

Child Labour in Europe and Central Asia: Problem and Response

**International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour
International Labour Organization**



An Overview of Selected Countries



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Problem and Response

An Overview of Selected Countries

Working Paper
International Labour Office
International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC)

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Foreword

Many children from poor families in Eastern and Central Europe and the former Soviet Republics of Central Asia have become more vulnerable to child labour in the wake of transition to market economies and regional political crisis in the Balkan countries and in Central Asia. These countries are ready to initiate and support action to eliminate child labour as it is a serious concern for policymakers at both national and international levels. It is for this reason the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) continues to expand its programme activities.

With priority being given to capacity building of IPEC's partners and direct action, the focus has been on the plight of working street children, trafficked children, and child labour in agriculture. Broad-based country programmes are being implemented in Albania, Romania, and Ukraine. In Russia, the success of the St. Petersburg street children programme has gained public and political attention both nationally and in the international media. Research and policy advice have been provided to many more countries. IPEC is in the process of mobilising more resources to fund its activities in the region.

A comprehensive sub-regional programme on trafficking in children is being prepared for the Balkan Region and Ukraine. Regional programmes on the Worst Forms of Child Labour for South Eastern Europe as well as for the former Soviet Republics in Central Asia are currently being prepared.

This report addresses problems and initial responses regarding child labour in Eurasia. It is based primarily on IPEC experience and seeks to assist all those contributing to the elimination of child labour in this region. It makes it clear that regionally focussed approaches and targeted action are required for sustained changes. And it provides a platform for discussions that may lead to further strategy development.

I would like to express my appreciation to the author, Mr. James Martin, for his intensive work that was supervised by Mr. Klaus Guenther and Ms. Sule Caglar. I would also like to thank the many IPEC colleagues, both at headquarters and in the field, for their willingness and assistance, which contributed to the realisation of this Report.

It is my sincere wish that through this overview, attention would be brought to the critical situation of children in the region and further strategies be planned toward the eradication of the worst forms of child labour present in Eurasia.



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Geneva, January 2003

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Report Overview

This Report takes a closer look at child labour and the response of IPEC in Eurasia. For the purpose of this report, the term *Eurasia* or *Central and Eastern Europe* will include the following: Central Europe, Eastern Europe, South Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, the Newly Independent States, the Baltic States, the Commonwealth of Independent States, Central Asia, and the Balkans. (See Annex I) The IPEC programme in Turkey is also examined in terms of good practice and experience.

The Report was realised primarily through desk research as well as the author's own experience in the region. References are taken mainly from secondary sources and include programmes and projects from the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC). This report is not comprehensive, but seeks to serve as an introduction to facilitate further discussion. It must be recognised that the region is not homogenous and thus certain characteristics or trends may not specifically apply to each and every country.

Section 1: Introduction and Background

This section is an introduction to child labour, providing the reader with a basic knowledge of the subject. It briefly covers the differences between child labour and child work, as well as provides an introduction to what are considered the unconditional worst forms of child labour. In addition, a brief look is taken of issues surrounding child labour specific to the region such as transition, poverty, education, family, social values and consumerism. These issues are broad in nature and vary from country to country.

Section 2: Child Labour in Eurasia

Here, the nature of child labour is reviewed in the specific context of Eurasia. The causes of child labour in the region are examined and the principle trends are presented. This section is to provide an overview of current trends present in the region, though some trends are more prominent than others in certain areas. The trends covered include working street children, working children in agriculture, working Roma children, and the issue of trafficking.

Section 3: Response to Child Labour

Looking at multiple responses to child labour, this section focuses predominantly on the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) through the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and its approach for the prevention and progressive elimination of child labour. The explanations of these components draw on country specific examples taken from Eurasia in order to demonstrate the general response of IPEC.

Section 4: Conclusion and Recommendations

This section lists recommendations for future action against child labour in Eurasia. The topics of expansion, research, awareness-raising, regional coordination, ethnic minorities, education and capacity building are discussed. Recommendations given aim at serving as a springboard for further dialogue, to be built upon by concerned partners.

Executive Summary

The worst forms of child labour, unacceptable and intolerable, are not only present, but also increasing in Eurasia. Countries in the region are not prepared to deal with this phenomenon and thus the number of working children steadily rises. These unacceptable forms of child labour include slavery, debt-bondage, trafficking, sexual exploitation, the use of children in drug trading and armed conflict to name just a few.

The transition process, a commonality throughout the region, combined with the Balkan crisis has brought about great changes to the economic, political and social environment. These societies, formerly with well developed social service systems and secured access to education are suffering from economic hardships which have begun to undermine tradition and social custom and erode the familial safe-haven previously afforded children.

Though each of these countries differed greatly before the transition and are equally as different now, it is clear that almost all countries suffered an initial economic slump between 1990 and 1994. In general, poverty has begun to rise with over 57 million children living on less than \$4.30 per day. Poverty, causally with child labour, has initiated a vicious cycle without end.

With poverty increasing, children have been spending more time working to supplement family income and less time in the classroom. This is evident from decreasing enrolment rates and lower school attendance. Other factors aggravate the problem such as the poor quality of education, school fees and lack of transportation. Also, with increased divorce rates and the prominence of single-parent households, children are slipping deeper and deeper below the poverty line.

Child labour has certain trends in the region which include the following:

Working street children. Probably the most visible face of child labour, the activities of street children include vending food and small consumer goods, shining shoes, washing windshields, scavenging, loading and unloading of merchandise among many others. There are an estimated one million homeless children in the **Russian Federation** and an estimated 5,000 street children in the city of Bucharest, **Romania**.

Working children in agriculture. Approximately 70 percent of working children worldwide can be found in the agricultural sector. These children are involved in found mixing, loading, and applying pesticides, fertilizers, or herbicides, which are often extremely toxic. In **Romania**, over 70 percent of children working in agriculture are between the ages of 6 and 14.

Working Roma children. Children from marginalised groups, predominately ethnic minorities, have been found to be disproportionately involved in child labour. With more than 5 million Roma living in the region, they often find themselves on the fringe of society. The literacy rate among Roma is extremely low and children can be found begging or scavenging for aluminium cans, scrap metal, or other objects they can sell. Living conditions have lead to diseases such as dysentery or hepatitis.

Child Trafficking. One of the worst forms of child labour, trafficking in children is on the rise in the region. In particular, children in rural areas are trafficked to urban centres or

wealthier countries for exploitation. Trafficked children are often forced into domestic service, agriculture or construction, with a rise in the commercial sex industry. More than 8,000 Albanian girls have been trafficked for prostitution, of which 30 percent are under the age of 18.

Governments in Eurasia have recognised the problem of child labour, and with the help of IPEC, have begun to combat it. There have been 27 ratifications of ILO Convention No. 138 on the Minimum Age of Work and 19 ratifications of ILO Convention No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour. National Governments, in collaboration with IPEC and other partners, have taken steps toward concrete action in the prevention and elimination of child labour.

The IPEC programme - ILO's InFocus programme on child labour - strives not only on the prevention of child labour, but on the removal and rehabilitation of children involved in the worst forms as well. Through a combination of measures in cooperation with other partners, IPEC strives to withdraw children from exploitative work and to provide alternatives to them and their families. Strategies of the IPEC programme cover legislation and enforcement, capacity building, awareness-raising and direct action.

It is clear that child labour is growing rapidly in the region and the nature of child labour is such that it requires concerted efforts, carefully coordinated to ensure succinct, effectual action in eradicating child labour. Strategies to combat child labour are complex and require interventions on various levels. In conclusion, this report makes recommendations in the areas of programme expansion, research, awareness-raising, regional coordination, capacity building, minorities, and education aiming to serve as a springboard for further dialogue on actions against child labour in Eurasia.

Introduction and Background

Precious children, outcast and rejected...

Widespread incidence of child labour is an unfortunate reality in today's world. The exploitation of children in the form of slavery, debt bondage, trafficking, sexual exploitation, the use of children in the drug trade and in armed conflict, as well as hazardous work affects millions of children across the globe. Eradicating such exploitation clearly defined as Worst Forms of Child Labour is a high priority for the International Labour Organisation (ILO). This priority is demonstrated by the promotion of Convention No. 182 concerning the Prohibition and immediate action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour, 1999. In addition, combating all forms of child labour must remain in focus on the basis of ILO Convention No. 138 on the Minimum Age of Work.

What is child labour?

Children can be found at work in just about every society. Work can help to develop moral character, increase self-esteem and instil responsibility. Light work that is not detrimental to education, performed only a few hours a week, can be used as a tool to promote a child's development. Child Labour, however, impedes development and subjects the child to harm and intolerable risk.

Child Labour can be defined as "work carried out to the detriment and endangerment of the child, in violation of international law and legislation."¹ According to new estimates, there are approximately 246 million children, ranging from ages 5 to 14, involved in child labour. Of this number, approximately 171 million children were estimated to be involved in hazardous work and another 8.4 million involved in what are considered the unconditional worst forms of child labour.² These worst forms include slavery, trafficking of children, debt-bondage, children in armed conflict, prostitution, production or trafficking of drugs. Hazardous conditions for work may also affect the health, safety, or morals of a child. As these numbers reflect, the problem of child labour is not static, but rather, in constant evolution as socio-economic factors continue to change.

The faces of child labour are many, differing from region to region, country to country and community to community. Given the complex nature of child labour, it is important to look at the problem within a socio-economic context, through the lens of culture and tradition, in order to completely understand the trends of the phenomenon. A holistic understanding of child labour, including the knowledge of where the problem is rooted, is indispensable for developing sustainable methods for combating this unfortunate phenomenon. The following two sections talk about the general strategies to combat child labour as well as the regional context, which should be taken into account for a better understanding of the problem.

Socio-cultural context

Before the transition, children at work were generally a social norm within the region. Socialist countries, emphasising collective work, often encouraged children to participate in work, particularly in agriculture. Children would perform tasks such as cleaning streets and parks or participate in the harvest. Recognition was given in the form of awards to those children who were deemed most productive. Work however, did not interfere with the child's schooling as high importance was placed upon learning and access to education was secured. There were also legal provisions for the minimum age for work in many of these countries, but they were not universally respected.³

Most of these countries, now undergoing transition, have experienced a sharp rise in child labour. With poverty increasing and education having fallen to the wayside in the majority of these countries, children are sent to work out of what is viewed by most families as an economic necessity.

Transition

The transition process in Central and Eastern Europe, as well as the Balkan crisis have brought about much change in the economic, political and social environment. From societies with well developed social service infrastructures where access to education and healthcare were virtually universal, unemployment has begun to rise, the rate of poverty is increasing and the quality of life is on the decline in the majority of the region. Economic hardship has oftentimes undermined tradition and social custom, eroding the protection families used to provide. The UNICEF Regional Monitoring report marks rapid social and cultural changes in many of the countries, as a result of transition from centralised to free-market economies, to be a major contributor to the increase in child labour.⁴

Countries in the region, however, differed greatly from one another before transition and individual progresses during transition vary. It is clear that almost all countries did suffer from an initial slump between 1990 and 1994 due to transitioning markets. Between 1994 and 2000 however, some countries were able to recover and even progress, for example **Poland** and **Slovenia**.

