

In 2017, Algeria made a moderate advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The government conducted a dedicated period of inspections focused solely on child labor, prosecuted 79 child labor cases, and achieved 58 convictions. It provided advanced training for government personnel on investigating and prosecuting trafficking in persons and protecting victims. Furthermore, the National Commission for the Prevention of and Fight Against Child Labor organized awareness days on the harms of child labor, putting together television and radio programs on the topic, encouraging imams to raise the subject in sermons, and offering assistance to needy families. However, children in Algeria engage in the worst forms of child labor, including in commercial sexual exploitation and forced begging, each sometimes as a result of human trafficking. Children also perform dangerous tasks in street work. The government has not sufficiently prohibited the use of children in illicit activities or determined by national law or regulation the types of work that are hazardous for children to perform.



I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Children in Algeria engage in the worst forms of child labor, including in commercial sexual exploitation and forced begging, each sometimes as a result of human trafficking. Children also perform dangerous tasks in street work. (1; 2; 3) Table 1 provides key indicators on children’s work and education in Algeria.

Table 1. Statistics on Children’s Work and Education

Children	Age	Percent
Working (% and population)	5 to 14	6.7 (413,729)
Attending School (%)	5 to 14	92.3
Combining Work and School (%)	7 to 14	7.2
Primary Completion Rate (%)		105.4

Source for primary completion rate: Data from 2016, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2018. (4)

Source for all other data: Understanding Children’s Work Project’s analysis of statistics from Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 4 (MICS 4), 2012–2013. (5)

Based on a review of available information, Table 2 provides an overview of children’s work by sector and activity.

Table 2. Overview of Children’s Work by Sector and Activity

Sector/Industry	Activity
Agriculture	Farming, including harvesting olives (1; 6; 7; 8; 9)
Industry	Construction, activities unknown (2; 6; 7; 9; 10)
Services	Street work, including vending, collecting plastics, and begging (2; 6; 7; 11; 12; 13; 14; 3; 15)
	Domestic work (1; 2; 10)
	Working in small workshops and businesses, including mechanics’ shops (6; 8; 10)
Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor‡	Commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking (2; 7; 14)
	Use in illicit activities, including drug trafficking (9)
	Forced begging, sometimes as a result of human trafficking (11; 12; 14; 10)
	Forced domestic work, including drawing water from wells, sometimes as a result of human trafficking (14)

‡ Child labor understood as the worst forms of child labor per se under Article 3(a)–(c) of ILO C. 182.

Evidence suggests that children, primarily unaccompanied sub-Saharan migrants, are subjected to commercial sexual exploitation and forced domestic work. (2; 16; 17; 18) Some migrants, particularly those from Niger, keep young children, often not their own but rather “rented” from smuggling networks, at their side while begging in the street. (9; 18; 10) The government reported

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that child labor was most prevalent in the provinces of Algiers, Batna, Constantine, and Oran, often part-time and informal in nature. (19; 10) Research could not find a current and comprehensive study on the activities and scope of the child labor situation in Algeria. (2; 20)

The Algerian public education system is free and open to all children, regardless of ethnicity and nationality. Non-Algerian children must provide documentation of grade level or sit for testing to determine their level. (10; 21) Many children with disabilities do not have the opportunity to access mainstream education because of social stigma, the relatively low number of teachers with specialized training, the lack of a transportation system for children with disabilities, and the limited accessibility of school buildings. (21) Barriers to education, including those placed on migrant children and children with disabilities, result in absence from school and increase vulnerability to child labor. Furthermore, many unregistered children remain out of school and vulnerable to child labor because birth certificates are required to attend school. (19)

II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR CHILD LABOR

Algeria has ratified all key international conventions concerning child labor (Table 3).

Table 3. Ratification of International Conventions on Child Labor

Convention	Ratification
 ILO C. 138, Minimum Age	✓
ILO C. 182, Worst Forms of Child Labor	✓
 UN CRC	✓
UN CRC Optional Protocol on Armed Conflict	✓
UN CRC Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography	✓
 Palermo Protocol on Trafficking in Persons	✓

The government has established laws and regulations related to child labor (Table 4). However, gaps exist in Algeria's legal framework to adequately protect children from the worst forms of child labor, including the lack of a prohibition against using children in illicit activities.

