

Tunisia

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3%

Population below international poverty line

€130
per month

National minimum wage

€135
per month

Agriculture minimum wage

€210
per month

Rural living wage

14%

Agricultural workforce

10%

Agriculture share of GDP

4

high

Risk to workers' rights

Context

Tunisia has a population of almost 11.7 million people.^[1] The majority of Tunisians, 69%, lives in urban regions^[2], while the rest 31% inhabits rural areas.^[3] Agriculture assumes 14% of total employment,^[4] with the agricultural sector representing 10% of the national GDP in Tunisia.^[5]

Although Tunisia's economy has been reviving during the past years, poverty is still a significant problem for the country. The state of development between regions in Tunisia varies greatly, with rural areas being the poorest. Together with tourism, agriculture is a key sector for Tunisia's economy and a significant driver for the country's regional development. Nevertheless, poor governance schemes concerning value chains, insufficient financing access for farmers as well as limited productivity due to water stress, pose severe obstacles to the sector's development. In addition, women in rural areas face various issues which limit their access to decent employment, even though they represent more than half of the agricultural workforce.^[6]

The top produced commodities in Tunisia are wheat, fresh cow milk, tomatoes, barley and olives.^[7] Tunisia's top export commodities in terms of quantity are virgin olive oil, refined sugar, dates, macaroni and food wastes.^[8]

Wages

Minimum wage

The minimum wage in Tunisia, based on a 48-hour system, is 429 Tunisian dinars (130 EUR) per month. As for the agricultural minimum wage, this is set by law at 16.5 Tunisian dinars (5 EUR) per day or 446 Tunisian dinars (135 EUR) per month based on 27 workdays.^[9] In general, the government of Tunisia has not been effective in enforcing the minimum wage stated above, especially in sectors without the presence of a workers' union. Working conditions are reportedly better in foreign export focused companies than local ones specialising in the domestic market. In addition, labor violations are common in the informal sector, since the laws in effect do not protect the sector to a satisfactory level.^[10]

Living wage

The **Global Living Wage Coalition** has developed a Living Wage Reference Value study for rural Tunisia based on the Anker methodology.

The Anker Living Wage Reference Value for rural Tunisia is estimated at 695 Tunisian dinars (210 EUR) per month. This is the estimated wage for workers to be able to afford a basic but decent standard of living for an average family in rural Tunisia. The estimate is 2 times higher than the national poverty line wage. When compared to the national minimum wage of 429 Tunisian dinars (130 EUR) per month and the agricultural minimum wage of 446 Tunisian dinars (135 EUR) per month mentioned above, the living wage estimate is 62% and 56% higher respectively.^[11]

What's happening

RESOURCE

[Living Wage Reference Value, Rural Tunisia](#)

Living wage estimate for workers to be able to afford a basic but decent living standard in a typical rural area of Tunisia.

RESOURCE

[Fair Wear Foundation: Tunisia](#)

This report sheds light to the working conditions and incomes of workers in the Tunisian textile and garment industry.

RESOURCE

[Covid-19 and the Tunisian Economy](#)



This report by IFPRI, explores the effect that the pandemic has had on the agrifood sector and on household incomes in Tunisia.

Footnotes

1. World Bank (2019). <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL?locations=TN>
2. World Bank (2019). <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.URB.TOTL.IN.ZS?locations=TN>
3. World Bank (2019). <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.RUR.TOTL.ZS?locations=TN>
4. World Bank (2019). <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.AGR.EMPL.ZS?locations=TN>
5. World Bank (2019). <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NV.AGR.TOTL.ZS?locations=TN>
6. IFAD. Country Profiles: Tunisia. <https://www.ifad.org/en/web/operations/country/id/tunisia>
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. Wage Indicator Foundation (2021). Minimum Wage-Tunisia.
<https://wageindicator.org/salary/minimum-wage/tunisia>
10. [2] U.S. Department of State. 2019 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Tunisia.
<https://www.state.gov/reports/2019-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/tunisia/>
11. Global Living Wage Coalition (2020). Anker Living Wage Reference Value-Rural Tunisia.
<https://www.globallivingwage.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Rural-Tunisia-LW-Reference-Value-FINAL.pdf>