

Dimension 1 “Safety and ethics of employment”:

Child labour in the Republic of Moldova

I. Introduction

This report aims to give a short analysis of the Moldovan labour market from the viewpoint of child labour. The analysis is mainly drawing on the proposed indicators from the quality of employment framework. Also, additional indicators are used to enrich the picture.

The purpose is to evaluate the proposed indicators for the suggested Dimension 1 “Safety and ethics of employment”, point (b) “Child labour and forced labour” (child labour sub-dimension):

- Share of employed persons who are below the minimum age specified for the kind of work performed;
- Share of employed persons below 18 years of age in “hazardous” industries and occupations (as defined by ILO);
- Share of employed persons below 18 years working hours which exceed a specified threshold;
- Share of children working in households chores which exceed a specified threshold of hours.

For this sub-dimension, the Report on *Potential indicators for measurement of quality of employment*, endorsed by the Conference of European Statisticians (CEC) at its plenary session in June 2010, suggests to follow the Resolution concerning statistics of child labour (adopted by the 18th International Conference of Labour Statistics, 2008) which contains concepts, definitions and methods of data collection on child labour, including its worst forms.¹

Thus, this report reveals the experience of Moldova in using the framework, the indicators and their international definitions in practice.

II. Background: the case of Moldova

The transition economy in Moldova is characterised by poor economic development, high inequality among people and huge human development discrepancy between rural and urban areas, whilst the majority of the population (61%) lives in rural areas. Those people living in villages lack employment opportunities (which mean limited sources of income) – most of children raised in poor or low-income families are from rural areas.

The main economic activity in the rural areas is agriculture, but it is poorly developed and unprofitable. This is the reason for massive migration of people, in search for jobs. Preferably they migrate to the capital, or abroad, which explains the lack of manpower. The process of demographic ageing of the population, which is more visible in rural areas, equalling to 15,3% (in urban areas – only 11,8%) also contributes to the lack of labour force.

¹ ILO. *Resolution concerning statistics of child labour*. 18th ICLS, Report of the Conference, p.56-66, Geneva, December 2008.

A number of sources mentioned numerous times that child labour phenomenon (traditional especially in agricultural activities) is widespread in Moldova, because poor families are dependent on the contributions brought by these children to household budgets, child labour having priority over education. Frequently child labour substitutes up for migrant parents' household tasks.

By ratifying international tools such as ILO Convention No. 138 on Minimum Age for Admission to Employment and ILO Convention No. 182 on the Elimination of Worst Forms of Child Labour, the Republic of Moldova has committed itself to undertaking the necessary measures for combating child labour at the national level.

Designing and implementing effective policies in this area requires a multilateral analysis of the phenomenon of child labour. In order to successfully analyze and develop solutions to the problem of child labour, comprehensive, qualitative and internationally comparable statistical data is a necessity.

Although several studies were conducted (inclusive Rapid Assessment on Child Labour)², the existing child labour data were not sufficient for policy making. The lack of reliable countrywide data impaired the full understanding of the problem of child labour in all its aspects, and this discrepancy between the real and reported situations resulted in ineffective governmental policy in this sphere. Clearly, a comprehensive survey was needed to assess the current child labour situation and provide detailed, updated information to facilitate the reform of government policy and the development of comprehensive, targeted national strategies.

For this purpose, during the 4th quarter of 2009, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) carried out the household survey entitled Children's Activities in the Republic of Moldova, as an ad-hoc module to the Labour Force Survey (LFS). This statistical survey was launched in compliance with the Resolution on Child Labour Statistics adopted by the 18th International Conference of Labour Statisticians in December 2008 and with support from the Statistical Information and Monitoring Programme on Child Labour (SIMPOC), of the ILO's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (SIMPOC/IPEC/ILO).

The survey provided the necessary information for the analysis of children's activities, in particular, school attendance, economic activity, household activities, and allowed to assess the phenomenon of child labour, its proportions and characteristics.

