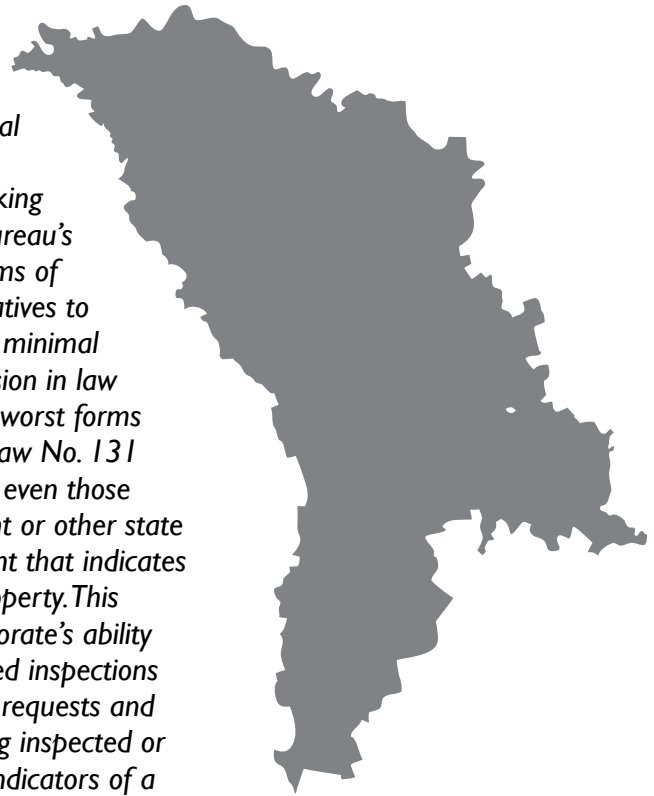


## MINIMAL ADVANCEMENT – EFFORTS MADE BUT CONTINUED LAW AND PRACTICE THAT DELAYED ADVANCEMENT

In 2019, Moldova made a minimal advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The government established the National Council on Human Rights to monitor and assess efforts to comply with national and international obligations to combat child labor, and established an annex specifically for child victims of trafficking within state-run shelters. In addition, the Anti-Trafficking Bureau's mandate was expanded to include investigations of all forms of online child sexual exploitation. However, despite new initiatives to address child labor, Moldova is receiving an assessment of minimal advancement because it continued to implement a regression in law and practice that delayed advancement in eliminating the worst forms of child labor. In August 2018, the government amended Law No. 131 through Law No. 179, such that unannounced inspections, even those based on a complaint or at the request of law enforcement or other state bodies, are permitted only on the basis of a risk assessment that indicates an immediate threat to the environment, life, health, or property. This stringent measure severely limited the State Labor Inspectorate's ability to conduct unannounced inspections. In addition, announced inspections are only permitted after the State Labor Inspectorate first requests and receives insufficient documentation from the business being inspected or after conducting a risk assessment that finds reasonable indicators of a possible violation. Moreover, when an inspection is conducted in response to a complaint, the labor inspector must only focus on the alleged violation outlined in the complaint; if other violations, such as child labor, are uncovered, they cannot be addressed. Children in Moldova engage in the worst forms of child labor, including in commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking. Children also engage in child labor in agriculture. Moldova lacks a sufficient number of labor inspectors to provide sufficient coverage of the workforce. Furthermore, training is needed for new criminal investigators. In addition, entities responsible for conducting occupational, safety, and health inspections, including of hazardous child labor, lacked adequate capacity to do so during the reporting period.



### I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Children in Moldova engage in the worst forms of child labor, including in commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking. Children also engage in child labor in agriculture. (I-3) Table I provides key indicators on children's work and education in Moldova.

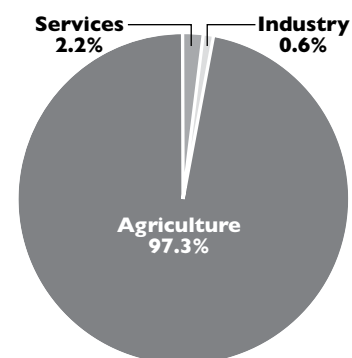
**Table I. Statistics on Children's Work and Education**

Children	Age	Percent
Working (% and population)	5 to 14	24.3 (102,105)
Attending School (%)	5 to 14	92.1
Combining Work and School (%)	7 to 14	29.0
Primary Completion Rate (%)		89.4

Source for primary completion rate: Data from 2018, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2020. (4)

Source for all other data: International Labor Organization's analysis of statistics from Labour Force Survey-Child Labour Survey (LFS-SIMPOC), 2009. (5)

**Figure I. Working Children by Sector, Ages 5-14**



# Moldova

## MINIMAL ADVANCEMENT – EFFORTS MADE BUT CONTINUED LAW AND PRACTICE THAT DELAYED ADVANCEMENT

Based on a review of available information, Table 2 provides an overview of children’s work by sector and activity.

