

[DOI: 10.20472/IAC.2017.030.009](https://doi.org/10.20472/IAC.2017.030.009)

LIA CHAREKISHVILI

Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University, Invited Associate Professor , Georgia

CHILD LABOUR: WHAT DO THE SURVEY RESULTS IN GEORGIA SHOW

Abstract:

The child labour is very important problem in the world. The statistical findings based on the survey results, providing details on child labour phenomenon in Georgia, its dimensions and scope, including characteristics and results. According to the survey 5.8% of children aged 5-17 are economically active. The boys account for 76.5% of employed children aged 5-17. Children engaged in economic activities constitute 1.6% in urban and 11.4% in rural areas. The educational level of parents of children in child labour is relatively low compared to the educational level of non-working children. Poverty and low income are among the main causes of child labour.

Keywords:

Legislation, ILO, Survey, Statistics

JEL Classification: J82, D19, J01

Introduction

Child labour is the work paid by the children in their childhood, which on the assumption of their lack of resources for the life survival, irresponsibility of the parents. Childhood is the great and happiest period of the lives of everyone during which one learns about the basic strategy of the life from parents, loved ones and nature. Child labour interferes with the proper growth and development of the children in all aspects like mentally, physically, socially and intellectually.

Child labour is a social problem which needs to be solved on regular basis. It is not the responsibility only of the government, it should be solved and taken care by all the parents and society.

In many developing countries child labour is very common because of the existence of high level of poverty. It is very important problem in the world. The statistical findings based on the survey results, providing details on child labour phenomenon in Georgia, its dimensions and scope, including characteristics and results. According to the survey 5.8% of children aged 5-17 are economically active. The boys account for 76.5% of employed children aged 5-17. Children engaged in economic activities constitute 1.6% in urban and 11.4% in rural areas. The educational level of parents of children in child labour is relatively low compared to the educational level of non-working children. Poverty and low income are among the main causes of child labour.

Background

2015 National Child Labour Survey was designed to produce reliable indicators of child labour, representative at the national, urban-rural, and, to the extent possible, regional level. The reference population of this survey includes non-institutional households with children aged 5-17. The survey has not covered the population living "in the street". Based on the definition of a household, except infants and newly married, only those individuals were classified as the members of a household who at the time of survey had lived or were planning to live in a given household and catered out as one unit for at least 6 of the last 12 months.

The survey covered the areas controlled by the central government. The main objective of the survey was to identify the scale of child labour and obtain accurate data identifying its characteristics.

legislation

Georgia, as the ILO member country, is obliged to harmonize labour legislation to the standards set by the ILO to its member states. At present Georgia has ratified 17 conventions, including conventions related to child labour, thus committing to fulfill obligations under the conventions.

It is described below how the obligations under the conventions related to children are implemented in the Georgian legislation.

National legislation on child labour – in line with international labour standards – is a fundamental basis for all action, and in particular, in defining what constitutes child labour to be eliminated, and providing the basis for efforts to gather statistical information on child labour. Above all, it is legislation that sets forth specific rights and responsibilities and permits legal remedies for victims and sanctions for violators. Many countries have recently been taking action for the establishment

or revision of their lists of what constitutes hazardous work, and including the prohibition of these kinds of work for anyone under 18 years of age as part of enforceable legislation [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---ipec/documents/publication/wcms_221513.pdf]

Moreover, the ILO has been playing a key role in providing an impetus to and framework for global efforts against child labour, both through its standard-setting and technical assistance. Standard-setting is not limited to the adoption²¹ of Conventions and Recommendations but also includes the continued international monitoring through reporting as demonstrated in the above Figure 1 – showing the specific action taken by each ratifying State in terms of the specific commitments made through the Conventions [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---ipec/documents/publication/wcms_221513.pdf].

Under Declaration of the Rights of the Child 1959 One of the key principles in the DRC is that a child is to enjoy “special protection” as well as “opportunities and facilities, by law and by other means,” for healthy and normal physical, mental, moral, spiritual, and social development “in conditions of freedom and dignity” [<https://www.loc.gov/law/help/child-rights/international-law.php>].

As indicated in the Civil Code of Georgia [<https://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/docs/ELECTRONIC/90468/118660/F999089720/GEO90468%20Geo.pdf>], a person shall be considered a minor/child from the moment of birth to 18 years of age, while the Labour Code prohibits entering into an employment contract with a minor to perform unhealthy and hazardous work.