GDP and employment in transition economies: Average annual growth rates (percentage) over selected years				
	GDP		Employment	
	1990-1994	1994-2000	1990-1994	1994-2000
Albania	-5.6	6.2	-5.0	-1.4
Armenia	-16.2	5.4	-2.2	-2.5
Azerbaijan	-17.0	3.7	-.05	0.3
Belarus	-7.8	3.3	-2.3	-0.9
Bulgaria	-3.9	-0.6	-5.7	-1.6
Croatia	-9.3	4.2	-6.3	0.5
Czech Republic	-2.6	1.8	-2.3	-1.0
Estonia	-8.8	5.0	-4.3	-2.1
Georgia	-27.5	5.2	-10.8	-6.9**
Hungary	-3.3	3.6	-7.2	0.4
Kazakhstan	-9.6	0.6	-4.2	-1.0
Kyrgyzstan	-14.4	3.6	-1.5	1.2
Latvia	-15.9	3.7	-6.3	-0.7
Lithuania	13.4	3.3	-2.5	-0.9
Macedonia	-5.5	2.2	-6.0	-3.9
Moldova (Republic of)	-20.5	-2.3	-5.1	-1.7
Poland	1.0	5.5	-2.9	0.9
Romania	-4.3	-0.2	-2.0	-3.4*
Russian Federation	-10.3	0.2	-2.3	-1.0
Slovakia	-5.2	4.5	-3.8	0.0
Slovenia	-1.7	4.3	-4.7	0.4
Tajikistan	-20.1	-2.1	-1.1	-1.0
Turkmenistan	-9.2	3.9	3.5	2.4
Ukraine	-14.1	-3.8	-2.4	-1.3
Uzbekistan	-4.9	3.1	1.3	1.2
Yugoslavia	-18.0	1.4	-2.8	-1.3
CSEE	-3.1	3.2	-4.0	-0.4*
Baltic States	-13.3	3.8	-4.1	-1.1
CIS	-11.1	0.1	-2.3	-1.1**

Source: Nesporova, Alena (2002) Why unemployment remains so high in Central and Eastern Europe. ILO: Geneva
Data from: UN/ECE Common Database

Turkey is also a country in transition, though the transition is not from a controlled market to an open one but rather from an agricultural to an industrial economy. Figures from the 1985 and 1990 censuses show that urbanisation was occurring at a rate of 62.6 and 43.1 per thousand respectively, while rural areas have shown a negative net population growth of 10.6 and 5.6 per 1,000 respectively. This process brings with it an unplanned migration from rural to urban areas contributing to a rise in child labour.

The transition has brought with it numerous psychological and sociological effects which have crippled society. The loss of secure employment, collapse of living standards and loss of income, accompanied by a prevailing sense of disgrace, confusion, and general marginalisation has set the stage for the emergence of child labour on a scale virtually

unknown to the region. Given the constant state of restructuring in many countries, neither the expertise nor the institutional capacity to deal with the issue is currently present.

Poverty

With chronic poverty generally on the rise in the region, it is clear that the most vulnerable are families with children. The presence of children in a family, as shown in Russia, significantly increases risks to poverty. Almost half of all children below the age of 16 were found to be living below the poverty line, comprising one-third of the poor.⁵ This is especially true when referring to both single-parent households and marginalised groups. The number of children living in impoverished families have increased drastically as real incomes have fallen, deepening social inequality. The end of the 1990's estimated almost 18 million children in the region living on less than \$2.15 per day.

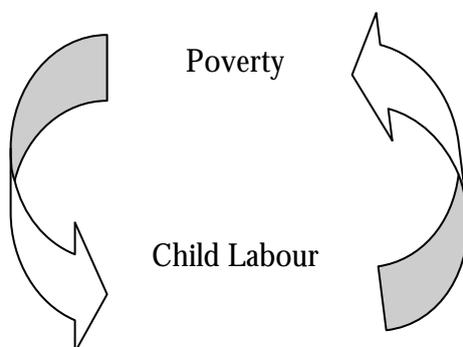
Estimated number of children 0-17 in absolute poverty, end of the 1990's		
	Living on under \$2.15 per day (1,000s)	Living on under \$4.30 per day (1,000s)
Central Europe	330	4,040
Former Yugoslavia	500	2,390
South-Eastern Europe	940	5,730
Baltic States	110	730
Western CIS	9,190	26,800
Caucasus	1,750	4,330
Central Asia	5,000	13,720
Total	17,820	57,730
Sources: (2000) Making Transition Work for Everyone, Washington, DC: World Bank		

Poverty has numerous affects on children. Those who grow up in poverty are “more likely to have learning difficulties, to drop out of school, to resort to drugs, to commit crime, to become pregnant at an early age and to live lives that perpetuate poverty and disadvantage to succeeding generations.”⁶ These children, as a means of survival oftentimes resort to or are forced into hazardous work.

Turkey, though not affected by the type of transition spoken about with regard to Central and Eastern Europe, has faced accelerated migration leading to increased population density and resulting in difficulty delivering social services such as health, education, housing and employment assistance. This accelerated migration leads to increasing poverty in urban areas. “Families arriving in urban centres are absorbed into unstructured communities of recent immigrants outside the influence of existing social structures. The difficulty of finding work outside the unskilled, informal sector results in typically low-income levels for these families who are often living well below the poverty line. In this scenario, children in these families become essential contributors to family income.”⁷

The inextricable link between child labour and poverty creates a negative socioeconomic trend. As stated before, it is clear that poverty lends to the proliferation of child labour.

Instances of child labour, however, perpetuate intergenerational poverty. Poverty provokes child labour which in turn promotes poverty and so on, creating an endless cycle. A child is twice as likely to work if their parents themselves were child labourers. Also, parents who were once child labourers tend not to place high value on education, thus choosing to send their children to work over school.⁸



Education

A major contributor to child labour is the fact that education is either not valued (especially among ethnic minorities such as the Roma), adequate, or accessible in many places for various reasons (though this is not typical of all countries in the region). Social stratification also plays a deciding role in whether or not a child will attend school. The upper strata tend to have a higher involvement in education whereas children from poorer backgrounds usually lack proper access to education. Studies have shown that there is a strong correlation between enrolment rates in education and instances of child labour. Increasing enrolment rates can be used as a proxy to measure progress in the fight against child labour. The reverse, decreasing enrolment rates can therefore potentially signal an increase in child labour.

Education, formerly considered a strength in the region, has declined on average. For economic reasons many schools have had to close. Those which remained open have faced shortages in fuel for heating, salaries for teachers, and money for textbooks. This is especially true in conflict areas. With poverty increasing, children have been spending more time working to supplement family income and less time in the classroom. This is visible by the ever decreasing enrolment rates and low attendance.

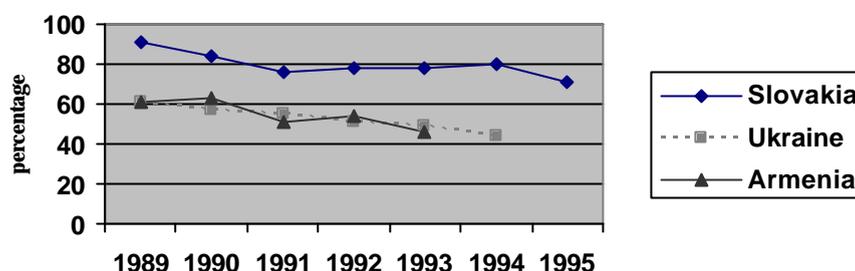
Primary education in Bosnia and Herzegovina			
School Year	# of schools	# of students	# of teachers
1965/66	2,696	597,256	12,856
1970/71	2,714	644,497	21,798
1980/81	2,462	625,619	23,053
1990/91	2,205	539,875	23,369
1993/94	285	199,689	7,238

Source: UNICEF, A Situation Analysis: Children and Women in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1994

In **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, for example, the numbers of schools, students, and teachers drastically declined. This is especially true from 1993-1994 when the number of schools dropped 87 percent, the number of students dropped 63 percent and the number of teachers dropped 69 percent in a matter of two years. Also in **Armenia, Slovakia** and **Ukraine**, kindergarten enrolment, which is an educational requirement, has been on the

decline. (Some countries, however, do not require kindergarten enrolment, but rather children are taught at home by parents and enrol directly in the first grade.)

Kindergarten enrolment rates in Armenia, Slovakia, and Ukraine, 1989-1995



Enrolment rates and class attendance are also affected by other factors such as the poor quality of education, lack of transportation, opportunity cost of sending children to school and the like. These factors play an important role in determining child labour by influencing the parental decision to send their children to school or send them to work.

School Attendance, Child Labour, and Parental Responsibility

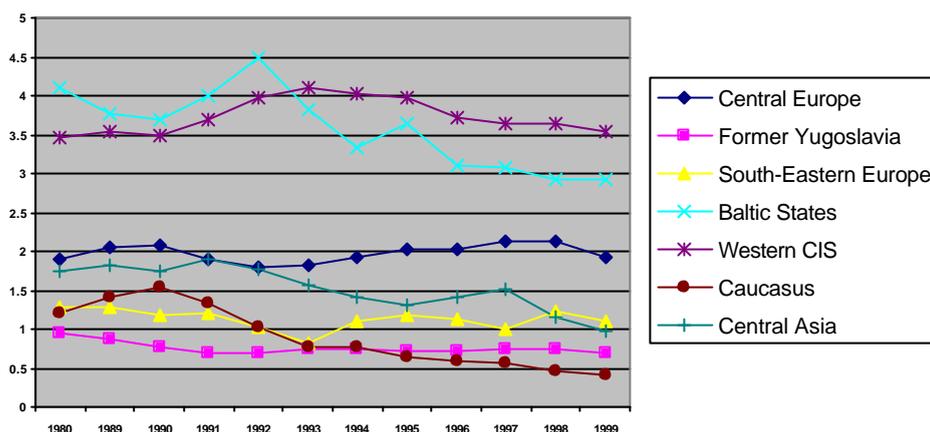
“Schooling problems also contribute to child labour. Many times children seek employment simply because there is no access to schools (distance, no school at all). When there is access, the low quality of the education often makes attendance a waste of time for the students. Schools in many developing areas suffer from problems such as overcrowding, inadequate sanitation and apathetic teachers. As a result, parents may find no use in sending their children to school when they could be home learning a skill (for example, agriculture) and supplementing family income. Because parents have so much control over their children, their perception of the value of school is a main determinant of the child’s attendance. Parents who are educated understand the importance of schooling from personal experience. As a result, parental education plays a large role in determining child schooling and employment. School Attendance by a child is also highly correlated with family income. Therefore, when children drop out of school it is not necessarily because of irresponsible parenting; it may be due to the family’s financial situation. When these children leave school, they become potential workers.”⁹

The prevention of child labour is one of the main objectives in the fight against child labour. For that reason, prevention of child labour through the provision of education is undoubtedly a key strategy for the region.