14,694 households were selected for the survey, 11,526 of which accepted to be interviewed. Of these, 5,054 households had among their members at least one child aged 5 to 17 years. A total of 6,784 children were interviewed, and the results were extended to cover the entire population of the respective ages. In the households with children, the response rate was 90.2%.

According to the results, 50,9% of the children that participated in the survey were boys, and about 67,0% of the children lived in rural areas. Structured by age groups, the distribution of the children appeared as follows: 5-11-year-olds constituted 45,4%; 12-14-year-olds represented 25,1%; and 15-17-year-olds 29,6%.

² During 2004-2008, in the frame of the ILO/IPEC in Moldova

III. Concept of Child Labour

According to the 18th ICLS resolution³, the definition and key concepts used are given below.

The target population for measuring child labour comprises all persons in the age group from 5 to 17 years.

The broadest concept relating to the measurement of child labour is that of “children in productive activities”, that is, children in any activity falling within the “general production boundary” as defined in the System of National Accounts (SNA). This comprises *children in employment* and *children in other productive activities*.

Children in employment⁴ (working children) are those engaged in any activity falling within the production boundary in the SNA, having worked in the reference week for at least one hour or those who in the reference week had a job or business from which they were temporarily absent.

Children in other productive activities includes children who perform unpaid household services, that is, the production of domestic and personal services by a household member for consumption within their own household, commonly called “household chores”.

Child labour: children who are engaged in work unsuitable for their capacities as **children** or work which by its nature or the circumstances is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children. The definition is based on *ILO Convention No. 138 on Minimum Age (1973)*, *ILO Convention no.182 concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour*, and *Collective Convention no.8 (national level) on the elimination of the worst forms of child labour⁵*.

Accordingly, the concept of “*child labour*” refers to work that is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful for the child and/or interferes with their schooling by causing absenteeism, academic failure and dropping out, or by obliging them to combine school attendance with work.

The **statistical definition** of this phenomenon is based on the following criteria: age, duration of the work, nature of the work and the circumstances in which this work is performed.

The statistical definition of child labour includes:

a). Hazardous work

- i) *Children employed in hazardous activities⁶* which include mining, quarrying and construction;
- ii) *Children employed in hazardous occupations⁶* which include metal trades workers, machinery and related trades workers, precision, handicraft, printing and related trades workers, other craft and

³ ILO. *Resolution concerning statistics of child labour*. 18th ICLS, Report of the Conference, p.57, Geneva, December 2008.

⁴ In the sense of the Children's Activities Survey, **employment** includes **all the persons who worked at least one hour** in the reference week, including on household subsidiary plots, unlike the definition applied in the Labor Force Survey (LFS), which does not include those who worked on household subsidiary plots for own consumption less than 20 hours.

⁵ Collective Convention no.8 was adopted by the National Commission for Collective Consultations and Bargaining in July 2007.

⁶ Government Decision no.562 of 07.09.93 on the approval of the Nomenclature of industries, professions and jobs in difficult and hazardous conditions proscribed for persons younger than eighteen years.

related trades workers, stationary-plant and related operators, machine operators and assemblers, and drivers and mobile-plant operators;

iii) *Children employed for more than 42 hours per week*⁷;

iv) *Children working under hazardous conditions*⁸ that involve carrying heavy loads at work, those who operate any machinery/heavy equipment at work, those exposed at work to adverse conditions such as dust/fumes, fire/gas/flames, loud noise and the like, as well as children who are verbally or physically abused at work.

b). Non-hazardous (regular) work (permissible light work)

v) *Children aged 5-11 years* who are employed, *even 1 hour per week*⁹;

vi) *Children aged 12-14 years* who work *between 14 and 42 hours per week*⁹;

vii) *Children aged 15-16 years* who work *between 25 and 42 hours per week*¹⁰;

viii) *Children aged 17 years* who work *between 36 and 42 hours per week*¹⁰;

c). ix) Children performing unpaid household services for more than 27 hours per week¹¹.

⁷ Third "Child Labour Statistics" Report presented at the 18th ICLS, 2008, paragraph 72, table 6.1., page 22.

