

Jordan

<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 ²²⁶⁷
Age to which education is compulsory:	16 ²²⁶⁸
Free public education:	Yes ²²⁶⁹
Gross primary enrollment rate in 2005:	96% ²²⁷⁰
Net primary enrollment rate in 2005:	89% ²²⁷¹
Percent of children 5-14 attending school:	Unavailable
As of 2003, percent of primary school entrants likely to reach grade 5:	99% ²²⁷²
Ratified Convention 138:	3/23/1998 ²²⁷³
Ratified Convention 182:	4/20/2000 ²²⁷⁴
ILO-IPEC participating country:	Yes ²²⁷⁵

Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

Working children in Jordan are primarily concentrated in the governorates of Amman, Balqa, Irbid, Ma'an, and Zarka.²²⁷⁶ According to a study by the Ministry of Labor (MOL) published in 2002, children work in automobile repair, carpentry, sales, blacksmithing, tailoring, construction, and food services.²²⁷⁷ Children also work in the informal sector in agriculture, domestic labor, and in small family businesses.²²⁷⁸ Because of deteriorating economic conditions, the number of working street children and child beggars may be greater now than it was 10 years ago.²²⁷⁹ Many child beggars are forced to beg by their parents.²²⁸⁰ Some working children are victims of physical, verbal, and sexual abuse in the workplace and are exposed to hazardous chemicals and dangerous working conditions.²²⁸¹

²²⁶⁷ Government of Jordan, *Labour Code, Law No. 8 of 1996*, Article 73; available from <http://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/docs/WEBTEXT/45676/65048/E96JOR01.htm#c1>.

²²⁶⁸ U.S. Department of State, "Jordan," 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/2006/78855.htm>.

²²⁶⁹ Ibid. See also U.S. Embassy- Amman, *reporting* May 26, 2005.

²²⁷⁰ UNESCO Institute for Statistics, *Gross Enrolment Ratio. Primary. Total*, accessed December 20, 2006; available from <http://stats.uis.unesco.org/>.

²²⁷¹ UNESCO Institute for Statistics, *Net Enrolment Rate. Primary. Total*, accessed December 20, 2006; available from <http://stats.uis.unesco.org/>.

²²⁷² UNESCO Institute for Statistics, *Survival Rate to Grade 5. Total*, accessed December 18, 2006; available from <http://stats.uis.unesco.org/>.

²²⁷³ ILO, *Ratifications by Country*, accessed June 16, 2006; available from <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/newratframeE.htm>.

²²⁷⁴ Ibid.

²²⁷⁵ ILO, *IPEC Action Against Child Labour Highlights 2006*, Geneva, October 2006; available from http://www.ilo.org/iloroot/docstore/ipcc/prod/eng/20061018_Implementationreport_eng.pdf.

²²⁷⁶ Ministry of Labor, *Towards a Healthy Environment for Children 2003*, Amman, , 2003.

²²⁷⁷ Mohammed Shahateet and Nihaya Issa Dabdub, *Estimating Child Labour in Jordan: 1991-2005*, Ministry of Labor, Amman, October 2002, p 15-16.

²²⁷⁸ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Jordan," Section 6d.

²²⁷⁹ Ibid.

²²⁸⁰ U.S. Embassy - Amman, *reporting* August 28, 2005.

²²⁸¹ Muntaha Gharaibeh and Shirley Hoeman, "Health Hazards and Risks for Abuse Among Child Labor in Jordan," *Journal of Pediatric Nursing* 18, no. 2 (2003), p 140, 143. See ILO Committee of Experts, *Direct Request, Worst*

Child Labor Laws and Enforcement

Jordanian law sets the minimum working age at 16 years, except for apprentices, and the minimum age for hazardous jobs at 18 years.²²⁸² Pursuant to the 2004 amendments to the labor code, children under 18 years shall not perform work with mechanically operated equipment; with oil and gas machines; requiring scuba diving equipment; in construction in which the worker is exposed to noise, vibration, high air pressure, radiation, or dust; underground; and in offices, hotels, restaurants, or nightclubs.²²⁸³ Minors must be given a rest break after 4 hours of work and may not work more than 6 hours per day during weekends and holidays or at night. Before hiring a minor, a prospective employer must obtain a guardian's written approval, the minor's birth certificate, and a health certificate.²²⁸⁴

Compulsory labor is prohibited, by the Constitution, except in circumstances of war or natural disaster.²²⁸⁵ The law prohibits voluntary enlistment into the government armed forces for children less than 16 years, although children may be enlisted as cadets at 15.²²⁸⁶ A child may be legally recruited into the armed forces at 17.²²⁸⁷ The law provides for the death penalty for anyone who uses a minor in the production, transportation, sale, or purchase of drugs.²²⁸⁸ Jordanian law specifically prohibits trafficking in children.²²⁸⁹ It is illegal to induce a girl under 20 to engage in prostitution or to entice any child under 15 to commit sodomy. Sanctions for these offenses include imprisonment for up to 5 years.²²⁹⁰

The Child Labor Unit (CLU) of the MOL is primarily responsible for monitoring child labor, collecting and analyzing data, and reviewing and ensuring the enforcement of existing legislation.²²⁹¹ The MOL's inspection division, which comprises 72 inspectors, is mandated to

Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182) Jordan (ratification: 2000), [online] 2004 [cited June 30, 2006]; available from <http://webfusion.ilo.org/public/db/standards/normes/appl/>.

