

## Oman

### *Selected Statistics and Indicators on Child Labor*

Percent of children 5-14 estimated as working:	Unavailable
Minimum age for admission to work:	15 <sup>3204</sup>
Age to which education is compulsory:	Not compulsory <sup>3205</sup>
Free public education:	Yes <sup>3206</sup>
Gross primary enrollment rate in 2004:	87% <sup>3207</sup>
Net primary enrollment rate in 2004:	78% <sup>3208</sup>
Percent of children 5-14 attending school:	Unavailable
As of 2003, percent of primary school entrants likely to reach grade 5:	98% <sup>3209</sup>
Ratified Convention 138:	7/21/2005 <sup>3210</sup>
Ratified Convention 182:	6/11/2001 <sup>3211</sup>
ILO-IPEC participating country:	No <sup>3212</sup>

### Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

Children in Oman work in family businesses, as well as in informal occupations such as agriculture, fishing, cleaning, and delivering messages and other goods. Bedouin children participate in camel racing as part of their cultural heritage, but there are no substantiated reports of foreign children trafficked to work as camel jockeys or for other purposes. The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child does not consider the use of child camel jockeys, as practiced in Oman, an issue of concern.<sup>3213</sup>

It is difficult to ascertain whether any child prostitution, pornography, or trafficking exists in Oman, because of lack of data. The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child has noted that a large number of migrant workers enter Oman each year, thus increasing the likelihood that trafficked children may be among them. The Committee has recommended that the government conduct in-depth studies on the commercial sexual exploitation and trafficking of children.<sup>3214</sup>

<sup>3204</sup> Government of Oman, *Royal Decree No. 35/2003: Oman Labour Law*, (May 3, 2003).

<sup>3205</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Oman," 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/2006/78860.htm>.

<sup>3206</sup> U.S. Embassy- Muscat, *reporting*, December 20, 2006.

<sup>3207</sup> UNESCO Institute for Statistics, *Gross Enrolment Ratio. Primary. Total*, accessed December 20, 2006; available from <http://stats.uis.unesco.org/>.

<sup>3208</sup> UNESCO Institute for Statistics, *Net Enrolment Rate. Primary. Total*, accessed December 20, 2006; available from <http://stats.uis.unesco.org/>.

<sup>3209</sup> UNESCO Institute for Statistics, *Survival Rate to Grade 5. Total*, accessed December 18, 2006; available from <http://stats.uis.unesco.org/>.

<sup>3210</sup> ILO, *Ratifications by Country*, accessed October 19, 2006; available from <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/newcountryframeE.htm>.

<sup>3211</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3212</sup> ILO-IPEC, *IPEC Action Against Child Labour: Highlights 2006*, Geneva, October 2006, 29; available from [http://www.ilo.org/iloroot/docstore/ipecc/prod/eng/20061018\\_Implementationreport\\_eng.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/iloroot/docstore/ipecc/prod/eng/20061018_Implementationreport_eng.pdf).

<sup>3213</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Oman." See also UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Consideration of Reports Submitted Under Article 44 of the Convention: Periodic Reports of States Parties due in 2004: Oman*, Geneva, May 8, 2006, paras 493, 494, and 495; available from [http://www.unhcr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/898586b1dc7b4043c1256a450044f331/5f413fbfb9afc6c3c125720300480dc5/\\$FILE/G0641883.DOC](http://www.unhcr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/898586b1dc7b4043c1256a450044f331/5f413fbfb9afc6c3c125720300480dc5/$FILE/G0641883.DOC).

<sup>3214</sup> UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Consideration of Reports Submitted by States Parties Under Article 44 of the Convention: Concluding Observations: Oman*, CRC/C/OMN/CO/2, Geneva, September 29, 2006, 14, 15; available from [http://www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/docs/co/CRC\\_C\\_OMN\\_CO\\_2.pdf](http://www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/docs/co/CRC_C_OMN_CO_2.pdf). See also United Nations

## Child Labor Laws and Enforcement

The minimum age of employment in Oman is 15 years. Minors 15 to 18 years are permitted to work up to 6 hours per day, between the hours of 6 a.m. and 6 p.m., but they may not work overtime or work on holidays or rest days.<sup>3215</sup> Workplaces that employ minors are required to post certain items for display, including a copy of the provisions of the law regulating the employment of children; an updated log with the names of minors employed in the workplace with their ages and dates of employment; and a work schedule showing work hours, rest periods, and weekly holidays.<sup>3216</sup> In July 2006, a royal decree increased the maximum prison term from 1 week to 1 month for employers who repeatedly use child labor.<sup>3217</sup> The minimum legal age to work as a camel jockey is being increased gradually from 14 until it reaches 18 in 2009.<sup>3218</sup>