⁸ Based on ILO methodology and Collective Convention no.8 (national level) on the elimination of the worst forms of child labour, in effect from 24 July 2007.

⁹ Minimum Age Convention, no.138, adopted on 26.06.1973 in Geneva and ratified by the Moldovan Parliament on 15.07.1999; Art.2.3 and the Third "Child Labour Statistics" Report presented at the 18th ICLS, 2008, paragraph 72, table 6.1., page 22.

¹⁰ The Labour Code of the Republic of Moldova, art. 96 (2).

¹¹ Third "Child Labour Statistics" Report presented at the 18th ICLS, 2008, paragraph 81, page 25.

Table 1. Framework for the statistical identification of child labour

Age group	General production boundary					
	SNA production ¹²			Non-SNA production		
	Non-hazardous work		Worst forms of child labour		Hazardous unpaid household services	Other non-SNA production
	Light work	Regular work	Hazardous work	Worst forms of child labour other than hazardous work		
Children aged 5–11 years	Below the minimum age for admission to light work (even if only for 1 hour per week)		1. Hazardous economic activities 1,9	Children trafficked for work; forced and bonded child labour; commercial sexual exploitation of children; use of children for illicit activities and armed conflict	Unpaid household services for more than 27 hours per week	
	26,6 of whom: 1-7 hours – 22,1 8-14 hours – 3,9 15-24 hours – 0,6					
Children aged 12-14 years	13 hours or less per week	14-42 hrs per week	4. Hazardous conditions 67,7			
	34,6	2,9				
Children aged 15-16 years	24 hrs or less per week	25-42 hrs per week				
	26,3	0,3				
Children 17 years of age	35 hrs or less per week	36-42 hrs per week				
	10,9	0,2				
Total child labour 109,0		29,9	74,7	-	4,4	-

Note: Based on schematic representations used by ILO.



Denotes child labour as defined by the resolution.



Denotes activities not considered child labour

¹² System of National Accounts

IV. Highlights of survey findings

4.1. Evaluations of the quality of employment indicators

According to the survey methodology, we obtained the expected survey outputs, including indicators suggested by Task Force on Quality of Employment. The analysis of these indicators allowed us to confirm that the proposed indicators are clear and measurable in practice to the national situation. At the same time, we decided to add one more indicator which is relevant for national level: “Share of employed persons below 18 years of age in “hazardous work conditions” in industries and occupations not designated as hazardous (as defined by ILO)”

Table 2. Child labour sub-dimension

		percent
		2009
1.	<i>Share of employed persons who are below the minimum age specified for the kind of work performed:</i> Share of employed children aged 5-14 years in the total number of children aged 5-14 years	24,3
2.	<i>Share of employed persons below 18 years of age in “hazardous” industries and occupations (as defined by ILO):</i> Share of employed persons aged 5-17 years in “hazardous” industries and occupations (as defined by ILO) in the total number of children aged 5-17 years	1,0
	<i>Additional indicator:</i> Share of employed persons aged 5-17 years in “hazardous” industries and occupations (as defined by ILO) in the total number of child labour (aged 5-17 years)	5,4
3.	<i>Share of employed persons below 18 years working hours exceed a specified threshold:</i> Share of working children aged 5-11 years; aged 12-14 years who work more than 13 hours per week; aged 15-16 years who work more than 24 hours per week; 17 years who work more than 35 hours per week in the total number of children aged 5-17 years	5,2
	<i>Additional indicator:</i> Share of working children aged 5-11 years; aged 12-14 years who work more than 13 hours per week; aged 15-16 years who work more than 24 hours per week; 17 years who work more than 35 hours per week in the total number of child labour (aged 5-17 years)	28,3
4.	<i>Share of children working in household chores which exceed a specified threshold of hours:</i> Share of children aged 5-17 years working in household chores for more than 27 hours per week in the total number of children aged 5-17 years	0,7
	<i>Additional indicator:</i> Share of children aged 5-17 years working in household chores for more than 27 hours per week in the total number of child labour (aged 5-17 years)	4,0
5	<i>Additional indicators, relevant for Moldova:</i> <i>Share of employed persons below 18 years of age in “hazardous work conditions” in industries and occupations not designated as hazardous (as defined by ILO) in the total number of children aged 5-17 years</i>	11,3
	<i>Share of employed persons below 18 years of age in “hazardous work conditions” in industries and occupations not designated as hazardous (as defined by ILO) in the total number of child labour (aged 5-17 years)</i>	62,1

