



# SPECIAL RELEASE

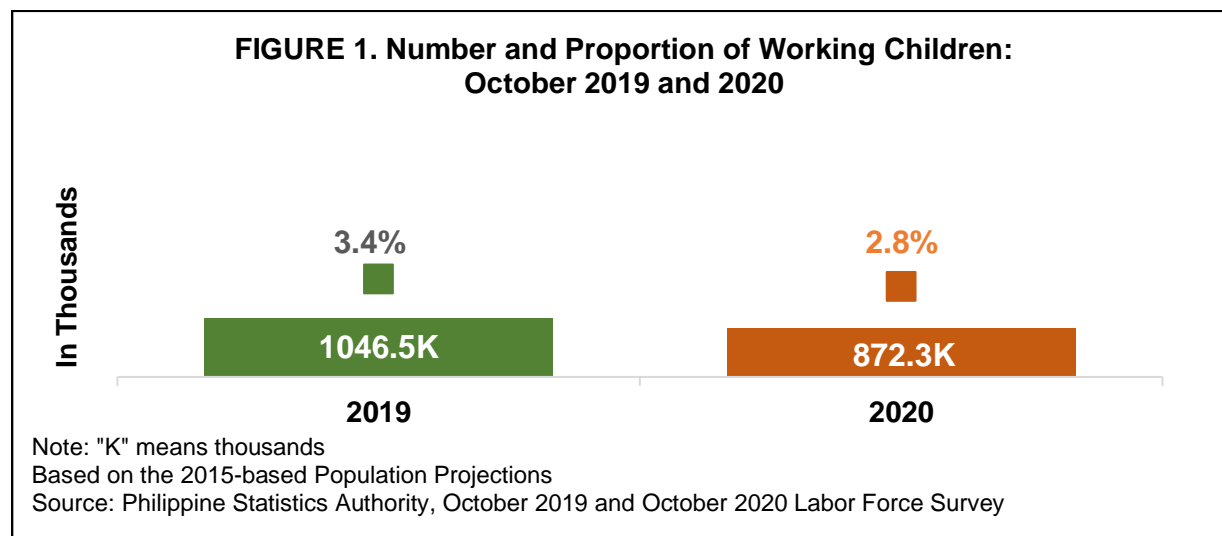
## Working Children and Child Labor Situation

Date of Release: 15 December 2021  
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### ***Proportion of working children 5 to 17 years old was estimated at 2.8 percent***

The total population of children 5 to 17 years old was estimated at 31.17 million in 2020. This was higher than the total number of Filipino children 5 to 17 years of age registered in 2019 at 30.50 million.

Of the estimated 31.17 million children 5 to 17 years old in 2020, 872 thousand or 2.8 percent were working. This was lower than the proportion of working children 5 to 17 years old in 2019 estimated at 3.4 percent. (Figure 1 and Table A)

