



**International Labour Organization  
International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC)**

**Investigating the Worst Forms of Child Labour No. 19  
Romania  
Working Street Children in Bucharest:  
A Rapid Assessment**

**By Gabriela Alexandrescu**

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## Preface

Unacceptable forms of exploitation of children at work exist and persist, but they are particularly difficult to research due to their hidden, sometimes illegal or even criminal nature. Slavery, debt bondage, trafficking, sexual exploitation, the use of children in the drug trade and in armed conflict, as well as hazardous work are all defined as Worst Forms of Child Labour. Promoting the Convention (No. 182) concerning the Prohibition and immediate action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour, 1999, is a high priority for the International Labour Organization (ILO). Recommendation (No. 190, Paragraph 5) accompanying the Convention states that “detailed information and statistical data on the nature and extent of child labour should be compiled and kept up to date to serve as a basis for determining priorities for national action for the abolition of child labour, in particular for the prohibition and elimination of its worst forms, as a matter of urgency.” Although there is a body of knowledge, data, and documentation on child labour, there are also still considerable gaps in understanding the variety of forms and conditions in which children work. This is especially true of the worst forms of child labour, which by their very nature are often hidden from public view and scrutiny.

Against this background the ILO, through IPEC/SIMPOC (International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour/Statistical Information and Monitoring Programme on Child Labour) has carried out 38 rapid assessments of the worst forms of child labour in 19 countries and one border area. The investigations have been made using a new rapid assessment methodology on child labour, elaborated jointly by the ILO and UNICEF<sup>1</sup>. The programme was funded by the United States Department of Labor.

The investigations on the worst forms of child labour have explored very sensitive areas including illegal, criminal or immoral activities. The forms of child labour and research locations were carefully chosen by IPEC staff in consultation with IPEC partners. The rapid assessment investigations focused on the following categories of worst forms of child labour: children in bondage; child domestic workers; child soldiers; child trafficking; drug trafficking; hazardous work in commercial agriculture, fishing, garbage dumps, mining and the urban environment; sexual exploitation; and working street children.

To the partners and IPEC colleagues who contributed, through their individual and collective efforts, to the realisation of this report I should like to express our gratitude. The responsibility for opinions expressed in this publication rests solely with the authors and does not imply endorsement by the ILO.

I am sure that the wealth of information contained in this series of reports on the situation of children engaged in the worst forms of child labour around the world will contribute to a deeper understanding and allow us to more clearly focus on the challenges that lie ahead. Most importantly, we hope that the studies will guide policy makers, community leaders, and practitioners to tackle the problem on the ground.



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<sup>1</sup> Investigating Child Labour: Guidelines for Rapid Assessment - A Field Manual, January 2000, a draft to be finalized further to field tests, <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/ipec/simpoc/guides/index.htm>

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## List of Abbreviations

AG	Advisory Group (on Child Labour)
ANPCA	National Authority for Child Protection and Adoption
BCH	Bucharest City Hall
CLU	Child Labour Units
CRC	UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
CS, CF	Case Initials
DCPR	Department for Child's Rights Protection
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GPI	General Police Inspectorate
ICTT	Intersectoral Central Training Team
ILO	International Labour Organization
INSSE	National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies
IPEC	International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour
LI	Labour Inspectorate
MER	Ministry of Education and Research
MHF	Ministry of Health and Family
MLSS	Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NSC	National Steering Committee
OP	Interview Operator
SIMPOC	Statistical Information and Monitoring Programme on Child Labour
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund



## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The International Labour Organization (ILO)/International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) is taking action towards the progressive prevention and elimination of the worst forms of child labour as stipulated by the ILO Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labour (no. 182) adopted in Geneva in June 1999.

IPEC was introduced in Romania in March 2000, and aims to support the country in the following ways:

- a) preventing the expansion of child labour, and ultimately eliminating child labour, starting with its worst forms;
- b) enhancing the capacity of the governmental and non-governmental agencies;
- c) conducting qualitative and quantitative surveys in order to evaluate the nature and the magnitude of the child labour phenomenon; and
- d) raising the awareness of the general public regarding child labour.

The purpose of this survey was to provide, in a relatively short period of time, qualitative and quantitative data about the engagement of street children in Bucharest in the worst forms of child labour. In the first stages of the survey, the worst forms of child labour, their content and the working conditions, as well as the socio-demographic characteristics of the target-population were identified.

The survey identified the main factors that had an impact on the phenomenon to explain how street children become engaged in the worst forms of child labour.

An important component of the study was to identify and describe the consequences of child labour on the street children: their physical and mental health, their education and the possibilities of social reintegration.

The ILO, through IPEC's Statistical Information and Monitoring Programme on Child Labour (SIMPOC), has undertaken thirty-eight Rapid Assessments of the worst forms of child labour in nineteen countries and one border area. These investigations have been made through application of the rapid assessment methodology recently prepared by ILO/UNICEF. The overall objectives of the project are that (i) quantitative and qualitative information related to the worst forms of child labour in the selected 38 investigations is produced and made publicly available, (ii) magnitude, character, causes and consequences are clearly described, and (iii) the body of methodologies – especially the ILO/UNICEF Rapid Assessment methodology on child labour – for investigating the worst forms of child labour is validated and further developed.

This Rapid Assessment (RA) on working street children in Bucharest is one of the thirty-eight RAs and its findings will provide policy makers with insights into children's engagement in the worst forms of child labour. These insights can then be used to determine strategic objectives for the prevention and elimination of the worst forms of child labour in the country,

to design and target policy packages, and to implement, monitor and evaluate those programmes.

### ***The types and incidence of child labour***

Based on the previous experience of social workers with working street children the survey focused on forms of child labour with a high incidence within the sample population: begging, car-washing at intersections or garages, collecting recyclable waste products, loading and unloading heavy goods (in markets, warehouses and supermarkets), household work, and selling goods. Given the short duration of the survey, it was difficult to find out about less visible forms of child labour (such as sexual exploitation, stealing, etc.). The semi-structured interviewing of working street children indicated the incidence of the worst forms of child labour within the survey as follows:

- Begging: 75 cases (44%);
- Car washing/parking: 29 cases (17%);
- Selling goods: 25 cases (15%);
- Loading and unloading goods: 16 cases (9%);
- Household work: 14 cases (8%).

The rest of the interviewed street children were classified by the type of performed activity as follows:

- Collecting waste products: 9 cases;
- Stealing: 3 cases;
- Engagement in prostitution (one case).

This distribution by the type of hard labour takes into account the preponderant type of work performed by the child; approximately 69% of the 150 interviewed children were engaged in several types of labour.

The data collected by the field operators indicate that ethnicity determines the type of work performed by children. Thus, in the case of Roma children, the data indicated a high incidence of work such as “car-washing“ (67% of those engaged in this type of work) and collection of waste products (89%). For the Romanian street children, the preponderant types of work were “household work“ (65%) and “begging“ (60%). The distribution by gender of the interviewed children indicates the prevalence of male working street children as far as the city of Bucharest is concerned: boys - 102 cases (68%), girls - 48 cases (32%).

### ***Factors that contribute to the expansion of child labour***

- Poverty of all the origin families of the working street children;
- Family disorganization (single parent families, alcoholic or imprisoned parents);
- A low level of education among the children’s parents or legal guardians, which contributes to mentalities and cultural patterns that favour child labour;
- The urban environment in which children and sometimes their families live, an environment characterized by a lower degree of social control and support than that of their original rural environment;

- Lack of legislation and poor enforcement of existing legislation to eliminate child labour.

### ***The consequences of child labour***

The survey indicated a low level of school performance and a high dropout rate: 62.66% of the interviewed children dropped out of school, and the percentage of children both working and attending school is only 34.66%. Most children have a positive attitude towards school. Approximately 72% of the children who had abandoned the formal education process wanted to go back to school.

The rapid assessment also provided information about the risks that children are exposed to while working. One of the severe consequences of child labour is exhaustion (56% of the children declared waking up tired). Other negative effects that were identified were work-related illness (24%) and accidents (17%).

### ***Strategies for the prevention and elimination of the worst forms of child labour***

The data collected by interviewing children and adult members of their families, as well as the focus-group discussions with the representatives of governmental and non-governmental agencies, provided the basis for the identification of strategies for the elimination of child labour. These are:

- the need for psychological and vocational counseling services for the families in need to provide social support for overcoming crisis;
- the enhancement and diversification of the information and awareness raising campaigns regarding the worst forms of child labour;
- the national coordination of efforts for the elimination of the phenomenon;
- the identification of ways for a deeper commitment of local communities to find resources and design policies.

All the general and specific objectives of the survey were accomplished and the findings will contribute to the design of new public policies for the elimination of the worst forms of child labour. At the same time, the findings of the rapid assessment will serve as a starting point for the initiation of further in-depth research that should shed light on this phenomenon.



# **I. THE POLITICAL AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUND OF THE RESEARCH**

## ***1.1 Demographics***

Starting in 1990, the population of Romania began to decline. One factor contributing to this is the number of births being smaller than the number of deaths. Another factor is the external migration that has taken place. The most dramatic population decrease occurred in 1996 – a decrease of 74,000. The overall decrease from 1992 to 1998 was 321,000 (*The National Human Development Report 1999, UNDP*). This trend continues today: the estimated population of Romania on 1 January 2001 was 22,430,000 inhabitants, which is a decrease of 25,900 compared to 1 January 2000 (*The National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies*).

In the year 1998, the urban population was 12,347,886 inhabitants (54.87% of the overall population), whereas the urban population was 10,154,917 inhabitants, representing 45.13% of the Romanian population. In 1998, the population segment 0-17 years exceeded 6.6 million people (29%). In 1999, it represented only 23.3% of the Romanian population, a decrease of 1.4 million people (21%). In the year 2000, the number of people aged between 0-17 years represented 22.6% of the overall population, that is 5,043,000 people.

There was a slight increase in the segment of population over 60 years, from 18% in 1997 (4,068,500 people) to 18.31% in 1998 (4,120,569 people). The analysis by gender shows that, as far as this age segment is concerned, the female population shows a slight increase (56.89% in 1997 to 56.99% in 1998), whereas the male population has witnessed a slight decrease from 43.11% in 1997 (1,754,234) to 43.01% in 1998 (1,772,420).

The demographic aging indicator shows that in 1998 for each 100 young women (under 15) there were 114 elderly women (60 and over), whereas for 100 men under 15 there were only 82 elderly men.<sup>1</sup>

In conclusion, there has been a decline in the main demographic indicators beginning after 1990. The transition period is the main cause of these demographic phenomena and has an impact on the population structure and number, as well as on the process of demographic aging. In the long term, this is likely to have a negative impact on socio-economic development, human resources and the social security system.

## ***1.2 Human capital***

### ***1.2.1 Health***

According to the data provided by the National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies, there is a fluctuation in the life expectancy at birth: 69.2 in 1998 as opposed to 69 in 1997 and 69.4 in 1995. The comparative analysis by gender indicated a lower life expectancy for the male population as compared to the female population, that is 65.5 males and 73.3 females

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<sup>1</sup> *Women and Men in Romania* - UNPD and INNSE, 2000.

(1998). The fluctuation of this indicator by gender is the same as for the overall population.

The infant mortality rate is constantly decreasing, from 26.9 in 1990 to 20.5 in 1998, with a steady decrease up until 2000. This phenomenon is due to the increased access of the population to medical services, and to contraception and abortion, which have positive consequences for the health of mothers and children. There was an increase in the mortality rate within the segment of the population 0-17, in the subgroup 5-9 years, from 0.6 in 1993 to 0.8 in 1998, whereas the mortality rate of the other subgroups has decreased (*National Institute for Statistics, Year Book 1999, Romania; National Human Development Report 1999, UNDP, produced by Romanian Academy 2000*).

The evolution of HIV/AIDS cases is extremely alarming. By 31 January 2001, 6,216 cases of AIDS were registered, out of which 5,384 were children. The highest incidence of AIDS is in children aged between 5-9 years old, a total number of 2,327 cases (1,386 boys and 959 girls) and children between 1-4 years, 2,147 cases (1,291 boys and 883 girls) (*General Direction for Public Health, Ministry of Health and Family, June 2000*).

The number of medical staff is continually decreasing, a direct consequence of the lack of wage incentives. The remuneration level of doctors is three to five times lower than in other Central and Southeastern Europe, and 20-30 times lower when compared to Western Europe. In 1990 the number of medical doctors amounted to 41,813, and by 1998 it decreased to 41,310. If we correlate this change with the population decrease after 1990, we notice that in 1998 the number of doctors per 10,000 inhabitants was 18.4, compared to 17.7 in 1993. The percent of public expenditures for health has undergone a change. In 1990 it represented 7.6 of the gross domestic product, by 1998 it reached 8.5%, with the highest value being that of 8.9% in 1994.

### *1.2.2 Education*

This field has undergone a lot of changes in regard to the population's access to education, as well as the negative perception of the importance of education. The negative impact of the transition period - decreasing budgetary sources, poverty, the increase in education expenditures - manifested itself at the level of the education system.

The adults' level of literacy has been constant (97% in 1998), with a slight disparity between women (95.5%) and men (98.7) (*The National Human Development Report - 1999 – UNDP*).

In 1995, the gross rate of education enrollment indicated negative tendencies for all age groups, followed by a slight improvement in the school enrollment rate, with the exception of secondary education. The gross rate of education enrollment for the secondary education was 91.1% in 1989, as opposed to 67.8% in 1998 (*The National Human Development Report, 1999, UNDP*). The enrollment rates for compulsory primary education decreased from 97.3% in 1989 to 94.4% in 1998.

The school dropout rate for the school year 1997/1998 was 0.8%, the same as the year before, for primary education. As far as high school education is concerned, the dropout rate is 4.2%, 0.2% higher than in 1996/1997. In Bucharest, the number of children enrolled in the primary education system in the year 2000 was 7% smaller than the year before. Thus, in 1999-2000 17,200 children were enrolled in the first school year, whereas in 2000-2001 there were only 16,000 children.

Another important aspect is the number of teachers, and especially qualified teachers. The number of students per teacher for the primary education decreased in 1993, compared to 1990 (from 17 students to 15 students) and maintained this value up until 1998. Although

gradually decreasing, the incidence of unqualified staff is still high (12.9% for the school year 1998/1999, as opposed to 15% in 1994/1995). An analysis of this indicator shows the incidence of unqualified staff is much higher in the rural areas (20.2%) compared to the urban areas (7.6%). The overall number of schools increased significantly in 1996/1997 - 29,815, from 29,376 in 1993/1994, and then decreased in 1998/1999 down to 29,409.

The decrease of the enrollment rate was a consequence of the decreased number of newborns in the last few years, and also of socio-economic factors.

The public expenditure for education has fluctuated since 1990: 3.6% in 1992, compared to 3% in 1990, followed by a dramatic decrease down to 3.1% in 1994 and a peak of 4.1% in 2001. Although this percent is higher than in the past, this increase does not entirely cover the costs of the education system.

### ***1.3 The economic background***

The reforming process initiated in 1990 focused mainly on reducing the budgetary deficits, privatization, and the creation of a free-market economy. In 1999, 41.2% of the Romanian population lived under the poverty line. The data provided by the Commission Against Poverty indicated that 45% of the urban population and 55% of the rural population live under the poverty line. Compared to 1989, when only 6% of the population lived in poverty, in 2000 43% of the Romanian population lived in poverty. By definition, it is said that a family lives under the poverty line when the daily income is less than 6 USD; the monthly income represents less than 60% of the average income; and when these amounts do not cover the basic family needs. This negative indicator has a direct impact on children. Eighty percent of the families with more than three children live in poverty. More than 50% of the Romanian children live in these families. "The territorial poverty indicator shows a concentration of poverty in Northeastern and Southern Romania. In fact, the Northeastern area includes 2/3 of the country's poorest communities (89 of 137), 1/3 of those at risk of poverty (86 of 227) and only 12 of the 203 that are considered the most developed" (*National Human Development Report, 1999*).

According to the data provided by the National Employment Agency, the recorded number of unemployed people at the end of December 2000 was about one thousand people, with an increase of 22.5 thousand compared to November 2000. Women represented 46.8% of the overall number of unemployed people. The incidence of the unemployed aged between 18-62 years in December 2000 was 7.2%, consistent with the overall unemployment rates. The unemployment rate in December 2000, related to the overall number of active civilian population, was 10.5%. The unemployment rate of women for the same period was 10.3%. Unemployment rates are high in the counties of Neamt (16.9%), Braila (16.6%), Botosani (16.5%) and Hunedoara (16.4%). The lowest unemployment rates were recorded in Satu-Mare (4.6%), Bihor (4.9%), Ilfov (6.5%) and Bucharest (6.5%). The impact of restructuring resulted in the dramatic expansion of unemployment. This means decreased manpower and a greater need for social protection, which results in increased social expenditures and significant budgetary losses due to the smaller number of taxpayers.

The gross average salary in May 2001 was 4,174,679 lei<sup>2</sup> while the net salary was 2,915.299 lei, recording a decrease by 3.4% and 3.6% respectively compared to April 2001. Another important indicator is the incidence of the occupied population within the overall population, of 50.2% in 1998, decreasing by 3.2% compared to 1995. In 1998 the active population

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<sup>2</sup> 32,279 Lei = USD \$1 (March 2002)

included 44.5% women, compared to 48.5% in 1995. This is a direct consequence of the economic reform, more precisely of the mass privatizations of the past few years, and of the lack of a system for the social and vocational reintegration of the human capital.

Another consequence of economic decline is the inequalities within the population. There is a strong relationship between the precarious socio-economic conditions of families and child labour.

## ***1.4 The political background***

### *1.4.1 Central institutions*

In December 1991, a new Constitution was approved by popular referendum. The Constitution declares Romania to be a parliamentary republic and provides for multiple political parties, a separation of powers between branches of government, a market economy, and respect for human rights.

The President of Romania is elected by direct, popular vote for a maximum of two four-year mandates. He or she represents the country in matters of foreign affairs and is the commander of the armed forces. According to the 1991 Constitution, the president may not belong to any political party.

The President appoints a Prime Minister to head the Government; the Prime Minister is generally the leader of the party with the majority of seats in parliament. The Prime Minister is responsible for selecting a cabinet to help carry out the operations of Government.

Romania has a bicameral (two-chamber) Parliament. Its lower house, called the Chamber of Deputies, maintains 343 seats, of which 15 are reserved for ethnic minorities; the upper house, or Senate, has 143 seats. Members of both houses of parliament are elected for four-year terms, according to a modified system of proportional representation. All citizens aged 18 and over are eligible to vote.

Romania is divided into 40 counties and the municipality of Bucharest. Each unit has its own local government, as do cities, towns, and communities (rural areas), within each county.

### *1.4.2 National Authority for Child Protection and Adoption*

In the 1990s Romanian economic development was affected by social democratisation, transition to a market economy within the context of extensive economic crisis, strong structural pressure, delays in the restructuring of the economy and intensifying – occasionally eruptive – social tensions.

In this context, along with pressures from the European Community, the Romanian Government was forced to admit that the institutionalized children's access to decent living conditions represents a real crisis as far as human rights are concerned. In response to this situation, the Government established a National Authority for Child Protection and Adoption that took over responsibilities for institutionalized children from the Department for Child's Rights Protection, the Ministry of Education and Research, the Ministry of Health and Family, and from the Secretary of State for the Handicapped. The Agency is directly subordinated to the Prime Minister and is responsible, at the national level, for the elaboration, co-ordination and monitoring of reform policies. The transfer of management responsibilities for childcare institutions from the Ministry of Education and Research, the Ministry of Health and Family and the Department of Handicapped Persons to the County Councils (local authorities) took longer than expected and was only completed in July 2000.



The Authority is in charge of ensuring that agreed standards and levels of care are implemented. An initiative has been the adoption, in May 2000, of a National Strategy on the Reform of the Childcare System 2001-2004, which sets out policy guidelines for the reform of the existing system. The basic goals of the strategy are to substantially decrease the number of institutionalized children and the number of children at risk of being institutionalized (children from families at risk, working children). This is the first time a Romanian legislative act recognizes child labourers as a specific category of beneficiaries to be dealt with and includes the following provisions: to revise and harmonize the national legal framework regarding child labour; to establish local structures and services to contribute to the progressive elimination of child labour; to raise awareness of the public at large on any type of abuse, neglect and exploitation of children; to design and implement direct action programmes aiming at the elimination of child labour; and to make known the good practices and lessons learned on children's rights.