¹ See Table 3 and Table 5 below

4.2. Children activities

One of the main goals of the survey was to collect data concerning three key aspects of a child's life: schooling, economic activity and household activities (household chores).

The analysis of the survey data showed that 91,0% of the children aged 5 to 17 years attend school or pre-school institutions, and 29,7% are engaged in economic activities. The overwhelming majority of children, or 86,0%, are engaged in domestic activities in their own households/families.

Table 3. Distribution of children by type of activity and age group

	Total	5-11 years	12-14 years	15-16 years	17 years of age
Total children, in thousands	596,9	270,8	149,6	115,6	60,9
Attend school, in thousands	543,3	238,6	148,7	107,2	48,8
Children employed in economic activities¹³, in thousands	177,0	37,4	64,7	51,2	23,7
Children engaged in household activities, in thousands	513,6	208,1	143,1	108,3	54,1
Total children, %	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0
Children who attend school, %	91,0	88,1	99,4	92,7	80,1
Children employed in economic activities, %	29,7	13,8	43,3	44,3	38,9
Children engaged in household activities, %	86,1	76,9	95,7	93,6	88,9

The survey aimed to assess the proportions in which children manage to combine school, work and household chores. For this purpose the following classification was used:

1. Attending school only;
2. Attending school and also engaged in economic activity;
3. Attending school and also engaged in non-economic activity (household chores);
4. Attending school and also engaged in both economic¹⁴ & non-economic activity;
5. Engaged in economic activity only (and not in school);
6. Engaged in both economic and non-economic activity;
7. Engaged in non-economic activity only (and not in school);
8. Not in school, and neither in economic or non-economic activities.

The analysis of the survey results showed that more than a half of the children are engaged, besides going to school, in household activities related to housekeeping and caring for household members who require such assistance (Table 4).

¹³ Child labour sub-dimension: "Share of employed persons who are below the minimum age specified for the kind of work performed"

¹⁴

A fairly large proportion (more than one-fourth) represents children who are engaged in all three types of activities: school, work and unpaid household services. One in ten children attends school only.

Approximately 4.0% of children are not engaged in any of these three activities.

Nine in ten children think that it is normal for a child of his/her age to work.

Table 4. Distribution of children by type of activity and age group

		percent			
		Total	5-11 years	12-14 years	15-17 years
1	Attending school only	9,5	16,1	2,6	5,3
2	Attending school and also engaged in economic activity	0,6	0,2	1,3	0,6
3	Attending school and also engaged in non-economic activity (unpaid household services)	54,3	58,5	53,5	48,6
4	Attending school and also engaged in both economic & non-economic activity	26,6	13,4	42,0	33,9
5	Engaged in economic activity only (and not in school)	0,3	0,0	0,0	0,8
6	Engaged in both economic and non-economic activity	2,2	0,2	0,0	7,1
7	Engaged in non-economic activity only (and not in school)	2,9	4,8	0,2	2,3
8	Not in school, and neither in economic or non-economic activities	3,6	6,9	0,4	1,4

School attendance

The rate of school attendance among children of compulsory school age (ages 7-15) is 99,1%, with a higher prevalence in urban areas (99,7% as compared to 98,8% in rural areas). Besides this, roughly 90,0% of children aged 6 years and one-fourth of 5-year-olds already attend school or kindergartens.

More than a half of the children attending school also carry out household activities related to housekeeping or caring for household members who require such assistance.

One in four children combines school and household chores with an economic activity. The highest proportion in this case represents children aged 12-14 years – 42,0%; followed by 15-17-year-olds, with 34,0%; and 5-11-year-olds, with 13,4%.