**Table 2. Overview of Children’s Work by Sector and Activity**

Sector/Industry	Activity
Agriculture	Agriculture,† including growing and harvesting crops, picking fruits, and raising farm animals (2,6-11)
	Forestry, including transporting heavy loads (2)
	Fishing, including feeding fish (2,6)
Industry	Construction,† including carrying heavy loads and welding† (2,6,7,12)
	Working in the garment sector (2,6)
	Baking,† including confectionary and food preservation (2,6)
Services	Street work, including begging (1,2,13-15)
	Domestic work (6,15)
	Working in wholesale, retail, restaurants, and transportation (2,6,8,11,15,17)
Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor‡	Commercial sexual exploitation and forced begging, each sometimes as a result of human trafficking (2,6,15,18-20)

† Determined by national law or regulation as hazardous and, as such, relevant to Article 3(d) of ILO C. 182.

‡ Child labor understood as the worst forms of child labor *per se* under Article 3(a)–(c) of ILO C. 182.

Lack of information limits an assessment of the types of work that children perform and the sectors in which they work, including for the secessionist region of Transnistria, which is not under the control of Moldovan authorities. (2,6,15)

Both boys and girls, as young as age 10, are recruited by traffickers for prostitution and other forms of commercial sexual exploitation. (1,3,6,13,20) Child online sexual exploitation, including the production and distribution of child pornography, has increased in recent years. (2) Moldova is also a destination for child sex tourism. (1,3,8)



Child trafficking, particularly of children suffering from familial neglect, continues to be a concern in Moldova and Transnistria. (1,9,15,18,21,22) The number of children left behind by migrant parents is increasing in both areas. These children are particularly vulnerable to child labor and human trafficking, especially those in orphanages or boarding schools. (2,15,20,21) Vulnerable children from Transnistria are at an increased risk of being trafficked through Ukraine’s Odessa region. (20,23,24) Victims from the Turkic-speaking autonomous territorial region of Gagauzia in Moldova were also likely to be trafficked to Turkey for commercial sexual exploitation. (20)

Although the Education Code provides for free and compulsory education until age 18, sometimes parents are asked to pay informal fees for supplies and gifts to teachers. (7,14,25) Occasional discrimination against Roma students by some school officials and other non-Roma students may create barriers to accessing education. Roma children are particularly vulnerable to school dropout. (2,15,26,27)


## II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR CHILD LABOR

Moldova has ratified all key international conventions concerning child labor (Table 3).

**Table 3. Ratification of International Conventions on Child Labor**

Convention	Ratification
 ILO C. 138, Minimum Age	✓
ILO C. 182, Worst Forms of Child Labor	✓
 UN CRC	✓
UN CRC Optional Protocol on Armed Conflict	✓
UN CRC Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography	✓

**Table 3. Ratification of International Conventions on Child Labor (Cont.)**

Convention	Ratification
 Palermo Protocol on Trafficking in Persons	✓

The government has established laws and regulations related to child labor (Table 4). However, gaps exist in Moldova's legal framework to adequately protect children from the worst forms of child labor, including the minimum age for work.

