

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF JUDGES

The Fourth Study Commission - Abidjan 28 -31 October 2002

SWEDEN

WORKING CONDITIONS OF CHILDREN

1. *Has your country provided for a legislation or protective measures concerning children at work?*

In the affirmative, specify the purpose and main lines, particularly:

- *minimum age for employment*
- *differences in rights based on age*
- *special working conditions for children*

In Sweden the Work Environment Act (SFS 1977:1160) safeguards the protection of children and young persons at work and, for the purpose of the act, a minor is a person under the age of 18 years.

In general this is nowadays not a big problem in Sweden though to the fact that we in Sweden have nine years compulsory schooling and almost universal upper secondary schooling. The stipulations on the employment of minors are in spite of that an important part of the work environment legislation.

A minor may not - according to chapter 5, section 2 in the act - be employed before the calendar year in which he (or she) is 16 and the minor must have completed the compulsory schooling. These regulations apply both to a minor with employee status and to a minor working as an entrepreneur or in a family business. However, a minor aged 13 or over may do light work that is not harmful to his health, development or schooling.

A minor may not be used for work, which in any way entails a risk for accidents or any other harmful effect on the minor's health or development. In order to avoid such risks the Government or The Work Environment Authority may issue provisions concerning conditions for or the prohibition of a minor being used for risky jobs.

In spite of what is mentioned above the Work Environment Authority can issue provisions making further exceptions to the 13-year rule, but only for very light work which would otherwise involve major problems of implementation.

2. *What are the sanctions (applied or applicable) in case of breach of children's right at work?*

Any recent cases in your country on violation of children's right at work?

The Work Environment Act defines direct penal sanctions for a number of cases. Chapter 8, section 2 stipulates that a fine may be imposed on persons intentionally or negligently employing a minor in contravention of chapter 5, section 2 or of provisions issued pursuant to chapter 5, section 2.

3. Specify, if need be, the concrete measures likely to improve the conditions of children at work in your country.

There is no need for improvements.

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