



INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION

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Global Poll: Governments' failure to address low wages and insecure jobs threatens trust in politics and democracy



Workers across the globe are struggling to make ends meet, believe their jobs are insecure and don't believe their voices matter in politics according to a new global public opinion poll from the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC).

02-12-2018

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Sharan Burrow, General Secretary of the ITUC, said: “Governments are failing to respect workers, and they are failing to respect voters. The fragility of the global economy is on show when 59% of people in work are only just managing, struggling to make ends meet or not managing at all and nearly two in three don't generally feel that their voice matters in politics. Without action to raise wages and change the rules for working people, we put democracy at risk.”

Released at the opening of the 4th ITUC World Congress in Copenhagen, Sunday 2 December, the ITUC Frontline Poll 2018, commissioned from polling company YouGov, covers the general public of fourteen countries.

The poll showed:

- 59% of people in work are just about managing financially, struggling to make ends meet, or are not managing at all financially, often going without essentials or falling into debt.
- Nearly one in four (23%) people in work believe their job is insecure.
- Only 37% of people think their voice always or mostly matters in politics.



“Shared prosperity is elusive, people are struggling to get by on the wages they earn, and one in four people feel their job is insecure. Social cohesion is at risk as the global economic model based on corporate greed fails working people,” said Sharan Burrow.

The ITUC represents the largest global democratic community, and the World Congress will debate the mandate for the global trade union movement, with more than 1,200 trade unionists from 132 countries.

“In order to rebuild peace, democracy and rights, we must regulate economic power – with minimum living wages, social protection and a new social contract. Workers need the security of just transitions, along with the guarantee of equality that ensures inclusion, to deal with the shifts in the world of work due to climate, technology and the displacement of people.

“First it was too big to fail banks, bailed out during the global financial crisis. Today it’s too big to touch companies like Amazon which are exploiting workers, avoiding tax, flouting competition policy and distorting the model of business with their monopoly power.

“When governments fail to stand up for their own people, regulate corporate power, ensure fair taxation, distribution of wealth through minimum wages, collective bargaining rights and social protection and vital public services, you get a world where nearly two out of three people don’t feel their voices matter in politics.

“Only when governments stand up for their own people, regulate corporate power, ensure fair taxation, distribution of wealth through minimum wages, collective bargaining rights and social protection, and ensure vital public services, will the huge and growing political confidence gap disappear.

“The global labour movement, meeting in Copenhagen at the ITUC World Congress, is putting governments and business on notice. Multilateralism is in crisis and democracy is at risk. We need to change the rules of the global economy to rebuild trust,” said Ms Burrow.

The poll was conducted 15 October – 6 November in Brazil, Bulgaria, Denmark, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Morocco, Portugal, the Philippines, South Africa, South Korea, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Notes for editors:

For a copy of the YouGov data tables, Wages, Job Security, Trust in Politics and Democracy (English), contact Gemma Swart at gemma.swart@ituc-csi.org (mailto:gemma.swart@ituc-csi.org).

The ITUC Frontline Poll 2018 covers the adult populations of Brazil, Bulgaria, Denmark, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Morocco, Portugal, the Philippines, South Africa, South Korea, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States. All polling numbers quoted above represent the average of the 14 countries, with each country given an equal weight.

In each country at least 1,000 respondents were interviewed, yielding a total of 14,834 respondents. All interviews were conducted online. YouGov carried out the fieldwork 15 October – 6 November 2018. The figures have been weighted on a national level and are representative of all adults in each respective country.



The ITUC World Congress opens in Copenhagen on Sunday 2 December and concludes on Friday 7 December 2018. The ITUC represents 207 million workers in 163 countries and territories from 331 national trade unions.

Congress Daily Highlights Live-streamed (All times Copenhagen +1 GMT)
congress2018.ituc-csi.org (<https://congress2018.ituc-csi.org/>)

Sunday 2 December 16:00 – 18:00 Opening Ceremony

Includes addresses from Prime Minister of Denmark Lars Løkke Rasmussen, the Lord Mayor of Copenhagen Frank Jensen, International Labour Organization Director-General Guy Ryder, LO-Denmark President Lizette Risgaard and ITUC President João Antonio Felício.

Monday 3 December 9:00 – 12:30 Plenary

ITUC General Secretary Sharan Burrow's address outlining the state of the world for working people and the findings of the ITUC Frontline Poll 2018.

The ITUC represents 207 million members of 331 affiliates in 163 countries and territories.

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