

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION

ITUC poll highlights wage stress and inequality in G20 countries

Brussels, 10 November 2011 (ITUC OnLine): More than eight in ten workers believe that receiving just an extra US\$100 a month would have an impact on their household's standard of living, highlighting the growing problems of inequality worldwide, the latest ITUC Frontlines poll reveals.

More than a quarter of those surveyed in the second International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) wages poll said it would have a big impact on theirs and their family's living standards, in a worrying trend for labour's falling income share.

The poll from seven G20 countries representing more than 50 per cent of the world's GDP – including China, France, Germany, India, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States – was further proof for the G20 to support measures to raise low and middle incomes, ITUC General Secretary Sharan Burrow said.

“Let's be realistic, the equivalent of an extra \$100 a month is not a significant amount in regards to median annual incomes across G20 countries, yet an overwhelming number of working families across the world say this would have an impact on their living standards.

“This proves just how inequality is now a global risk for economies worldwide with the income share of labour falling to dangerous levels – issues that labour ministers from the G20 have agreed to address with social protections, minimum wages and collective bargaining,” Ms Burrow said.

“G20 leaders must now demonstrate they understand that the wealth generated by workers must be shared if economies are to function and economic justice is to be realised,” said John Evans, General Secretary TUAC.

Key findings of the Frontlines Poll included:

- Across the seven G20 countries 82% stated that a \$100/month wage increase (or local equivalent) would have an impact on household's standard of living.
- More than a quarter said that an increase would have a 'big impact' on their or their family's living standards.
- Respondents in the UK were the most likely to predict a 'big impact'.
- Those in India, the USA and Turkey had large majorities that thought an increase would have some impact.
- Across the G20 countries almost one quarter of respondents indicated that the increase would make a big impact on their standard of living.
- Tellingly results from the UK and the US showed high levels of both 'big impact' and 'no impact' responses, pointing to widening wealth gaps.

- The seven G20 countries polled represent 50.5% of the world's total GDP, according to UN figures.

The latest results were part of the second wave of the ITUC's Frontline Poll into global wages. A similar survey last year found that for 53 per cent of the world's population family income had fallen behind the cost of living.

Earlier this year the ITUC conducted further research with people from nine countries that make up at least half of the world's GDP. More than half of these respondents reported that their household finances were either getting worse or staying the same.

Ms Burrow said the Labour 20 (L20), the group of trade unions representing the interests of workers at the G20 level, is calling on leaders at the G20 summit to abandon work inclusively with workers to strengthen economies worldwide.

“Austerity as an experiment has failed and it has left a legacy of low wages and a falling income share for labour in economies worldwide.

“We are calling on the G20 to support investment, skills and innovation, greater public services and more progressive tax and distributive systems. Low and middle incomes can be raised and purchasing power improved through ensuring living minimum wages and reducing income inequality and precarious work.

“These measures must be coupled with setting targets for public infrastructure and linking investment plans to the creation of clean energy and green jobs.”

The L20 will discuss a range of topics at its annual summit of 60 trade union leaders at Antalya, Turkey this weekend. Discussions include: dialogue with business and civil society; why the global refugee crisis is a G20 issue; inequality and income share; and, quality jobs worldwide.

ENDS

Read the full ITUC Frontlines Poll on wages : <http://www.ituc-csi.org/ituc-frontlines-poll-2015-special>

Read the L20 recommendations to G20 Summit:

English: <http://www.ituc-csi.org/l20-priority-recommendations-g20>

Spanish: <http://www.ituc-csi.org/prioritarias-del-l20-reunion-de>

French: <http://www.ituc-csi.org/principales-recommandations-du-l20>

The L20 Summit takes place Friday 13 and Saturday 14 November at Limak Atlantis Hotel, Belek-Antalya for media access contact Gemma Swart gemma.swart@ituc-csi.org [+32 479 06 41 63](tel:+32479064163)

Question: If you were to receive a 100 dollars a month pay rise, how much of an impact would this have on you and your family's standard of living: a big impact, some impact, no impact at all, don't know

Country Big impact Some impact Monthly Increase Figure

China 11% 63% 650 yuan

Germany 14% 54% 90 euro

France 14% 62% 90 euro

Turkey 27% 61% 300 liras

USA 28% 50% 100 dollars

India 30% 59% 6,600 rupees

UK 31% 51% 65 pounds

TNS Opinion carried out the fieldwork between the 1st and the 8th of October, 2015. In each of the 6 countries, approximately n=1000 respondents were interviewed.

The sample in each country has been selected by quotas to reflect national proportions in regards to age, gender and region.

For more information contact gemma.swart@ituc-csi.org [+32 479 06 41 63](tel:+32479064163)

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