



Centre for Research

in Social Policy







WageMap BACKGROUND

Round 2 Public Consultation





Our Launch Partners (selection)



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1. About WageMap





WageMap's mission is to support the achievement of living wages for workers globally, **drive alignment across living wage methodologies** and frameworks.

Core Priorities

1. Establish a Living Wage Reference Standard



Develop a universally accepted Living Wage Reference Standard method to calculate a living wage



Guide data providers, offer a foundation for creating incentives, and promote transparency in employer actions

2. Create an aggregated map of living wage estimates



Assess existing national and global living wage benchmarking methodologies against the living wage reference standard



Determine a single living wage estimate value that is most aligned with the Living Wage reference standard in a specific geography

Secondary Priorities

Build Living Wage Knowledge Hub

Expand the Global Movement

The Living Wage Data Problem

While progress on living wages has been made – WageMap seeks to tackle the following core issues...

Lack of Transparency

Limited Comparability

Weak Implementation Capacity

- There is a lack of transparency in the differences between the methodologies.
- This makes it challenging for actors to identify how estimates compare to one another.
- The lack of a standardized and universally accepted method to calculate a living wage.
- This **leads to market distortion** and disparities in compensation and working conditions.
- These factors have weakened implementation efforts as actors across value chains use different living wage data, driving greater confusion.



Founding member organizations

WageMap's six founding organizations are **leading living wage data and service providers** who came together in 2023 to try to address the data inconsistencies and confusion that are a major blockage in the living wage movement.



BSR is a sustainability and human rights organization that builds impactful multi-stakeholder collaborations and supports companies to establish living wage programs.



Creates public benchmarks across the U.S. and certifies U.S. employers that pay their workers and contractors a living wage based on real costs of living.



The research organization behind the UK Living Wage Foundation's cost-ofliving number that also supports research teams globally to determine the true cost of living in decency.



Strategy consultancy firm with expertise across the full living income and living wage journey working to firm driving transitions towards sustainable economies in over 35 sectors and 45 countries.



UK accreditation scheme for over 14,000 recognized Living Wage Employers, including over half of the FTSE 100.

• WageIndicator

Global not-for profit organization. Co-creator of the WageIndicator Living Wage methodology. Publishes data and information to inform workers, trade unions, employers and policy makers to improve wage negations - in every country in the world, in national languages.

Funders

Launch Partners

- Launch partners provide a fixed, three-year financial commitment to enable the WageMap proposition to be put into practice.
- Current paying Launch Partners are Hershey, Mondelez, and an undisclosed partner.



Members

- Members provide a fixed, three-year financial commitment to enable the WageMap proposition to be put into practice.
- WageMap's current paying Member is Target Corporation.



Sponsors

- Sponsors provide a financial commitment determined on an individual basis to contribute to the WageMap activities.
- WageMap's current sponsors are ISS World, Bettys and Taylors of Harrogate, and an undisclosed partner (made public soon).





2. How does WageMap work?



Our Principles



Transparency: Share information, actions, decisions, and decision-making processes in a clear and accessible manner to all stakeholders involved.



Human Rights: Uphold the fundamental, universal, inalienable and indivisible rights that every person is entitled to.



Evidence-Based Decision Making: Prioritize evidence-based insights in all decisions, minimizing political influences. Involve both external and internal experts to ensure a well-rounded perspective on each issue.



Multiple Perspectives: Consider multiple perspectives on any given topic or question to inform decisions. Ensure that the ultimate goal remains the guiding principle throughout the decision-making process.



Adherence to Academic Standards: Apply rigorous academic norms, such as the principle of hearing both sides (audi alteram partem), forming and revising hypotheses, and maintaining scholarly integrity.



The problem

1/3 of workers globally earn less than a living wage, equating to 1 billion people. These workers earn less than they need to afford a decent standard of living.

To support efforts to close the living wage gap, numerous living wage benchmarking approaches & methodologies have emerged.

As a result:

- No universal standard to calculate a living wage and minimal trust and collaboration on LW approaches.
- Use of different methods has led to market distortions and compensation disparities
- The hyperfocus on methodologies has resulted in insufficient resources directed towards actions to reduce the living wage gap

Strategic response

A global consortium of living wage data & service providers driving alignment across LW methodologies and frameworks.