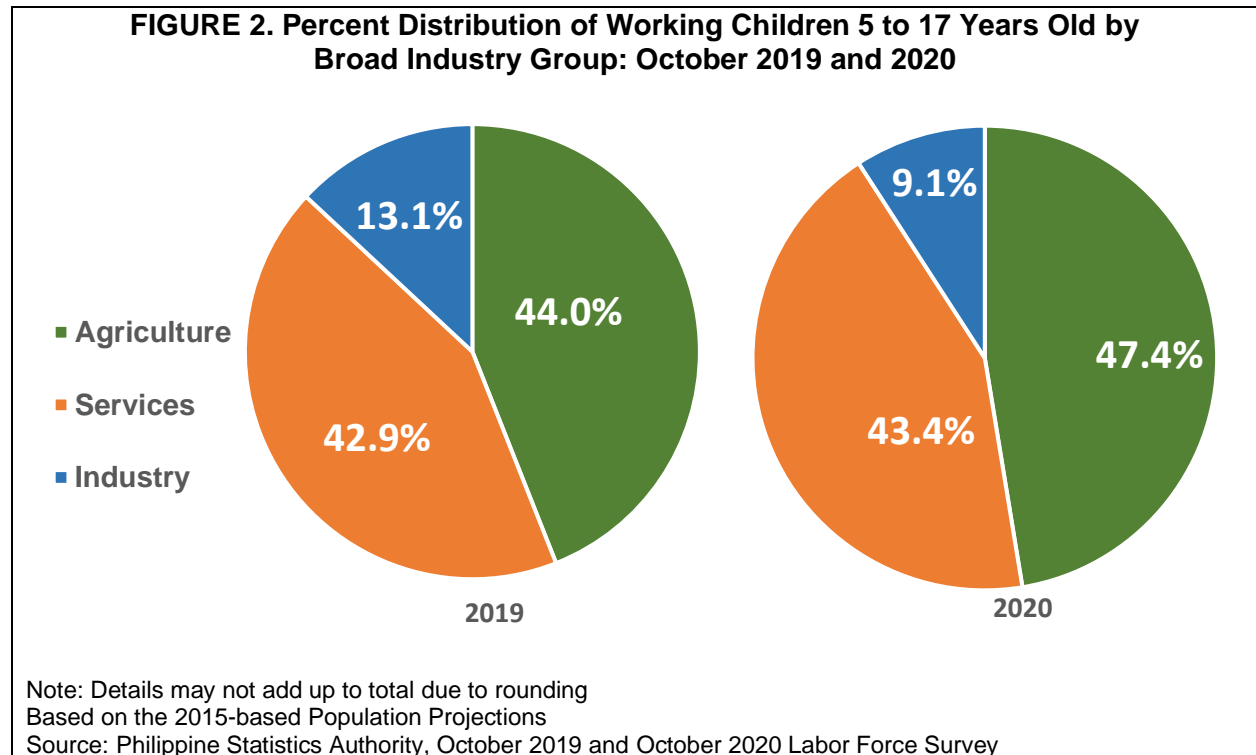


Working children was higher among boys compared to the girls. Of the 872 thousand working children in 2020, 582 thousand or 66.7 percent were boys while 291 thousand or 33.3 percent were girls. In 2019, 65.6 percent of the working children were boys while 34.4 percent were girls.

Children belonging to the older age groups (15 to 17 years) were more likely to work than the younger ones. Majority of the working children belonged to age group 15 to 17 years of age accounting for 68.9 percent of the total working children in 2020 and 67.4 percent in 2019. (Table B)

**Majority of working children were in agriculture sector**

By broad industry group, agriculture sector registered the highest proportion of working children in 2020 at 47.4 percent. The same sector had working children accounted for 44.0 percent of the total working children in 2019. In addition, working children in the services sector was the second largest group accounted for 43.4 percent of the total working children in 2020. Working children in the industry sector consistently accounted for the smallest contributing sector at 9.1 percent. (Figure 2 and Table B)



**Majority of the working children worked 20 hours or less per week**

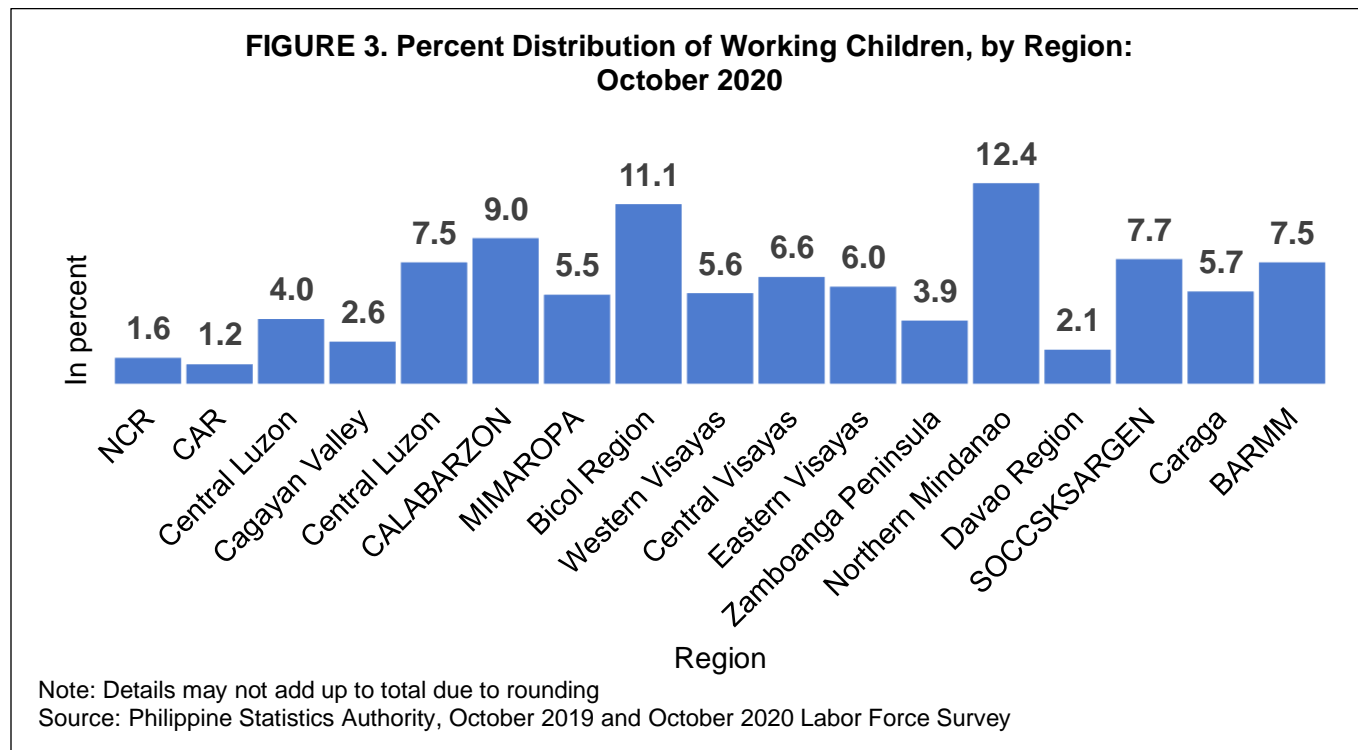
Working children were asked on the actual number of hours worked during the reference week. Of the total working children, majority (53.0%) reported to have worked 20 hours or less per week in 2020. This was lower than the proportion of children who worked 20 hours or less per week in 2019 at 69.6 percent. Meanwhile, children who worked for 21 to 40 hours increased to 26.7 percent in 2020 from the 14.8 percent in 2019. (Table B)

