

Uruguay

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

In December 2000, the Government of Uruguay created a National Committee for the Eradication of Child Labor, and the government is in the process of becoming a member of ILO-IPEC.²⁶¹³ The National Child and Adolescent Institute (INAME), in collaboration with a local NGO, provides parents of working children with monthly payments to cover the costs of schooling in exchange for regular class attendance by their children.²⁶¹⁴ Project Projovent, an initiative created by the National Employment Council, the Ministry of Labor and Social Security, and the Sport and Youth Ministry, encourages adolescents to improve their employment opportunities by offering them skills training in non-hazardous work.²⁶¹⁵ In May 2000, the Uruguayan Minister of Labor and Social Security joined with labor ministers from other countries in the region to discuss regional policies to fight child labor.²⁶¹⁶

The National Food Institute implements projects to prevent and protect at-risk children from early entrance into the labor market by offering them daycare services and healthy meals and by providing their families with courses in nutrition.²⁶¹⁷ The ILO's Inter-American Center for Research and Documentation on Professional Formation funds a number of projects to socially integrate youth into schools and the greater community.²⁶¹⁸ The National Administration of Public Education (ANEP), an autonomous government agency, has developed a project to train teachers and educate students on children's rights.²⁶¹⁹

²⁶¹³ *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2000—Uruguay* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of State, 2001) [hereinafter *Country Reports 2000*], Section 6d, at <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/htpt/2000/wha/index.cfm?docid=834>. See also ILO-IPEC, *All About IPEC: Programme Countries*, at http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/ipecc/about/countries/t_country.htm.

²⁶¹⁴ U.S. Embassy - Montevideo, unclassified telegram 1824, September 2000 [hereinafter unclassified telegram 1824].

²⁶¹⁵ Programa de Capacitación e Inserción Laboral de Jóvenes, Uruguay, *Oportunidades para los jóvenes*, at <http://www.projovent.gub.uy> on 11/13/01.

²⁶¹⁶ The meetings included members of the Southern Cone Common Market (MERCOSUR). See unclassified telegram 1824.

²⁶¹⁷ Asociación Uruguaya de Protección a la Infancia (AUIPI), Centro de Atención a la Infancia y a la Familia (CAIF), Servicio de Asistencia Alimentaria Colectivizada (SAAC), Ministerio de Trabajo y Seguridad Social. Instituto Nacional de Alimentación, Asistencia, Educación y Vigilancia Alimentaria Nutricional, at <http://www.inda.gub.uy/caif.htm> on 11/13/01.

²⁶¹⁸ ILO, *Observatorio de experiencias: Uruguay*, programas y proyectos ejecutados por el Instituto de Educación Popular el Abrojo, at <http://www.cinterfor.org.uy/public/spanish/region/ampro/cinterfor/temas/youth/exp/uru/abrojo/index.htm> on 11/07/01.

²⁶¹⁹ Administración Nacional de Educación Pública (ANEP), *Derechos del niño: Derechos deberes y garantías*, una propuesta pedagógica hacia un indicador de logro actitudinal, segunda parte del proyecto, at <http://www.anep.edu.uy/primaria/InformacionInstitucional/ProyectosCEP/Derechos1.htm> on 11/13/01.

Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

In 1999, a survey conducted by the National Statistics Institute estimated that 12.7 percent of children ages 12 to 17 in Uruguay were working.²⁶²⁰ Children work in agriculture, commerce, and family-run businesses and as domestic servants.²⁶²¹ Children as young as age 11 or 12 reportedly engage in prostitution.²⁶²² More children work in the interior of the country than in Montevideo, the capital city.²⁶²³

Education is compulsory for a total of nine years, beginning at the primary level, and is free from the pre-primary through the university level.²⁶²⁴ In 1996, the gross primary enrollment rate was 111.7 percent, and the net primary enrollment rate was 92.9 percent.²⁶²⁵ Primary school attendance rates are unavailable for Uruguay. While enrollment rates indicate a level of commitment to education, they do not always reflect children's participation in school.²⁶²⁶

Child Labor Laws and Enforcement

The Children and Adolescents' Code sets the minimum age for employment at 14 years.²⁶²⁷ However, in most cases, children must complete compulsory education in order to obtain a work permit. The government permits some children over the age of 12 to work in family businesses and children over the age of 13 to work in light, non-industrial work such as messengers, newspaper deliverers, and fruit and flower pickers. Children under the age of 14 are prohib