**Table 4. Laws and Regulations on Child Labor**

Standard	Meets International Standards	Age	Legislation
Minimum Age for Work	Yes	16	Article 46 of the Labour Code (28)
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	Yes	18	Article 255 of the Labour Code; Article 3 of the Collective Convention on Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour (28,29)
Identification of Hazardous Occupations or Activities Prohibited for Children	Yes		Government Decision No. 541; Articles 2 and 3 of the Collective Convention on Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour; Articles 103, 105, and 255–256 of the Labour Code (28-30)
Prohibition of Forced Labor	Yes		Article 44 of the Constitution; Article 168(b) of the Criminal Code; Article 7 of the Labour Code; Collective Convention on Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour (28,29,31,32)
Prohibition of Child Trafficking	Yes		Articles 2 and 25–29 of the Law on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings; Collective Convention on Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour (29,33)
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	Yes		Articles 175, 206, and 208 of the Criminal Code; Article 6 of the Law on the Rights of the Child; Collective Convention on Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour; Law No. 207 (29,32,34,35)
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities	Yes		Article 208 of the Criminal Code; Collective Convention on Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour (29,32)
Minimum Age for Voluntary State Military Recruitment	Yes	18	Article 12 of Law No. 162-XVI on the Status of Military Servicemembers (36)
Prohibition of Compulsory Recruitment of Children by (State) Military	Yes		Article 28 of Law No. 1245-XV on the Preparation of Citizens for Homeland Defense (37)
Prohibition of Military Recruitment by Non-state Armed Groups	Yes		Article 26 of the Law on the Rights of the Child; Article 206(d) of the Criminal Code (32,34)
Compulsory Education Age	Yes	18	Articles 13 and 152 of the Education Code of 2014 (38)
Free Public Education	Yes		Article 35 of the Constitution; Article 9 of the Education Code of 2014 (31,38)

As the minimum age for work is lower than the compulsory education age, children may be encouraged to leave school before the completion of compulsory education. (28,38)

### III. ENFORCEMENT OF LAWS ON CHILD LABOR

The government has established institutional mechanisms for the enforcement of laws and regulations on child labor (Table 5). However, gaps exist within the authority of the Ministry of Health, Labor, and Social Protection that may hinder adequate enforcement of their child labor laws.

**Table 5. Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement**

Organization/Agency	Role
Ministry of Health, Labor, and Social Protection's State Labor Inspectorate (SLI)	Enforces child labor laws through inspections of labor relations of enterprises, institutions, and organizations, regardless of their type or legal form. (2,39) Manages the National Referral System to Protect and Assist Victims and Potential Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings (NRS), which has been implemented in all of Moldova's regions; each regional coordinator works directly with law enforcement, NGOs, and schools, and leads victim rehabilitation efforts. (15,18) Through the NRS, builds the capacity of multidisciplinary teams at the local level, which includes community social assistants, police officers, and NGO workers to improve victim identification and referral for crisis intervention and rehabilitation. (40) Through the National Coordination Unit and Child Labor Monitoring Unit (CLMU), coordinates activities related to the protection of victims and those vulnerable to human trafficking. (24)
Sectoral Regulating Agencies	Enforce occupational health and safety (OSH) laws, including those related to hazardous child labor, in specific sectors designated by law. Conduct OSH inspections of enterprises operating in respective sectors of responsibility. (2) Ten entities have sectoral OSH enforcement mandates: the National Food Safety Agency; the Consumer Protection and Market Surveillance Agency; the National Public Health Agency; the Environmental Protection Inspectorate; the National Road Transport Agency; the Civil Aeronautics Authority; the Naval agency; the National Energy Regulation Agency; the National Electronic Communication and Informational Technology Regulation Agency; and the Technical Supervision Agency. (2)
Center for Combating Trafficking in Persons within the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MOIA)	Leads criminal investigations and arrests perpetrators, including for the trafficking of children for both labor and sexual exploitation. (2) Subdivision of MOIA with criminal investigators. (6,7) Cooperates with the Border Police Inspectorate, National Anti-Corruption Center, and Customs Service. (2) Operates a 24/7 trafficking in persons hotline. (20)
Specialized Prosecution Office for Organized Crime and Special Cases (PCCOCS) and Anti-Trafficking Bureau within the Prosecutor General's Office (PGO)	Monitors and analyzes human trafficking cases in the Anti-Trafficking Bureau within the PGO. (1) Includes an investigative and prosecution unit within the national-level PCCOCS. (13) In 2019, nine special judges were nominated to work on human trafficking cases. (1) A specialized unit within the Anti-Trafficking Bureau focuses on child pornography, and expanded its mandate in 2019 to include investigations of all forms of online child sexual exploitation. (2)
Ministry of Justice	Enforces criminal laws against child trafficking and sexual exploitation. (6,15)

