

## Profile of Working Children in the Philippines

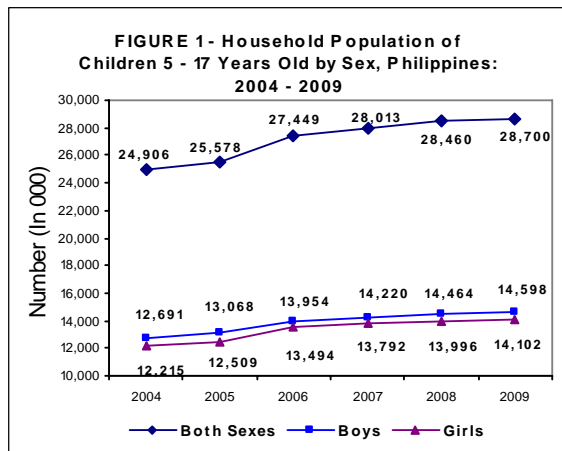
The issue on the eradication of child labor has always been paramount in the consciousness not only within countries but also to the international community as a whole. Positive experiences on child labor programs from many parts of the world combined with hard-line stance and strong commitment among different international organizations have begun to bring teeth to anti-child labor advocacy.

However, the International Labor Organization (ILO) stressed, that not all of the work done by children should be eliminated as in some instances their participation in work may even be considered as something positive for as long as it does not hamper their health and personal development. Hence, Article 7 of ILO Convention No. 138 stipulated that children in particular age groups are permitted to engage in such "light work."

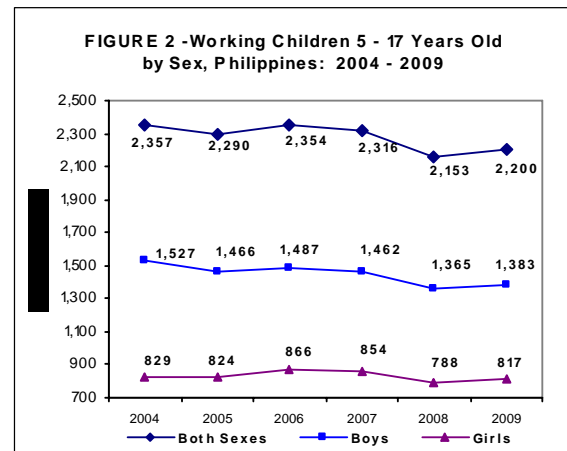
In the Philippines, a child's employment or participation in public entertainment or information through cinema and other forms of media is allowed provided that such employment is essential and that the contract is concluded by the child's parents or legal guardian in order to ensure the child's protection. However, there are no existing data series on child labor. What is available are data on working children in which child labor is a part of.

The term "working children" is a broad concept which encompasses most production activities undertaken by the children, paid or unpaid, for a few hours or full time, on a casual or regular basis, in the organized or unorganized (formal or informal) sector, and whether the activities are legal or illegal. Work in family enterprises and in household-based production activities is included, so is work done in another household for an employer.

Using the Public Use Files of the Labor Force Survey of the National Statistics Office from 2004 to 2009, this LABSTAT Updates aims to provide an analysis and profile of the working children, defined to cover those aged 5-17 years old, in the Philippines. Specifically, it will highlight on the demographic and socioeconomic profile of working children in order to get a glimpse on who and where these Filipino working children are.

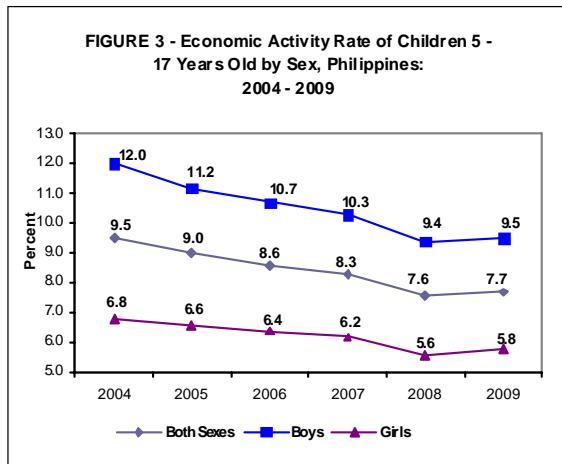


Source of basic data: National Statistics Office, Labor Force Survey, Public Use Files.



