

Research report
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Combating the ongoing child labor in East-Asia

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Introduction

Child labor, the exploitation of children through any form of work, is ongoing and therefore an important issue to address. Child labor deprives children up to 15 years old from their childhood, it interferes with their education and it is mentally, physically, socially or morally harmful. Labor in itself does no harm, though in practice there are a lot of negative consequences. We distinguish child labor from adult labor, because children are more vulnerable, the impacts result into more devastating and longer lasting problems. Children's bodies and minds are still developing.

According to UNICEF there are an estimated total of 152 million children (64 million girls and 88 million boys) in child labor globally. East-Asia is one of the multiple areas for which this issue is relevant.

Definition of Key Terms

East-Asia: Area consisting of the countries China, Hong Kong (special administrative region of China), Japan, Macau (special administrative region of China), Mongolia, North Korea, South Korea and Taiwan.

The East-Asian delegations joining the GA3 at Bonamun 2019 consists of the countries China and the DPRK.

Child labor

The employment of children in an industry or business, especially when illegal or considered exploitative. (definition of child labor by the Oxford Dictionary)

General Overview

REGIONAL PREVALENCE OF CHILD LABOUR

■ Africa	19.6%
■ Americas	5.3%
■ Arab States	2.9%
■ Asia and the Pacific	7.4%
■ Europe and Central Asia	4.1%



Global estimation of child labor according to ILO in 2012 to 2016

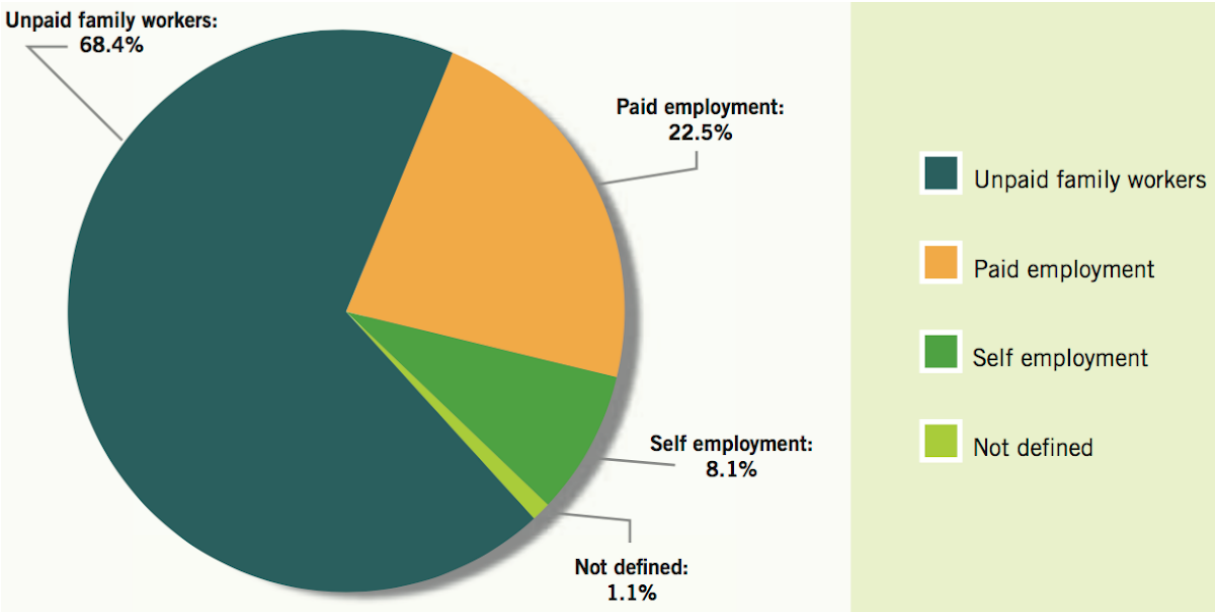
In the image above you see the percentages of child labor in different parts of the world. It is a *general* overview, as it shows a percentage of large areas at a time. Even though the results might not be too specific, it still shows that Asia is not the only continent with child labor, in fact the percentage in Africa is higher than in Asia and the Pacific. Besides this, the image is also referring to *all* sorts of child labor. In the world less than 50 percent of laboring children are working under hazardous conditions. The percentage is not the same in every part in the world; some countries might have more child labor, but a large percentage of work in good conditions than a country with a low percentage of child labor.

The goal of this resolution is to combat the ongoing child labor in East-Asia. There will have to be a limit set for when child labor has to be discouraged or forbidden.

