



Child labour

In Europe, kids can work during the school holidays or at weekends. They can do jobs which don't interfere with their schoolwork or their health. The law says how many hours they can work and what kind of jobs they can do. When we speak about child labour, however, we mean something different.

Child labour means that kids are working illegally, often in terrible conditions. Children and teenagers who work can't go to school and they are often sick. These children are usually very poor. 60% of them work in agriculture. They gather bananas, cotton, flowers, cocoa, tea and vegetables. They get very little pay and inadequate food and water. They work long hours in extreme temperatures and they are often in contact with pesticides. Children who work in rice fields have their feet in water all day and there is the problem of insects, animals and bacteria. About 14 million children work long hours in dark, dusty, hot factories making things like clothes, shoes and footballs. Other kids do very dangerous jobs such as making fireworks or preparing explosives in mines.

gather: raccolgono dusty: polverose mines: miniere

CITIZEN ZONE Children's rights

British children today must go to school from ages 5 until 16. When they are 13 they can do some part-time work but there are laws to protect them. They can't do dangerous jobs and they can't work for more than 12 hours a week. Do you know what age you can work in Italy?



Children in an outdoor factory