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Algeria

MINIMAL ADVANCEMENT

In 2024, Algeria made minimal advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The Penal Code was amended in 2024 to increase criminal penalties for inciting, promoting, or facilitating corruption of a child and for organized criminal groups forcing children to beg. The government also increased the labor inspectorate’s budget by 23.8 percent, allowing for increased office space, vehicle purchases, and other improvements. However, Algerian law does not provide increased penalties for, or categorize as a separate crime, the use, procuring, or offering of children in the production or trafficking of drugs. In addition, the government has not determined by national law or regulation the types of work that are hazardous for children. Moreover, implementation of existing social programs is insufficient to address the full scope of the child labor problem, including street work and forced begging.

PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Statistics on Children’s Work and Education		
Children	Age	Percent and Population
Working	5 to 14	3.6% (Unavailable)
Hazardous Work by Children	15 to 17	Unavailable
Attending School	5 to 14	94.8%
Combining Work and School	7 to 14	3.9%

Children in Algeria are subjected to the worst forms of child labor, including in forced begging. Children also engage in construction and street vending.

Overview of Children’s Work by Sector and Activity	
Agriculture	Farming, fishing, and forestry.
Industry	Construction. Manufacturing in small metalworking and carpentry shops.
Services	Street work, including vending and begging. Working in small businesses, including mechanics’ shops, sewing, and restaurants.
Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor‡	Forced begging. Commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking.

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

SUGGESTED GOVERNMENT ACTIONS TO ELIMINATE CHILD LABOR

The suggested government actions below would close gaps USDOL has identified in Algeria’s implementation of its international commitments to eliminate the worst forms of child labor.

Area	Suggested Action
Legal Framework	Increase penalties for, or categorize as a separate crime, using, procuring, and offering children for the production and trafficking of drugs.
	Determine the types of hazardous work prohibited for children under age 18, in consultation with employers’ and workers’ organizations.
	Criminally prohibit the recruitment of children under age 18 by non-state armed groups.
Enforcement	Publish disaggregated data by age on criminal law enforcement efforts, including forced child labor, commercial sexual exploitation, and trafficking.
	Increase the number of labor inspectors from 725 to 868 to ensure adequate coverage of the labor force of approximately 13 million people and ensure that the number of labor inspections conducted is commensurate with the size of the labor inspectorate to maintain adequate quality and scope of inspections.

Area	Suggested Action
	Increase labor inspections in informal workplaces, such as construction sites, and conduct inspections of informal workplaces in the absence of a complaint.
Coordination	Ensure that the National Council for the Protection and Promotion of Children publicly publishes its annual report on the rights of children in Algeria to inform enforcement, coordination, policies, and programs related to addressing the worst forms of child labor.
Government Policies	Adopt a national policy that includes all relevant worst forms of child labor, such as forced begging and street work.
Social Programs	Expand existing social programs to address the full scope of the child labor problem, including street work and forced begging. Take measures to remove barriers to education, including improving the process for children to obtain birth documentation needed to enroll in school.

CHILDREN AT HIGHER RISK

Children from sub-Saharan Africa, including those who are unaccompanied, are sometimes exploited through commercial sexual exploitation and forced begging. Children who lack legal documentation, including sub-Saharan African children and those fleeing unrest in neighboring countries, are vulnerable to labor exploitation and face violence, widespread social discrimination, and barriers to formal employment. As a result, these children generally work under informal arrangements, often in exploitative conditions.

BARRIERS TO EDUCATION ACCESS

The Algerian public education system is free and compulsory for all children ages 6 to 16, regardless of ethnicity and nationality. Despite universal access to education, schools in the southern regions of Algeria face attendance problems, with some children as young as age 13 or 14 dropping out of school. Non-Algerian children face other barriers to education, such as required documentation of grade level or testing to determine their level. In addition, children who do not speak Arabic, the language of instruction, face challenges in the Algerian education system, and some families may also not be familiar with Algerian law granting free education to all children. Despite assistance from international organizations to address documentation barriers, these informal restrictions to education access result in absence from school and contribute to increased vulnerability to child labor.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR CHILD LABOR

Algeria has ratified all key international conventions concerning child labor. However, Algeria's laws do not meet international standards on the use of children in illicit activities or identification of hazardous occupations or activities prohibited for children.

Laws and Regulations on Child Labor			
Standard	Age	Meets	
		International Standards	Legislation
Minimum Age for Work	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
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	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
Identification of Hazardous Occupations or Activities Prohibited for Children		X	
Prohibition of Slavery, Debt Bondage, and Forced Labor		✓	Article 303 <i>bis</i> 4 of the Penal Code

Laws and Regulations on Child Labor			
Standard	Age	Meets International Standards	Legislation
Prohibition of Child Trafficking		✓	Articles 303 <i>bis</i> 4 and 319 <i>bis</i> of the Penal Code; Articles 1 and 2(1) of Law No. 23-04 on Trafficking in Persons
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children		✓	Articles 2, 319, 333 <i>bis</i> 1, 343, and 344 of the Penal Code; Article 2(1) of Law No. 23-04 on Trafficking in Persons
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities		✗	Article 16 <i>bis</i> 1 of Law No. 04-18 on Narcotics and Psychotropic Substances; Article 342 of the Penal Code
Minimum Age for Voluntary State Military Recruitment	18	✓	Article 14 of Presidential Decree No. 08-134 on the National People's Army
Prohibition of Compulsory Recruitment of Children by (State) Military		✓	Article 3 of Law No. 14-06 on National Service
Prohibition of Military Recruitment by Non-state Armed Groups		✗	
Compulsory Education Age	16	✓	Article 12 of Law No. 08-04 on National Education
Free Public Education		✓	Article 13 of Law No. 08-04 on National Education

