

MINIMAL ADVANCEMENT – EFFORTS MADE BUT CONTINUED LAW THAT DELAYED ADVANCEMENT

In 2021, Ukraine made minimal advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The government adopted Law No. 1256-IX, which strengthened Ukraine's child protection framework by criminalizing the sexual exploitation of children in accordance with the Council of Europe's Lanzarote Convention. The Office of the Prosecutor General issued Order No. 224 to ensure all Ukrainian government bodies responsible for investigating crimes against children are fully observing the laws and regulations aimed at protecting minors. Additionally, the Ministry of Social Policy collaborated with UNICEF to develop a National Strategy for Children's Rights. However, despite new initiatives to address child labor, Ukraine is assessed as having made only minimal advancement because it continued to uphold Act No. 877-V of 2007, which both restricts labor inspectors' ability to conduct regular workplace visits and places limits on the time, scope, and duration of worksite inspections. Furthermore, in 2021, the National Police opened criminal investigations against 72 children for participation in Russia-led military formations in the so-called "Donetsk People's Republic" and "Luhansk People's Republic," as well as one child in the Russia-led forces in Crimea; it transferred 47 of these cases to courts for prosecution. Children in Ukraine are subjected to the worst forms of child labor, including in the production of pornography. Children also perform dangerous tasks in mining. The government collected few of the financial penalties imposed for child labor violations and lacked social programs designed to assist children engaged in hazardous work in mining. In addition, it remains unclear how Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022 will affect the child labor situation throughout the country.



I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Children in Ukraine are subjected to the worst forms of child labor, including in the production of pornography. Children also perform dangerous tasks in mining. (1-7) Table 1 provides key indicators on children's work and education in Ukraine.

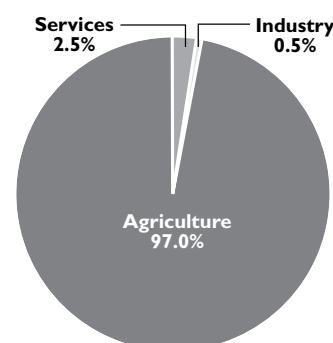
Table 1. Statistics on Children's Work and Education

Children	Age	Percent
Working (% and population)	5 to 14	9.7 (385,204)
Attending School (%)	5 to 14	97.2
Combining Work and School (%)	7 to 14	12.0
Primary Completion Rate (%)		102.6

Source for primary completion rate: Data from 2014, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2022. (2)

Source for all other data: International Labor Organization's analysis of statistics from National Child Labour Survey (NCLS), 2015. (3)

Figure 1. Working Children by Sector, Ages 5-14



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, activities unknown (1,4-6,8,9)
	Raising livestock, activities unknown (10)
Industry	Construction, activities unknown (1,4,7,11,12)
	Mining,† including loading, transporting, and sorting coal, and extracting amber (1,5-7,9,11,13)
Services	Street work, including distributing advertising leaflets, street trade, washing cars, and begging (1,4,6-8,14)

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

Sector/Industry	Activity
Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor†	Commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking (1,4,12,14)
	Use in the production of pornography (1,5,7,11,12,15)
	Recruitment of children by non-state armed groups for use in armed conflict (7,11,14)
	Forced begging (1,7,9,11,12,14,16,17)

† Determined by national law or regulation as hazardous and, as such, relevant to Article 3(d) of ILO C. 182.

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

Children from Ukraine are trafficked both internationally and domestically for commercial sexual exploitation and forced begging. (7,12,14,17) The Ministry of Social Protection noted that due to the pandemic, many children spent more time on the Internet and were at increased risk of cybercrime victimization, including in the production and distribution of pornographic content. (18) The pandemic also increased the risk of internal trafficking for children, particularly for labor exploitation and forced criminal activities. (17) Girls from single-parent families, youth from disadvantaged families, children with disabilities and homeless, orphaned, and poor children, especially those living in state-run institutions, are at high risk of being trafficked. (14,17-19) Some state-run orphanages have used children for illegal labor in business, seasonal agricultural work, construction, and sexual exploitation. (1,10,12) Ukraine is a transit and destination country for refugees from Afghanistan, the Russian Federation, Bangladesh, Syria, and Iraq. Refugee children lack access to state-run children’s shelters, face challenges receiving birth registration documents, and experience heightened vulnerability to child trafficking. (18-20)