Types of child labor

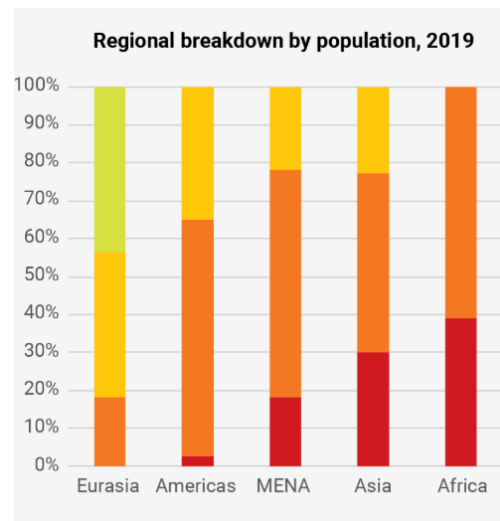
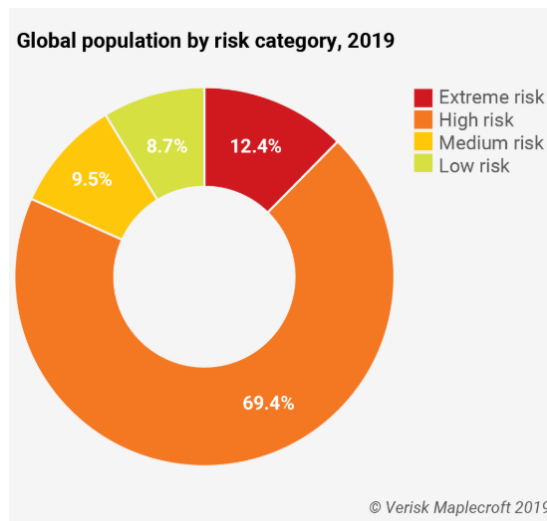
We differentiate child labor in two categories: unconditional worst forms of child labor (absolutely prohibited) and hazardous child labor. Unconditional worst forms of child labor cover types of labor such as slavery, prostitution and work for illicit activities. Under the category hazardous child labor are the kinds of work that can harm the children’s health, safety or morals. It is important to distinguish these different types of labor when referring to solutions, as each type asks for a different solution.

The following diagram shows that, contrary to popular opinion, most working children in the world are unpaid family workers. These children belong in the second type of child labor from the types distinguished above.



Breakdown of ILO-IPEC global estimates of child labor by employment status in 2012

The diagram below gives a good indication on how child labor risks stack up. The left diagram shows the overall risk on a global skill. Whereas the right diagram shows highlights the regions and their degree of risk.



Factors for child labor

The biggest cause of child labor is poverty. Citizens in poor countries rely on their child's income to financially support their families. Another major factor is the lack of education, often combined with a lack of obligatory education.

The economy of a country is not the only thing to blame, especially when talking about the unconditional worst forms of child labor.

Solutions

Globalization can have a positive effect on reducing child labor, because of an increase in labor demand. Even though a bigger demand for labor asks for both adult and child labor, the greater demand for adult labor can result into a reduction of child labor, because of the increase of income from the parents.

There are other solutions such as developing high quality education and providing financial aid to families that need money for their children's education. These more short term solutions will help individuals but will not solve the root cause of child labor in a country. To fix the problem of child labor, a country's development is the best place to start. However, improving living standards will only reduce child labor in the long run (it will take a while).

Major Parties Involved

The ILO (International Labor Organisation): The ILO's goal is to abolish child domestic labor amongst children younger than the minimum legal working age and on eliminating exploitative and hazardous child domestic labor.

DPRK

Opinions about the amount and level of severity of child labor in the DPRK differ a lot.

According to the Assessment of the 3rd Universal Periodic Review (UPR), the DPRK is doing its best to improve human rights of vulnerable groups, such as children. The DPRK also ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography in 2014. This report was issued by the Korea Institute for National Unity.

However, the DPRK does not seem to fully come through on their promises when it comes to these reviews and conventions. Also the overall issue of child labor is still a problem.

Verisk Maplecroft gives a different opinion on the issue of child labor. Verisk Maplecroft ranks the DPRK as number one highest risk for child labor. This company is a UK based worldwide research firm.

China

Chinese authorities have been working on implementing measures to ensure children of internal migrant workers to have social services, such as education. However, China has not published any official statistics on child labor.

USA

The US Department of Labor consists of a Bureau of International Labor Affairs (ILAB). The ILAB has funded projects to eliminate exploitive child labor and forced labor around the world; and has assisted in the development and implementation of U.S. government policy on international child labor, forced labor, and human trafficking issues.

UK

The UK Government started funding a major new programme of the ILO to tackle the worst forms of child labour in several countries in South Asia in 2018.

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