Core priorities	Activities
1. Develop a Living Wage Reference Standard	 Draft Standard Refine the standard and develop assessment of compliance to standard Review, update and increase global adoption

- Understand 2. Set globally existing comparable, methodologies and principles and drive consensus estimates Establish 'best
 - available' data map and promote adoption

Other priorities

locally

specific

3. Strengthen

4. Expand the

global movement

living wage

support

- Build network of equipped service providers implementation Community
 - building
 - Inputs
- Multi-stakeholder visions **Financial resources**
- Academic expertise • Time

Outcomes IMPACT Short Medium Long Greater consistency in living wage benchmarking Increased stakeholder Increased Workers and unions adoption of awareness and Estimates living wage understanding are more benchmarking More of living wage commonly Increased (in policy and informed Greater concept and used in wages practice) negotiations alignment, measurement wage trust & negotiations Government + civil collaboration Î Increased society amongst understanding stakeholders Progress Consistent of differences Strengthened working on and fairer towards Standard is and similarities living wages advocacy labor UN SDGs universally in LW estimate efforts on All workers (1, 8, 10)practices accepted, approaches living wages receive a widely used Living ф. Supply chain actors & considered Wage. best practice Increased More transparency More ethical business consistent and access to practices living wages living wage estimates implementati on support across geographies More ethical investments

Assumptions

Need for harmonization

Willingness to share amongst all

Alignment with existing living wage efforts

There are many organizations that have established living wage methodologies and approaches to implementation.

The purpose of WageMap is to drive alignment across these platforms while also building on best practices.

WageMap remains open to additional members joining the consortium, actively consults other living wage organizations on the strategic vision, and references recommended practices generated by these organizations into the Living Wage Reference Standard. This should not be misinterpreted as implying these organizations have endorsed the WageMap effort. Rather, it is an acknowledgment of their independent work and a credit that we referenced this work in the standard creation from publicly available documentation.

Several contributors beyond the WageMap consortium include:



... in addition to local trade unions and community led initiatives



Building on ILO principles for a Living Wage

The Living Wage Reference Standard is designed to be in alignment with the ILO principles. As the ILO expands its guidance on living wage WageMap will continue to evolve the standard.

Definition

In line with the ILO Constitution and the Philadelphia Declaration, and consistent with the spirit of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), **the ILO denotes that the concept of the living wage is:**

"the wage level that is necessary to afford a decent standard of living for workers and their families, taking into account the country circumstances and calculated for the work performed during the normal hours of work; calculated in accordance with the ILO's principles of estimating the living wage, as outlined below; and to be achieved through the wage-setting process in line with ILO principles on wage setting."

ILO Principles for living wage benchmarking

- Estimation of the **needs of workers and their families** through **evidence-based methodologies;**
- Consultation with representative employers' and workers' organizations on living wage estimates and involvement of social partners throughout their development, with a view to ensuring national and/or local ownership;
- **Transparency,** including details with regard to data sources and methods of processing, that are open to scrutiny, are comprehensive and replicable;
- Robustness of the data in terms of **representativeness and transparent data collection** methods;
- **Timely** public availability of the estimates, data and methodologies;
- Specification on whether estimates are gross or net, namely whether items such as social security contributions are included or not;
- **Regular adjustments** to consider changes in the cost of living and the patterns of consumption;
- quality control, including sound technical review, validation, as well as periodic review for continuous improvements;
- **Promotion of gender equality** and non-discrimination;
- Consideration of the **regional or local context** and socio-economic and cultural realities.



3. What is the Living Wage Reference Standard?



What is the Living Wage Reference Standard?

Definition

The Living Wage Reference Standard is a document which can be used to assess living wage estimates according to three categories containing quality criteria: Beyond Compliant, Compliant and Working Towards Compliance*.



Beyond Compliance recognizes estimates that go above and beyond good practice.

Compliant demonstrates that the estimate and its methodology follow good practice according to the Living Wage Reference Standard.

Working Towards Compliance recognizes estimates that demonstrate transparency, but do not meet the minimum threshold with regards to good practice. Estimates meeting this tier are provided feedback on how to make improvements.

Purpose

Create a universally accepted 'Standard' that:

- Provides greater consistency, clarity and alignment on approaches to living wage estimation
- Guides methodology owners about good practices, and
- Increases credibility and transparency of employer initiatives on living wages.



