An Overview of Women's Work and Employment in Kazahstan

Decisions for Life MDG3 Project
Country Report No. 10
Short version

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1. Introduction: The Decisions for Life project

The DECISIONS FOR LIFE project aims to raise awareness amongst young female workers about their employment opportunities and career possibilities, family building and the work-family balance. The lifetime decisions adolescent women face, determine not only their individual future, but also that of society: their choices are key to the demographic and workforce development of the nation.

DECISIONS FOR LIFE is awarded a MDG3 grant from the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs as part of its strategy to support the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals no 3 (MDG3): "Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women". DECISIONS FOR LIFE more specifically focuses on MDG3.5: "Promoting formal employment and equal opportunities at the labour market", which is one of the four MDG3 priority areas identified in Ministry's MDG3 Fund. DECISIONS FOR LIFE runs from October 2008 until June 2011 (See http://www.wageindicator.org/main/projects/decisions-for-life).

DECISIONS FOR LIFE focuses on 14 developing countries, notably Brazil, India, Indonesia, the CIS countries Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Ukraine, and the southern African countries Angola, Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Project partners are International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), Union Network International (UNI), WageIndicator Foundation, and University of Amsterdam/AIAS.

This report is part of the Inventories, to be made by the University of Amsterdam, for all 14 countries involved. These Inventories and the underlying gender analyses are listed in the Table. All reports will be posted at the project website. This country report on Azerbaijan, the short version of the full report that will be published in a month's time, concentrates on Activity nr 1.03, the Gender analysis regarding pay and working conditions (or, as Chapter 2 is called, work and employment). This short report focuses on statistical information that enables an estimate of the size of the target group of DECISIONS FOR LIFE. and adds some information on earnings and the gender pay gap.

Included in the full report on Azerbaijan will be Activity 1.01, Inventories of national legislation; partly the analysis of national legislation has resulted in a separate product, the DecentWorkCheck for Azerbaijan. The full report will also include sections on the country's history and the position of women; governance; prospects in the current crisis; communication facilities; labour relations; inequality; population and fertility; women's career opportunities; education of girls and young women, and working conditions. Activity 1.02, Inventories of companies' regulations, will take place through a company survey. Preparations for Activities 1.03a and 1.03b have resulted in a number of lists, to be used in the WageIndicator web-survey for country-specific questions and their analyses, and also to be included in the full report. Chapter 3 of this short version gives more insight in the WageIndicator.

Table 1   Activities for DECISIONS FOR LIFE by the University of Amsterdam

Nr	Inventories
1.01	Inventories of national legislation
1.02	Inventories of companies' regulations
1.03	Gender analysis regarding pay and working conditions
1.03a	Gender analysis start-up design of off-line gender analyses inventory
1.03b	Gender analysis data-entry for off-line use inventories

2. Gender analysis regarding work and employment

2.1. Population and employment

As a general background for this report, we have to emphasize that Azerbaijan –after a fall in population between 1993-2002-- recently has a rather low population growth; for the year 2009 its growth is estimated at less than 0.4%. According to the 1999 Census, the population was 14,953,000, whereas a 2008 estimate comes at 15,572,000: an increase of 4.1% in ten years.[1] For 2009, the country's life expectancy at birth is estimated at 62.6 years for males and 73.5 years for females, a large difference. Kazahstani men seem to encounter serious health problems. The total fertility rate (TFR, the number of births a woman would have if she survived to age 50) is currently estimated at 1.88 and the birth rate at 16.6 per 1,000 of the population, thus rather low. The current death rate is set at about 9.4 per 1,000 (sources: wikipedia; CIA World Factbook; ILO Laborsta).

Table 2 presents the development of total employment and employment status in Kazahstan between 2001-2008. The table shows a substantial growth in these years of total employment for males, by 16%, and an even stronger growth for females, by 611,000 persons or 18%. The increase of paid employment went faster, clearly diminishing the shares as well as the numbers of own-account and contributing familiy workers. Between 2001-2008, the number of male employees increased by 28% and the number of female employees by no less than 42.5%. This employment boom is largely attributable to the booming energy sector of Kazahstan; the extraction, processing and export of the country's huge natural resources was the main impetus for an over 8% yearly average growth in 2002-2006, though growth per person employed slowed down to 5.2% in 2007 and 2.8% in 2008, due to declining oil prices and the worldwide economic crisis (CIA World Factbook; UN MDG Indicators).