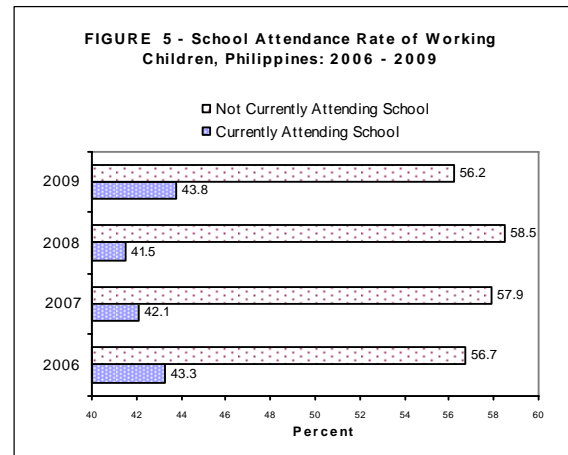
Source of basic data: National Statistics Office, Labor Force Survey, Public Use Files.

- The household population of children for both sexes generally followed an increasing trend from 2004 - 2009.
- However, the boys aged 5-17 years old consistently posted a higher population than the girls of the same age during the same period.
- In contrast, the phenomenon of working children showed a fluctuating trend over the years. In 2009, it went down to 2.2 million or by 6.7% from 2.4 million in 2004.



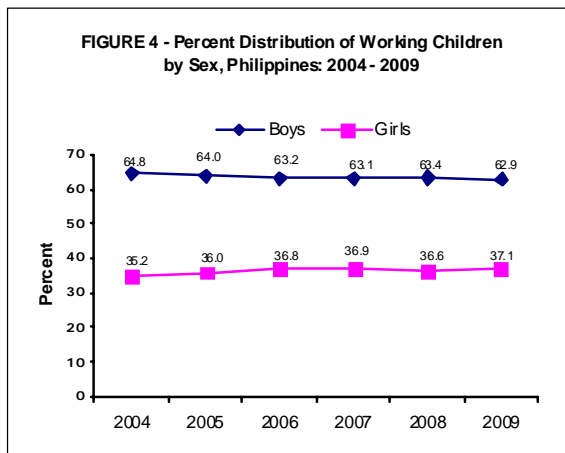
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- The economic activity rate of children or the proportion of working children to the total population of children in the country decreased from 9.5% in 2004 to 7.7% in 2009.
- However, the decline in economic activity rate for working boys was faster (12.0% to 9.5%) compared to their girl counterparts (6.8% to 5.8%).



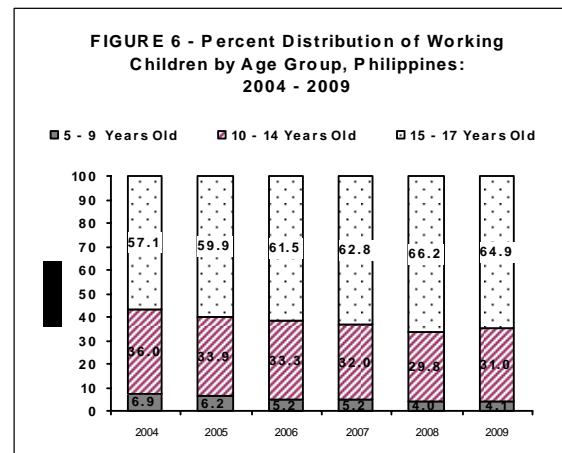
Source of basic data: National Statistics Office, Labor Force Survey, Public Use Files.

- Generally, six out of 10 working children did not attend school. Those currently attending school were highest in 2009.



