Factsheet: Laos
Last update: 24 October 2014

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DEFINITION OF YOUTH

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CANDIDACY AGE

Lower House
Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union
21

Upper House
Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union
Unicameral.

MARRIAGEABLE AGE

Opposite Sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Without Parental Consent</th>
<th>With Parental Consent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No specific legislation for same-sex marriage. Homosexual acts are legal. Source: UNSD, ILGA

VOTING AGE

18
Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union

MAJORITY AGE

18

CRIMINAL RESPONSIBILITY

15

SITUATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT INDEX

0.42
137 out of 170 countries.
Year: 2013
Source: Commonwealth Youth Programme

LITERACY RATES

90.23%
Both sexes (15-24) %
93.10% Male (15-24) %
87.28% Female (15-24) %
Year: 2015
Source: UNESCO

NET ENROLMENT RATE

Secondary School
41.37%
Both sexes %
42.96% Male %
39.71% Female %
Year: 2012
Source: UNESCO

SITUATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE

PREVALENCE OF HIV

0.1%
Male (15-24) %

0.1%
Female (15-24) %
Year: 2013
Source: World Bank

TOBACCO USE

Consumed any smokeless or smoking tobacco product at least once 30 days prior to the survey.

5.70%
Both sexes (13-15) %
7.80% Male (13-15) %
3.90% Female (13-15) %
Year: 2010
Source: WHO

POLICY & LEGISLATION

For some time now, information on youth policies in Laos and their impact, and more fundamentally on the situation of young people more generally, was scattered and outdated. UNFPA confirms the lack of data by stating in its country programme for Laos for 2012-2015 that there is “no comprehensive situation analysis on adolescents and youth.” They seek to respond to this deficit by providing “financial and technical assistance to conduct a comprehensive situation analysis on adolescents and young people” in the country. A first planning workshop for the study was held in March 2013.

Is there a national youth policy?

NO

Laos has no national youth policy. A comprehensive youth analysis is currently being conducted.

PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

What is the budget allocated to the governmental authority (ministry, department or office) that is primarily responsible for youth and/or...
There is no separate youth ministry in Laos, but rather “the responsibility of [Lao People’s Revolutionary Youth Union (LYU)] is similar to Ministry of Youth and Sport existing in other countries”, as stated in a 2012 document, authored by the Lao People’s Revolutionary Youth Union (LYU) and addressed to the Human Rights Council Secretariat of the United Nations regarding Cuba’s Universal Periodic Review. See the section on Youth & Representation below for more information about LYU.

**YOUTH AND REPRESENTATION**

The main youth organisation of the country is the Lao People’s Revolutionary Youth Union (LYU), the youth wing of the Communist Party governing the country. In 2005, then-Deputy Chief of LYU’s Cabinet claimed the organisation had 273,000 members and introduced the organisation’s two main objectives: i) to mobilize youth solidarity in implementing the goals of the Party; ii) to contribute to the construction and expansion of the People’s Democratic Regime, aiming to create peace, independence, democracy, unity and prosperity.

**BUDGET & SPENDING**

No documentation on youth spending in Laos could be found online. According to the World Bank, Laos spent 13.19% of its government expenditure and 3.31% of its GDP on education provision in 2010.

**TOTAL EXPENDITURE ON EDUCATION AS A PERCENTAGE OF GOVERNMENT SPENDING AND GDP**

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**TOTAL EXPENDITURE ON EDUCATION AS A PERCENTAGE OF GOVERNMENT SPENDING AND GDP**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>% of GDP</th>
<th>% of govt expenditure</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td></td>
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Source: World Bank
Gaps indicate missing data from the original data source. (Accessed August 2013).

**PUBLICATIONS AND REVIEWS**

Visit our library for further reading:
Documents about Laos.