

## WageIndicator Policy 2019-2021

### 1. Introduction

#### 1.1. Background

WageIndicator started in The Netherlands. Back in 1999 the initiative, which ultimately led to the current WageIndicator operations in over 92 countries, was taken by Paulien Osse (at the time trade union journalist) and Kea Tijdens (labour market researcher), both specialised in gender issues. The gender focus is deeply ingrained in all activities ever since. Thus in all Salary Checks - the core of the WageIndicator enabling users to compare earnings and secondary working conditions - men and women in similar jobs and labor market situations may assess their relative positions, earnings and benefits.

Why the initiative and its scope? There is a lack of of coherent labour market information, easy to access, easy to understand, full circle, independent, free of politics in many countries worldwide. To fill this gap the national WageIndicator websites function as online, up to date labour market libraries for workers, employers, governments, academics and media alike.

By systematically collecting and structuring wages data and publishing them, (new) minimum wages for instance, may become law and be put into effect sooner. Another such finding from analysing Labour Law in many countries shows that the laws themselves are reasonably good, yet that compliance with the law is the real issue. Therefore WageIndicator offers compliance forms, mediation, and a legal help desk. These are just two examples from amongst many.

To sum up: WageIndicator assists individual workers and employers with real wage data for use in negotiations and job search. Moreover it provides workers, employers and labour inspectors with comprehensive insight in national Labour Law and how to comply with the law. In a word, WageIndicator assist individual workers and employers in solving problems of daily working life.

## 1.2. How to achieve it, people & means

The WageIndicator is all about inclusion, not exclusion. All data collected and elaborated into indicators is brought online and made accessible for free. Millions of visitors shared, and continue to share, their wage and working conditions information in order to inform colleagues and peers around the world about their working life. These people are the real beneficiaries of WageIndicator.

The core team of 15 facilitates all participants and actively supports the approx. 100 dedicated national specialists in the field, as well as specialists on the global level. Together they create innovative open source online techniques and offer the best compatible and affordable apps. The team applies smart marketing, develops the smartest calculations for the best indicators, including living wages. It strives to come up with the best actual wage estimates world wide. It makes use of spidering and big data where available. Where data is not (yet) readily available WageIndicator wants to be - and often is - the first to map wage and legal information.

In order to make this happen WageIndicator undertakes a whole range of activities on a daily basis, such as:

- Upkeep, maintenance and updating of all national WageIndicator websites
- Search Engine Optimization
- Development of salary and workings conditions surveys plus related dataset & codebook
- Design of web based surveys, matching these with field research/face-to-face surveys
- Collection of wage data online and offline
- Data cleaning and matching, creation of databases
- Calculation of actual wages and living wages
- Collection of legal minimum wages (statutory)
- Collection and editing of labour law, country-specific
- Desk research on VIP-incomes
- Project-related awareness-raising, coaching and training in its data-use of workers, trade unionists, (small) employers and civil servants such as labour inspectors
- Publication of all collected data, i.e. Salary Checks; Minimum Wages; Living Wages, Collective Agreements; DecentWorkChecks; national Labour Law; VIP-checks.

## 1.3. SWOT-analysis

WageIndicator works for working people across the globe. Therefore it works in a huge variety of national contexts, yet must be global in its make up, database architecture, and universally applicable software. In order not to compromise or frustrate its global ambition WageIndicator has to and wants to be politically neutral and non-partisan. Its data must be seen to be reliable. For this reason also its status as a not-for-profit foundation is indispensable. Yet, this position is a severe handicap when it comes to raising funds or

finding investors. Also, the fact that all its data is published online for free, is a handicap in finding commercial partners. On the other hand, internet penetration is growing worldwide. This growth provides the ground swell on which WageIndicator grows, as illustrated by its ever increasing numbers of visitors across the board.

Internal strengths are the commitment of many of its team members, the variation of areas of expertise they bring in, and their flexibility to accept somewhat lower earnings when times are tough. Video-conferences and -meetings have become standard practice and contributed to a highly efficient organisation. WageIndicator has little overhead, and makes use of free office space at the University of Amsterdam, faculty AIAS (Amsterdam Instituut voor ArbeidsStudies).

Internal weaknesses: the lack of funding limited growth of the organisation in the last couple of years. The high dependence on director Paulien Osse for overall management and direction is slowly being reduced though by introducing key senior staff members into management positions both at HQ-level and in the countries which presently receive project funding.

## 2. Planned Actions and Targets in 2019

From the Work Plan 2018-2019:

- Update of COBRA (CBA/Minimum Wages/Labour law) databases
- Company Pages of all export related garment factories in Indonesia/Ethiopia
- Add 3 countries in the garment sector
- 5 - 10 new countries online
- More job security for database- and content team members
- Total global traffic stable at around 40 million
- CBA database presents more sample CBAs and has 1200 CBAs
- Use of data profiles for matching vacancies
- Use of Wages in Context and Living Wages by more corporates
- Presentations on the basis of the datasets at the RDW (ILO) Conference, Geneva
- Submit new Social Dialogue (EU) projects in 2019
- At least 4 new project proposals submitted in 2019
- Minimum €400,000 in funded project proposals.

