

## Congo, Republic of

<i>Selected Statistics and Indicators on Child Labor</i>	
Percent of children 5-14 estimated as working:	Unavailable
Minimum age for admission to work:	16 <sup>1119</sup>
Age to which education is compulsory:	16 <sup>1120</sup>
Free public education:	Yes <sup>1121*</sup>
Gross primary enrollment rate in 2004:	89% <sup>1122</sup>
Net primary enrollment rate:	Unavailable
Percent of children 5-14 attending school:	Unavailable
As of 2002, percent of primary school entrants likely to reach grade 5:	66% <sup>1123</sup>
Ratified Convention 138:	11/26/1999 <sup>1124</sup>
Ratified Convention 182:	8/23/2002 <sup>1125</sup>
ILO-IPEC participating country:	Yes, associated <sup>1126</sup>
*Must pay for school supplies and related items.	

### Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

Children work with their families on farms or in informal business activities.<sup>1127</sup> In Brazzaville and other urban centers, there are significant numbers of street children, primarily from the neighboring Democratic Republic of the Congo, who engage in street vending and begging. There were isolated cases of children involved in commercial sexual exploitation.<sup>1128</sup> There are unconfirmed accounts of trafficking into the Republic of Congo of “minor relatives” of immigrants from West Africa.<sup>1129</sup> Children from West Africa reportedly work as domestic servants, fishermen, shop workers, and street sellers.<sup>1130</sup>

<sup>1119</sup> Government of the Republic of Congo, *Loi N° 45-75, Code du travail de la République populaire du Congo*, (1975), Articles 11, 116; available from <http://www.droit-afrique.com/images/textes/Congo/Congo%20-%20Code%20du%20travail.pdf>.

<sup>1120</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Republic of Congo," in *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2006*, Washington, DC, March 6, 2007, Section 5; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2006/78729.htm>.

<sup>1121</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1122</sup> UNESCO Institute for Statistics, *Gross Enrolment Ratio. Primary. Total*, accessed December 20, 2006; available from <http://stats.uis.unesco.org/>.

<sup>1123</sup> UNESCO Institute for Statistics, *Survival Rate to Grade 5. Total*, accessed December 18, 2006; available from <http://stats.uis.unesco.org/>.

<sup>1124</sup> ILO, *Ratifications by Country*, accessed October 23, 2006; available from <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/newratframeE.htm>.

<sup>1125</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1126</sup> ILO-IPEC, *IPEC Action Against Child Labour-Highlights 2006*, Geneva, October 2006; available from [http://www.ilo.org/iloroot/docstore/ipcc/prod/eng/20061019\\_Implementationreport\\_eng\\_Web.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/iloroot/docstore/ipcc/prod/eng/20061019_Implementationreport_eng_Web.pdf).

<sup>1127</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Congo," Section 6d.

<sup>1128</sup> Ibid., Sections 5, 6d. See also Integrated Regional Information Networks, "Congo: Street Children a Growing Problem in Brazzaville", IRINnews.org, [online], April 21, 2005 [cited October 16, 2006]; available from [http://www.irinnews.org/report.asp?ReportID=46742&SelectRegion=Great\\_Lakes&SelectCountry](http://www.irinnews.org/report.asp?ReportID=46742&SelectRegion=Great_Lakes&SelectCountry).

<sup>1129</sup> U.S. Embassy- Brazzaville, *reporting*, February 26, 2007. See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Congo."

<sup>1130</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Congo," Section 5.