### ***1.5 The child labour issue***

#### *1.5.1 Child labour - institutions*

The International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) intends to assist Romania in: (i) preventing the expansion of, and ultimately eliminating, child labour, (ii) enhancing the capacity of governmental and non-governmental agencies, (iii) conducting qualitative and quantitative surveys in order to assess the nature and magnitude of child labour and (iv) raising the awareness of the general public regarding child labour.

The following institutional mechanisms were established within the Programme:

- The National Steering Committee for the Elimination of Child Labour (NSC), was established based on the Memorandum of Understanding signed by the ILO and the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity (on 9 June 2000), and consists of representatives of the National Authority for Child Protection and Adoption, the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity, the Ministry of Education and Research, the Ministry of Health and Family, the Ministry for European Integration, the General Inspectorate of Police, employers' and workers' organizations, NGOs and universities;
- Child Labour Units (CLUs) were established within the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity, the Labour Inspectorate, and the National Authority for Child Protection and Adoption;
- The National Advisory Group on Child Labour was established made up of CLUs members and the Intersectoral Central Training Team.

#### *1.5.2 Child labour - programmes in progress*

In order to prevent and eliminate child labour and the related street children phenomenon in Romania, the following programmes have been successfully implemented within the IPEC framework:

- Initial training of Child Labour Units' members and Intersectoral Central Training Team on investigating and monitoring child labour, including project design, management, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, 25-29 September 2000;
- First manual on child labour issues - translation and publication of selected chapters of "Action against Child Labour" by Nelien Haspels and Michele Jankanish, Geneva,

ILO, 2000, consisting of strategies, instruments, methodologies and information necessary to plan and carry out effective action, October 2000.

- Labour inspectors trained to fight the worst forms child labour, implemented by the Labour Inspectorate, 15.05-15.07.2001.

A series of action programmes have been undertaken:

- Enhancing the capacity of Roma communities in selected areas for the withdrawal of Roma working children from the streets and/or other hazardous work implemented by the NGO ECHOSOC Foundation (Foundation for Social Recuperation, Integration and Promotion).
- Police officers of the General Inspectorate of Police trained to act against the worst forms of child labour implemented by ARIADNA Association (NGO).
- Integrated programme for the elimination of the worst forms of child labour in three selected metropolitan areas in Romania by 2002, implemented by Salvati Copiii (Save the Children Romania).
- Rural Child Labour Baseline Survey in five selected counties of Romania – implemented by a local expert.
- Enhancing the capacity of the Ministry of Education and Research to increase the Attendance, Retention and Performance Rates of Children in order to Prevent and Eliminate Rural Child Labour, implemented by the Ministry of Education and Research and the Centre for Education and Professional Development Step-by-Step.
- Strengthening the capacity of the Confederation of Romanian Democratic Trade Unions to combat the worst forms of child labour, implemented by the Confederation of Romanian Democratic Trade Unions.

### *1.5.3 Child labour - previous studies*

A study carried out by Salvati Copiii-ILO/IPEC in 1997 covered 400 street children, 200 children living in care institutions and 400 children living with their families in Bucharest and Suceava (a middle sized city in the Northeast of the country). In addition, 200 families of working children were interviewed. The most alarming findings concerning children's situation were that about 8% of the children interviewed reported working more than eight hours a day; they also reported having quit primary school because they were too exhausted to concentrate on their education. The study also found that most children came from large cities (83.5%) and from families with more than four children (44.7%). Twenty-six percent of the interviewed children had received no education, and only 0.2% graduated from primary school, while the large majority dropped out of school. Most of the children in the streets are boys (71.5%), while 41.7% are Roma and 0.75% belong to other ethnic groups.

In the National Study on Street Children's Situation carried out in 1999, Salvati Copiii identified the causes that lead to children ending up in the streets (for 60% of the cases) as poverty, family conflicts and violence, followed by family disorganization<sup>3</sup>. The study also emphasized that children's main source of income was begging (71%), with children being either sent to beg by their parents or begging at their own choice.

Another Salvati Copiii study on working children conducted in 1997 reported that 37% of

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<sup>3</sup> The term "family disorganisation" used throughout the *National Study on Street Children's Situation* and the present survey refers to any of the following types of family structure: illegitimate family (concubinage); single parent family as result of decease, divorce, imprisonment and abandonment. A family may be considered as disorganised when violence or alcohol addiction occur.

children work in order to meet the needs of their families. Food is the main reason for working in the streets (80%)<sup>4</sup>. Most families are not aware of the risks their children face in the streets. The study found that 35% of girls admitted to having engaged in prostitution in order to survive. Similarly, a rather high number of children and teenagers living in the streets have become victims of adult pedophiles (20% of the boys said that they had been subjected to such an abuse at least once).

The target group of the present survey is working street children. Unlike other previous studies, this one focused on the most common types of child labour in Bucharest (such as begging, car-washing, loading/unloading merchandise, collection of waste products, etc.). At the same time, the survey is intended to serve as an information instrument for the ILO/IPEC programmes for preventing and eliminating child labour. In July 2001, ILO/IPEC and Salvati Copiii Organisation launched an action programme on child labour (Integrated programme for the elimination of the worst forms of child labour in three selected metropolitan areas in Romania by 2002). The data collected during this survey and data that will be gathered by the end of 2002 in Iasi and Craiova cities will constitute an integrated basis of information for the activities stipulated in the programme for 500 children withdrawn from the street and reintegrated into their families or the educational system.

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<sup>4</sup> *Children and Work*, Save the Children Romania and UNICEF, 1997.



## II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

### *2.1 International legislation*

Romania ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on 28 September 1990. The ILO Minimum Age Convention (no. 138), 1973 and the ILO Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labour (no. 182), 1999 were ratified in 1975 and 2000 respectively.

### *2.2 Compulsory education*

Article 6 of the Education Law (Law. no. 84/1995, 28th of September, republished in 1999) increases the duration of compulsory education from eight to nine years. The children can attend daytime schools until the age of 17. The following forms of education are available: daytime and evening education, low-attendance education, correspondence or distance learning.

Although education is compulsory, not all children in Romania go to school. The enrolment rate for primary education decreased from 97.3% in 1989 to 94.4% in 1998 and for secondary education from 91.1% in 1989 to 61.6% in 1998 (The National Human Development Report, UNDP and the Romanian Academy, 1999).

The Education Law stipulates that for uneducated children there is *the possibility to organize special classes made up of children who have not completed the first four years of the compulsory education by the age of 14, for one reason or another (art. 20). For secondary education, classes may be organized as evening, low-attendance or distance education for those who are more than two years older than the respective school age (art. 15).*

### *2.3 Child labour legislation*

#### *2.3.1 General information*

Romania does not have a *Child Code*; therefore the implementation of child protective policies, including those on child labour, is the responsibility of several agencies. The supervision of the observance of the norms regarding child protection falls under the responsibility of the following state institutions: the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity, the Ministry of Health and Family, the Ministry of Education and Research and the National Authority for Child Protection and Adoption.

The main legal provisions on child labour are found in the Romanian Constitution, the Labour Code, the Family Code and in the ILO Conventions and recommendations.

The Romanian Constitution, as the supreme law, institutes the following principles:

- forced labour is prohibited (art. 39, par. 1);
- the exploitation or the employment of children in activities that are likely to harm their health or morals, or that endanger their lives or normal development is prohibited (art. 45, par. 3);

- children under 15 years of age cannot be employed (art. 45, par. 4).

The Labour Code, adopted by Law no.10/1972, stipulates in article 7 that any individual aged 16 who does not attend school has a moral duty to perform work that is useful to society, that children aged 15 may be engaged in temporary work, whereas industrial work can only be performed starting at the age of 16.

Teenagers between 15 and 16 years of age can only be employed with the consent of their parents or legal guardians and only in work that is adequate for their physical development, their knowledge and their skills. The consent must be given by both parents, who have to sign the employment contract along with the child. The parents may reconsider their consent if the child's physical and moral development is hampered in any way, in which case the employment contract is cancelled. Another necessary condition is the medical certificate (the Family Code). This condition is meant to protect the child in situations in which the child's employment is abusively decided by the parents in complicity with the employer.

The compulsory legal working hours of teenagers between 15 and 16 years are six hours a day. The minimum duration of paid leave for teenagers below 18 years is 24 working days.

Underlining the obligation of children between 14 and 16 years to graduate from compulsory education, the Labour Code stipulates that the employer has the obligation to support the child's attendance in school.

### *2.3.2 The protection of teenage employees*

Teenage employees are protected in different forms from hard and hazardous works that may endanger their physical and psychological development.

Article 161, paragraph 2 of the Labour Code stipulates that working teenagers below the age of 18 cannot be engaged in hard, harmful and hazardous working conditions, and that they cannot be used for night labour, nor in extension of the legal working hours. It also prohibits the use of teenagers in handling dangerous materials or products (highly toxic, explosive etc.), such as painting jobs that involve the use of toxic chemicals with a high lead concentration. Other high-risk activities that are banned from the work of teenagers under 18 are working at great heights, forestry, mining, petroleum and metal exploitation, automobile, naval or aircraft transportation, the exploitation and maintenance of roads and bridges etc. (the *General Norms of Labour Protection*).

With regard to manual work of loading, unloading and transportation, the engagement of children under 16 is prohibited. For those aged between 16 and 18, the maximum legal weights for transportation, handling and lifting are established according to the child's sex and age (The *General Norms of Labour Protection*).

### *2.3.3 The sanctioning system*

Article 19 of the Labour Code, sanctions the act of forcing an individual to work against their will with imprisonment from six months to three years.

Failure to observe the legal provisions on labour protection is considered a crime and it is sanctioned with imprisonment from three months to two years or money penalties, if this leads to an imminent danger of work-related accidents or sickness. Money penalties are given for non-observance by the employers of the legal provisions regarding the signing and registration of employment contracts or collaboration conventions.

### 2.3.4 Conclusions

The Romanian legislation on child labour prohibits any form of employment of children under 15. The legislation does not make a direct reference to the occasional work that a child may perform within the family to help the parents, nor does it refer to artistic or sporting activities. The interdiction of using children in hard work can be interpreted to infer that the children's engagement in household activities or other activities is considered legal provided it does not endanger their health and education.

The age segment 15-18 is treated differently by the law, the age of 16 being considered an age of transition from light work to industrial work. Also, the fact that the parents' consent is not compulsory in signing an employment contract for children aged between 16 and 18 places an extra amount of responsibility on this age category. This is not applicable with children under 16, for the employment of whom the law also requires a medical certificate.

**Table 1: Comparative table on age categories**

14 years	15 years	16-18 years
Compulsory education	No compulsory education Secondary education continued in vocational schools	No compulsory education Secondary education continued in vocational schools
	Written consent of parents for employment	No parental consent
	Medical certificate	
Household, artistic and sporting activities only	Light work	Industrial work
		Banning of hard or hazardous work





### **III. JUSTIFICATION OF THE RAPID ASSESSMENT TARGETS**

The quantitative and qualitative understanding of the main forms of child labour can be the basis for the design and implementation of concrete child protection programmes. Although programmatically approached and subjected to research, the street children phenomenon still has some unknown aspects regarding the children's engagement in the worst forms of child labour. The National Study on Street Children's Situation conducted by Salvati Copiii and UNICEF provided a holistic view of the street children phenomenon, including a large range of information: a historical analysis of the Romanian legislation on child protection, a social and psychological analysis of this issue and the children's behaviour, the situation of the young people living in the streets and the juvenile delinquency, the mass-media's attitude towards street children and an assessment of the existing social services. Child labour was studied only as one of the survival means of the children living permanently in the street.

The qualitative and quantitative analysis of the child labour aspects represent the basis of the programme for the family and school reintegration of working children in three Romanian cities initiated in 2000 within the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour.

As the findings of the survey will indicate, the research did not investigate the whole range of worst forms of child labour. It studied the activities carried out by working street children that have a high incidence such as begging, car-washing, loading and unloading merchandise, selling merchandise, scavenging, etc. The short duration of the rapid assessment did not allow for the investigation of the less visible or more hidden forms of child labour (such as prostitution, drug trafficking, etc.).

The interviews were conducted in 50 locations covering all six sectors of the city of Bucharest, the locations being selected based on the previous experiences of the street workers.

The locations included areas that were likely to have a high incidence of children involved in hazardous work: markets, main intersections, highly deprived areas, railway stations, construction sites, warehouses, supermarkets and industrial areas.

The experience of the street social workers also proved useful in selecting the subjects for the interviews.



#### **IV. PROFILE OF THE SURVEY AREA**

Bucharest, the capital of Romania, is situated in the Southeastern area of the country and has a population of 2,016,000 inhabitants, 19.3% of whom are up to 15 years old.

The analysis of the demographic and economic indicators in the city shows positive values as compared to other areas of the country. They are a result of the higher incomes in the capital. However, Bucharest accounts for the most dramatic expansion of poverty, as people living below the poverty line doubled in number in 1997. The capital represents a genuine refuge for homeless families coming from other areas of the country and hoping to benefit from the support of the central institutions. Their number increases every year, perhaps because their return to the places of origin is almost impossible. The incidence of poverty is very high in the case of families with many children. Almost half of the individuals from households made up of five family members and two thirds of those made up of six members live in poverty.

Bucharest ranks highest in terms of its number of street children, being preferred by children because it offers the greatest surviving opportunities (income sources, organizations working in this field, anonymity, etc.). According to the estimates of the National Study regarding the Homeless Children's Situation (1998-1999), Bucharest amounts for more than half the overall number of children permanently living in the streets and children begging in the streets (approximately 2,000).

Although illegal, begging is still present and can be seen everywhere in the capital. It has become a business and it represents the single source of survival not only for the street children, but also for the families that use their children for such ends.

The Bucharest poverty rate is the lowest compared to other major cities (19.81%), however it still represents more than half a million people. At the same time, the human development indicator for the city of Bucharest is the highest in the country, which is reflected in the schooling rate for the first levels of education (primary and secondary): 90 instead of 81, the rate at the national level.

The poor health of the population and its continuous deterioration has a negative impact on human development. This is reflected in the increase of the mortality rate and the decrease of life expectancy. The number of inhabitants per doctor is 400 in Bucharest, while the national average is 547 inhabitants per doctor. There is a great deal of disparity in the medical services provided by each county, therefore the population from other areas often resorts to the services provided in Bucharest.

The capital of Romania can be seen as an economic centre that has satisfactory development premises. It is the city where investments have been more numerous than in other cities or areas of the country, a city with a real chance of economic growth. However, it can be said just as well that Bucharest is a real "collector" of disadvantaged categories of the population (homeless families, homeless children, the Roma ethnic minority, the unemployed) and a social area with a high delinquency rate.



## **V. THE RAPID ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY AND THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOUR**

This survey was intended to provide an assessment of the situation of working street children living in the capital city of Bucharest from their perspective, regarding their engagement in the worst forms of labour, and the consequent negative impacts these activities have on their bio-physical and educational development.

### ***5.1 The justification of the research***

The phenomenon of the illegal engagement of street children in the worst forms of child labour has often been tackled but insufficiently described by the Romanian and foreign mass media. There is an obvious need for further research on working street children as a category of the population.

It was therefore imperative to create a solid and coherent body of knowledge relative to a social phenomenon that has become an important issue for Romanian society in its transition to democracy and a free-market economy.

### ***5.2 The objectives of the survey***

The general objectives of the data collection are identifying, circumscribing, describing and explaining this phenomenon in the largest Romanian city.

*Specific objectives* include:

- The identification of the social and demographic characteristics of working children and their families;
- The identification of factors that determine or facilitate the engagement of children in the worst forms of child labour (paying special attention to objective and subjective factors such as: the family's economic status, the family type and structure, the family climate, attitudes towards labour and school, life style, self-image, attitudes towards the future);
- Qualitative and quantitative descriptions of the hazardous forms of child labour (types of work, the amount and the content of the work, the children's working conditions);
- An evaluation of the impact that labour has on the child's development.

These objectives were achieved by means of field research based on semi-structured, in-depth interview guides targeting a segment of the population consisting of street children and members of their families.

A second set of objectives aims to:

- Assess the perceptions and attitudes of the representatives of authorities and NGOs towards the street children phenomenon and their engagement in hazardous work;

- Explain the ways in which to structure the efforts of the state institutions and NGOs in designing and implementing policies for the elimination of the worst forms of child labour;
- Identify ways to establish the competence and the cooperation between governmental and non-governmental institutions and organizations active in the field of child protection.

These objectives of the research were achieved by organizing two focus groups with representatives of the authorities (the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity, the Social Assistance Service of the Bucharest City Hall, the General Inspectorate of the Bucharest Police), as well as other participants from the main NGOs in Bucharest dealing with the subject of this research.

A third category of specific objectives concerns the estimation of the number of children involved in hazardous work in the city of Bucharest.

The prevention and the elimination of the worst forms of child labour is not possible in the absence of a systematic in-depth understanding of this phenomenon.

The findings of this study will prove useful in designing new public policies targeting working street children, as well as in redirecting and adjusting the existing policies. At the same time, the findings will be used as an informational foundation in the implementation of the National Programme for the family and school reintegration of working street children in three cities: Bucharest, Iasi, and Craiova.

### **5.3 Research strategies**

The study was conducted in the context of a lack of national data on the phenomenon of working children (the first national data on child labour in Romania will be available at the end of 2001). This determined certain *methodological choices*.

The Rapid Assessment (RA) methodology was thus suitable as a methodological practice that combines quantitative approaches with qualitative research.<sup>5</sup>

The Rapid Assessment methodology combines the advantages of both types of methodological practices, providing statistical information as well as descriptive and analytical findings of a qualitative type.

The implementation of this method facilitates the collection of qualitative data in a relatively short period of time, unlike other time-consuming methods (such as participative observation). At the same time, the Rapid Assessment can lead to quantitative findings, which allow for a satisfactory degree of quantification of the results.

A significant advantage of this method is the relatively low level of needed resources (material, human and time resources).

An exploratory type of method by definition, the RA seems to be the most appropriate choice in researching the social phenomenon of working street children - a field that has not been studied much in Romania.

The results provided by this multi-method exploratory approach will facilitate and provide the basis for more comprehensive research.

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<sup>5</sup> *A Guide to Reporting on Rapid Assessments Or What You Should Get from Your Rapid Assessments (ILO/UNICEF RA Field Guide)*, prepared by: Robert T. Jensen, Meredith Pearson, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 2001.

#### ***5.4 Data collection methods, techniques and procedures***

The *Rapid Assessment methodology* allows for the use of several data collection methods in view of a thorough comprehension of the studied phenomenon in a short period of time.<sup>6</sup>

In order to achieve the set objectives the study has used the following methods of empirical research:

- In-depth, *semi-structured interview* applied to street children and adult members of their family, if possible;
- *Structured observations* of the field operators, during the interview;
- Two *focus-group discussions* with the participation of representatives of the authorities and the NGOs.

##### *5.4.1 The semi-structured interviews*

The choice of this data collection method was based on the study's subject, as well as on the defining characteristics of the target-population: street children engaged in worst forms of child labour. It did not seem appropriate to use the relatively formal type of inquiry such as the structured questionnaire with pre-codified answers for these subjects. It would have been unproductive to formalize this rather unexplored phenomenon of child labour. A great deal of freedom in formulating and ordering the questions, as well as in recording the answers, contributed to obtaining substantial first-hand qualitative information that should explain a social phenomenon with low visibility.

The interview guide applied to the street children in Bucharest was organized around the following *dimensions*:

Data for the social identification of the subject;

- The child's relation to school and the formal education process;
- The child's relationship with the his/her family;
- The content of the hazardous work the child is engaged in;
- Perceptions of the future;
- Characteristics of the child's everyday life.

To each dimension was attached a set of *indicators*, that are to be found in the questions included in the interview guide (*see Annexes*):

1. The dimension "data for the social identification of the subject" was researched using the following indicators:

- age;
- gender;
- ethnicity;

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<sup>6</sup> Idem 4.

- birth place;
- the present living environment;
- the year of arrival in Bucharest.

