

# Congo, Republic

## Overview

### Commodities

Dashboard

Context

Wages

What's happening

59%

Population below international poverty line

€183

per month

National minimum wage

€165

per month

Rural living wage

33%

Agricultural workforce

8%

Agriculture share of GDP

0

Risk to workers' rights

## Context

The Republic of Congo has a small population of 5,835,806 million people<sup>[1]</sup>. The country is mostly urbanised, with 68% of the population living in urban areas,<sup>[2]</sup> and 32% concentrated in rural areas<sup>[3]</sup>. Agriculture, however, is an important source of employment for the country, accounting for 36% of the workforce.<sup>[4]</sup> The sector represents 9.5% of the national GDP<sup>[5]</sup>.

The Republic of Congo derives most of its GDP, exports and state revenue from the oil sector. This is behind the rapid urbanisation of the country, whose two largest cities, Brazzaville and Pointe-Noire, are home to more than half the population. The Republic of Congo, however, is still largely covered in tropical forests and has almost a third of its land as arable land. In the latter, poverty is a reminiscent problem: the national poverty rate declined between 2008 and 2011, but in rural areas, where a third of the population lives, poverty reaches 70%.<sup>[6]</sup>

The top produced commodities in Congo are cassava, sugar cane, palm fruit oil and plantains and cooking bananas.<sup>[7]</sup> The top exported commodities in terms of quantity are wheat bran, cereal bran, raw cane or beet sugar and refined sugar.<sup>[8]</sup>

## Wages

## Minimum Wage

The minimum wage in the Republic of Congo is set by law at 120,000 Central African Francs (183 EUR) per worker per month.<sup>[9]</sup> The minimum wage for the private sector is above the poverty line, with rights such as paid holidays and maternity leave ensured. However, no official minimum wage exists in the agricultural or informal sectors, leaving the most vulnerable for underpayment without legal recourse. NGOs reported violations of wage, hour, or overtime laws were common in fishing, logging, quarries, and private construction sites.<sup>[10]</sup>

During the COVID-19 pandemic the number of informal workers rose from previous years. There were no existing credible data from the government, but international organisations estimated that approximately 65% of the workforce, overwhelmingly female, worked in the informal sector. According to the law, workers in the informal sector and part-time workers are covered by wage, hour, and OSH laws and inspections. The government, however, did not provide adequate social protections for workers in the informal economy.

## Living wage

The **Global Living Wage Coalition** has developed a Living Wage Reference Value for rural Republic of Congo based on the Anker methodology.

The Anker Living Wage Reference Value in the rural Republic of Congo is estimated at 108,338 Central African Francs (165 EUR) per month. This value represents the amount a typical family in rural areas of the country needs to cover the monthly cost of a basic but decent standard of living. Although the number is around 10% lower than the minimum wage for public sector workers, it's important to bear in mind that most of these workers live in urban areas where the Anker Living Wage Reference Value would be considerably higher. Big part of workers in the Republic of Congo are not formally employed and, therefore, not paid the minimum wage. Considering that, the figure is around 1.5 times higher than the Republic of Congo national poverty line wage, and 2.2 times higher than the minimum wage for all sectors.<sup>[11]</sup>

## What's happening

### RESOURCE

#### [Living Wage Reference Value, Rural Republic of Congo](#)

Living wage reference value for workers in rural regions of the Republic of Congo to afford a basic but decent living standard. Global Living Wage Coalition.

## Footnotes

1. World Bank (2021). <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL?locations=CG>
2. World Bank (2021). <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.URB.TOTL.IN.ZS?locations=CG>
3. World Bank (2021). <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.RUR.TOTL.ZS?locations=CG>
4. [4] World Bank (2021). <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.AGR.EMPL.ZS?locations=CG>
5. World Bank (2021). <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NV.AGR.TOTL.ZS?locations=CG>
6. IFAD. Country Profiles: Republic of Congo. <https://www.ifad.org/en/web/operations/w/country/republic-of-congo>
7. FAOSTAT (2021). [http://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#rankings/commodities\\_by\\_country](http://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#rankings/commodities_by_country)
8. FAOSTAT (2021). [http://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#rankings/commodities\\_by\\_country\\_exports](http://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#rankings/commodities_by_country_exports)

9. WageIndicator Foundation (2023). Minimum Wage- Republic of Congo. <https://wageindicator.org/salary/minimum-wage/republic-of-the-congo>
10. U.S. Department of State. 2022 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Republic of Congo. <https://www.state.gov/reports/2022-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/republic-of-the-congo/>
11. Global Living Wage Coalition (2023). Anker Living Wage Reference Value: Rural Republic of Congo 2022. <https://www.globallivingwage.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/Rural-Congo-Brazzaville-LW-Reference-Value-Report-Dec-5-Final-1.pdf>