Family

With rapidly changing social and economic structures and poverty clearly on the rise, the traditional family unit has begun to breakdown. Divorce rates in the region increased on average between 1989 and 1994, resulting in more and more single parent households with lower incomes. This breakdown of the traditional family structures, resulting from many factors, has led to an increase of children on the streets.¹⁰

Divorce rate (per thousand) 1980-1999



Source : Author's calculations of average divorce rates taken from MONEE Report No.8¹¹

In **Romania**, for example, the relationship between children and their families is a significant factor affecting working children. A study has shown that a number of working children interviewed did not know their parents. In 25 of the 32 cases interviewed, children's relations with their family were weak and were often subjected to parental violence. Children from these types of households are more likely to become involved in the worst forms of child labour.¹²

In an IPEC study¹³ carried out in the Leningrad Region of the **Russian Federation**, the family was seen as a principle factor for driving children to the street. This is especially true for children with families that deviate from the traditional nuclear two-parent households. For example, of the girls involved in prostitution, 74.3 percent came from either single-parent families or live with a step-parent. The same is true for children involved in criminal activities where 66.7 percent of children come from non-traditional families.

Attitudes, Social Values and Consumerism

Attitudes and social structures are equally as relevant as economic factors in determining child labour. Children's work, especially in **Turkey**, is often viewed as an important part of the socialisation process for transitioning into adult roles. For example, the urban population of Sinop (**Turkey**) considers the renting of children as a traditional pattern of behaviour in the villages. This lack of awareness reinforces existing socio-cultural beliefs and traditional practices. Although the local government has adopted policies and

developed activities to address the issue of child labour, social acceptance of the problem has prevented these from being fully successful.

Social values also play an important role. In another area of **Turkey**, children perceive leaving their villages to earn money as an important event in their lives. Boys feel that by carrying out seasonal work they are contributing to family income which gives them a sense of importance. Leaving the village is a ritual deeply engrained in the local cultural ideology, which the boys perceive as a first step on their road to manhood. This attitude has existed in the area for years and has been reinforced by the poverty that leads to the perception of child labour as a necessity.

Consumerism is also on the rise within the region, provoking child labour much less visibly. In an ILO report on child labour in **Russia**, it is clear that children, regardless of age, were attracted to discos, cinemas, cosmetics, alcohol and other current trends. With older children especially, there is a need for social approval that is sought through having expensive clothes, shoes, and other consumer products, which they feel will make them more popular.¹⁴ The demand for consumer goods, which serve as a status symbol especially for marginalised groups, can push children into various forms of child labour, including prostitution in order to attain these items.¹⁵

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Child labour in Eurasia

...without hope, love, or happiness...

Child Labour in Central and Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Republics, and Central Asia is on the rise. This section will cover the following trends of child labour in the region: working street children, working children in agriculture, child trafficking, and working Roma children. These areas appear to be the most prominent instances of child labour in the region. Child Labour, however, is not static but is constantly changing. Children's involvement in the work force changes according to numerous variables such as school participation for example (school year vs. summer vacation). Other examples which could determine the type and intensity of work might be immediate cash needs, seasonal work, economic opportunity, etc.

Working Street Children

Children at work on the streets of cities worldwide could be considered the most visible face of child labour. Their activities range from tasks such as vending food and small consumer goods, shining shoes, washing windshields, scavenging, rag picking, begging, loading and unloading merchandise, among others. In the streets, children face numerous hazards such as traffic, exhaust fumes, overexposure, harassment, and extreme violence.

Since the 1990's, working street children have been increasingly recognised as a particularly vulnerable group, especially in large urban areas. Research conducted targeting the problems of working street children in the region identified a sharp increase in their numbers.¹⁶ For example, a fact-finding mission to **Albania** reported the number of children on the streets of Tirana to have tripled over the course of the last few years.¹⁷ These children are involved primarily in prostitution, drug-trafficking, begging, peddling, construction work and street work.¹⁸ Similar results underlining the problem can be seen in a study done by Gallup International and Save the Children with the support of IPEC in **Romania**, reporting an estimated 5,000 children working on the streets of the capital city of Bucharest.¹⁹ Working street children is an alarming issue in the **Russian Federation** as well. There are an estimated one million homeless children in the

Federation, of which the streets of Moscow are home to more than 60,000 children. There are also an estimated 10,000 to 16,000 street children in the city of St. Petersburg.²⁰

Working street children can often be divided into three groups. Each group has slightly different needs and hence may require different types of interventions.²¹

- The first group consists of children who spend their days roaming the streets without their parents' knowledge. These children, frequently absent from school, involve themselves in child labour to attain money for personal use. These children, in the street during the day, have contact with their families and sleep at home.
- The second group of street children work to contribute to their family's income. These children maintain close ties to their parents, working on the streets during the day and sleeping at home during the night.
- The third group are those children who live on the street by day and by night. They do not attend school nor do they have much or any contact with their families. Parents are usually unknown, deceased, or abusive. These children, having no other place to go, have been taken in by the streets.

Street children are among the most vulnerable in society and their natural development is adversely affected by their situation. A child's development is a combination of delicately interwoven physical, psychosocial and cognitive stages. Impairment at one stage of their development will consequently lead to problems in other stages.

Work deprives children from the time and opportunity needed to pass through the most critical developmental stages of life. The psychological side-effects of street work include trauma, low self-esteem, emotional disorders, and depression, as well as rob the child of moral and spiritual values. These children are also at higher risk to addictive behaviours such as alcohol and substance abuse, particularly chemical inhalants such as solvents, adhesives, and paints.²³

Homeless Children

“There are approximately 2,000 homeless children in **Romania**. Many of them are forced to accept money for sex to survive. AIDS is an increasing problem.”²²

Street work also has gender implications. Most children on the streets are boys. A Save the Children study in **Romania** showed that 71.5 percent of working street children are male and 28.5 percent are female. Similarly, surveys of working street children in Moscow and St. Petersburg, **Russian Federation** show that 75 percent of boys and 25 percent of girls are involved in street work. Girls, however, have been more commonly (though not exclusively) involved in prostitution. In **Albania**, out of the 22 percent of children found to work for themselves, more than 75 percent were boys.²⁴ In St. Petersburg, girls represented 88 percent of the children involved in prostitution. Boys, on the other hand, have a higher involvement in the distribution of drugs.

In **Turkey**, the difference between girls and boys involvement in street work can be explained culturally. Both parents and children traditionally believe that it is unacceptable for girls to work on the street, and rather, should spend that time in the home. This is particularly true after the age of 12, which is considered the critical age to assume socially assigned gender roles. The social norm seems to provide limited

protection for girls in terms of working on the street, but may negatively affect their consequent participation in the education system.²⁵

Working Children in Agriculture

It has been shown that 70 percent of working children worldwide can be found in the agricultural sector. Of these children, the majority can be found working on small to medium size family farms. In an IPEC baseline survey of rural child labour in **Romania**, over 70 percent of the children involved in rural labour were between the ages of 6 and 14. Daily activities included cleaning the house, cooking, feeding the animals, milking cows, chopping wood, cleaning the stables, chicken coops and pigsty, as well as taking care of younger siblings. 64 percent of these children stated that they worked for a local employer and 63 percent of children said that their parents did not let them go to school because they needed the money they earned.²⁶

Children working in agriculture face many hazards, namely exposure to biological and chemical agents. Children can be found mixing, loading and applying pesticides, fertilizers or herbicides, some of which are highly toxic and potentially carcinogenic. Pesticide exposure poses a considerably higher risk to children than to adults and has been linked to an increased risk of cancer, neuropathy, neurobehavioral effects and immune system abnormalities.

A dramatic increase in agricultural child labour is evident in many transition countries. Much of this can be contributed to the break-up of collective farms into smaller family-owned plots. These small farms increase the need for unpaid labour, involving children within the family unit or even children within the village. In an IPEC study carried out in **Bulgaria**²⁷, children working unpaid on family farms are five times more numerous than remunerated child labourers.

The opposite can be said, however, for children living in the **Russian Federation**. It appears that children's work in agriculture has actually decreased since the Soviet period given that forced involvement of children in harvesting crops on the collective farms has been stopped.

Twelve year old in Tajikistan

"I get up at 5:30 a.m. and go with my mother to milk the goats. We come back and make breakfast for the younger children and my father. I then prepare lunch to take to school. We used to have a canteen at school [where] we could get a hot meal, but now we usually take some bread and maybe in summer a piece of cucumber from the plot. At 7:30 a.m. I leave the house to walk to school, which is five kilometres away. I used to catch the bus, but now we cannot afford the fare – and in any case, it often doesn't come. I get home from school mid-afternoon and help prepare the meal or do the laundry. After tea I milk the goats again, clean the kitchen and go to bed. I want to be an engineer, but I'll probably have to leave school soon and help on the farm."²⁸

It is also shown that children in rural areas are of higher risk to poverty than those in urban areas. In Central and Eastern Europe, rural households are 50 percent more likely to be poor. Children in rural areas also face other challenges, for example, the distance

they must travel to school is greater than that of urban areas not to mention they normally travel by foot without adequate clothing. Also, homes in rural areas still burn wood, coal, or oil in a stove for heating, the soot of which contributes to respiratory problems in children. In **Romania** for example, 91 percent of rural homes are heated in this manner as compared to only 18 percent of urban homes. Child labour, combined with these and other hazards associated with rural areas in this region, create a particularly dangerous environment for children.

Working Roma Children

Children from marginalised groups, predominately ethnic minorities, have been found to be disproportionately involved in street work. In Eurasia, one of the most predominant and most discriminated minorities are the Roma. There are more than twelve million Roma located in many countries around the world. There is no way to obtain an exact number since they are not recorded on most official census counts. The Roma are a distinct ethnic minority whose origins began on the Indian subcontinent over one thousand years ago. No one knows for certain why the original Roma began their great wandering from India to Europe and beyond, but they have dispersed worldwide despite persecution and oppression through the centuries.



