

# Media Update

11 June 2019

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## ILO

### World Day Against Child Labour

12 June 2019

The International Labour Organization (ILO) launched the World Day Against Child Labour in 2002 to focus attention on the global extent of child labour and the action and efforts needed to eliminate it. Each year on 12 June, the World Day brings together governments, employers and workers organizations, civil society, as well as millions of people from around the world to highlight the plight of child labourers and what can be done to help them.

**2019 theme:** Children shouldn't work in fields, but on dreams!

Children shouldn't work in fields, but on dreams. Yet today, 152 million children are still in child labour. Although child labour occurs in almost every sector, seven out of every ten is in agriculture.

In 2019, the International Labour Organization celebrates 100 years of advancing social justice and promoting decent work. The World Day Against Child Labour looks back on progress achieved over a 100 years of ILO support to countries on tackling child labour. Since its founding in 1919, the protection of children has been embedded in the ILO's Constitution (Preamble). One of the first Conventions adopted by the ILO was on Minimum Age in Industry (No. 5, 1919).

On this World Day, we also look forward towards UN Sustainable Development Goal Target 8.7 set by the international community calling for an end to child labour in all its forms by 2025. In support of Alliance 8.7, we call for immediate action to address the remaining challenges so that the world community can get firmly on track towards eliminating child labour. A newly released ILO report points the way with policy approaches and responses.



2019 also marks 20 years since the adoption of the ILO's Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182). With only a few countries still to ratify, this Convention is close to universal ratification. On this World Day we call for full ratification and implementation of Convention No. 182 and of the ILO's Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138). We also encourage ratification of the Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labour Convention, which protects both adults and children.

## Background:

## Child Labour

### Facts & Figures

- Worldwide 218 million children between 5 and 17 years are in employment.  
Among them, 152 million are victims of child labour; almost half of them, 73 million, work in hazardous child labour.
- In absolute terms, almost half of child labour (72.1 million) is to be found in Africa; 62.1 million in the Asia and the Pacific; 10.7 million in the Americas; 1.2 million in the Arab States and 5.5 million in Europe and Central Asia.
- In terms of prevalence, 1 in 5 children in Africa (19.6%) are in child labour, whilst prevalence in other regions is between 3% and 7%: 2.9% in the Arab States (1 in 35 children); 4.1% in Europe and Central Asia (1 in 25); 5.3% in the Americas (1 in 19) and 7.4% in Asia and the Pacific region (1 in 14).
- Almost half of all 152 million children victims of child labour are aged 5-11 years.  
42 million (28%) are 12-14 years old; and 37 million (24%) are 15-17 years old.
- Hazardous child labour is most prevalent among the 15-17 years old. Nevertheless up to a fourth of all hazardous child labour (19 million) is done by children less than 12 years old.
- Among 152 million children in child labour, 88 million are boys and 64 million are girls.
- 58% of all children in child labour and 62% of all children in hazardous work are boys. Boys appear to face a greater risk of child labour than girls, but this may also be a reflection of an under-reporting of girls' work, particularly in domestic child labour.

- Child labour is concentrated primarily in agriculture (71%), which includes fishing, forestry, livestock herding and aquaculture, and comprises both subsistence and commercial farming; 17% in Services; and 12% in the Industrial sector, including mining.

Today, throughout the world, around 218 million children work, many full-time. They do not go to school and have little or no time to play. Many do not receive proper nutrition or care. They are denied the chance to be children. More than half of them are exposed to the worst forms of child labour such as work in hazardous environments, slavery, or other forms of forced labour, illicit activities including drug trafficking and prostitution, as well as involvement in armed conflict.

Guided by the principles enshrined in ILO's Minimum Age Convention No. 138 and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention No. 182, the ILO Programme on Child Labour (IPEC) works to achieve the effective abolition of child labour.

**For more information:** <https://www.un.org/en/events/childlabourday/>

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