

## 125 THOUSAND CHILD WORKERS OF AGE 6 to 14 ARE NOT ENROLLED, 30 THOUSAND NEVER WENT TO SCHOOL

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### Executive Summary

From 1994 to 2006, the fraction of working children of age 6 to 14 dropped from 8.5 percent to 2.6 percent in Turkey. Yet, given that the population is relatively young in Turkey, 2.6 percent implies that 320 thousand children work. 70 thousand out of 207 thousand working boys and 55 thousand out of 113 thousand working girls are not enrolled. 30 thousand out of 125 thousand children who work and who are not enrolled, never went to school. 204 thousand children who work are employed as unpaid family workers and 109 thousand children who work are employed as regular or casual paid employees. 50 percent of boys and 72 percent of girls who work are employed in agricultural fields. The majority of the remaining children who work are employed in institutional workplaces.

The majority of these children will be 25 to 35 years old in 2030; the future looks very bleak. In order to achieve long-term growth, Turkey has to invest in its human capital. It is crucial to (re)integrate these children into the educational system, especially since they are at an age where education is still compulsory.

### 320 Thousand Children of Age 6 to 14 Are Employed

Since joining the International Labour Organization's (ILO) *International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour* (IPEC) in 1992, Turkey made significant progress in combating child labor. Turkey approved ILO Conventions No. 138 in 1998 and No. 182 in 2001, which respectively sets the minimum working age to 15 and bans the worst forms of child labor. Ministry of Labour and Social Security's *National Time-Bound Programme Against Child Labour*, anticipates the complete elimination of all types of employment for children of ages below 15 by 2014.

This research brief aims to summarize some key statistics on working children of age 6 to 14 in Turkey using the most recent dataset available: Child Labor Force Survey conducted in 2006 by TURKSTAT. The sample in this dataset is representative of the entire population in Turkey and it represents almost 12.5 million children of age 6 to 14.

**Table 1 Children of Age 6 to 14 in Turkey**

	1994	1999	2006
Number of working children of age 6 to 14	974 000	511 000	320 000
Number of total children of age 6 to 14	11 406 000	12 065 000	12 478 000
Ratio of working children of age 6 to 14	8.5%	4.2%	2.6%

Table 1 presents the main figures on child labor in Turkey between 1994 and 2006. The ratio of working children of age 6 to 14 went down from 8.5 percent in 1994 to 4.2 percent in 1999 and to 2.6

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percent in 2006. Yet, given that the population is relatively young in Turkey, 2.6 percent implies that 320 thousand children work (Table 1). 1.8 percent of girls of age 6 to 14 and 3.3 percent of boys of age 6 to 14 are employed. Of 320 thousand children who work, 35 percent are girls and 65 percent are boys. Turkey still has a lot of work to do before completely eliminating child labor for children below 15.

### 70 Thousand Boys and 55 Thousand Girls Who Work Are Not Enrolled

61.2 percent of children of age 6 to 14 who work, are currently enrolled (Table 2). 70 thousand boys and 55 thousand girls, 125 thousand children in total, who work are not enrolled. In other words, 33.5 percent of boys and 48.5 percent of girls who work are not enrolled at any school. This discrepancy between male children and female children is the direct consequence of gender discrimination faced by girls at home.

**Table 2 Enrollment Indicators for Children of Age 6 to 14**

	Total		Female		Male	
	Number	Ratio	Number	Ratio	Number	Ratio
<b>Working Children (6 to 14)</b>						
Enrolled	196 077	61.2%	137 915	66.5%	58 161	51.5%
Not Enrolled	124 178	38.8%	69 455	33.5%	54 723	48.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>320 254</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>207 370</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>112 884</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 3 focuses on children who work, and who are not currently enrolled. Note that these children can be primary school graduates given that they are younger than 15 years of age. 52.7 percent of children who work and who are not enrolled quit school after completing primary education, 23.2 percent quit before they completed primary education and 24.1 percent never went to school. Table 4 presents more detailed information on this latter group who never went to school.

**Table 3 Education Statistics for Working Children Who Are Not Enrolled**

<b>Working Children Who Are Not Enrolled (6 to 14)</b>	Total	
	Number	Ratio
Completed primary education	65 431	%52,7
Did not complete primary education	28 846	%23,2
Never went to school	29 901	%24,1
<b>Total</b>	<b>124 178</b>	<b>%100</b>

**Table 4 Reasons for Not Going to School (For those who never went)**

<b>Working Children Who Never Went to School (6 to 14)</b>	Total		Male		Female	
	Number	Ratio	Number	Ratio	Number	Ratio
Family does not allow	7 995	26.7%	2 059	19.0%	5 935	31.2%
Have to work	7 087	23.7%	1 737	16.0%	5 350	28.1%
Unable to pay school expenses	7 233	24.2%	3 502	32.2%	3 731	19.6%
Other reasons	3 272	10.9%	1 262	11.6%	2 011	10.6%
School is too far away	1 201	4.0%	395	3.6%	806	4.2%
Too old	1 336	4.5%	549	5.1%	786	4.1%
Learned a trade instead	1 211	4.1%	793	7.3%	418	2.2%
Sick or handicapped	567	1.9%	567	5.2%	-	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>29 901</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>10 864</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>19 036</b>	<b>%100</b>

47.9 percent of children who work never went to school because of economic reasons: They have to work or they are unable to pay school expenses. 64.6 percent of who work and who never went to school are girls. 31.2 of these girls never went to school because their families did not allow them to go. Considering that the corresponding ratio for boys is only 19 percent, we take this to be a depressing implication of gender discrimination at home.