**Working Children was highest in the Northern Mindanao**

Across the regions, CALABARZON with about 4.22 million, National Capital Region (NCR) with nearly 3.35 million, and Central Luzon with around 3.26 million had the largest population of children 5 to 17 years old in 2020. In terms of proportion of working children,

Northern Mindanao posted the highest at 7.2 percent in 2020 and 10.0 percent in 2019. (Table A)

In terms of the share of the working children, for every 100 working children in the country in 2020, around 12 (12.4%) resided in Northern Mindanao, 11 (11.1%) resided in Bicol Region, and 9 resided in CALABARZON. On the other hand, Cordillera Autonomous Region (1.2%), NCR (1.6%), Davao Region (2.1%), and Cagayan Valley (2.6%) each had less than 3 working children for every 100 working children in the country. (Figure 3 and Table B)



### ***Child laborers in the country continued to drop in 2020***

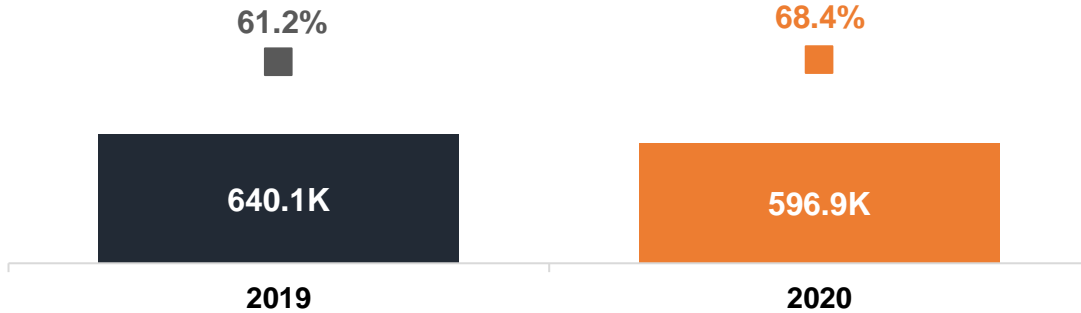
Child labor referred to in this report were those children 5 to 17 years of age engaged in hazardous work identified in the DOLE Administrative Order No. 149 or long working hours only.