As regards the minimum age for employment (ILO Convention N138) [http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C138], the Labour Code of Georgia sets the minimum age for admission to employment at 16. Legal capacity of minors under 16 to enter into a labour agreement shall originate by consent of their legal representative or a custody/guardianship authority unless the labour relations contradicts minors’ interests, prejudice their moral, physical and mental development, and limit their right and opportunity to acquire compulsory primary and basic education. Consent of the legal representative or custody/guardianship authority shall be valid with respect to similar type of subsequent labour relations as well. A labour agreement with minors under 14 may be concluded solely in connection with the activities in sport, art, and culture, as well as

for performing certain advertising work (Labour Code of Georgia, Paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 4 of Article 4).

As defined in the Legislation of Georgia [\[http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_protect/@protrav/@ilo_aids/document/s/legaldocument/wcms_113183.pdf\]](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_protect/@protrav/@ilo_aids/document/s/legaldocument/wcms_113183.pdf) concerning working time, duration of working time shall not exceed 36 hours per week for minors aged 16-17, and 24 hours for minors aged 14-15 (Labour Code of Georgia, Article 14, paragraphs 3 and 4).

The Legislation of Georgia also prohibits employment of a minor in night job (22 pm to 6 am) (Labour Code of Georgia, Article 18).

To measure the scope and characteristics of the National Child Labour Survey, in connection with the minimum age of admission to employment in line with the Georgian legislation, children were divided into 3 age groups:

- Age group of 16-17 year-olds – above the general minimum age specified for employment;
- Age group of 14-15 year-olds - children within the age range specified for light work;
- Age group of 5-13 year-olds – children below the minimum age specified for light work.

With respect to education, as stated in the Constitution of Georgia, pre-school education shall be guaranteed by the State in line with the national legislation. Primary and basic education shall be compulsory. The state shall fully finance general education as prescribed by law (the Constitution of Georgia, Article 35, http://www.parliament.ge/files/68_1944_951190_CONSTIT_27_12.06.pdf).

Child labour - includes children of both sexes aged 5-17 who were engaged in one or more of the following types of economic activity during the reference period.

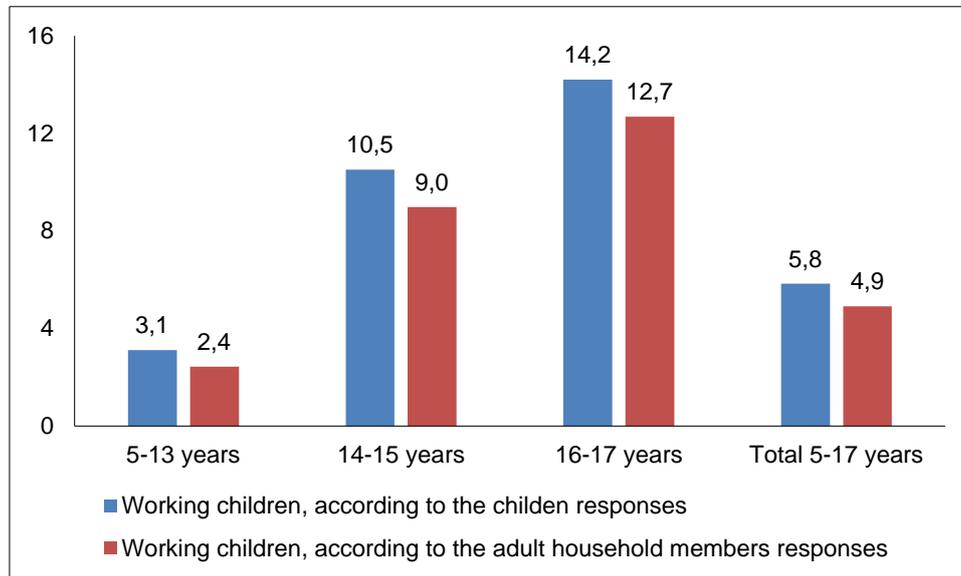
In the world child labour is mostly found in agriculture. About 100 million boys and girls are engaged in child labour in farming, livestock, forestry, fishing or aquaculture, often working long hours and facing occupational hazards. Child labour violates children's rights. By endangering health and education of the young, it also forms an obstacle to sustainable agricultural development and food security. To remedy this, FAO works to address its root causes, such as rural poverty and lack of social protection.