Next to these spearheads for the immediate future, a lot of activity is of a regularly recurring nature, creating the conditions for the continued functioning of the WageIndicator organisation and its presence online. See the Introduction and also 'Activities' below, where these are listed once again.

### 3. Mission, Vision, Strategy

*The mission in short:* Greater labour market transparency for the benefit of all employers, employees and workers worldwide by sharing and comparing information on wages, Labour Law and career. WageIndicator is all about inclusion, not exclusion. All data collected and elaborated into indicators is brought online and accessible for free.

*Vision:* More knowledge about and understanding of the labour market enables informed decisions for a happier working life. A strong WageIndicator operation in all countries. Excellent indicators to make sure that everybody gets a fair pay under "OK" circumstances or can act fairly.

*Strategy:* The WageIndicator has a four-pronged strategy.

The first two main streams consist of data collection in combination with research on this data. The results of research and data analyses are then fed back through its national websites reaching out to its beneficiaries worldwide.

The third outward move is to use its labour market data for labour policy reforms and collective bargaining negotiations in many developing countries. In this main stream WageIndicator provides project-based training to trade unions and employers' associations in the use of its data.

Lastly, through fact-finding debates in developing countries, in which the so-called DecentWorkCheck plays a pivotal role, WageIndicator fosters awareness of labour market issues amongst both workers and employers as well as their representative bodies, i.e. trade unions and employers' associations. Participation of government officials and researchers in these debates are key to their success.

*The WageIndicator USP:* its global approach means internationally comparable minimum wages, living wages, actual wages, wages in Collective Agreements (CBAs), and internationally comparable Labour Laws. Providing basic knowledge for all in a labour market, both for formal and informal sectors. Mapping the national labour market, especially in those countries where information is not (yet) on paper or digital.

#### 4. Overall Aim, Long term

A strong WageIndicator operation in all countries. Excellent indicators to make sure that everybody gets a fair pay under "OK" circumstances or can act fair.



## 5. Achievements, Planned (and some not)

The ambition to go global gradually took shape over the past 15 years, as the number of participating countries grew. Each extension was linked to funding of projects (grants). Most projects lasted three years and were successfully concluded, adding new countries to reach the present list of 92+. Thus numbers grew, but funds did not. That has been the basic tenet over the past 18 years. The actual situation in figures reads as follows:

- Annually 35 million visitors on the WageIndicator sites, between 50 % and 70 % mobile, 80 % workers/employees, 20 % (small) employers
- 57 million - outreach in media campaign - only in Europe, only on topic: gender pay gap. Reach global: unknown - in 2016
- 2000 - Face to Face interviews in Indonesia in July/August 2017 - see [Factory pages](#)
- 8 000 - Questions
- 430 000 - Observations for [Salary and Working Conditions](#) in 2017
- 100 - [Committed WageIndicator team members](#) - core team 15 team members
- 92 - [Countries](#) with a Salary and Working Conditions Survey - one or two national languages \*
- 81 - Countries with a [Salary Check](#)
- 81 - Countries in the (statutory) [Minimum Wage Database](#) - English and national languages
- 54 - Countries in [Collective agreement Database](#) - National languages
- 84 - Countries in the [Labour law Database](#) - English and national languages
- 94 - Countries with a [Decent Work Check](#) - English and national languages
- 92 - Countries with a [Cost of Living Survey](#) - National languages
- 64 - Countries with a [Living Wage Calculation](#)
- 85 - Countries with VIPs - more than 1000 up to date VIP Incomes - National currencies
- 23 - Countries fact finding debates - more than 5 000 participants
- 450 - [Academic Publications](#)
- Mobile Judge wins Innovative Justice Award 2013 - NR 1
- Wages in Context wins Innovative Justice Award 2014 - NR 3



## 6. Activities

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- Use of Wages in Context and Living Wages by more corporates
- Presentations on the basis of the datasets at the RDW (ILO) Conference Geneva
- Submit new Social Dialogue (EU) projects in 2019

Continuous activities are:

- Upkeep, maintenance and updating of all national WageIndicator websites
- Search Engine Optimization
- Development of salary and workings conditions surveys plus related dataset & codebook
- Design of web based surveys, matching these with field research/face-to-face surveys
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- Collection and editing of labour law, country-specific
- Desk research on VIP-income
- Project-related awareness-raising, coaching and training in its data-use of workers, trade unionists, (small) employers and civil servants such as labour inspectors
- Publication of all collected data, i.e. Salary Checks; Minimum Wages; Living Wages, Collective Agreements; DecentWorkChecks; national Labour Law; VIP-checks.

