

In 2022, Brazil made moderate advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The government published two updates to the national "Dirty List," which contains data on employers that the Ministry of Labor and Employment found to be using slave labor, including that of children. The updated lists were published in April and October for a total of 184 newly listed employers. The Secretariat of Labor Inspection conducted over 1,368 child labor specific operations which resulted in the removal of 2,317 children from situations of child labor; the numbers of operations and rescues were the highest recorded in the last six years. Additionally, the government launched the Information System for Confronting Human Trafficking, which aims to generate data on the purposes for and forms of recruitment, improve responses in addressing these crimes, and allow for detailed information on victims of human trafficking to be recorded. The Rio de Janeiro City government also launched the first Municipal Plan to Combat the Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents, which includes awareness campaigns to address and eradicate child labor. In addition, the Auxílio Brasil cash transfer program reached unprecedented levels by extending assistance to over 21.5 million families. However, children in Brazil are subjected to 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, including in the production of coffee. Although Brazil made meaningful efforts in all relevant areas during the reporting period, prohibitions against child trafficking require the use of threats, violence, coercion, fraud, or abuse be established for the crime of child trafficking to have occurred and, therefore, do not meet international labor standards. The reported number of labor inspectors is also likely not sufficient to provide adequate coverage of the workforce, and local governments lack the capacity to fully implement and monitor the National Program to Eradicate Child Labor and other social protection programs.



I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Table 1 provides key indicators on children's work and education in Brazil. Data on some of these indicators are not available from the sources used in this report.

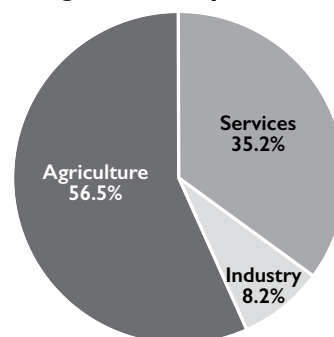
Table 1. Statistics on Children's Work and Education

Children	Age	Percent
Working (% and population)	5 to 14	2.1 (638,943)
Attending School (%)	5 to 14	98.0
Combining Work and School (%)	7 to 14	2.4
Primary Completion Rate (%)		Unavailable

Primary completion rate was unavailable from UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2023. (1)

Source for all other data: International Labor Organization's analysis of statistics from Pesquisa Nacional por Amostra de Domicílios (PNAD) Continua, 2015. (2)

Figure 1. Working Children by Sector, Ages 5-14



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

Brazil

MODERATE ADVANCEMENT

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

Sector/Industry	Activity
Agriculture	Harvesting of açai and citrus fruits, and the production of bananas, cocoa, coffee, corn, cotton,† eucalyptus, grapes, mangoes, manioc, mate tea, onions, pineapples,† rice, sisal,† soy, sugarcane,† tobacco,† and watermelons (3-13)
	Cattle ranching and raising livestock, including hogs, poultry, and sheep (4,5,11)
	Fishing and harvesting mollusks† (4,5,14,15)
	Forestry, including logging,† extracting carnauba palm leaves, and producing charcoal† (4,5,11,12,16)
Industry	Slaughtering animals,† including for beef production (12,17)
	Processing manioc flour† and cashews† (11,18,19)
	Production of ceramics† and bricks† (12,16)
	Production of footwear and textiles, including garments (5,16)
	Construction† (8,12,20)
	Work in stone quarries† (16,21)
Services	Rolling straw cigarettes† (22,23)
	Street work,† including vending,† begging, washing cars,† collecting recycling,† and garbage scavenging† (8,11,16,24)
	Work in supermarkets, markets, and fairs, including hauling fruits and vegetables and transporting heavy loads (11,25)
	Restaurant food delivery, including by bicycle (26,27)
	Work in restaurants and other food and drink establishments, including selling alcoholic beverages† (11,12,24)
	Artistic and sports-related activities and cultural work (28,29)
Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor‡	Domestic work,† including childcare, housekeeping, and eldercare (8,11,16)
	Maintaining and repairing automobiles (11)
	Commercial sexual exploitation, including use in the production of pornography, sometimes as a result of human trafficking (30,31)
	Forced domestic work (31)
	Forced begging (32)
	Forced labor in agriculture, including in the production of coffee and manioc (3,33)
	Forced labor in the production of garments, including in garment factories (34)
	Use by gangs to perform illicit activities, including drug trafficking, sometimes as a result of human trafficking (12,35-38)

† 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.




