

SPECIAL RELEASE

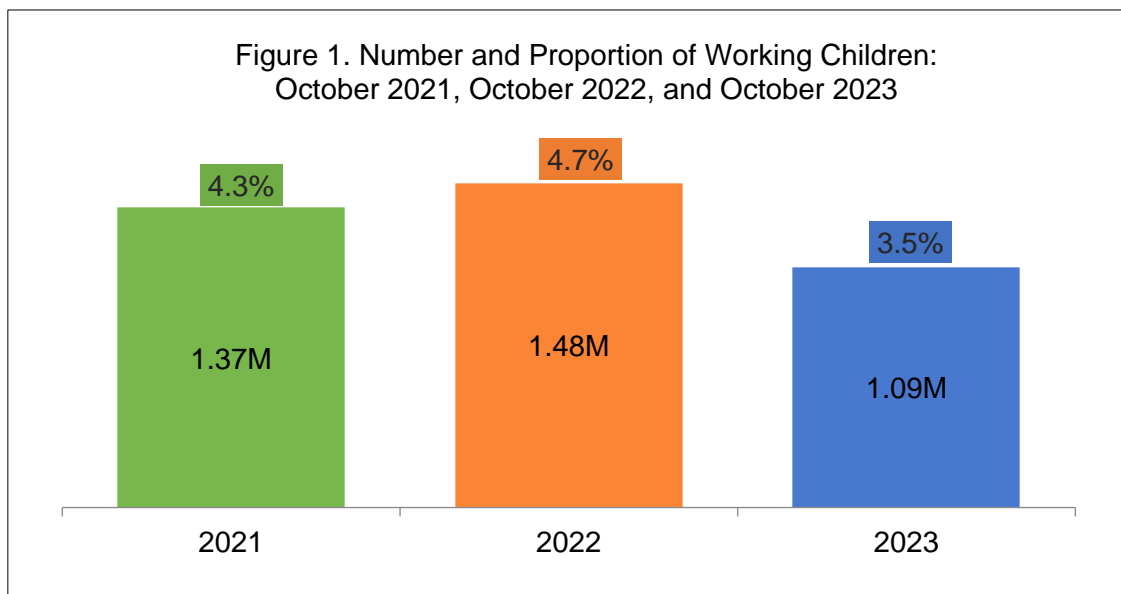
Working Children Situation

Date of Release: 20 November 2024

Reference No. 2024-355

1. Proportion of Working Children 5 to 17 Years Old was Estimated at 3.5 Percent

The number of working children 5 to 17 years old was estimated at 1.09 million in 2023, a decrease of 383 thousand from the estimated 1.48 million working children in 2022. In 2021, the number of working children 5 to 17 years old was recorded at 1.37 million. In terms of proportion or share of working children to the population of children 5 to 17 years old, it declined to 3.5 percent in 2023 from 4.7 percent in 2022. In 2021, the proportion of working children 5 to 17 years old was estimated at 4.3 percent. (Table A and Figure 1)



M - million

Source: Philippine Statistics Authority, October 2021, October 2022, and October 2023 Labor Force Survey

In 2023, out of the 1.10 million working children, boys comprised 647 thousand or 59.1 percent, while girls made up 447 thousand or 40.9 percent. Similarly, more than half of the working children were boys in 2022 (58.7%) and in 2021 (62.8%).

