

ITUC Global COVID-19 Survey



30 March – 2 April 2020
Key Findings

Executive Summary

The impact of Covid-19 on jobs and employment has increased as more countries are responding to the pandemic with national lockdown measures including the closure of schools and non-essential business (62%, up from 54% amongst the same 67 countries who completed the survey week to week).

Europe (75%) has the largest number of countries in lockdown followed by the Americas (71%). Asia-Pacific has the least with 61% of countries.

The vast majority of governments (72%) are providing wage protection and income support but there are big regional differences. 57% of countries surveyed in Africa and 35% surveyed in the Americas are not providing wage protection and income support for workers. Nearly half of the countries providing this level of support are in Europe/Pan European region: 33 of the 68 countries. 15 of the seventeen G20 countries surveyed are providing income support or wage protection. 29 OECD countries are providing income support or wage protection.

In the countries which are providing wage protection and income support, 59% of countries say they are enough to cover essential costs including food electricity and housing. 41% say they are not enough to cover essential costs – this is most strongly felt in the Asia-Pacific (64%) region followed by the Americas (45%).

The social contract is being re-written in many countries as governments, employers and unions work together to manage the social and economic impact of Covid-19. Governments are responding to the needs of workers well in 64% of countries. This view is held in all regions apart from Americas where governments are responding badly in 65% of countries.

Employers are leaving workers behind. 56% of countries think that employers are responding to the needs of workers badly. Employers in the Americas and Asia-Pacific are worse at responding to the needs of workers. Amongst the 67 countries who completed the survey both weeks, 51% said employers were performing badly the first week, and 61% in the second week.

Introduction

116 trade unions from 94 countries took part in the second ITUC Global Covid-19 Survey between 30th March – 2 April 2020.

Five questions were asked using an online survey platform to monitor government responses, review income support and wage protections measures and assess how well or badly governments and employers are responding to the crisis.

ITUC affiliates will be asked regular survey questions to track the global response to Covid-19 and identify trends in support of international and national advocacy and campaigning. Three questions monitoring the government response and assessing how well or badly governments and employers are responding are tracking questions that will be asked in each survey.

Seventeen G20 countries including Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Korea, Mexico, the Russian Federation, South Africa, Turkey, the UK and the USA.

32 out of 36 OECD countries including Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Korea, Latvia, Lithuania, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, the UK, the USA.

Regions:

- 23 countries in Africa
 - 17 countries in the Americas
 - 18 countries in Asia-Pacific
 - 36 countries from the Pan European region of the ITUC (PERC)
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Government Responses to COVID-19

30 March – 2 April 2020

More countries are moving to contain the spread of the virus with national lockdown measures. No countries are re-opening workplaces, businesses and community spaces.

Global Findings

68% of countries are containing the spread of the virus with national lockdown measures, the closure of schools and non-essential businesses.

31% of countries are delaying the spread of the virus with promotion of hand washing, working from home, social distancing and border restrictions for international visitors.

One government, Brazil, says **coronavirus is not a major threat to public health or the national economy.**

Global – Tracking Data

67 countries responded to these questions in both the week of 17th March and 30th March 2020.

Two governments no longer think the coronavirus is not a major threat to the public health or national economy. 11 governments have moved to contain the spread of the virus with national lockdown measures.

G20 Findings

12 G20 countries (71%) were said to be containing the spread of the virus and four (24%) were said to be delaying the spread. Only one G20 government, Brazil, considers the coronavirus not to be a major threat to public health of the national economy.

OECD Findings

25 OECD countries (78%) were said to be containing the spread of the virus and 7 (22%) were said to be delaying the spread.

Regional Findings

Region	Contain the spread of the virus with national lockdown measures	Delay the spread of the virus with promotion of hand washing	Coronavirus is not a major threat to public health or the national economy
Americas 17 countries	12 countries (71%)	4 countries (24%)	1 country
Africa 23 countries	14 countries (61%)	9 countries (39%)	
Asia-Pacific 18 countries	11 countries (61%)	7 countries (39%)	
Europe (PERC) 36 countries	27 countries (75%)	9 countries (25%)	

2 Government provision of income or wages support

The majority of countries surveyed are providing income support or wage protection.

57% of countries in Africa are not providing income support or wage protection at this stage, despite 61% of these countries containing the spread of the virus with national lockdown measures which curtail the economy and earnings for workers.

Global Findings

72% of countries (67) **are providing income support or wage protection.**

28% of countries (26) **are not providing income support or wage protection.**

G20 Findings

15 G20 countries (88%) are providing income support or wage protection and 2 (12%) are not providing income support or wage protection.

