



ST. PETERSBURG FACT SHEET

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In the 90s a growing number of cases of child prostitution, forced and hazardous labour, cases of violence among Russian street children caught traditional social institutions off guard. Russia faced a re-emerging malady – working street children – that had plagued the country in the 20s.

Street Kids: A Growing Problem

By Irina Titova

They hang out huddled in small groups near metro stations, markets, and railway stations — crowded spaces where it's much easier to beg, work, or steal. They are St. Petersburg's street children, a constituency that — as the result of broken attitudes, broken values, and poverty — is blossoming by the thousands.

Not all are homeless, but all are neglected, uneducated, forgotten.



Slava, 13, selling flowers next to the Prospekt Prorodnitskaya metro station. Slava, 13, selling flowers next to the Prospekt Prorodnitskaya metro station. Slava, 13, selling flowers next to the Prospekt Prorodnitskaya metro station. Slava, 13, selling flowers next to the Prospekt Prorodnitskaya metro station.

The St. Petersburg Times
29 May 2001, by Irina Titova



Begging mother and baby in the underpass near "Nevsky Prospect" Metro Station

Fully understanding the seriousness of the situation and its consequences both on a national and international scale, in January 2000 the **International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC)** of the **International Labour Organization (ILO)** launched a Project "Street Children of St. Petersburg: from Exploitation to Education". A two-pronged approach was chosen - both capacitating relevant governmental institutions and NGOs on how to combat street child labour as well as directly supporting (ex)working street children and their families.

First of all an in-depth analysis of the situation in St. Petersburg was carried out¹. It revealed as many as 16 000 working street children, a lot of whom were engaged in the worst forms of child labour. The research also showed a low level of awareness about the problem, not only on behalf of the public at large, but of experts as well.

During 3 years IPEC spurred a nation-wide movement against child labour in which city administration, media, University experts, politicians, NGO workers, Police officers, trade union leaders, volunteers, religious activists, employers, school teachers took an active part.

On 25 March 2003 Russia ratified the ILO **Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention (No. 182)**, which prioritizes the development of practical interventions to treat this social malady.

Since the very beginning, IPEC St. Petersburg has been a pilot project for implementing ILO Convention No. 182. Domestically adjusted Russian strategies to combat child labour and its worst forms have been developed. The guidelines used for formulating and carrying out the Project's Action Programmes are those identified in Recommendation No. 190. This is a new step forward towards extending and strengthening the system of social protection in St. Petersburg. It is worth mentioning that during 2001 – 2002 the Russian Ministry of Labour officials repeatedly referred to the IPEC experience in St. Petersburg as being a unique domestic test ground with targeted rehabilitative and preventative strategies and methods to be replicated in the whole of the country.

Since February 2003 IPEC has been implementing the second stage of the Project in St. Petersburg, the main purpose of which is to strengthen tripartite co-operation in order to implement ILO Convention No.182.

Action Programmes

TRAINING

In 2000 the Kirovsky District of St. Petersburg was chosen as an IPEC project site. The overall purpose of IPEC efforts in the district has been to create a reproducible domestic model of cross-departmental cooperation on the prevention/rehabilitation of child labour. Experts representing the Sociology Department of St. Petersburg State University carried out the training with special emphasis on capacitating officials on the prevention and rehabilitation of child labour.

Three training programmes were carried out (**training of School Pedagogues on Child Labour Prevention, training of the Staff Members of the Local Self-**

¹ "In-depth Analysis of the Situation of Working Street Children in St. Petersburg, 2000", St Petersburg, 2001

Governing Bodies and training of the Inspectors of Police Units on the Affairs of Children). As a result pedagogues of **50** secondary schools were equipped with practical knowledge and skills in social work; **20 childhood inspectors, 50 members of staff of the Local Self-Governing Bodies and 20 inspectors of the Police Units on the Affairs of Children** were capacitated on the issue of child labour. An effective mechanism of cooperation between the local self-governing bodies and educational system was developed, and the legal system of protection of children's rights at a city level was improved.

Four manuals (printout: 500 copies each) on practical aspects of social work were published in the course of the above training programmes. The manuals appeared to be in high demand by different institutions and individuals active in the sphere of childhood protection. The Ministry of Labour and Social Development later reissued these manuals.

The training triggered some unplanned local initiatives. Thus, the Police Administration along with the City Prosecutor's Office performed a series of checks in trading areas on the use of children in hazardous work (cargo handling and night work).

Moreover, **500 children at risk** were identified and individual corrective practices were designed for them.