Through the end of 2021, Russia’s operations in eastern Ukraine resulted in more than 1.4 million IDPs, including more than 190,000 children. (21,22) These numbers climbed far higher in 2022, with millions of additional children been forced to leave their homes. (23) It remains unclear how the war will affect the child labor situation throughout the country, though refugee and IDP children (particularly those who are unaccompanied) are especially vulnerable to exploitation in the worst forms of child labor. (19,24,25) In addition, there is limited information about the types of work that children perform and the sectors in which they work in Russia-controlled territory in the Donbas region and Russia-occupied Crimea. However, available data suggest that some children in these areas, in particular boys ages 11 to 16, engaged in illegal coal mining in the Donbas region. (1,7)

Reports also indicate that thousands of children participate in military-style training or other military-style activities carried out by Russia-led forces in "Donetsk People’s Republic" and "Luhansk People’s Republic," and by Russia’s occupation authorities in Crimea. (1,7) During the reporting period, proxy groups backed by Russia continued to recruit children to take part in armed combat. Children were trained in weapons use and organized into reserve militia battalions at militant-run camps and school programs located in territory controlled by Russia’s proxies. (1,7,11,22)

Children in Donetsk and Luhansk face challenges being registered at birth, which can prevent them from receiving Ukrainian identity documents. This, in turn, limits their ability to enroll in school and puts them at risk of statelessness. (26) Although a judicial procedure exists to provide children born in Donetsk and Luhansk with Ukrainian birth certificates, fewer than half of the children born in these areas are estimated to have obtained a birth certificate issued by the Government of Ukraine. A law adopted in 2018 provides for any civil registry office to issue a Ukrainian birth registration on the basis of a birth certificate issued in Donetsk and Luhansk. (27) In 2021, the government adopted amendments to this law to clarify the status of many Ukrainians living in these territories. (17)

In addition, members of the Roma community continue to face barriers to education, including a lack of access to alternative preschool programs, discrimination in admissions and in the school environment, the lack of inclusive approaches in the school system, and low social services support for Roma families. Roma families can also lack a registered residence, which further complicates their children’s school enrollment. (1,7) Additionally, up to a third




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of children from Roma communities also lack birth registration, impeding their access to education. (19) Some children, especially those from poor families and those with special needs, could not participate in distance learning because they lack access to the Internet or computer equipment. (1,7)

II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR CHILD LABOR

Ukraine 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 Ukraine's legal framework to adequately protect children from the worst forms of child labor, including failure to prohibit the commercial sexual exploitation of children.

Table 4. Laws and Regulations on Child Labor

Standard	Meets International Standards	Age	Legislation
Minimum Age for Work	Yes	16	Article 150 of the Criminal Code; Article 188 of the Labor Code; Article 21 of the Law on the Protection of Childhood (28-30)
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	No	18	Article 150 of the Criminal Code; Article 190 of the Labor Code; Article 21 of the Law on the Protection of Childhood (28-30)
Identification of Hazardous Occupations or Activities Prohibited for Children	Yes		Article 150-1 of the Criminal Code; Order of the Ministry of Health No. 46 on the approval of the list of heavy work and work with dangerous and harmful working conditions, in which the employment of minors is prohibited; Article 190 of the Labor Code (28,29,31)
Prohibition of Forced Labor	Yes		Articles 149, 172, and 173 of the Criminal Code; Article 43 of the Constitution of Ukraine; Article 1 of the Law on Employment (28,32,33)
Prohibition of Child Trafficking	Yes		Article 149 of the Criminal Code; Article 32 of the Law on the Protection of Childhood (28,30)
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	No		Articles 149 and 301–303 of the Criminal Code; Articles 10 and 21 of the Law on the Protection of Childhood; Articles 1, 6, and 7 of the Law on the Protection of Public Morality; Law on Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of Ukraine on Combating the Distribution of Child Pornography (28,30,34,35)
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities	Yes		Articles 304 and 307 of the Criminal Code; Articles 10 and 21 of the Law on the Protection of Childhood (28,30)
Minimum Age for Voluntary State Military Recruitment	Yes	17	Articles 15 and 20 of the Law on Military Duty and Military Service (36)
Prohibition of Compulsory Recruitment of Children by (State) Military	Yes		Article 15 of the Law on Military Duty and Military Service; Decree No. 447 on Measures to Improve the Defense Capabilities of the State (36,37)
Prohibition of Military Recruitment by Non-state Armed Groups	Yes		Article 30 of the Law on the Protection of Childhood (30)