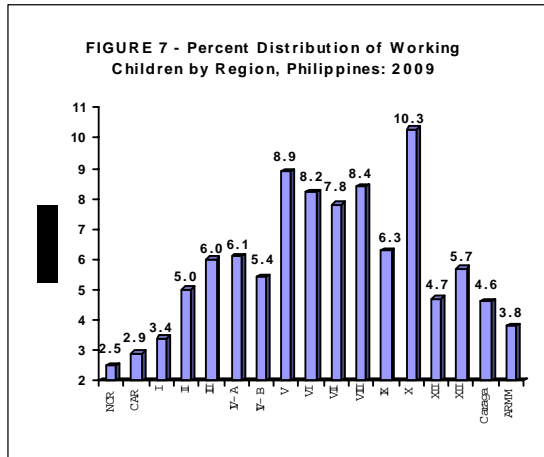
Source of basic data: National Statistics Office, Labor Force Survey, Public Use Files.

- Boys still make up more than half of the total number of working children. Their share ranged from a high of 64.8% in 2004 to 62.9% in 2009.



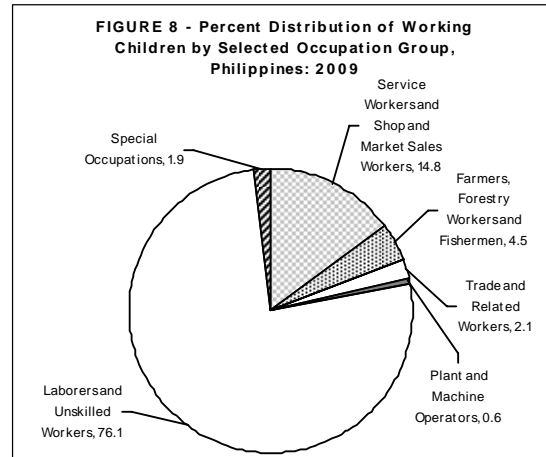
Source of basic data: National Statistics Office, Labor Force Survey, Public Use Files.

- Older children are more likely to be working compared to their younger counterparts. For 2009, almost two-thirds (64.9%) of working children were aged 15-17 years old, while 31.6% and 4.1% were 10-14 years old and 5-9 years old, respectively.



Source of basic data: National Statistics Office, Labor Force Survey, Public Use Files.

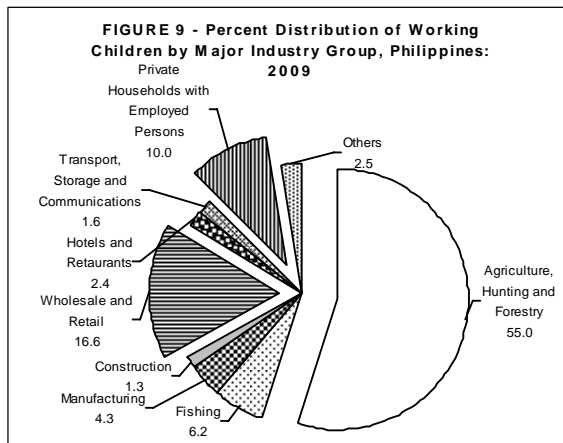
- Region X (Northern Mindanao) posted the biggest share of the total working children in the country in 2009 at 10.3%.



Source of basic data: National Statistics Office, Labor Force Survey, Public Use Files.

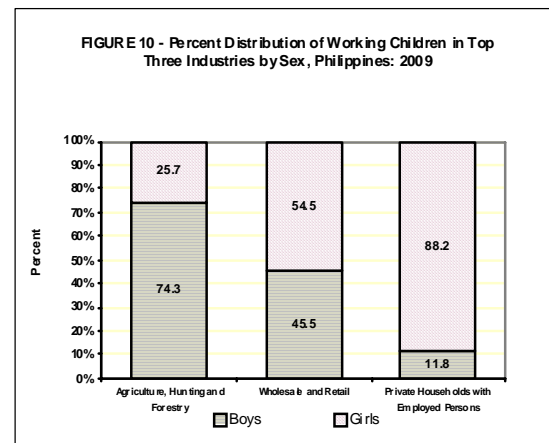
- Working children were predominantly laborers and unskilled workers, comprising more than three-fourths (76.1%) of the total in 2009.

