

## Armenia

<i>Selected Statistics and Indicators on Child Labor</i>	
Percent of children 5-14 estimated as working:	Unavailable
Minimum age of work:	16 <sup>221</sup>
Age to which education is compulsory:	14 <sup>222</sup>
Free public education:	Yes <sup>223</sup>
Gross primary enrollment rate in 2004:	101% <sup>224</sup>
Net primary enrollment rate in 2004:	94% <sup>225</sup>
Percent of children 5-14 attending school:	Unavailable
Percent of primary school entrants likely to reach grade 5:	Unavailable
Ratified Convention 138:	1/27/2006 <sup>226</sup>
Ratified Convention 182:	1/2/2006 <sup>227</sup>
ILO-IPEC participating country:	No

### Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

Children in Armenia work in family-run, small business enterprises.<sup>228</sup> Children can be observed selling flowers on the streets of Yerevan and working in local marketplaces, usually after school hours.<sup>229</sup> There have been reports of increasing numbers of children begging on the streets<sup>230</sup> and dropping out of school to work in the informal sector, especially in agriculture.<sup>231</sup> Outside the urban areas children have been known to work in fishing.<sup>232</sup>

<sup>221</sup> *Labor Code of the Republic of Armenia*, (November 9, 2004).

<sup>222</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Armenia," in *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2006: Armenia*, Washington, DC, March 6, 2007; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2005/61635.htm>.

<sup>223</sup> Ibid.

<sup>224</sup> UNESCO Institute for Statistics, *Gross Enrollment Ratio. Primary. Total*, accessed December 20, 2006; available from <http://stats.uis.unesco.org/>.

<sup>225</sup> UNESCO Institute for Statistics, *Net Enrollment Ratio. Primary. Total*, accessed December 20, 2006; available from <http://stats.uis.unesco.org/>.

<sup>226</sup> ILOLEX, *Database of International Labour Standards*, January 31, 2007; available from <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/newratframeE.htm>.

<sup>227</sup> Ibid.

<sup>228</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Armenia." Section 6d.

<sup>229</sup> Ibid. See also Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia, *Questionnaire Responses*, submitted in response to the U.S. Department of Labor Federal Register Notice (September 25, 2001) "Request for Information on Efforts by Certain Countries to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labor", October 24, 2001.

<sup>230</sup> National Center for Democracy and Human Rights, *NGO Report: Supplementary report to Armenia's second periodic report on the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child*, Yerevan, January 30, 2004; available from [http://www.crin.org/docs/resources/treaties/crc.35/armenia\\_ngo\\_report.pdf](http://www.crin.org/docs/resources/treaties/crc.35/armenia_ngo_report.pdf).

<sup>231</sup> UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child: Armenia*, Geneva, January 30, 2004, Para. 60; available from <http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu2/6/crc/doc/co/Armenia%20-%20CO2.pdf>.

<sup>232</sup> "Vostan" Ethno-Cultural Research Center Official, Expert, Interview with USDOL Consultant, June 06, 2006. See also Yerevan State University. "Vostan" NGO Official, Lecturer, Interview with USDOL Consultant, June 02, 2006.

## Child Labor Laws and Enforcement

The minimum age of employment is 16 years, but the law allows children 14 to 16 to work with written permission from a parent or guardian. Children under 14 are prohibited from working.<sup>233</sup> Children 14 to 16 may work up to 24 hours per week, and children 16 to 18 may work a maximum of 36 hours per week.<sup>234</sup> Employers must require proof of a medical examination from any employee under 18.<sup>235</sup> Children under 18 are prohibited from working overtime, at night, on holidays, or in hazardous conditions.<sup>236</sup> Armenian law defines hazardous work to include the production and/or sale of alcohol and tobacco products, as well as activities that may compromise children's health or physical or mental development, or interfere with their education.<sup>237</sup>

The Armenian Constitution prohibits forced and compulsory labor, including by children.<sup>238</sup> The law proscribes trafficking in persons and considers child trafficking an aggravated circumstance, which is punishable with 3 to 15 years imprisonment.<sup>239</sup> Sexual intercourse with a minor under 16 is punishable with up to 2 years imprisonment, and involving underage children in prostitution or pornography can result in 5 years imprisonment.<sup>240</sup> The law gives responsibility to the government to protect children from criminal activities, prostitution, and begging.<sup>241</sup> Armenian males are registered for military conscription at 16, but are not subject to compulsory military service or voluntary recruitment until 18.<sup>242</sup>

The Armenian State Labor Inspectorate is responsible for ensuring compliance with child labor laws.<sup>243</sup> However, the inspectorate has not received or investigated complaints of child labor since its inception in 2005 and does not have any inspectors assigned to child labor.<sup>244</sup> According to the U.S. Department of State, local community councils, unemployment offices, and courts have jurisdiction to enforce the laws on minimum working age, but their efforts are

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<sup>233</sup> *Labor Code of the Republic of Armenia*.