²²⁸² Government of Jordan, *Labour Code of 1996*, Chapter VIII, Sections 73-74. See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Jordan," Section 6d.

²²⁸³ ILO Committee of Experts, *Direct Request CEACR comments on 182*.

²²⁸⁴ *Labour Code, Law No. 8 of 1996*, Section 75, 76; available from <http://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/docs/WEBTEXT/45676/65048/E96JOR01.htm#c1>.

²²⁸⁵ Government of Jordan, *Constitution of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan*, (1952), Chapter 2, Article 13; available from <http://www.mfa.gov.jo/uploads/const.pdf>.

²²⁸⁶ UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Periodic Reports of States Parties Due in 1998 (Addendum)*, September 17, 1999, para 160-162; available from [http://www.unhcr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/\(Symbol\)/a06f687951c4fc1080256846003b7763?Opendocument](http://www.unhcr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/(Symbol)/a06f687951c4fc1080256846003b7763?Opendocument). See also Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, "Jordan," in *Child Soldiers Global Report 2004*, London 2004; available from http://www.child-soldiers.org/document_get.php?id=957.

²²⁸⁷ Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, *The Use of Child Soldiers in the Middle East and North Africa Region*, prepared by Ibrahim Al-Marashi, pursuant to the Amman Conference on the Use of Children as Soldiers, April 8-10, 2001, 19; available from http://www.id.gov.jo/human/activities2000/middleeast_report.html.

²²⁸⁸ ILO Committee of Experts, *Direct Request CEACR comments on 182*.

²²⁸⁹ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Jordan," Section 5.

²²⁹⁰ ILO Committee of Experts, *Direct Request CEACR comments on 182*.

²²⁹¹ ILO-IPEC, *National Programme for the Prevention and Elimination of Child Labour in Jordan*, project document, Geneva, September 16, 2002, 20. See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Jordan," Section 6d.

inspect all registered establishments with more than five employees.²²⁹² The government, however, has provided little training on child labor, and inspectors generally try to remedy the situation through informal mechanisms, including referring some adult family members to job training programs.²²⁹³ According to the National Council for Family Affairs (NCFA) and the ILO Committee of Experts, current labor inspection mechanisms are inadequate in terms of their frequency, scope, outreach, and quality of reporting. Most working children work in establishments employing five workers or less, over which labor inspectors have no jurisdiction.²²⁹⁴

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

The National Agenda for the years 2006-2015, "The Jordan We Strive For," was passed in late 2006. It includes the elimination of the worst forms of child labor as a major goal.²²⁹⁵ The Ministry of Labor launched an aggressive media campaign in June 2006 to raise awareness of child labor issues to discourage the employment of minors.²²⁹⁶ The Jordanian National Plan of Action (NPA) for Children 2004-2013 was launched by King Abdullah II and Queen Rania in October 2004.²²⁹⁷ Among other goals, the NPA aims to eliminate the worst forms of child labor in Jordan by 2014 and to decrease the number of child laborers under 16 years.²²⁹⁸

USDOL is supporting a USD 1 million ILO-IPEC project to combat child labor in the urban services sector in Jordan, which is being undertaken with the cooperation of the Ministries of Labor, Education, and Social Development. The program aims to withdraw 3,000 and prevent an additional 500 potential workers from the worst forms of child labor over 5 years; mainstream them into non-formal and formal education programs; provide them with pre-vocational and vocational training; and support them with counseling, health care, and recreational activities.²²⁹⁹ Recognizing the link between the lack of education and child labor, the Ministry of Education (MOE) addresses child labor issues in its 2003-2015 Educational Development Plan.²³⁰⁰

²²⁹² U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Jordan," Section 6d. See ILO Committee of Experts, *Direct Request CEACR comments on 182*.

²²⁹³ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Jordan," Section 6d.

²²⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

²²⁹⁵ ILO-IPEC, *National Programme to Eliminate Child Labor in Jordan, technical progress report*, Geneva, August 11, 2006, p 2.

²²⁹⁶ Integrated Regional Information Networks, "Jordan: Government to Launch Awareness Campaign on Child Labor", IRINnews.org, [online], 2006 [cited November 3, 2006]; available from www.irinnews.org/report.asp?ReportID=53587&SelectRegion=Middle_East&Select...

²²⁹⁷ UNICEF, *Jordan Launches National Plan of Action for Children*, [online] October 25, 2004 [cited June 17, 2005]; available from http://www.unicef.org/media/media_23864.html.

²²⁹⁸ UNICEF, *The Jordanian National Plan of Action for Children (2004-2013)*, [online] [cited June 17, 2005]; available from http://www.unicef.org/jordan/resources_809.html.

²²⁹⁹ ILO-IPEC, *National Program in Jordan, project document*, 26-27.

²³⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 7.