2. The dimension "the child's relationship to school and the formal education process" had the following indicators:

- the degree of attendance in school activities;
- the form of education the child is engaged in;
- the school performance level;
- the child's perception of school;
- factors that lead to school drop-out.

3. The set of indicators by means of which the dimension "the child's relationship with the origin family" was put into operation were:

- the parents' occupation;
- the family structure;
- the family climate (attachments, conflicts, the degree of family cohesion);
- factors at risk of compromising the interpersonal relations within the family (e.g. alcoholism).

4. Indicators of the dimension "the content of the hazardous work the child is engaged in" were:

- the type of work;
- the working conditions (the child's perception of these conditions - as a subjective indicator, as well as the field operator's observations - as an objective indicator);
- the amount of daily work;
- the relationship with the employer;
- income from work (quantity, destination);
- the felt impact of work on the psychological and the physical state;
- the causes of the engagement in hazardous work;
- the risks of the respective work;
- the leisure activities;
- the impact of work on school attendance;
- the parents' attitude towards their children's work;
- possibilities of giving up the severe forms of child labour.



5. Indicators attached to the dimension "perceptions of the future" were:

- the profession the child would like to have in adulthood;
- attitude towards the future of younger siblings;
- attitude towards the child's own future family;
- attitude towards future offspring;
- the child's most important desires.

6. The dimension "characteristics of the child's everyday life" was researched by means of the following indicators:

- living and resting conditions, intimacy;
- drug use;
- greatest fears;
- the perceived attitude of other people towards the child.

The semi-structured interviews used the technique of the "face to face" direct interview. The answers were recorded by means of the following procedures:

- written registrations by the field operators, during the interviews;
- written registration following the interview, by the operator's recollection of the answers;
- magnetic recording of the interview (by means of a tape recorder).

In order to be able to check the reliability and the validity of the collected data, for a small number of interviews the answers of the same subject by all three procedures above were recorded. By comparing the three types of records we achieved a high level of reliability of the collected data.

The team doing the fieldwork was made up of six operators recruited among volunteers having a great deal of experience in working with street children. Training sessions were organized with the interviewers in order to familiarize them with the interview guide, the techniques and the procedures to be used. This ensured uniformity in the behaviour of the field operators - another important element in ensuring the reliability and the validity of the collected data.

The target-population interviewed included 150 subjects. This overall number of interviews allowed for a descriptive type of statistical analysis of a satisfactory level (frequency analysis, bi-varied analysis).

The procedure of selection of the subjects to be effectively investigated was a combination of purposive (or judgmental) sample and quota sampling, the main purpose of the sampling being to preserve the diversity of observed cases. The criteria applied in the process of selection of cases were: type of child's work, sex, age, and ethnicity. In this way, field operators tried to interview a number of children proportional to the size of each type identified in the field. This type of sampling is appropriate when the research is exploratory and/or when a target population is difficult to define or locate. Like other non-probabilistic

samples, quota samples provide estimates of the attributes of target populations that are of unknown accuracy.

The guide for the interviewing of adult members of the origin family targeted the following aspects:

- the relationship between the origin family and the child (family structure, parents' occupation and marital status, serious family problems);
- data regarding the migration to Bucharest (place of origin, the date of the arrival in Bucharest, the reasons for the migration);
- the parents' attitude towards the work of their children (advantages/ disadvantages, how the child's income is used, an estimation by the parents of the minimum income necessary for covering the basic family needs);
- the parents' attitude towards school (the perceived role of school education, problems in the relationship with the school);
- habitation conditions (the type of dwelling, furnishings, long-term use goods, the degree of occupation);
- family income (income sources, income quantum).

This interview guide could be applied to adult family members in 45 of the overall number of cases. This data was correlated with those provided by interviewing the child.

#### *5.4.2 Structured observations of the field operators*

The observations made during the interview were recorded post-factum in an observation chart focusing on the following characteristics:

- Exterior aspect of the child (clothing, personal hygiene);
- Communication and language (fluency in communication, gestures, use of slang);
- Mental abilities;
- Structure of personality (emotional, behaviour disorders).

#### *5.4.3 Focus-groups*

The themes that were proposed for discussion to the participants in the focus-group were:

- the evolution of the "street children" phenomenon between 1990-2001 (quantitative and qualitative changes);
- the existing legislation on child labour;
- the main types of child labour (with a direct reference to the inherent risks);
- the role of the family in the phenomenon under research;
- the impact of child labour on schooling, the role of schooling in preventing the phenomenon;
- available resources for the elimination of the worst forms of child labour;
- ways of addressing the problem of working street children;
- monitoring and coordination of the activities for the elimination of child labour.

The analysis of the discussions within the focus groups emphasized the main attitudes and perceptions of the representatives of governmental and non-governmental institutions and organizations towards the phenomenon of the street children's engagement in the worst forms of child labour.

#### *5.4.4 Methodological difficulties encountered during the research*

The pre-testing of the interview guides showed some deficiency in the ordering of the questions. Therefore the questions were rearranged to ensure the fluency of the interview and to lead to consistent answers.

Another problem was the difficulty that some of the children had in answering the questions. In order to overcome this difficulty the operators had to interact with the children for a longer period of time, throughout several meetings, in order to create a climate of trust. These meetings consisted of spending time with the children, talking and playing together, going to the swimming pool, the cinema or taking them for a snack. The questions were asked gradually, taking into account the child's mood at the time, since children are not usually willing to answer such long questionnaires. This approach was meant to provide accurate and reliable data.

The instruments that were used proved flexible enough in collecting "first-hand" valuable data for the researched phenomenon, at the same time ensuring the uniformity needed to compare the collected information.

The instruments used in the collection of data (interview guides, observation charts, the focus-groups themes) are presented in the annexes.



## VI. RESULTS - STATISTICS AND ANALYSIS

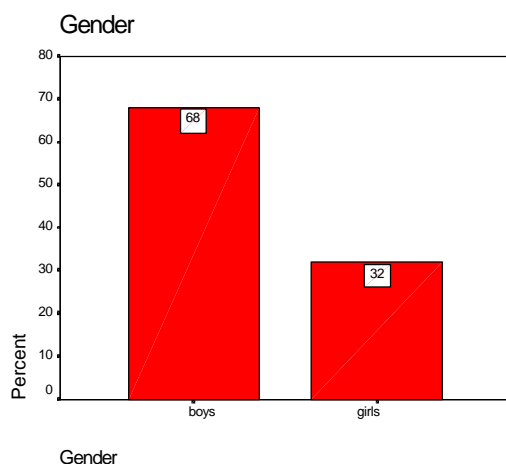
### 6.1 The children's profile by gender, age, ethnicity and origin environment

#### 6.1.1 Age and gender

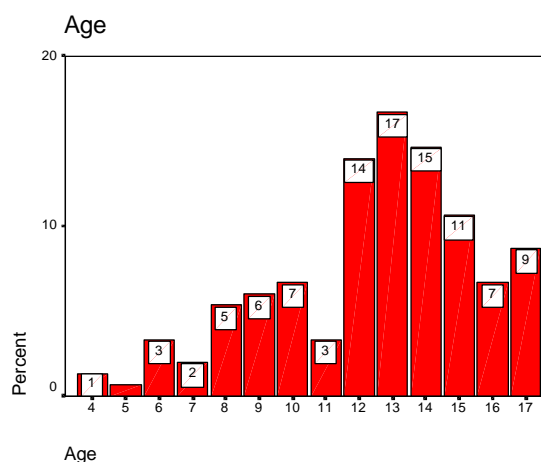
Most of the interviewed children were boys (68%), while the girls represented only 32%. The causes for this are simple and well-known: the girls are more vulnerable in the street and less effective than boys in performing street work, which is why their families prefer using them in household activities. However, the field operators found that, of the 150 children, there were 34 girls under 14 years old who were begging in the street for eight to ten hours a day in unbearable heat.

For the children permanently living in the streets who do not depend on their families, the differences in the distribution by gender are explained by the fact that the girls are more likely to cope with family conflicts, violence and poverty than to put up with the street environment which they fear.

**Chart 1**



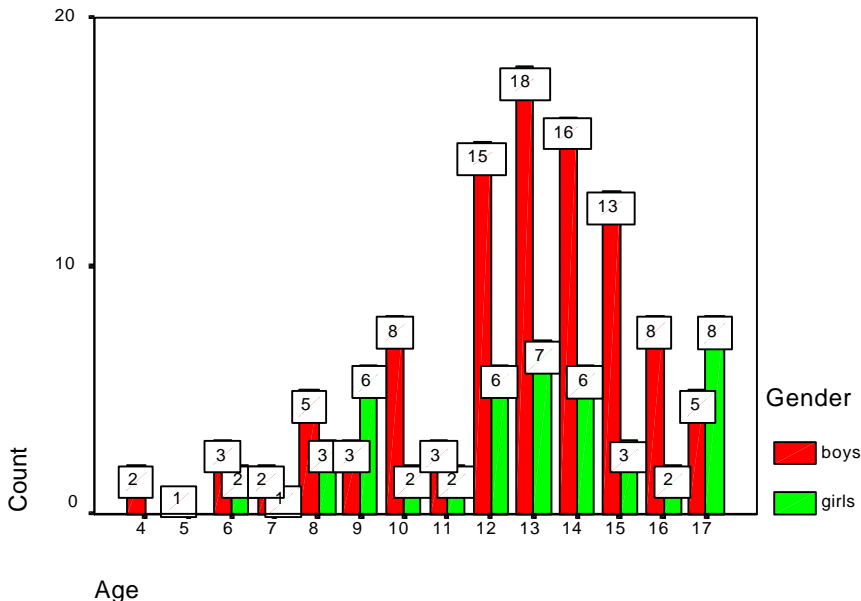
**Chart 2**



The average age of the survey sample is 13 which is considered a serious problem. Statistically therefore, in our survey sample the number of children under 13 who are used in street work is almost the same as the number of teenagers engaged in this type of hazardous work. These findings lead us to believe that worst forms of child labour affect all age categories of working street children. Small children are used in certain types of labour (such as begging) more than teenagers, as they are more likely to arouse the sympathy of the public.

As for the age-gender correlation, the proportions are the same for almost all age categories, from young children to teenagers between 13 and 17 years. The age group of 17 years was the sole exception, with two-thirds girls (eight cases out of 13), but three of these girls were “looking after” their younger siblings who also engaged in begging.

**Chart 3: Gender/age**

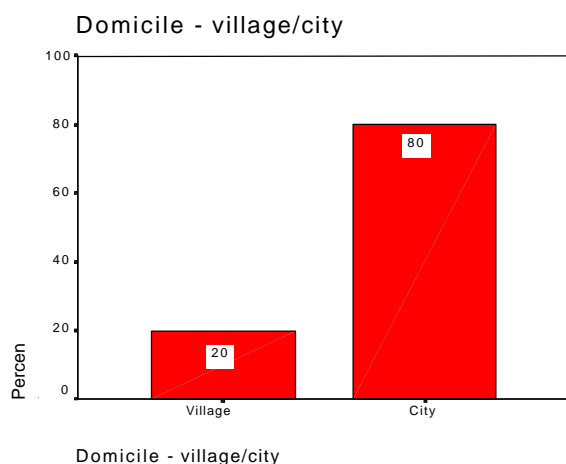


*6.1.2 Ethnicity*

Since the survey was conducted in an area where the majority of the population is Romanian, the assessment was restricted to a comparison between Romanian and Roma children in terms of ethnicity. According to the latest statistics, the Roma population accounts for approximately 10% of the overall Bucharest population. The findings show that 49% of the interviewed children belong to the Roma minority. This appears to confirm that the Roma population is a disadvantaged minority, in the sense that certain factors (the migration and the impenetrability of the Roma communities, the lack of a strong policy for the school enrolment of Roma children, the Roma traditions and the lack of a political unity of the Roma leaders) contribute to the systematic social and educational isolation of the Roma communities.

*6.1.3 The origin environment (rural/urban)*

Eighty percent of the children come from the urban environment and only 20% from the rural environment. Most of the children coming from a rural area live in the villages surrounding Bucharest. These children usually come to Bucharest during the day in order to beg or to work and go back to their villages in the evening.



**Chart 4**

The rural family relations and traditional household responsibilities usually prevent children from leaving their families for the city streets. Unfortunately, this does not protect children from the worst forms of child labour. An increasing number of children from the countryside drop out of school to join their parents in exhausting agricultural work that endangers their health and physical development.<sup>7</sup>

### **6.2 Children's work in the street**

The number of working children in Romania is increasing. Children work for different reasons. They work to support their families, to survive or to have their own money. Most children perform unqualified and temporary types of work (in construction or agriculture) to help their parents. There are also children who work in commerce. In the urban areas, most of the children are involved in begging. The incidence of working children is higher in deprived families.

Here are the findings of the survey on working street children in Bucharest:

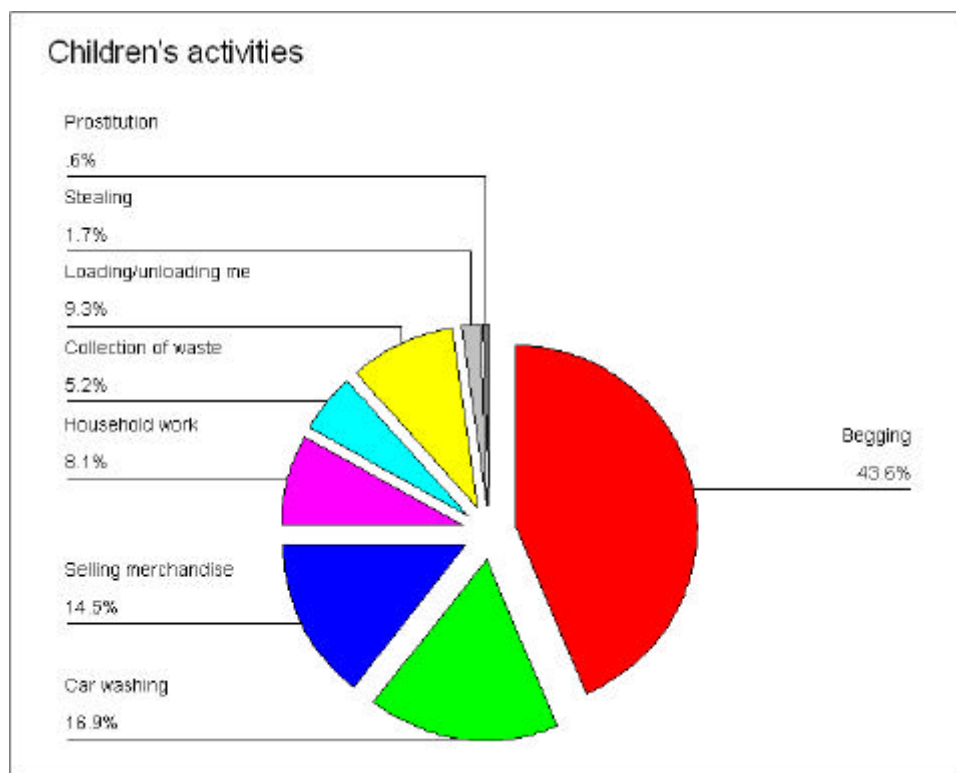
- Begging: 75 cases (44%);
- Car washing: 29 cases (17%);
- Selling merchandise: 25 cases (15%);
- Loading and unloading merchandise: 16 cases (9%).
- Household work: 14 cases (8%);
- Collection of waste products: 9 cases (5%);

The rest of the interviewed street children performed illegal activities, as follows:

- Stealing: 3 cases;
- Prostitution: 1 case.

Although most children declared having been involved in several types of labour in the past (69% of the 150 interviewed children), the figures presented above represent the specific form or forms of labour that the child was engaged in at the time the questionnaire was applied. Some children were involved in more than one type of work at the time of the research.

<sup>7</sup> Baseline Survey on Rural Child Labour in Five Selected Countries in Romania, ILO/IPEC Country Programme, Romania, 2001.



**Chart 5**

Regarding the age when children start working, the findings are extremely alarming. For instance, 28% of pre-school or school age children had already started working in the street.<sup>8</sup>

**Begging** is performed in different locations (subway stations, intersections, supermarkets, buses, parking areas and generally in crowded places) by singing or telling short stories about the dramatic situation of their families. Sometimes the child beggars are accompanied by younger siblings (sometimes as young as two or three years of age) or puppies. Some of the dangers that begging involves are: extreme heat or cold, risk of car accidents, and pollution in the central intersections.

**Car washing** is performed in intersections or parking areas, usually by teenagers. It consists of quickly washing the windcreens and lights of the cars. In the parking areas, this activity may involve washing the whole vehicle. The main dangers that children are exposed to while washing cars are accidents, inhaling noxious gases for many hours a day and the violent outbursts of some drivers.

**Selling merchandise** is one of the less dangerous types of work and it usually refers to selling low-priced items, such as newspapers, city maps, car deodorants, etc. Some children accompany their parents in the markets, helping them to sell different products: fruits, vegetables, and other items. Since these activities are mostly illicit, the children or their parents risk being fined by the police.

<sup>8</sup> *Children and Work*, Save the Children Romania and UNICEF, 1997.



**Loading and unloading merchandise** is one of the worst forms of exploitation. This type of labour is usually performed by teenagers (but it does not exclude younger children) in large warehouses, supermarkets, construction sites or commercial areas in general. Although this is a very hazardous and physically challenging type of work, it is very poorly paid by the “employers.”

**Household activities** represent the work performed by children either within their families or for other families the children's parents may be indebted to. Traditionally, girls are mostly used in such activities. The street children who reported being involved in these activities were met begging or working on the streets, where they spent most of their time. The household activities are a second form of work for them.

**Collection of waste products** is most common for the Roma children and their families. Some of the products the children recycle are iron, glass or paper. The danger of this work resides in the environment the children come into contact with every day when performing this work: garbage fields and abandoned construction sites.

### **6.3 The negative impact on education**

During the past ten years of transition Romania has undergone significant economic and social changes. In this period, the attitude towards education has gradually deteriorated. This was mainly caused by the quality of the educational system, by the increase of the schooling costs and by the unemployment rate among young people. As a consequence, many families prefer to send their children to work, thinking that this will provide them with vocational skills better than schools would.

There are two aspects to consider in the relationship between education and child labour. On one hand, the children's engagement in the worst forms of labour leads to a decrease in their school attendance, and on the other hand the lack of the necessary resources to go to school leaves child labour as the only alternative.

The statistical analysis of the collected data underscores the negative impact of child labour on education, 62.66% of the interviewed children having dropped out of school. The percent of children who both work and go to school is only 34.66% (see diagram no. 1). Of those who go to school, 73.49% attend mass education, while 21.68% attend special schools and 4.81% are enrolled in non-attendance schools.<sup>9</sup>

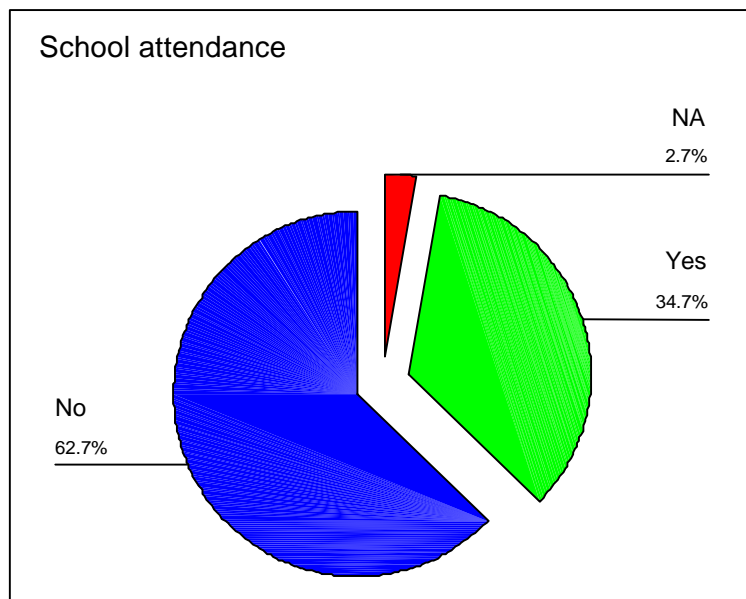
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<sup>9</sup> **Mass education** represents the national education system which includes the primary education system (grades 1-4) and the lower secondary education (grades 5-8), both compulsory forms of education. Compulsory education begins with the first grade of primary school, where pupils can be enrolled if they turn seven during the respective calendar year. Compulsory education normally ends by the age of 15 with a "capacity examination" that entitles the pupils to continue their studies in the post-compulsory educational system or to integrate in active life.