Statistics [http://geostat.ge/index.php?action=wnews_archive1&qy=1&qy1=25&lang=eng]

In order to accurately assess children's engagement in economic activities during the reference period (7 days prior to the interview date), children aged 5-17 as well as adult members of the household were interviewed. Figure 5.6 shows the proportion of children in employment among children of the respective age groups by responses of respondents of two different categories - 5-17 year-old children and adult household members. The results reveal that the figure provided by adult members in all age groups is slightly lower than the information given by children themselves. The

difference between responses of these two types of respondents is 1.5 percentage points for 14-15 and 16-17 year age groups, and 0.7 percentage points for the 5-13 year age group.

Figure 1. **Proportion of children in employment by age groups (%)**

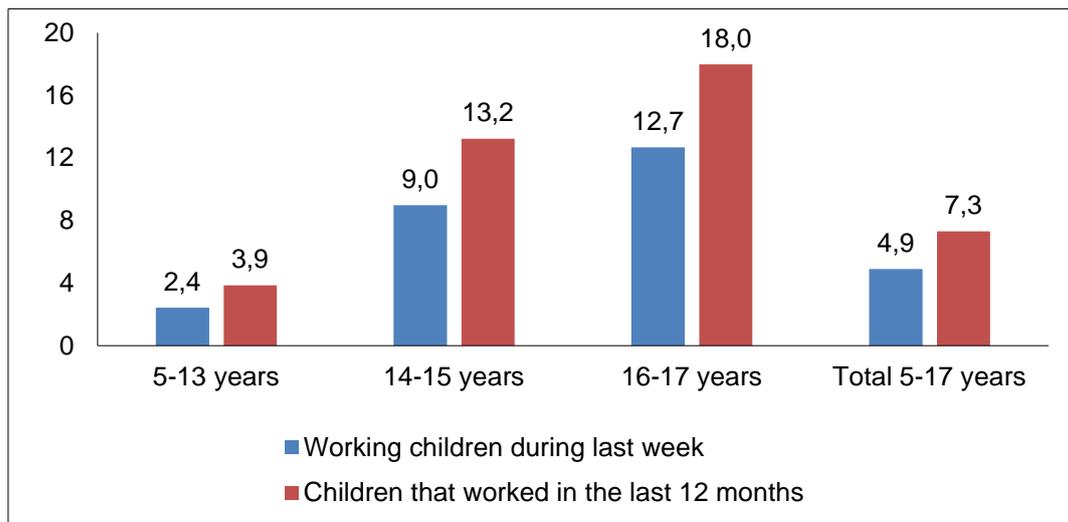


Source: GeoStat.

Figure 1 gives the information on the share of employed children in the respective age groups with the reference period of 7 days and 12 months preceding the interview, based on the responses of adult household members. As can be seen, the percentage of children employed in the last seven days is lower than the percentage of children employed over the last 12 months in all three age groups, by 1.5, 4.2 and 5.3 percentage points, respectively. This fact is partly due to seasonality factors. It should be noted that the seasonality effect increases with age.

As shown, the number of children who reported to be employed during the reference week is higher compared with the responses of the adult household members. In addition, child questionnaire contained more detailed questions for identifying boundaries and forms of child labour. Consequently, children's economic activity was analyzed based on children's responses.

Figure 2. **Distribution of 5-17 year-old children in employment by age groups (%)**

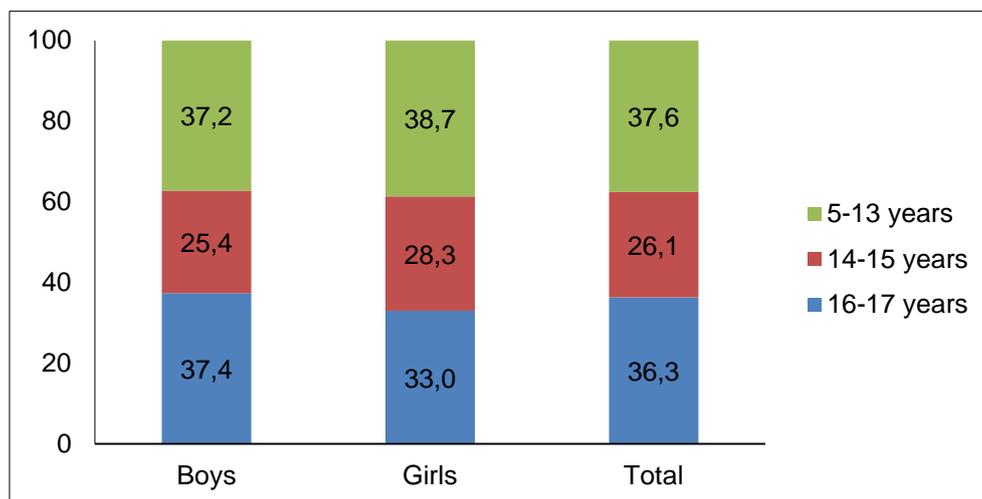


Source: GeoStat.