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

Standard	Meets International Standards	Age	Legislation
Compulsory Education Age	Yes	17‡	Articles 3, 12, and 20 of the Law on General Secondary Education; Article 53 of the Constitution (32,38)
Free Public Education	Yes		Article 53 of the Constitution of Ukraine; Article 2 of the Law on General Secondary Education (32,38)

‡ Age calculated based on available information (38)

Because the minimum age for work is lower than the compulsory education age, children may be encouraged to leave school before the completion of compulsory education. (28-30,38) Furthermore, the Ministry of Health Order No. 46 does not prohibit children between ages 14 and 16 from engaging in hazardous work as part of a vocational training program, which is not in compliance with international standards. Although the law specifies that children in these training programs may be onsite for no more than 4 hours and must remain in strict compliance with applicable safety norms and rules and regulations on labor protection, this is not in compliance with international standards. (39,40) In April 2021, the District Administrative Court of Kyiv rescinded Decree No. 823 of 2019, which outlined procedural rules for labor inspections conducted by the State Labor Service (SLS) and restricted inspectors' authority to conduct worksite visits, both proactively and in response to complaints. (41,42) However, Decree No. 877 of 2007 (Fundamental Principles of State Supervision and Monitoring of Economic Activity) continues to restrict inspectors' ability to undertake inspections without giving employers prior notice, in addition to effectively limiting the frequency of allowed inspections. (41,43)

During the reporting period, the government of Ukraine adopted Law No. 1256-IX—On Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of Ukraine on the Implementation of the Council of Europe Convention for the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Violence (Lanzarote Convention)—which includes enhanced punishment for storing and viewing child sexual abuse material and online child grooming. (7,17,44,45) However, Ukraine does not sufficiently prohibit commercial sexual exploitation of children because, while Articles 302 and 303 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine criminalize involvement of a minor in prostitution and pimping involving minors, no law criminalizes the users (clients) of prostitution involving children. Further, the law does not sufficiently prohibit commercial sexual exploitation because the use, procuring, or offering of children in pornographic performances is not expressly prohibited. (28,44,46)

The Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine adopted Resolution No. 531 on Amendments to the Procedure for Establishing the Status of a Victim of Trafficking in Persons, which improved the existing procedures of establishing victim status and granted increased authority to the National Social Service (NSS) to certify human trafficking victims to allow receipt of government services. (17,47)

The government also adopted Amendments to Law No. 1916-IX to codify the right of Ukrainians, including children, living in the temporarily Russia-occupied territories encompassing parts of Luhansk and Donetsk Oblasts, Crimea, and the city of Sevastopol to register their residencies and obtain identity documents. These amendments clarify the status of many Ukrainians living in these areas where Russia has distributed Russian passports, in some cases forcibly, and left many residents, including children, in ambiguous status and more vulnerable to human trafficking. (17,48)

In 2021, the Government of Ukraine began drafting several pieces of legislation related to child labor: On Amendments to the Criminal Code of Ukraine on Strengthening Criminal Liability for Trafficking in Human Beings (Reg. No. 5134, 22 February 2002); On Amendments to Article 149 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine on Ensuring Harmonization of Criminal Legislation with Provisions of International Law Concerning the Regulation of Criminal Liability for Trafficking in Human Beings (Reg. No. 5134-I, March 2021); and On Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of Ukraine on Delimitation of Executive and Local Governments on Social Protection and Protection of Children's Rights with the establishment of the National Social Service and its territorial

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bodies (Reg. No. 5849, August 2021). Regulation No. 5849 includes provisions to improve human trafficking victims' access to assistance by allowing them to apply for victim status with their local government. (17)

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 operations of enforcement agencies that may hinder adequate enforcement of their child labor laws.