Forced labor by children is prohibited by law.<sup>3219</sup> The crime of inciting a minor under 18 years into prostitution is punishable by not less than 5 years of imprisonment.<sup>3220</sup> Child pornography is not explicitly outlawed, but the production, possession, or distribution of pornographic material is punishable by up to 1 year of imprisonment.<sup>3221</sup> There is no specific legal provision prohibiting trafficking in persons;<sup>3222</sup> however, the crime of enslaving a person carries a prison sentence of between 5 and 15 years.<sup>3223</sup> Similarly, the crimes of receiving, possessing, acquiring, maintaining, or causing a person to enter or exit Oman in a state of servitude or slavery are punishable by 3 to 5 years of imprisonment.<sup>3224</sup> It is illegal to engage a minor under age 18 in illicit activities such as drug production or trafficking, or any other activity linked with narcotic drugs; such offenses are punishable by the death penalty.<sup>3225</sup> The minimum age for voluntary military recruitment is 18.<sup>3226</sup>

The Ministry of Manpower (MOM) is responsible for the enforcement of child labor laws, and the U.S. Department of State reports that enforcement is generally sufficient. However, enforcement does not always extend to small family businesses, especially those engaged in

---

Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), *Trafficking in Persons: Global Patterns*, Vienna, 2006, 19-20; available from [http://www.unodc.org/pdf/traffickinginpersons\\_report\\_2006ver2.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/pdf/traffickinginpersons_report_2006ver2.pdf).

<sup>3215</sup> Government of Oman, *Oman Labour Law*, Articles 75-77.

<sup>3216</sup> *Ibid.*, Article 78.

<sup>3217</sup> U.S. Embassy- Muscat, *reporting*, November 7, 2006.

<sup>3218</sup> U.S. Embassy- Muscat, *reporting*, December 20, 2006.

<sup>3219</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Oman," Section 6d.

<sup>3220</sup> Government of Oman, *Penal Code*, Article 220; available from <http://www.interpol.int/public/Children/SexualAbuse/NationalLaws/csaOman.asp>.

<sup>3221</sup> *Ibid.*, Articles 34 and 224.

<sup>3222</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Oman," Section 5.

<sup>3223</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Oman (Tier 2 Watch List)," in *Trafficking in Persons Report- 2006: Oman*, Washington, DC, June 5, 2006; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2006/65989.htm>.

<sup>3224</sup> ILO Committee of Experts, *Direct Request, Worst Forms of Child Labor Convention, 1999 (No. 138), Oman (ratification: 2001)*, [online] 2004 [cited November 2, 2006]; available from <http://webfusion.ilo.org/public/db/standards/normes/appl/appl-displayAllComments.cfm?conv=C182&ctry=2790&hdroff=1&lang=EN>.

<sup>3225</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3226</sup> CIA, *World Factbook: Oman*, [online] May 17, 2005 [cited October 18, 2006]; available from <https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/fields/2024.html>.

agriculture and fishing.<sup>3227</sup> The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child has recommended that the Government of Oman strengthen its labor inspectorate in order to better monitor the extent of child labor in both the formal and informal sectors.<sup>3228</sup> In practice, most employers ask each prospective employee for a certificate indicating that he or she has completed basic education through grade 10. Considering that children usually begin their basic education at age 6, this means that workers, in most cases, will be age 16 when they begin work.<sup>3229</sup> Registration with the Omani Camel Racing Federation and submission of a passport, photograph, and birth certificate confirming compliance with minimum age laws is required of all persons seeking work as camel jockeys.<sup>3230</sup>

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

In March 2006, the Governments of Oman and Pakistan signed a memorandum of understanding to increase cooperation in combating organized crime and trafficking in persons.<sup>3231</sup> Oman has also entered into bilateral and multilateral agreements with Saudi Arabia, India, and the Arab Gulf Cooperation Council aimed at combating various forms of child sexual exploitation.<sup>3232</sup> The government operates a 24-hour hotline to allow citizens to report claims of labor abuses,<sup>3233</sup> including trafficking.<sup>3234</sup>

---

<sup>3227</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Oman," Section 6d.

<sup>3228</sup> UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Concluding Observations: Oman*, 14.

<sup>3229</sup> U.S. Embassy- Muscat, *reporting*, August 23, 2004.

<sup>3230</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Oman (Tier 2 Watch List)."

<sup>3231</sup> U.S. Department of State official, E-mail communication to USDOL official, March 14, 2006.

<sup>3232</sup> ILO Committee of Experts, *ILO Direct Request: Oman*.

<sup>3233</sup> US Embassy- Muscat official, E-mail communication USDOL official, July 25, 2007.

<sup>3234</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Oman," Section 5. See also U.S. Department of State, "Oman (Tier 2 Watch List)."