In Europe, Roma were either kept in slavery in the Balkans (in the territory that is today **Romania**), or else were able to move up into the rest of the continent, reaching every northern and western country by about the year 1500 A.D. Over the course of time, as a result of having interacted with various European populations, and being fragmented into widely-separated groups, Roma have emerged as a collection of distinct ethnic groups within the larger whole.²⁹

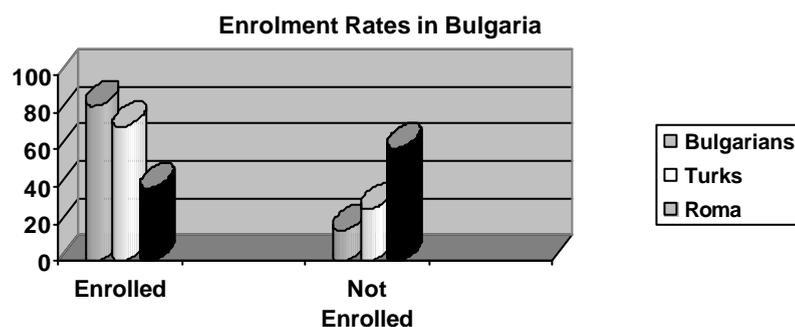
Estimates of Roma Populations in Selected Central and Eastern European Nations		
States	Independent Estimates	Official Estimates
Bulgaria	500,000 – 800,000	600,000
Czech Republic	150,000 – 300,000	32,903
Hungary	550,000 – 800,000	400,000
Macedonia	110,000 – 260,000	43,707
Romania	1,410,000 – 2,500,000	430,000
Slovakia	458,000 – 520,000	260,000
Former Yugoslavia	400,000 – 600,000	138,645
Total Estimates:	3,578,000 – 5,780,000	1,905,255

Source: Open Society Institute (2000) Research on selected Roma education Programs In Central and Eastern Europe: Final Report <http://www.osi.hu/iep/equity/rep.html> (accessed 20 Nov. 2002)

The Roma have been intensely discriminated against throughout Europe. Their transitory culture often places them outside of society. With no permanent address, identity card, and sometimes without even a birth certificate, this population does not have proper access to education or social protection. With traditionally low literacy rates, proper employment is virtually impossible to find³⁰. Roma in **Albania**, for instance, have relatively lower incomes, literacy rates, and access to social services and healthcare as compared to the population as a whole.³¹ They seek jobs which are usually paid by the day such as harvesting crops or collecting scrap metal in horse-drawn carts which they then sell. Given their grave circumstances, some Roma have been increasingly known to sell certain drugs such as heroine.

Roma families tend to be very large, sometimes with as many as ten children or more. In the cities, Roma parents often put their children on the streets to beg, staying nearby to collect the child's earnings. The children are often forced to cry or left intentionally in dirty rags, carrying their infant siblings to provoke the pity of passer-bys. In Tirana (**Albania**), like other places, many young children are left all day in the hot sun without food, water or sanitation. Their hygiene is very poor and often they suffer from diseases such as dysentery or hepatitis. You can also find these children scavenging for aluminium cans, scrap metals, and other small objects which they can sell. Their major function is to be used by their parents for financial gain.³²

According to the Research Institute for the Quality of Life - **Romania**, there is a visible decrease in the number of Roma children attending school. This decrease is more pronounced as the level of education increases. The cost for maintaining a child in school is usually too high for Roma families and many do not graduate the compulsory eight years of education. School drop-out rates are increasing and families are thus losing the monthly allocation granted to parents on the basis of their child's attendance.³³ This leaves no other alternative but to send their children to work. The same is also true in **Bulgaria** as seen in the chart below:



Source : IPEC (2002) "Problems of Child Labour in Condition of Transition in Bulgaria" ILO: Geneva

According to the National Human Development Report, poverty is most widely spread among large families, more specifically, families with many children. 80 percent of families with four or more children live in poverty. With the link between poverty and child labour firmly established, and given the size of the average Roma family, children who belong to these families are especially vulnerable to becoming child labourers.³⁴

Roma Housing Conditions

On a surface of approximately 10,000 square meters, in the proximity of the industrial zone outside a refuse area, Roma families have built small huts, improvised from different materials collected from the dump. The huts cannot be connected to utilities such as electricity, gas, running water, etc. The number of persons inhabiting a single hut is quite high, having between 5 and 9 members, usually spanning three or four generations.

During the cold season, heating is provided by burning materials collected from the dump. Most of the time these are plastic bottles which produce extremely toxic fumes when burned. The danger of starting fires is also a reality, as many of the fires are left unattended.

Source: ILO-IPEC, ECOSOC: Report on socio-cultural and psychological characteristics and living circumstances of Roma working (street children) and their families)

The Roma girl-child is particularly vulnerable. They are overrepresented in prostitution and other forms of sexual exploitation. Roma families, having many children, tend to marry the girl-child off at an early age. Girls are typically married from the age of 14 and often have 6 or 7 children by the time they reach their early twenties. Contraception is not something they are informed about so they run higher risks of unwanted pregnancies and contracting sexually transmitted diseases.

Child Trafficking

The UN Convention on Trans-national Crime (The Palermo Convention) adopted by the UN General Assembly of 15 November 2000 defines trafficking as *“the recruitment, transportation, harbouring or receipt of persons either by threat or use of kidnapping, force, fraud, deception or coercion or by the giving or receiving of unlawful payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person for the purposes of sexual exploitation or forced labour”*

Trafficking involves the removal of the person from one location and subsequently moved to another for the purpose of exploitation. Trafficking in children, one of the worst forms of child labour is on the rise in Central and Eastern Europe. In particular, children in rural areas are trafficked to urban centres or wealthier countries for exploitation. Trafficked children are often forced into domestic service, agriculture, construction, and begging. The commercial sex industry, however, is one of the more rapidly growing sectors. Women and youth from the **Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Russia**, and the **Ukraine** are among the largest groups trafficked into the European Union³⁵ for various activities.

Trafficking in Albania and Romania

“More than 8,000 Albanian girls are prostituted in Italy, and more than 30% of them are under 18 years...”³⁶

*“Homeless children have increasingly been trafficked under false pretences and forced into prostitution in Berlin and Hamburg, **Germany** and Amsterdam, **Holland**.”¹*

Children commonly become victims of trafficking by force, coercion, or deception. They face exploitation and abuse often including beatings, sexual violence, threats to the child and/or family, as well as the administration of drugs. Within the region children are generally either “pushed” or “pulled” into trafficking. In Central Asia and the CIS, children are trafficked as a result of the “push” of poverty with little or no economic opportunity left in the country. Children are often trafficked for use in service industries, the entertainment sector, sex trade and pornography. In Eastern Europe however, children are trafficked as result of the “pull” of unmet demand for cheap labour and commercial sex. Children are often trafficked for unskilled labour, commercial sex, the entertainment sector, and begging.³⁷

Children who are trafficked are particularly vulnerable. Aside from the trauma of being taken from their parents, they are faced with the status of illegal immigrant in a foreign place. Oftentimes they do not even understand the language, a barrier to escaping or finding some sort of help. Their isolation renders them unable to refuse what is demanded of them for fear that they may be punished, arrested, or deported. These children often work long hours combined with lifting heavy loads, exposure to dangerous substances, excessive violence and/or sexual abuse which have severe consequences on the child’s physical and mental health.

Lyubov, age 17

“...a man in Lyubov’s hometown told her he could get her a plane ticket, a visa, and a job abroad. She entered Israel with a tour group and was met by a hotel owner who gave her a job as a cleaner in exchange for a room. One day he told her to get out of his car and get into another. Then he drove away. ‘At first I didn’t know I had been sold. Then my owner told me he had bought me for \$9,000,’ Lyubov said in an interview in a prison office, waiting for expulsion as an illegal worker.

Lyubov’s ‘owner’ kept her and eight other women in two apartments. He never paid any of them but instead they were indebted to him for their plane tickets and every expense incurred, from doctor’s visits to haircuts. Transported to clients by drivers and often under guard, Lyubov had sex with an average of six men a day for about \$75 an hour. All she could keep were tips, working around the clock, seven days a week.

She said the circumstances made it hard for her to quit. ‘I came into this circle and it was very hard to get out. My papers were fake, I had no money, I had no acquaintances and I was in an enclosed place.’ she said. The nearest police station was right across the road, though she never went there, inhibited by the double bind of fear of her owner and fear of deportation.”³⁸

The **Republic of Moldova, Romania, and Ukraine** are major sources of trafficked girls and women. They are brought from Eastern Europe to **Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo or Albania** and sold into local networks to be trafficked to Western Europe for prostitution. **Albania**, for example, serves not only as a point of origin for trafficking to neighbouring countries such as **Greece and Italy**, but also as a point of transit for children trafficked to Albania from countries such as the **Republic of Moldova, Romania, and Ukraine**. Other transition countries, **Kyrgyzstan and Mongolia** for example, have become targets of international trafficking rings that move girls through the **Russian Federation** to Western Europe and through **China** to **Japan** or **Australia**.

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ILO Response to Child Labour

... yearning for appreciation, compassion, and acceptance...

What is the best response to child labour in Eurasia? Should actions focus on improving and enforcing child labour laws, on promoting compulsory education, or both? Too often the problem of child labour is confronted in a piecemeal and scattered fashion, as a series of separate issues rather than as a whole. It cannot be repeated enough that child labour needs to be tackled in a multi-pronged fashion on all fronts: economic, educational, social and cultural”³⁹. There are still many factors within the regional, national, and local contexts which require more observation when designing a response to child labour. For that reason, IPEC has cooperated with various partners including individual Governments, the European Union, UNICEF, the World Bank and others in effort to eradicate the problem of child labour.

Governments in Eurasia have recognised the problem of child labour in their countries and agree that action must be taken to combat it. This is evident in the 27 ratifications of ILO Convention No. 138 and the 19 ratifications of ILO Convention No. 182 in the region. (See ratification table: Annex II). There has also been an overwhelming request from governments for IPEC assistance in developing national strategies to combat child labour. IPEC has responded with country-based programmes in three countries, a time-bound programme in one country with more in the preparatory stages, and projects in several countries across the region. National governments, in collaboration with IPEC, have initiated and completed numerous studies to determine the extent and nature of the problem of child labour locally.

The European Union (EU) is also a strategic partner in the fight against child labour, especially in Central and Eastern Europe. The European Commission has stated that it is “fully committed to stamping out the abuse and exploitation of children in developing countries... [and] has taken obvious legal steps to formally ban child labour, to establish a minimum age of employment of 15 years and to set specific rules to protect the health and safety of 15 to 18 year olds.”⁴⁰ The EU has also initiated programmes within Eastern Europe and the Balkans, programmes such as STOP and DAPHNE which provide financial support to combating issues like trafficking and exploitation.

The Stability Pact

On June 10th 1999, at the EU's initiative, the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe was adopted in Cologne. In the founding document, more than 40 partner countries and organisations undertook the strengthening of the countries of South Eastern Europe in their efforts to foster peace, democracy, respect for human rights and economic prosperity in order to achieve stability in the whole region.

The Stability Pact is based on key experiences and lessons from worldwide international crisis management. Conflict prevention and peace building can be successful only if they in parallel in three key sectors: the creation of a secure environment, the promotion of sustainable democratic systems, and the promotion of economic and social well-being. Only if there is progress in all three sectors can a self-sustaining process of peace to be achieved.⁴¹

Task Force on Trafficking in Human Beings⁴²

The growing importance of the problem, particularly in the Balkans, but also in many other OSCE participating States, and the tragic consequences of the phenomenon for thousands of vulnerable persons - especially women and children, led to the decision - at the Inaugural Meeting of the Stability Pact Working Table 3 in Oslo on 13/14 October 1999 - to make trafficking issues one of the priorities within the OSCE and the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe and to the establishment of the TF on Trafficking in Human Beings in June 2000 (Inaugural Meeting: 18 September 2000 in Vienna).