The overall scope and magnitude of commercial sexual exploitation of children is unknown; however, the latest biennial report published by the Federal Highway Police, in collaboration with Childhood Brazil, identified 3,651 areas along highways throughout the country where children are vulnerable to commercial sexual exploitation. Areas are assessed by evaluating the risk of exploitation and the implementation of preventative mechanisms and strategies that exist within each state. (30) According to the report, the states of Bahia, Goiás, Pará, Minas Gerais, and Ceará are at the highest risk for this type of exploitation. The report also indicated a 0.4 percent decrease of these vulnerable areas since its previous publication. (30) Child sex tourism is particularly common in tourist and coastal areas, and girls from other South American countries are also exploited for commercial sex in Brazil. (31)

A survey by the education-focused NGO Education for All (*Todos pela Educação*), using data from the second quarter of the 2021 Continuous Household Survey (PNAD), found that the number of children between the ages of 6 and 14 who are out of school grew 171 percent compared to the same calendar period in 2019, resulting in 244,000 children out of school, the largest number since 2012. Furthermore, the percentage of school-enrolled children fell from 98 percent in 2019 to 96.2 percent in 2021. (39) Additionally, research found that some schools, particularly those in rural areas, are overcrowded, have poor infrastructure, and lack basic resources and teachers. (8)

II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR CHILD LABOR

Brazil 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	✓
 Palermo Protocol on Trafficking in Persons	✓

The government has established laws and regulations related to child labor (Table 4). However, gaps exist in Brazil's legal framework to adequately protect children from the worst forms of child labor, including deficiencies with its child trafficking prohibitions.

Table 4. Laws and Regulations on Child Labor

Standard	Meets International Standards	Age	Legislation
Minimum Age for Work	Yes	16	Article 403 of the Labor Code (40)
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	Yes	18	Article 2 of the Hazardous Work List (41)
Identification of Hazardous Occupations or Activities Prohibited for Children	Yes		Hazardous Work List (41)
Prohibition of Forced Labor	Yes		Articles 149 and 149-A of the Penal Code; Article 13 of Law 13.344 amending Penal Code; Articles 1 and 2 of Law 12.781 (42,44)
Prohibition of Child Trafficking	No		Article 149-A of the Penal Code; Article 244-A of the Child and Adolescent Statute (43,45)
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	Yes		Articles 218-A, 218-B, 227, and 228 of the Penal Code; Articles 240, 241, and 244-A of the Child and Adolescent Statute (42,45)
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities	Yes		Articles 33 and 40 of the National System of Public Policies on Drugs; Article 244-B of the Child and Adolescent Statute (45,46)
Minimum Age for Voluntary State Military Recruitment	Yes	17	Article 127 of the Military Service Regulation (47)
Prohibition of Compulsory Recruitment of Children by (State) Military	Yes		Article 5 of the Military Service Law (48)
Prohibition of Military Recruitment by Non-state Armed Groups	No		
Compulsory Education Age	Yes	17	Article 4 of the National Education Law (49)
Free Public Education	Yes		Article 4 of the National Education Law (49)

The national "Dirty List" containing information on employers found to be using slave labor, including that of children, was updated in April 2022 with 89 new names and again in October 2022 with 95 new names. (50) However, prohibitions against child trafficking require the use of threats, violence, coercion, fraud, or abuse to be established for the crime of child trafficking and, therefore, do not meet international labor standards. (43) In addition, 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. (40,49)

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 operations of enforcement agencies that may hinder adequate enforcement of their child labor laws.