As stipulated already, WageIndicator works in a huge variety of national contexts, yet is global in its make up, database architecture, universally applicable software and ambition. In order not to compromise or frustrate this ambition WageIndicator has to and wants to be politically neutral and non-partisan. Its data must be seen to be reliable. For this reason also its status as a not-for-profit foundation seems to be indispensable. This position is a severe handicap however in raising funds or finding investors. Also, the fact that all its data is published online for free is a handicap when it comes to finding commercial partners. Thus, lobbying for funds is a permanent activity of WageIndicator if there ever was one.

Internally, a continuous effort goes into keeping the team together and in high spirits. Only a truly global, diverse team in which members respect each other's expertise can reach a high level. Therefore a delicate balance has to be forged between academics, journalists and social partners on the team. It is part of WageIndicator culture that team members are highly motivated for social reasons to join hands and not by wanting to get rich fast.

## 7. Organization

WageIndicator Foundation, p/a University of Amsterdam/AIAS,  
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The Netherlands

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Email [office@wageindicator.org](mailto:office@wageindicator.org)

VAT Number 8124.82.463.B01.

RSN 812482463

Chamber of Commerce 34195586

Bank nr 12.17.99.298 – Bic/SWIFT RABOBANK RABONL2U - IBAN - NL90RABO0121799298.

Established under Dutch Law 17 September 2003

## 8. Supervisory Board

Chair: Director University of Amsterdam/AIAS - Prof Paul de Beer

Member: President of the Workers' Group of the International Labour Organization -  
Catelene Passchier.

Member (finance): Independent - Maarten van Klaveren

Member: Independent - Willy Wagenmans

Member: Independent - Bert Wiggers

## 9. Management

Directors: Paulien Osse, Dirk Dragstra

Scientific coordinator: Kea Tijdens

Financial manager: Tendayi Matimba

A team from all continents, with deep respect for different opinions, cultures and religious beliefs. Cooperative, nice, sharp witted, of different ages, colours and educational backgrounds. A balance between global analysis and local perfection. 100 in total, hands on.

## 10. Finance

### 10.1 Fundraising

The largest source of income over the years consisted of grants for projects in over 90 countries worldwide. Main funders are and have been the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, FNV, CNV, International Trade Union Confederation (Brussels), EU-programs, University of Amsterdam, and C&A Foundation. In addition, many small funders have been instrumental in helping WageIndicator to fulfill its mission.

As a not-for-profit foundation WageIndicator is to a large extent dependent on the application of cost-saving methods and techniques. WageIndicator has to make ends meet with the results of its consistent efforts to find funding from national governments, EU-programs and private foundations. In addition income is generated through ads as well as the sale of (parts of its) data to commercial parties. Also donations are sought, but thus far not plentiful. Yet, the WageIndicator will in all likelihood celebrate its 20th anniversary in 2020 - notwithstanding the fact that all over the developed world funds for international cooperation have been slashed. In the Netherlands, to make the point, these were cut by 50%, increasing competition between contenders for funds and lowering the ceilings for funding grants.

As its fundraising activities mainly target public and non-profit institutions WageIndicator does not have any fundraising costs to speak of.

It is WageIndicator policy and practice to sustain - after project funding has ended - the newly acquired web-based operations through its own income generating activities: i.e. banner ads, data sales, research assignments/reports and various applications. It managed to do this well. But in the last two years it has been forced to cut expenditure drastically. Yet, not all is lost, amongst others because of the interest in sponsoring shown by some large multinationals.

### 10.2 Budget

Given the dwindling of non-commercial sources for funding, it is top priority in the coming three years to find new funds/partners to invest in its continuity and gradual attainment of worldwide presence and impact. For the period 2019-2021 WageIndicator strives to have at least 12 new project - and sponsoring proposals submitted, of which about two thirds should be granted. In total this should provide it with an income of at least € 1,300,000 over these

three years. Next to these proposals, WageIndicator actively engages with companies for working together on job profiling and recruitment, which - if successful - may result in a regular source of commercially generated income.

<b>WageIndicator Budget 2019-2020</b>					
		2019	2020	2021	
<b>Revenues</b>					
Income Generating Activities		166,000	175,000	194,000	
Grants / Funds		140,300	225,000	250,000	
Sponsoring		60,000	80,000	94,000	
		<b>366,300</b>	<b>480,000</b>	<b>538,000</b>	
<b>Direct Costs</b>					
WI-countries		155,000	178,000	204,000	
Grants / Funds		140,300	225,000	250,000	
		<b>295,300</b>	<b>403,000</b>	<b>454,000</b>	
<b>General Costs</b>					
General coordination		17,350	23,000	27,000	
Result before taxation *)		<b>53,650</b>	<b>54,000</b>	<b>57,000</b>	

### 10.3 Financial reserve

The policy of WageIndicator is to build up a general reserve from its own fundraising and other income generating activities, that will enable it to sustain itself during short periods of low liquidity position, to reduce dependency on donor funding, and to have funding available for innovations. Moreover, various funders require grantees to raise enough own funding to ensure financial sustainability. WageIndicator envisages to have a general reserve of € 250,000, which should suffice to sustain operations for at least six months, and to invest in innovation.

Amsterdam, 31 October 2018