The share of 5-17 year-old children living in Georgia who were occupied with any type of economic activity equals 5.8%, including 1.6% in urban areas, and 11.4% in rural areas. Boys account for 76.5% of employed children.

The survey results demonstrated that only 1.6% (8.6 thousand) of non-working children aged 5-17 wanted to work and were ready to start work if offered. 67.9% (5.9 thousand children) of children seeking work are boys, and nearly 63.8% of job seekers among children live in urban areas.

Figure 3. **Distribution of children involved in economic activity by sex and age groups (%)**



Source: GeoStat.

95.9% of 5-17 year-old children living in Georgia attended school in the current academic year. The school attendance rate stands at 95.4% among boys and at 96.5% among girls.

The largest proportion of 5-17 year-old children (90.7%) are only involved in learning. The share of children who learn and work at the same time equals 5.2%, while the share of children who neither work nor learn, constitutes 3.5%. 61% of children from the latter category never attended school, with pre-school aged children accounting for the majority.

Figure 4. **Distribution of 5-17 year old children involved in household chores by the time of performing these activities, sex and age groups (%)**

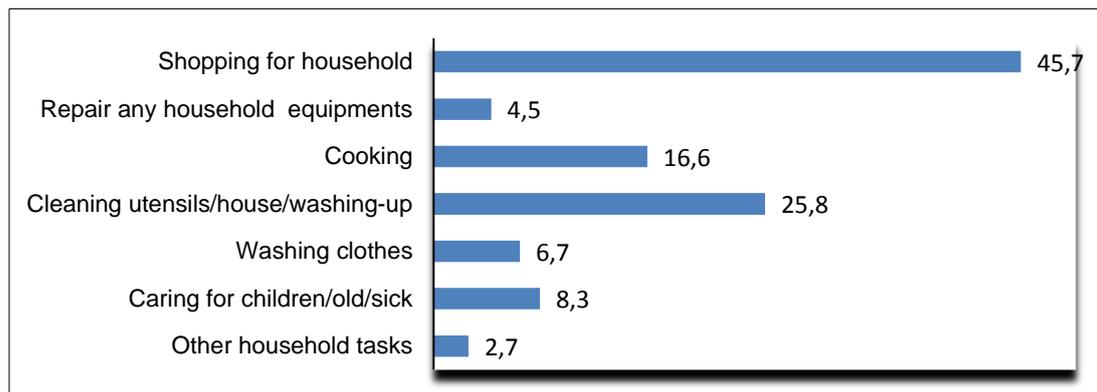
	Mostly during the day	Mostly over the weekend	At night
Total			
5-13 years	61.1	16.2	22.7
14-15 years	53.5	16.8	29.6
16-17 years	56.8	12.4	30.8
5-17 years	58.9	15.6	25.5
Boy			
5-13 years	63.7	13.8	22.6
14-15 years	52.8	16.5	30.8
16-17 years	59.6	11.3	29.1
5-17 years	60.9	13.8	25.3
Girl			
5-13 years	58.6	18.7	22.8
14-15 years	54.3	17.2	28.5
16-17 years	54.4	13.4	32.3
5-17 years	56.9	17.3	25.8

Source: GeoStat.

The majority of children involved only in studies (60.5%) live in urban type settlements, exceeding the analogous figure for rural areas by 21.0 percentage points. This can be explained by the fact that economic activity performed by children in rural areas is more extensive in comparison with the urban areas. Among children who work and study at the same time, 86.3% live in rural areas, which is 6 times higher than in urban areas. The proportion of boys who study and work at the same time approximately 3 times exceeds the similar figure for girls (75.6% and 24.4%, respectively).

Among children aged 5-17, who neither work nor study, 55.1% are boys, and 67.3% of such children live in rural areas. As noted above, mostly children of pre-school age fall under this category and higher number of such children in rural areas is conditioned by limited access to preschool institutions.

Figure 5. Involvement of children aged 5-17 in household chores (%)



Source: GeoStat.

More than half (54.7%) of children who do the shopping are boys; boys' engagement is also high in equipment repair and other household chores (wood-cutting was most frequently named among other household chores). Cooking, cleaning, washing, care for children, elderly and sick household members is primarily performed by girls.

