Bahrain

Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

Small numbers of children in Bahrain perform non-hazardous work in the Manama Central Market, and although not common, some children work in family businesses.262

Child Labor Laws and Enforcement

The law forbids the employment of children younger than 14 years.263 Minors 14 to 16 years may work no more than 6 hours per day, with one hour of rest during daytime hours only; minors may not work overtime or be paid on a piece-rate basis.264 The law also establishes a list of 25 occupations in which no person younger than 16 years may work. These occupations include

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260 Ibid.
264 Ibid., Articles 49, 51, 52, 53, and 54.

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<th><strong>Selected Statistics and Indicators on Child Labor</strong></th>
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<td>Percent of children 5-14 estimated as working:</td>
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<td>Minimum age for work:</td>
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<td>Age to which education is compulsory:</td>
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<td>Gross primary enrollment rate in 2004:</td>
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<td>Percent of children 5-14 attending school:</td>
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<td>As of 2003, percent of primary school entrants likely to reach grade 5:</td>
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quarrying; oil refining; auto repair; butchering; construction; and any work that involves lifting heavy loads or contact with radiation, asbestos, furnaces, explosives, batteries, cranes, electricity, pressurized gas, or poisonous dust, vapors, or fumes. Working minors 14 to 16 years must obtain authorization to work from the Ministry of Labor (MOL); must undergo a medical examination prior to being employed; and must be granted annual leave of not less than a full month. However, these provisions do not apply to workers, including children, in the domestic service and agricultural sectors or in enterprises owned by their immediate family members.

The MOL is responsible for enforcing child labor laws and regulations. Violations of child labor laws are punishable by fines. In addition to levying punishment against employers and supervisors, the law holds responsible any person acting as a guardian who permits the employment of a child or minor in violation of the law’s provisions. The U.S. Department of State reports that MOL enforcement of child labor laws is adequate in the industrial sector, but not as effective outside that sector.

The Constitution outlaws compulsory labor, and employers found guilty of using forced labor can be liable to imprisonment of up to 10 years. Prostitution is illegal; forcing or enticing a child under 18 years into prostitution is punishable by 3 to 10 years of imprisonment. Child pornography is not explicitly outlawed, but it is illegal to print, possess, or display publications, pictures, and other media that violate public morals. There is no law prohibiting trafficking in persons, but trafficking-related crimes may be prosecuted under laws prohibiting forced labor, forced prostitution, the abduction or kidnapping of children, or exposure of children to danger. However, according to the U.S. Department of State, prosecutions for trafficking-related offenses are rare. While there is no compulsory military service in Bahrain, juveniles can be recruited into the Bahraini Defense Force from the age of 17 years.

266 Government of Bahrain, Labour Law for the Private Sector, as amended, Articles 51 and 55.
267 Ibid., Articles 2 and 58.
269 Government of Bahrain, Labour Law for the Private Sector, as amended, Article 163.
273 Penal Code, Articles 324(1) and 325, as cited in ILO Committee of Experts, Direct Request: Bahrain. See also ECPAT International CSEC Database, Bahrain, accessed October 10, 2006; available from http://www.ecpat.net/. See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Bahrain," Section 5.
274 ILO Committee of Experts, Direct Request: Bahrain.
276 US Embassy- Manama official, E-mail communication USDOL official, July 29, 2007.
The MOL grants permits to Bahraini companies to employ foreign workers, and immigration officials ensure that foreign workers entering Bahrain are 18 years of age or older.\textsuperscript{280} There have been isolated incidents of the use of false documents to gain entry into the country for workers under age 18.\textsuperscript{281}

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

The government has supported anti-trafficking training workshops for law enforcement officers, judges, prosecutors, lawyers, NGOs, and employers.\textsuperscript{282} In 2006, the government opened a shelter to provide medical care as well as psychosocial and legal services to female victims of trafficking.\textsuperscript{283}

\textsuperscript{280} U.S. Embassy- Manama official, E-mail communication to USDOL official, March 19, 2007.
\textsuperscript{281} U.S. Embassy- Manama, reporting, March 5, 2007.
\textsuperscript{282} U.S. Department of State, "Trafficking in Persons Report- 2006: Bahrain."