During the reporting period, laws and practices introduced as part of government restructuring in 2017 and 2018 continued to limit the power of the Ministry of Health, Labor, and Social Protection's State Labor Inspectorate (SLI) to enforce child labor laws. The SLI lacks authority to investigate workplace accidents and enforce penalties for occupational, safety, and health (OSH) violations, including of hazardous working conditions for children. (41,42) Ten sectoral regulating agencies have mandates to enforce OSH laws, including through discretionary inspections in specific areas outlined in amendments to Law No. 131. However, sources indicate that lack of training and capacity may limit these agencies' ability to adequately enforce OSH laws, including those related to hazardous child labor. (2,41,42) Laws No. 179 and No. 131 mandate that SLI inspections begin with a desk review, and permit site visits only if the subject of an inspection provides insufficient documentation or if a risk-assessment procedure finds reasonable indicators of a possible violation. (2,41-45) In 2019, these strict measures continued to limit the number of on-site inspections, especially unannounced inspections, that the SLI was empowered to conduct. (2,41,43,44) Site visits, including those conducted in response to complaints, must be announced 5 days in advance unless a risk assessment indicates an immediate threat to the environment, life, health, or property. This restriction also applies to OSH inspections conducted by sectoral regulating agencies. (41,45,46) While the SLI is able to receive complaints, procedures to submit a complaint can be cumbersome, and complaints cannot be anonymous. (2,47) Furthermore, if an inspection is conducted in response to a complaint, the labor inspector can focus only on the alleged violation outlined in the complaint, even if other violations, such as child labor, are observed. (42)

In addition, the responsibilities of the Child Labor Monitoring Unit (CLMU) within the SLI structure have not been clearly defined, and CLMU's role under Law No. 131 is limited to requesting a report of child labor from other agencies when child labor is found. (24) Sources report that this has affected the SLI's capability to detect child labor. (48)

The Transnistrian region is not under the control of Moldovan authorities, who are prevented from carrying out inspections and law enforcement there. (27,49)

## MINIMAL ADVANCEMENT – EFFORTS MADE BUT CONTINUED LAW AND PRACTICE THAT DELAYED ADVANCEMENT

**Labor Law Enforcement**

In 2019, labor law enforcement agencies in Moldova took actions to combat child labor (Table 6). However, gaps exist within the operations of the Ministry of Health, Labor, and Social Protection that may hinder adequate labor law enforcement, including the lack of unannounced inspections in sectors in which child labor is known to occur.

**Table 6. Labor Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor**

Overview of Labor Law Enforcement	2018	2019
Labor Inspectorate Funding	\$690,000 (15)	\$657,663 (2)
Number of Labor Inspectors	45 (15)	45 (2)
Inspectorate Authorized to Assess Penalties	Yes (49)	Yes(2)
Initial Training for New Labor Inspectors	Yes (15)	Yes (2)
Training on New Laws Related to Child Labor	Yes (49)	Yes (2,49)
Refresher Courses Provided	Yes (15)	Yes (2)
Number of Labor Inspections Conducted	2,191† (15)	1,549‡ (2)
Number Conducted at Worksite	2,006† (15)	696‡ (2)
Number of Child Labor Violations Found	15 (15)	21‡ (46)
Number of Child Labor Violations for Which Penalties Were Imposed	3 (15)	6 (46)
Number of Child Labor Penalties Imposed that Were Collected	4 (49)	3 (46)
Routine Inspections Conducted	Yes (15)	Yes (2)
Routine Inspections Targeted	Yes (15)	Yes (2)
Unannounced Inspections Permitted	Yes (15)	Yes (2)
Unannounced Inspections Conducted	No (15)	No(50)
Complaint Mechanism Exists	Yes (15)	Yes (2)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Labor Authorities and Social Services	Yes (15)	Yes (2)

† Data are from January 1, 2018 to November 30, 2018.

‡ Data are from January 1, 2019 to October 30, 2019.

The number of labor inspectors is likely insufficient for the size of Moldova's workforce, which includes over 1.295 million workers. (51) According to the ILO's technical advice of a ratio approaching 1 inspector for every 20,000 workers in transition economies, Moldova would employ about 65 labor inspectors. (51,52) The SLI has reported that the number of labor inspectors is insufficient to adequately conduct child labor inspections. (2) In addition, amendments made to Decree 788 in 2018 limit the total number of personnel the SLI can hire to 28 staff members serving on the main office staff, and 45 labor inspectors serving in 10 regionally-focused subdivisions. (2, 39, 49, 54)