Table 2   Employment by status and gender, Kazahstan, 2001, 2008

	2001				2008			
	male		female		male		female	
	x1,000	%	x1,000	%	x1,000	%	x1,000	%
Employers	43	1.2%	16	0.5%	79	2.0%	42	1.1%
Own-account workers and Contributing family workers	1,310	37.8%	1,467	44.5%	1,228	30.6%	1,309	34.1%
Employees	2,117	61.0%	1,746	54.0%	2,711	67.4%	2,489	64.8%
Total	**3,470**	**100%**	**3,229**	**100%**	**4,018**	**100%**	**3,840**	**100%**

Sources: ILO Laborsta, Table 2D

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[1]   Estimates of the population size of Kazahstan for some years vary widely between western sources and between western and Kazahstani sources. According to the Statistics Agency of Kazahstan, preliminary results of the March 2009 Census indicate a considerably large population of 16,402,000 persons (http://www.kt.kz/index.php?lang=eng&uin=1133435211&chapter=1153480633)

2.2. Labour force participation

Of the total Kazahstani population, by 2008 8,415,000 persons were counted as economically active (the share of the population over 14 of age in employment or registered unemployed), of which 95,000 aged 65 and older: see Table 3. If we leave out this group of elderly citizens in order to comply with the internationally comparable Labour Participation Rate (LPR) or Employment-to-Population ratio (EPOP) that only takes stock of the labour force aged 15-64 in percentages of the total population of the same age, we can calculate the over-all LPR or EPOP at 78.2% *(MDG Indicator 1.5)*. This implies a position in the higher ranks among the 14 countries in our project. With respectively 81.6% for males and 75.2% for females, the "corrected" female LPR in 2008 was 92% of the "corrected" male rate (the so-called women to men parity). In Table 3, below, we show the 2008 LPR's for 5-years'age cohorts.

Table 3 **Economically active population and labour participation rates (LPRs) by gender and by age group, Kazahstan, 2008**

	all		male		female	
	x 1,000	*LPR*	x 1,000	*LPR*	x1,000	*LPR*
15-19	308	*22.8*	175	*25.3*	133	*20.2*
20-24	998	*69.5*	539	*72.8*	459	*66.0*
25-29	1,246	*92.0*	650	*95.6*	596	*88.4*
30-34	1,265	*93.2*	625	*95.6*	640	*90.9*
35-39	944	*94.6*	466	*97.4*	479	*92.0*
40-44	970	*94.1*	473	*96.0*	497	*92.5*
45-49	1,072	*93.7*	520	*95.5*	553	*92.1*
50-54	841	*90.6*	400	*93.0*	441	*88.5*
55-59	508	*79.5*	247	*89.2*	261	*72.1*
60-64	168	*41.9*	100	*64.7*	68	*27.5*
65-69	61	*12.9*	32	*15.9*	29	*10.6*
70+	34	*4.7*	18	*7.6*	16	*3.4*
Total 15+	**8,415**	**71.1**	**4,244**	**76.1**	**4,171**	**66.7**

Source: ILO Laborsta, Table 1A (Labour Force survey)

Table 3 reveals some interesting gender differences in the LPR's for the 5-years' age cohorts. For men, the LPR's were highest among the 25-49-year-olds, for women slightly later, among the 35-49-year-olds. Unless the usual decrease with age over age 49, the participation rates remain quite high, especially for men. As for the DECISIONS FOR LIFE target group, the girls and young women aged 15-29, in 2008 there were 1,188,000 of them employed on a population of 2,026, 000, implying an LPR of 58.6% – rather high across countries. With 64.6% (1,364,000 active in a population of 2,111,000), the LPR of their male peers was 6%points higher.