Most of 5-17 year-old children (58.9%) do household chores during the day, while 4 times less children (15.6%) perform household chores during the weekends. 13.1% of children are engaged in chores sometimes during the day, sometimes in the evening, while the share of children who have to carry out household chores both during the day and the evening is 8.7%. The smallest proportion of 5-17 year-old children (3.8%) has to do household chores in the evening or at night (Figure 5.12). The majority of children in all three age groups fulfill household chores during the day.

The proportion of children engaged in household chores during the weekends is nearly equal for 5-13 year and 14-15 year age groups (16.2% and 16.8% respectively), while the same figure stands at 12.4% for 16-17 year-old children. Table 5.10 also includes the category "at night"¹, which comprises time periods: carrying out household chores during the day and at night; sometimes during the day, sometimes at night; and at night. Percentage of children occupied with household chores at night increases with age. The increase is especially noticeable for 5-13 year-olds vs. 14-15 year-olds, with the difference amounting to 7 percentage points.

The largest proportion of 5-17 year-old children (90.7%) are only involved in learning. The share of children who learn and work at the same time equals 5.2%, while the share of children who neither work nor learn, constitutes 3.5%. 61% of children from the latter category never attended school, with pre-school aged children accounting for the majority.

Employment rate for children aged 5-17 amounted to 5.8% in Georgia. The number of working boys is more than 3 times higher than the number of working girls. Table 6.1 shows that employment rate for children aged 5-17 increases with age, as the highest

¹ The category "at night" includes children, who work from 10 pm to 6 am.

percentage (14.2%) of working children was registered among children of 16-17 years. In terms of urban and rural disaggregation even a greater imbalance was observed. While the percentage of employed children equals 11.4 in rural areas, their share is only 1.6% in urban areas, which can be explained by the fact that the 5-17 year-old working children are mainly involved in agriculture.

Majority of employed children in Georgia work without pay in a household business/farm (unpaid family workers) and thus, do not earn cash income. Based on the questionnaire design, the information on earnings in the child questionnaire is provided only for 10-17 year-old employed children. The adult questionnaire also includes information on cash income for children aged 5-9. However, no cash income was recorded for children of this age group during the survey. Accordingly, the following data are based on the child questionnaire and refer to children of 10-17 years of age, of whom only 12.4% earn cash income from employment. The average monthly net remuneration of these children amounts to 173.0 GEL. This figure equals 178.4 GEL for boys and 159.5 GEL for girls. Children employed in rural areas earn an average of 139.3 GEL, while receiving 51.7% more (211.2 GEL) in urban areas.

Average earnings of employed children increase with age with the average remuneration of 16-17 year-olds equaling 195.7 GEL and being nearly twice as high as that of children aged 10-14 (96.9 GEL).

It should be noted that the majority of children employed in hired labour are paid on a monthly (39.3%) or daily basis (33.6%). A small number of children are paid hourly, weekly, upon completion of work or based on piece rate.

When spending earned money, 68.8% of children buy personal items, while 44.8% of them give all/part of money to parents/guardians, and 14.4% of children buy goods for the household. As noted above, cash income from employment is mostly recorded for children in the 16-17 year age group.

Conclusion

Child labor is a big social problem which needs to be solved, and it's necessary to involve parents, teachers and society. The Government has key role, too. Children are very sensitive and an approach has to be considered carefully.

So, the responsibility of parents is not only taking part in the process of growing the children, but also upbringing them into individuals. Parents do know this, but economical distress that is currently present in the country, complicates the situation.

Main cause of child labor is poverty. This problem will be solved when poverty is reduced. This is the main goal 1 of Sustainable Development Goals. Governments of most countries have started work to fulfill all the goals of this very important document.

References

http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---ipec/documents/publication/wcms_221513.pdf

[Accessed: 10th December 2016].

<https://www.loc.gov/law/help/child-rights/international-law.php> [Accessed: 6th October 2016].

<https://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/docs/ELECTRONIC/90468/118660/F999089720/GEO90468%20Geo.pdf>

[Accessed: 10th December 2016].

http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C138

[Accessed: 10th December 2016].

http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_protect/@protrav/@ilo_aids/documents/legaldocument/wcms_113183.pdf [Accessed: 10th December 2016].

http://www.parliament.ge/files/68_1944_951190_CONSTIT_27_12.06.pdf [Accessed: 9th September 2016].

http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---ipec/documents/publication/wcms_221513.pdf

[Accessed: 10th December 2016].

http://geostat.ge/index.php?action=wnews_archive1&qy=1&qy1=25&lang=eng [Accessed: 20th October 2016].

[Accessed: 20th October 2016].