**Top Three Industries in terms of the number of working children in 2009**



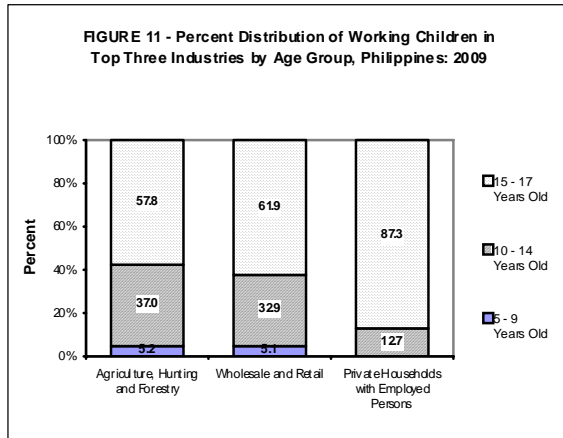
Source of basic data: National Statistics Office, Labor Force Survey, Public Use Files.

- Agriculture, hunting and forestry employed more than half (55.0%) of the total working children in 2009.

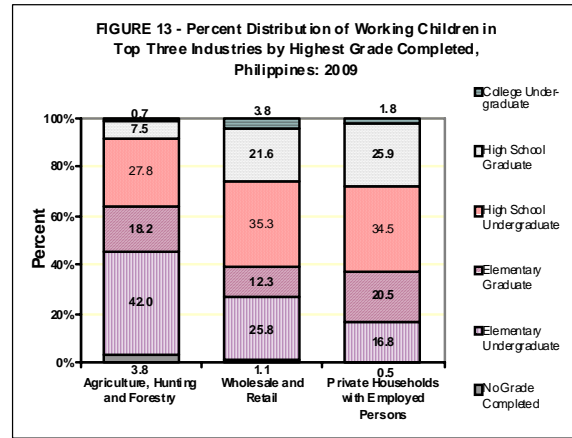


Source of basic data: National Statistics Office, Labor Force Survey, Public Use Files.

- A great proportion of boys worked in farms (74.3%) while girls dominated the private households industry (88.2%) and wholesale and retail trade (54.5%).

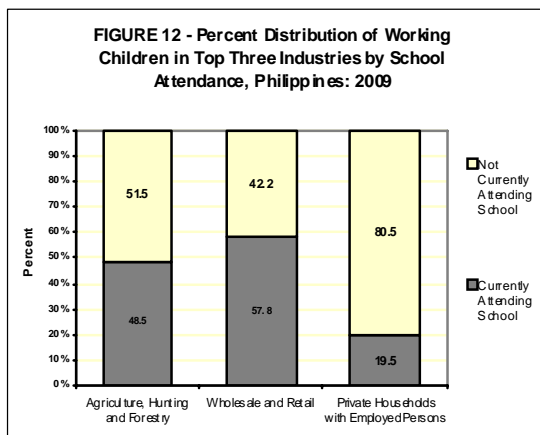


Source of basic data: National Statistics Office, Labor Force Survey, Public Use Files.



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- Older children with ages ranging from 15 – 17 years old dominated the top three industries in 2009. In private households, they comprised about 90% of the total.
- Majority of children working in wholesale and retail were better educated than those working in agriculture. Most of the working children in agriculture were elementary undergraduates (42.0%) while 56.9% and 60.4% of children in wholesale and retail trade; and private households reached high school, respectively.



Source of basic data: National Statistics Office, Labor Force Survey, Public Use Files.

- Four (4) in every 5 children working in private households in 2009 were not attending school, while 3 out of 5 in wholesale and retail trade were attending school.

FOR INQUIRIES:

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 E-mail: [bles\\_tsd@yahoo.com](mailto:bles_tsd@yahoo.com) Website: <http://www.bles.dole.gov.ph>