In 2019, the SLI identified child labor violations in the construction, entertainment, transportation, and agriculture sectors involving a total of 21 children. (46) Inspectors identified a total of three children who were working under hazardous conditions, two of whom worked in construction and one of whom worked in agriculture. (46) The SLI prescribed penalties for six child labor violations, which under Moldovan law must be reviewed by the courts before fines are issued and collected. Courts issued fines in three of these cases, and the other three cases remain pending. (2,46,55) Both government and NGO sources reported that the child labor violations identified by the government during the reporting period did not reflect the magnitude of the child labor problem in Moldova due to an insufficient number of labor inspectors, budget limitations, cultural acceptance of child labor on family farms, and legal limitations on the government's ability to conduct inspections. (2,24,48,53,54)

The ten sectoral agencies with labor enforcement mandates conducted a total of 1,116 OSH inspections in 2019, the majority of which were conducted by the National Food Safety Agency, which oversees the agriculture and food processing industries; the National Agency for Road Transportation, which oversees the transportation industry; and the Technical Supervision Agency, which oversees the construction industry. A total of 9,925 labor law violations were identified in the course of these OSH inspections. (46) However, information on the number of these violations related to child labor, if any, was unavailable for inclusion in this report.

# Moldova

## MINIMAL ADVANCEMENT – EFFORTS MADE BUT CONTINUED LAW AND PRACTICE THAT DELAYED ADVANCEMENT

During the reporting period, SLI inspectors received training on forced child labor as part of a workshop organized by the Ministry of Health, Labor, and Social Protection in partnership with the OSCE. (2)

### **Criminal Law Enforcement**

In 2019, criminal law enforcement agencies in Moldova took actions to combat child labor (Table 7). However, gaps exist within the operations of the criminal enforcement agencies that may hinder adequate criminal law enforcement, including insufficient training for new criminal investigators.

**Table 7. Criminal Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor**

Overview of Criminal Law Enforcement	2018	2019
Initial Training for New Criminal Investigators	No (15)	No (2)
Training on New Laws Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor	Yes (15)	Yes (2)
Refresher Courses Provided	Yes (15)	Yes (2)
Number of Investigations	32† (15)	34‡ (2)
Number of Violations Found	53† (15)	109 (20)
Number of Prosecutions Initiated	32† (15)	30 (20)
Number of Convictions	24 (15)	16‡ (2)
Imposed Penalties for Violations Related to The Worst Forms of Child Labor	Yes (49)	Yes (2)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Criminal Authorities and Social Services	Yes (15)	Yes (2)

† Data are from January 2018 to November 2018.

‡ Data are from January 2019 to October 2019.

In 2019, the Center for Combating Trafficking in Persons (CCTIP) identified 109 children as victims of human trafficking, 59 of whom were exploited for labor in artistic performances and two of whom were exploited for labor in agriculture. Within the first 10 months of 2019, 12 child victims of trafficking were referred for assistance through the National Referral System for the Protection and Assistance of Victims and Potential Victims of Human Trafficking. (2)

Of the 30 cases in which prosecution was initiated for child trafficking during the reporting period, 22 involved sexual exploitation; two involved labor exploitation; two involved forced begging; two involved multiple forms of exploitation; and in two cases the form of exploitation was unknown. (2,20) Seven cases involving commercial sexual exploitation of children that were pending before the courts resulted in a conviction; two cases resulted in acquittal; and five cases are still pending. (2,20) Two of the seven cases that resulted in conviction were related to commercial sexual exploitation of children perpetrated in late 2017 and early 2018. During the first 10 months of 2019, 16 convicted individuals received criminal penalties for violations related to child labor, while three were acquitted. (2)

During the reporting period, law enforcement officials and prosecutors in CCTIP received more than 10 trainings related to detecting and combating human trafficking, and providing rehabilitation services to victims. (2)

Authorities may lack adequate training to identify potential child trafficking victims. Legislation providing special interview services for child victims of human trafficking is also not uniformly applied, which can result in re-traumatization of victims. (1)

Online recruitment, solicitation of sexually explicit content, and online threats are inconsistently handled. Investigators sometimes treat these crimes as child trafficking offenses, and sometimes as sexual harassment, which is considered a less serious crime. (15) In addition, law enforcement failed to use special investigation measures to investigate child pornography, which investigators fail to treat as a serious crime. (15)

Sources have reported that CCTIP's newly hired staff lack knowledge on human trafficking and how information and communications technology is used to facilitate human trafficking crimes. There are also reports that CCTIP "disjoins" cases to artificially inflate its enforcement stats. (1,20)

#### IV. COORDINATION OF GOVERNMENT EFFORTS ON CHILD LABOR

The government has established mechanisms to coordinate its efforts to address child labor (Table 8). However, gaps exist that hinder adequate coordination of efforts to address child labor, including coordination efforts of the National Council for the Protection of Child Rights.