REHABILITATION

By now IPEC has implemented four large rehabilitation programmes and is starting a new one:

• **Comprehensive Model for Rehabilitation of Working Street Girls in St. Petersburg (June 2001 – June 2002)**

This Action Programme was designed to develop a rehabilitation model and apply it to **100 girls aged 12-17** either working in the street or **at risk of sexual exploitation**, who were affected by lack of education, continuous family crisis, and social exclusion and isolation.

The girls were withdrawn from the streets and provided with creativity development and training opportunities, rehabilitating and harmonizing relations in their families. Simultaneously, the policy-makers, City Authorities, the Police and the public at large were sensitised on the issues of the young girl and specific risks related to this particular group of working street children².

Psychological rehabilitation group session for (ex) street girls

² The methods and procedures of the old social protection system treated children as a homogenous group without sex and without personal aspirations.

The Action Programme largely contributed to changing the public attitude to this most vulnerable group of children. In line with the overall ILO gender-mainstreaming policy, the Action Programme sought to sensitise stake-holders on specific risks working street girls were subject to on the streets. In a broader sense the Action Programme helped to raise the most pressing issue of the sexual exploitation of children high on the political agenda

To secure tangible results, IPEC raised additional funding for the Action Programme using contributions of the Nordic Council of Ministers and UNICEF. The Implementing Agency was the St. Petersburg Women Labour Exchange.

• **Art rehabilitation for working street girls in St. Petersburg, Russia: making the good gender practice sustainable (December 2002 – April 2003)**

In October 2002 the Vice Government officially confirmed the city's commitment to institutionalise the ILO/IPEC Action Programme on working street girls by gradually incorporating its elements into the city programmes on street children. A respective planned budgeting was announced. As restructuring of the city budget had not been in place yet, IPEC started a four-month Programme with the implementing agency to secure sustainability of the gender practice developed under the above Action Programme. **Ten working street girls** were rehabilitated during it. The serious work carried out by the NGO was recognized by the St. Petersburg City Administration officials who visited the Action Programme several times: representatives of the Committee on Labour and Social Protection of Population, Committee on Contacts with the Local Self-Governance Structures, Department of the Federal Public Employment Services for St. Petersburg, Public Relations and Media Department of St. Petersburg.



Girls at a computer literacy session

In the framework of this Action Programme on **23 – 24 April 2003** a Workshop **Working Street Children and Strategies for Their Withdrawal** was carried out in the City Hall (Smolny). Social workers, teachers and psychologists of the St. Petersburg Career Counseling and Youth Psychological Support Centre where the Action Programme had been implemented, city social workers, St. Petersburg officials as well as official representatives of the ILO and Consulates took part in the workshop. It was enriched by an exhibition of items created by the ex-working girls. The achievements of the girls were highly appreciated by visiting Administration staff and other workshop participants.

The workshop raised awareness among the participants about the circumstances that force children, especially girls, into street labour, and drew the experts' special attention to the risks working street girls are faced with. An important part of the Workshop was the discussion of the rehabilitation and harmonization of family relations by first of all, providing psychological support to the families, as well as career counselling for the adult members of the family. Moreover, the Workshop summarized and disseminated the experience gained in St. Petersburg in combating the worst forms of child labour.

- **Comprehensive Rehabilitation of Working Street Girls and Support to Their Families in Selected Districts of St. Petersburg (November 2003 – September 2004)**

In November 2003 IPEC launched a new Action Programme disseminating the above experience in the Nevsky and Primorsky districts. It aims at supporting and developing rehabilitative structures and institutions at a local level. It is a new practice in remote districts to incorporate the gender aspect in social work. During the autumn 2003 two District Rehabilitations Centres for Working Street Girls were established to carry out the new Action Programme. The implementing agency is the City Centre of Youth Career-Guidance and Psychological Support to the Population.

- **Withdrawal of Street Children from Work at the Level of Local Communities (October 2001 – October 2002)**

The strategy of the Action Programme was a multifaceted intervention at a local level against child labour performed by street children. The existing capacities of local self-governments were channelled to concerted action, guided and advised by specialists in street social work. Schools were used as the initial sites to identify children at-risk. Families with children involved in the worst forms of child labour were capacitated on child labour prevention/rehabilitation through the methodology of self-help groups. The self-help groups combined direct support to the families with awareness-raising on the adverse nature of child labour.