**Special needs education:** as a general rule, it is organized as full-time education, but, in special cases, it can be organized in other forms, too. Only when they cannot be reoriented towards mass education, the children having "special educational needs" continue the process of education in units of special needs education.

**Non-attendance education** is organized exceptionally for those who are more than two years older than the average age of the respective grade, under the form of evening classes or part-time education or distance education.

*The Romanian Education System – the national report*, Ministry of Education and Research, Bucharest, 2001.



**Chart 6**

School dropout is the most visible effect of child labour on education. In the long term, this phenomenon will lead to a lack of high-level vocational skills and opportunities and restricted manpower in certain fields of activity.

However, the children's attitude towards school is a positive one; 72.34% of children who reported dropping out of school manifested their willingness to go back to school. The children are aware of the importance of education for their professional career: *"If you graduate from a high school you can do whatever you want in life. You are nobody without an education."* Most of those who continue their education identify it with social and professional achievement: *"I would like to go back to school, at least to graduate high school, so that I can find myself a better job."* Twenty-five percent of the children declared that they liked learning how to read and write. The qualitative analysis indicates that what the children resent most about school are: the inappropriate attitudes of some teachers, the poor conditions of most schools, as well as the aggressiveness of older students.

Another negative consequence of child labour is the hindrance it places on school activities. The working children do not have the necessary amount of time to fulfill their school tasks. Even though some children go to school, most of them admitted to having missed classes at least once to go to work. This category of children should be considered at risk of school dropout. Approximately 25% of children who work in the streets admitted missing school on a regular basis to be able to work. If the 10.7% of children who refused to answer this question is added, the number of children whose school activity is affected by child labour would be even larger.

Another negative aspect revealed by this survey is the fact that 34% of the interviewed children were illiterate and that 40% had poor writing and reading skills (see Table 2).

**Table 2: Writing/Reading skills**

Level of education	Writing - reading skills	
	Frequency	Percent
Non-answer	1	0.7
Low level	60	40
High level	38	25.3
Unknown	51	34
Total	150	100

For the school dropout distribution by sex, ethnicity and origin environment, the findings indicated significant disparities. Of the Roma children, 65.75% had dropped out of school, as opposed to 59.21% of the Romanian children (see Table 3).

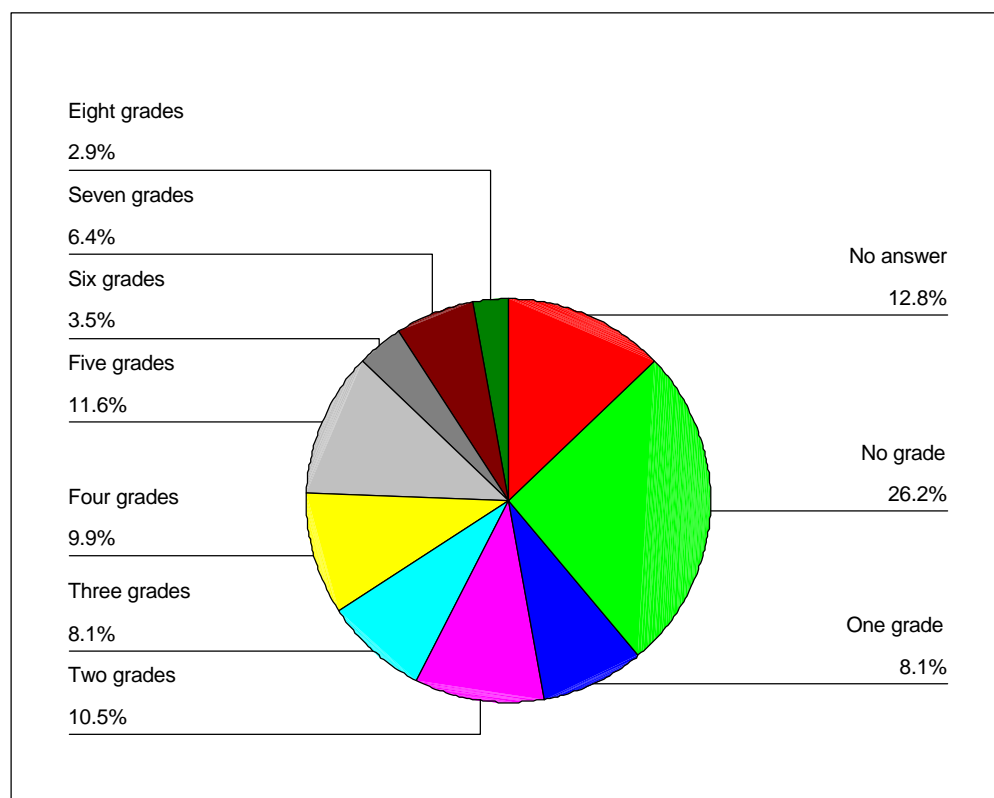
**Table 3: School attendance**

		School attendance			Total
		No answer	Yes	No	
Gender	Male	1.96	35.29	62.74	102
	Female	4.16	33.33	62.5	48
Ethnicity	Romanian	3.94	36.84	59.21	76
	Roma	1.36	32.87	65.75	74
Environment	Rural	-	30	70	30
	Urban	3.33	35.83	60.83	120

Approximately 18% of those dropping out of school had dropped out by the age of 12, and 16.92% by the age of 10. The proportion of children who dropped out of school very early is relatively high within the sample: 7.69% at the age of 7, 6.15% at the age of 8, 12.30% at the age of 9 and 10.76% at the age of 11. A relatively high percent of the working children - 19.33% - had never been to school.

Thirty percent of the working street children had not completed any grade level, while only 3.33% had graduated from primary school. Therefore, another aspect that has to be taken into consideration in the design and implementation of national programmes is that of promoting a quality education for the prevention of the worst forms of child labour. At the same time, the children's withdrawal from work must be followed by their social and school reintegration.

**Chart 7: Grades completed by the children**



Most children complained about being forced to drop out of school because of the poverty of their families. There are two aspects to this problem: the lack of money for schooling and the need for the child's financial contribution. Other factors resulting from the qualitative analysis were: a problematic family situation (the death/ illness/disability of one of the parents), the unattractiveness of the school environment, the older students' aggressiveness, and school failure. A primordial condition for the prevention and elimination of child labour is to provide equal education opportunities for all children.

#### **6.4 The family situation, parents' socio-economic status**

Where family structure is concerned, the situation is inconsistent with the general idea that children working in the street come from disorganized families (38%). Within the causal link, family disorganization comes as a result of the family's poor socio-economic status. Poverty and the lack of political stability lead to the disintegration of family relations and even to the children's running away to live in the streets on their own.

Many children live in the street with their parents in different places, such as the deprived areas of Bucharest (Casa Radio, Ferentari, Rahova neighborhoods). Their parents who came to Bucharest during the communist period (a period of excessive industrialization and urbanization) sold or lost their houses given by the state after losing their jobs. This category is the most vulnerable and is constantly exposed to the risk of running away in the street.

The parents' occupation is an indicator that may explain, as a first step, the fact that the child is working in the street. Most of the parents do not have a steady job (57% of 87% valid answers for mothers and 36% of 71% valid answers for fathers) and, as a consequence, they do not have a steady income source. The parents' occupation underlines the economic

difficulties these families are going through, as well as the impossibility of providing their children with a decent living. In this context, sending their children to beg becomes an attractive alternative. They are encouraged to continue to do so by the lack of serious sanctions. Children themselves think that there is no other way, and that they have to contribute to the family expenses.



Chart 8

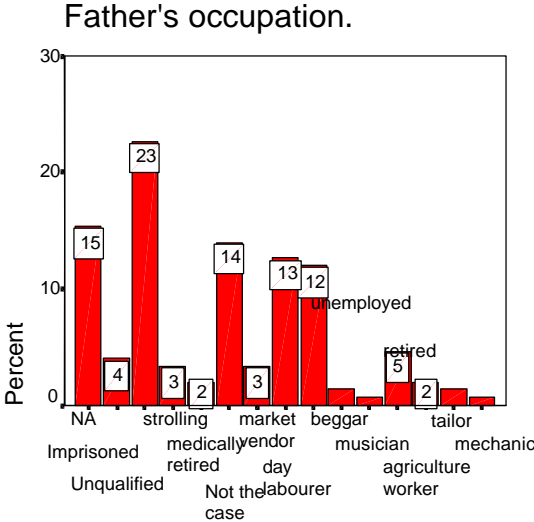


Chart 9

Besides the economical problems, their families face other problems in the parental relations including alcohol consumption, gambling and violence. In time, most parents get used to being supported by their children and eventually end up living off their children's work as the only income source in the family.

**6.5 Causes that lead children into the worst forms of child labour**

The causes that lead to the worst forms of child labour are complex and characteristic of the socio-economic background. Some of the main causes of this phenomenon that apply to any region are: poverty, the poor quality of education, cultural patterns concerning children and labour, and the lack of an adequate national legislation. In fact, poverty is the main cause of which people speak. The direct relationship between a family's socio-economic status and the work that children are forced to perform must be considered.

The main causes for children working in the streets are: the poor socio-economic status of the family, the parents' favorable attitude towards child labour and the street children's need to survive. The quantitative data analysis indicates the below average financial status of the children's families as a main cause for children's engagement in work. Of the interviewed families, 62.79% stated they needed more than 2 million lei (~65\$) to meet their basic needs and keep their children out of work. This is explained by the fact that 42.85% of the families had a monthly income of between 1,000.001 lei (~35\$) and 2,000.000 lei (~65\$), whereas 11.9% of them had a monthly income under 500,000 lei (~17\$), with their children's

allowances as the main income source.<sup>10</sup>

**Table 4: Minimum income required**

Needed income	Frequency	Percent
under 1,000.000 lei	2	11.62
1,000.001 – 2,000.000 lei	5	4.65
over 2,000.000 lei	27	62.79
Does not know	9	20.93

The children’s income is an important resource for the family, indicated by the fact that 54.7% of the children working in the street declared giving all their money to their family and 6.7% to their group leader, while only 28.7% of the children got to keep the money they made. However, only 23.3% of the children declared being forced by others to work; 73.3% of them reported that they started working on their own initiative. *(The role that circumstances can play in forcing a child to decide to work should be taken into consideration.)*

The parents’ statements indicate that the child’s average daily contribution to the family income is under 100,000 lei (~3\$) in 55.81 % of the cases and between 100,000 - 200,000 lei (~3-7\$) in only 16.27% cases. The child’s financial contribution is vital for the family’s survival, not merely for its decent living, as illustrated by the fact that most of the families live under the poverty line.

Another important factor that accounts for this phenomenon is the parents’ attitude towards child labour. It was a common tendency in Romanian society to underestimate the importance of a quality education in favor of an experience in the work field, as a guarantee for a better future. In the past few years, families have encountered confusion and contradiction in as far as the importance of education is concerned, as they notice that, despite qualifications and trainings, people are ending up unemployed. Parents who send their children to beg make up the category of parents for whom neither school nor professional training is important. Their children's future is not a priority, but their contribution to the family budget is. Most of the reasons mentioned by parents for their children's school drop out are related to the family's poor financial resources, which generate difficulties in covering the expenses for school.

*"I did not send them to school because I did not have money to pay for the supplies."*

*"No. Since my husband died, it has been from bad to worse and they did not go to school anymore."*

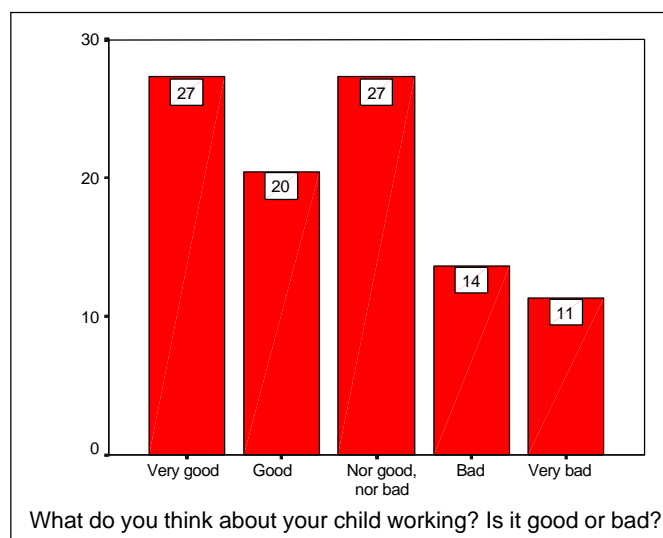
*"I did not have any resources to send them to school. They need clothes, shoes, bags."*

<sup>10</sup> For comparison, the average salary in Romania is around 4,000,000 lei (~130\$).

Other reasons resorted to old concepts regarding women's status in society:

*"If she likes school, all right, if not, why should we force the child? She is a girl, after all, and she can get married having graduated eight grades."*

Both parents and children think that the child should make a financial contribution to the family income. The fact that 27.9% of the interviewed families thought that child labour was a positive thing and that 20.93% thought that a child should work indicates the fact that the changes for the prevention and elimination of child labour should include a change in the attitude of the general public towards this phenomenon by informing them about the negative consequences of a child's premature engagement in the worst forms of child labour.



**Chart 10**

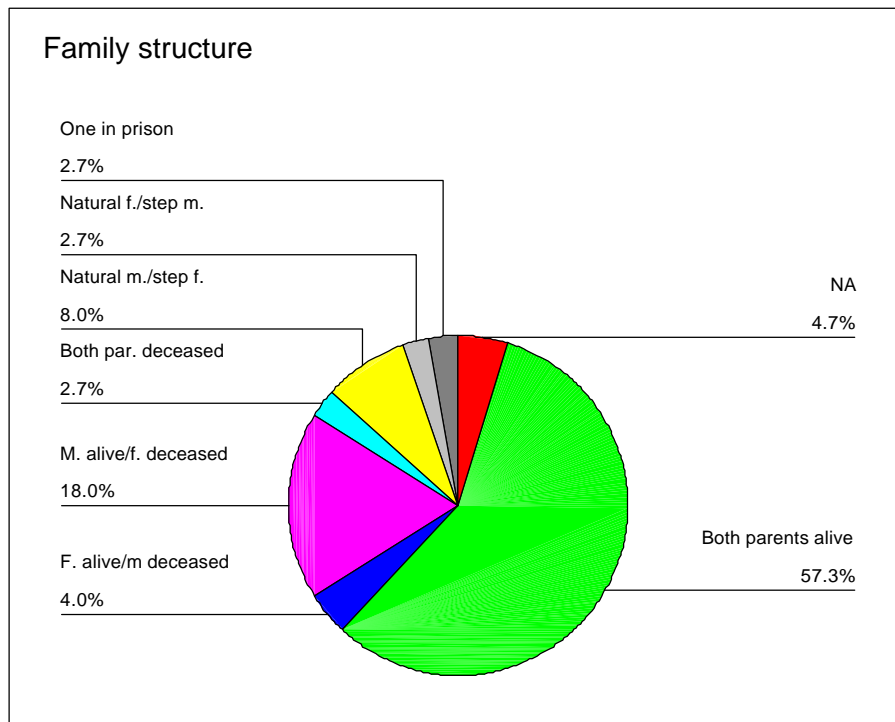
In conclusion, the main causes for the expansion of this phenomenon in the context of Romanian society are of an attitudinal and socio-economic nature. The economic decline that Romania has witnessed since 1989 has had a devastating impact at the micro-social level. The increased rate of unemployment and of the number of families with many children living under the poverty line, the inflation rate, the reduced income of the population and the rather symbolic child allowances are the main causes of child labour.

## **6.6 The parents' attitude towards child labour and education**

### **6.6.1 The structure of the interviewed children's origin families**

- 57.3% children come from nuclear families (both parents are alive);
- 18% children come from maternal mono-parental families (the mother is alive, the father is deceased);
- 8% children come from stepfamilies (biological mother, stepfather);
- 4% children come from paternal mono-parental families (the father is alive, the mother is deceased)

- 2.7% children come from stepfamilies in which the biological father remarried (the presence of a stepmother);
- 2.7% no longer have a natural family (both parents are deceased);
- in 4.7% cases the children refused to answer this question, probably for two reasons: either their parents were not aware that their children were working, or the families would punish their children (physical and emotional abuse) if they told other people about their working.

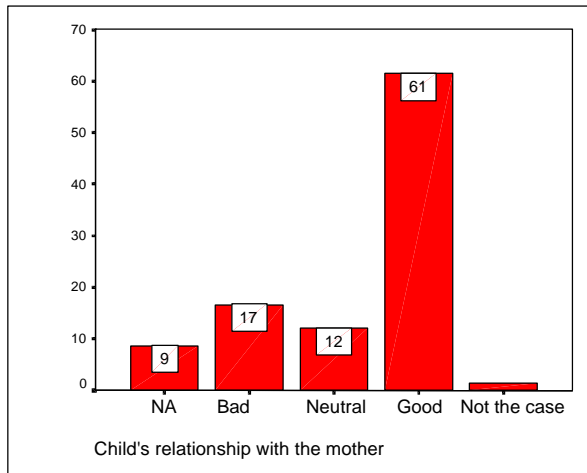


**Chart 11**

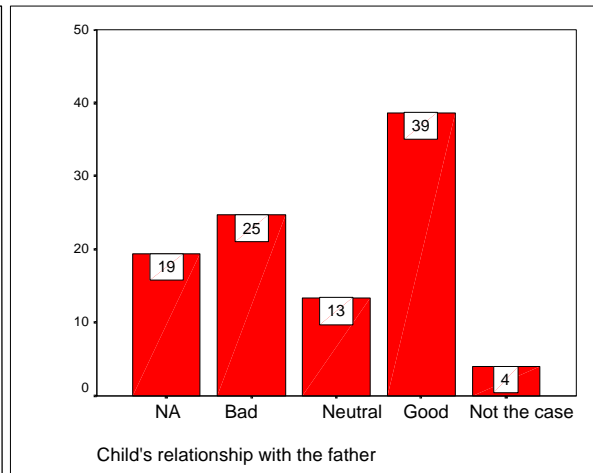
### 6.6.2 Child's declared relationship with their mother

- bad, in 16.7% cases. The children declared being victims of physical and emotional abuse; they were punished by their mothers for not bringing money by means of beatings, sleep-deprivation and food-deprivation;
- neutral, in 12% cases;
- good, in 61.3%. The children declared having a good relationship with their mother, meaning they were not beaten by them in case they did not bring any money at home.
- 8.7% of the children did not answer this question, indicating again that the children were afraid about what the parents might do if they found out about their statements about the work they were doing. At the time of the interview, some of the children were begging together with their parents, which accounts for their silence





**Chart 12**



**Chart 13**

### 6.6.3 Child's declared relationship with their father

- bad, in 24.8% cases, the father abused the child physically and emotionally (cursing, or stigmatizing them, etc.) or deprived them of sleep and food for not bringing any money at home.
- neutral, in 13.4% cases.
- good, in 38.9% cases, meaning the child was not beaten for not bringing money.
- not applicable, in 4% cases, because the father was deceased or because the child had left home a long time before and was living in the street;
- 18.8% - no answer, indicating the same possible interpretation as in the case of the child's relationship with the mother.

The qualitative interpretation of the answers says that, in the case of the neutral relationship with the parents, the children avoided a direct answer in favor of an evasive one. From a psychological point of view, this can be interpreted as an escape from the painful reality of admitting a bad relationship with one of the parents, or it may mean that the child is attached to the respective parent in spite of being forced to work or being denied their basic needs (food, sleep) and superior needs (emotional, educational).

