



INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE (ILO)
International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC)



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ACTIVITIES FOR COMBATING CHILD LABOUR AND TRAFFICKING IN CHILDREN IN ALBANIA 2001-2010

CHILD LABOUR IN ALBANIA

The transformation to a market economy in Albania generated a large shadow economy in which child labour is widely used. A whole series of socio-economic factors exist to explain this situation: economic decline, lack of schools and teachers in certain regions, family breakdown, lack of awareness of the importance of schooling, discrimination against ethnic minorities. The facts that: a/child labour is perceived as good for the character-building and skill development of the children, irrespective of the physical or moral hazards they may be exposed to and b/community identity, especially for ethnic minorities is also linked to inter-generational on the job training also contributed to the increase of child labour. According to the Albanian Institute of Statistics, 32% of children between 6 and 17 years old in the country are working¹. The main sectors in which the worst forms of child labour (WFCL), occur in Albania are street work, trafficking in children for labour and sexual exploitation, illicit activities, and hazardous work in agriculture.

Working street children are very vulnerable to various forms of abuse and hazards. The results of ILO-IPEC Rapid Assessment Survey “Street working children in Albania” (2002), conducted in three Albanian cities (Tirana, Shkodra and Vlora), on a sample group of 298 working street children, showed that most of working street children are boys (81.5%) between 12 and 17 years old. They are working as vendors, beggars, scavengers, shoe polishers and porters. Life for working street children is marked by many problems related to their health, morals, socializing and overall development. Working street children are very vulnerable to recruitment for other forms of hazardous work or are easy prey to child trafficking, illicit activities and prostitution.



Children begging in the streets of Tirana

1 INSTAT/UNICEF, Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey, 2001

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Albania is a source, transit and destination country for trafficking in children². The prevalence of child trafficking is linked with poverty, economic instability, housing problems and poor living conditions,



Child begging in the main boulevard Tirana, Albania

reduced employment opportunities, and improper/ineffective law enforcement. Child trafficking in Albania are either external (to Greece and Italy and onward to the United Kingdom, France, Belgium, Norway, Germany, and the Netherlands) or internal (rural to urban). As per the ILO-IPEC Rapid Assessment Survey on Trafficking in Children for Labour and Sexual Exploitation in Albania (2003), most children trafficked externally are boys and they are trafficked for begging, street vending, theft and drug

trade. They were obliged to work for long hours in conditions that seriously affect their health. They were deprived of educational opportunities and at risk of physical, sexual and emotional harassment and abuse. Although a decrease in external trafficking has been noted, internal trafficking in formal and informal sectors has been increasing in recent years³.

RATIFICATION OF THE RELEVANT INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS AND INSTRUMENTS

Albanian Government has committed itself to take the necessary measures to address child labour by ratifying the following conventions and international instruments:

- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, February 1992
- ILO Convention No.138 on the Minimum Age for Admission to Employment, February 1998
- ILO Convention No.182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour, August 2001
- UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, October 2002
- UN protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, August 2002

² Trafficking in Persons Report, US State Department, 2006

³ Evaluation Report of Trafficking Project Phase I, ILO-IPEC, 2006

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- Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, February 2007 (entered into Force in February 2008)
- Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse, April 2009

INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

The first Memorandum of Understanding between the International Labour Organization, represented by the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour, and the Government of Albania was signed in 1999. In October 2008, the MOU was renewed for a five-year period.

Based on the Memorandum, a National Steering Committee (NSC) against Child Labour has been in place since November 2001 and it is chaired by the Minister of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities. It is composed by representatives of the key ministries (Labour, Education, Justice, Interior), the President's Office, employers' and workers' organizations and NGOs to oversee the activities for prevention and elimination of child labour in Albania, provide policy guidance for activities aimed at eliminating child labour and advise on the priority areas.

A Child Labour Unit (CLU) has been set up within the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities (MOLSAEO) to act as a national focal point on child labour issues and as secretariat for the NSC. As of March 2010, the CLU is part of the civil service structure of MOLSAEO, funded from the budget of the Ministry. ILO-IPEC will assist the MOLSAEO to prepare the TORs for the CLU and the Child Labour Specialist (CLS).