*Details on how Living Wage Reference Standard will be scored using these three categories is in development.

Contents of the Standard – Part 1 [Overarching Frameworks]

Section	Overview
Data collection and Transparency	 Data Collection and Sharing Academic Rigor – Survey-based Data and Focus Groups Transparency Conflict of Interest Representative Data
Geographic scope and Timing of estimates	 Geographic Scope Quality Control Local Input of Ownership Migrant Labor Timing for Updates of Data
Family size, Number of workers per family and Working hours	 Family Household Size – General Family Size – Number of Adults and Children Number of Workers Per Family Working Hours
Accounting for public Benefits	 Applicability of Public Benefits Accessibility of Public Benefits Accounting for Public Benefits



Contents of the Standard – Part 2 [Items on Cost of Living]

Section	Overview
Nutritious Food	 Nutrition Variability of Diet Price Collection
Housing	 Housing Size Rent vs. Home Ownership Utilities, Furnishings, Insurance, Maintenance and Repairs, Taxes, and Mandatory Services Charges
Healthcare	Data Collection and Transparency – General
Care	 Ensuring Timely Childcare Payment Elder Care / Retirement
Transportation	Assessing Transportation
Other Categories (COICOP)	 Alcoholic Beverages, Tobacco and Narcotics Clothing and Footwear Furnishings, Household Equipment and Routine Household Maintenance Information and Communication Recreation, Sport and Culture Education Services
Savings for Special or Emergency Events	Amount Included
Mandatory Deductions from Pay	Depth and Specificity



We are here How have we developed the Standard? Compare **Compare Data from Specific** Present consensus and areas of difference for Methodology **Benchmarks in Overlapping Documents &** stakeholder feedback to inform Standard design Geographies **Descriptions** Step 4 Step 5 Step 1 Step 2 Step 3 Step 6 Assess Identify where Assess estimates Examine the **Discuss identified** Present choices differences and methodology methodological from different differences where consensus differences are similarities in documents and methodologies in against the does not yet exist within WageMap for producing the same framework of ILO, technical records committee stakeholder Identify major equivalencies in geographic area to IDH, and LICoP differences in results, allowing for determine which guidance on living meetings feedback to inform flexibility in wage estimations to establishing where the standard approach elements of the approaches calculations are inform best path consensus exists choices showing the forward greatest level of consistency or variability in results Methodologies and estimates reviewed in comparative analysis – Using publicly available or shared data and details Alberta Living Wage Network **Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives** Living Wage Ireland NewForesight Living Wage Movement Aotearoa New Anker Methodology **ILO Methodology Ontario Living Wage Network** Zealand Institut de recherche et d'informations Anker Reference Values Loughborough University Seoul Metropolitan Council socio-economiques

Area Metropolitana de BarcelonaLiving Wage for Families BCMIT Living Wage CalculatorUK Living Wage FoundationAsia Floor WageLiving Wage For UsNational University of SingaporeWageIndicator Foundation

4. How will the Standard be applied?



How are methodologies evaluated?

WageMap has developed a draft methodology to evaluate living wage estimates and their methodologies. To evaluate these methodologies, WageMap will work with separate organizations and individual contributors (see Evaluators).

1. Assess methodology against questions in Standard

- To ensure evaluations are as clear and consistent as possible, we've adopted a binary approach – each criterion is scored as Met or Not Met.
- This binary approach eliminates ambiguity and allows users to quickly understand weather a requirement has been fulfilled.

2. Conduct overall assessment against quality criteria

- The framework is organized into structured categories –
 Working towards compliant, Compliant, Beyond Compliance –
 with each tied to a specific set of yes/no questions.
- We've developed scoring templates to illustrate how this approach works in real assessments.

2.1 Data Collection and Transparency – 2.1.1: Data Collection and Sharing - General	Examp
Working towards requirements	
Is data IDH-aligned? Does the estimate rely on data sources accepted by IDH (i.e., field-level research, representative online surveys, national statistics, and/or modeling—but not modeling alone or self-selected online surveys)?	Met Not met N/A
Is data ILO-aligned? Does the methodology reflect the ILO principle of estimating the needs of workers and their families through evidence-based approaches?	Met Not met N/A
Compliant Requirements	
Is data collection variability documented across estimates? Are differences in methods (e.g., skipped fieldwork, varying sample sizes) clearly documented across different locations or studies?	Met Not met N/A





Potential Evaluation Journey for Living Wage Estimates



Preparation – Opt In

- Data provider opts in to have their methodology and data evaluated.
- Data provider conducts self-assessment and submits with data.

