

THAILAND

Total Population: 60,856,000

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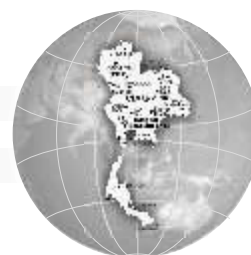
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182

Child Population: 19,039,000

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TOTAL CHILD LABOUR

About 230,000 Thai minors between the ages of 13 to 17 are working.

According to government figures, 850,000 to 1,480,000 children work, mostly in family farms.

For the year 2000, 173,400 children between 13-14 years were economically active.

An overview of the number of child workers between 13-14 years is reported to be 516,800.

240,000 to 410,000 children, or 2% to 4% of children between the ages of 6 to 14, work in urban employment.

CHILD SLAVERY

Forced or bonded labour by children is a serious problem in Thailand.

CHILD TRAFFICKING

According to domestic NGOs, girls between the ages of 12 and 18 are trafficked from Burma, southern China, and Laos to work in the commercial sex industry.

Organised criminal gangs are recruiting and even kidnapping children from neighbouring countries and trafficking them to beg for them in Thailand.

In 1996, there were almost 200,000 foreign children from Burma, Laos and Cambodia who had been trafficked in to Thailand for prostitution and work at construction sites and sweatshops.

There are at least 50,000 Burmese girls and women working in Thailand as prostitutes at any one time.

CHILD PROSTITUTION

The Public Welfare Department set the number of minors engaged in prostitution at between 12,000 and 18,000 in 1998, while the Office of Women's Affairs is cited as calculating the number of under-18 years-olds in prostitution as between 22,500 and 40,000.

According to National Commission for Women's Affairs estimates there are between 150,000 to 200,000 prostitutes with approximately 30,000 to 35,000 prostitutes below 18 years, excluding foreign prostitutes.

5.3% of the prostitutes are under 18 years.

Estimates of children who were sold for sex range from 100,000 (UNICEF) to 800,000.

CHILDREN USED IN CRIME

Statistics of court cases involving drugs and children according to Juvenile and Family Central Court authorities are 19,967 in 1998.

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June Kane, Sold for Sex, 1998, citing CPCR

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There is a growing involvement of children in the drug trade.

CHILD SOLDIERS

The 1954, Military Service Act sets 18 as a minimum age for the voluntary recruitment of Thai male citizens.

Some Malay Muslim separatist armed groups are believed to attract teenagers.

CHILD SERVANTS

No information found.

OTHER HAZARDOUS CHILD LABOUR

Begging - Statistics from the Department of Social Welfare indicate there were 1,062 child beggars in 1999. Of these children 80 were Thai and 982 were foreign.

Commercial Fishing - The results of a survey in Pattani province, in Thailand revealed about 7,080 child labourers, i.e. 269 children working at sorting fish; 148 children in factories; 1,408 children aboard fishing boats and 5,255 children working at fishing in villages.

Street Children - The Asian economic crisis has led to an increase in street children in Thailand. Before the crisis the majority (80%) of street children were from poor families; in 1998, 10% to 15% of the children were from middle class families. The children are involved in prostitution, drugs, and begging. According to official estimates, there are 15,000 street children.

Commercial Fishing -The 1985 Marine Fishery Census of Thailand found 2,442 children aged 11-14, of whom 687 worked for commercial fishing operations while the rest worked for their families.

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