Local Action Committees (LACs) at local level in Tirana, Korca and Berat are in place from October 2005 and coordinated by the Child Labour Unit at the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities. This structure is operational and it has been further reinforced and expanded to two new regions, Elbasan and Shkodra, in 2009.



National Steering Committee Meeting

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NATIONAL LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Albanian Constitution (1998) contains provisions related to child protection against violence, maltreatment and labour exploitation. Education is compulsory up to the age of 16, which is also the minimum age for admission to employment.

Labour Code (1996) prohibits employment of children less than 16 years of age and provides that young persons under 18 cannot be employed in activities or work likely to jeopardise their health, safety or morals.

Penal Code (1995, amended in 2001 and 2008). Establishing clear sanctions to the persons who abuse with children in different forms including trafficking, child labour, pornography, maltreatment.

ILO-IPEC ACTIVITIES IN ALBANIA

The ILO's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) has been working in Central and Eastern Europe to provide technical and financial assistance to eliminate the worst forms of child labour and to implement the ILO's child labour conventions: Minimum Age Convention (1973) No.138 and Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention (1999) No.182.

ILO-IPEC started its operations in Albania in 2001 with a Country Programme funded by the Italian Government. Since 2004, Albania is part of the projects implemented in the region under the common programming framework Project of Technical assistance for the Elimination of Child labour, including Trafficking, in countries of Central and Eastern Europe (PROTECT CEE) that also includes Bulgaria, Kosovo (UNMIK), Moldova, Romania and Ukraine.

Strategic components

ILO-IPEC strategy in the country has been a combination of policy-related upstream interventions to create a conducive environment against child labour with downstream service activities at the community level to pilot models of intervention that are appropriate to the Albanian context.

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The main components of the projects are:

- ☞ Mainstream WFCL into national policies and legislation and awareness raising/ mobilization activities to increase the resources allocated to eliminate the WFCL.
- ☞ Advocate to bring legislation, policy and institutional framework in line with international commitments and specifically ensure that national policies address the special needs of children trafficked internally and across borders for sexual exploitation or for labour.
- ☞ Promote, pilot and scale-up the models of intervention (CLMS, psychosocial counselling, peer education, education and job counselling, youth employment) by increasing the outreach of institutions to curb child labour through capacity building and greater involvement of employers.
- ☞ Prevent or withdraw children from the WFCL in five sectors/areas (agriculture, street work, illicit activities, sexual exploitation, and trafficking in children) through provision of educational and non-educational services.
- ☞ Strengthen knowledge management at national and sub-regional levels by 1/producing manuals and guidelines adapted to the local context, 2/documenting, validating and disseminating good practices in combating the WFCL.



Meeting with Trade Union, Employers Organizations, MOLSAEO 2009

Mainstreaming Child Labour into National Policy Development and Legal Frameworks

It is essential to ensure mainstreaming of child labour concerns into poverty reduction strategies and other national development programmes due to the extent of child labour problem, the nature of root causes and the consequent need for large-scale multi-sectoral approaches involving extended

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partnerships. “Mainstreaming”, in this context, refers to the effective recognition of child labour in major policy documents as a key factor hindering national socio-economic development.

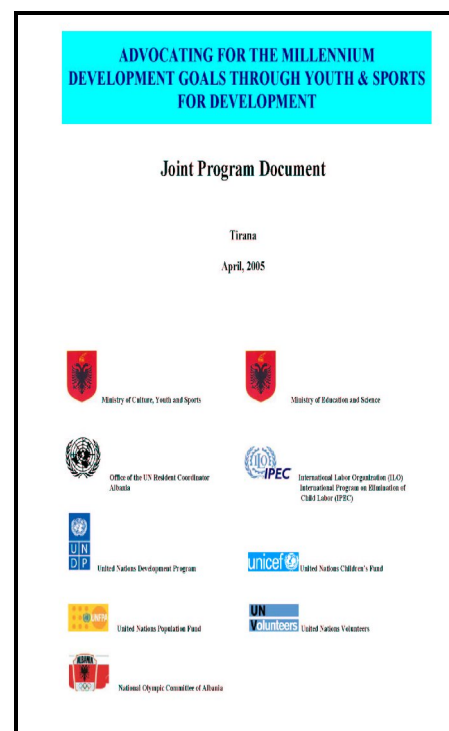
The main pillars of the policy framework for the Government of Albania are the *National Strategy for Development and Integration*, the *Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA) with the European Union* and the *Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)* which are complementary and mutually re-enforcing in the issues that they address, the methodologies they use and the timetables they establish.