In 2024, Law No. 24-06 went into effect, amending the Penal Code to increase the criminal penalties for inciting, promoting, or facilitating corruption of a child and for organized criminal groups forcing children to beg. While Algeria does criminalize the use of children in the promotion of illicit substances, Algerian law does not provide increased penalties for, or categorize as a separate crime, the use, procuring, or offering of children in the production or trafficking of drugs. Furthermore, Algeria has not determined by national law or regulation the types of work that are hazardous for children.

ENFORCEMENT OF LAWS ON CHILD LABOR

In 2024, labor and criminal law enforcement agencies in Algeria took actions to address child labor. However, labor inspectors do not inspect informal workplaces in the absence of a complaint.

Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement	
Ministry of Labor, Employment, and Social Security:	Enforces labor laws, including laws related to child labor, through its labor inspectorate. Issues citations and refers violations to the Ministry of Justice for prosecution. Also refers children found in child labor to the Ministry of National Solidarity, Family, and the Condition of Women to ensure follow-up with social services. Chairs the Interministerial Committee Against Child Labor involving 12 other government ministries and prioritized child labor inspections according to the ministry's 2023 action plan.
Ministry of Justice:	Prosecutes criminal cases—including forced child labor, child trafficking, sexual exploitation, and use of children in illicit activities—and is the lead enforcement agency for human trafficking issues. During legal proceedings, appoints a special judge familiar with the needs of minors if a child does not have a parent. Assigns criminal investigations to the Director General of National Security and provides referrals for child survivors to the Ministry of National Solidarity, Family, and the Condition of Women for social services.

Enforcement Mechanisms and Efforts	
Has a Labor Inspectorate	Yes
Able to Assess Civil Penalties	Yes
Routinely Conducted Worksite Inspections	Yes

Enforcement Mechanisms and Efforts	
Unannounced Inspections Permitted	Yes
Has a Complaint Mechanism	Yes
Imposed Penalties for Child Labor Violations	Yes
Conducted Criminal Investigations for Worst Forms of Child Labor Crimes	Yes
Imposed Penalties for Worst Forms of Child Labor Crimes	Yes

In 2024, **725** labor inspectors conducted **188,395** worksite inspections, finding **49** child labor violations.‡ The government conducted investigations into suspected worst forms of child labor crimes, including forced labor and commercial sexual exploitation, but government data do not disaggregate by age. In addition, the government conducted at least **1** investigation into the use of children in illicit activities and convicted **7** perpetrators.‡

‡ Data are from January 1, 2024 to November 30, 2024.

COORDINATION, POLICIES, AND PROGRAMS

Algeria established a mechanism to coordinate its efforts to address child labor.

Key Mechanism to Coordinate Government Efforts on Child Labor
National Body for the Protection and Promotion of Childhood (ONPPE): Coordinates government child protection efforts, including addressing child labor, and reports to the Prime Minister. Works with the Ministry of Solidarity to remove children from danger and the Ministry of Justice to respond to criminal acts against children, including the worst forms of child labor. ONPPE also runs the government 1111 Hotline, which intakes all complaints related to children’s rights, and it maintains the Civil Society Network for the Strengthening of Children’s Rights, a network that has 175 organizations working on children’s rights issues. In 2024, ONPPE announced the creation of a monitoring unit to protect children from exploitation through cybercrime, to become operational in 2025.

Algeria established policies related to child labor. However, these policies do not cover all forms of child labor that exist within the country, such as forced begging and street work.

Key Policies Related to Child Labor
National Action Plan for Children (2024–2029): An ONPPE-led effort to protect children from physical and moral dangers, including child labor. However, the government has never publicly released the National Action Plan for Children. In 2024, a commission was established to develop the Algerian National Plan for Children (2025–2030).
National Action Plan for the Prevention of and Fight Against Trafficking in Persons (2022–2024): Aimed to prevent and reduce human trafficking by raising awareness, strengthening legislation, prosecuting human trafficking crimes, improving the provision of protective services to survivors, and increasing collaboration with national and international civil society organizations. This plan continued activities of the 2019–2021 plan that have not been completed. In 2024, the National Committee for the Prevention and Combating of Trafficking in Persons drafted the new National Strategy and Action Plan on the Prevention of Human Trafficking 2025–2027.

Algeria funded and participated in programs that include the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor. However, existing social programs do not adequately address all forms of child labor that exist within the country, such as street vending and forced begging.

Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor
Educational Assistance Programs: Several ministerial departments and national institutions implemented a social action plan to provide free services, such as textbooks, transportation, school meals, and health coverage. The government also provides a \$22 (3,000 Algerian dinar) schooling bonus per child. In 2024, the government reported that the school allowance program for underprivileged students reached approximately 3.3 million students.

Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor

Children Assistance Facilities:‡ Operated by the government to provide support for children, namely orphans and children in dangerous situations who are taken into custody by the state. During the reporting period, three new specialized centers for the protection of delinquent children were created, and another establishment for to provide general assistance to children.

‡ Program is funded by the Government of Algeria.

For references, please visit dol.gov/ChildLaborReports