

MINIMUM LIVING WAGES AND COLLECTIVE BARGAINING FOR DECENT LIVELIHOODS AND FAIR PAY

Despite unprecedented economic growth over the last decades, wages have stagnated globally and have not kept pace compared to rising productivity, nor unprecedented economic growth. Millions of workers across the world are not earning enough to live in dignity. Wage inequality is also increasing, with the highest-wage earners enjoying a wage rise multiple times faster than the average. The share of labour income in GDP is declining, and profits are not being shared with workers through pay rises.

Unions are campaigning in Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America to demand fair and decent wages. They are calling on their governments to set minimum living wages, based on evidence on the cost of living and with the full involvement of social partners. Obstacles to freedom of association must also be effectively addressed. Collective bargaining on wages should be promoted, and agreements should have wide coverage and be enforced by law.

Unions are moreover demanding that adequate, comprehensive social protection systems – in line with ILO Convention 102 and Recommendation 202 – be put in place in order to guarantee income security for workers and their families as part of a comprehensive strategy of reducing inequality and promoting adequate living standards for all.

- » 300 million workers in emerging and developing countries earn less than US\$1.90 per day (ILO World Employment and Social Outlook)
- » A further 430 million workers in emerging and developing countries earn between US\$1.90 and US\$3.10 per day (ILO World Employment and Social Outlook)
- » 83% of people believe that the minimum wage is not enough to live on (2017 ITUC Global Poll)
- » Global real wage growth is falling behind economic growth with a growth rate of only 1.6 per cent in 2017, the lowest since 2008. (ILO World Employment and Social Outlook)