Table 5. Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement

Organization/Agency	Role
State Labor Service within the Ministry of Economic Development, Trade and Agriculture	Enforces labor laws, including laws on child labor, by conducting inspections. (1,7,11)
Ministry of Internal Affairs	Enforces criminal laws against the worst forms of child labor, including child trafficking. (1,7,11)
Security Service of Ukraine	Tracks recruitment and use of children in armed conflict. (1,7,11)
Office of the Prosecutor General	Investigates and prosecutes cases related to the worst forms of child labor. Oversees a department and regional offices for the Protection of Interests of Children and Combating Violence that focuses on the worst forms of child labor. (1) Ensures compliance with laws and regulations aimed at protecting minors by other government bodies investigating crimes against children. (1,7,49)

The Office of the Prosecutor General (OPG) has established a department and regional offices for the Protection of Interests of Children and Combating Violence. These regional offices are responsible for conducting pre-trial investigations and investigations of criminal offenses, filing appeals of court decisions relating to children's issues, providing legal representation to children, and supporting the execution of court decisions in the sphere of child protection. (7,44) In 2021, the OPG issued Order No. 224 "On the Authorization of Employees of the Department for the Protection of Interests of Children and Combating Violence." This order authorizes the department to conduct inspections to ensure that government bodies tasked with enforcing and investigating crimes against children (such as the National Police of Ukraine, the Security Service of Ukraine, the State Bureau of Investigation, the State Fiscal Service of Ukraine, the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine, and the State Penitentiary Service of Ukraine along with their territorial divisions) are fully observing the laws and regulations aimed at protecting minors. (7,49) Regional offices of the SLS signed cooperation agreements to share information about child labor cases with regional offices of the National Police of Ukraine, regional employment centers, the Department of Child Affairs, trade union leaders, regional social services organizations, and centers dedicated to social protection. (1,7) Russia-occupied Crimea and areas controlled by Russia-led forces in the Donbas region of eastern Ukraine are not under the control of the Ukrainian government, which is prevented from carrying out inspections and law enforcement actions there. (45)

Labor Law Enforcement

In 2021, labor law enforcement agencies in Ukraine took actions to address child labor (Table 6). However, gaps exist within the operations of the SLS that may hinder adequate labor law enforcement, including the inability of the SLS to compel payment of delinquent fines without a court proceeding.

Table 6. Labor Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Labor Law Enforcement	2020	2021
Labor Inspectorate Funding	\$16.3 million (1)	\$16.9 million (7)
Number of Labor Inspectors	1,199 (7)	772 (7)
Mechanism to Assess Civil Penalties	Yes (43)	Yes (43)
Initial Training for New Labor Inspectors	Yes (1)	Yes (7)
Training on New Laws Related to Child Labor	Yes (1)	Yes (7)
Refresher Courses Provided	Yes (1)	Yes (7)
Number of Labor Inspections Conducted	17,330 (7)	16,008 (7)
Number Conducted at Worksites	17,330 (7)	16,008 (7)

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

Overview of Labor Law Enforcement	2020	2021
Number of Child Labor Violations Found	57 (7)	127 (7)
Number of Child Labor Violations for Which Penalties Were Imposed	57 (7)	127 (7)
Number of Child Labor Penalties Imposed that Were Collected	11 (7)	13 (7)
Routine Inspections Conducted	Yes (1)	Yes (7)
Routine Inspections Targeted	Yes (1)	Yes (7)
Unannounced Inspections Permitted	Yes (42)	Yes (42)
Unannounced Inspections Conducted	Yes (1)	Yes (7)
Complaint Mechanism Exists	Yes (1)	Yes (7)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Labor Authorities and Social Services	Yes (1)	Yes (7)

The 39 percent decrease in the number of inspectors, from 1,199 in 2000 to 772 in 2021, resulted from changes in legislation that prohibit officials from having a dual role. Members of executive bodies of city councils or local communities are no longer able to serve as certified labor inspectors to conduct inspections. (7)

During the reporting period, all new labor inspectors received ILO-approved training upon hiring. (7) Sources note that training for labor inspectors on child trafficking may be inadequate, especially outside of Kyiv. (14,19) Although local inspectors are certified by the SLS, their training may be inadequate and inconsistent with the training given to inspectors employed directly by the SLS. (46) In 2021, the OSCE conducted online training sessions for labor inspectors from around Ukraine to improve detecting and preventing labor exploitation and human trafficking. (7)

In 2021, the SLS reported a total of 2,600 child labor-related unannounced site inspections. Identified instances of child labor were in services (44 companies), industry (6 enterprises), agriculture (11 enterprises), and other (12 enterprises). (7) Inspections identified 360 children under the age of 18 who were employed illegally. This included 329 children between the ages of 16 and 18, 14 children between the ages of 15 and 16, 14 children between the ages of 14 and 15, and 3 children under the age of 14. (7) The SLS is not authorized to compel payment of delinquent fines without a court proceeding, which can delay the collection of penalties. (1,11)

Criminal Law Enforcement

In 2021, criminal law enforcement agencies in Ukraine took actions to address child labor (Table 7). However, gaps exist within the authority of the criminal enforcement agencies that may hinder adequate criminal law enforcement, including a lack of information on criminal convictions for the worst forms of child labor.

