



## Vatican report says 800 million children exploited

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More than 800 million children around the world are victims of malnutrition, disease, trafficking and other forms of economic and social exploitation, an annual Vatican report said.

Catholic News Service reports that it listed among the more worrisome trends, the more than 200 million child labourers between 5 and 14 years of age, and the increase in street children on several continents.

Millions more children are forced into armed conflict or prostitution. In many countries, births are unregistered, leaving those children open to a lifetime of exploitation, it said.

"They are the scandal of our time. For 860 million children of the world, the future is an unknown and the present is a nightmare that lies on the consciences of adults," said the report, issued last week by Fides, the Vatican missionary news agency.

The report said that among the estimated 211 million child labourers about 171 million work in hazardous environments -- operating dangerous machinery, handling toxic materials or spending hours in poorly ventilated mines, for example.

At the origin of many forms of child exploitation is the fact that, according to UNICEF, more than 50 million children born each year, mostly in Africa and Asia, are never registered. They become, in effect, clandestine in their homelands, unknown to their own governments, the report said.

The Vatican report said that among the estimated 120 million street children about half live in South America, and some 30 million live in Asia. It said the street children population was increasing, particularly in the major cities of Eastern Europe.

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### Marist representation in this field:



United Nations, Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) based in Geneva  
BIS represents all Marists at this council and makes representations on the Convention on Rights of the Child with particular emphasis on Children at Risk

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