### 6.6.4 Mothers' attitudes towards child labour

- Eighty-seven (56%) children declared that their mothers were very pleased about their working, that they thought that contributing to the insufficient family income was a positive thing. The most frequent answers were:

*"My mother thinks it is good for me to work."*

*"My mother praises me for bringing money home."*

*"My mother believes in the approach of 'Now you must work for me, as I have worked for you.'"*

- Twenty-five (16%) children declared that their mothers were not aware that they worked, but most of these children were runaways (they had left their families because of physical and emotional abuse or because of the alcoholism of one of the parents) and were living in the street. Most frequent answers:

*“My mother doesn’t know I’m working, I haven’t seen her in four years.”*

*“My mother doesn’t know where I am, and she shouldn’t know, because she used to beat me and forced me to go begging.”*

- Fourteen children (9.3%) thought their mothers did not care about this, that they didn’t ask them about where they were spending their time. This indicated the mothers’ lack of interest and contribution to the children’s education, the lack of parental control and the presence of child neglect.

*“My mother is not interested in where I am and what I am doing.”*

*“My mother doesn’t know where I am, she spends all her time shooting craps with my father.”*

- Twelve children (8%) declared that their mothers did not agree with their working, and in these cases it was the father who had power and control, forcing the children to work.

*“My mother doesn’t want me to do this work, she says it’s shameful, but my father makes me bring him money and if my mother argues he beats her, too.”*

*“My mother tells me not to go because I might get hit by a car, but I still do it because we don’t have anything to eat.”*

- With 12 children it was not applicable, as the mother was either deceased or absent.

#### 6.6.5 Fathers’ attitudes towards child labour

- Fifty-nine (40%) children thought their father was very pleased about their working and that he thought that it was normal for them to contribute to the daily expenses, most of them having to do with food. The most frequent answers were:

*“My father says it’s a good thing, it was he who first sent me to work so that he could buy his booze.”*

*“My father thinks that working is good, that it teaches us a lot of things, that this is the way to make it in life.”*

*“My father makes me beg, he says that this shows how much I love him.”*

This last type of answer indicates one of the methods that parents use to get their children to work – emotional blackmail.

- Twenty-nine (19.3%) children declared that their fathers didn't know about their working, but most of these children were runaways (they had left their families because of physical and emotional abuse or because of the alcoholism of one of the parents) and were living in the street.

*“My father doesn't know and neither does he care.”*  
*“My father doesn't know. I tell him that I go out to play.”*  
*“My father doesn't know, and I don't want him to know where I am.”*

- Fourteen (9.3%) children thought their fathers didn't care about this, that they didn't ask them about where they were spending their time. This indicated the fathers' lack of interest and contribution to the children's education, the lack of parental control and the presence of child neglect.

*“My father doesn't care about me, what I do or where I go, he's into drinking and gambling.”*  
*“My father barely speaks to me.”*

- Nine children (6%) declared that their fathers did not agree and were ashamed about their working, and in some cases it was the mother who forced the children to work. In these families, either the mother had the power and was in control or the biological father remarried.

*“My father scolds me and tells me that he has seen other children getting hurt this way.”*  
*“He doesn't want me to go begging, but if he says anything my mother beats him, too.”*

- Three children did not answer this question, being interviewed in their fathers' presence.

#### 6.6.6. Conclusions

Most parents have a positive attitude towards child labour, thinking that given the poverty of their family, the children should contribute to the daily expenses on food and rate paying.

The data resulting from the focus group with working children and their families indicate that they came to Bucharest during the communist period, becoming the victims of the forced industrialization and urbanization. Most families came from the rural environment where mentalities favored the children's premature engagement in work.

These families, victims of the communist regime, refuse any initiatives and proposals to

return to the rural environment coming from the Social Services and city halls, even though they are offered houses and land. They think it is a matter of personal ego and that they cannot go back to where they came from. They would rather live in Bucharest, merely subsisting, deprived of the basic living and personal hygiene conditions, choosing not to enroll their children in school and make them work, rather than to go back to their original environment.

*“They brought us to Bucharest, they gave us houses, jobs, why should we leave now? The state must give us jobs and provide for everything.”* This statement indicates the presence of the collective mentalities of people who refuse to accept the post-communist changes after 1989. These families refuse to admit that Romanians no longer live under a totalitarian regime where the state forcibly created jobs. Now Romanians live in a market economy in which personal skills and competence are the main attributes needed to find a place to work.

The findings of the focus group also show that most of the parents who send their children working do not have a job of their own and therefore no steady income sources.

The results of the survey do not confirm the hypothesis that family disorganization is what leads to child labour – 57.3% of the interviewed children come from organized families (both parents alive).

In the case of mono-parental families or stepfamilies, the economic status is even more problematic. Children coming from this type of family are given the responsibilities of the missing parent (such as working) and the sanctions for not fulfilling these responsibilities may lead the child to leave the family environment.

Children with both parents deceased are forced to work in order to survive (begging, unqualified work and even prostitution).

### ***6.7 Parents’ attitudes towards education***

In order to identify the parents’ attitudes towards education, the following variables were analysed:

- school absenteeism – whether the child had ever missed school in order to work;
- the reasons for the absenteeism: reasons the child stopped going to school;
- the mother’s occupation;
- the father’s occupation.

Regarding school absenteeism (whether the children happened to miss school in order to work), the children’s answers follow:

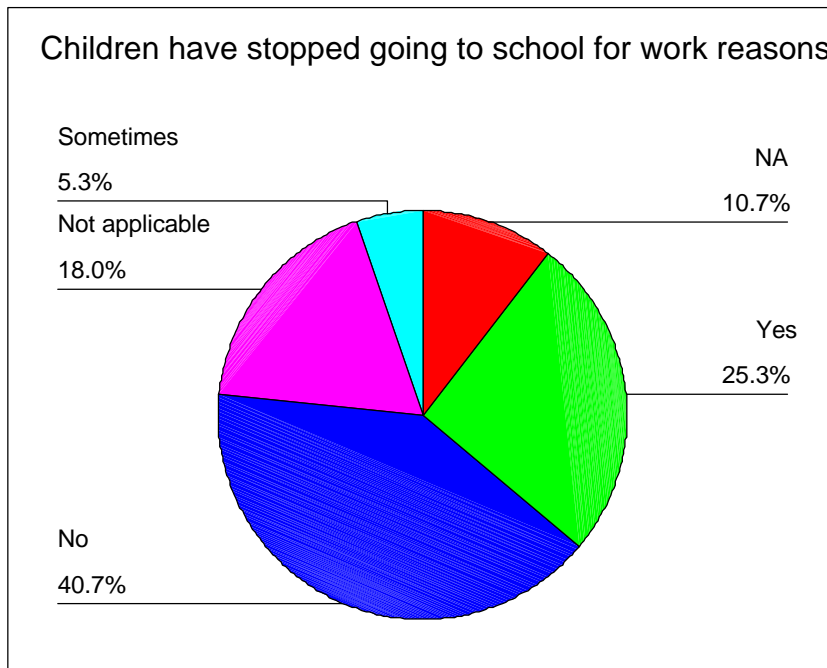
- Yes – 25.4%;
- No – 40.6%;
- Sometimes – 5.4%;
- Not applicable (no education) – 18%;
- No answer – 10.6%.

For the reasons of school absenteeism (why had the child stopped going to school), the answers are:

- the family’s poverty – 24 cases ;
- in order to work – 26 cases ;

- failure to complete a school year – 8 cases;
- fear of beatings (by older students or teachers) – 5 cases;
- to take care of younger siblings – 1 case ;
- medical conditions – 4 cases;
- the child did not like school – 3 cases;
- numerous disciplinary problems – 4 cases.

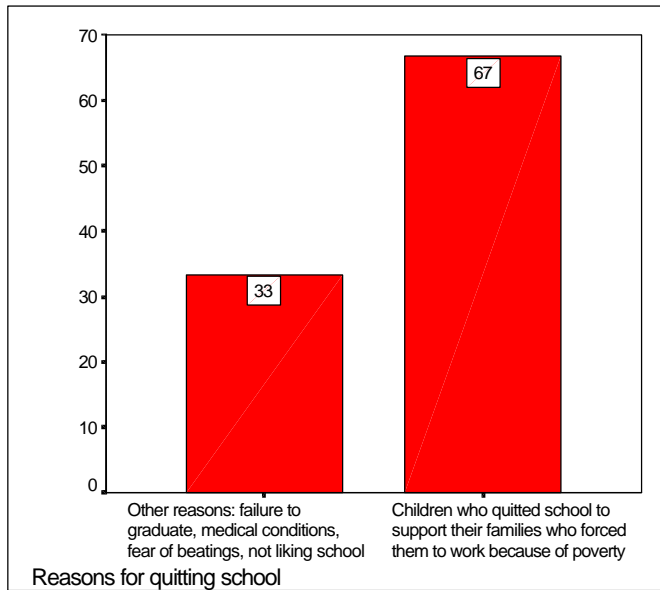
Of the 75 children who declared that they have stopped going to school in order to work, 50 (66.6%) had quit school because of the family’s extreme poverty which, one way or another, forced the child to contribute to the family’s income. The parents’ attitude in these cases is obviously a negative one: the parents probably consider that the basic needs (food and surviving, in general) are more important than other needs such as those of protection and security, the need of belonging to a group, of forming one’s self-respect/self-image and the need for a self-fulfilment by means of education.



**Chart 14**

The need to be part of the school group and belong to a group of friends is crucial in satisfying the need to form a self-image that does not lead to a psychological complex, as well as the need for self-fulfilment and achievement. The time spent in school is a time for relating and getting to know other people, of forming interpersonal and social skills.

The remaining 33.3% of the children had abandoned school for other reasons – failure to complete a school year, medical conditions, fear of beatings, disciplinary problems or the fact that they did not like school.



**Chart 15**

In this case as well, the parents' attitude towards the necessity of education is a passive and indifferent one.

The parents' level of education resulting from their occupation is limited to the completion of from four to eight school years and a high school education for only 2 or 3% of the parents.

The type of the parents' occupations indicates that most parents are unqualified workers, unemployed (housewives) or day-labourers, jobs that in Romania are remunerated with minimum wages. Most children declared that one of the parents had a steady income that did not cover the costs of the minimum of family needs.

The correlation of the variables concerning the children's school absenteeism and the parents' education reveals a trans-generational educational pattern. This means that the parents' low level of education is a major factor in their decision to withdraw their children from school.

Most of the times, these families' monthly income does not exceed 1,000.000 – 1,500.000 lei (approx. 30-50 USD), which does not even cover the nutritional needs of a family made up of two members (not including clothing, shoes, drugs, and rate paying costs).

The types of the parents' occupations indicate that parents probably think that their children should at the most rise to their level, which does not require much education.

In conclusion, the findings from the interviewed children's families show that the children's low level of education is mostly due to the education costs that cannot be covered by families that live in poverty and where the parents have a low level of education themselves.

## **6.8 Quality of life (abuse suffered on the job, sleeping conditions, number of sleeping hours, the state at the time of waking up, the obligation to work, previous jobs, leisure activities, etc.)**

In order to have an overview of the working children's quality of life the following variables were taken into consideration:

### *6.8.1 Sleeping hours (how much the child sleeps)*

- 28% declared sleeping less than 7 hours a night;
- 31.3% sleep between 7-8 hours a night;
- 36.7% sleep over 8 hours a night;
- 4% no answer.

### *6.8.2 The children's state at wake up time (whether they feel rested or not)*

- 44% think they wake up rested;
- 56% think they are not rested at the time of waking up, that they are tired and they wake up because they have to (for different reasons: to go to work or because life on the street is like that).

The data resulting from the correlation of variables 1 and 2 shows that more than half the survey sample (59.3%) has sleeping hours under the amount needed (under 8 hours a night) for a physical and psychological development in accordance with the children's chronological age.

Of all the interviewed children, 44% declared feeling rested after waking up, while 56% declared feeling tired.

More than half the overall number of children feels sleep-deprived, which triggers different types of behaviours during the day: irascibility, psychomotor instability, a high degree of aggressiveness and tiredness. Tiredness itself can have a series of negative consequences for the child's physical and psychological health such as:

- difficulty in focusing on work which increases the risk of accidents, especially for children performing different types of work (washing cars, begging) in crowded places such as intersections;
- major difficulties in motor coordination, with possible risks for children engaged in hard work such as loading and unloading merchandise, construction work (work-related accidents);
- problems in relating with the employer or the workmates leading to inter-group conflicts that may degenerate into physical and verbal violence and eventually the child's dismissal by the employer.

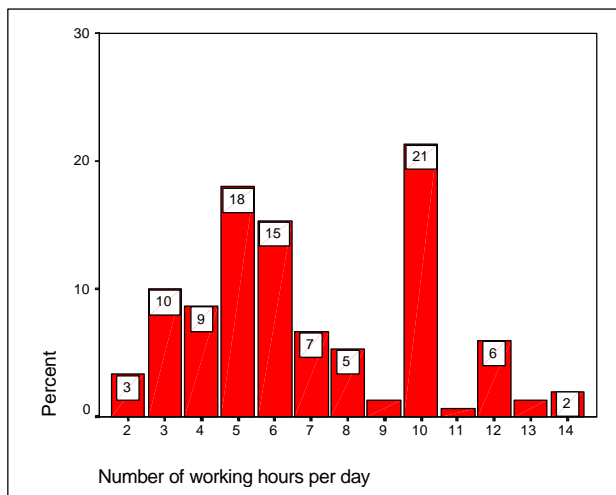
These short-term effects may have a devastating impact in the long term: accidents that disable the children and prevent them from ever working (e.g. amputation) or banishment by their parents.

### 6.8.3 Sleeping conditions

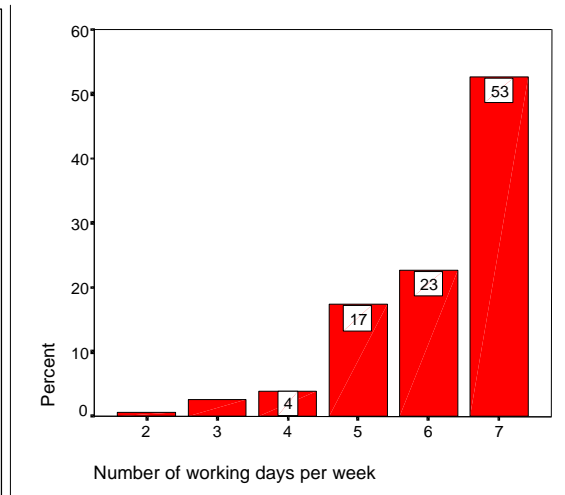
- home, in the family: 64%;
- in the street: 32.6%;
- in a placement centre: 1.4%;
- no answer: 2%.

### 6.8.4 Number of working days per week

- 24.7% children work less than 5 days a week;
- 22.6% work 6 days a week;
- 52.7% work 7 days a week.



**Chart 16**



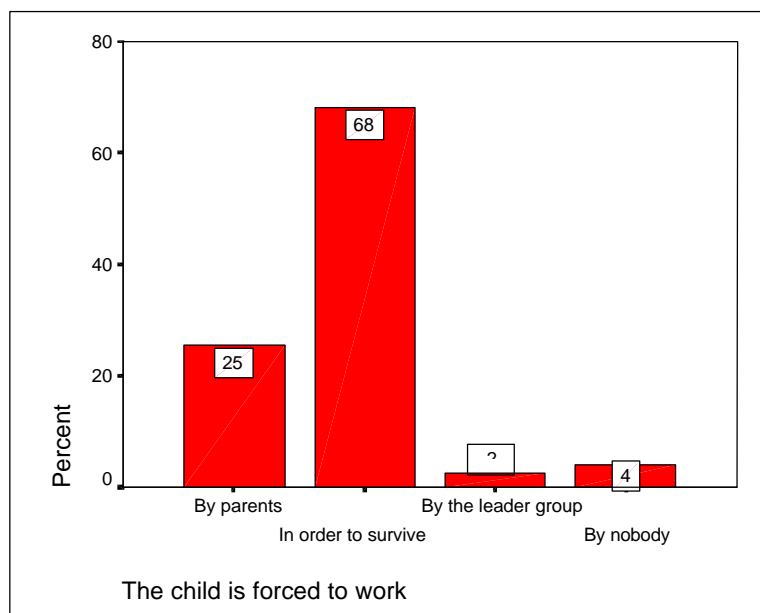
**Chart 17**

More than half of the overall number of working children have no days off. This makes it impossible for them to enjoy their childhood, as playtime turns into working. As for the time the children spend working every day, the situation tends to become inhuman. One third of the interviewed children work more than eight hours a day and are unable to meet their basic sleeping needs. The field operators noticed that most children suffered from a general state of fatigue, combined with a characteristic depressive behaviour.

### 6.8.5 Obligation to work (whether the child is forced to work by the parents or the group leaders):

- 25% declare being forced to work by parents, siblings or relatives;
- 68% declare not being forced to work, but they work in order to survive;
- 2% declare that they are sometimes forced to work by the leaders of the groups they belong to;
- 4% declared that nobody is forcing them to work.





**Chart 18**

#### 6.8.6 Whether children like the work they do

- 23.2% - yes; 73.3% - no; 0.7% - no answer.

The analysis of these variables reveals that most children are subjected to abuse:

- 37% work more than 8 hours a day (all day long, or in the morning and in the evening), which is more than the legal working hours for an adult;
- 76% children work 6 to 7 days a week, which is more than the normal number of working days for an adult (5 days);
- 50% children had a previous job, which means that they engaged in work much earlier than the minimum age for employment;
- 25% declare being forced to work, but this percentage is probably higher, considering that many of the children were interviewed in the presence of one of the parents, the group leader or the employer. This hindered the reliability of this information, because the child is unable to speak openly in the presence of the respective individuals.
- 68% of the children earn their living. These children either have to live in the streets permanently or are not provided with enough food or clothing by their parents, which forces them to fulfill these needs themselves by begging or working.
- Children are subjected to abuse regarding the number of working hours, working days, the illegal employment under the age of 16 and forced labour.

#### 6.8.7 Abuse suffered during working hours

- **exhaustion:** 42% declare that they are overworked;
  - 58% declare that they are not overworked.



### 6.9.1 What would you like to be (which profession) when you grow up?

- Qualified/unqualified workers, vendor: 30.3%
- Doctor: 10.7%
- Policeman: 8.6%
- Driver/mechanic: 16%
- I don't know: 12.8%
- Plane pilot: 1.3%
- Painter, musician, dancer, actor (arts): 6%
- Priest: 1.4%
- Employer: 4.8%
- Teacher (only girls): 2%
- Social assistant (street children who had been assisted in the residential or day-care centres of NGOs): 0.7%
- Prostitution (a girl who was engaged in prostitution): 0.7%
- A pickpocket (a Roma child whose family had been in this "business" for generations); this method was an important income source, the child declared making approx. 1,500,000 lei (approx. 50\$) a day from pick pocketing with his father: 0.7%.
- Athlete: 4%.

The analysis of these percents shows that many of the working children have concrete expectations (hopes) as far as professions are concerned (doctors, policeman, teachers, drivers, mechanics, artists). The rest of the children are pessimistic about the possibility of such professions. This may be explained by the children's realistic expectations regarding professions that require certain skills and considering their level of education (mostly a poor level of education compared to the children's age and the possibility of going back to school).

Another explanation may be that of the intergenerational transmission of professions, i.e. most of the children's parents/grandparents having the same professions (qualified/unqualified workers - carpenters, masons, tailors, cooks, drivers, mechanics, etc.). The same explanation applies in the case of the children who answered: musician (three Roma children whose parents played different musical instruments) and the pickpocket. The children who wanted to be drivers or mechanics (16%) said that the reason for this was that these professions paid very well.