One of the main objectives of the SPTF is to enhance and further strengthen regional co-operation among the various anti-trafficking actors in the Balkan region and beyond, among the International Organisations active in the region and among the governments of the countries in the region.

It aims to assist key actors in South Eastern Europe to better address human trafficking and associated human rights abuses by agreeing on priority areas of concern (awareness raising, training and capacity building, law enforcement co-operation, victim assistance and protection, return and reintegration assistance, relevant legislative reform, prevention) and by co-operating on anti-trafficking activities in the field.

It acts as a clearing house, fostering co-ordination among the relevant actors and providing necessary information, assisting in the effort to strengthen regional co-operation among governments, International Organisations and NGOs.

The focus of its anti-trafficking strategy is on concrete joint action involving all sectors and all actors whose intervention is necessary to counter the activities of traffickers and to assist the victims, and addressing the issue in a comprehensive, forward-looking, innovative and collaborative way.

Among other issues, the SPTF is now focusing on the specific issue of trafficking in children to ensure it is rightly addressed by the governments. In this perspective, a position paper and recommendations on child trafficking is currently being drafted by experts from ILO-IPEC/UNICEF and Save the Children. The paper should be presented at the Regional Ministerial Forum on 11 December 2002.

Joint efforts to combat child labour are important as well, facilitating the sharing of information between major agencies concerned with the issue. To address this, the inter-agency research cooperation project: *Developing New Strategies for Understanding Children's Work and Its Impact*⁴³ was established. The project demonstrates cooperation between the International Labour Organisation, UNICEF, and the World Bank and seeks to minimise duplication of action against child labour, identify information gaps and improve child labour research.

The IPEC Programme

The IPEC programme focuses on the prevention of child labour as well as the removal and rehabilitation of children involved in the worst forms. This is achieved through the simultaneous implementation of short, medium, and long term measures, taking into account the specific context within the country. These measures, reviewed further on, put forth a concerted effort within society to prevent child labour, withdraw children from exploitative work, and provide alternatives to them and their families.

IPEC at a glance

The ILO's technical InFocus programme on child labour – IPEC – works toward the elimination of child labour by strengthening national capacities to address child labour problems, and by contributing to the worldwide movement to combat them.

The priority target groups are bonded child labourers, children in hazardous working conditions and occupations, and children who are particularly vulnerable, that is, very young working children (below 12 years of age) and working girls.

The political will and commitment of individual governments to address child labour in cooperation with employer's and worker's organisations, other NGOs and relevant parties in society such as universities and the media, are the starting points for all IPEC action. Sustainability is built in from the start through an emphasis on in-country "ownership". Support is given to partner organisations to develop and implement measures which aim at preventing child labour, withdrawing children from hazardous work and providing alternatives to them and their families.

Since its inception in 1992, the Programme has expanded tremendously. A total of 37 governments have signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the ILO committing themselves to the elimination of child labour. Preparatory activities are being carried out in 31 more countries and IPEC is supported by 26 donor agencies.

With ten years of experience, IPEC has developed a comprehensive body of knowledge on the magnitude and characteristics of child labour as well as the strategies to combat the problem. The IPEC programmes, utilising a hands-on approach, has contributed to the prevention, removal and rehabilitation of hundreds of thousands of children from harmful work. At the same time, IPEC has also sought to develop the most appropriate and cost-effective measures in achieving these objectives.

Direct action programmes and projects, primary components of the IPEC programme, aim at the withdrawal and rehabilitation of selected groups of children from the labour market. However, for the sustainable eradication of child labour, IPEC also aims toward its' prevention concurrently. This is done by ensuring that the development process includes both actions and policies to deter and prevent the supply of and demand for child labour. Therefore, IPEC places the concern for child labour into the broader framework of a country's development, following a sustainable and comprehensive approach in combating the issue.⁴⁴

IPEC experience has also demonstrated that child labour cannot be eliminated with any sustainability without effectively addressing both the lack of accessible, quality education as well as the absence of jobs or other sufficient income for the parents. In response, IPEC underlines the need for its' programmes to be more closely integrated with efforts to improve employment and income generation, gender equality, and skills development. IPEC also encourages member States to accumulate their own experience and expertise, making use of the collective knowledge of ILO constituents and other partners in dealing with the problem of child labour.

The IPEC programme relies primarily on two international conventions as the premise for interventions against child labour. The Minimum Age Convention No. 138 (1973) and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention No. 182 (1999), put forth by the International Labour Organization, provide the framework for action against child labour. The ratification of these conventions by a country is one of the first steps in the fight against child labour. These conventions, with their respective recommendations, set the framework for the establishment of an IPEC Country Programme. (see annex III for other conventions) This national level programme, established by the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the host country and IPEC, jointly put into fruition actions for the prevention and progressive elimination of child labour.

**"Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention (No.182)
and Recommendation (No.190)" on 17 June 1999.**

(C.182/R.190) cover all girls and boys under the age of 18, and call for "immediate and effective measures to secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour as a matter of urgency." The immediacy of the means has been emphasized.

The worst forms of child labour comprise: (a) slavery and forced labour, including child trafficking and forced recruitment for armed conflict; (b) child prostitution and pornography; (c) production and trafficking of drugs; and (d) work likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children.

C.182 requires ratifying States to design and implement programmes of action to eliminate the worst forms of child labour as a priority and establish or designate appropriate mechanisms for monitoring. Measures should take for prevention; provide support for the removal of children form the worst forms of child labour and their rehabilitation; ensure access to free basic education or vocational training for all children removed from the worst forms of child labour; identify children at special risk; and take account of the special situation of girls.

Country-based Programmes

IPEC works with local partner organisations to develop and implement measures which aim at preventing child labour, withdrawing children from hazardous work, and providing alternatives to them and their families as well as improving working conditions for children who have reached the legal age of employment as a transition measure toward eliminating child labour. An important scope is the expansion of local governments' capacities to build on and duplicate successful programmes. IPEC programmes also rely on the expertise and contributions of professionals from many disciplines to attack the root causes of child labour and assure sustainability of proposed solutions.

The multi-sectoral strategy of IPEC country-based programmes comprise actions which: encourage ILO constituents and other partners to begin dialogue and create alliances; determine the extent and nature of the child labour problem and assist in devising national policies and protective legislation to counter it; set up mechanisms to provide in-country ownership and operation of a national programme of action; create awareness in the community and the workplace; and replicate successful projects and integrate child labour issues systematically into social and economic development policies, programmes and budgets. Country-based programmes are currently underway in **Albania, Romania, and Ukraine**.

Time-bound Programmes

Upon ratification of Convention No. 182, member states must put in place national laws, policies and programmes to fulfil their commitment to prohibit and eliminate the worst forms of child labour. Here IPEC is assisting member countries to do this through the development of Time-bound Programmes that formulate concrete policies and programmes to implement the eradication of the worst forms of child labour within a defined period of time. IPEC is helping member states to: create a comprehensive framework to determine which hazardous forms of child labour are present and understand the underlying causes; assess the importance of the various parameters for preventing children from falling into the worst forms and rehabilitating those who already are victims; develop a monitoring and evaluation system (including targets and indicators) for assessment of the impact, cost effectiveness and sustainability of the programme; and promote monitoring and enforcement of national legislation. A time-bound programme is currently being prepared in **Turkey**.

Programmes and Regional Projects

IPEC also works through the implementation of programmes and projects focusing on specific target groups. In St. Petersburg **Russia**, for example, a programme has been developed for working street children. Other projects include research on child labour with regard to specific target groups through Rapid Assessments on trafficking, working street children, rural child labour, etc.

In terms of regional projects, IPEC has begun to give particular attention to the problem of trafficking in the region and is in the first stages of developing a methodology to assess the nature and dynamics of child trafficking in several Balkan countries and the **Ukraine**. The methodology is based on an adaptation of the ILO/UNICEF Rapid Assessment Manual on

the worst forms of child labour to the more specific situation of trafficked children. These country assessments aim to elaborate prevention and rehabilitation strategies in order to reduce the vulnerability of at-risk children and provide services and support to victims.⁴⁵

This IPEC methodology, currently in development, will focus primarily on children at risk, victims or recovering victims of sexual or labour exploitation, traffickers and exploiters, as well as workers and other interested parties who have first hand knowledge of the situation. In terms of data collection and analyses, IPEC has included not only the problems of trafficking in terms of the victims, but also examined the responses by government as well as resources made available by donors.

Knowledge Building

Demand for child labour research and policy analysis has risen in recent years along with the increased political will to act against it. IPEC is responding to this need by undertaking a number of thematic research projects. It also collaborates with other institutions such as UNICEF, the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank. IPEC's statistical research on the scope of child labour is the responsibility of the Statistical Information and Monitoring Programme on Child Labour (SIMPOC), which carries out child labour surveys in member countries and provides technical assistance to them in order to improve data collection methods.

What is SIMPOC?	
SIMPOC aims to assist individual countries in generating comprehensive quantitative and qualitative data on child labour at the national level.	
<p>(a) Launched in January 1998 as an inter- departmental technical co-operation programme.</p> <p>(b) Generates comprehensive and reliable quantitative as well as qualitative gender sensitive data on child labour in all its forms.</p> <p>(c) Standardised <u>household survey</u> is the key instrument, with questions addressed to both parents and children.</p> <p>(d) The surveys are either stand-alone inquiries or attached as a module to a labour force or other household based survey.</p> <p>(e) All benchmark surveys are national in scope with subsequent ones expected to be more focussed</p>	<p>(f) Rapid Assessment Survey Procedure is also being used to obtain data in a much quicker way especially for the worst forms of child labour.</p> <p>(g) The programme collects, processes, archives and disseminates child labour data with capacity building component at the national level to ensure sustainability.</p> <p>(h) Aims to establish a global micro-data repository on child labour.</p> <p>(i) The outputs from SIMPOC activities will provide important inputs for a regular global trend report on child labour.</p> <p>Source: http://www.ilo.org/ipec/simnoc/factsheet.htm (accessed 4 November 2002)</p>

Given the complexity of the problem of child labour, and the various ways it is manifest in different countries, cultures and communities, it is important to understand how child labour fits within each of these contexts. Knowledge building is key to understanding the interlinked causes of child labour and sets the stage for designing more effective strategies to combat it. Baseline surveys, rapid assessments, SIMPOC surveys, working papers, and other forms of research inform the way in which programmes and projects are designed.

Experience is also something that must be taken into consideration. Good practices and lessons learned, within the country and in other countries, serve as springboards for discussion and models for potential programmes and projects. A good example of this would be the IPEC project on street children in **Turkey** which has been successfully replicated in St. Petersburg.