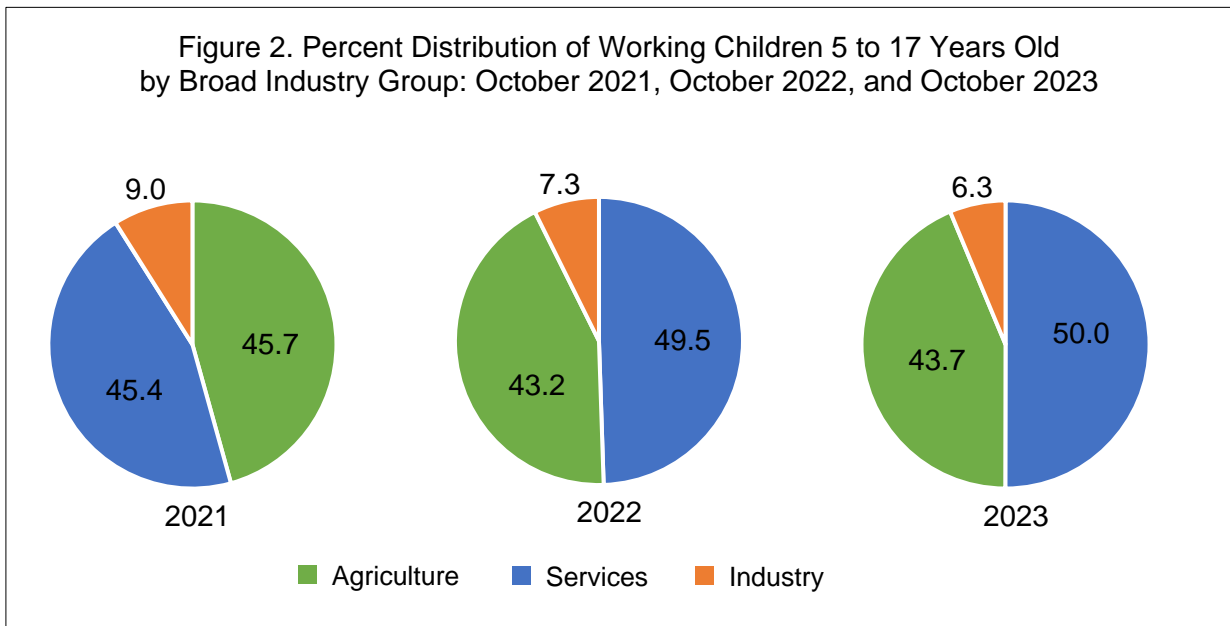
By age group, older children were more likely to work than the younger ones as majority or 72.5 percent of the total working children in 2023 were 15 to 17 years old. The percentage of working children for the same age group was higher in 2023 compared to the corresponding percentage of working children in 2022 at 59.7 percent and in 2021 at 63.8 percent. (Table A)

2. Services Sector Had the Largest Share of Working Children

By broad industry group, the services sector emerged as the primary employment hub for working children, accounting for 50.0 percent of the total working children in 2023. In 2022 and 2021, the percent share of services to total working children were lower at 49.5 percent and 45.4 percent, respectively.

On the other hand, the proportion of working children in the agriculture sector was recorded at 43.7 percent in 2023, while 43.2 percent in 2022. The agriculture sector had the largest share of working children in 2021 at 45.7 percent.

The industry sector continued to have the lowest share of working children at 6.3 percent in 2023, 7.3 percent in 2022, and 9.0 percent in 2021. (Table A and Figure 2)



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

Source: Philippine Statistics Authority, October 2021, October 2022, and October 2023 Labor Force Survey

3. Majority of the Working Children Worked 20 Hours or Less per Week

Majority or 73.7 percent of working children reported to have worked 20 hours or less per week in 2023. The proportions of children who worked 20 hours or less per week in 2022 and 2021 were reported at 75.6 percent and 55.9 percent, respectively. Meanwhile, the proportion of children who worked 21 to 40 hours per week increased to 16.4 percent in 2023 from 15.7 percent in 2022. (Table A)

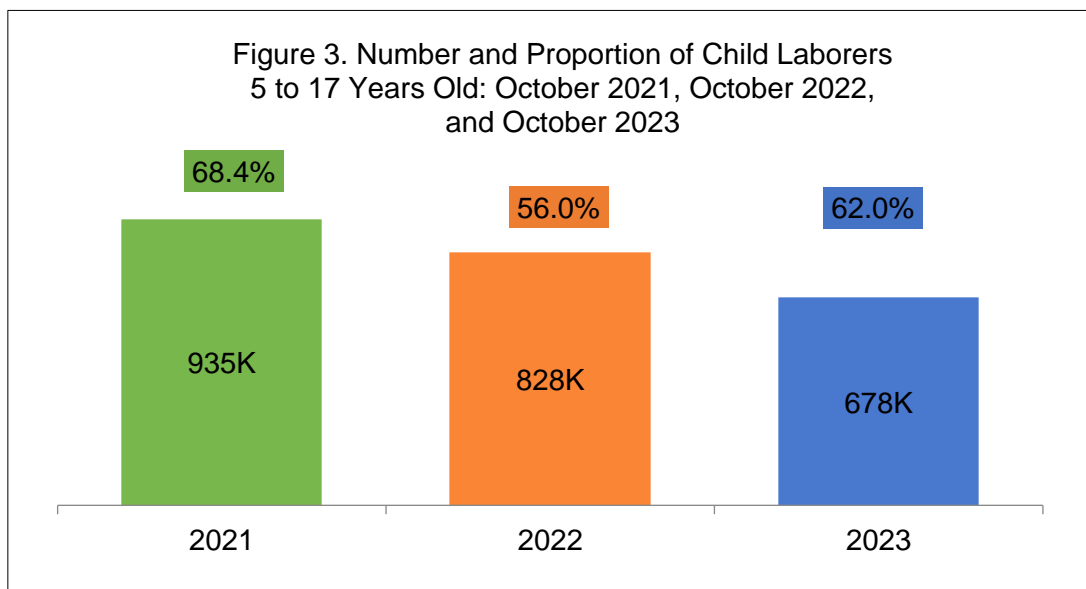
4. Child Laborers in the Country Decreased in 2023