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Preparation – Opt Out

 For methodologies and data that WageMap has prioritized to include, but the data provider has not formally opted in, a package of data and an initial assessment will be submitted for evaluation.

Evaluation Evaluators will be trained to use the standard to review the selfassessments and

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Month 3-4

- datasets as well as evaluate any methodologies that are provided without a selfassessment.
- Evaluators will provide scoring as well as feedback to the data providers on what they can do to improve their scores initially and over the long term to improve their scores.

Data providers will be provided their scores and feedback. There will be a call to review the results and to hear about any

issues, questions.

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Month 5-10

Reassess

 Data providers will have ~4 months to make any initial changes and resubmit their methodology and estimates. They are not required to make changes but will be noted as "Working towards Compliance."

Approval

 Evaluators submit their final recommendation to WageMap. Month 11-12

Publish

WageMap will compile data and scores to publish on website.

A Phased Implementation Approach for Evaluating Estimates*

2

Year 1 (Pilot 2026)

Pilot approach with 1
 organization and/or several
 individuals to evaluate
 methodologies

Medium term

 2-4 organizations/multiple individuals from different regions and sectors to evaluate methodologies and provide scoring.

Long-term

3

 4+ organizations/multiple individuals from different regions and sectors to evaluate methodologies and provide scoring.



*WageMap is currently meeting with organizations and individuals who are interested in this role. Please share recommendations on which organizations would be best suited to play this role in the short or medium term.

Results of Assessments: WageMap Aggregated Data Map

Compliant

The core output is a publicly available aggregated data map* of globally comparable, locally specific, living wage estimates. Estimates will be assessed at the regional estimate level, with each sub-national estimate evaluated independently. The example below shows how three different estimates could be visualized based on 1) how the data provider chooses to 'opt-in' to have their estimates disclosed and 2) how estimate's methodology aligns with the standard.

atimata Country Dominican Donublic		Full Opt-in	Partial Opt-in	No Active Opt-in
Stimate Country: Dominican Republic Stimate Coverage: Santo Domingo VILLAMELLA GUARICANO Pentoja	Living Wage Reference Standard Categories and Scoring	Living Wage Methodology 1 Estimate: 15.35 DOP/hour	Living Wage Methodology 2 Estimate: <u>See public</u> <u>site (link)</u>	Living Wage Methodology 3 Estimate: See website
LÔS MINA SU	This standard is used as a point of comparison. The most aligned living wage estimation is provided along with the associated data below	Estimate Year: 2024 Evaluation: Link: Website	Estimate Year: 2024 Evaluation: Link: <u>Website</u>	Estimate Year: 2024 Evaluation: Link: Website
HERRERA Santo Domingo	The scoring below is illustrative only, showing two of six subcategories within the first category. The final version would include scoring across all categories. Data Collection and Transparency			
Carril	Data Collection and Sharing			
X P	Academic Rigor – Survey-based Data			
6 Contraction of the second se	Academic Rigor – Focus Groups	Indicati		
aina	Transparency		ve	
	Conflict of Interest			
Scoring Framework	Representative Data			
	Geographic Scope and Timing			
GE Working towards Beyond	Geographic Scope			

*WageMap continues to explore different ways to visualize their data map and welcomes feedback on the proposed concept.

6. How will WageMap operate in the long-term?



WageMap Proposed Governance (~2027 Onwards)

WageMap is preparing to evolve its governance and its stakeholder engagement approach after the first round of pilot data is launched. The following model is subject to change based on feedback.



A range of key stakeholder groups will interact with the Standard

WageMap is preparing to evolve its governance and its stakeholder engagement approach after the first round of pilot data is launched. The following model is subject to change based on feedback.





Methodology evaluators

Individual organizations or collaborators trained to evaluate living wage estimates

Use case

Methodology evaluators will review self-assessments and estimate methodologies against the Living Wage Reference Standard and provide scoring*.