ILO-IPEC provided technical assistance for the mainstreaming child labour into the following national policies and legislation:

- ↪ National Strategy for Children 2005-2010
- ↪ The National Strategy for Development of Social Services 2005-2010
- ↪ National Strategy for Development and Integration 2007-2013
- ↪ The National Strategy for Employment 2007-2013
- ↪ National Strategy for Social Inclusion 2007-2013
- ↪ The Anti-Trafficking Strategy 2008-2012
- ↪ National Strategy on Trafficking in Children 2008-2012⁴
- ↪ National Strategy on Youth and National Action Plan 2007-2013
- ↪ Decent Work Country Programme 2008-2010
- ↪ Decision of the Council of Ministers No. 207 on the “Definition of hazardous work and work in difficult conditions”, 2002 (amended in 2009)
- ↪ Law No. 9205 on Protection of Witnesses and Collaborators of Justice, 2004
- ↪ Law No. 9355 on Social Assistance and Social Services, 2005
- ↪ Law No. 9634 on Labour Inspection and State Labour Inspectorate, 2006
- ↪ Decision of the Council of Ministers no. 384 on “Occupational safety of minors”, 1996 (amended in 2009)

Laws in approval process (expected to be discussed in the Parliament in 2010)

- ↪ Draft Integrated Law on Child Labour
- ↪ Draft Law on Protection of Children from Exploitation and Abuse



Capacity Building

⁴ It is part of the National Anti-Trafficking Strategy 2008-2012.

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To effectively address the child labour issues in Albania, a comprehensive training programme was prepared and delivered to over 600 officials and representatives of the line ministries and local government, Members of Parliament, Labour Inspectorate, social partners, NGOs, media, teachers, parents and peer educators, etc.

- 50 labour inspectors trained as TOT on child labour issues based on “Handbook for Labour Inspectors on Combating Child Labour”.
- 230 members of LACs and MDTs in Tirana, Berat, Elbasan, Shkodra and Korca composed of labour inspectors, school inspectors, police officers, NGOs, teachers and TU representatives were trained on child labour, Child Labour Monitoring System (CLMS) and reporting on ILO Conventions No. 138 and 182.
- 25 staff from the Ministry of Education and the Institute of Pedagogical Studies received TOT training sessions on child labour issues.
- 105 teachers, school inspectors were trained in Shkodra, Elbasan, Vlora and Korca on child labour and “Supporting Children’s Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media” – SCREAM package.
- 25 parliamentarians from the Commissions of Education, Culture, Labour and Social Affairs, Legislation and Finance Policy Makers/Civil Society and Donors were trained based on the Albanian version of the IPEC Handbook for Parliamentarians.
- 76 employers from Tirana, Vlora, Berat, Kucova, Korca and Pogradec were trained and sensitized on child labour issues.
- 160 teachers, school principals, NGOs staff, local administrators and parents were provided with training on CLMS.
- 60 students of Faculty of Social Work and Sociology at the University of Tirana; trained on “Supporting Children’s Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media” – SCREAM package
- 60 students and 10 teaching staff of the Faculty of Social Work attended the open lecture on child labour issues “Give Girls a Chance”.
- 130 representatives of the local branches of the Trade Union Federation of Education and Science, employers’ organizations and teachers trained based on SCREAM package and Teachers’ Training Manual on Child Labour.