### 50 percent of boys and 72 percent of girl who work are employed in agriculture

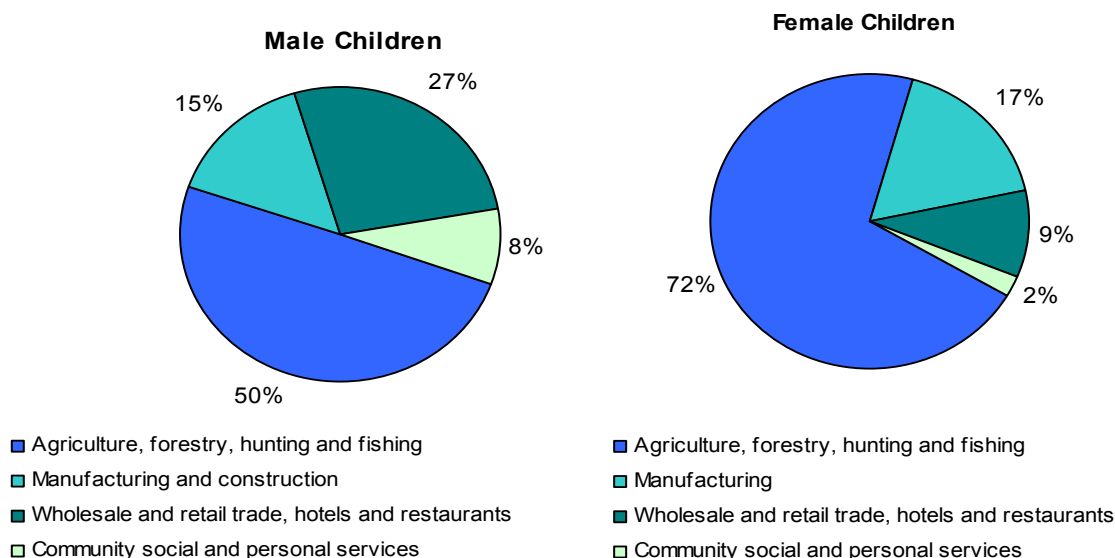
Among 320 thousand working children of age 6 to 14, 204 thousand work as unpaid family workers and 109 thousand work as paid employees.<sup>1</sup> The remaining 7 thousand work as self-employed.<sup>2</sup>

**Table 5 Employment Status**

Working Children (6 to 14)	Total	
	Number	Ratio
Unpaid family worker	204 326	63.8%
Paid employee	109 264	34.1%
Self employed	6 665	2.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>320 254</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Majority of children (72 percent of girls and 50 percent of boys) who work are employed in agriculture. There is also a large group of children working in the manufacturing industry. 19 thousand girls of age 6 to 14 and 26 thousand boys of age 6 to 14 are employed in the manufacturing industry. 5 thousand boys of age 6 to 14 are employed in the construction industry. There is also a significant group of working boys of age 6 to 14 in the hotels and restaurants industry.

**Figure 1 Sectoral Distribution of Employment**



Ratio of children working in agricultural fields is 45.7 percent for male children and 69.6 percent for female children. The majority of the remaining children who work are employed at institutional workplaces. Male children of age 6 to 14, who work, have a much higher probability of working in institutional workplaces or mobile workplaces. For male working children, ratio of those working in a

<sup>1</sup> They receive regular wages or daily payments.

<sup>2</sup> A large of part the self-employed children work as peddlers. There are some children who work at home.

mobile workplace is 10.5 percent. On the other hand, 5.1 percent of working girls are employed at home. A majority of working girls of age 6 to 14 work at agricultural fields or home (75 percent).

**Table 6 Employment According to Type of Workplace**

	Total		Male		Female	
	Number	Ratio	Number	Ratio	Number	Ratio
<b>Working Children (6 to 14)</b>						
Agricultural fields	173 376	54.1%	94 789	45.7%	78 587	69.6%
Institutional workplace	111 573	34.8%	85 428	41.2%	26 146	23.2%
Mobile workplace	22 637	7.1%	21 688	10.5%	949	0.8%
Home	7 112	2.2%	1 370	0.7%	5 742	5.1%
Marketplace	5 557	1.7%	4 095	2.0%	1 462	1.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>320 254</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>207 370</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>112 884</b>	<b>100%</b>

Even though the ratio of child labor dropped to 2.6 percent in 2006, 320 thousand children work. 125 thousand out of this 320 thousand are not enrolled and 30 thousand never went to school, of which 20 thousand are girls.

These children work as unskilled workers at very low-return jobs. For those who quit school, it will be very difficult to find high-return jobs with proper work conditions. Those who attend school while working, struggle to obtain a proper education under disadvantageous conditions. As the return to unskilled labor is very low, it would be more efficient to ensure that these children accumulate human capital instead of working as unskilled workers.

These children will constitute the backbone of the labor market in 2030 when they will be of age 26-35, i.e. primary working age. To promote long-term economic growth, it is more efficient to (re)integrate these children into the educational system to ensure that they accumulate the human capital they will need to keep up with the fast-paced technological change, rather than encouraging the parents to have more children to keep the demographic window of opportunity open.