annual Review (2000-2008): Eritrea*, 2.

¹³⁴⁹ Government of Eritrea, *The Labour Proclamation of Eritrea*, article 157.

¹³⁵⁰ Government of Eritrea, *The Constitution of Eritrea*, (May 23, 1997), article 16(3); available from http://www.chr.up.ac.za/undp/domestic/docs/c_Eri

tra.pdf. See also U.S. Embassy- Asmara, *reporting, October 9, 2008*, para 8.

¹³⁵¹ Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, "Eritrea," in *Child Soldiers Global Report 2008*, London, 2008, 138; available from <http://www.child-soldiers.org/regions/country?id=66>. See also Amnesty International, *Eritrea: 'You Have No Right to Ask' - Government Resists Scrutiny on Human Rights*, AFR 64/003/2004, Amnesty International, London, May 2004, 25 and 27.

¹³⁵² U.S. Embassy- Asmara, *reporting, February 18, 2009*, para 3A.

¹³⁵³ Government of Eritrea, *The Transitional Eritrean Penal Code*, (1991), articles 605-607. See also Hanibal Goitom, *Eritrea: Child Labor*, Law Library of Congress, February 2008, 3. See also U.S. Embassy- Asmara, *reporting, February 18, 2009*, para 2B. See also U.S.

Department of State, "Country Reports- 2008: Eritrea," section 5.

¹³⁵⁴ U.S. Embassy- Asmara, *reporting, February 18, 2009*, para 5D. See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2008: Eritrea," section 6d.

¹³⁵⁵ U.S. Embassy- Asmara, *reporting, February 18, 2009*, para 19. See also U.S. Embassy- Asmara, *reporting, October 9, 2008*, para 8.

¹³⁵⁶ U.S. Embassy- Asmara, *reporting, October 9, 2008*, para 8.

¹³⁵⁷ UNODC, *Ongoing Projects in Eastern Africa*, [online] December 16, 2008 [cited February 9, 2009]; available from <http://www.unodc.org/easternafrika/en/about-unodc-eastern-africa/ongoing-projects.html>. See also UNODC official, E-mail communication to USDOL official, April 2, 2009. See also UNODC and EAPCCO, *Regional Action Plan to Prevent and Combat Human Trafficking in Eastern Africa*, Addis Ababa, August 2008.

Ethiopia

Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

In Ethiopia, most children work for their families without pay.¹³⁵⁸ The number of working children is highest in Amhara, Oromiya, Tigray, and Southern Nation, Nationalities and Peoples (SNNPR).¹³⁵⁹ In both rural and urban areas, children often begin working at young ages, with many starting work at 5 years.¹³⁶⁰ The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MOLSA) has indicated that 2 out of 5 working children in Ethiopia are under 6 years.¹³⁶¹ In rural areas, children work primarily in family-based agriculture¹³⁶² and commercial agriculture.¹³⁶³ Children are known to work in tea, coffee, sugarcane, and cotton production. Children work long hours for low wages on cotton plantations, where they are exposed to environmental toxins, snakes, and disease.¹³⁶⁴

Children in rural areas also work in domestic service.¹³⁶⁵ Children, especially boys, engage in activities such as cattle herding, petty trading, plowing, harvesting, and weeding, while other children, mostly girls, collect firewood and water.¹³⁶⁶ Children also work in illegal gold mining.¹³⁶⁷

Children in urban areas work in construction and manufacturing.¹³⁶⁸ They manufacture clothes and other woven items, shoes, and textiles.¹³⁶⁹ They also work shining shoes, tailoring, portering, leading customers into taxis, and trading, as well as animal herding, which is a common activity both in Ethiopia's urban and rural areas.¹³⁷⁰ As in rural areas, in Addis Ababa, many children, mostly girls, work in domestic service.¹³⁷¹ Child domestics work long hours and are vulnerable to sexual abuse by male employers. Many are unable to attend school and are unpaid, receiving only room and board.¹³⁷² There are a number of street children in Ethiopia, some of whom work in the informal sector.¹³⁷³

The commercial sexual exploitation of children continues to be a problem in Ethiopia, especially in urban areas.¹³⁷⁴ Young girls, some as young as 11 years, have been recruited to work in brothels, where they are sought by customers who believe them to be free of sexually transmitted infections. Girls are also exploited in prostitution at hotels, bars, rural truck stops, and in resort towns.¹³⁷⁵ Girls have also been forcibly sexually exploited by their teachers in exchange for favors, such as better grades.¹³⁷⁶