**Table 8. Key Mechanisms to Coordinate Government Efforts on Child Labor**

Coordinating Body	Role & Description
National Council for Human Rights*	Monitors and assesses the implementation of the Human Rights National Action Plan (2018–2022), which includes activities dedicated to protecting child rights and combating exploitation of children, including in child labor. (2,56,57) Monitors, evaluates, and coordinates efforts to comply with other national policies related to human rights and human rights treaties to which Moldova is a State Party, including those related to child labor. (56)
National Committee for Combating Trafficking in Persons (NCCTIP)	Coordinates efforts to prevent and combat child trafficking and child sexual exploitation. Members include the SLI, Security and Intelligence Service, Agency for Public Services, and other government departments. (6,7,15,23) Drafts legislation related to human trafficking, participates in anti-trafficking campaigns, and develops national action plans. (18) Met once in 2019 to discuss progress and challenges in combating human trafficking, including in the areas of investigation, prosecution, and protection of victims of trafficking. (2)
National Council for the Protection of Child Rights	Coordinates national efforts to combat child exploitation and improve access to education. (7) Includes the Deputy Minister of Health, Labor, and Social Protection, and representatives from the Ministries of Justice, Education, Interior, Foreign Affairs and European Integration, and others. (58) Has a working group to discuss existing gaps in the current birth registration process and develop recommendations. (58,59) This body did not meet in 2019. (2)
Human Rights Ombudsman	Monitors and publishes annual reports on observance of human rights, including the rights of children. Through the Office of the Ombudsman for Children's Rights, receives and responds to complaints about children's rights violations, including child labor. (60) In 2019, responded to 194 complaints, including three related to child labor. (61)

\* Mechanism to coordinate efforts to address child labor was created during the reporting period.

In 2019, the government abolished the National Steering Committee on the Elimination of Child Labor. (2)

#### V. GOVERNMENT POLICIES ON CHILD LABOR

The government has established policies related to child labor (Table 9). However, policy gaps exist that hinder efforts to address child labor, including implementation.

**Table 9. Key Policies Related to Child Labor**

Policy	Description
Child Protection Strategy (2014–2020)	Includes the goals of preventing and combating violence, neglect, and the exploitation of children. (62,63) Research was unable to determine whether activities were undertaken to implement the Child Protection Strategy during the reporting period.
Action Plan for Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings (2018–2020)	Outlines how law enforcement agencies should work to combat human trafficking, provides support to victims of human trafficking, and aims to create standards for the operation of victim witness rooms for children, among other tasks. (1,64) Carried out by the Permanent Secretariat Directorate of NCCTIP. (1) Includes an accompanying National Strategy for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings 2018–2023. (1,64) Research was unable to determine whether activities were undertaken to implement the Action Plan for Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings during the reporting period.
Moldova Strategy Country Note Program Priorities (2018–2022)	Focuses on the realization of all children's rights, including education and health, especially for children from ethnic minorities, children from low-income families, children with disabilities, and children left behind because of migration. (65) Research was unable to determine whether activities were undertaken to implement this policy during the reporting period.
Moldova-EU Association Agenda (2017–2019)	Protected and promoted children's rights. (66,67) In 2019, as part of this policy, the government drafted changes to a number of laws on child rights concerning child adoption, return of child to place of residence, and custody of children whose parents have gone abroad. (2) The Government of Moldova and the Council of the EU also began talks to establish an updated Association Agenda to guide government action in coming years. (68)
Action Plan to Support the Roma People (2016–2020)	Aims to promote social inclusion of Roma people. Includes the goals of education, social protection, and combating discrimination. (69,70) Funded by the government, private partnerships, and the EU. (67) Research was unable to determine whether activities were undertaken to implement the Action Plan to Support the Roma People during the reporting period.

‡ The government has other policies that may have addressed child labor issues or had an impact on child labor. (2,57)

# Moldova

## MINIMAL ADVANCEMENT – EFFORTS MADE BUT CONTINUED LAW AND PRACTICE THAT DELAYED ADVANCEMENT

### VI. SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS CHILD LABOR

In 2019, the government funded and participated in programs that include the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor (Table 10). However, gaps exist in these social programs, including the adequacy of programs to address the full scope of the problem.