Table 4. Laws and Regulations on Child Labor

Standard	Meets International Standards: Yes/No	Age	Legislation
Minimum Age for Work	Yes	16	Article 15 of the Labor Code; Article 7 of Executive Decree No. 96-98 on the List and Content of Special Books and Registers Mandatory for Employers (22; 23)
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	Yes	18	Article 15 of the Labor Code; Article 7 of Executive Decree No. 96-98 on the List and Content of Special Books and Registers Mandatory for Employers (22)
Identification of Hazardous Occupations or Activities Prohibited for Children	No		
Prohibition of Forced Labor	Yes		Article 303 <i>bis</i> 4 of the Penal Code (24)
Prohibition of Child Trafficking	Yes		Articles 303 <i>bis</i> 4 and 319 of the Penal Code (24)
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	Yes		Articles 319, 333 <i>bis</i> 1, 343, and 344 of the Penal Code (24)
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities	No		Article 195 <i>bis</i> of the Penal Code (24)
Prohibition of Military Recruitment			
State Compulsory	Yes	19	Article 3 of Law No. 14-06 on National Service (25)
State Voluntary	Yes	17	Article 14 of Presidential Decree No. 08-134 on the National People's Army (26)
Non-state	No		

Table 4. Laws and Regulations on Child Labor (cont)

Standard	Meets International Standards: Yes/No	Age	Legislation
Compulsory Education Age	Yes	16	Article 12 of Law No. 08-04 on National Education (27)
Free Public Education	Yes		Article 13 of Law No. 08-04 on National Education (27)

The government drafted a bill to revise the Labor Code; however, it is currently subject to consultations with business and civil society partners before it is submitted to Parliament. (28; 29; 30; 10) The Labor Code prohibits anyone under age 19 from working at night and anyone under age 18 from performing work that is harmful to their health, safety, or morals. Algeria has not determined by national law or regulation the types of work that are hazardous for children; however, in January 2018, the government created a commission tasked with proposing a list of hazardous professions. (2; 3; 22; 31; 32) Algerian law does not provide increased penalties for or categorize as a separate crime the involvement of children in either the production or trafficking of drugs. (24)

III. ENFORCEMENT OF LAWS ON CHILD LABOR

The government has established institutional mechanisms for the enforcement of laws and regulations on child labor (Table 5). However, gaps exist within the authority of the Ministry of Labor, Employment, and Social Security that may hinder adequate enforcement of their child labor laws.

Table 5. Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement

Organization/Agency	Role
Ministry of Labor, Employment, and Social Security (MTESS)	Enforce labor laws, including laws related to child labor, through its General Labor Inspectorate, distribute written notices and issue tickets in response to violations, and refer violations to the Ministry of Justice. (6; 21) Supervise the application of laws and regulations related to labor relations, working conditions, and worker safety. (9) Share child labor reports with the Ministry of National Solidarity to ensure follow-up with social services. (9; 11)
Ministry of the Interior and Local Assemblies	Enforce criminal laws related to child trafficking through the Directorate General for National Security, which comprises 8 active brigades of 77 specialized police officers, focused on illegal immigration and human trafficking, and 50 brigades of 300 police officers, specialized in the protection of children. (9; 14; 33; 19)
Ministry of National Defense	Enforce criminal laws pertaining to the worst forms of child labor, including child trafficking, in rural and border regions through the National Gendarmerie. (14) Work with the Directorate General for National Security and NGO Algerian Network for the Defense of Children's Rights to administer hotlines for the reporting of child abuse. (11; 33; 34; 35)
Ministry of Justice	Prosecute child exploitation cases, including those related to non-compliance with labor laws, through its Office of Criminal Affairs and Amnesty Procedures as the lead law enforcement actor for trafficking issues. (34)

Labor Law Enforcement

In 2017, labor law enforcement agencies in Algeria took actions to combat child labor (Table 6). However, gaps exist within the authority of the Ministry of Labor, Employment, and Social Security that may hinder adequate labor law enforcement, including the lack of authorization for the Labor Inspectorate to assess penalties.