Building the knowledge base

The nature of child labour makes difficult to obtain reliable and accurate data. In this context, ILO-IPEC took the initiative to conduct the following studies and research:

- Rapid Assessment Survey (RAS) on working street children in Albania (Tirana, Shkodra and Vlora), 2002
- Rapid Assessment Survey on Trafficking in Children for Labour and Sexual Exploitation in Albania (Tirana, Korca, Elbasan and Vlora), 2003
- Study on Child Labour and Albanian Legal Framework, 2006
- Mapping of relevant local partners addressing child labour in two new selected municipalities (Elbasan and Shkodra), 2009

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Ongoing Surveys:

- A Child Labour Survey, including the Development of a Database on Child Labour in Albania, is currently conducted by INSTAT with technical and financial support provided by ILO-IPEC/SIMPOC. The Child Labour Survey is expected to be completed in May 2011 and will generate quantitative and qualitative data on labour market and child activities (including schooling, economic and non-economic activities). Information will be generated through interviews with heads of 6,840 households and children aged 5-17 years. Data collection and tabulation process will be completed in June 2010. A simplified questionnaire will be prepared in order to be incorporated in the Labour Force Survey (LFS) questionnaire to be conducted by INSTAT on a quarterly basis starting with 2011 and funded from the government budget.

Publications

The capacity building and sensitization activities carried out in the framework of ILO-IPEC interventions were based on working tools and materials drafted by ILO-IPEC, partners or ILO materials translated into Albanian language.

- Child labour Briefing Material: The Problem and the Response – translation and publication into Albanian, 2002
- Eliminating the Worst Forms of Child Labour: Handbook for Parliamentarians – translation into Albanian, 2002
- Combating Child Labour: A handbook for Labour Inspectors – translation and publication into Albanian, 2003
- Eliminating Hazardous Child Labour Step by Step – ILO Booklet (Albanian), 2003
- Good Practices: Mainstreaming in Actions Against Child Labour – translation and publication into Albanian, 2003
- Teachers' Manual on Child Labour, 2004
- SCREAM - Supporting Children's Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media, 2007
- A set of six lectures on child labour for students of the Faculty of Social Sciences- Social Work Department, 2009.



ILO-IPEC publications

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Child Labour Monitoring System (CLMS)

The Child Labour Monitoring System is operational in five pilot areas of Albania. The Child Labour Unit (CLU) at the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, as base unit for CLMS in the country operates based on agreements between the Minister of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities and Mayors of the five pilot cities: Tirana, Berat Elbasan, Shkodra and Korca. Five Local Action Committees (LACs) and six Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MDTs) are operational.

Partnership Agreements between the main collaborating institutions of LAC at the local level (Educational Directorate, Municipality, Employment Office, Labour Inspectorate Office, Vocational Training Centers, Police office) are signed for the implementation of the Child Labour Monitoring System and Child Labour Referral System Plan.

230 members of LACs and MDTs in Tirana, Berat, Elbasan, Shkodra and Korca composed of labour inspectors, school inspectors, police officers, NGOs teachers and TU representatives are trained by CLU on CLMS, Occupational Safety and Health issues.

Working with social partners

Capacity Building for Workers' and Employers' Organizations

- Teachers' Trade Unions in Albania approved a special Resolution to combat child labour in Albania in their third Congress held on 4-5th November 2004 in Tirana.
- A new Collective Agreement between the Education Trade Unions and the Albanian Ministry of Education and Science was signed on July 4, 2006. Two articles of this agreement stipulate the trade unions (TU) commitment to eliminate child labour and the decrease of school drop-out. This is the first time that TUs in Albania include explicitly the issue of child labour in their Collective Agreement.
- A regional conference on "The role of trade unions to combat child labour" was organized by the two education trade unions of Albania, on 20-21 October 2006, in Tirana, with technical and financial support of ILO-IPEC.
- A Joint Agreement on prevention and elimination of child labour among trade unions, employers' organizations, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Labour Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities and Labour Inspection was officially signed and launched in 12 June 2008. This agreement aims to engage the trade unions, employers' organizations and other key stakeholders in prevention and elimination of child labour in Albania and defines the roles and responsibilities of each signatory in identification of children involved/at risk of entering WFCL, integration in the education system, cooperation, capacity building, mainstreaming child labour into collective agreements, support in job placement, inspections at the workplace, introduce children to the world of work, provision of career guidance, awareness raising, etc.