IPEC project on street children in St. Petersburg replicates earlier success in Turkey

A three year IPEC project in St. Petersburg, **Russia**, launched in 1999 aims to provide direct support to working street children in order to improve their living and working conditions in the short term, and to withdraw them from the streets and to provide alternatives in the long term. By the end of the project, between 4,000 to 5,000 street children in the city will have been withdrawn. It is estimated that there are currently between 20,000 and 30,000 children on the streets of St. Petersburg, Russia's second city. The project focuses on the worst forms of child labour.

The project makes use of the experience gained by the Centre for Children Working on the Streets of Ankara, **Turkey**. The centre was established by the Municipality of Greater Ankara within the framework of IPEC with the aim of improving working conditions of children in the short term and preventing child labour in the long term. Although the financial involvement IPEC terminated in 1997, the Municipality still continues the activity and is seeking to improve the methods employed to date. Some 1,200 children are registered at the Centre and over 5,000 more children have been contacted by the Centre's social workers.

Source: IPEC Fact Sheet: St. Petersburg replicates earlier success in Turkey, www.ilo.org/childlabour

Legislation and Enforcement

National governments play a crucial role in the prevention and progressive elimination of child labour. Political commitment is the initial step in the implementation of a national programme. This commitment gives way to concrete policies to facilitate national level interventions.

Effective policies on child labour must be supported by legislation which clearly delineates a framework for enforcement. This type of legislation can serve as a deterrent, especially when the punishments are severe and systematically enforced. Though most countries have enacted legislation prohibiting the employment of children below a certain

age, and even specified certain working conditions for those allowed by law to work, the coverage of these laws and practical implementation are always potential problems. ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour and the Minimum Age Convention 138 as well as their Recommendations (No. 190 and 146 respectively) provide a frame-work for developing national legislation. The national harmonisation of these international standards is a process unique to each country.

The Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138)		
General minimum age (Article 2)	Light work (Article 7)	Hazardous work (Article 3)
Under normal circumstances:		
15 years or more (not less than compulsory school age)	13 years	18 years (16 years conditionally)
Where economy and educational facilities are insufficiently developed:		
14 years	12 years	18 years (16 years conditionally)

Legislators face many issues when trying to harmonise international standards with national law. They must decide what sectors of the economy or professions should be targeted in order to prohibit child labour. A decision must also be made with respect to the minimum age at which entry into the workforce is allowed, and will this minimum age differ depending on the nature of employment. National legislators must define the elements of what should be considered hazardous work and the minimum age for entry into these occupations. Aside from resolving these issues, legislators must also decide what the penalties are for violation of these laws, who or what should be subject to penalisation, and what the practical steps for ensuring proper enforcement are. Though international labour standards do have suggested solutions to many of these issues, it is of utmost importance for these decisions to be made nationally as each country displays a different legislative environment.

There is some key legislation that must be considered in the fight against child labour. Setting the minimum age, as discussed before, is an extremely important step. There are also other types of legislation equally as utile in eliminating and further preventing child labour. These include legislation concerning the following:

Compulsory education.

It is clear that one of the most effective tools for eliminating the use of child labour is education. Children who are in school are less likely to be engaged in full time employment. By legally obliging children to attend school, and setting the compulsory education at least through the minimum age of employment, enforcement of either legislation will contribute to the enforcement of the other.

Forced labour.

Setting national legislation on forced labour is important. Countries usually have legislation with regard to forced labour, though it does not usually separate the use of children in forced labour from that of adults. How well developed forced labour legislation is depends greatly on the awareness of the problem within the country. It is important to heighten public awareness of the problem in order to promote solid mechanisms of enforcement and avoid weak laws.

Mainstreaming Child Labour in Legislation: Romania

The National Strategy on Child Protection (2002-2004) and the operation plan for implementation:

Decision 539 / 14.06.01

Recognises child labourers as a specific category of beneficiaries. The strategy includes: revision and improvement of the legal framework; establishment of local services in order to eliminate exploitation of child labour; awareness raising of the public on any type of abuse, neglect, or exploitation; design and implementation of action programmes aiming at the elimination of child labour; and make know the good practices and lessons learned in respecting and promoting children's rights.

New Organic Law No. 678 / 2001

Preventing and combating trafficking in persons, the law was promulgated and published in the Official Monitor of Romania, No 782 on December 11th 2001. This law includes special provisions regarding trafficking of minors and the use of children in pornography. There are provisions referring to exploitation through forced labour, slavery, prostitution, and activities violating fundamental human rights and freedoms. Penalties are more severe, particularly when the victims are children under the age of 15.

Governmental Ordinance Nr. 89 / 2001

Instituted for the purpose of reviewing and improving the Criminal Code concerning offences with regard to sexual life (art. 198 and 202), including an increase in the severity of penalties for sexual offences against minors.

The Ministry of Public Administration Ordinance No. 4425 / 2001

This ordinance is concerned with the organisation of drug prevention and illegal drug use, which establishes an Inter-ministerial Commission for drug abuse prevention. This commission is comprised of representatives of the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Education and Research, Ministry of Public Administration, and Ministry of Youth and Sports, as well as local centres for prevention and counselling coordinated by the Prefect offices in each county including Bucharest.

Commercial Sexual Exploitation.

Child prostitution, child pornography, and the sale or trafficking of children is intolerable. National legislation should treat these violent crimes against children severely. Most countries have laws regarding prostitution, but often these laws do not differentiate the use of children as a specific criminal offence. Other types of approaches to combat commercial sexual exploitation include the: criminalisation of sexual relations

with minors; treatment of sexual intercourse with minors as rape; criminalisation of enticement of children into sexual acts; criminalisation of economic benefit derived from the sexual activities of children; and the criminalisation of “consumers” of prostitution in their own countries and for acts committed in other countries.

Capacity Building

Child Labour policy and legislation is only as good as the capacity of the institutions expected to combat the problem. Institutions are the functional arms of law, and the eradication of child labour depends on the capacity of relevant institutions like Trade Unions and Workers Organisations, Police Inspectorates, Ministries of Labour and Social Protection, Ministries of Education, Labour Inspectorates, Non-governmental Organisations and Social Work agencies for example.

Strengthening the capacity of institutions is necessary in the fight against child labour. Existing mechanisms often need to be enhanced or sometimes even be created in order to: set priorities in close partnership with the representative organisations of employers and workers and with other relevant groups of civil society; promote and coordinate the activities of various ministries and other governmental institutions concerned with child labour; encourage participation by the private sector and ensure that measures taken by the public and private sectors complement one another; and support pilot schemes at the local level, both technically and financially, that experiment with new ways of preventing child labour or rehabilitating children removed from exploitative or dangerous types of work. Strengthening the local capacity to deal with the problem of child labour facilitates country ownership of the problem, which thereby promotes sustainability in actions against child labour.

Capacity building takes place on all levels. On the national level with the national steering committee, labour and police inspectorates and ministry of labour and social protection for example. Regional capacity building also takes place and targets local government units on the county level. Partners such as teachers, social workers, and police officers, for example, are trained on the local level.

Strategies for national policy formulation differ from country to country, and the capacity of institutions dealing with policy must be built up. For this reason, the formation of a National Steering Committee (NSC) on Child Labour is standard for those countries which have signed a Memorandum of Understanding with IPEC. The NSC, comprised of relevant government agencies, NGOs, trade unions, workers’ organisation and other partners, help develop a national strategy and provide recommendations for national policy. Building the capacity of this committee in understanding the problem of child labour will promote the adoption of good policy, as well as facilitate sustainability and country ownership.

Along the same lines, a major strategy for capacity building is the training of trainers. An example of this is the formation of Intersectoral Training Teams which participate in training of trainers seminars on project design, implementation monitoring and evaluation which are often held. A sample list of capacity building activities from **St. Petersburg, Romania, and Ukraine** are listed in the following box.

Capacity Building in St. Petersburg, Romania, and Ukraine

St. Petersburg

School Staff

Seeking to bridge the gap between the school and street social work, a staff of 50 secondary schools in the Kirovsky District were equipped with the practical knowledge and skills in social work, enabling them to prevent school attrition, and thus potential child workers. Moreover, 500 children at risk were identified and interventions were taken individually.

Local Government Units

Twenty child welfare inspectors and fifty staff members of local government units in the Kirovsky district were trained on the issues of child labour. An effective mechanism of cooperation between the local bodies and the educational system was developed, and the legal system of child's rights protection was improved at the city level.

Police Inspectors

Twenty police inspectors on the Affairs of Children were trained on the issue of child labour. New effective joint programmes between the Police, Local Government Units and Educational Departments resulted, laying the groundwork for the Safe Zone – free of child labour.

Romania

Child Labour Units

Initial training of Child Labour Units and the Intersectoral Central Training Team on investigating and monitoring child labour, including project design, management, monitoring and evaluation.

Police

Police officers of the General Inspectorate of Police trained to act against the worst forms of child labour.

Trade Unions

Training strengthened the capacity of the Confederation of Romanian Democratic Trade Unions to combat the worst forms of child labour.

Roma Communities

Enhanced the capacity of Roma communities in selected areas for the withdrawal of Roma working children from the streets and/or other hazardous work.

Ministry of Education

Enhanced the capacity of the Ministry of Education and Research to increase school attendance, retention, and performance rates in order to prevent and eliminate rural child labour.

Ukraine

The National Steering Committee

The Committee comprised of representatives from the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Justice, the State Committee on Family and Youth Affairs, the State Statistics Committee, Workers' and Employers' organizations, NGOs as well as Youth Government associations have all been trained on the issues of child labour.

Trade Unions

Forty representatives from eight Ukrainian National trade union organizations have been sensitised on the issue of child labour through training. The Trade Union's National Framework for actions against child labour has also been drafted.

Ministry of Labour and Social Policy

Training of Trainers seminar conducted on the design, monitoring and evaluation of action programmes, where areas for intervention regarding specific target groups were defined. Two three-day seminars for labour and social inspectors have also been carried out. A national workshop for community leaders has been scheduled and is currently in the pipeline.

Awareness-raising

Raising awareness on the issue of child labour is a powerful tool, useful in bringing about positive change. Since views about child labour are often deeply engrained within culture and tradition, heightening the awareness of individuals, institutions, and the society as a whole represent a method for sustainable prevention and eventual elimination of child labour.

Awareness-raising projects use numerous mediums including billboards, posters, brochures, theatre productions, news coverage, and special campaigns among many others. The audiences also vary, ranging from parents, communities, government officials, trade unions and workers organisation to the children themselves. Awareness-raising activities can be divided into several overarching categories.