Table 7. Criminal Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Criminal Law Enforcement	2020	2021
Initial Training for New Criminal Investigators	Yes (1)	Yes (7)
Training on New Laws Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor	Yes (1)	Yes (7)
Refresher Courses Provided	Yes (1)	Yes (7)
Number of Investigations	262 (1)	1,265† (7)
Number of Violations Found	188 (1)	802† (7)
Number of Prosecutions Initiated	188 (1)	802† (7)
Number of Convictions	Unknown (1)	Unknown
Imposed Penalties for Violations Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor	Unknown (1)	Unknown
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Criminal Authorities and Social Services	Yes (1)	Yes (7)

† Data are from January 2021 to November 2021.

The National Police reported identifying 25 minors as human trafficking victims in 2021, all of whom were used for commercial sexual exploitation or the production of pornography; it did not provide specific information on these cases. (7,17)

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The OPG referred 802 cases related to the worst forms of child labor for prosecution, including 19 cases of trafficking in persons of a minor, 155 cases of the use of children for the production of pornography, 232 cases of distribution or sale of child pornography, 3 cases of criminal exploitation of child labor or forced begging, 13 cases of sexual violence committed against a minor, 281 cases of sexual intercourse with a person under the age of 16, and 19 cases of engaging minors in criminal activity. (7) The outcomes of these cases are unknown, as the OPG does not track convictions in cases related to the worst forms of child labor. (1,7,11)

In 2021, the National Police opened criminal cases against 72 children for participation in Russia-led military formations in the so-called "Donetsk People's Republic" and "Luhansk People's Republic," as well as 1 child in the Russia-led forces in Crimea; it transferred 47 of these cases to courts for prosecution. The status of these cases is unknown. (1,7)

The National Police acknowledged instances of involvement of minors in amber or coal extraction in Ukraine, but they provided no information on efforts taken to address this issue. (7)

In October 2021, the Council of Europe launched a new course on family law and human rights under the project Combating Violence Against Children in Ukraine. Representatives of the legal community in Ukraine participated in the course, which provides an overview of child-friendly justice and good practices in cases involving children's rights. (50) In addition, the OSCE and IOM conducted several trainings to strengthen the capacity of Ukrainian government bodies and NGOs to work together to address human trafficking. Activities included participants from 10 oblasts, including police, investigators, social services providers, psychologists, labor inspectors, state labor service officials, officials responsible for granting victim of trafficking status, and NGO representatives. (17,51)

IV. COORDINATION OF GOVERNMENT EFFORTS ON CHILD LABOR

The government has established mechanisms to coordinate its efforts to address child labor (Table 8). However, gaps exist that hinder the effective coordination of efforts to address child labor, including efforts to address all forms of child labor.

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

Coordinating Body	Role & Description
Inter-Ministerial Counter-Trafficking Coordination Council	Led by the Ministry of Social Policy (MSP), which serves as the National Coordinator for Counter-Trafficking Policy and includes more than 20 government entities and representatives from regional governments, NGOs, and international organizations. (12) This body was not active during the reporting period. (17)
National Referral Mechanism	Identifies victims of human trafficking, including children, and refers victims to appropriate government agencies for assistance and services. Implemented by the MSP in its capacity as the National Coordinator for Counter-Trafficking Policy. (1,12) The Cabinet of Ministers approved Resolution No. 585 to clarify the National Referral Mechanism's role in providing social protection for vulnerable children. The referral mechanism operates between the MSP, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and the OPG, and facilitates coordination between government agencies when child victims are identified. (1,7) Research was unable to determine whether this mechanism was active during the reporting period. (7)
Office of the Ombudsman for Children's Rights	Monitors protection of the rights of children and fulfillment of international obligations to protect children's rights, including by preventing child labor. Coordinates the development of laws on child protection and informs the public on children's rights. (52)

Although Ukraine has established the Inter-Ministerial Counter-Trafficking Coordination Council to coordinate efforts to address child trafficking, it does not have coordinating mechanisms to address other forms of child labor, including in mining and agriculture.