Brazil

MODERATE ADVANCEMENT

Table 5. Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement

Organization/Agency	Role & Activities
Ministry of Labor and Employment (MTE)*	Oversees the Secretariat of Labor Inspection (SIT), which is responsible for organizing, coordinating, evaluating, and monitoring all labor inspection activities, including those related to child labor and forced labor. Labor inspectors carry out a number of actions outlined in the Labor Prosecution Office's Normative Instruction No. 02 of 2021, including unannounced inspections at sites where child labor is suspected, identification and removal of children from child labor situations, and issuing of penalties. (11,51) At the start of 2023, Decree 11.359 reestablished SIT within the Ministry of Labor and Employment. (52) In 2022, SIT's Special Mobile Group to Combat Child Labor was reinstated and carried out an operation in Maranhão, which resulted in the removal of 43 minors engaged in activities included in Brazil's Hazardous Work List. The Mobile Group carries out inspections of greater technical and operational complexity, including in isolated geographical areas and for cases classified as the worst forms of child labor according to Decree 6.481. (11,41,53)
Labor Prosecution Office (MPT)	Prosecutes child labor and forced labor violations by working with prosecutors from its National Committee to Combat Child and Adolescent Labor, an in-house body that coordinates efforts to address child labor. Collects fines for forced labor violations and allocates funds for initiatives that address child labor and forced labor. (8) Led by the Ministry of Public Union. (54)
Military, Civil, and Federal Police	The Military Police operate at the local level and refer cases to the Civil Police for investigation. The Federal Police, in turn, work on interstate or international cases and maintain a database to track cases of human trafficking for sexual exploitation. (8) The recently established Nucleus to Repress Forced Labor office works with the Federal Police's Service for the Repression of Trafficking in Persons and Human Smuggling (STRP) to respond to cases of human trafficking and forced labor. The STRP is led by a police delegate and supported by three federal police officers, along with additional staff support, depending on the specific mission with a focus on human trafficking and smuggling. (55,56)

* Agency responsible for child labor enforcement was restructured during the reporting period.

Labor Law Enforcement

In 2022, labor law enforcement agencies in Brazil took actions to address child labor (Table 6). However, gaps exist within the operations of the Ministry of Labor and Employment (MTE) that may hinder adequate labor law enforcement, including insufficient human resource allocation.

Table 6. Labor Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Labor Law Enforcement	2021	2022
Labor Inspectorate Funding	\$4,586,620 (11)	\$6,059,361 (11)
Number of Labor Inspectors	2,015 (8)	1,971 (11)
Mechanism to Assess Civil Penalties	Yes (57)	Yes (11)
Training for Labor Inspectors Provided	Yes (8)	Yes (11)
Number of Labor Inspections Conducted at Worksite	37,806 (11)	59,588 (11)
Number of Child Labor Violations Found	1,671 (11)	2,317 (11)
Number of Child Labor Violations for Which Penalties Were Imposed	933 (55)	1,170 (11)
Number of Child Labor Penalties Imposed that Were Collected	123 (11)	406 (11)
Routine Inspections Conducted	Yes (8)	Yes (11)
Routine Inspections Targeted	Yes (8)	Yes (11)
Unannounced Inspections Permitted	Yes (57)	Yes (11)
Unannounced Inspections Conducted	Yes (8)	Yes (11)
Complaint Mechanism Exists	Yes (8)	Yes (11)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Labor Authorities and Social Services	Yes (8)	Yes (11)

In 2022, the Secretariat of Labor Inspection (SIT) conducted over 1,368 child labor specific operations resulting in the removal of 2,317 children from situations of child labor, including its worst forms. The number of operations and rescues were the highest recorded over the last 6 years. (11) According to SIT, when children are found in situations of child labor, including in hazardous working conditions, they are immediately removed from the situation and relevant data related to the violations are collected and forwarded to social services providers within the child and adolescent protection network, while reports are sent to the Public Ministry for further guidance. (51,58) In addition, children over age 14 may be referred to the country's apprenticeship program. (58)

However, research indicates that Brazil does not have an adequate number of labor inspectors to carry out their mandated duties. (59-61)

Criminal Law Enforcement

In 2022, criminal law enforcement agencies in Brazil took actions to address child labor (Table 7). However, gaps exist within the operations of the enforcement agencies that may hinder adequate criminal law enforcement, including insufficient efforts to hold violators of child labor laws accountable in accordance with the law.

Table 7. Criminal Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Criminal Law Enforcement	2021	2022
Training for Criminal Investigators Provided	Yes (8)	Yes (50)
Number of Investigations	Unknown	Unknown
Number of Prosecutions Initiated	Unknown	Unknown
Number of Convictions	Unknown	Unknown
Imposed Penalties for Violations Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor	Unknown	Unknown
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Criminal Authorities and Social Services	Yes (8)	Yes (50)

In 2022, the Ministry of Justice and Public Security (MJSP) prepared a Judicial Activity Protocol on Trafficking in Persons and Crimes, which was funded and led by the IOM, and in partnership with the Federal University of Minas Gerais, drafted a report titled "International Trafficking in Persons in Brazil: Crime in Motion, Justice on Hold." The report presents a diagnosis of how the Brazilian justice system addresses international human trafficking across its entire national territory. (50,62) In addition, the Judiciary, the Labor Prosecution Office (MPT), and the federal and state police have databases to track cases of human trafficking for sexual exploitation; however, information from these databases is not shared in a standardized way across relevant agencies. (8,63) Furthermore, reports indicate that the judicial system does not sufficiently hold perpetrators accountable for child labor law violations, including forced child labor, which may lead to a sense of impunity among violators. (64)

IV. COORDINATION OF GOVERNMENT EFFORTS ON CHILD LABOR

The government has established a key mechanism to coordinate its efforts to address child labor (Table 8).

