

Colombia

Overview

Commodities

Dashboard

Context

Wages

What's happening

39%

Population below international poverty line

€257

per month

National minimum wage

€372

per month

Rural living wage

16%

Agricultural workforce

7%

Agriculture share of GDP

5

very high

Risk to workers' rights

Context

Colombia has a population of almost 52 million people,^[1] with 18% of the population living in rural areas^[2] and the remaining 82% living in urban areas^[3]. Agriculture, forestry and fishing make up just over 7% of the country's GDP^[4], with 16% of the total workforce employed in the agricultural sector.^[5]

It is estimated that there are 2.7 million farmers in rural Colombia and that approximately 45% of them, mostly small and medium farmers, live in poverty. A large majority of small farms not only function as subsistence farms, but also play an important role in Colombia's total national agricultural output.^[6] Many small farms in Colombia are located in the countryside, which contributes to low technology transfer and limited access to market. Coupled with long-lasting armed conflict, these barriers have made the development of a sustainable and competitive agricultural sector a key focus in reinforcing food security in Colombia for many years.^[6]

The top produced commodities in Colombia are sugar cane, fresh cow milk, palm oil fruit, potatoes and rice.^[7] Colombia's top export products in terms of quantity are bananas, green coffee, palm oil, refined sugar and raw sugar.^[8]

Wages

Minimum wage

The minimum wage in Colombia is 1,300,606 Colombian Pesos (258 EUR) per month, including a transport allowance of 140,606 (28 EUR).^[9] By law, the maximum duration of a normal working day is 8 hrs a day or 48 hrs a week. For those working less than normal working hours, minimum wage will apply in proportion to number of hrs actually worked.

The **Global Living Wage Coalition** has developed 2 Living Wage benchmarks for Colombia based on the Anker methodology, one for the Caribbean coast of Colombia, focusing in banana producers, and another for rural areas and small towns of Colombia, looking at coffee-growin areas.

Living wage

In the Caribbean coast of Colombia, the estimated living wage is 1,823,372 Colombian Pesos (372 EUR) per month for a family of 4 with roughly 1.6 workers.^[10] This benchmark is focussed on banana growing, coastal regions of Northern Colombia. Many banana workers currently receive a living wage, or close to it, especially unionized workers covered by collective bargaining agreements. Since bananas are harvested year-round, providing consistent workloads, most of the workers have indefinite contracts and high job security. Even so, it is important to pay attention to the payment system. Workers are not paid for the time worked but for the task completed which can lead to significant fluctuations in daily wages.^[11]

The estimated living wage for typical rural areas and small towns of Central Colombia is 1,910,165 Colombian Pesos (378 EUR) per month for a family of 4 with 1.54 workers.^[12] The study took place in the top two coffee producing departments of Colombia (Huila and Antioquia), in the municipalities located around La Plata and Salgar. Colombia is one of the main producers of coffee in the world. Currently, it is the world's third largest producer, producing 833,400 tons of coffee in 2020 and exporting 751,619 tons, worth a total of USD 2,655 million.^[13]

What's happening

RESOURCE

[Update 2022 Living Wage Benchmark, Caribbean coast of Colombia](#)

Update of the living wage estimate for the Caribbean coast of Colombia, focussing on banana farmers. Global Living Wage Coalition, 2022.

RESOURCE

[Gender Pay Gaps in the Colombia Banana Export Sector](#)

The **Anker Research Institute's** Gender Pay Gap study in the Colombian banana sector is the first of five to pilot the Institute's **methodology for measuring gender pay gaps at the workplace level**.

RESOURCE

[Update 2021 Living Wage Benchmark, Caribbean coast of Colombia](#)

Update of the living wage estimate for the Caribbean coast of Colombia, focussing on banana farmers. Global Living Wage Coalition, 2021.

RESOURCE

[Fairtrade Living Income Reference Prices for Coffee from Colombia](#)

A Fairtrade Living Income Reference Price (LIRP) indicates the price needed for an average farmer household with a viable farm size and an adequate productivity level to make a living income from the sales of their crop. This study was done in 2019.

RESOURCE

Task Force for Coffee Living Income



Framework for measuring the living income gap with a focus on Colombian coffee producers to assess effective sourcing and pricing practices to close the gap. IDH, 2019.

RESOURCE

Tracking living and minimum wages in the banana sector



A report commissioned by the World Banana Forum in May 2015 with information for 9 banana producing countries.

RESOURCE

Living Wage Benchmark, Caribbean coast of Colombia



Living wage estimate for the Caribbean coast of Colombia, focussing on banana farmers. Global Living Wage Coalition, 2020.

Footnotes

1. World Bank. (2021). <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL?locations=CO>
2. World Bank. (2021). <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.RUR.TOTL.ZS?locations=CO>
3. World Bank. (2021). <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.URB.TOTL.IN.ZS?locations=CO>
4. World Bank. (2021). <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NV.AGR.TOTL.ZS?locations=CO>
5. World Bank. (2021). <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.AGR.EMPL.ZS?locations=CO>
6. CGIAR. (2018). Boosting Agriculture as Key to Lasting Peace in Colombia. <https://ciat.cgiar.org/annual-report-2017-2018/boosting-agriculture-as-key-to-lasting-peace-in-colombia/>
7. FAOSTAT (2019). http://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#rankings/commodities_by_country
8. FAOSTAT (2019). http://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#rankings/commodities_by_country_exports
9. WageIndicator Foundation. (2023). <https://wageindicator.org/salary/minimum-wage/colombia>
10. Global Living Wage Coalition. (2022) Living Wage for the Caribbean Coast of Colombia <https://www.globallivingwage.org/countries/colombia/>
11. World Bank. (2017). Colombian rural women are building peace. <https://blogs.worldbank.org/latinamerica/colombian-rural-women-are-building-peace>
12. Global Living Wage Coalition. (2022) Rural areas and Small towns of Colombia. <https://www.globallivingwage.org/living-wage-benchmarks/living-wage-for-rural-areas-small-towns-colombia/>
13. Global Living Wage Coalition. (2021) Rural areas and Small towns of Colombia. <https://www.globallivingwage.org/countries/colombia/> https://www.globallivingwage.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Benchmark_LIVING-INCOME-AND-LIVING-WAGE-REPORT-RURAL-AREAS-AND-SMALL-TOWNS-OF-CENTRAL-COLOMBIA-2.pdf