The total number of working children considered engaged in child labor was estimated at 597 thousand in 2020. This magnitude of working children considered engaged in child labor was lower than the 640 thousand child laborers in 2019. (Table C)

In terms of proportion, 68.4 percent of the working children were engaged in child labor in 2020. This was higher than the estimate of 61.2 percent in 2019. (Figure 4 and Table C)

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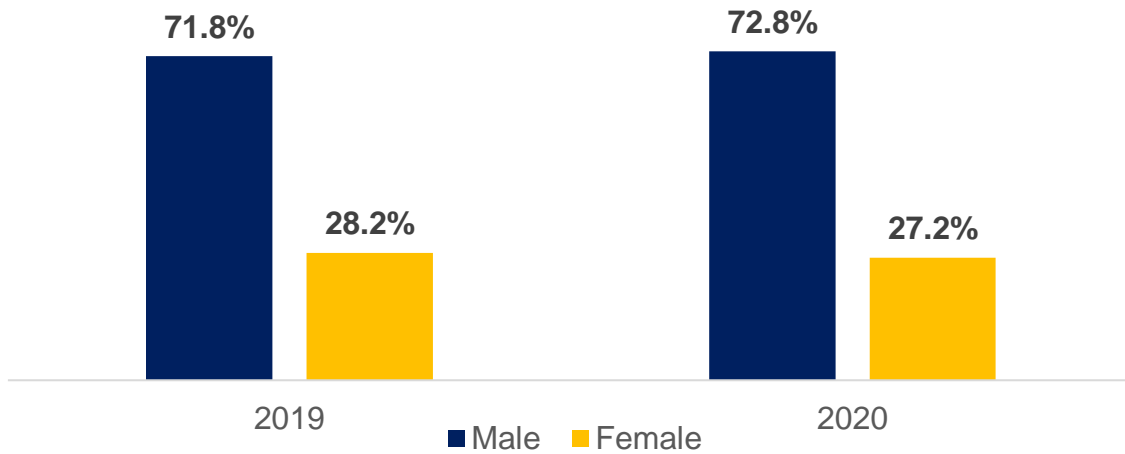
**FIGURE 4. Proportion of Working Children Engaged in Child Labor: October 2019 and 2020**



Note: "K" means thousands  
 Based on the 2015-based Population Projections  
 Source: Philippine Statistics Authority, October 2019 and October 2020 Labor Force Survey

Of the estimated 597 thousand working children engaged in child labor in 2020, 435 thousand or 72.8 percent of them were boys while 162 thousand or 27.2 percent were girls. (Figure 5 and Table D)

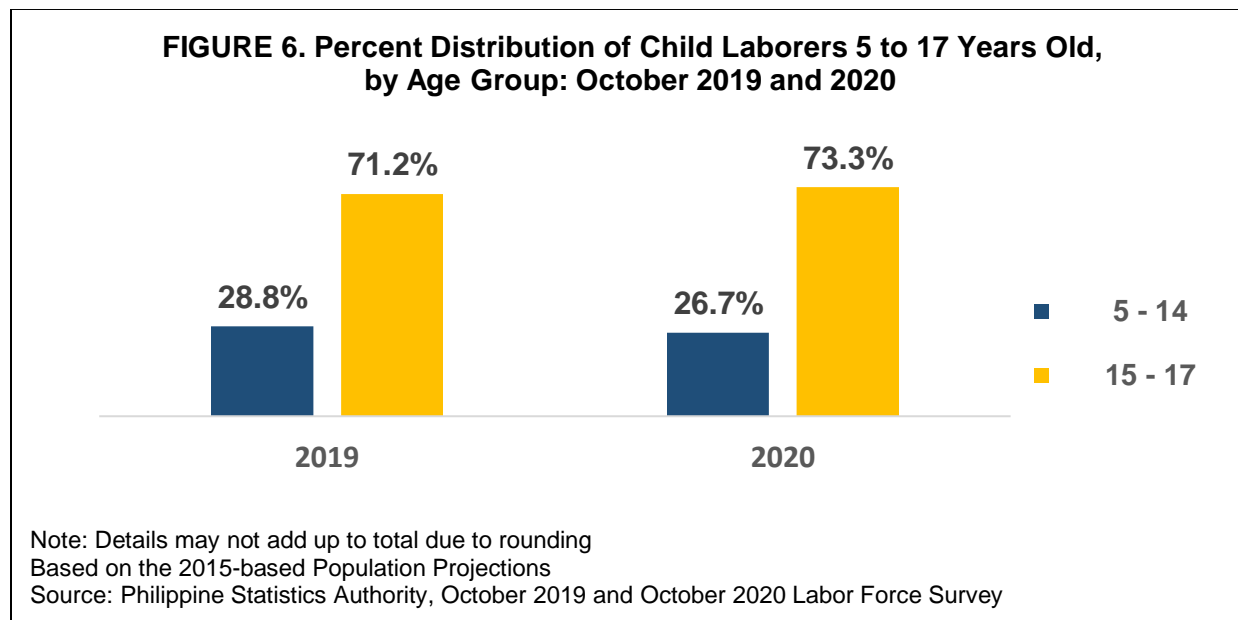
**FIGURE 5. Percent Distribution of Child Laborers 5 to 17 Years Old, by Sex: October 2019 and 2020**