Comparison with the 1999 Census outcomes shows remarkable shifts in the LPR's of both sexes between 1999-2008. The participation rates for the two youngest cohorts fell: for the males aged 15-19 by 7%points, for the females of the same age by even 14%, from 34% to 20%; for the males aged 20-24 the decrease in this period was 11%points, for the females of the same age only 2%points, from 68 to 66%. The LPR for all other age groups went up, though for women considerable more than for men. In the age cohorts between 25-49 of age, the male LPR's increased by 4-6%points, but the female LPR's by 9-13%. The most pronounced rises were among the 50 and older, with an increase for the women 50-54 of age of 32%points and an astonishing rise for the women aged 55-59, from 11 to 72% or 61%points. For our project, the fall of the LPR of the 15-19 aged girls is most interesting. Their 14%point decrease cannot

be explained by developments in female enrollment in secondary education, as between 2003-'07 this fell by 10,600 (UN Data).

2.3. Employment by industry

In Table 4 we present the division of the Kazahstani labour force by industry and gender, for the labour force at large.

Table 4   Employment by industry and gender, total labour force, Kazahstan, 2008

	all		male		female	
	x 1,000	%	x 1,000	%	x 1,000	%
agriculture, forestry, fishing	2,370	30.2	1,250	31.1	1,120	29.2
mining	200	2.5	149	3.7	51	1.3
manufacturing	573	7.3	360	9.0	213	5.5
utilities (gas, water, electr.)	165	2.1	115	2.9	50	1.3
construction	549	7.0	418	10.4	131	3.4
wholesale and retail	1,150	14.6	470	11.7	680	17.8
transport, storage, commun.	589	7.5	434	10.8	155	4.0
restaurants, hotels	103	1.3	32	0.8	71	1.8
finance	96	1.2	37	0.9	59	1.5
real estate, renting, business	378	4.8	182	4.5	196	5.1
public administrat., defense	375	4.8	206	5.1	169	4.4
education	754	9.6	195	4.9	559	14.2
health, social work	347	4.4	82	2.0	265	6.9
other community services	205	2.6	88	2.2	178	4.6
Total	**7,857**	**100**	**4,018**	**100**	**3,839**	**100**

Source: ILO Laborsta, Table 2B

The table shows that still a considerable part of the labour force of Kazahstan is in agriculture: about 30%, comparatively slightly more men than women. For both sexes, wholesale and retail trade is the second largest employer, though for females this industry is, with nearly 18%, more important than for males, for nearly 12% employed in wholesale and retail. For women, education comes third (14.2%), followed by health and social work (6.9%) and manufacturing (5.5%). Also for men (7.3%), the share of manufacturing in employment is still low. In 2008, 30% of the female labour force was in commercial services, of which over half in wholesale and retail.

Table 5 (next page) presents an overview of the female employment shares by industry for the labour force at large. Seven of the 15 industries show a female share above the average 48.9%, all with a female majority. With over 87%, this majority is quite large in other community services, but also in health and social work (76%); education (74%); restaurants and hotels (69%); finance (over 61%), and wholesale and retail (59%). In international perspective, notably the high female share in finance is surprising. By contrast, with 45% the female share in public administration is rin that perspective rather low.

Table 5   Female employment shares by industry, total labour force, Kazahstan, 2008

	x 1,000	%
agriculture, forestry, fishing	1,120	47.3
mining	51	25.5
manufacturing	213	37.2
utilities (gas, water, electr.)	50	30.3
construction	131	23.9
wholesale and retail	680	59.1
transport, storage, commun.	155	26.3
restaurants, hotels	71	68.9
finance	59	61.5
real estate, renting, business	196	51.9
public administrat., defense	169	45.1
education	559	74.1
health, social work	265	76.4
other community services	178	86.8
Total	**3,839**	**48.9**

Source: authors' calculations on ILO Laborsta, Table 2B

2.4. Employment by occupation

Table 6 gives an overview of the total labour force divided by occupational group and gender, for 2008.

Table 6   Employment by occupational group and gender, total labour force, Kazahstan, 2008

	all		male		female	
	x 1,000	%	x 1,000	%	x 1,000	%
legislators,senior officials,managers	506	6.4	312	7.8	194	5.1
professionals	1,006	12.8	323	8.0	683	17.8
technicians, associate professionals	714	9.1	247	6.1	467	12.2
clerks	170	2.2	46	1.1	124	3.2
service, shop, sales workers	1,077	13.7	360	9.0	717	18.7
skilled agricultural, fishery workers	1,281	16.4	657	16.5	624	16.3
craft and related trades	739	9.4	570	14.3	169	4.4
plant & machine operators, assemblers	713	9.1	636	15.9	77	2.0
elementary occupations	1,625	20.8	848	21.2	777	20.2
Total	**7,857**	**100.0**	**4,018**	**100.0**	**3,839**	**100.0**

Source: ILO Laborsta, Table 2C

The table shows that the qualification structure of the Kazahstani female labour force is rather well balanced. In 2008 a rather limited share, 20% of all women employed, was at the bottom of the labour market, in elementary occupations, the same share as for males. The considerable share of over one in three women in employment (35%) could be found in the three occupational groups at the top of the organisational hierarchy.