<sup>234</sup> *Ibid.*, Article 140.

<sup>235</sup> *Ibid.*, Article 249.

<sup>236</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Armenia", Section 6d.

<sup>237</sup> U.S. Embassy- Yerevan, *reporting*, August 18, 2004. See also Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia, *Questionnaire Responses*.

<sup>238</sup> Government of Armenia, *Constitution of the Republic of Armenia*, (July 7, 1995); available from [http://www.gov.am/enversion/legal\\_1/legal\\_sahman\\_all.html#09](http://www.gov.am/enversion/legal_1/legal_sahman_all.html#09). See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Armenia." Section 6c.

<sup>239</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Armenia.", Section 5.

<sup>240</sup> *Criminal Code*, Articles 141 and 166; available from

<http://www.legislationline.org/upload/legislations/db/3a/bb9bb21f5c6170dad5efd70578c.htm>. See also UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Consideration of Reports Submitted by States Parties Under Article 44 of the Convention: Armenia*, United Nations, July 17, 2003, Para. 417; available from [http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/898586b1dc7b4043c1256a450044f331/693ad0fbe22529cbc1256dc70027de86/\\$FILE/G0343131.pdf](http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/898586b1dc7b4043c1256a450044f331/693ad0fbe22529cbc1256dc70027de86/$FILE/G0343131.pdf).

<sup>241</sup> UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Consideration of Reports Submitted by States Parties: Armenia (2003)*, Para. 414.

<sup>242</sup> *Ibid.*, Para. 51. See also Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, *Child Soldiers Global Report 2004*, London, November 17, 2004; available from [http://www.child-soldiers.org/document\\_get.php?id=966](http://www.child-soldiers.org/document_get.php?id=966).

<sup>243</sup> *Law on the State Labor Inspectorate of the Republic of Armenia of 2005*, Article 10.

<sup>244</sup> U.S. Embassy- Yerevan, *reporting*, December 12, 2006.

uneven.<sup>245</sup> There have been no reports of child labor cases being prosecuted in Armenia.<sup>246</sup> Although the Armenian government has heightened its attention to the issue of trafficking and is taking steps to more effectively prevent trafficking-related offenses,<sup>247</sup> the U.S. Department of State reports that enforcement of anti-trafficking laws is generally weak, and there is evidence of collusion with traffickers by individual government officials. Several trafficking convictions have been overturned by courts or sentences were reduced by re-classifying charges to pimping, which carries lower penalties.<sup>248</sup>

### **Current Government Efforts to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labor**

During the year, the government continued to implement the 2004-2006 National Action Plan to Combat Trafficking.<sup>249</sup> The government is collaborating with international organizations and NGOs on a variety of counter-trafficking efforts, including mass-media public awareness campaigns and victim hotlines.<sup>250</sup> IOM contributes to the Government of Armenia's counter-trafficking efforts through a project that trains Armenian consular staff to recognize and assist trafficking victims in Armenia.<sup>251</sup> The UNDP is working with the government to develop anti-trafficking legislation and strengthen victim assistance efforts.<sup>252</sup>

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<sup>245</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Armenia," Section 6d.

<sup>246</sup> U.S. Embassy- Yerevan, *reporting*, August 18, 2004.

<sup>247</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>248</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Armenia (Tier 2 Watch List)," in *Trafficking in Persons Report*, Washington, DC, June 5, 2006; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2006/65988.htm>.

<sup>249</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Trafficking in Persons Report- 2006: Armenia."

<sup>250</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Armenia." Section 5.

<sup>251</sup> IOM, *Capacity building for the Consular Personnel in Counter Trafficking: Armenia*, October 17, 2006; available from <http://www.iom.int/armenia/projects/mfa.htm>. See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Armenia." Section 5.

<sup>252</sup> UNDP Armenia, *Supporting formation of informed individuals able to protect their rights*, August 30, 2006; available from <http://www.undp.am/?page=LatestNews&id=309>.