One in ten children attends school only, without carrying out other activities.

Economic activity

Of the total children aged 5-17 years, 29,6% (177,0 thousands) were engaged in economic activities in the reference period. Of them, 2,5% were in the age group 5-7 years, 18,6% in the age group 8-11 years, 36,6% in the age group 12-14 years, and 42,3% in the age group 15-17 years. The ratio between boys and girls employed in economic activities was 3 to 2.

Of the total number of children performing an economic activity, 57.7% (102 thousands) were in the 5-14 years age group. Share of employed children aged 5-14 years in the total number of children aged 5-14 years¹⁵ was 24,3%.

¹⁵ Child labour sub-dimension: “Share of employed persons who are below the minimum age specified for the kind of work performed”.

The magnitude of agriculture in the employment of the adult population, besides the fact that subsistence agriculture is a widespread phenomenon across the country, can lead to the supposition that this sector holds plenty of work for the children, as well. Accordingly, the overwhelming majority of working children were employed in *agriculture* (95,3%), mostly as *farm-hands and labourer* (94,3%). 3,3% of the working children were *unskilled workers* in other areas. Other areas where children worked were retail and *wholesale trade* (1,4%) and *constructions* (1,1%).

Regardless of the economic activities and occupations engaged in, the overwhelming majority of working children, or 95,3% named the farm/subsidiary plot/orchard as being their workplace.

The analysis of the *status in employment* of the working children showed that most of them (94,1%) helped their parents with their businesses, working as *contributing family workers*. The share of children who were *employees* or *own-account workers* amounted to merely 6% of the total 177,0 thousands children engaged in economic activities.

The average length of the workweek was about 9 hours, with the median standing at 7 hours, meaning a half of the children worked no more than 7 hours. More than a half of the total number of children had a workweek of up to 8 hours, 28,4% worked from 8 to 14 hours, 10,4% worked 15 to 24 hours, and 3,8% for 25 hours and more. The longest duration of the workweek is registered in industry, 34 hours, and the shortest in agriculture, 9 hours.

Economic activity among children in the Republic of Moldova is for the most part a rural phenomenon, with roughly 92,0% of the total working children residing in rural areas. In such areas, the incidence of economic activity among children is six times the level registered in urban areas (40,8% and 7,0%, respectively) and the number of working children in towns was 12 times smaller than of those in villages. This situation is also observed in the distribution by type of activity. In all activities, except for trade and hotel services, children living in villages represent the bulk.

The main reason for which more than one half of the children worked was to offer help to the family or the family business. About 40,0% of children worked to school themselves to occupational skills.

When asked about how they use the earned money, more than one half of the children, or 56,0%, said they bought things for themselves. 28,5% of the children give part or all of their earnings to their families. About 8,6% of the children said they spent their earnings on tuition or on school supplies.

One in ten children who worked in the reference period and one in eight children who worked in the last 12 months admitted to having at least one health-related problem¹⁶ due to the performed activity. One-fifth of these children reported that they interrupted for a short period of time their work and/or missed school because of these conditions. Three-fourths of the children who had at least one health-related problem worked in agriculture. Most of the children who fell sick complained of exhaustion/fatigue (3,9%). Other registered complaints included sprains/dislocations (2,4%), fever (1,9%) and disorders of the respiratory system (1,8%).

Household chores

Most children, or 86,1%, said they performed regular household chores. 85,1% *clean their homes and yards*, 70,5% - *shop for household goods*, 65,2% - *wash the dishes*, 27,7% - *cook*, and 25,8% do the *laundry*.

¹⁶ Minor injuries or open wounds, fractures, sprains, dislocations, bruises, disorders of the respiratory system, eye pains and vision problems, skin disorders, stomach disorders, fever, exhaustion, fatigue, etc.

Household services are performed equally by male and female children (49.4% and 50.6%, respectively). Significant discrepancies were observed in the distribution of participation in household chores of the children in towns and villages, with the ratio standing at 1:3.