Child labor refers to working children who were engaged in the following activities:

- (i) Hazardous Work (Hazardous Child Labor) or activities which are likely to be harmful to the health, safety or morals of children (as identified in the Department of Labor and Employment Department Order No. 149, Series of 2016 – Guidelines in Assessing and Determining Hazardous Work in the Employment of Persons Below 18 years of Age);
- (ii) Work by children below 15 years of age that is more than 20 hours a week or more than four hours at any given day or between eight o'clock in the evening and six o'clock in the morning of the following day (Sec. 12-A, paragraphs (1 and 3) of RA No. 9231); and
- (iii) Work by children 15 to 17 years of age that exceeds 40 hours a week or more than eight hours a day or between 10 o'clock in the evening and six o'clock in the morning of the following day (Sec. 12-A, paragraphs (2 and 3) of RA No. 9231).

The total number of working children who were engaged in child labor was estimated at 678 thousand in 2023. This was lower than the reported number of working children who were engaged in child labor in 2022 at 828 thousand and in 2021 at 935 thousand. (Table B)

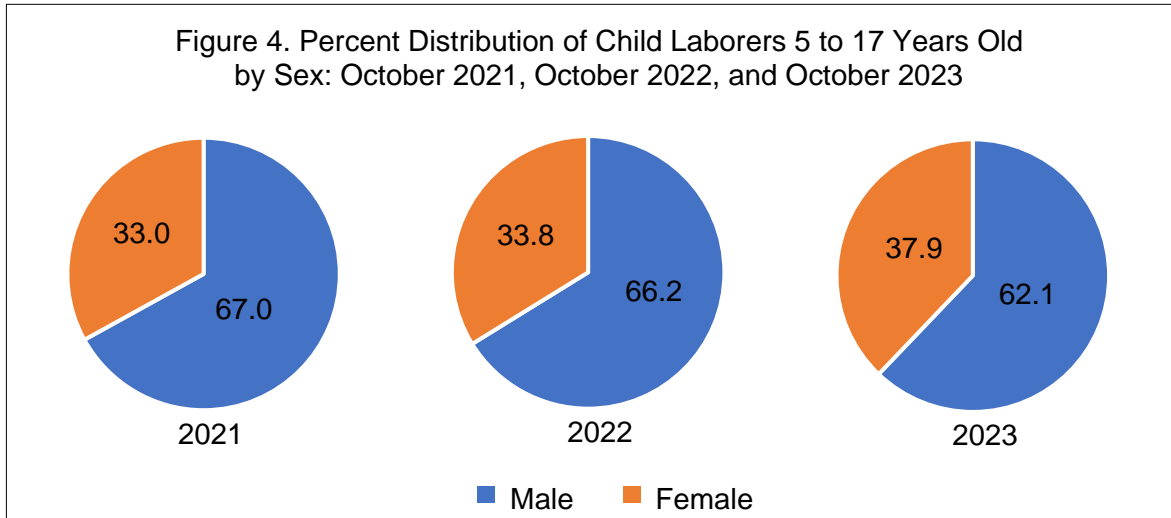
In terms of proportion, 62.0 percent of the total number of working children in 2023 were engaged in child labor. This was higher than the estimated proportion of working children who were engaged in child labor in 2022 at 56.0 percent but lower than the proportion of working children who were engaged in child labor in 2021 at 68.4 percent. (Table B and Figure 3)