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- Over 250 representatives of Teachers' Trade Unions, other branch trade unions and employers' organizations from the main cities of Albania were trained to increase their knowledge and understanding on child labour issues and measures to combat it.

Direct services for children

As result of ILO-IPEC project interventions implemented during the period 2003-2009, in five regions of Albania (Tirana, Elbasan, Korca, Berat, Shkodra), 3,810 children have been direct beneficiaries, out of which 897 children have been withdrawn from WFCL and 2,913 children have been prevented to enter WFCL. The sectors targeted are: trafficking, street work, illicit activities. A comprehensive package of services were provided to children, including pre-vocational counseling, vocational training, job placement, extra-curricular and awareness raising activities, non-formal education classes, enrollment into mainstream education, life skills sessions, health services, legal counseling, summer camps, food basket, school supplies, etc..



Activities with Children in Youth Center of Elbasan



Activities with Children in Youth Center of Korca

AWARENESS RAISING ACTIVITIES

World Day Against Child Labour – 12 June

12 June 2004. A wide drawings competition was organized with pupils from Tirana, dedicated to children's rights with a special emphasis on the worst forms of child labour. The best children's works were collected to design a flag against child labour. The flag was offered to the Albanian



ILO IPEC Director, Mr. Frans Roselars and
Albanian Minister of Labor, Mr. Engjell Bejtaj 2004

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Minister of Labour and Social Affairs on the 12th of June and to the Mayor of Tirana during a special event against child labour

12 June 2005. Groups of working children, ex-working children and non-working children were gathered in the main square of Tirana under the initiative: We, Children Talk – Listen to Us. Activities like painting and interviews with children were conducted by children themselves, under the guidance of Troc –TV Youth Programme, young reporters. The activities were broadcasted on big digital TV screens in the main square of Tirana while drawings composed a “graffiti wall” in order to raise awareness on combating child labour.



Children painting in Skenderbej Square 2005



Roma working children from with the President of the Republic of Albania, Mr. Alfred Moisiu

12 June 2006. A representative group of 30 Roma working children from Korca, Berat and Elbasan met with the President of the Republic of Albania, Mr. Alfred Moisiu, in his residence, the Minister of Labour and the Minister of Education. Children made life testimonials on child labour to the President and performed a street theatre focusing on combating child labour, including child trafficking.

12 June 2007. ILO-IPEC supported the BKTF (All Together against Child Trafficking) “anti-forced child begging campaign” in Tirana, conducted in cooperation with Municipality of Tirana, Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Interior, Terre des Hommes and Arsis. Four buses circulated in Tirana for 25 days in June 2007 with big posters against child forced begging. Media was part of the campaign, ensuring the coverage at local, regional and national levels.

12 June 2008. A Press Conference was organized for launching the week against child labour and the Joint Agreement on prevention and elimination of child labour among trade unions, employers’

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organizations, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Labour Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities and Labour Inspection. Two talk shows on child labour were broadcasted on Vision Plus TV and News 24 channels. 15 TV channels and 11 media representatives attended the Press Conference and broadcasted the events

12 June 2009. An open lecture on girls' labour was organized for 80 students and 20 academic staff of the Faculty of Social Sciences with the participation of the representatives of the Child Labour Unit/Ministry of Labour Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Ministry of Education, trade unions, and NGOs.



Open lecture with students and academic staff of the Faculty of Social Sciences, Tirana

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ILO/IPEC PARTNERS

Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs

- Child Labour Unit
- Labour Inspectorate
- State Social Service
- Vocational Training Centres

Ministry of Interior

- General Directorate of Police
- Anti-Trafficking Committee

Ministry of Education

- Institute of Pedagogical Studies
- Regional Education Directorates

4. Albanian Institute of Statistics

5. Municipalities

6. Albanian Parliament

7. TUFESA (Trade Union Federation of Education and Science of Albania) and ITUEA (Independent Trade Union Education of Albania),

8. Workers and Employers' Organization

9. Institute for Contemporary Studies

10. Help for Children (HFC)

11. Every Child

12. Children's Human Rights Center of Albania (CRCA)



Painting of Ariola Budo
winner of the ILO - IPEC competition 2005

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