The NSS, formed in 2020 with the purpose of implementing state policies for social protection and children's rights, including those on human trafficking, assumed the duties of granting, refusing, extending, revoking, and managing human trafficking victim status in May 2021. (17,47) With the ongoing decentralization reform process that consolidated rayons and communities in August 2020, the Ministry of Social Policy (MSP) and NSS are transferring the responsibility for identifying human trafficking victims and administering the certification process to local and regional authorities. The MSP, the NSS, and partner organizations began providing training for those

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officials in effectively assisting potential victims. (17) However, the new local administrative structures are not yet officially part of the National Referral Mechanism. The necessary legislation is pending, and the gap has resulted in some confusion over responsibilities. (17)

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 coverage of all worst forms of child labor.

Table 9. Key Policies Related to Child Labor

Policy	Description
National Action Plan for Implementation of UN CRC (2017–2021)	Identified priorities in the area of child protection, including improving measures to address the worst forms of child labor and increasing coordination between government agencies and NGOs. (1,6,8,53,54) During the reporting period, MSP collaborated with UNICEF to develop a new National Strategy for Children's Rights that prioritizes implementation of activities related to CRC. (55)
Resolution on the Social Protection of Children and Urgent Measures to Protect the Rights of the Child	Directs the government to develop additional programs and social services to protect children against abuse, including the worst forms of child labor. Includes a provision on measures that specifically address the participation of children in armed conflict. (11,56) Research was unable to determine whether actions were undertaken to implement this policy during the reporting period.
Memorandum of Understanding between the ILO and Ukraine (2020–2024)	Establishes terms of agreement between ILO and the government on cooperation to implement the Decent Work Country Program in Ukraine. (57) Research was unable to determine whether activities were undertaken to implement this policy during the reporting period.

Although the Government of Ukraine has adopted the National Action Plan for Countering Human Trafficking, the National Action Plan for Implementation of UN CRC, and the Resolution on the Social Protection of Children, research found no evidence of a policy on other worst forms of child labor, including hazardous child labor in mining. (1,7,11)

In July 2021, the Government of Ukraine approved a concept paper, entitled "Concept of the State Social Program to Combat Trafficking in Persons until 2025," which will serve as the basis for a new countertrafficking strategy to cover 2021–2025. In September 2021, the MSP convened a working group composed of members of the National Police of Ukraine, OPG, various NGOs, and other stakeholders, to discuss the draft, but no further progress was made. (17)

In March 2021, President Zelenskyy approved Ukraine's National Strategy on Human Rights, which includes the rights of children, and in June 2021, the government approved the action plan to execute that strategy. (17,58,59)

VI. SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS CHILD LABOR

In 2021, the government funded and participated in programs that may contribute to eliminating or preventing child labor (Table 10). However, gaps exist in these social programs, including the inadequacy of programs to address the full scope of the problem.

Table 10. Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor

Program	Description
Directorate for the Development of Social Services and Protection of Children's Rights†	Established under MSP in March 2020 to address the needs of vulnerable children. (18) Research was unable to determine whether this body was active during the reporting period.
Shelters and Centers for Socio-Psychological Rehabilitation of Children†	Serve children in need, including child victims of trafficking, through 82 centers, including 8 children's shelters. Children are provided with individual assistance programs that involve social, psychological, pedagogical, medical, legal, and other types of assistance. (12,19) Government officials report that there is a lack of resources and specialized personnel to assist child victims of sexual exploitation through these centers. (19) Research was unable to determine whether the shelters were active during the reporting period.
Centers for Social Services for Family, Youth, and Children†	Centers, in coordination with municipal authorities, provide social services for vulnerable children and families, including victims of human trafficking. (58) Research was unable to determine whether the centers were active during the reporting period.

† Program is funded by the Government of Ukraine.