Table 8. Key Mechanism to Coordinate Government Efforts on Child Labor

Coordinating Body	Role & Activities
National Commission for the Eradication of Child Labor	Leads implementation of the National Plan for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labor and the Protection of Working Adolescents. Re-established in December 2020 and restructured from its original multipartite composition to a tripartite structure made up of six government, six employer, and six employee representatives. (65) Government representatives include the Ministries of Economy, Education, Citizenship, Health, Agriculture and Supply, and Women, Family and Human Rights. In addition, six special representatives are allowed to participate in meetings as observers, including from government agencies and national and international organizations, though these special representatives are not allowed to vote on any new initiatives. (66) In 2022, established a Working Group focused on developing a national workflow among agencies to address child labor. (11)

During the reporting period, the MJSP, through its National Committee to Combat Trafficking in Persons and in collaboration with the IOM, launched the Information System for Confronting Human Trafficking, which aims to generate data on the purposes and forms of recruitment, improve responses in addressing these crimes, and allow for detailed information on victims of human trafficking to be recorded. (50,67)

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 the efficacy of accomplishing mandates.

Brazil

MODERATE ADVANCEMENT

Table 9. Key Policies Related to Child Labor

Policy	Description & Activities
National Plan for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labor and the Protection of Working Adolescents III (2019–2022)	Prioritized the prevention and eradication of child labor and the protection of adolescent workers; raised public awareness of child labor and its worst forms, including the risks of child labor; ensured relevant legislative compliance related to the prohibitions of child labor and its worst forms; strengthened family security and stability through the increase of employment opportunities; ensured access to quality education; and established health support systems for child labor victims. (68) Its implementation was coordinated by the National Council for the Rights of Children and Adolescents (CONANDA). (69) Research was unable to determine whether activities were taken to implement this policy during the reporting period.
National Plan to Combat Human Trafficking III (2018–2022)	Outlined the government's strategy to address human trafficking. Included 58 objectives based on 6 themes: policy management, information management, training, accountability, victim assistance and prevention, and public awareness raising. (64,70) During the reporting period, the Plan was implemented through numerous human trafficking trainings, victim assistance and prevention, and awareness campaigns. (50)
Federal Pact for the Eradication of Forced Labor	Aims to establish a database on forced labor, create state-level commissions to address forced labor, and strengthen inter-agency coordination. Led by the Ministry of Justice and Public Security's (MJSP) Special Secretariat for Human Rights, and currently signed by 23 of the 27 states. (64,71,72) Research was unable to determine whether activities were taken to implement this policy during the reporting period.

‡ The government had other policies that may have addressed child labor issues or had an impact on child labor. (73-75)

In 2022, the Rio de Janeiro city government launched a Municipal Plan to Combat the Sexual Exploitation of Children and adolescents. The Municipal Plan is aimed at improving existing policies focused on protecting and ensuring the rights of minors in the municipality, including through the increase of awareness campaigns to address and eradicate child labor; this is the first municipal plan of its kind to be implemented in Brazil. (76)

VI. SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS CHILD LABOR

In 2022, 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 inadequacy of programs to assist child victims of human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation.