Although reports of violence in the Pool region have continued since the country's civil conflict formally ended in 2003, it is unclear whether children have continued to be involved as child soldiers in the region.<sup>1131</sup>

### **Child Labor Laws and Enforcement**

The law sets the minimum age for employment, including apprenticeships, at 16 years. Exceptions may be permitted by the Ministry of Education after an inspection of the place of employment.<sup>1132</sup> The law prohibits forced or compulsory labor; however, there are exceptions for military service and other civic duties.<sup>1133</sup> The minimum age of enlistment for service in the armed forces in the Republic of Congo is 18 years.<sup>1134</sup>

The law criminalizes procuring a person for the purpose of prostitution. Furthermore, it establishes a penalty of 10 years of imprisonment if such an act is committed with respect to a minor, defined as a person less than 15 years of age.<sup>1135</sup> While the law does not specifically prohibit trafficking in persons, traffickers can be prosecuted for child abuse, forced labor, illegal immigration, prostitution, rape, extortion, and slavery under existing laws.<sup>1136</sup> There were no reports that the government prosecuted any traffickers under these laws.<sup>1137</sup>

The Ministry of Labor is responsible for enforcing child labor laws and monitors businesses in the formal sector; however, because of resource constraints, in total only two inspection trips were made during the year.<sup>1138</sup> According to the U.S. Department of State, child labor continues to occur in the informal sector and in rural areas that lack effective government oversight.<sup>1139</sup>

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

In response to the recruitment of child soldiers during the civil conflict that formally ended in 2003, the Government of the Republic of Congo participated in a global USD 7 million USDOL-funded project implemented by ILO-IPEC to prevent the involvement of children in armed conflict and support the rehabilitation of former child soldiers.<sup>1140</sup> The project targets a total of

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<sup>1131</sup> ILO-IPEC, *Prevention and Reintegration of Children Involved in Armed Conflict: An Inter-Regional Programme*, technical progress report, Geneva, September 2006, 2. See also Integrated Regional Information Networks, "Congo: Interview with Madeleine Yila Bompoto, Coordinator of Efforts to Reintegrate Ex-Child Soldiers", IRINnews.org, [online], March 31, 2006 [cited October 16, 2006]; available from [http://www.irinnews.org/report.asp?reportid=52536&selectregion=great\\_lakes](http://www.irinnews.org/report.asp?reportid=52536&selectregion=great_lakes).

<sup>1132</sup> Government of the Republic of Congo, *Loi no 45-75, Code du travail*, Sections 11 and 116.

<sup>1133</sup> *Ibid.*, Article 4.

<sup>1134</sup> Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, "Republic of Congo," in *Child Soldiers Global Report 2004* London, 2004; available from [http://www.child-soldiers.org/document\\_get.php?id=768](http://www.child-soldiers.org/document_get.php?id=768).

<sup>1135</sup> Government of the Republic of Congo, *Penal Code*, Articles 222-4, and 225-7, [previously online]; available from <http://www.protectionproject.org/main1.htm> [hard copy on file].

<sup>1136</sup> U.S. Embassy- Brazzaville, *reporting, February 26, 2007*. See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Congo."

<sup>1137</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Congo," Section 6d.

<sup>1138</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1139</sup> *Ibid.*, Section 6d.

<sup>1140</sup> ILO-IPEC, *Prevention and Reintegration of Children Involved in Armed Conflict: An Inter-Regional Programme*, project document, Geneva, September 17, 2003, 1.

5,264 children for withdrawal and 4,250 children for prevention from involvement with armed groups in seven countries, including the Republic of Congo.<sup>1141</sup>

The Government's National Program for Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (PNDDR) became effective in August 2006.<sup>1142</sup> The program includes a component to offer financial support and technical training to former child soldiers.<sup>1143</sup>

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<sup>1141</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>1142</sup> ILO-IPEC, *Children Involved in Armed Conflict: September 2006, technical progress report*, 2.

<sup>1143</sup> World Bank, *Technical Annex for a Program of USD 17 Million from the MDRP Multi-Donor Trust Fund to the Republic of Congo for an Emergency Reintegration Program*, World Bank, December 14, 2005, 7, 18-9; available from [http://www.mdrp.org/PDFs/Country\\_PDFs/ROC-MDRP-TechAnnex\\_0506.pdf](http://www.mdrp.org/PDFs/Country_PDFs/ROC-MDRP-TechAnnex_0506.pdf). See also Integrated Regional Information Networks, "Congo: Interview with Madeleine Yila Bompoto, coordinator of efforts to reintegrate ex-child soldiers".