**Table 10. Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor**

Program	Description
Decent Work Country Program (2016–2020)	ILO program that aims to gather statistics on the prevalence of child labor; build the capacity of the labor inspectorate, and combat labor exploitation in the construction and agriculture sectors. (71)
Shelters for Victims of Human Trafficking†	Government-funded shelters for victims of trafficking from Moldova that offer accommodations, rehabilitation, and reintegration services. (2) In 2019, a new annex specifically for child victims was established, and 18 children received services at these shelters. (20)
Child Helpline	Provides psychological counseling and information to parents and children experiencing violence, neglect, or exploitation. (2) In 2019, the helpline received over 5,000 calls. In addition, during the reporting period operation of this helpline was transferred from the NGO La Strada to another NGO, the National Center for Training, Assistance, Counselling and Education in Moldova. (2,20)
Hotlines‡	One human trafficking hotline is managed by the Ministry of Health, Labor, and Social Protection and refers cases within the NRS. (1,2) The PGO manages the Anti-Trafficking Green Line Telephone for specialist prosecutors. (2) In addition, the NGO La Strada manages the national hotline for women and children, which received 2,139 calls in 2019. (2)
Social Aid Program and Social Support for Families with Children†	Provides cash assistance to families. The Social Aid Program, implemented by the district departments of social assistance and family protection, has provided aid for low-income families since 2008; this program continued to operate in 2019. (2,15,72) The Social Support Service for Families with Children program has operated since 2013. The government allocated \$2.14 million for families in 2019. (2)

† Program is funded by the Government of Moldova.

‡ The government had other social programs that may have included the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor. (1,2,20)

Existing social programs do not meet the current level of need, particularly for children working in agriculture and child victims of human trafficking who require long-term care. (1,2)

### VII. SUGGESTED GOVERNMENT ACTIONS TO ELIMINATE CHILD LABOR

Based on the reporting above, suggested actions are identified that would advance the elimination of child labor in Moldova (Table 11).

**Table 11. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor**

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Legal Framework	Raise the minimum age for work to the age up to which education is compulsory.	2018 – 2019
Enforcement	Ensure that entities responsible for conducting occupational, safety, and health inspections have the training and capacity to carry out these inspections in all sectors in which child labor is known to occur so that child labor violations are accurately detected.	2018 – 2019
	Strengthen the labor inspection system by eliminating barriers for on-site inspections and conducting unannounced inspections.	2018 – 2019
	Ensure that labor inspectors are empowered to identify and assess penalties for child labor violations detected during inspections, even if the inspection was not conducted in response to a child labor complaint.	2019
	Clearly define the responsibilities of the Child Labor Monitoring Unit and ensure that it is fully empowered to coordinate the State Labor Inspectorate's efforts to detect and respond to child labor violations.	2019
	Increase the number of labor inspectors and funding for the State Labor Inspectorate to ensure that it provides inspectors with the financial resources necessary to inspect for child labor.	2012 – 2019
	Reduce procedural requirements for filing child labor complaints and permit such complaints to be made anonymously.	2019
	Publish information on the number of child labor violations detected during occupational safety and health inspections conducted by sectoral regulating agencies.	2019



**Table 11. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor (Cont.)**

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Enforcement	Ensure that investigators, including police officers and Center for Combating Trafficking in Persons investigators, receive training on laws and investigative techniques related to the worst forms of child labor, especially for online child pornography and children left behind without parental care.	2016 – 2019
	Improve the collection of data on criminal law enforcement efforts by curtailing the practice of disjoining child trafficking cases.	2019
Coordination	Ensure that the National Council for the Protection of Child Rights meets and carries out their mandate.	2019
Government Policies	Publish information about activities undertaken to implement policies related to child labor, including the Child Protection Strategy, the Action Plan for Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, the Moldova Strategy Country Note Program Priorities, and the Action Plan to Support the Roma People.	2019
Social Programs	Collect and publish data on the extent and nature of child labor to inform policies and programs, including for the separatist region of Transnistria.	2013 – 2019
	Enhance efforts to eliminate barriers to education by removing informal fees for school supplies.	2018 – 2019
	Institute targeted support programs that eliminate discrimination and violence against Roma children and promote equal access to education.	2014 – 2019
	Ensure sufficient support for child trafficking victims and children working in agriculture.	2015 – 2019

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