International Conference on Policies to Fight Child Labour Exploitation in Europe

1-3 February 2001, Lisbon

The aim of the conference was to bring forth the question of child labour internationally, providing an opportunity for an exchange of experience on policy and methodology and contributions made that will be useful for all countries. The conference was organised by the Government of Portugal with the assistance of IPEC. It reflects the strong commitment of all governments, employers' and workers' organisations, and non-governmental organisations to reduce and eliminate child labour. The conference catalogues the valued experiences of countries and point to the possibilities necessary in stopping the worst forms of child labour.⁴⁶

Broad-based awareness-raising seeks to inform an expansive target group about the issues surrounding child labour. There are a range of useful media which include but are not limited to television and radio documentaries, panel debates, call-in programmes, print media articles and news, internet sites, etc. Using multiple interventions simultaneously has been known to create a more detectable impact⁴⁷.

World Day Against Child Labour

The IPEC office in Romania used June 12th, the World Day Against Child Labour, as the platform for a broad-based awareness raising scheme with the strategic and simultaneous use of multiple interventions. This included:

Child labour displays, arranged by children and teachers in 27 schools from Bucharest and 7 counties. These displays included the *World Day* poster translated into Romanian, children's drawing exhibition, as well as the viewing of the ILO-IPEC video "Combating Child Labour, a Global Cause" also translated into Romanian. Other materials were also distributed, such as leaflets, pens, notebooks and t-shirts;

Press conferences, were organised in Bucharest – with both *Save the Children* and the *International Foundation for Child and Family* - and a press release was prepared regarding the progresses made in combating child labour in Romania;

Mailings were sent to 50 representatives of UN organisations, World Bank, the Delegation of the European Commission, and embassies of donor countries which included the World Day Against Child Labour poster and the newly released Rapid Assessment on the Situation of Working Street Children in Bucharest;

Electronic News Bulletin (No. 6) Special Edition on the World Day Against Child Labour was sent, in both English and Romanian respectively, to members of international agencies as well as news agencies, national dailies, specialised magazines on child welfare, key personnel from various ministries, non-governmental organisations etc; and a

Street display placed in front of the UNDP office, arranged by the UN Information Centre with all ILO-IPEC materials on child labour produced under action programmes.

Awareness-raising at the community level is seen as a prerequisite for implementing direct action programmes. This level of awareness-raising focuses specifically on local community members with outputs such as cultural activities, open discussions, and visual media such as posters, leaflets, or t-shirts for example. For direct action to be the most effective it is necessary to communicate the issues surrounding child labour clearly and within the local context. Sensitising the community where direct action is planned will reduce resistance and foster concern and support in eliminating child labour.

Child Labour Free Zone, St. Petersburg

One of strategic concepts designed specifically for St. Petersburg was to network all key players in a so-called **Safe Zone**, free from child labour, launched in February 2002. For all agencies concerned with the protection of children's rights, it means the effective fulfilment of all provisions as defined in the national legislation. The Safe Zone is to embody a comprehensive insight into the problem of child labour aimed at protecting children from exploitation on the streets and preventing new children from slipping into the street environment.

The comprehensiveness of this methodology will be ensured through strengthening the main social institutions at the district level. The key elements of the newly established network will include, but not be limited to, educational authorities, police, local governments, the labour inspectorate, trade unions, academia, media, and NGOs.

Serving as a model for further replication, the Safe Zone will stimulate development of the local schemes for child labour prevention. This, in turn, will increase understanding of child labour and its worst forms as a new phenomenon for the Russian society.

Raising the awareness of children can be done in many ways. The subject of child labour can be integrated into the school curricula or into ongoing community activities. Clubs can also be established to educate and support working children. Children aware of the dangers of child labour, mobilised to combat it, can have a very powerful impact on those around them.

The 1st All-Ukrainian (National) Children's Congress

Initiated and held by the CARITAS-SPES Ukraine (Roman Catholic Church) on June 1st, 2002, the goal was to develop an alternative Declaration on Children's Rights. Composed by children themselves, the declaration was handed to the President and representatives of international organisations. The participants were informed on the risks of early employment, employment in hazardous conditions, as well as on the worst forms of child labour. As a follow-up, children declared that "they want to have enough workplaces for their parents", "want to have access to education", and "no longer want to be forced to work".

The 1st All-Ukrainian Children Congress:
children composing the Declaration on
Children's Rights



The 1st All-Ukrainian Children Congress:
children declaring their rights

Awareness-raising among parents, as they are key players in deciding whether to send children to work, is important. Parents send their children to work for many reasons, which can be rooted in tradition, economics, perceived value of education, etc. Parents who send their children to work often look at the opportunity cost of the alternative, which is, sending their children to school. Though basic education is assured free in Central and Eastern Europe, hidden costs such as uniforms, books, and transportation make education rather expensive. Families suffering from economic hardship often cannot see past the economic loss of their child's income contribution when deciding if they can shoulder the costs related to their education.

Raising parental awareness of the dangers of child labour, as well as their understanding of the long term sustainable benefits of their children's education, help in deterring them from sending their children to work. Combining this awareness with the provision of accurate information regarding social welfare programmes and economic alternatives will decrease instances child labour.

Direct Action

Direct action takes up the challenge of actually releasing children from work and reintegrating them into school and family life. Similarly, measures to are also taken to protect and educate those youth who are working legally. Within the IPEC programme, direct action takes the form of what are called action programmes or sometimes mini-programmes. These programmes are strategically designed to fit into the framework of the national programme, relying on the groundwork set by legislation and awareness-raising initiatives.

Comprehensive Model for Rehabilitation of Working Street Girls in St. Petersburg

The action programme was designed to develop a rehabilitation model and apply it to 100 girls on the street and/or at risk of sexual exploitation, aged 12-17, who are affected by lack of education, continuous family crisis, and isolation. The girls were withdrawn from the streets and provided with creativity development and training, with special emphasis given to family counselling and rehabilitation.

Simultaneously, Policy-makers, City Authorities, Police, and the public at large were sensitised to the issue of child labour, and more specifically, the special situation of the girl-child. Risks related to this specific group were also covered.

Virtually the very first project in the city to address the specific needs of the working girl-child, the action programme is a major contributor in changing the public attitude on this vulnerable group of children. In line with the overall ILO gender-mainstreaming policy, the action programme sought to raise awareness among stake-holders on the specific risks of working street girls. In a broader sense, the programme helped raise the issue higher on the political agenda.

The local and international media has extensively covered the IPEC Working Street Girls programme. To secure tangible results, IPEC raised additional funding for the programme through the Nordic Council of Ministers and UNICEF. This programme was implemented by the St. Petersburg Women's Labour Exchange.

Direct action is contextually local by nature. Usually working directly with children and their families, action programmes must be culturally sensitive, taking into account the tradition and social understanding of the target group. For example, an action programme designed for retracting working Roma children would be very different from a project designed for working street children, as the Roma culture and social understanding are usually quite different from the mainstream.

Children's Clubs, Albania

The core of IPEC's work involves the prevention of child labour as well as the withdrawal and rehabilitation of those already in intolerable situations. Children's clubs for working and at-risk children have been established at 5 primary schools. Recreational activities and informal education are provided to some 650 working and at-risk children, with the distribution of textbooks (grades 1-6) and training on handcrafting and sewing. Through these activities, children acquire skills and abilities in the areas of teamwork, creativity, common courtesy, and the like.

The main priority has been to further identify and encourage child labourers to attend these clubs. About 100 children who attend the clubs are active child labourers and more than 500 are prevented from entering the workforce. Furthermore, the programme was able to identify preventative measures against child labour through awareness-raising and community mobilisation.



Children's Clubs, Albania (cont)

IPEC-Albania adopted a systematic approach ensuring the integration or cross cultural linkages into interventions. The strategy is based on capacity building of partners, awareness-raising, advocacy, and integrated multi-sectoral approach in the provision of services to child labourers and their families. Sustainability of interventions, ownership of programmes, participation of stakeholders, child and family participation, and focus on the worst forms of child labour were cornerstones in the design and implementation of the work done.

Informed by experience, it is clear that direct action is most successful when interventions are mixed, combining multiple elements such as capacity building for those involved in direct action, awareness raising in the host community, as well as support and rehabilitation to children and their families. The importances of these elements have been discussed earlier in this section. The action programme "Withdrawal of Street Children from Work at the Level of Local Communities" in St. Petersburg provides us with a good example of using combining multiple interventions.

The strategy of this action programme was multifaceted, involving local governing bodies, school, and families of children engaged in the worst forms of child labour. Local governing bodies and schools were provided with results of the in-depth analysis of the situation of working street children in St. Petersburg⁴⁸, and then advised by specialist in street social work. Schools were used as initial sites to identify children at-risk. Once identified, families with children at-risk or children already active in child labour were provided with support via a self-help group methodology and rehabilitation services.

The programme was successful having placed emphasis on:

- Building capacity of the newly established local authorities in three city districts on the prevention and monitoring of child labour;
- Rehabilitating 1,000 working street children through the provision of medical services, additional nutrition, and schooling all on the community level;
- Raising the awareness of city and community policy-makers as well as the public at large on the issue of working street children through a set of activities at the community level; and
- Rehabilitating 72 families with 200 children involved in the worst forms of child labour through the self-help group methodology, income-generating activities, pedagogical support, crisis management training, and additional medical services.

When taking a look at direct action, it is important to look at lessons learned and experiences from other programmes and projects. Several studies have been initiated on developing good practice for child labour and are underway. The project "Vocational Training for Rural and Domestic child Labour" implemented by the Development Foundation of Turkey (DFT) has been considered, as such, a good practice.⁴⁹

One of the major aims of the programme was to take a holistic view of the problem of rural and domestic child labour in the context of the population, poverty, environment, education, and the family. The programme sought to contribute to the elimination of child labour through the provision of vocational training, education for rural and domestic child labourers, income generation for young girls in domestic labour in rural areas, the creation of employment opportunities for the parents of working children, as well as training for parents on reproductive health and family planning.

The programme adapted more than one type of intervention and made explicit linkages between them to maximise the impact on child labour. These included anti-poverty measures, vocational training, educational support, reproductive health and family planning, child to child programming, public awareness-raising and community and family involvement.

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Section

4

Conclusion and Recommendations

Precious children, outcast, rejected, without hope, love, or happiness, yearning for appreciation, compassion, and acceptance.

It is clear that child labour is growing rapidly from Central Europe to Central Asia, especially in its worst forms, and thus must be addressed quickly. Strategies to combat child labour are complex and require interventions on numerous levels. The nature of child labour is such that it requires help from across borders, across institutions, across religion, creed or profession. Concerted efforts must be carefully coordinated to ensure succinct, effectual efforts in eradicating child labour.

The following is a list of recommendations for future action against child labour in the region of Eurasia. This list is by no means comprehensive, but aims to serve as springboard for timely discussion and further development of action against the worst forms of child labour.

Expansion

Currently the IPEC programme is only present in a few States within Eurasia. In an attempt to eradicate child labour, it would be necessary for initiatives to be expanded to other countries within the region. With predominantly green borders between countries, problems such as Roma child labour, rooted in a transient culture, as well as issues of child and drug trafficking require a universal presence to avoid pushing the problem out of one country and into another.