OECD Findings

29 OECD countries (91%) are providing income support or wage protection and three (9%) are not providing income support or wage protection.

Regional Findings

Region	Government providing income support or wage protection	Government not providing income support or wage protection
Americas 17 countries	11 countries (65%)	6 countries (35%)
Africa 23 countries	10 countries (43%)	13 countries (57%)
Asia-Pacific 18 countries	14 countries (78%)	4 countries (22%)
Europe (PERC) 36 countries	33 countries (92%)	3 countries (8%)

3 Adequacy of wage protection and income support for essentials

The majority of countries say wage protection and income support are enough to cover essentials. Many workers are at risk with 41% of countries reporting that government measures are not enough to cover essential costs. There are regional differences with 64% of countries in Asia-Pacific saying government measures are not enough to cover essential costs.

Global Findings

Of the 68 countries which are providing wage protections and incomes support, 40 countries (59%) **agree that they are enough to cover essential costs including food electricity and housing**. 28 countries (41%) say they **are not enough to cover essential costs**.

G20 Findings

In the 15 G20 countries which are providing wage protection and income support, 9 countries (60%) agree that they are enough to cover essential costs. 6 countries (40%) say they are not enough to cover essential costs.

OECD Findings

In the 29 OECD countries which are providing wage protection and income support, 19 countries (66%) agree that they are enough to cover essential costs. 10 countries (34%) say they are not enough to cover essential costs.

Regional Findings

Wage protections and income support are enough to cover essential costs including food, electricity and housing

Region	Agree	Disagree	Number of countries responded
Americas 17 countries	6 countries (55%)	5 countries (45%)	11
Africa 23 countries	6 countries (60%)	4 countries (40%)	10
Asia-Pacific 18 countries	5 countries (36%)	9 countries (64%)	14
Europe (PERC) 36 countries	23 countries (70%)	10 countries (30%)	33

4 Assessment of government responses

Many governments are responding well.

There are big regional differences with 65% of countries (11 out of 17) in the Americas who think their governments are responding badly to the needs of workers.

Global Findings

65% of countries think their **government is responding to the needs of workers well**.
35% of countries think their **government is responding to the needs of workers badly**.

Global – Tracking Data

67 countries responded to this questions in both the week of 17th March and 30th March 2020. There has been little to no change in attitudes to how well or badly governments are responding to the needs of workers affected by Covid-19.

G20 Findings

10 G20 governments (59%) are responding well to the crisis.
7 G20 governments (41%) are responding badly to the crisis.

OECD Findings

22 OECD governments (69%) are responding well to the crisis.
10 OECD governments (31%) are responding badly to the crisis.

Regional Findings

How well or badly is your government responding to the needs of workers affected by Covid-19

Region	Well	Badly
Americas 17 countries	6 countries (35%)	11 countries (65%)
Africa 23 countries	16 countries (70%)	7 countries (30%)
Asia-Pacific 18 countries	11 countries (61%)	7 countries (39%)
Europe (PERC) 36 countries	28 countries (78%)	8 countries (22%)

5 Assessment of employer responses

Employers are not responding to the needs of workers. Employers in Asia-Pacific and the Americas are responding to the needs of workers worse than in other regions.

Global Findings

44% of countries think that **employers are responding to the needs of workers well**.
56% of countries think that **employers are responding to the needs of workers badly**.

Global – Tracking Data

67 countries responded to this questions in both the week of 17th March and 30th March 2020.

The number of countries where unions think employers are responding badly to the needs of workers increased from 33 to 39 countries.

Employers in 58% of countries are now seen to be responding badly to the needs of workers in this weeks survey (30 March – 2 April), up from 49% who were seen to be responding badly in the week 17th – 23 March.

G20 Findings

Employers in five G20 countries (29%) are responding well to the crisis.
 Employers in twelve G20 countries (71%) are responding badly to the crisis.

OECD Findings

Employers in 15 OECD (47%) countries are responding well to the crisis.
 Employers in 17 OECD (53%) countries are responding badly to the crisis.

Regional Findings

How well or badly do you think employers are responding to the needs of workers affected by Covid-19

Region	Well	Badly
Americas 17 countries	3 countries (18%)	14 countries (82%)
Africa 23 countries	13 countries (57%)	10 countries (43%)
Asia-Pacific 18 countries	7 countries (39%)	11 countries (61%)
Europe (PERC) 36 countries	18 countries (50%)	18 countries (50%)