Table 6. Labor Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Labor Law Enforcement	2016	2017
Labor Inspectorate Funding	\$21,000,000 (9)	\$17,600,000 (10)
Number of Labor Inspectors	563 (33; 9)	645 (10)
Inspectorate Authorized to Assess Penalties	No (3)	No (10)
Training for Labor Inspectors		
Initial Training for New Employees	Yes (19)	Yes (10)
Training on New Laws Related to Child Labor	N/A (9)	N/A (10)
Refresher Courses Provided	Yes (9)	Yes (10)
Number of Labor Inspections Conducted	11,575 (36)	11,419 (10)
Number Conducted at Worksites	11,575 (3; 9)	11,419 (10)

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Table 6. Labor Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor (cont)

Overview of Labor Law Enforcement	2016	2017
Number of Child Labor Violations Found	12 (36)	141 (10)
Number of Child Labor Violations for Which Penalties were Imposed	Unknown (9)	Unknown (10)
Number of Child Labor Penalties Imposed that were Collected	Unknown (9)	Unknown (10)
Routine Inspections Conducted	Yes (33)	Yes (10)
Routine Inspections Targeted	Yes (33)	Yes (10)
Unannounced Inspections Permitted	Yes (9)	Yes (10)
Unannounced Inspections Conducted	Yes (33)	Yes (10)
Complaint Mechanism Exists	Yes (33; 11)	Yes (10)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Labor Authorities and Social Services	Yes (33)	Yes (10)

The number of labor inspectors is likely insufficient for the size of Algeria's workforce, which includes more than 11.8 million workers. According to the ILO's technical advice of a ratio approaching 1 inspector for every 15,000 workers in developing economies, Algeria should employ roughly 788 inspectors, notably in all geographic areas of the country, both urban and rural. (8; 37; 38) The government conducted a dedicated period of inspections focused solely on child labor violations over 25 days in 2017 and uncovered nine instances of children working below the minimum age of employment. During the reporting period, inspectors issued 60 notices and 81 citations for violations related to child labor, which were then referred to the Ministry of Justice for prosecution and the assessment of penalties. (10)

Criminal Law Enforcement

In 2017, criminal law enforcement agencies in Algeria took actions to combat child labor (Table 7). However, gaps exist within the operations of the criminal enforcement agencies, including the lack of published information on the number of criminal investigations and violations found related to child labor.

Table 7. Criminal Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Criminal Law Enforcement	2016	2017
Training for Investigators		
Initial Training for New Employees	Yes (19)	Yes (10)
Training on New Laws Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor	N/A (9)	N/A (10)
Refresher Courses Provided	Yes (33)	Yes (10)
Number of Investigations	Unknown (9)	Unknown (10)
Number of Violations Found	Unknown (9)	Unknown (10)
Number of Prosecutions Initiated	117 (19)	79 (10)
Number of Convictions	89 (19)	58 (10)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Criminal Authorities and Social Services	Yes (9)	Yes (10)

In April, the National Gendarmerie dismantled a criminal network that was allegedly recruiting underage girls in Mali to work as domestic servants in Algeria. The Ministry of Justice prosecuted 79 cases involving illegal employment of children, economic exploitation of a minor, begging with a child, and employment of a child at night, with 73 percent of the cases ending in conviction. (10) The General Directorate of National Security held 17 trainings on the subject of child victims, benefiting 600 police officers. (10)

The government has an ad hoc practice in place for law enforcement personnel to refer potential victims of human trafficking to the prosecutor, who then notifies social services, as needed. (9; 14; 33; 10)

IV. COORDINATION OF GOVERNMENT EFFORTS ON CHILD LABOR

The government has established mechanisms to coordinate its efforts to address child labor (Table 8).