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During the reporting period, the UNICEF Ukraine Business Advisory Board was developed to encourage private sector entities to support initiatives that defend children's rights. The Board's inaugural meeting emphasized the importance of businesses bearing responsibility for innovation in the realms of responsible consumption and ecological concerns, with an emphasis on children's health and well-being. (59)

In 2020, Ukraine's Cabinet of Ministers adopted Resolution No. 585, which established a procedure for social protection of children in difficult situations, including children who are victims of abuse. (1,60) The Centers for Social Services for Family, Youth, and Children have historically experienced a large turnover of staff due to an excessive workload and low pay. (61) Although the Government of Ukraine has implemented programs to assist child victims of human trafficking, research found no evidence that it has carried out programs specifically designed to assist children in other forms of child labor, including hazardous work in mining.

In November 2021, Ukraine's Cabinet of Ministers adopted Resolution No. 126, which established a Hotline for Combating Human Trafficking, Domestic Violence, Sexual Violence, and Violence against Children. (17)

During the reporting period the OPG and oblast and rayon prosecutor's offices established specialized units to handle cases involving children. In addition, the OPG, with the assistance of UNICEF, established specialized centers for child victims or witnesses. (17) These children's centers are open and operating in Mykolayiv and Vinnytsya oblasts, and are planned for Chernivtsi, Odesa, and Ternopil oblasts, as well as Kyiv. (17)

Employees of the Local Units of the State Migration Service, who are trained in identifying human trafficking victims as well as child interviewing techniques, provided social, psychological, legal, and medical assistance to children who are separated from their families and may have been placed in shelters. (17)

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 Ukraine (Table 11).

Table 11. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Legal Framework	Raise the minimum age for work to the age up to which education is compulsory.	2018 – 2021
	Prohibit all children under age 16 from working in hazardous occupations during vocational training.	2011 – 2021
	Criminally prohibit and penalize the use of a child for prostitution, and the use, procuring, or offering of children in pornographic performances.	2019 – 2021
	Strengthen the labor inspection system by removing restrictions on labor inspectors' authority to conduct unannounced onsite inspections, both proactively and in response to complaints.	2019-2021
Enforcement	Authorize the State Labor Service to enforce collection of delinquent penalties to ensure that all penalties imposed are collected.	2019 – 2021
	Ensure that all labor inspectors, including those working outside the capital, receive training on child trafficking.	2019 – 2021
	Ensure that labor inspectors employed by regional governments receive adequate training that is consistent with that provided to labor inspectors employed by the State Labor Service.	2019 – 2021
	Increase funding for the State Labor Service to ensure that the labor inspectorate has adequate capacity to address the scope of the child labor problem.	2019 – 2021
	Publish criminal law enforcement information.	2021
	Hold perpetrators of the worst forms of child labor, including child soldiering, accountable. Ensure that former child soldiers are not penalized for crimes they were forced to commit.	2021
Coordination	Ensure that all coordinating bodies are active and able to carry out their intended mandates.	2020 – 2021
	Establish coordinating mechanisms to address all worst forms of child labor.	2019 – 2021
Government Policies	Adopt a policy that addresses all relevant worst forms of child labor, including hazardous child labor in mining.	2018 – 2021
	Implement all policies addressing child labor, including the National Action Plan for Implementation of UN CRC and the Resolution on the Social Protection of Children and Urgent Measures to Protect the Rights of the Child.	2019 – 2021

Table 11. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor (Cont.)

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Social Programs	Conduct research to gather comprehensive data on child labor, including the activities carried out by children working in mining, farming, raising animals, and construction, to inform policies and programs.	2019 – 2021
	Ensure that refugee children are allowed to receive services at state-run children's shelters and can be registered at birth.	2019 – 2021
	Establish a procedure to implement the law empowering any civil registry office to issue a Ukrainian birth registration on the basis of a birth certificate issued in the areas of Donetsk and Luhansk.	2019 – 2021
	Develop programs to ensure that Roma children are registered at birth and are able to access education.	2010 – 2021
	Allocate resources and trained personnel to assist with child victims of illegal labor in business, seasonal agriculture work, construction, and commercial sexual exploitation in all state-run facilities that serve children in need.	2020 – 2021
	Expand educational opportunities for children without Internet access and those with special needs.	2020 – 2021
	Ensure that there are sufficient resources for the Centers for Social Services for Family, Youth, and Children to assist child victims of human trafficking.	2013 – 2021
	Implement social programs to assist children subjected to all forms of child labor, including mining.	2020 – 2021
	Institute a rehabilitation and reintegration program for children engaged in armed conflict.	2021

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