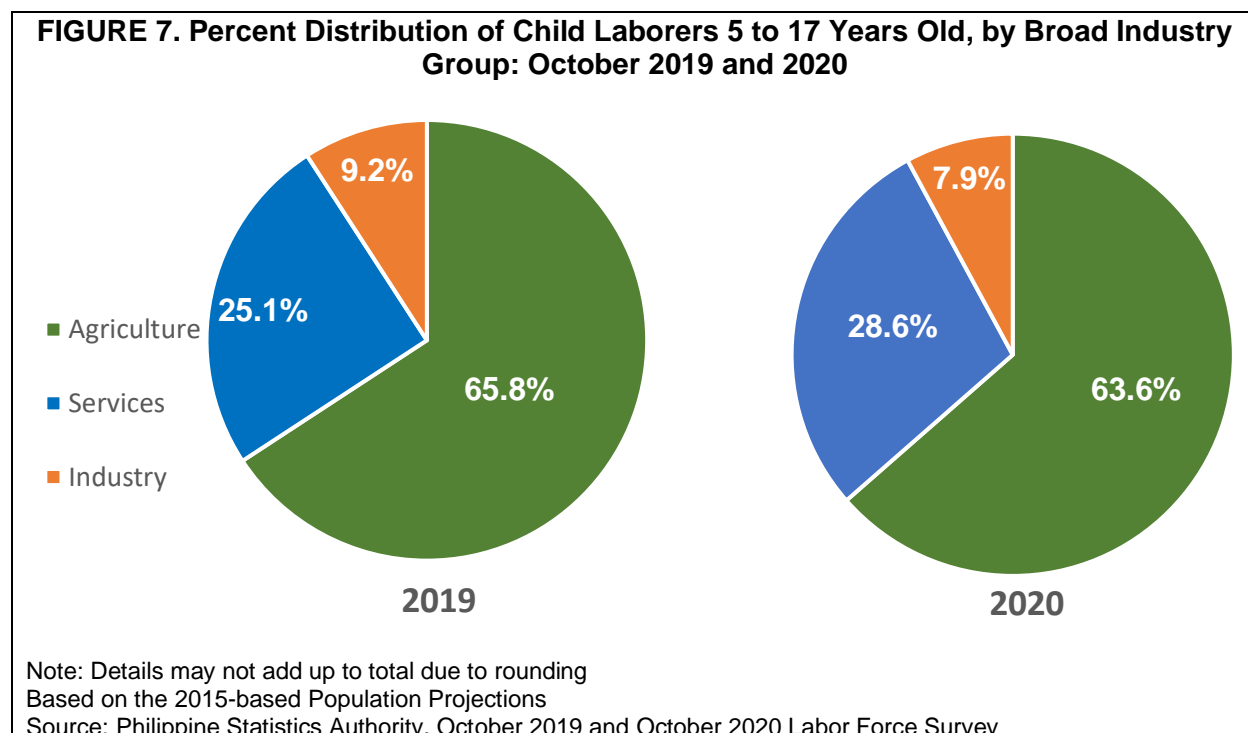
Note: Details may not add up to total due to rounding  
 Based on the 2015-based Population Projections  
 Source: Philippine Statistics Authority, October 2019 and October 2020 Labor Force Survey

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Across age groups, the largest proportion of working children considered engaged in child labor were in the ages 15 to 17 years at 73.3 percent in 2020. In the same manner, child laborers aged 15 to 17 years old comprised the largest share in 2019 at 71.2 percent. (Figure 6 and Table D)