Table 8. Key Mechanisms to Coordinate Government Efforts on Child Labor

Coordinating Body	Role and Description
National Commission for the Prevention of and Fight Against Child Labor	Prevent and eliminate child labor by coordinating between government ministries and all other agencies that oversee labor activities. (6; 35) Led by the MTESS, with members from the National Labor Union and NGOs, as well as nine other governmental agencies. (35; 39) In 2017, the commission established a new national program focused on child labor awareness-raising activities. (10)
National Committee for the Prevention of and Fight Against Trafficking in Persons	Monitor implementation of the National Action Plan for the Prevention of and Fight Against Trafficking in Persons, established by Decree 16-249. Comprises representatives from the President's Office; the Prime Minister's Office; 12 ministries, including the MTESS; and other government entities. (9; 17; 40) In 2017, the committee started drafting a comprehensive anti-trafficking in persons bill to strengthen existing laws. (10)
National Authority for the Protection and Promotion of Children (ONPPE)	Protect and promote children's rights and provide advocacy for children in danger of economic exploitation. Act as a liaison between the Ministry of Justice and members of the public alleging violations of children's rights. (2; 9; 33) In 2017, established a website and planned to establish a toll-free hotline through which the public can report on child labor violations. (10)

V. GOVERNMENT POLICIES ON CHILD LABOR

The government has established policies related to child labor (Table 9). However, policy gaps exist that hinder efforts to address child labor, including no evidence of a policy regarding other worst forms of child labor beyond the government's policy related to trafficking in persons.

Table 9. Key Policies Related to Child Labor

Policy	Description
National Action Plan for the Prevention of and Fight Against Trafficking in Persons	Aims to prevent and reduce human trafficking by raising awareness of the issue, strengthening legislation, prosecuting trafficking crimes, improving the provision of protective services to victims, and increasing collaboration with national and international NGOs. (9; 14) During the reporting period, drafting of a directive from the Prime Minister establishing a formal process for officials to follow in identifying and caring for potential trafficking victims was started. (10)

Although the Government of Algeria has adopted the National Action Plan for the Prevention of and Fight Against Trafficking in Persons, research found no evidence of a policy regarding other worst forms of child labor.

VI. SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS CHILD LABOR

In 2017, the government funded and participated in programs that include the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor (Table 10). However, gaps exist in these social programs, including the adequacy of programs to address the full scope of the problem.

Table 10. Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor†‡

Program	Description
Child Labor Awareness Campaign*†	The National Commission for the Prevention of and Fight Against Child Labor organized awareness days on the harms of child labor, putting together television and radio programs on the topic, encouraging imams to raise the subject in sermons, and offering assistance to needy families. (10)

* Program was launched during the reporting period.

† Program is funded by the Government of Algeria.

‡ The government had other social programs that may have included the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor. (10; 41)

Although Algeria has programs that target child labor, the scope of these programs is insufficient to fully address the extent of the problem, including the commercial sexual exploitation of children, forced begging, and street work.

VII. SUGGESTED GOVERNMENT ACTIONS TO ELIMINATE CHILD LABOR

Based on the reporting above, suggested actions are identified that would advance the elimination of child labor in Algeria (Table 11).

Table 11. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Legal Framework	Ensure that laws prohibit the use of children in all illicit activities, including using, procuring, and offering children for the production and trafficking of drugs.	2013 – 2017
	Determine the types of hazardous work prohibited for children under age 18, in consultation with employers' and workers' organizations.	2009 – 2017
	Ensure that the law criminally prohibits the recruitment of children under age 18 by non-state armed groups.	2016 – 2017
Enforcement	Publish information on the enforcement of child labor laws, including the number of penalties imposed and collected and the number of criminal investigations and violations.	2009 – 2017
	Increase the number of labor inspectors in accordance with the ILO's technical advice and ensure that child labor laws are enforced in all geographic areas.	2009 – 2017
	Ensure that the Labor Inspectorate is authorized to assess penalties.	2017
Government Policies	Adopt a policy that includes all relevant worst forms of child labor, such as forced begging and commercial sexual exploitation.	2015 – 2017
Social Programs	Research and publish information on children involved in child labor, or at risk of being involved; specify these activities and publish information to inform policies.	2014 – 2017
	Take measures to register children at birth and remove barriers to accessing education, particularly for migrant children and children with disabilities, namely transportation and accessibility to schools.	2015 – 2017
	Expand existing programs to address the scope of the child labor problem.	2016 – 2017

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