Children who had high expectations considering their education and their families' financial possibilities wanted to become doctors (10.7%) arguing that "*they are tired of seeing all this suffering,*" that they "*want to restore the people's health, so that they aren't sick anymore.*" Children who wanted to be priests (all of whom were children who worked and lived in the streets, and who no longer had any relationship with their parents) said that they believed in God that "*God is the only one who looks after us and the only one we believe in. It is to God that we cry for help.*"

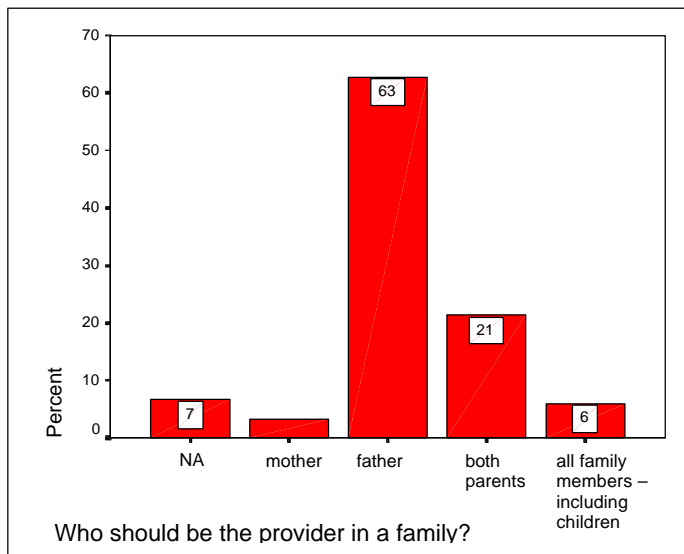
Those who wanted to be policemen (8.6%) had two reasons for this:

1. Children who had left their families and integrated in the street children's groups said they wanted to be policemen so that they could beat other people just like the police beat them;

2. The children who had a family and who were only working in the street said that they wanted to be policemen to “do justice.”

### 6.9.2 Who should be the provider when you have a family of your own?

- The man (father): 64%
- Both parents: 21.3%
- No answer: 6%
- All family members (including children): 6%
- The woman (mother): 2.7%.



**Chart 19**

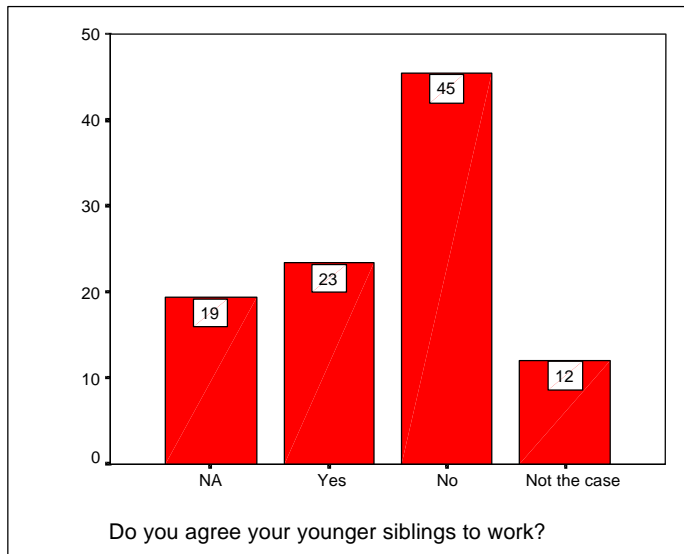
The answers indicate that most of the working children (68% - boys, 32% - girls) think that it is normal for the father to provide for the family, according to the traditional patriarchal mentality that the father is “*the head of the family*” - the one who has power and control but also the one who provides for his family.

Approximately 21% of the children show some change in mentality, thinking that both parents are in charge of the family’s economic status and should equally contribute to the family’s well being.

Only 6% of the children reflect the family patterns they come from, agreeing that their children should work, even though they have been through the same tragic experience themselves.

### 6.9.3 Do you agree that your younger siblings should work?

- No: 45%;
- Yes: 23%;
- Not applicable (no younger siblings): 12%;
- No answer: 19%.

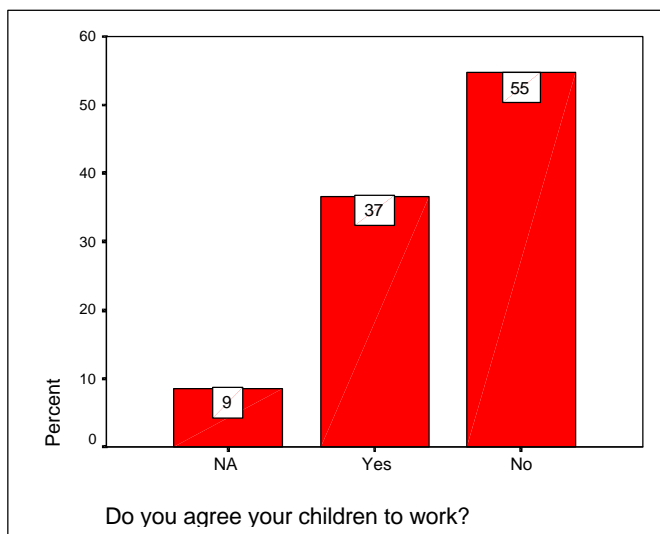


**Chart 20**

Forty-five percent of the working children do not want their younger siblings to work, which shows their attachment and their wish to protect them from the risks of working in the street. This implies that they have psychologically matured because of the hardship they have been through and their responsibility for their younger siblings' future. If they had the means, these children would probably find another home away from the parents who forced them to work, they would provide for their siblings and send them to school so that they do not go through the same traumatizing experience that they have been through.

*6.9.4 Do you agree that your children should work in the future?*

- No: 54.7%; Yes: 36.7%; No answer: 8.6%.



**Chart 21**

The structure of these answers shows that the children are not willing to propagate the same parental pattern, arguing as follows:

*“We mustn't do to our children what our parents have done to us. They should go to school, learn a trade, and we must help them.”*

The message that 54.7% of the interviewed children are trying to send is that the role of the parents is to support and educate their children.

Unfortunately, a relatively high percent (36.7%) of the children think that sending one's children to work is a normal thing to do:

*“They should bring money because they too eat in that house.”*

This category is at risk of passing on this family pattern, which is why this group is considered a priority for the prevention programs to be implemented by the social services.

#### *6.9.5 If somebody (a fairy) could make three of your wishes come true, what would you wish?*

As this was an open question, the answers varied and called for a qualitative analysis.

The main types of wishes of children whose parents were deceased or who had left their families because of physical and emotional abuse were:

- To have their own family and a good relationship with all its members;
- To have a house of their own;
- To have children whom they can support and send to school;
- To have money for food and not have to beg.

Children working daytimes and who have one or both parents alive had extremely concrete and minor wishes - that are usually fulfilled in normal and even more deprived families:

- To have toys - dolls (the girls) and balls, bicycles, toy cars (the boys);
- To have food;
- To be healthy;
- To complete their education;
- To have friends.

Some of the children who had occasional access to computers wanted a computer very badly.

### *6.9.6 Conclusions*

These children have modest wishes, limited to the basic needs - food, a house, material goods. They are very close to their parents on the human evolution scale - the result of restricted access to education and means of information, the origin environment and the group they are part of, but mostly because they lack means of reference and positive role models and circumstances. They have not had access to nurturing environments where children are valued and continually assisted in their psychological and physical development.

### *6.10 The psychological profile*

In order to have a picture of the psychological profile of the working street children, the co-participative observation method, non-directive interviews and, in some cases, the projective tests (the Koch test, the family test) were used.

The data resulting from the direct observation of the survey sample certifies the fact that most working children have a hindered physical development: height, weight, and muscular capacity below the normal standards of the respective chronological age; their permanent teeth are compromised because of changes in the calcium metabolism. This is caused by malnutrition, by a sleeping rhythm that is inadequate for their age (two thirds complain about not getting enough sleep), as well as the characteristics of the respective work place (7-8 hours of daily work, crowded premises, heat, noxious substances).

Many of the working children, especially those living in the street suffer from diseases that are characteristic of their working and living environment (furunculosis, skin disorders, scabies, wounds, burns), respiratory disorders caused by cigarette smoking, glue-sniffing (for children living in the street) and the weather conditions (for children working throughout the year, including in the winter).

The children's clothing is dirty and shabby. Their personal hygiene is also problematic, many of the children stating that they bathe only two or three times a week, in the Dâmbovită River. This is the case with children living in the streets, who do not have the possibility of taking a decent bath, but also for children from families. These children claim that there is not enough space for a proper bathroom (most families live in poor conditions, in one-room apartments with no utilities).

The communication and language skills of the working children are poor due to their limited knowledge and restricted access to education and communication means. Usually these children express themselves in short sentences, and are not able to use short clauses. Their verbal communication is dominated by grammatical mistakes and many slang elements characteristic of their groups or their family environment are used. Some children suffer from language disorders, because of the lack of cognitive stimulation within the family (e.g. the inability to pronounce certain syllables or words, stuttering, as a component of neurotic symptoms). The findings of the direct observation show the presence of a relatively limited vocabulary dominated by the use of slang (marginal linguistic elements).

The limited duration of the research prevented the children from opening up about the alleged sexual abuse suffered in the family or in the group. The psychologist did not have the time and the means necessary for the creation of a relationship of total trust with the children.

#### *6.10.1 Cognitive development*

The differential direct observation of the psychologist indicates a statistically significant

percentage of cognitive deficits generated by a lack of cognitive stimulation within the origin family environment, but also by the restricted access to education. Although this category of children cannot be clearly diagnosed as mentally retarded, the following variables should be considered:

- the characteristics of the family environment – short-circuiting of the basic family function (mainly the economic and social functions);
- the type of socialization of the child, which is mainly a negative type dominated by norms that do not comply with the social norms; also, the family's system of values is often reversed; the secondary socialization achieved by schooling is often interrupted or non-existent.
- the characteristics of the group the child works in – most of the group members are children coming from the same type of family and having the same deficits.

Taking all these variables into consideration a child suffering from mental retardation can only be diagnosed in a few cases. Most have acquisition deficits because of the lack of cognitive stimulation.

Regarding the thinking processes, most children (90%) do not have abstract and generalization abilities. The children have a hard time understanding the hypothetical situations suggested by the psychologist, they are addicted to the present, have no desires for the future and sometimes cannot even understand the notion of future. The children's past and their previous family experiences do not disappear and can be recaptured quite accurately by them. The unfortunate childhood events are perceived differently by the children who often take responsibility for their occurrence.

#### *6.10.2 Emotional structure and personality*

Most of these children suffer from emotional deficits because of the neglect or the absence of one of the parents.

Many of the children admitted having been subjected to physical or emotional abuse within the family and are unconsciously perpetuating this pattern in their relationships with their younger siblings or friends.



*"I was seven years old when he killed my mother. We had a well in our backyard and the neighbours would come for water. He was very angry and he made a lot of fuss about that. My mother went to work to sell sunflower seeds in Basarab railway station and apartment blocks and she used to take me with her to wash myself.*

*Op. - How did your parents get along?*

*C.S. - He couldn't stand her, he would hit her with his fists to the point where she almost died and eventually he went to a neighbour and got a shovel and started hitting her in the head and on the back until we woke up from all the noise he made beating our mother. And then he told me to stay in bed with my little brother and then he hit her in the head with the shovel once more and then went to the table and got a knife that he threw at her. The knife came right here and so he killed her.*

*- I don't understand, where did the knife come?*

*- Right here in the liver, into her belly, I don't know, and he did away with her.*

*- What do you mean? He did away with her?*

*- She couldn't speak, couldn't breathe, she just laid there for a minute or two and then she removed the knife herself and in the end she asked me for some water after taking out the knife and she died on the spot. Eventually a neighbour came and asked what happened. So I told her that he killed my mother and that woman called the police right away.*

*- And what were you doing in the house, were you screaming, crying?*

*- We were crying and when he went to get some vodka I wiped my tears cause he would beat me too, he cared a lot about me. Then came the police and the ambulance, a lot of people gathered, we were very young, he killed her on December the 14th 1991, I was 7 years old at that time. I spent a whole year in courts because my father wouldn't confess to killing my mother."*

Analyzing this child's story, the child was subjected to different types of physical and emotional abuse: beatings, witnessing acts of verbal and physical violence between the parents and the killing of one of the parents by the other, being forced to take part in the trials and be subjected to repeated interrogation. The following stories reflect the presence of sexual abuse within the groups of working street children (*please note that all names used in the following text boxes are fictional*):

*"Op. - Did a lot of kids make money for Bruce Lee? (Bruce Lee is one of the leaders of the street children's groups in Bucharest)*

*C.S. - Yes, while I was living in Dristor several children made money for him (George, Faianta, the Moldavians, etc.)*

*- Do you know what a call girl is?*

*- Yes, I do. While Lenuta was living with Rubina she would go to Ion's place, they washed together and then he took her to bed and paid her - about 150-200,000 lei (approx. 5 \$). In Basarab there are also a lot of girls who wear short skirts and show their legs to people. These people stop the car, they get in and they take the girls I don't know where.*

*- What can you tell us about the girls in Basarab? Do they have a home or do they also live in sewers or barracks?*

*- Yes, with those people they live with.*

*- So they live with their pimps?*

*- Yes, they don't go by themselves, younger children ask people around "would you like a girl?" and then take them to their place."*

This is not an isolated case in the street children groups, but it speaks about the structure of these groups, the roles and responsibilities within the group, the worst forms of labour (prostitution as a survival mechanism in the street environment), the types of the group leaders and their power over the group.

The following paragraph shows how most street children are systematically subjected to physical abuse, the main cause of their leaving their families:

*"C.F. Other boys, if you don't bring them money, they beat you up or molest you, like Rafael from Parada who abuses other street children.*

*Op. - How about you, do you have a girlfriend?*

*- Yes, I do, but she is in a children's home, Ciresarii 2, a girl called Vlad Elena.*

*- So that's why you wanted us to put you in Ciresarii 2?*

*- No, it's just that I don't like living in the streets anymore, the police take you, they won't even let you work at the intersections or in the buses. I was in a centre before but my mother took me but now I tell them do not come for me anymore, I am used to this place.*

*- Why don't you go home, to your mother and father?*

*- Because my father drinks, he beats me up with a chain and he forces me to get them money, begging in busses, and I didn't want to anymore so I left and went in the street. I hung around with some street boys, I made friends with them, then broke up with them and now they send younger children to beg for them.*

*- But you have never ever had a younger child beg for you?*

*- Never, if he wants he gets food, sometimes I get food, and we manage to survive this way."*

This category of children is characterized by emotional instability, negativism, hostility towards the adult world and a fragmented feeling of belonging. They feel that they belong to a group at most, and not to a family.

The children interviewed in the street as well as in their family environment do not seem to be particularly attached to one of the family members, either the mother, the father or the grandparents. The parents do not identify and fulfill the needs of their children during the first three years of life (that are crucial for the child's normal psychological development).

In this context, the child's self-image is deteriorated, distorted and minimized. Deprived of an adult that should monitor the child's needs and due to the abusive behaviour of one or both parents, the child cannot have a positive self-image based on reality.

### 6.10.3 Conclusions

1. The working street children, who either live and work or just work in the streets, are characterized by untidy clothing, reflecting the poverty of their origin families and by physical appearances and development (weight, height, muscular capacity, etc.) that are inconsistent with their chronological age. The physical development of these children is hindered by nutritional deficits and the working environment (the children are exposed to noxious substances, heat, accidents, as well as the transmission of dermatological or venereal diseases within the group).
2. Most of the working children suffer from a form of developmental delay caused by the

lack of cognitive stimulation within the family and the restricted access to education and means of communication.

3. The language and communication of the working children is characterized by a limited vocabulary, the use of short sentences and occasional short clauses, as well as by the presence of slang elements characteristic of the marginal groups.
4. The main cause for the children's engagement in work and leaving their origin families is physical and emotional abuse that is sometimes doubled by the sexual abuse suffered in the street environment. The informal leaders of the groups of children living in the street use force and threats of exclusion from the group against the younger children, when they refuse to work or engage in prostitution.
5. These children did not benefit from the presence of a positive role model to stimulate their emotional development as part of the overall development of their personality.



## VII. FOCUS-GROUP DISCUSSIONS

### *7.1 Representatives of authorities*

The following institutions were represented in the focus-group discussions: the Labour Inspectorate, the Labour and Social Protection Directorate within the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity; the Social Assistance Directorate within the Bucharest City Hall; the Criminality Prevention Department within the General Police Inspectorate - Bucharest.

The discussions were focused on the topics listed below. Following is a summary of the points brought up by the various participants, by topic (see also Annex I).

#### *7.1.1 The evolution of the street children phenomenon: causes, magnitude, legislation*

The general opinion was that the main cause for children working in the street is poverty. The street children phenomenon can be seen in the streets, in the subways, especially in the form of begging.

The phenomenon has been expanding ever since 1990, prior to which it was essentially non-existent. It has also evolved from a qualitative point of view: now there are “families living in the city sewers” and “street teenagers” - as a result of the failure of social reintegration policies.

As far as the legislation is concerned, the Decree no. 153 on public order annulled after the 1989 Revolution stipulated sanctions for begging, vagrancy, as well as the use of sexual relations in the view of financial benefits. The Decree no. 61/1990 on public order eliminated these two provisions, which were then reintroduced in 1996 at the initiative of the Police.

#### *7.1.2 The forms of child labour, the causes and consequences of the phenomenon: family role, impact on education*

The *worst forms of child labour* of the working street children phenomenon were stated to be: begging, prostitution (including international trafficking), construction work, loading-unloading merchandise, industrial work (especially in hazardous environments - painting).

The *consequences of child labour* are: medical risks (accidents and sickness), psychological damage, exploitation (the wages of the working children are much smaller than the minimum wages on the labour market) and school dropout.

The *main causes of child labour* are: poor, disorganized and uninformed families with a low level of education and the lack of school responsibility in regard to the reintegration of children dropping out of school.

#### *7.1.3 The contribution of authorities and NGOs to the prevention and elimination of the working street children phenomenon:*

The Labour Inspectorate started its activity in this particular field in May 2001 with a brief

training program for the labour inspectors in the territory, followed by a seminar on 29 May-1 June 2001. The training has doubled by the elaboration of information materials (leaflets and posters) addressed to labour inspectors, as well as to employers. This campaign is correlated with the one for the elimination of the illegal forms of labour (“black-market” labour) and will be continued by coordination at the central level. The Labour Inspectorate has introduced a new chapter in its data base on working teenagers under 18.

It was also mentioned that the Departments for Child Protection are ineffective, having no clear-cut objectives, while working street children do not seem to be a priority. Another problem lies in the excessive bureaucracy of the Departments for Child Protection.

In regard to the 120 NGOs working with street children, it was underlined that only 20 are doing their job.

The Police have resumed their activities in the field this year by the department’s action “*Home Again*,” ordered by the Prime Minister. Children were removed from the streets by force, sent to their origin towns, but, surprisingly, went back to the streets soon afterwards. A possible solution would be to find substitute-families for the street children.

#### *7.1.4 Possible solutions for the elimination of child labour*

- Articulate family policies: families should be supported financially and also well informed.
- There is a need for institutional coordination. Inter-ministerial cooperation (between the Departments for Child Protection, the Ministry of Health and Family, the Internal Affairs Ministry) should be established.
- Design of social policies at a national level for the protection of child and family in difficulty as a whole.
- The answer is not a prohibitive policy, but an intensively mediated family planning outreach implemented at the street level to reduce the number of children who are born in the streets.
- The general concern was that solutions were hard to find and meanwhile the phenomenon would only continue to expand.

### ***7.2 Representatives of the Departments for Child’s Rights Protection and of the NGOs running programmes for homeless children***

*Participants:* 11 individuals with responsibilities within the Departments for Child’s Rights Protection of all six sectors of Bucharest and 5 NGO representatives (ARMS, FOC, IOMC, The International Foundation for Child and Family, Gavroche).

The discussions were focused on the topics listed below. Following is a summary of the points brought up by the various participants by topic.

#### *7.2.1 The evolution of the street children phenomenon: causes, magnitude, legislation*

It is generally accepted that before 1990 the number of street children was much smaller, even though children were kept in certain centres by force, that education was compulsory and that if children stopped going to school the Political Police forced the parents to send their children back to school. After 1990 all these restrictions ceased to exist and the number of

street children started growing at an alarming rhythm. The phenomenon exploded after 1990. Western capitalism seemed to have contributed to all this, giving examples of prostitution, human trafficking, illegal adoptions etc. Nowadays all age groups are represented in the street.

Another opinion was that the Departments for Child's Rights Protection were established in 1997 and it took some time to understand who street children were and what financing resources could be used. It was also underlined that it is very difficult to reintegrate street children, because they reject the institutional system of rules and there are no real services that meet the needs of these children. The lack of information also contributed to the inability to work with this category of children and only after 1995 did the phenomenon start to be understood.

