

Dominican Republic

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23%

Population below international poverty line

variable

National minimum wage

€338

per month

Rural living wage

8%

Agricultural workforce

6%

Agriculture share of GDP

2

low

Risk to workers' rights

Context

The Dominican Republic has a population of around 11 million,^[1] with nearly 82%^[2] of inhabitants residing in urban areas. The agricultural sector employs 8%^[3] of the working population of the Dominican Republic and is responsible for 6% of the nation's GDP.^[4]

Agriculture is the fourth largest economic sector in the Dominican Republic, however traditional agriculture has been declining for the last four decades, meaning that many rural households have to supplement their income with off-farm work. Conversely, over the last ten years the Dominican Republic has become one of the top exporters for organic and Fairtrade products.^[5]

The top produced crops in the Dominican Republic are sugar cane, bananas, papayas, rice and plantains.^[6] In terms of export quantity, the top commodities are bananas, raw sugar, molasses, cocoa beans and wheat flour.^[7]

Wages

Minimum wage

The minimum wage in the Dominican Republic ranges between 11,900 (201 EUR) and 21,000 (355 EUR) Dominican pesos per month and varies based on the business market value and the type of labour.^[8] By law, a standard workweek is 44 hours, with a maximum of 8 hours per day. As an exception, agricultural workers are allowed 10-hour workdays without additional compensation. It is common practice for many agricultural workers to work overtime in dangerous working conditions and generally receive less than the legally established minimum wage.^[9]

Living wage

The **Global Living Wage Coalition** has developed a [living wage](#) benchmark for the banana growing areas of the Northern Region of Dominican Republic, based on the Anker methodology.

The estimated living wage is 20,017 Dominican pesos (338 EUR) per month for a family of 4 with 1.67 workers.^[10] Agricultural wages are particularly low in the Dominican Republic compared to other sectors, hence a living wage is crucial for farm workers to afford a decent standard of living. Additionally, further research is needed to estimate the [living income](#) that smallholder farmers should receive. Smallholder farmers are considered business owners and receive an income rather than a wage. In the Dominican Republic, there is a large number of smallholders who, it is believed, are not earning enough to support themselves, let alone pay their workers a living wage.^[11]

What's happening

INITIATIVE

[Dominican Republic Cocoa Supply Case Study](#)

Project from Gaia Cacao coordinated by the International Executive Service Corps (IESC) with advice of the Fine Cacao and Chocolate Institute (FCCI) and funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

RESOURCE

[Updates on the Living Wage Benchmark, rural Dominican Republic](#)

Updates of the living wage estimate for rural Dominican Republic, focussing on banana farm workers. Global Living Wage Coalition.

RESOURCE

[Tracking living and minimum wages in the banana sector](#)

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

RESOURCE

[External costs of banana production](#)

Study on the negative effects of banana production in main banana producing countries to capture the external costs in the price.

RESOURCE

[Living Wage Benchmark, rural Dominican Republic](#)

Living wage estimate for rural Dominican Republic, focussing on banana farm workers. Global Living Wage Coalition, 2019.

Footnotes

1. World Bank. (2021). <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL?locations=DO>
2. World Bank. (2021). <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.URB.TOTL.IN.ZS?locations=DO>
3. World Bank. (2021). <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.AGR.EMPL.ZS?locations=DO>
4. World Bank. (2021). <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NV.AGR.TOTL.ZS?locations=DO>
5. IFAD. (2017). https://www.ifad.org/en/web/operations/country/id/dominican_republic
6. FAOSTAT (2019). http://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#rankings/commodities_by_country
7. FAOSTAT (2019). http://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#rankings/commodities_by_country_exports
8. WageIndicator Foundation. (2023). <https://wageindicator.org/salary/minimum-wage/dominican-republic>
9. U.S. Department of State. (2019). <https://www.state.gov/reports/2019-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/dominican-republic/>
10. Global Living Wage Coalition. (2021) Living Wage Update: August 2021. Dominican Republic, rural areas. <https://www.globallivingwage.org/living-wage-benchmarks/rural-dominican-republic/>
11. Anker R., & Anker, M. (2013). Living Wage for Rural Dominican Republic with Focus on Banana Growing Area of the North.. https://www.globallivingwage.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Living_Wage_Report_Dominican_Republic_en.pdf