Building on Table 6, Table 7 shows the female employment shares by occupational group in Kazahstan for 2008. Quite remarkable is that, except for the very top level, women are clearly over-represented in four occupational groups at the higher and middle levels, each time with more than a two to one parity: among professionals (68%); technicians and associate professionals (65%); clerks (73%), and service,

shop and dsales workers (67%). Even at the level of legislators, senior officials and managers, the female share of 36% is in international perspective rather high in international perspective. By contrast, with just 10% the female share in operational manufacturing occupations is quite low.

Table 7   Employment by occupational group and gender, total labour force, Kazahstan, 2008

	x 1,000	%
legislators,senior officials,managers	194	38.3
professionals	683	67.9
technicians, associate professionals	467	65.4
clerks	124	72.9
service, shop, sales workers	717	66.6
skilled agricultural, fishery workers	624	48.7
craft and related trades	169	22.9
plant & machine operators, assemblers	77	10.8
elementary occupations	777	47.8
Total	**3,839**	**48.9**

Source: authors' calculations on ILO Laborsta, Table 2C

2.5.   Employment by level of education

Table 8 presents the division of the economically active population of Kazahstan by gender and educational attainment, based on official estimates as of 2008 and following the ISCED division. In line with the statistics on employment by occupational group, the table shows that women in the employed population have on average a higher educational level than their male colleagues. Not only were women underrepresented at the lower levels, they were also well represented at the highest levels. The considerable share of nearly 26% of all women in employment had reached ISCED 5-6 level, 56% of all at this level, bringing women to men parity at 125%. Statistics as of 2002 suggest that this gender distance remained about the same between 2002-2008.[2]

Table 8   Economically active population (incl. unemployed) by highest level of education completed and by gender, Kazahstan, 2008

	all		male		female	
	x 1,000	%	x 1,000	%	x 1,000	%
no education completed (ISCED 1)	383	4.6	211	5.0	172	4.1
second level, first stage (ISCED 2)	2,645	31.4	1,405	33.1	1,240	29.7
second level, second stage (ISCED 3)	3,149	37.4	1,630	38.4	1,520	36.4
third level, first stage (ISCED 4)	289	3.4	132	3.1	157	3.8
third level, second stage (ISCED 5-6)	1,949	23.2	866	20.4	1,082	25.9
Total	**8,415**	**100.0**	**4,244**	**100.0**	**4,171**	**100.0**

Source: ILO Laborsta, Table 1B

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[2]   Unfortunately, changes between 2002 and 2008 in the statistical grouping of the number of employed at various ISCED levels do not allow a more detailed picture of the development of the educational structure.

2.6. Unemployment

Between 2001-2008, the official unemployment rate of Kazahstan gradually fell from over 12% to below 7%. Although the absolute gap between the male and the female unemployment rates fell somewhat (in 2001 nearly 14% of women was unemployed, against 10% of men), female unemployment rates remained above male, in 2008 by 2.6%points or one third. Most striking in this period was the decrease in unemployment of the youngest cohort. While Kazahstan –like most, also developed, countries-- in the early 2000s suffered from considerable youth unemployment, with unemployment rates in 2001 of 24% for boys aged 15-19 and 29% for girls of the same age (authors' calculations based on ILO Laborsta), it succeeded to lower these rates to slightly over 6% in 2008. Though to a lesser extend, this succeeded for the 20-24-year olds too, but between 2001-2008 the unemployment rates for the 25-29 aged remained at approximately the same level, with the female rate continuously about 40% over the male rate. In 2008, on average 113,000 females aged 15-29 were unemployed, or 8.5% of this group economically active at large.

