

# Gabon

## Overview



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32%

Population below international poverty line

€229

per month

National minimum wage

€306

per month

Rural living wage

€410

per month

Urban living wage

30%

Agricultural workforce

6%

Agriculture share of GDP

## Context

Gabon has a population of 2.2 million people.<sup>[1]</sup> The country is highly urbanized since almost all of its population (90%) resides in urban areas.<sup>[2]</sup> The agricultural sector assumes 30% of total employment in Gabon<sup>[3]</sup> and represents 6% of its national GDP.<sup>[4]</sup>

The agricultural sector in Gabon is small and under-developed, even though a significant share of rural Gabonese depends on agriculture to meet their needs. Small-holder farmers dominate agriculture in Gabon, with around 70,000 family subsistence farms in existence. These farmers are relatively old and tend to small plots of no more than 0.2 hectares on average. As a result, the country is not able to meet its domestic food demand, thus resolving to import almost 60% of the needed food products.<sup>[5]</sup>

The top produced commodities in Gabon are plantains, cassava, sugar cane, yams and taro (cocoyam).<sup>[6]</sup> As for Gabon's top exported commodities in terms of quantity, these are wheat bran, natural dry rubber, palm oil and palm kernel oil.<sup>[7]</sup>

## Wages

### Minimum wage

The national minimum wage in Gabon is set at 150,000 Central African francs (229 EUR) per worker per month.<sup>[8]</sup> The government however has not enforced the aforementioned minimum wage in the informal sector, which includes the majority of workers in the country. In addition, labor law regulations have not been enforced in the mining and timber sectors, where the majority of foreign labor is employed. Employers in these sectors have repeatedly mistreated workers, especially foreigners, by underpaying them, dismissing them without notice and even abuse them physically.<sup>[9]</sup>

## Living wage

The **Global Living Wage Coalition** has developed a [living wage Reference Value](#) study for rural and urban Gabon, based on the Anker methodology.

The Anker Living Wage Reference Value in rural Gabon is estimated at 200,770 Central African francs (306 EUR) per month, while in urban Gabon it is estimated at 268,721 Central African francs (410 EUR). This is the wage required for workers in a typical area of rural or urban Gabon respectively, to afford a basic but decent standard of living. When compared with the national minimum wage, the rural Gabon estimate is 34% higher and the urban Gabon estimate is 79% higher. The living wage estimate for urban Gabon is 22% higher than the wage at the national poverty line, while the estimate for rural Gabon is 9% lower. However, it is important to note that the national poverty line in Gabon overestimates rural poverty while underestimating urban poverty. <sup>[10]</sup>

## What's happening

### RESOURCE

#### [Living Wage Reference Value, Rural and Urban Gabon](#) ↗

Living wage estimates for workers to be able to afford a basic but decent living standard in rural and urban Gabon.

### INITIATIVE

#### [Cocoa Under Shade](#) ↗

An initiative in Gabon's Woleu-Ntem province which aims to address poverty and deforestation through the promotion of shade-grown cocoa.

## Footnotes

1. World Bank (2020). <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL?locations=GA>
2. World Bank (2020). <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.URB.TOTL.IN.ZS?locations=GA>
3. World Bank (2019). <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.AGR.EMPL.ZS?locations=GA>
4. World Bank (2020). <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NV.AGR.TOTL.ZS?locations=GA>
5. IFAD. Country Profiles: Gabon. <https://www.ifad.org/en/web/operations/w/country/gabon>
6. FAOSTAT (2019). [http://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#rankings/commodities\\_by\\_country](http://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#rankings/commodities_by_country)
7. FAOSTAT (2019). [http://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#rankings/commodities\\_by\\_country\\_exports](http://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#rankings/commodities_by_country_exports)
8. Wage Indicator Foundation (2021). Minimum Wage-Gabon. <https://wageindicator.org/salary/minimum-wage/gabon>
9. U.S. Department of State. 2020 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Gabon. <https://www.state.gov/reports/2020-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/gabon/>
10. Global Living Wage Coalition (2021). Anker Living Wage Reference Value: Rural & Urban Gabon. [https://www.globallivingwage.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Gabon-LW-Reference-Values\\_urban-and-rural\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.globallivingwage.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Gabon-LW-Reference-Values_urban-and-rural_FINAL.pdf)