The Action Programme improved the situation both at a practical and administrative level, with special emphasis on:

- capacitating the newly established local authorities in three city districts on preventing and monitoring child labour,



Meeting of a self-help group

- rehabilitating **1000 working street children** through providing medical services, additional nutrition, and schooling in their local communities;

- rehabilitating **72 families** with **200 children** involved in the worst forms of labour through self-help group methodology, equipping them with income-generating, pedagogical, and crisis management skills, and providing medical services and additional nutrition.

- sensitising city and local policy-makers as well as the public at large on the issue of working street children through a set of awareness-raising actions to address the situation of children within local communities. The Implementing Agency was the "Child Protection" Foundation.

- **Developing and Supporting Socio-Medical Mechanisms for the Rehabilitation of the Worst Forms of Child Labour in St. Petersburg (June 2002 – February 2003)**

The practical component of the Action Programme resulted in establishing a night drop-in centre for street children engaged in the worst forms of child labour, like child prostitution and night work. The political impact of the Action Programme yielded intensification of political pursuit at a district level to effectively address child labour and its worst forms. The Implementing Agency – the Humanitarian Action as a local branch of Medecins du Monde – had already played a coordinating role in the district social policy. It had been fully integrated in the local social protective schemes and involved in planning, designing and fulfilment of social programmes in the City along with the Administration, Education Authorities, Police, local communities, and state medical institutions.



Examining a child in the Night drop-in centre

The expertise of Medecins du Monde showed that a positive result of social work on street children could be reached only in cases of step-by-step rehabilitation (e.g. street – medical centre – drop-in centre/hospital – home/shelter). Accordingly, the Action Programme strengthened the middle part of the rehabilitation chain through running a drop-in centre. The Action Programme was also supported by UNICEF.

PREVENTION

- **Establishment of a Child Labour Free Zone in the Kirovsky District of St. Petersburg (February 2002 – February 2003)**

One of the strategic concepts designed specifically for St. Petersburg was to network all key players in a so-called **Safe Zone** free from child labour. For all agencies concerned with the protection of children's rights, it meant

the effective fulfilment of all provisions as defined in the national legislation. The Safe Zone was 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 being absorbed by the street environment.

The comprehensiveness of this methodology was also ensured through strengthening the main social institutions at a district level. The key elements of the newly established network included the Education Authorities, Police, local self-governments, labour inspectorate, trade unions, academia, media, and NGOs. The implementing agency was the St. Petersburg State University, Department of Sociology.

In the framework of the Action Programme on 12 February 2003 a **Multi Stakeholder Workshop on the Results, Lessons Learned and Conclusions of the IPEC Three-Year Project in St. Petersburg** was held. The Rector of the St. Petersburg State University, the Director of IPEC, other representatives of the Headquarters (Geneva), representatives of the Russian Ministry of Labour, city administration and NGOs involved in the Project took part in the workshop. The participants were briefed about the results of all the Programmes implemented in St. Petersburg. Ex-working street children from the Kirovsky District, rehabilitated in the Safe Zone Programme, performed a play "Pinocchio and All, All, All". The children staged it themselves (under the supervision of University students) to describe the plight of working street children. At the end of the workshop the participants discussed the **Initial Framework of the St. Petersburg Administration Action Plan** to combat child labour and its worst forms.

Replicating IPEC experience in other parts of Russia

In May 2001 the St. Petersburg State University team carried out a **Survey of child labour in Moscow**³ with overall methodology based on the IPEC St. Petersburg expertise. A full-scale sociological research covered 1,500 working street children, more than 200 employers and experts from social state institutions and NGOs. This event stimulated deep political discussions and put the issue and the role of the ILO into much sharper focus.

On **10-11 June 2003** a **Training Workshop for Social Workers and School Personnel on Child Labour Issue** was held in the South-Western District of Moscow. It contributed to establishing a close cooperation between different organizations of education and social work at a district level. As a result the participants adopted a Declaration defining the priorities in combating child labour and its worst forms in Moscow.

IPEC is establishing links and working contacts between the St. Petersburg Project and the new one launched in 2003 in the Leningrad Region. New IPEC Action Programmes and

partners in the region can benefit from the social models previously created in the city.

Promoting Social Dialogue

Government

Upon the initiative of St. Petersburg Administration, a group of officials went to Turkey in October 2002 to study IPEC's experience accumulated there. During the tour they visited ILO/IPEC Centres for street children in Ankara, Yalova, Golcuk, Adapazari and Istanbul and met with the officials of those towns.

In the same month the IPEC National Manager was appointed a member of the City Commission on Minors and Protection of Their Rights⁴.