Methodology evaluators will:

- be separate organizations from data providers themselves.
- **provide objectivity** in the evaluation of different methodologies.
- **operate independently** in evaluating and scoring methodologies and will report to the Project Management Office.

Engagement approach

WageMap is currently meeting with potential methodology evaluators and will be using the insights from the 2nd public consultation period to inform the overall engagement approach with potential partners.



Data Providers

Voluntary network of data providers who opt in to collaborate with WageMap

Use case

To fulfill its mission of advancing alignment and transparency across living wage estimate methodologies, WageMap aims to build a collaborative community of Data Providers – working together to strengthen the Living Wage Reference Standard and enhance its value for those contributing to and using the data.

Engagement approach

Data Providers can choose to share their living wage estimates (or just have a link to their website) and participate directly in WageMap's evaluation and engagement activities. Providers that choose to have their estimates evaluated will:

- **Receive recognition** as official contributors
- Nominate representatives to participate in WageMap's Technical Advisory Board
- Provide **feedback on methodology** alignment and scoring processes
- **Stay informed of developments**, revisions, and expectations around data validation and standard alignment.



Data users

Employers or other entities that use Living Wage data to inform their living wage efforts

Use case

WageMap was created to make it easier for Data Users to implement living wages. WageMap aims to offer solutions for employers, unions, civil society and even governments. WageMap will continue to strive to support data users through providing:

- Transparent, easy-to-use, reliable living wage data
- **Clarity and standardization** on how to evaluate and implement living wages

Engagement approach

As WageMap explores how to establish a sustainable model to maintain the ongoing evaluations of estimates and its platform, it will continue to engage Data Users so it can create offerings that meet their needs.

WageMap appreciates all employers who participated and provided feedback in the 1st Public Consultation in Oct/Nov 2024.



Key partners

Non-profit organizations, unions, international organizations, governments

Use case

- WageMap is built upon multiple attempts by different parties to find a solution to the living wage data problem. WageMap works with many of these stakeholders and engages with others to strengthen the approach and overall movement. WageMap stakeholders include:
 - Workers and Unions
 - Employers and Employer Organizations
 - Businesses and Investors
 - Governments
 - Platforms and Multi-stakeholder Initiatives

Engagement approach

WageMap is grateful to have received feedback and insights from numerous contributors as part of:

- Regular check-ins with key organizations
- Specialized focus groups during public consultation sessions
- Collaboration on evaluation and implementation



Long-term model must address costs of collecting data

WageMap recognizes that to be able to provide easily understandable living wage data, living wage Data Providers must be able to sustain their work. WageMap aims to work iteratively on its 'publicly available aggregated data map' to drive progress while working collaboratively within the living wage movement to address this challenge.





6. What is the consultation process?



Public Consultation Process

WageMap is dedicated to getting stakeholder input from across different regions, stakeholder groups and channels. It is hosting **two rounds of public consultation as well as a round of targeted feedback** to garner final insights before **launching in November 2025 at the UN Forum on Business and Human Rights**.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1	Round 2 Public Stakeholder 2 Engagement Consultation July – August 2025	Targeted Final3FeedbackSept – Oct 2025
Engagement results:6 webinars122 organizations36 countries150 individuals53 survey responses150 individuals0 Civil society, NGOs, INGOs10 Individuals10 Individuals11 Industry groups11 Industry groups11 Industry groups11 Industry groups11 Industry groups	Consultation FocusPlanned engagements• Feedback on the draft Living Wage Reference Standard• Online focus group series for 'underrepresented groups (e.g. union and local movements)• Feedback on draft WageMap Background document• Online Survey, open to all• Share progress and feedback from Round 1• 1-2-1 interviews & conversations for key stakeholders	 stakeholder groups Follow up on specific issues that need greater expertise and further discussion Address scoring and implementation guidance
• Funders		© WageMap All rights reserved

Decision making structure

You can find the WageMap Standard Development and Revision Procedure in this link.

This document specifies the procedure to be followed by WageMap for the development of any new WageMap standards, such as the Living Wage Reference Standard, and when substantive changes to existing WageMap standards are required to be made.



Contact us

To follow up or for broader questions, please address communication to the **Project Management Office:**



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