Table 9   Unemployment by gender and by age group, % of economically active population, Kazahstan, 2008

	all	male	female
15-19	6.2	6.2	6.3
20-24	7.8	7.0	8.7
25-29	9.0	6.6	10.9
30-34	6.9	4.9	8.8
35-39	6.3	4.6	7.9
40-44	4.5	3.5	5.2
45-49	5.2	4.1	6.3
50-54	6.1	4.3	7.8
55-59	7.4	6.0	8.9
60-64	7.9	7.7	8.1
Total 15+	**6.6**	**5.3**	**7.9**

Source: authors' calculations based on ILO Laborsta, Tables 1A and 3B

Table 10 presents the 2008 official unemployment rates by gender and highest level of education completed. Most striking is that women are worse off at all educational levels, except for third level, first stage (ISCED 4), where unemployment is highest. It should be noted that this regards a rather small group, making up 3-4% of the economically active population, and that there is some unclarity in recent statistics whether at this level the unemployed matched correctly with the employed. This unclarity may have led to an overestimation of the unemployment rate at level 4 and some underestimation of that rate at levels 5-6.

Table 10   Unemployment by gender and highest level of education completed, % of economically active population, Azerbaijan, 2008

	all	male	female
first level (ISCED 1)	9.3	7.9	11.5
second level, first stage (ISCED 2)	8.1	6.5	10.0
second level, second stage (ISCED 3)	5.8	4.2	7.5
third level, first stage (ISCED 4)	13.5	15.8	11.7
third level, second stage (ISCED 5-6)	4.4	3.3	5.2
Total	**6.6**	**5.3**	**7.9**

Source: authors' calculations based on ILO Laborsta, Table 3C

2.7. Size of the target group

We are now able to produce an estimate of the size of the target group of the DECISIONS FOR LIFE project for Kazahstan, the girls and young women aged 15-29, working in urban areas in commercial services -- that is, wholesale and retail as well as commercial services more narrowly defined, like finance and restaurants and hotels. The total size of the female labour force aged 15-29 in Kazahstan can be estimated at 1,188,000. Given an urbanisation rate of 58% (CIA World Factbook), about 690,000 girls and young women lived and worked in urban areas. Of this 690,000, about one in three[3] or about 230,000 can be estimated to belong to our target group as they worked in commercial services. A large majority of them, about 70-80%, will work in paid employment. Some 90,000 to 110,000 (depending on the economic conditions) girls and young women will enter into commercial services employment in the next five years.

2.8. Wages

Concerning wages, we focus here on the differences in wages between men and women, the gender pay (wage) gap, though Table 11 also gives a picture of the wage differences between industries in Azerbaijan. It shows that for both genders by far the highest earnings are in finance, paying respectively 144% (men) and 152% (women) over the average earnings, with mining ranking second. Earnings in the other industries follow at quite some distance. Remarkably low are the official average earnings in education, health and social work, also for males. Except for agriculture and fishing, the health and social work sector even closes the ranks.

Table 11   Average monthly earnings of employees by industry and by gender, Kazahstan, 2008, in Tenge

	total	male	female	m/f gap
agriculture	31,407	34,084	24,698	27.6
fishing	28,894	30,714	22,428	27.0
mining	109,933	117,867	82,517	30.0
manufacturing	65,874	73,457	48,764	33.6
utilities (gas, water, electr.)	55,955	60,346	46,423	23.6
construction	81,573	83,407	61,985	25.7
wholesale and retail	59,330	66,094	51,208	22.5
transport, storage, communication	83,012	87,342	73,749	15.6
restaurants, hotels	64,382	90,832	52,137	42.6
finance	138,544	178,649	116,749	34.7
real estate, renting, business	93,557	97,807	84,616	13.5
public administrat., defense	47,276	51,670	40,540	21.5
education	34,454	37,255	33,506	10.1
health, social work	35,775	39,384	34,952	11.2
other community and personal services	61,369	75,816	47,914	36.8
Total	**60,805**	**73,508**	**46,922**	**36.2**

Source: ILO Laborsta, Table 5A

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[3]   We calculate with a 4%points overrepresentation of girls and young women aged 15-29 in commercial services compared to women over age 29.

