

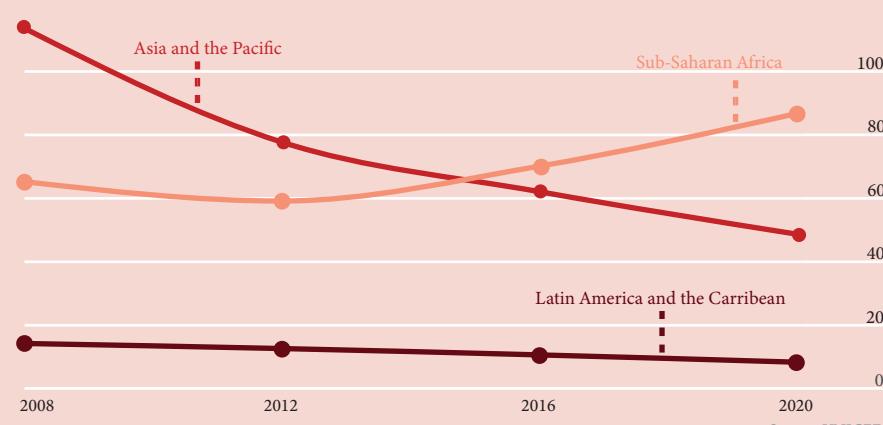
Child Labor in the Democratic Republic of Congo

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is a country located in sub-Saharan Africa. It is mainly known for its rich and natural resources such as copper, gold, coltan, cobalt, and diamonds, and has the earth's second-largest forest after the Amazon. It is also considered the wealthiest country in natural resources, in the world with its untapped raw minerals estimated at \$24 trillion.

Despite its wealth, Congo is one of the least developed countries in the world, and the Congolese population among the poorest. The nation has experienced more than two decades of war and conflict, political instability and corruption, which have affected the growth and development of the country leading to illegal and unethical practices such as child labor to boost the economy.

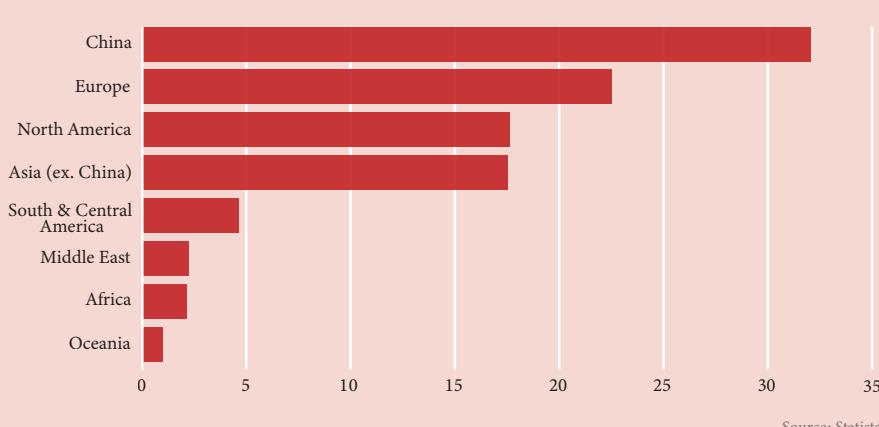
Number of children in child labour by regions (in million)

While child labour has seen a decline in other parts of the world, the number of children in child labour has increased in Sub-Saharan Africa. As of 2023, the DRC ranks 44th in child labour worldwide.



Distribution of cobalt consumption worldwide in 2020 by region (in percent)

More than half of the world's cobalt resources are located in the DRC, and over 70% of the world's cobalt mining occurs there. By 2025, the cobalt demand is projected to grow by 60% due to increased technology-driven surge, which will significantly elevate child labor practices in mines in the DRC.



Worldwide prices of cobalt (in U.S dollars per metric ton)

The price of cobalt ranged between 28,000 and 82,000 U.S dollars per metric ton between August 2019 and August 2023.