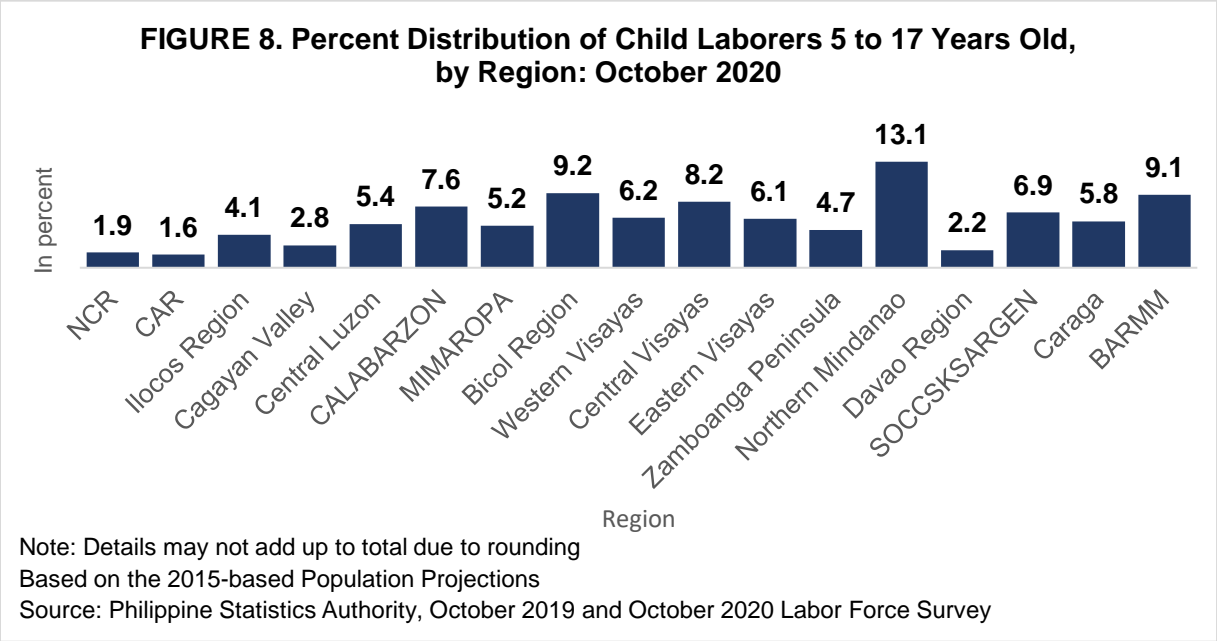
Classified by broad industry group in 2020, about 63.6 percent of child laborers were in the agriculture sector, 28.6 percent were in the services sector, and 7.9 percent were in the industry sector. (Figure 7 and Table D)



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**Thirteen in every 100 child laborers were in Northern Mindanao**

Among the 17 regions, Northern Mindanao had the largest share of the country’s child laborers. For every 100 child laborers in the country in 2020, 13 (13.1%) were from Northern Mindanao, followed by Bicol Region with around 9 (9.2%) child laborers. Cordillera Administrative Region had the lowest share of child laborers at 1.6 percent followed by NCR at 1.9 percent and Davao Region at 2.2 percent in 2020. (Figure 8 and Table D)



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## SUMMARY STATISTICS

Philippines	2019	2020
Population 5-17 Years Old ('000)	30,497.9	31,169.6
Working Children 5 to 17 Years Old ('000)	1,046.5	872.3
Proportion of Working Children 5 to 17 Years Old (%)	3.4	2.8
Child Laborers ('000)	640.1	596.9
Proportion of Child Laborers to the Total Working Children (%)	61.2	68.4

- The population of children aged 5 to 17 years old in 2020 was estimated at 31.17 million. This was higher than the total number of Filipino children 5 to 17 years of age in 2019 at 30.50 million.
- Working children in 2020 were estimated at 2.8 percent of the 31.17 million children 5 to 17 years old. This was lower than the registered working children in 2019 at 3.4 percent.
- In terms of the distribution of working children by broad industry group, agriculture sector remained dominant in 2020, followed by services sector, while industry sector remained the lowest contributor to the total working children.
- Of the 872 thousand working children in 2020, 597 thousand or 68.4 percent were child laborers. Of these estimated child laborers, 73.3 percent were in age group 15 to 17 years. Moreover, 63.6 percent of the 597 thousand child laborers were found in the agriculture sector.

**DENNIS S. MAPA, Ph.D.**

Undersecretary

National Statistician and Civil Registrar General

WAG/MMV/MCG