The distribution by age suggests the fact that virtually all the children in the age group 12-14 years are engaged in household activities (95,7%), followed by those in the age group 15- 17 years (92%) and those aged 5-11 years (76,9%).

The children do household chores for an average period of time of 6,4 hours per week. Structured by number of hours spent per week on household services the distribution appears as follows: 71,6% children work up to 7 hours per week, 21,8% work 8 to 14 hours, 5,6% work 15 to 17 hours, and only 1% of children work more than 27 hours around their homesteads.

4.3. Child Labour

Another aim of the survey was to assess the proportions and characteristics of child labour in Moldova.

In conformity with the definitions and concepts used, child labour represent a subcategory of the children who either *are employed in an economic activity* or *are engaged in unpaid household services (household chores)*.

The table below shows the proportions and the structure of this phenomenon.

Table 5. Distribution of child labour by component elements and age group

	Total	5-11 years	12-14 years	15-16 years	17 years
Total children, in thousands	596,9	270,8	149,6	115,6	60,9
Child labour, in thousands	109,0	38,2	30,5	26,9	13,4
I. Activities within the SNA					
<i>a) non-hazardous activities</i>	29,9	26,6	2,9	0,3	0,2
Working children aged 5-11 years	26,6	26,6	0	0	0
Children aged 12-14 years who work more than 13 hours per week; aged 15-16 years who work more than 24 hours per week; 17 years who work more than 35 hours per week	3,3	0	2,9	0,3	0,2
<i>b) hazardous activities</i>	74,7	10,7	27,1	24,2	12,7
Hazardous economic activities ¹⁷	1,9	0,1	0,4	0,7	0,8
Hazardous occupations ¹⁵	4,0	0,3	0,6	1,7	1,4
Excessive working hours (> 42 hrs/week)	1,0	0	0,3	0,4	0,4
Hazardous conditions ¹⁸	67,7	10,3	25,8	21,4	10,1
II. Activities outside the SNA					
<i>c) children engaged in unpaid household services for more than 27 hours per week¹⁹</i>	4,4	0,8	0,5	2,4	0,7

¹⁷ As defined by Government Decision no.562 of 07.09.1993 on the approval of the Nomenclature of industries, professions and jobs in difficult and hazardous conditions proscribed for persons younger than eighteen years.

¹⁸ Hazardous conditions are those which involve carrying heavy loads at work, those who operate any machinery/heavy equipment at work, those exposed at work to adverse conditions such as dust/fumes, fire/gas/flames, loud noise and the like, as well as children who are verbally or physically abused at work.

¹⁹ Unpaid household services include shopping for household goods, cooking, doing laundry, washing dishes, home & yard cleaning, clearing utensils, repairing household appliances, caring for children, caring for elderly and sick family members, etc.

The number of children who fall into the category of child labour is roughly 109,0 thousands persons, or 18,3% of the total children and 61,6% of the children employed in an economic activity.

The distribution by gender and area of residence shows that the proportion of boys who are found to be in child labour is greater than that of girls (63,0% and 37,0%, respectively) and the share of the rural areas is predominant, with 91,0% against 9% in the urban areas. At the same time, 24,9% of the rural children are classified as child labour, as the corresponding figure for the urban children is limited to 5%.

About 63% of the total number of child labour is in the age group 5-14 years.

The distribution of child labour by the types of *economic activities* and *occupations* is analogous to the distribution of employed children. The overwhelming majority of them are found in *agriculture* (93,8%), followed by *constructions* (1,9%) and *retail and wholesale trade* (1,6%). 92 per cent are employed in small family businesses, farms and own subsidiary plots as *farm-hands and labourer* (92,2%) and having the status in employment as *contributing family workers* (91,7%). *Employees* represented 6,%, and 2,% had the status of *own-account workers*.