²⁶²⁰ Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas, *Indicadores de empleo y desempleo: Módulo de trabajo infantil*, cuadro 1, Oct. 3, 2000, at <http://www.ine.gub.uy/bancodedatos/bdech%5Fmódulo%5Ftrab%5Finfant.htm>. The incidence of working boys is greater than that of working girls, and this ratio increases in rural areas. See Oficina Internacional de Trabajo, *Trabajo infantil en los países del MERCOSUR: Argentina, Brasil, Chile, Paraguay, Uruguay*, Chapter 5, "Uruguay" (Lima, Peru, 1998) [hereinafter *Trabajo infantil en los países del MERCOSUR*], 99.

²⁶²¹ *Trabajo infantil en los países del MERCOSUR* at 99.

²⁶²² http://www.ecpat.net/eng/Ecpat_inter/projects/monitorin/online_database/.

²⁶²³ *Trabajo infantil en los países del MERCOSUR* at 99.

²⁶²⁴ Unclassified telegram 1824.

²⁶²⁵ UNESCO, *Education for All: Year 2000 Assessment*, (Paris, 2000) [CD-ROM].

²⁶²⁶ For a more detailed discussion on the relationship between education statistics and work, see *Introduction* to this report.

²⁶²⁷ ILO, NATLEX database, 1934-04-06, Ley núm. 9342, por la que se dicta el Código del niño, at <http://natlex.ilo.org/Scripts/natlexcgi.exe?lang'S&doc'query&ctry'URY&llx'12.01>.

ited from working more than 2 hours per day.²⁶²⁸ Adolescents between the ages of 15 and 18 are prohibited from working more than six hours daily and 36 hours weekly in the industrial sector.²⁶²⁹ All working children under the age of 18 must obtain a work card issued by the National Child and Adolescent Institute and must provide it to their employers.²⁶³⁰ A draft Code of the Child, intended to harmonize the Children and Adolescent's Code to the stipulations of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child has been introduced into the legislative process.²⁶³¹ Article 294 of the Uruguayan Penal Code prohibits procuring a person for prostitution.²⁶³² The trafficking of children and child pornography are criminal offenses in Uruguay.²⁶³³

The Ministry of Labor and Social Security is responsible for enforcing labor laws.²⁶³⁴ Uruguay ratified ILO Convention 138 on June 2, 1977, and ILO Convention 182 on August 3, 2001.²⁶³⁵

²⁶²⁸ Ministerio de Educación y Cultura, Instituto Nacional de la Juventud, *Trabajo de Menores*, 5, Capacidad para Contratar a Menores, 1, Edad minima, at <http://www.mec.gub.uy/inju/trabajo.htm> on 10/05/00.

²⁶²⁹ An exception to this regulation is that adolescents 16 years of age and older may work 8 hours daily in industrial activities that do not compromise their physical or moral health.

²⁶³⁰ Work cards must contain a medical certificate reflecting the child's good health and parental authorization. During the first 9 months of 2000, National Institute for Children (INAME) issued approximately 1,445 work cards to children between the ages of 14 and 18, with three-fourths of these going to boys. See unclassified telegram 1824.

²⁶³¹ *Country Reports 2000* at Section 5. In the new code, the INAME, along with the Ministries of Health, Labor and Social Security, and the National Security Bank, would be responsible for periodically establishing a list of the worst forms of child labor. See also untitled article, Hace 9 años que las Naciones Unidas aprobaron la convencion sobre los derechos del niño, el mayor derecho, el de los niños, at <http://www.140/buscador/1998/11noviembre/981120/soci2.html>.

²⁶³² If the victim is younger than 14 years, the punishment is 4 years of imprisonment. See PNUD contra violencia: Leyes, Uruguay, at <http://www.undp.org/rblac/gender/campaign-spanish/uruguay.htm> on 11/7/01.

²⁶³³ Unclassified telegram 1824.

²⁶³⁴ *Trabajo infantil en los países del MERCOSUR* at 101.

²⁶³⁵ ILO, ILOLEX database, at <http://ilolex.ilo.ch:1567/scripts/ratifce.pl?C182> on 11/14/01.

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