K - thousand

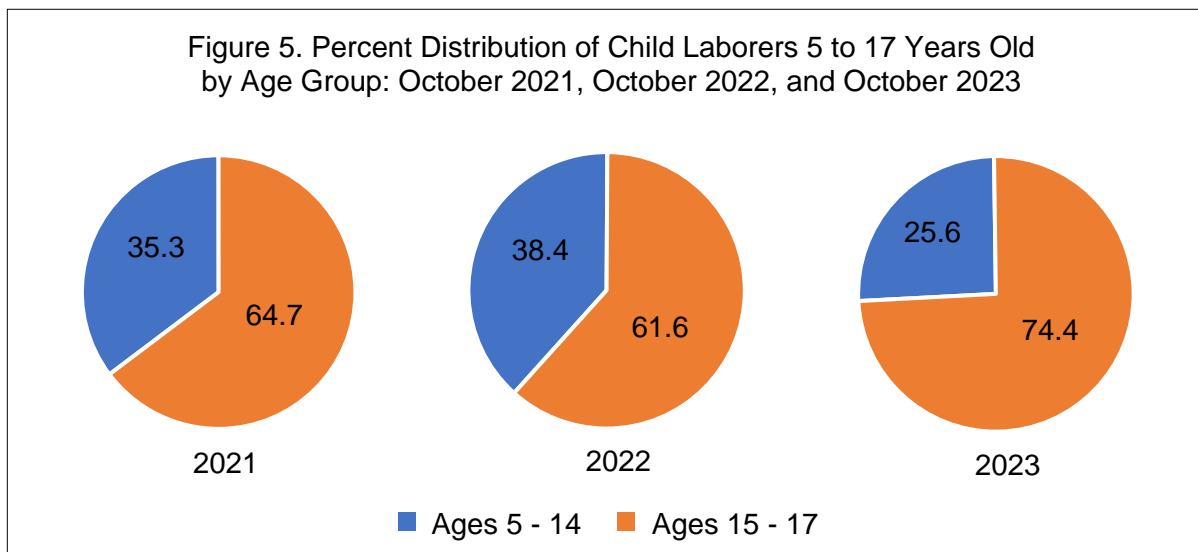
Source: Philippine Statistics Authority, October 2021, October 2022, and October 2023 Labor Force Survey

By sex, 422 thousand or 62.1 percent of the estimated 678 thousand working children engaged in child labor in 2023 were boys, while 257 thousand or 37.9 percent were girls. (Table B and Figure 4)



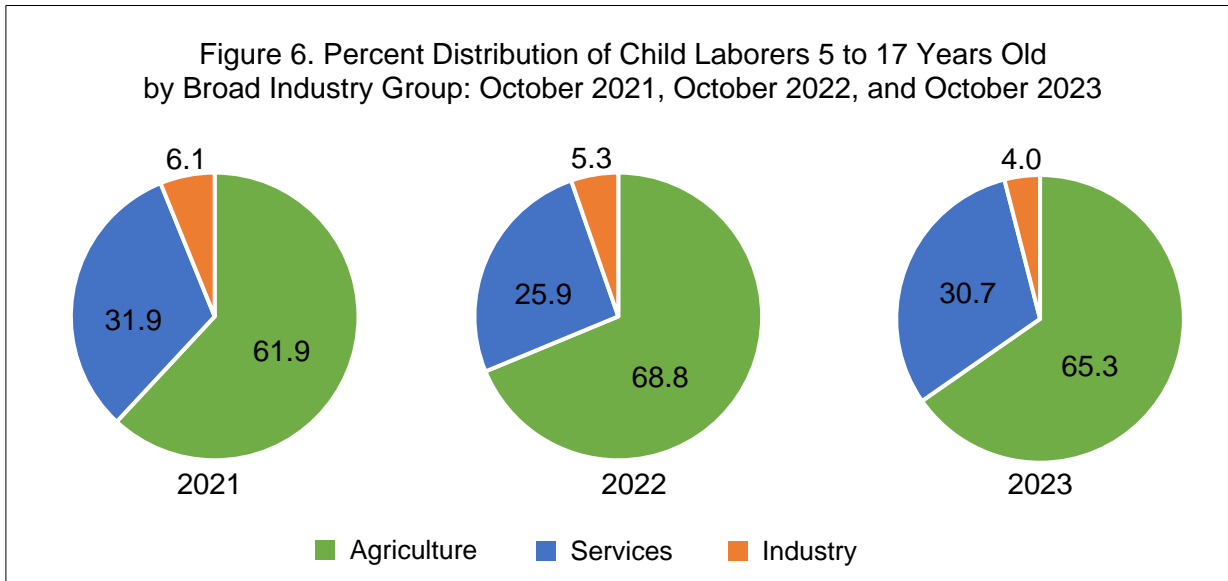
Source: Philippine Statistics Authority, October 2021, October 2022, and October 2023 Labor Force Survey

Across age groups, child laborers 15 to 17 years old continued to account for the largest share of working children engaged in child labor at 74.4 percent in 2023. This was higher than the share of child laborers 15 to 17 years old reported in 2022 at 61.6 percent and in 2021 at 64.7 percent. (Table B and Figure 5)



Source: Philippine Statistics Authority, October 2021, October 2022, and October 2023 Labor Force Survey

By broad industry group, the agriculture sector continued to account for the largest share of child laborers at 65.3 percent in 2023, followed by the services sector with 30.7 percent share and the industry sector with 4.0 percent share. (Table B and Figure 6)



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

Source: Philippine Statistics Authority, October 2021, October 2022, and October 2023 Labor Force Survey

CLAIRE DENNIS S. MAPA, PhD
Undersecretary
National Statistician and Civil Registrar General

DGLDP/AAC/MCLDL