The analysis of the distribution of children by the number of hours worked per week (Figure 4) shows that more than a half of children worked up to 7 hours a week, over one-quarter worked more than 7 hours but didn't exceed 14 hours a week, 12,0% worked between 15 and 24 hours, and the remainder worked more than 24 hours. The distribution by the median number of worked hours and the age of the children looks as follows: one half of the children aged 5-9 years worked less than 4 hours per week, one half of the children aged 10-14 years worked less than 7 hours per week, and one half of the 15-17-year-old worked less than 10 hours per week.

The average number of hours worked by child labour is 10 hours per week. In the age group 5-11 years this figure represents 6 hours, in the age group 12-14 years - 10 hours, and in the age group 15-17 years - 14 hours per week.

Component elements

This survey covered the following categories of child labour: *non-hazardous work* (in permissible light work), *hazardous work*, and *unpaid household services* (household chores) related in particular to housekeeping and caring for other household members (see Table 1).

Hazardous work accounts for more than two-thirds of the total (68,5%); *non-hazardous work* represents more than one-fourth (27,4%) and *unpaid household services* - 4,0%.

4.3.1. Non-hazardous work

The proportion of non-hazardous work represents 27,4%. This category includes light work and regular work, whose main identification attributes are either the very young age²⁰ which is unsuitable for work, or the excessive length of the workweek. This includes the children aged 5-11 years who worked (regardless of the number of hours worked per week), the children aged 12-14 years who worked between 14 and 42 hours per week, the children aged 15-16 years who worked between 25 and 42 hours per week and the children aged 17 years who worked between 36 and 42 hours per week.

In the category of non-hazardous work, the 5-11-year-olds represent the major part, or 89%. According to the definition applied, they are too young to work even one hour per week. Of the total child labour, the children in this age group represent almost one-fourth (24,4%). Four in five children of those aged 5-11 years, who performed permissible light work, had an average working week of 7 hours.

²⁰ According to the used methodology, ILO established the minimum age for admission to light work to be 12 years.

4.3.2. Hazardous work

The children employed in hazardous work constitute 42,2% of the total working children and 68,6% of the total child labour, which represents 74,7 thousands children. This means that these children either *performed hazardous activities* (2,5% of the total number of this category) or *had hazardous occupations* (5,4% of the total number of this category), or the *length of the workweek exceeded 42 hours* (1,5%), or they worked under *hazardous conditions* (90,6%).

Of the total of these hazardous work elements the most widespread (9 in 10 children) was *work under hazardous conditions* (dangerous or harmful working conditions), which represented about 68,0 thousands children.

4.3.2.1. Hazardous work conditions

Of the total child labour, 62,0% of children worked in hazardous working conditions, in other words, were exposed at the workplace to harmful factors or conditions²¹, carried heavy loads, or operated heavy equipment and machinery that could endanger their health or lives.

A more detailed analysis of the nature and conditions of the performed work revealed that practically every second child (47,1%) *carries heavy loads* at work. *Handling of dangerous instruments* (38,5%), *extreme heat or cold* (37,6%), *environments with dust or fumes* (34,8%), *operating of heavy equipment and machinery* (28,3%), *constant yelling* (16,5%) represent other widespread adverse conditions. The conditions faced by male and female child labour are for the most part similar, except for the fact that a greater number of boys are engaged in carrying heavy loads and operating of heavy equipment and machinery.

4.3.3. Household chores

The share of children who rendered unpaid household services for more than 27 hours per week represented 4,0% of the total child labour. Generally, these children are engaged in shopping for household goods, home and yard cleaning, cooking, washing dishes and doing the laundry. Small proportions of children are engaged in caring for the elderly and sick family members (3,3%) and children (15,4%) in the household.

4.4. Key conclusion

The problem of child labour in the Republic of Moldova is generated mainly by the (hazardous) working conditions in which children work and the entry into employment too early of age. The key determinants of child labour are: the age of the child, the child's place of residence (urban or rural) and the fact if the household has or not a subsidiary plot.

²¹ Includes dust, fumes, fire, gas, loud noise or strong vibration, extreme heat or cold, dangerous instruments, inadequate ventilation, chemical substances, physical, mental or sexual abuse, etc.