On the one hand, there were changes in the structure of the phenomenon - the number of street children would have increased, had there not been a gradual increase in the number of NGOs working with a large part of these children, and on the other hand, some qualitative changes, as well. The first children ending up in the street have become young group leaders, as compared to when the phenomenon first appeared.

### *7.2.2 Legal framework concerning homeless and working children*

There are general legal provisions concerning children in difficulty, but no special chapter for homeless children, which is, in a way, a good thing because it leaves room for interpretation to the child's benefit (we often resort to art. 2 of the Law no. 108 stipulating the obligation of looking after a child's best interests), but on the other hand, this law does not mention the fact that this category of children in difficulty includes street children.

NGOs opinion related to the necessary means to withdraw these children from the streets and to the lack of trained personnel and communication means.

Some of the DCRPs suggested that they should start some projects for the street children in collaboration with the NGOs establish their own Street Social Services.

Unfortunately, the street children phenomenon was seen as a political issue, but it was unacceptable that political structure should interfere and give orders.

### *7.2.3 The worst forms of child labour*

Begging is a form of labour accepted by all participants. It was also mentioned that more and more children nowadays resort to stealing. This all led to the worst forms of child labour: construction work, loading and unloading merchandise in markets and supermarkets, prostitution etc.

*Harmful effects:* somatic and psychological effects (sickness, accidents, premature exhaustion etc); in construction work children and teenagers are not paid for their work, the employers make up excuses to fire them; for the other forms of labour, generally the children/teenagers are usually paid as promised.

However, it is necessary to educate the family and the community. The industrialization and the urbanization of the communist period led to the perpetuation of family patterns that allowed children to work very early - in the countryside, children were and still are sent by their parents to work in the fields, to raise animals etc.

#### *7.2.4 The consequences of child labour:*

- After several times of not being paid as promised, the children may give up trying to work and resort to other illegal activities: theft, robbery etc.
- Accidents: the child has no medical insurance, no identity papers or family doctor and he/she can be denied hospitalization;
- Fines: they may be asked to pay damages by their employers;
- Sickness - hard labour.

#### *7.2.5 Possible solutions for the elimination of child labour*

Harmonizing and correlating the efforts of NGOs and authorities in preventing and intervening in child labour cases. NGOs and the DCRPs should join their efforts in working with these children, to design joint programmes for evaluating and monitoring the situation of working children.

The local communities should also contribute and the change of mentalities can be made by information and awareness raising campaigns.

### **7.3 Conclusions**

- the gaps in the legal provisions on child labour and, most of all, the instability of the legislation are major obstacles in the elimination of the worst forms of child labour;
- excessive bureaucracy of the state institutions, the excess of personnel and its ineffectiveness are other impediments in approaching the phenomenon;
- in the case that it is confirmed that only 1 in 6 NGOs is active (20 out 120), it means that only part of the money raised is spent for children in need;
- participants tend to provide general solutions for elimination of the worst forms of child labour; they are less interested in designing specific strategies;
- there was a lot of doubt that local communities have the ability and the resources to solve this problem by themselves;
- discussions reflected the lack of an effective co-operation between institutions related to the phenomenon of working street children; the competencies of each institution do not seem to be clearly defined; participants underlined the need for coordinated efforts at a national level;
- there is limited knowledge about street children employed in the worst forms of child labour; in-depth research is needed to define, analyze and explain the causes and the consequences of this social phenomenon.



## VIII. ANALYSIS OF THE PATHWAYS TO THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOUR

### *8.1 Analysis of the pathways to the worst forms of child labour*

The main pathways to the children's participation in the worst forms of child labour are the utmost poverty and the disorganization of families – mono-parental families and stepfamilies. The statistics indicate that 41.2% of the Romanian population is living under the poverty line and that 80% of the families with four children or more live in poverty, although only a small percentage of these deprived families decide to send their children to work.

There are several social and psychological explanations that account for this situation:

- The communist period was characterized by qualitative mutations in the social dynamics: the forced and exacerbated industrialization, urbanization and creation of jobs, which lead to a collective type of mentality. It is during this period that most of the families included in the survey came to Bucharest, which is a confirmation of the hypothesis. At that time people used to think that it was the state that provided them with houses and jobs.
- The society changed rapidly after 1990, moving towards a free-market economy in which the distribution of jobs is based on professional competence criteria and where social dwellings are provided under the strictest conditions at prohibitive prices. The state is no longer "*responsible*" for the citizens' destiny. In this context, the families that were coercively moved to the city during the last years of communism have not had the time nor the ability to adjust to these social changes. They were left on their own, with no jobs or other material resources. The confusion of these families was great, since they already had three to four children to provide for and did not have the necessary amount of time for the interpersonal relating that might have provided them with the support of a group of personal friends. Alienation and uprooting became the main family attributes. These families were unable to understand that requirements change once political systems change and that "*the state*" makes little efforts for their social and vocational reintegration. As material resources were becoming increasingly scarce, these families wondered about the existence of a miraculous survival strategy. Different personal motivations of these people prevented them from even thinking about going back to their villages. As time passed they became so desperate that they ended up selling their houses. This is why many of the families of working street children were eventually forced to live in the street. The only remaining strategy after spending the money from their houses is that of engaging their children in different forms of labour while still very young.
- That moment of extreme confusion caused by the post-communist reality, the moment of hopelessness and turmoil would have been the most appropriate moment for intervention. The recently disintegrated families living in the mirage of a "*great anonymity*" were left alone at the time of the psychological struggle caused by the political and economic changes. This psychological crisis that the families had to overcome on their own is what caused them to lose their homes, decide to take their

children out of school and force them to work in order to meet the basic family needs. This crisis can be overcome by the creation of social services of psychological counselling, material support, as well as vocational and legal guidance for families at risk. Unfortunately, these families did not receive any support during the crisis they passed through. Their adaptation to new social and economic conditions was very low, leading eventually to failure in the carrying out of their parental responsibilities. The *State* did not act as a "family protector" any more, this attitude towards family's social problems becoming a feature especially between 1990 and 1997.

The fundamental condition for a quantitative and qualitative change in the dynamics of this phenomenon is to resort to a systemic and rapid type of intervention, now when the working children phenomenon is expanding.

## ***8.2 Obstacles and opportunities in the design and implementation of policies for the prevention and elimination of child labour***

The post-communist changes have had a positive impact as far as opportunities are concerned, but they also contributed to the appearance and expansion of a phenomenon that Romanian society had not been confronted with at all or only to some extent. The lack of experience and of policy-design models has hindered the elaboration and implementation of national strategies. Child labour is a phenomenon whose rapid expansion is directly correlated to the changes inherent in the transition to a free market economy.

The analysis of the obstacles and opportunities in this field in the past 10 years reveals a great deal of disparity between the two. Today's economic background must be considered when speaking of obstacles. The effects of the transition at a micro-social level are multifaceted and difficult to combat. The high degree of vulnerability and exposure to risks puts children in a special situation.

In order to prevent the expansion of child labour, policies should focus on reducing poverty, on assisting young people in finding jobs and on making sure that children have equal educational opportunities. This primary level of prevention is meant to enhance the society's capacity in dealing with the characteristic aspects of children's engagement in the worst forms of child labour. Another aspect that the national policies have left out is the lack of official statistical information about the nature and magnitude of child labour in Romania. The only research efforts so far have been those of the nongovernmental organizations. The lack of information has made it impossible to organize campaigns for the information of the general public on the negative consequences of children's premature engagement in work. ILO/IPEC together with Salvati Copiii, Global March Against Child Labour, and other NGOs, thus took steps to organize a campaign to accelerate the ratification of the ILO Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labour (no. 182), 1999.

The ratification of ILO Convention no. 182 in November 2000 is a sign that political decision-makers are aware of the rapid expansion of the phenomenon and of the need to take measures. The governmental child policy for 2001-2004 also targets aspects concerning the exploitation of categories of children at risk. In spite of all this, the legislative changes following the ratification have not yet been made. There is a need for legal grounds to intervene in such child labour cases. The law should stipulate the activities that may hamper the physical, psychological and moral development of children between 0-15 years, as well as for children over 15 who have the legal right to work. Another vital step in combating child labour is to design and implement a national action plan with clear-cut objectives and responsibilities.

In conclusion, the national policy for the prevention and elimination of child labour should be implemented by concrete programmes in the following fields: collection of data about the magnitude and the characteristics of the phenomenon; legislation; education; health; mobilization of the community; the reduction of poverty and social protection.

In 2002 the results of the national study on child labour, that is being carried out by National Institute for Statistics and Economical Studies (INSSE) in cooperation with ILO/IPEC, as well as the findings of the surveys regarding the working street children and working Roma children will be available. Based on these findings, a national plan can be developed that will identify the competent authorities and provide a coherent framework for the prevention and elimination of the worst forms of child labour.



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## ANNEX I

### Minute Sheets of the Focus Groups

#### I. Central Authorities focus group

##### Participants:

- the Labour Inspectorate (LI)
- The Labour and Social Protection Directorate - the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity;
- the Social Assistance Directorate within the Bucharest City Hall (BCH);
- the Criminality Prevention Department within the General Police Inspectorate (GPI)- Bucharest.

*Duration of the discussions:* 4h 30 min

*The content of the discussions:*

##### *1. The evolution of the street children phenomenon (causes, magnitude, legislation)*

LI: the street children phenomenon can be seen in the streets, in the subways, especially as begging. The poor economic evolution of Romania accounts for this phenomenon.

*“Children are rather sent (by their parents) to work in the streets!”*

The phenomenon has been expanding ever since 1990; there are “a few hundred” street children in Bucharest alone.

GPI: This phenomenon did not exist before 1990. There was the Decree no. 153 on public order, annulled after the 1989 Revolution that stipulated sanctions for begging, vagrancy, as well as the use of sexual relations in view of financial benefits. The Decree no. 61/1990 on public order eliminated these two provisions, which were then reintroduced in 1996 at the initiative of the Police.

Immediately after 1990, there were “a few dozen” children living in the streets; their number reached 100-200 in 1992-1993 and, according to the Police records, in 1996-1997 there were 500-600 street children in the winter and 700-800 in the summer.

The phenomenon has also evolved from a qualitative point of view: now there are “families living in the city sewers” and “street teenagers” - as a result of the failure of social reintegration policies.

BCH: The decrease of the living standards of the Romanian population accounts for the street children phenomenon that has been amplifying ever since 1990. *“Probably this is the case with a few hundreds of children in Bucharest and other hundreds in the rest of the country.*

*Whole families end up in the streets!*“. Every day, the Social Assistance Service of the City Hall receives requests from five or six poor families with many children.

## *2. The forms of child labour, the causes and the consequences of the phenomenon (the role of the family, the impact on education)*

*The worst forms of child labour:*

GPI: begging, prostitution (including international trafficking).

BCH: construction work, loading-unloading merchandise, industrial work (especially in hazardous environments - painting).

LI: the issues are not clear; there is a need for exact definitions of the hazardous types of work.

*Consequences:*

LI: there are risks: medical risks (work-related accidents and sickness), psychological risks, exploitation (the wages of the working children are much smaller than the minimum wages on the labour market).

BCH: School dropout is a serious consequence.

*Causes:*

BCH: *“the existence of poor families with a low level of education that are disorganized and uninformed“.*

LI: *“the poverty of a large part of the Romanian population“.*

GPI: Nowadays schools are no longer responsible with the school reintegration of children dropping out of school.

## *3. The contribution of authorities and NGOs to the prevention and elimination of the working street children phenomenon*

LI: The Labour Inspectorate started its activity in this particular field in May 2001(brief training program for the labour inspectors in the territory, followed by a seminar on 29 May-1 June 2001. The 20 trained labour inspectors will become trainers themselves). We are in the process of designing research methodologies, which we intend to complete by the end of September 2001. *“The training component is doubled by an informational component: the elaboration of information materials for labour inspectors, as well as for employers.“* So far we have issued three leaflets (an overview of the institution, the international provisions and the Romanian legislation on child labour) and a poster (as a means of raising the awareness of the general public). The poster is a translation of the one that was put into circulation by the International Labour Office in Geneva. This campaign is correlated with the one for the elimination of the illegal forms of labour (*“black-market“* labour). The Labour Inspectorate has entered in its data centralization tables a new chapter on working teenagers under 18. *“So far the Labour Inspectorates have only identified working teenagers that were legally*



*employed (employment contracts, collaboration contracts, etc.).“*

There is a need for adequate labour inspection instruments in this particular field. *“It is too early to determine whether child labour is only found in the streets or if it is also practiced by employers.“* The campaign that has only just started will be continued by coordination at the central level.

GPI: The police should have been more involved in preventing and eliminating the “street children“ phenomenon. Once the Departments for Child Protection were established, it was decided that the Police should not work with street children. We should underline the ineffectiveness of these Departments: they have no clear-cut objectives and street children and working street children do not seem to be a priority of these Departments (for Child Protection).

Another problem lies in the excessive bureaucracy of the Departments for Child Protection. *“There are probably more social workers than there are street children: approx. 300 for each sector of the capital! In sector 1 - Bucharest there are approx. 1,000 social workers and if each would assist a child the problem would be solved!“*

Assessment of the NGOs in Bucharest: *“of the 120 NGOs working with street children, only 20 are doing their job - as far as we know.“*

The Police has resumed its activity in the field this year (after being interrupted in 1995 following the action entitled “The Chance“) by its action “Home Again“, ordered by the Prime Minister. The children were removed from the streets by force, sent to their origin towns and put in the care of the local Police chief who then returned them to their families. The results were astonishing: the children went back to the streets soon afterwards. A possible solution would be to find substitute-families for the street children.

*“The money penalties for the parents whose children live in the city streets are not effective: after being fined, the parents send their children begging again to get their money back.“*

#### *4. Possible solutions for the elimination of child labour, for the coordination and monitoring of the activities*

LI: Articulate family policies: *“the families should be supported financially, and also well informed!“*

There is a need for a coordination of the institutions, because no one has exhaustive competencies; there is a limit to any institutional component.

BCH: We should establish an inter-ministerial cooperation (between the Departments for Child Protection, the Ministry of Health and Family, the Internal Affairs Ministry). There is a need for the design of social policies at a national level and for the protection of the family in difficulty as a whole, not of the child only. It would be useful to have a hotline as a means of pointing out instances of child labour.

GPI: *The Ministry of Health and Family should be more involved, for instance by informing poor families about the inopportuneness of having many children.*

*“It may be that the street children phenomenon is a transitory one, just like the hippy movement. I think that at some point it will cease to exist...“*

*“I think the Police should no longer pay the Forensics Institute for the examination of street children. The Police already has liabilities amounting to billions of lei. The Parliamentary*

*Commissions designing the legislation on child labour are made up of several medical doctors and a legal counselor; other specialists should be involved.*“

BCH: *"The answer is not a prohibitive policy, but an intensively mediated birth-control policy implemented at the street level to make sure that children are not born in the streets."* "I think it is inappropriate to compare the street children phenomenon with the hippy movement. Unless we find solutions to the problem, the phenomenon will only continue to expand!"

## ***II. The Departments for Child's Rights Protection and of the NGOs running programmes for homeless children focus group***

### ***Participants:***

- 11 individuals with responsibilities within the Departments for Child's Rights Protection of all six sectors of Bucharest
- 5 NGO representatives (ARMS, FOC, IOMC, The International Foundation for Child and Family, Gavroche).

*The duration of the discussions: 5 h.*

*The content of the discussions:*

### ***1. The evolution of the "street children" phenomenon (causes, magnitude, legislation)***

DCRP: *"It is a fact that before 1990 the number of street children was much smaller, even though children were kept in certain centres by force, that education was compulsory and that if children stopped going to school the Political Police forced the parents to send their children back to school. After 1990 all these restrictions ceased to exist and the number of street children started growing at an alarming rhythm. The phenomenon just exploded after 1990. I suppose that the West also contributed to all this, giving examples of prostitution, human trafficking, illegal adoptions, etc."*

NGO: *The phenomenon is expanding. Before 1990, children used to work in agriculture and not in the cities - because of the prohibitive labour legislation and the scarcity of jobs which often lead to the extension of the schooling period, there was no working on the black-market because there were no employers and no private capital."* All age groups are represented in the street.

DCRP: *"The Departments for Child's Rights Protection were established in 1997 and it took all of us some time to understand what street children were and what financing sources could be used for this type of programme. There are other aspects to consider: you can work with children that have been in the street for a month or two, and even a year, but the rest of the children are very difficult to reintegrate, they are lost. We haven't had a single success in the case of children who have been in the street for more than a year. Why is that? Firstly, because the children reject the institutional system of rules and secondly because there really aren't services that should meet the needs of these children."*

Up until 1995, the information we had on this phenomenon was indirect, taken from the press, we had no direct contact with street children. We found out about the existence of these children, and then the term "phenomenon" was used, which indicated a significant

quantitative change. We found out that there are people from NGOs who work in the street, talking to these children, which I thought was great novelty. After 1995 we started to understand the phenomenon.

There are changes in the structure of the phenomenon - the number of street children would have increased, had there not been a gradual increase in the number of NGOs working with a large part of these children.

There are some qualitative changes, as well. *“The first children ending up in the street have become young group leaders. They have formed a lifestyle and a leadership based on their direct experience in the street. There is an obvious change in a group in which a child who was abused in the street becomes a leader with a different point of view. When the phenomenon first appeared, there were only children and no groups or leaders.”*

## *2. Legal framework concerning homeless children and working children*

DCRP: There are general legal provisions concerning children in difficulty, but no special chapter for homeless children, which is, in a way, a good thing because it leaves room for interpretation to the child’s benefit (we often resort to art. 2 of the Law no. 108 stipulating the obligation of looking after a child’s best interests), but on the other hand, this law does not mention the fact that this category of children in difficulty includes street children. There should be different provisions in the sense that one cannot apply the same measures for abandoned children or children with deviant behaviours and street children; they are confronted with other problems, therefore different protection measures should be designed.

NGO: *“The problem is that we do not have the necessary means to withdraw these children from the streets: there is no counseling or residential centre, nor a centre providing schooling, etc. We do not have people trained to do this kind of work, no cars, no information means.”*

DCRP: Some of the DCRPs said: *“Let’s do what the NGOs have been doing all this time and so we started some projects for the street children in collaboration with the NGOs and we established our own Street Social Services. We created a team made up of four workers but we didn’t have a car for emergencies and we were not authorized to employ psychologists. Unfortunately, the street children phenomenon is a political issue, but it is unacceptable that political structure should interfere and give orders. Children from Placement centres were even used in electoral campaigns.”*

## *3. Worst forms of child labour*

DCRP: *“As for labour, children didn’t work much, they merely begged because there were generous and sensitive people. I don’t consider begging a form of labour.”*

NGO: *“Begging is a form of labour when you are forced to stay in the sun for 12 hours, in crowded and hazardous places; it is a hard and dangerous work.”*

DCRP: *“As long as there are no fixed working hours, wages and norms, I don’t consider it work, or freelance.”*

DCRP: The increase of poverty rates contributed to children’ running away in the streets and to an increase in the number of children living in the street and of those who only work in the street and go back to their families at night. It also contributed to the number of families

living in the street. The economic background comes first.

NGO: Unlike before, when children earned their living by begging, more and more children nowadays resort to stealing. People are giving them less and less money because they don't have it anymore and because they have become used to the phenomenon. There was a press campaign on the NGOs and people starting asking, "*Why are there so many organizations and still a lot of children living in the streets and begging?*" People have thus come to totally reject these children or rather be completely indifferent to their situation.

DCRP: "*Children are given money very seldom, so they moved to stealing or getting a job (only 5%). Why can't they get a steady job? Because they have no clothes, no food, no place to sleep, no place to live, no identity papers, so they are of no guarantee to the employer. It is also because many employers take advantage of them and "employ" them for a week or two, after which they fire them without paying them for having no identity papers or a domicile.*"

Very few working children have employment contracts, although they have the minimum age for employment.

NGO: "*I have come across 10 cases of street youths with an employment contract, but the contracts were made by NGOs and young people who had previously been assisted by these organizations were hired as cooks, nurses, etc. I think it is unfortunate that the society denies these children the possibility of getting a job. This attitude reflects the lack of trust towards these children.*"

The number of children was decreased by Governmental provisions and police actions (the aberrant program "*Home Again*"). The children are sent home by force in the hope that the local Public Services will come up with a solution, but the children go back to the streets on the first train.