Expansion is particularly important in countries having experienced armed conflict or severe poverty. The Balkan countries, for example, have been subject to armed conflict which has driven up the number of displaced persons as well as disrupted children's education. Also, countries in Central Asia such as **Tajikistan** or **Georgia** have been experiencing extreme poverty limiting access to education and requiring children to contribute to family income. These sub-regions of Eurasia have an increased risk with regard to child labour and thus action should be taken immediately to prevent further spiralling of the problem.

Research

More data on the region is needed. Many assessments and surveys have already been done in some of the countries, and more studies are in the pipeline, for example, a regional trafficking project has recently been proposed. However, more in depth-knowledge of the issues of child labour is needed, especially in Central Asia where data tends to be outdated.

Given that Eurasia is not a homogeneous region, it would be recommended to carry out a needs assessment within each sub-region (Central Europe, Baltic States, and so on). Though there are obvious trends of child labour in the region as a whole, it is clear that certain sub-regions have more prominence in certain trends than do others. For example, countries in Central Asia may require interventions to provide better access to quality education, whereas this would not be an immediate need in Central Europe.

Also, more research is needed on the most prominent trends of child labour within the region highlighted in section 2. These include working street children and children in agriculture, with special emphasis placed on child trafficking and working Roma children.

Awareness-raising

Though efforts have been made to raise awareness of the issues of child labour within certain countries, this awareness needs to be spread throughout the region. With that said, it would also be useful to raise awareness globally of the problem of child labour in Eurasia, as it is commonly viewed as a problem only prevalent to Africa, Asia and Latin America.

This could be achieved through a broad-based campaign bringing awareness-raising material concerning the issue of child labour in the region to various partners including donors, governments within the region, universities, international organisations and the like. Campaign materials such as fact sheets, electronic newsletters, websites, and a database to access information on the region would be quite useful. This would allow not only those outside the region to get more information, but also promote the sharing of experiences within the region.

Regional coordination.

The issue of child labour in Eurasia, though different in every country, does carry similar trends. Experience and lessons learned in one country can be extremely useful to other countries in the region with a similar context. Increased availability of such material could inform the design process in other countries and promote the replication of what could be considered effective guidelines.

Interagency cooperation and coordination is also key. ILO Convention No. 182 has been ratified in many of the countries, and the remaining few are in the process of ratification. Assistance in implementation of the convention is required, and such assistance must involve the cooperation of interested partners such as IPEC, UNICEF, and the European Union. An overall regional strategy for combating child labour should be developed and this development should take place with the participation of constituents such as IPEC, UNICEF, the European Union, representatives from

governments in the region, as well as child labour experts with specialisation on each of the target groups.

Capacity building.

Strengthening the capacity of individuals and institutions to fight child labour is essential. Though this is already a key component of the IPEC programme, further development of a regional capacity building strategy would be useful. For example, with the ratification of Convention 182 and the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with IPEC, governments are required to take certain steps in harmonising their national legislation. A Regional Training Meeting on harmonising national legislation could be held with representatives from each government. With participation by governments that have already started the process, governments currently developing national strategies, as well as related experts, a regional working group could be formed where experiences could be shared and more effective strategies developed.

Nationally, training on child labour should be continued in those countries where programmes have begun and training should be initiated in those countries where assistance has been limited or non-existent. These trainings should include concerned ministries, government agencies, and non-governmental organisations.

Particular attention must also be paid to the psycho-social and emotional state of the child. With these hidden issues left unresolved, a child may gravitate back toward child labour, seeking to fulfil emotional needs. Social workers and counsellors in Eurasia need to be equipped with the capacity to deal with these issues. Special training of trainer sessions, whether held regionally, nationally, or locally, could be initiated to train those individuals who work directly with children. Training should include methods for counselling children, including knowledge on physical, emotional, and sexual abuse and trauma counselling. Thematic handbooks may also be developed (eg. Social Worker's – Police – Community Worker's Guide to Child labour) and translated into local languages.

Ethnic Minorities and gender mainstreaming.

There is very little knowledge that has been developed on ethnic minorities within the region, namely the ethnic Roma population who are disproportionately involved in child labour. This ethnic minority has a very distinct culture and background and comprises a major target group of child labourers in the region. Further research should be conducted, enlisting a few of the many Roma organisations available, and information material should be developed to help guide the design and implementation of more accurate interventions targeting this group.

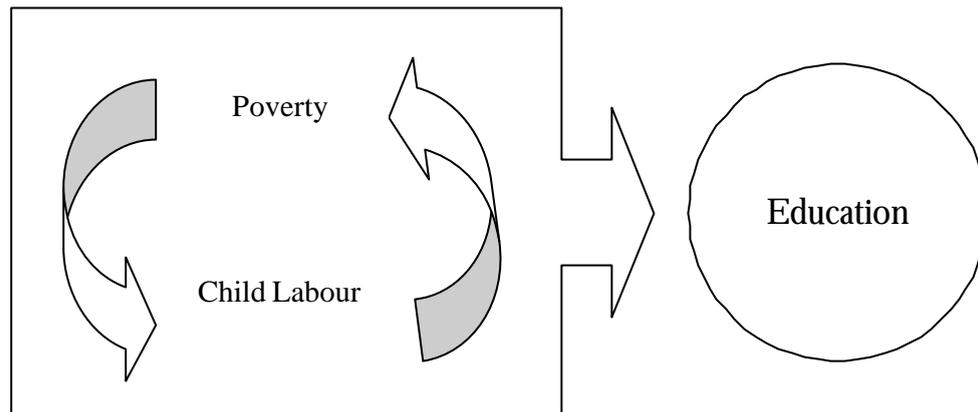
In terms of gender, it is clear the situation of the girl-child is of special concern. Information on this subject is available but a review of that information should be carried out and the development of information material should be initiated. This material would be useful in informing decision makers and project designers to ensure the special situation of the girl-child is taken into proper consideration.

Education.

Education is one of the most important components in the fight against child labour. Much work has already been done in this area through numerous action programmes in certain

countries. However, it is necessary for education programmes to be developed, strengthened and expanded in many of the sub-regions.

A major strategy for the region is the prevention of child labour before the issue increases any further. To prevent child labour and break the cycle of poverty, it is necessary for attainable education, including alternative or non-formal education and vocational training to be provided. Therefore, the further development of the educational system in many countries in Eurasia is a must and a comprehensive strategy for ensuring access to quality education region-wide needs to be developed with relevant social partners.



In conclusion, the prevention and progressive elimination of child labour in Eurasia is an immense task, but not an impossible one. Through understanding, cooperation, and perseverance it **is** possible to bring acceptance, hope, love, happiness, compassion, appreciation and dignity back to these precious children.

ANNEX I: Breakdown of Eurasia by region and country

Central Europe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Czech Republic • Slovakia • Poland • Hungary
Former Yugoslavia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slovenia • Croatia • FYR Macedonia • Bosnia-Herzegovina • FR Yugoslavia
South-Eastern Europe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Albania • Bulgaria • Romania
Baltic States	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estonia • Latvia • Lithuania
Western CIS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belarus • Moldova • Russia • Ukraine
Caucasus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Armenia • Azerbaijan • Georgia
Central Asia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kazakhstan • Kyrgyzstan • Tajikistan • Turkmenistan • Uzbekistan

ANNEX II: Ratification Status of Conventions 138 and 182 in Eurasia (as of October 24, 2002)

Country	C.138 Ratification status	C.182 Ratification status
Albania	Ratified on 16.2.98 (Min age:16)	Ratified on 02.08.2001
Armenia	Plans to ratify.	The Convention has been translated into Armenian and is now being examined by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in view of ratification.
Austria	Ratified on 18.9.00 Min age: 15	Ratified on 04.12.2001
Azerbaijan	Ratified on 19.5.92 (Min age: 16)	Harmonization of national legislation with C182 is underway and a law on prohibition of employment of children in hazardous work is being passed.
Belarus	Ratified on 3.5.79 (Min age: 16)	Ratified on 31.10.2000
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Ratified on 2.6.93 (Min age: 15)	Ratified on 05.10.2001
Bulgaria	Ratified on 23.4.80 (Min age: 16)	Ratified on 28.07.2000
Croatia	Ratified on 8.10.91 (Min age: 15)	Ratified on 17.07.2001
Cyprus	Ratified on 2.10.97 (Min age: 15)	Ratified on 27.11.2000
Czech Rep.	Proposal for ratification to be submitted before the end of 2002.	Ratified on 19.06.2001
Estonia	Plans to ratify.	Ratified on 24.09.2001
Georgia	Ratified on 23.9.96 (Min age: 15)	Ratified on 24.07.2002
Hungary	Ratified on 28.5.98 (Min age: 16)	Ratified on 20.04.2000
Kazakhstan	Ratified on 18.05.01 (Min. age 16)	On October 23, 2002, the lower house of the Kazakh Parliament approved ratification and forwarded it to the Senate, after which it must go to the President.
Kyrgyzstan	Ratified on 31.3.92 (Min age: 16)	Considering ratification.

Country	C.138 Ratification status	C.182 Ratification status
Latvia	Plans to ratify.	Formal ratification process initiated.
Lithuania	Ratified on 22.6.98 (Min age: 16)	Changes in national legislation required.
Macedonia	Ratified on 17.11.91 (Min age: 15)	Ratified on 30.05.2002
Moldova	Ratified on 21.9.99 (Min age: 16)	Ratified on 14.06.2002
Poland	Ratified on 22.3.78 (Min age: 15)	Ratified on 9.8.2002
Romania	Ratified on 19.11.75 (Min age: 16)	Ratified on 13.12.2000
Russian Federation	Ratified on 3.5.79 (Min age: 16)	In the process of ratification.
Slovakia	Ratified on 29.9.97 (Min age: 15)	Ratified on 20.12.1999
Slovenia	Ratified on 29.5.92 (Min age: 15)	Ratified on 08.05.2001
Tajikistan	Ratified on 26.11.93 (Min age: 16)	Ratification approved by Government on 13.12.00
Turkey	Ratified on 30.10.98 (Min age: 15)	Ratified on 16.08.2001
Turkmenistan	not ratified	Ratification under consideration
Ukraine	Ratified on 3.5.79 (Min age: 16)	Ratified on 14.12.2000
Uzbekistan	not ratified	not ratified
Yugoslavia	Ratified on 6.12.83 (Min age: 15)	In the process of ratification.

Annex III: Important Conventions and their Purpose

Convention	Purpose
ILO Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) • Recommendation No. 146	Sets the minimum age for work.
ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 • Recommendation No. 190	Prohibits the worst forms of child labour.
ILO Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No.29)	Prohibits children in bondage, prostitution, and pornography.
UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989	Protection from economic exploitation, work that is hazardous, interferes with education, or considered harmful.
International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	Compulsory free education.
International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights	Protection for minors.
Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery	Debt bondage of children.
Convention of the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitations of the Prostitutions of Others.	Trafficking of Children.