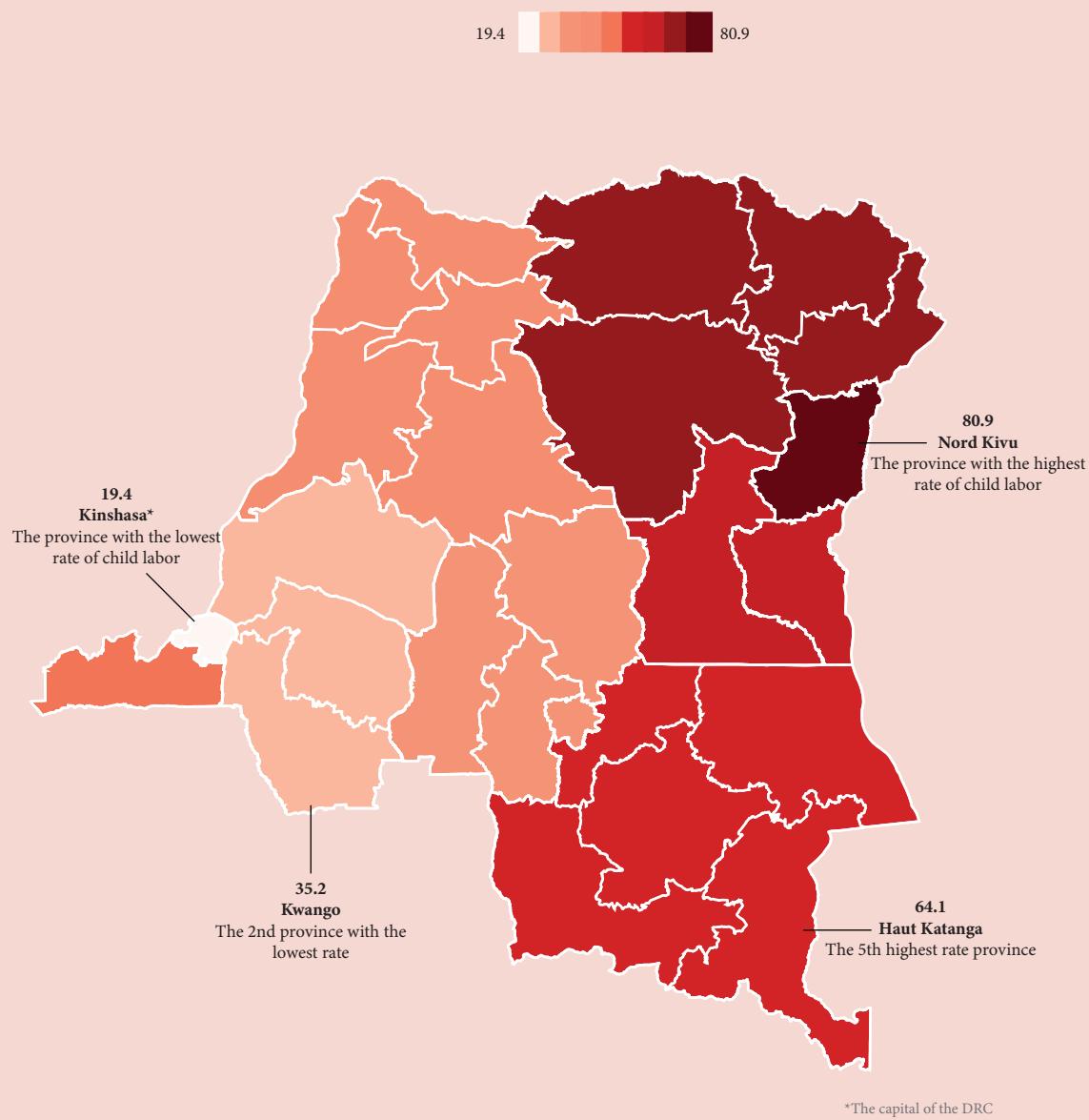


Global trends

According to UNICEF, the latest global estimates indicate that the number of children in child labour has risen to 160 million worldwide (63 million girls and 97 million boys). This is an increase of 8.4 million children in the last four years.



Children aged 5-17 years old working in the DRC per provinces (in percent)



The conditions and impact of children working in the mines

The U.S Department of Labor reported that in 2023, at least 25,000 children were working in cobalt mines in the DRC. The working conditions for children working at mining sites are atrocious.



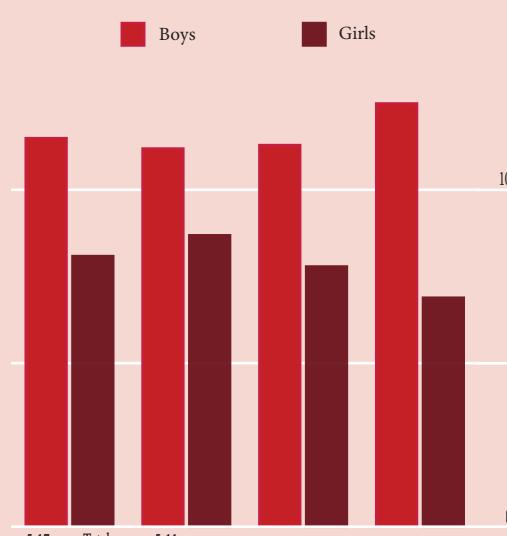
In the mine sites, children are given the same status as adults. They work long hours between 10 to 12 hours per day with little to no breaks.

Child labour has significantly impacted the education of these children. Their attendance and learning outcomes have declined

tremendously especially since children who attend school are still expected to work the same hours as those who don't.

Source: Amnesty International & Humanion Reports

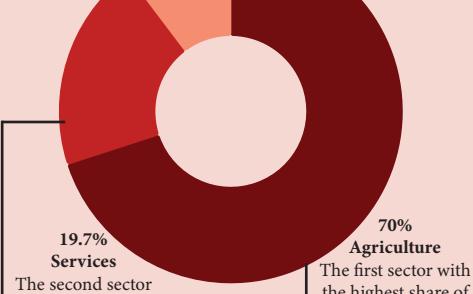
Child labour is more prevalent among boys than girls at every age. But depending on the sector, girls can outnumber boys in certain industries. Percentage of children aged 5 to 17 years in child labour.



10.7% Industry
The sector with the lowest share of child labour

19.7% Services
The second sector with the highest share of child labour

70% Agriculture
The first sector with the highest share of child labour



Source: UNICEF