DCRP: "*We used to have a different approach. DCRP - sector 6 - used to identify the children, go to the parents' place of residence together with the Police and have them sign a paper stipulating the legal sanctions they exposed themselves to. That gave them a good scare, because this works very well with us, the Romanians. Obviously those sanctions were not applied, but there were there on paper, money penalties up to 50,000,000 million lei (~1700 USD). It is true that this way some of the children never went back to the street.*"

NGO: There have been changes from this point of view, as well. Begging (immediately after 1990) led to the worst forms of child labour: construction work, loading and unloading merchandise in markets and supermarkets, prostitution, etc.

Harmful effects: first of all, somatic effects (sickness, accidents, premature exhaustion, etc.) and, secondly, psychological effects. We have to distinguish however, between children who work and live in the streets and children who work in the streets and go back home at night. The number of children working in the street is increasing in number, while the number of those living and working in the street is decreasing.

DCRP: When we identify a child who works in the street we are allowed by the law to sanction the family. However, we think it is necessary to educate the family and the community. The industrialization and the urbanization of the communist period have led to the perpetuation of family patterns that allow children to work very early in their life - in the countryside, children were and still are sent by their parents to work in the fields, to work with animals, etc.

NGO: There are no means to bring families back to their rural environment, although they are offered this possibility. As for prostitution, half of those involved are girls and half are pimps (according to the girls). In construction work there is another problem - children and teenagers

are not paid for their work, the employers make up excuses to fire them. For the other forms of labour, generally the children/teenagers are usually paid as promised.

#### *4. The risks of child labour*

- After several times of not being paid as promised, the children may give up trying to work and resort to other illegal activities: theft, robbery, etc.
- Accidents: the child has no medical insurance, no identity papers or family doctor and they can be denied hospitalization;
- Fines: they may be asked to pay damages by their employers;
- Sickness - hard labour.

#### *5. Possible solutions for eliminating child labour, for coordinating and monitoring the activities*

Harmonizing and correlating the efforts of NGOs and authorities in preventing and intervening in child labour cases.

DCRP: *“We think that the NGOS and the DCRPs should join their efforts in working with these children, to design joint programmes for evaluating and monitoring the situation of working children.”*

NGO: *“We have to identify the causes and to conduct studies on child labour before designing joint intervention programmes. The local communities should also contribute, we have to change mentalities by information and awareness raising campaigns.”*



**CHESTIONAR – MUNCA COPILULUI**  
**CHILD LABOUR - QUESTIONNAIRE**

**Zona** (inclusiv sectorul): .....

*Area (including the sector)*

**Numele operatorului:** .....

*Operator's name:*

**Data completarii si ora:** .....

*Completion date and time:*

**A. DATE PERSONALE**

**PERSONAL DATA**

**1. Numele copilului:** .....

*The child's name*

**2. Varsta** ..... **Sex:** ( ) Masculin ( ) Feminin

*Age* ..... *Sex:* ( ) Male ( ) Female

**3. Etnia**

.....

*Ethnicity*

**4. Locul nasterii:** ( ) Sat/Comuna ( ) Oras

*Place of birth:* ( ) Village/ Commune ( ) Town

.....

**Judet:** .....

*County*

**5. Domiciliul** (daca corespunde cu locul nasterii nu se mai completeaza):

*Domicile (not to be filled in if it coincides with the place of birth):*

( ) Sat/Comuna ( ) Oras

( ) Village/ Commune ( ) Town

.....

**Judet:** .....

*County*

**6. Daca nu are domiciliul in Bucuresti:**

*If the domicile is not in Bucharest:*

(i) In ce an ai venit in Bucuresti? .....

*What year did you come to Bucharest?*

(ii) De ce ai ales sa vii in Bucuresti?

What did you choose to come to Bucharest?

.....  
.....

## B. NIVEL SCOLAR

### SCHOOL LEVEL

#### 1. Mergi la scoala?

Do you go to school?

1. DA (Treci la intrebarea 2)                      2. NU (Treci la intrebarea 3)  
1. YES (Move on to question no.2)    2. NO (Move on to question no.3)

#### 2. Forma de invatamant:

Form of education:

1. de masa (mass education)                      2. special (special education)  
3. camin spital (hospital - home)                      4. alta forma (other form).....

#### 3. In ce clasa esti?

What grade are you in?

Nici o clasa	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	Sc. prof.	Liceul
--------------	---	----	-----	----	---	----	-----	------	-----------	--------

None

Professional school

Highschool

#### 4. Cate clase ai terminat?

How many grades have you graduated?

Nici o clasa	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	Sc. prof.	Liceul
--------------	---	----	-----	----	---	----	-----	------	-----------	--------

None

Professional school

Highschool

#### 5. S-a intamplat sa lipsesti de la scoala pentru a munci? Sau sa nu-ti faci temele pentru a munci? (posibile exemple)

Did you ever happen to miss school so as to work? Or not do your homework so as to work? (possible examples)

.....  
.....

#### 6. De ce nu te-ai mai dus la scoala (Cum te-ai hotarat sa parasesti scoala)?

Why did you stop going to school (How did you decide to quit school?)

.....  
.....



**7. La ce varsta ai abandonat scoala? .....**

*At what age did you abandon school?*

**8. Ce iti place cel mai mult la scoala (ce ti-a placut cel mai mult) ? Dar cel mai putin?**

*What do you like (or liked) most about school? What did you like least?*

.....  
.....

**9. Ti-ar placea sa te intorci la scoala? De ce? (Pentru cei care au abandonat scoala)**

*Would you like to go back to school? Why? (For those still in school)*

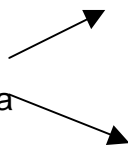
.....  
.....

**10. Stie sa citeasca?**

*Can he/she read?*

1. Nu  
*No.*

2. Da  
*Yes*

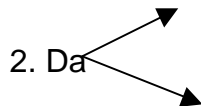


**11. Stie sa scrie?**

*Can he/she write?*

1. Nu

2. Da



**C. FAMILIA**

**THE FAMILY**

**1. Numele parintilor si ocupatia lor (Daca vreunul dintre parinti a decedat, cand?):**

*1. Parents' name and ocupation (If either of the parents is deceased, when?)*

Mama (*Mother*): ..... Ocupatia (*Profession*)  
.....

Tatal (*Father*): ..... Ocupatia  
(*Profession*).....

Alti membri ai familiei (observatii):

*Other family members (notes)*

.....  
.....

**2. Parintii copilului sunt:**

*The child's parents are:*



.....  
.....  
.....

**10. Diverse observatii privind ceilalti membri ai familiei (relatii de atasament, conflicte, etc.):**

**Differents note regarding other family members (attachment relations, conflicts, etc.)**

.....  
.....  
.....

**D. MUNCA**

*LABOUR*

**1. Tipul de munca in care este implicat copilul**

*The type of labour the child is involved in*

.....  
.....

**2. Descrierea locului in care muncesti (descrierea operatorului)**

**Description of the workplace (operator's description)**

.....  
.....

**3. La ce varsta ai inceput sa muncesti? .....**

*At what age did you start working?*

**4. Descrierea locului de munca de catre copil**

*Child's description of the working place*

.....  
.....  
.....

**5. Cate ore pe zi in medie muncesti? Poti sa ne descrii o zi obisnuita de munca?**

*How many hours on average do you work? Can you describe a regular working day?*

.....  
.....

**6. Cand muncesti? Dimineata, seara, noaptea? Si in ce anotimp?**

*When do you work? In the morning, in the evening, at night? In what season?*

.....  
.....

**7. Cate zile pe saptamana muncesti?** .....

*How many days a week do you work?*

**8. Cine este patronul sau seful tau?**

*Who is your employer or your boss?*

.....

**9. Cum te intelegi cu patronul?(I - prost, II - neutru, III - bine)**

*How do you get along with your employer? (I - bad, II - neutral, III - good)*

I	II	III
---	----	-----

Motiv: .....reason.....

.....

**10. Spune-mi cateva cuvinte despre patron**

*Tell me a few words about your employer*

.....  
.....

**11. Ce trebuie sa stii ca sa faci tipul asta de munca (spalatul masinilor, carat marfa, etc.)?**

*What skills does this kind of work require? (washing cars, cleaning merchandise, etc.)*

.....  
.....

**12. Ai muncit si in alta parte? Daca da, unde si de ce a renuntat?**

*Did you work anywhere else? If so, why did you quit?*

.....  
.....

**13. Cat castigi pe zi? (Daca nu e platit cu bani, precizati ce primeste in schimbul muncii lui.)**

*How much do you earn in a day? (If the child is not paid in money, mention what he/she gets for his/her work)*

.....

**14. Cati bani iti raman tie?**

*How much money do you get to keep?*

**15. Cum consideri castigul pe care il realizezi?**

*How do you feel about how much you earn?*

1. Foarte bun *Very good*
2. Bun *Good*
3. Prost *Bad*
4. Foarte prost *Very bad*

**16. Ai si alte resurse? In ce constau si de unde provin?**

*Do you have other resources? What are they and where do they come from?*

.....

.....

**17. Ce cumperi cu banii castigati? Cui ii dai?**

*What do you buy with the money you make? Who do you give the money to?*

.....

.....

**18. Cum te simti dimineata? (Observatii)**

*How do you feel in the morning? (Notes)*

1. Odihnit
2. Neodihnit

.....

.....

**19. De cate ori mananci pe zi? Ce mananci?**

*How many times a day do you eat? What do you eat?*

.....

.....

**20. Iti place munca asta (de ce da, de ce nu)?**

*Do you like this job? (why do you, why don't you)?*

.....

.....

**21. Esti obligat de cineva sa faci munca asta? Daca da, de cine?**

*Does anyone make you do this job? If so, who does?*

.....

.....

**22. Cum ai gasit locul acesta de munca?**

*How did you find this job?*

.....  
.....

**23. Daca ai vrea, ai putea sa-ti schimbi locul de munca (sa renunti sa mai faci munca asta)?**

*If you wanted to, could you change your workplace? (quit this job)*

.....  
.....

**23. Probleme sau abuzuri suferite in timpul muncii:**

*Problems encountered or abuse suffered while working:*

- a. Suprasolicitare (Overworking) Da .....  
Nu.....
- b. Lipsa pauzelor (Lack of breaks) Da ..... Nu.....
- c. Insulte (Insults) Da ..... Nu.....
- d. Lovituri, batai (striking, beatings) Da ..... Nu.....
  
- e. Viol (Rape) Da ..... Nu.....
- f. Accidente (Accidents) Da ..... Nu.....
- g. Imbolnaviri (Illnesses) Da ..... Nu.....

.....

**24. Cui ceri ajutorul cand ai vreuna dintre problemele de mai sus?**

*Who do you turn to in any of the above cases?*

.....  
.....

**25. Ai vazut alti copii care au avut problemele de mai sus cand munceau?**

*Did you see other children being confronted with the above problems while working?*

.....  
.....

**26. Cate ore dormi noaptea? Unde dormi?**

*How many hours a night do you sleep? Where do you sleep?*

.....  
.....

**27. Ce s-ar intampla daca refuzi sa mai muncesti? Dar celorlalti copii?**

*What would happen if you refused working? How about the other children?*

.....  
.....

**28. Primesti ceva in plus daca muncesti bine?**

*Do you get anything extra for doing a good job?*

.....

**29. Ce se intampla daca nu muncesti bine? Dar celorlalti copii?**

*What happens when you don't do a good job? How about the other children?*

.....

**30. Ce se intampla daca nu duci bani acasa?**

*What happens when you don't bring money home?*

.....  
.....

**31. Sunt si alti copii din cartierul/grupul tau care muncesc? Ce fac?**

*Do other children from your neighbourhood/group work? What do they do?*

.....  
.....

**32. Ce iti place cand muncesti pe strada?**

*What do you like about working in the street?*

.....  
.....

**33. Cum iti petreci timpul cand nu muncesti?**

*How do you spend your spare time?*

.....  
.....

**34. Ce crede mama despre faptul ca muncesti?**

*What does your mother think about you working?*

.....  
.....

**35. Ce crede tatal tau despre faptul ca muncesti?**

What does your father think about you working?

.....

### 36. Cum crezi ca este familia ta?

What do you think about your family? It is...

1. Bogata (*rich*)
2. Potrivita (*average*)
3. Saraca (*poor*)

## E. VIITOR

### FUTURE

#### 1. Ce vrei sa te faci cand vei fi mare? De ce?

What do you want to be when you grow up? Why?

.....  
.....

#### 2. Cand vei fi avea familia ta, cine crezi ca te trebuie sa aduca bani acasa? De ce?

When you have a family of your own, who do you think should bring in the money? Why?

.....  
.....

#### 3. (Numai pentru copiii care au un frate mai mic) Ai dori ca fratele/surioara ta mai mic/mica sa munceasca cand vor fi mai mari, asa ca tine?

(For children with younger siblings only) Would you want your younger brother/sister to work when they grow up, like you do?

.....  
.....

#### 4. In viitor, ai dori ca si copiii tai sa munceasca?

In the future, would you want your children to work?

.....  
.....

#### 5. Daca ar aparea o zana care sa-ti indeplineasca trei dorinte, care ar fi acelea?

If a fairy came up to fulfill three of your wishes, what would those wishes be?

.....  
.....



.....  
.....  
.....

**F. VIATA IN STRADA**

**LIFE IN THE STREET**

**1. Unde doarme?**

*Where does the child sleep?*

.....

**2. Consuma aurolac?**

*Does he/she sniff glue?*

1. DA YES

2. NU NO

3. Alte droguri (*Other drugs*) .....

**3. De ce anume te temi cel mai mult?**

*What do you fear most?*

.....

.....

**4. Cum se poarta oamenii de pe strada cu tine?**

*How do people in the street treat you?*

.....

.....

**5. Alte observatii** privind relatiile cu persoanele din zona (grupul, trecatorii, politia, gardienii publicii, vanzatori etc.)

*Other notes regarding the people in the area (the group, the people passing by, the Police, the public guards, the vendors, etc.)*

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

**ALTE OBSERVATII**

*FURTHER NOTES*

**1. Aspect vestimentar** (ingrijit/neingrijit, etc.)

*Clothing (tidy/untidy, etc.)*

.....  
.....  
.....

**2. Comunicare si limbaj** (comunicare facila/greoaie, deficiente de limbaj, prezenta elementelor de jargon, mimica, gestică, etc.)

*Communication and language (easy/difficult communication, language deficits, the use of slang, face and body expression, etc.)*

.....  
.....  
.....

**3. Gandirea** (prezenta sau absenta retardului intelectual, capacitate de abstractizare/generalizare/comparatie, cunoasterea culorilor, dimensiunilor si a notiunilor)

*Thinking (the presence or absence of intellectual retardation, the ability to make abstractions/generalizations/comparisons, the cognition of colours, dimensions and notions, etc.)*

.....  
.....  
.....

**4. Afectivitate si structura de personalitate** (prezenta/absenta unei figuri de atasament, emotivitate, anxietate, fobii, tulburari de comportament – minciuna, absenteism scolar, evaziune familiala, etc.); Sistemul de valori – familia, libertatea, prietenia, banii, profesia, etc.)

*Affectivity and structure of personality (presence or absence of affectivity figures, anxiety, phobias, behaviour disorders - lying, school absenteeism, family evasion, etc.); the system of values - family, freedom, friendship, money, profession, etc.)*

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**CHESTIONAR FAMILIE  
FAMILY QUESTIONNAIRE**

**Zona** (inclusiv sectorul):...

.....  
*Area (including the sector)*

**Numele operatorului:** .....

*Operator's name*

**Data completarii:** .....

*Completion date*

**A. DATE DESPRE FAMILIE**

**FAMILY DATA**

1. **Numele parintilor si ocupatia lor** (Daca vreunul dintre parinti a decedat, cand?):  
*Parents' name and ocupation (If one of the parents is deceased, the date of the decease)*

Mama: .....

**Mother**

Ocupatia si locul de munca .....

*Ocupation and workplace*

.....

Tatal: .....

**Father**

Ocupatia si locul de munca .....

*Ocupation and workplace*

.....

2. **Cu cine locuieste copilul?**

*Who does the child live with?*

.....

3. **Structura familiei**

**Family structure**

8. Ambii parinti in viata (*both parents are alive*)

9. Tata traieste/Mama decedata (*father alive/mother deceased*)

10. Mama traieste/Tatal decedat (*mother alive/father deceased*)

11. Ambii parinti decedati (*both parents are deceased*)

12. Mama biologica/tatal vitreg (*biological mother/stepfather*)

13. Tatal biologic/mama vitrega (*biological father/stepmother*)

14. Unul din parinti in detentie (motivul) .....

*One of the parents is imprisoned (why)*



*Did you think of going to another town? If so, where and why?*

.....  
.....

### 5. Nu e cazul

Not the case

## C. ATITUDINEA PARINTILOR FATA DE MUNCA COPILULUI

### THE PARENTS ATTITUDE TOWARDS CHILD LABOUR

#### 1. Cum ati descrie relatia dvs. cu copilul/copiii (I - proasta, II - neutra, III - buna):

*How would you describe your relation to your child/children (I - bad, II - neutral, III - good)*

Mama:

Mother:

I	II	III
---	----	-----

Explicatii:

(Explanations).....

.....

Tatal:

Father:

I	II	III
---	----	-----

Explicatii:

(Explanations).....

.....

#### 2. Cum a/au inceput copilul/copiii dvs. sa munceasca? (motive, justificari)

*When did your child/children start working? (motives, justifications)*

.....

.....

#### 3. Dupa parerea dvs., exista avantaje ale trimiterii copilului/copiilor dvs la munca?

*In your opinion, are there any advantages in sending your child/children to work?*

Pentru dvs.: .....

For you

.....

Pentru copil: .....

For the child

.....

#### 4. Dupa parerea dvs., exista dezavantaje ale trimiterii copilului/copiilor la munca?

*In your opinion, are there any disadvantages in sending your child/children to work?*

Pentru dvs.: .....

For you

.....

Pentru copil: .....

*For the child*

.....

**5. Cum apreciati faptul ca copilul dvs. munceste?**

*How do you feel about the fact that your child is working?*

1. Foarte bun (*Very good*)
2. Bun (*Good*)
3. Nici bun nici rau (*Not good, nor bad*)
4. Rau (*Bad*)
5. Foarte rau (*Very bad*)

**6. (Numai pentru familiile cu copii mici) V-ati gandit sa-i trimiteti si pe cei mici la munca in viitor? Daca da, de ce? Daca nu, de ce?**

*(For families with small children only) Have you thought of sending the younger children to work in the future? If so, why? If not, Why?*

Pentru dvs.: .....

*For you*

.....

Pentru copil: .....

*For the child*

.....

**7. Ce suma aproximativa aduce copilul dvs. acasa intr-o zi obisnuita?**

*Approximately what amount of money does your child bring home in an ordinary day?*

.....

**8. Cand copilul ajunge acasa dupa orele de munca, cui ii da banii?**

*When your child gets home from work, who does he/she give the money to?*

.....

.....

**9. Ce vreti ca fiul/fiica dvs. sa ajunga cand va fi mare?**

*What do you want your son/daughter to be when he/she grows up?*

.....

.....

**10. Cand ati fost copil, ati prestat aceeasi munca ca cea efectuata de copilul/copiii dvs.?**

*When you were a child, did you do the same kind of work as your child/children?*

.....

.....

**11. Cam de cati bani ati avea nevoie in medie pentru ca copilul dvs. sa nu mai munceasca (eventual precizati activitatea)?**







**8. Cuantumul in lei al veniturilor**

1. pana la 500.000 lei  
*(under 500. 000 lei – 17 \$)*  
– 33\$)

2. intre 500.000 si 1.000.000 lei  
*(between 500.000 and 1.000.000 lei*

3. intre 1.000.001 si 2.000.000 lei  
.....  
*(between 1.000.001 and 2.000.000 lei – 66\$)*

4. peste 2.000.000 lei  
*(over 2.000.000 lei – 66\$)*

**9. Cuantumul in lei al veniturilor**

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**F. OBSERVATIILE SI IMPRESIILE CERCETATORULUI**  
*RESEARCHER'S NOTES AND IMPRESSIONS*

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