In the fourth column of the table we have indicated the magnitude of the gender pay gap,[4] on a monthly base. It has to be added that this gap is normally calculated on an hourly base, as to eliminate differences in hours worked between em and women. Yet, the official statistics for Kazahstan show hardly any gender differences in hours worked (i.e. average hours per month, per occupation -- ILO Laborsta, Table O1). A full-time working week, of 35-45 hours, clearly is the country's standard, also for women workers. Thus, the figures of Table 11 are reasonable indications of the gender pay gap in Kazahstan. With over 36% in 2008, the overall gap was very large, also in international perspective. Only two industries show higher pay gaps: hotels and restaurants, surprisingly (as this industry across countries has no reputation of high gender pay gaps), and other community and personal services. The high overall average compared to the industry averages may seem rather odd, but can be explained by the composition effect: men are consistently over-represented in higher-paid industries and occupations. The industries with the lowest average earnings --education, health and social work—also show the smallest gender pay gaps.

It should be stressed that the evidence on the gender pay gap in Kazahstan presented here is in violent contrast with the evidence showed earlier on employment by occupational group, with female overrepresentation in two of three groups of (highly) qualified occupations, and on level of education completed, with Kazahstani women in employment having surpassed their male colleagues in this respect. The only obvious explanation left for such a large gender pay gap is the continuous and widespread existence of practices of wage discrimination.

2.9. References

CIA World Factbook *Kazahstan* (last accessed December 11, 2009) (https://www.coa.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/kz.html)

International Labour Office (ILO) *Labour Statistics (Laborsta)* (Ongoing: http://laborsta.ilo.org/)

UN Millenium Development Goals (MDG) Indicators (Ongoing: http://mdgs.un.org/unsd/mdg/Data.aspx)

Website UN Data, *Secondary education Enrolment* ((last accessed December 11, 2009) (http://data.un.org/Data.aspx?d=UNESCO&f=series%3AE_23))

wikipedia *Education in Kazahstan* (last accessed December 11, 2009)

wikipedia *Demographics of Kazahstan* (last accessed December 11, 2009)

3. What is WageIndicator?

WageIndicator has websites in 50 countries. In every country, a national website has a free Salary Check. This Check provides detailed information about the wages, on average earned in a wide range of occupations, taken into account personal characteristics, such as tenure/age, education, supervisory position, region and alike.

Apart from the Salary Check, the websites in many countries have attractive web-tools, such as Minimum Wage Checks, DecentWorkCheck, Gross-Net Earnings Check, and alike. In addition, most websites have content about wages, working conditions, labor standards and related topics. Each

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[4]   Using the international standard formula for the gender pay (or wage) gap: ((wage men – wage women) : wage men) x100).

country has at least one website. Multilingual countries have two or more websites. In addition, many countries have websites for target groups, for example women or youth. The project website is www.wageindicator.org.

Worldwide, the national WageIndicator websites attract large numbers of web-visitors. The websites are consulted by workers for their job mobility decisions, annual performance talks or wage negotiations. They are consulted by school pupils, students or re-entrant women facing occupational choices, or by employers in small and medium sized companies when recruiting staff or negotiating wages with their employees.

In return for all free information provided, the web-visitors are encouraged to complete a web-survey, which takes 10 to 20 minutes. The survey has detailed questions about earnings, benefits, working conditions, employment contract, training, as well as questions about education, occupation, industry, and household characteristics. This web-survey is comparable across all countries. The web-survey is continuously posted at all WageIndicator websites, of course in the national language(s) and adapted to country-specific issues, where needed. The data from the web-survey are used for the calculations, underlying the Salary Check. For occupations with at least 50 observations in the national database a salary indication can be calculated. The Salary Checks are updated annually.

The project started in 2000 in the Netherlands with a large-scale, paper-based survey to collect data on women's wages. In 2001 the first WageIndicator website with a Salary Check and a web-survey was launched. Since 2004, websites were launched in European countries, in North and South America, in South-Africa, and in countries in Asia. All large economies of the world currently have a WageIndicator website, among which the USA, the Russian Federation, China, India and Brazil. From 2009 onwards, websites are being launched in more African countries, as well as in Indonesia and in a number of post-soviet countries. More information about the WageIndicator Foundation and its activities can be found at www.wageindicator.org.

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