The St. Petersburg officials in the Adapazari ILO/IPEC Centre for street children

Employers

In the view of the recently adopted UN Global Compact – a declaration for the employers – effective abolition of child labour has become a strategy for attaining modern globalisation principles. On **19 April 2002** IPEC St. Petersburg served as a case study during the ILO's Global Compact meeting with the Russian employers. The leading Russian oil and energy companies were briefed on the problem of child labour and IPEC St. Petersburg.

In September 2002 IPEC St. Petersburg organised a similar round table meeting with St. Petersburg employers, under the auspices of the City Parliament and its majority - the *Edinaya Rossiya* Party.

Trade Unions

Relations between IPEC and the **St. Petersburg and Leningrad Region Federation of Trade Unions** are useful and functional. They have allowed the preparation of changes to the St. Petersburg Tripartite Agreement regarding the issue of child labour. The present Tripartite Agreement 2002-2004 was signed by the St. Petersburg Governor and the representative of Trade Unions and Employers' Organizations on **4 February 2002**. For the first time in Russia the document contains provisions on the elimination of child labour and its worst forms and highlights the adoption of corporate codes of conduct.

The Federation is leading a campaign against child labour among its members and in society. In May 2003 the

³ In-depth Analysis of the Situation of Working Street Children in Moscow 2001, St. Petersburg, 2002

⁴ The Commissions on Minors and Protection of Their Rights are joint bodies, empowered by the Russian Law to formulate the regional/district policy on childhood. They unite all state agencies responsible for the protection of childhood, first of all the law-enforcement agencies, health and education authorities.

Federation together with IPEC launched an Action Programme to develop its political and practical role in the struggle against the worst forms of child labour.

As a first step, two Trade Union representatives were trained by ILO/ACTRAV experts in a trainers' workshop in Moscow in April 2003, followed in June by a workshop for twenty members of a Working Group on Child Labour created at the Federation. The participants learnt how to mainstream the issue of child labour in all trade union activities. They also drew up the Terms of Reference for their Working Group endorsed by the Governing Body of the Federation



Presentation of the St. Petersburg Trade Union of Small and Medium Businesses

In the framework of the above mentioned Programme 85, working street children from the Admiralteisky, Kirovsky and Nevsky districts were provided with free places at the summer camp "Chaika".



Ex-working children at the summer camp "Chaika"

Awareness-Raising and Publications

Awareness-Raising

In addition to the awareness-raising activities done in the projects mentioned above, the IPEC St. Petersburg team initiated and participated in the following:

- 3 videos;
- a 30 minute BBC documentary;
- About 60 articles in Russian and foreign newspapers and magazines;
- 5 radio programmes.

Publications



Cover page of the brochure "New Tool to Combat the Worst Forms of Child Labour. ILO Convention 182" (in Russian)

- Action Against Child Labour (in Russian), Moscow, ILO, 2001 ISBN 5-94063-010-3

- In-depth Analysis of the Situation of Working Street Children in St. Petersburg 2000 (in English) St. Petersburg, 2002 ISBN 92-2-112738-9
- In-depth Analysis of the Situation of Working Street Children in Moscow 2001 (in English) St. Petersburg, 2002 ISBN 92-2-112989-6; (in Russian) St. Petersburg, 2002 ISBN 92-2-412989-7
- In-depth Analysis of the Situation of Working Street Children in the Leningrad Region 2001, St. Petersburg 2002, (in English) ISBN 92-2-112990-X; (in Russian) ISBN 92-2-412990-0
- New Tool to Combat the Worst Forms of Child Labour. ILO Convention 182 (in Russian), St. Petersburg. 2002 no ISBN
- Disc "Working Street Children of St. Petersburg. Photo Catalogue" ILO, Moscow, 2002 ISBN 92-2-412988-9
- Eliminating the Worst Forms of Child Labour. A Practical Guide to ILO Convention No. 182. Handbook for Parliamentarians No. 3 – 2002 (in Russian), ILO, Moscow, 2003, ISBN 92-2-412900-5

In 2003 the most important projects were the translation and publication in Russian (with separate Finnish funds) of the Handbook for Parliamentarians, a joint product of ILO and the Interparliamentarian Union. The guidebook backstopped IPEC's technical cooperation in Russia and contributed to the successful ratification of Convention 182 by the Russian Federation on 25 March 2003.



- In-depth Analysis of the Situation of Working Street Children in St. Petersburg 2000. (in Russian). Second edition. St. Petersburg, 2003, ISBN 92-2-413554-4