**TABLE 1 - Household Population 5 - 17 Years Old, Number of Working Children and Economic Activity Rate of Children by Sex, Philippines: 2004 - 2009**  
(In Thousands Except Rates)

| <b>YEAR AND SEX</b> | Household Population | Working Children | Economic Activity Rate |
|---------------------|----------------------|------------------|------------------------|
| <b>BOTH SEXES</b>   |                      |                  |                        |
| 2004                | 24,906               | 2,357            | 9.5                    |
| 2005                | 25,578               | 2,290            | 9.0                    |
| 2006                | 27,449               | 2,354            | 8.6                    |
| 2007                | 28,013               | 2,316            | 8.3                    |
| 2008                | 28,463               | 2,153            | 7.6                    |
| 2009                | 28,700               | 2,200            | 7.7                    |
| <b>BOYS</b>         |                      |                  |                        |
| 2004                | 12,691               | 1,527            | 12.0                   |
| 2005                | 13,068               | 1,466            | 11.2                   |
| 2006                | 13,954               | 1,487            | 10.7                   |
| 2007                | 14,220               | 1,462            | 10.3                   |
| 2008                | 14,464               | 1,365            | 9.4                    |
| 2009                | 14,598               | 1,383            | 9.5                    |
| <b>GIRLS</b>        |                      |                  |                        |
| 2004                | 12,215               | 829              | 6.8                    |
| 2005                | 12,509               | 824              | 6.6                    |
| 2006                | 13,494               | 866              | 6.4                    |
| 2007                | 13,792               | 854              | 6.2                    |
| 2008                | 13,996               | 788              | 5.6                    |
| 2009                | 14,102               | 817              | 5.8                    |

*Note: Details may not add up to totals due to rounding.*

*Source of basic data: National Statistics Office, Labor Force Survey, Public Use Files.*

**TABLE 2 - Working Children 5 -17 Years Old by Age Group and School Attendance,  
Philippines: 2004 - 2009**  
(In Thousands)

| <b>SEX, AGE GROUP AND<br/>SCHOOL ATTENDANCE</b> | 2004         | 2005         | 2006         | 2007         | 2008         | 2009         |
|-------------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| <b>BOTH SEXES</b>                               | <b>2,357</b> | <b>2,290</b> | <b>2,354</b> | <b>2,316</b> | <b>2,153</b> | <b>2,200</b> |
| 5 - 9 Years Old                                 | 162          | 143          | 123          | 120          | 86           | 90           |
| 10 - 14 Years Old                               | 849          | 776          | 783          | 742          | 643          | 682          |
| 15 - 17 Years Old                               | 1,346        | 1,370        | 1,448        | 1,454        | 1,425        | 1,427        |
| <b>BOYS</b>                                     | <b>1,527</b> | <b>1,466</b> | <b>1,488</b> | <b>1,463</b> | <b>1,365</b> | <b>1,383</b> |
| 5 - 9 Years Old                                 | 98           | 86           | 73           | 70           | 49           | 52           |
| 10 - 14 Years Old                               | 550          | 496          | 496          | 467          | 401          | 432          |
| 15 - 17 Years Old                               | 880          | 884          | 919          | 926          | 915          | 899          |
| <b>GIRLS</b>                                    | <b>829</b>   | <b>824</b>   | <b>867</b>   | <b>854</b>   | <b>787</b>   | <b>817</b>   |
| 5 - 9 Years Old                                 | 64           | 58           | 51           | 50           | 36           | 39           |
| 10 - 14 Years Old                               | 299          | 280          | 287          | 275          | 241          | 250          |
| 15 - 17 Years Old                               | 467          | 487          | 529          | 529          | 510          | 528          |
| <b>SCHOOL ATTENDANCE</b>                        |              |              |              |              |              |              |
| Currently Attending School                      | NA           | NA           | 1,019        | 974          | 894          | 964          |
| Not Currently Attending School                  | NA           | NA           | 1,334        | 1,342        | 1,259        | 1,236        |

*Note: Details may not add up to totals due to rounding.*

*NA Not Available.*

*Source of basic data: National Statistics Office, Labor Force Survey, Public Use Files.*