Table 10. Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor

Program	Description & Activities
National Program to Eradicate Child Labor (<i>Programa de Erradicação do Trabalho Infantil [PETI]</i>)†	Ministry of Citizenship (MOC) social assistance program that addresses child labor through awareness-raising activities, victim identification and protection, and conditional cash transfers. To receive program benefits, family participants must ensure that children are not working and maintain at least 85 percent school attendance. (77) In 2022, continued providing support to Brazilian states, and participated in all meetings of the National Commission to Combat Slave Labor and in the meetings of the National Commission for the Eradication of Child Labor. (78)
Aid Brazil (<i>Auxílio Brasil</i>)†	MOC cash transfer program that integrates various public policies addressing social assistance, health, education, employment, and income. Aimed at families living in poverty and extreme poverty throughout the country. (79) Established in November 2021, the program replaces the pre-existing Family Stipend (<i>Bolsa Família</i>) program, increasing the amounts paid to vulnerable families and incorporating all families previously enrolled in the <i>Bolsa Família</i> program. (8) In 2022, the program reached unprecedented levels by extending assistance to over 21.5 million families due to an increase of \$13 million. (80)
National Flow of Assistance to Victims of Slave Labor†	Creates an integrated network of social services providers and standardizes assistance to victims of slave labor, including child victims, across the country. It is structured into three stages: complaint and planning, rescue and reintegration, and the identification of organizations mandated to act at each stage, including details of each organization's roles. (81) Led by the Ministry for Women, Family, and Human Rights. (82) Active in 2022. (11)

For information about USDOL's projects to address child labor around the world, visit <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/ilab/ilab-project-page-search>

† Program is funded by the Government of Brazil.

‡ The government had other social programs that may have included the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor. (83,85-89)

In 2022, the Secretary of State for Tourism in the state of Maranhão continued conducting its annual weeklong awareness campaign to Combat Abuse and Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents. Various activities were carried out in schools to raise awareness of these issues. (50) Campaigns were also conducted at tourist focused events. In addition, the state of Pernambuco's Public Ministry of Labor, in partnership with the State Secretariat of Urban Development and Housing, the Pernambuco International Transport Company, and the

Recife Transport Consortium, launched a campaign to raise awareness of child abuse and human trafficking. (50) Posters were distributed through 66 intercity transport terminals and plastered on 2,000 buses in the Metropolitan Region of Recife. (50) Moreover, the National Forum for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labor launched the results of a study on the situation of child laborers in domestic service. According to the study, most of the identified cases were girls (85 percent), African descent (70.8 percent), and between the ages of 14 and 17 (94 percent). Activities performed were varied though the study determined that 48.6 percent of these children worked as child caregivers, 40.3 percent as domestic workers, and 5.3 percent as caretakers. (90)

Although there are social programs in place, reports indicate that states lack resources and expertise to adequately assist, identify, refer, and support child trafficking victims, and many also do not have specialized shelters for child victims of commercial sexual exploitation. (31) In addition, because the National Program to Eradicate Child Labor (*Programa de Erradicação do Trabalho Infantil [PETI]*) is decentralized, municipal governments are responsible for implementation and monitoring, and must report back to state and federal governments. Challenges include responding to the needs of program participants, complex local contexts and geographic areas, excessive program requirements, and high staff turnover. (91)

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 Brazil (Table 11).

Table 11. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Legal Framework	Ensure that laws do not require the use of threats, violence, coercion, fraud, or abuse to establish the crime of child trafficking.	2016 – 2022
	Ensure that the law criminally prohibits the recruitment of children under age 18 by non-state armed groups.	2016 – 2022
	Raise the minimum age for work from 16 to 17 to align with the compulsory education age.	2018 – 2022
Enforcement	Significantly increase the number of labor inspectors from 1,971 to 7,000 to ensure adequate coverage of the labor force of approximately 105 million people.	2014 – 2022
	Publish information related to criminal law enforcement efforts, such as the number of investigations conducted, prosecutions initiated, convictions obtained, and whether penalties were imposed for child labor crimes.	2021 – 2022
	Ensure that relevant enforcement agencies coordinate their efforts to collect data on cases of human trafficking for sexual exploitation and ensure that the data are disaggregated by victims' ages.	2009 – 2022
	Ensure that all perpetrators of child labor crimes are held accountable in accordance with the law.	2015 – 2022
Government Policies	Ensure that activities are undertaken to implement the National Plan for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labor and the Protection of Working Adolescents III and the Federal Pact for the Eradication of Forced Labor and publish results from activities implemented by each plan during the reporting period.	2021 – 2022
Social Programs	Remove barriers to education, including by ensuring an adequate number of trained teachers, providing sufficient schools, improving school infrastructure, and taking steps to enroll children in rural areas.	2013 – 2022
	Support local governments in the implementation and monitoring of the National Program to Eradicate Child Labor.	2009 – 2022
	Provide adequate resources to state governments to ensure that child trafficking victims receive appropriate social services and ensure the availability of specialized shelters for child victims of commercial sexual exploitation.	2012 – 2022
	Ensure that the government publishes the results of National Forced Labor Survey.	2020 – 2022

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MODERATE ADVANCEMENT

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