**TABLE 3 - Working Children 5 - 17 Years Old by Region, Major Industry Group and Major Occupation Group, Philippines: 2009**  
(In Thousands)

| REGION, MAJOR INDUSTRY GROUP<br>AND MAJOR OCCUPATION GROUP                                                | 2009         |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| <b>PHILIPPINES</b>                                                                                        | <b>2,200</b> |
| National Capital Region                                                                                   | 55           |
| Cordillera Administrative Region                                                                          | 62           |
| Region I - Ilocos Region                                                                                  | 74           |
| Region II - Cagayan Valley                                                                                | 110          |
| Region III - Central Luzon                                                                                | 132          |
| Region IV- A - CALABARZON                                                                                 | 135          |
| Region IV- B - MIMAROPA                                                                                   | 119          |
| Region V - Bicol Region                                                                                   | 196          |
| Region VI - Western Visayas                                                                               | 181          |
| Region VII - Central Visayas                                                                              | 172          |
| Region VIII - Eastern Visayas                                                                             | 186          |
| Region IX - Zamboanga Peninsula                                                                           | 139          |
| Region X - Northern Mindanao                                                                              | 226          |
| Region XI - Davao Region                                                                                  | 104          |
| Region XII - SOCCSKSARGEN                                                                                 | 126          |
| Caraga                                                                                                    | 102          |
| Autonomous Region in Muslim<br>Mindanao                                                                   | 83           |
| <b>MAJOR INDUSTRY GROUP</b>                                                                               |              |
| Agriculture, Hunting and Forestry                                                                         | 1,211        |
| Wholesale and Retail Trade, Repair of Motor<br>Vehicles, Motorcycles, and Personal and<br>Household Goods | 365          |
| Private Households with Employed Persons                                                                  | 220          |
| Others                                                                                                    | 407          |
| <b>MAJOR OCCUPATION GROUP</b>                                                                             |              |
| Service Workers and Shop and Market Sales<br>Workers                                                      | 325          |
| Farmers, Forestry Workers and Fishermen                                                                   | 99           |
| Laborers and Unskilled Workers                                                                            | 1,675        |
| Other Occupations                                                                                         | 101          |

*Note: Details may not add up to totals due to rounding.*

*Source of basic data: National Statistics Office, Labor Force Survey, Public Use Files.*

**TABLE 4 - Working Children in Top Three Industries with The Most Number of Working Children by Sex, Age Group, School Attendance and Highest Grade Completed, Philippines: 2009**  
(In Thousands)

| <b>SEX, AGE, SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND HIGHEST GRADE COMPLETED</b> | <b>Agriculture, Hunting, and Forestry</b> | <b>Wholesale and Retail Trade, Repair of Motor Vehicles, Motorcycles, and Personal and Household Goods</b> | <b>Private Households with Employed Persons</b> |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                | <b>1,211</b>                              | <b>365</b>                                                                                                 | <b>220</b>                                      |
| <b>SEX</b>                                                     |                                           |                                                                                                            |                                                 |
| Male                                                           | 900                                       | 166                                                                                                        | 26                                              |
| Female                                                         | 312                                       | 199                                                                                                        | 195                                             |
| <b>AGE</b>                                                     |                                           |                                                                                                            |                                                 |
| 5 - 9 Years Old                                                | 63                                        | 19                                                                                                         | 0                                               |
| 10 - 14 Years Old                                              | 448                                       | 120                                                                                                        | 28                                              |
| 15 - 17 Years Old                                              | 700                                       | 226                                                                                                        | 192                                             |
| <b>SCHOOL ATTENDANCE</b>                                       |                                           |                                                                                                            |                                                 |
| Currently Attending School                                     | 587                                       | 211                                                                                                        | 43                                              |
| Not Currently Attending School                                 | 624                                       | 154                                                                                                        | 177                                             |
| <b>HIGHEST GRADE COMPLETED</b>                                 |                                           |                                                                                                            |                                                 |
| No Grade Completed                                             | 46                                        | 4                                                                                                          | 1                                               |
| Elementary                                                     | 729                                       | 139                                                                                                        | 82                                              |
| Undergraduate                                                  | 509                                       | 94                                                                                                         | 37                                              |
| Graduate                                                       | 220                                       | 45                                                                                                         | 45                                              |
| High School                                                    |                                           | 208                                                                                                        | 134                                             |
| Undergraduate                                                  | 337                                       | 129                                                                                                        | 76                                              |
| Graduate                                                       | 91                                        | 79                                                                                                         | 57                                              |
| College Undergraduate                                          | 9                                         | 14                                                                                                         | 4                                               |
|                                                                | -                                         | -                                                                                                          | -                                               |

*Note: Details may not add up to totals due to rounding.*

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