

ITUC Frontlines 2016 Poll

Special Topic: Global Supply Chains



ITUC International Trade Union confederation
CSI Confédération syndicale internationale
CSI Confederación Sindical International
IGB Internationaler Gewerkschaftsbund



TNS opinion

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Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Commentary	4
Chart 01 - Transparency: All companies should make information publicly available to their customers about all the contractors and sub-contractors they use (global)	5
Chart 02 - Responsibility: A company is ultimately responsible for and should be held accountable for the actions of their subcontractors, including if they undertake any illegal practices (global)	6
Chart 03 - Transparency: All companies should make information publicly available to their customers about all the contractors and sub-contractors they use (by country)	7
Chart 04 - Responsibility: A company is ultimately responsible for and should be held accountable for the actions of their subcontractors, including if they undertake any illegal practices (by country)	8
Chart 05 - Transparency: All companies should make information publicly available to their customers about all the contractors and sub-contractors they use (by age & gender)	9
Chart 06 - Responsibility: A company is ultimately responsible for and should be held accountable for the actions of their subcontractors, including if they undertake any illegal practices (by age & gender)	10
Table	
Table 01: Transparency by country	11
Table 02: Transparency by age and gender	12
Table 03: Responsibility by country	13
Table 04: Responsibility by age and gender	14
Methodology	15

Introduction

Corporate greed is growing and working people and governments are the victims of a level of corruption that denies taxation dollars for health, education, pensions and other areas of social protection, and fair distribution of wealth for a minimum living wage and a share of productivity through collective bargaining.

When up to 94% of the workers on whom our largest companies depend for their profits through global supply are invisible - a hidden workforce - with the large majority on low wages, insecure and unfair work, this greed is crippling working families and crippling the global economy.

The world's people know this is wrong. 82% hold companies accountable for the actions of their subcontractors and 77% want companies to be open and transparent about their subcontractors.

Ending corporate greed requires respect for workers' rights, a minimum wage on which people can live with dignity, collective bargaining and social protection backed by the rule of law.

Governments can change the exploitative model of global trade by supporting the demand for an ILO Convention that all governments must support, and use as the basis for legislation.

The UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights state that companies are responsible for due diligence - governments must act to put that into law.



Sharan Burrow

General Secretary, International Trade Union Confederation

Commentary

In the ITUC Frontlines Poll of 2016, the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) chose to delve into the issue of supply chains, and what responsibilities companies hold for the workers they subcontract to.

Across the nine G20 economies polled (Argentina, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, South Korea, the UK and the USA) each respondent was asked if they agreed or disagreed with two separate statements regarding supply chains.

Across all countries, the majority of people agree that companies are ultimately responsible for the actions of their subcontractors, and should make information about them available to their customers.

Together, the populations of these countries represent some 45% of the world's population and 55% of global GDP.

Overall, 82% of the population agree that a company is ultimately responsible for and should be held accountable for the actions of their subcontractors.

For those in this poll, this included if the subcontractor was undertaking illegal practices, such as slavery, forced labour or paying below the minimum wage. [\[CHART 2\]](#)

The levels of agreement were high across all countries polled, but were especially high in South Korea (91%), the UK (86%) and India (84%).

The two countries with the lowest levels of agreement still had large majorities of their populations agree; Argentina with 71% agreement and Germany with 78%. [\[CHART 4\]](#)

There was also barely any difference in agreement between the genders; 82% of males and 81% of females agree that that companies are ultimately responsible and should be held accountable for the actions of their subcontractors. [\[CHART 6\]](#)

In terms of differences in attitudes by age, the older the respondent the more likely they were to agree; although a large majority of those aged 16-24 agree that companies are ultimately responsible for the actions of their subcontractors (79%), this was less than those aged 55+ (86%). [\[CHART 6\]](#)

The public want companies to be open and transparent about their subcontractors' illegal practices including slavery, forced labour and paying below the minimum wage.

77% of the public agree that all companies should make information publically available to their customers about all the contractors and sub-contractors they use. [\[CHART 1\]](#)

Again, across all those countries polled agreement with this statement was high; the lowest level of agreement was for China, but at 72% was still a very large majority. India (82%) and France (80%) had the highest levels of agreement. [\[CHART 3\]](#)

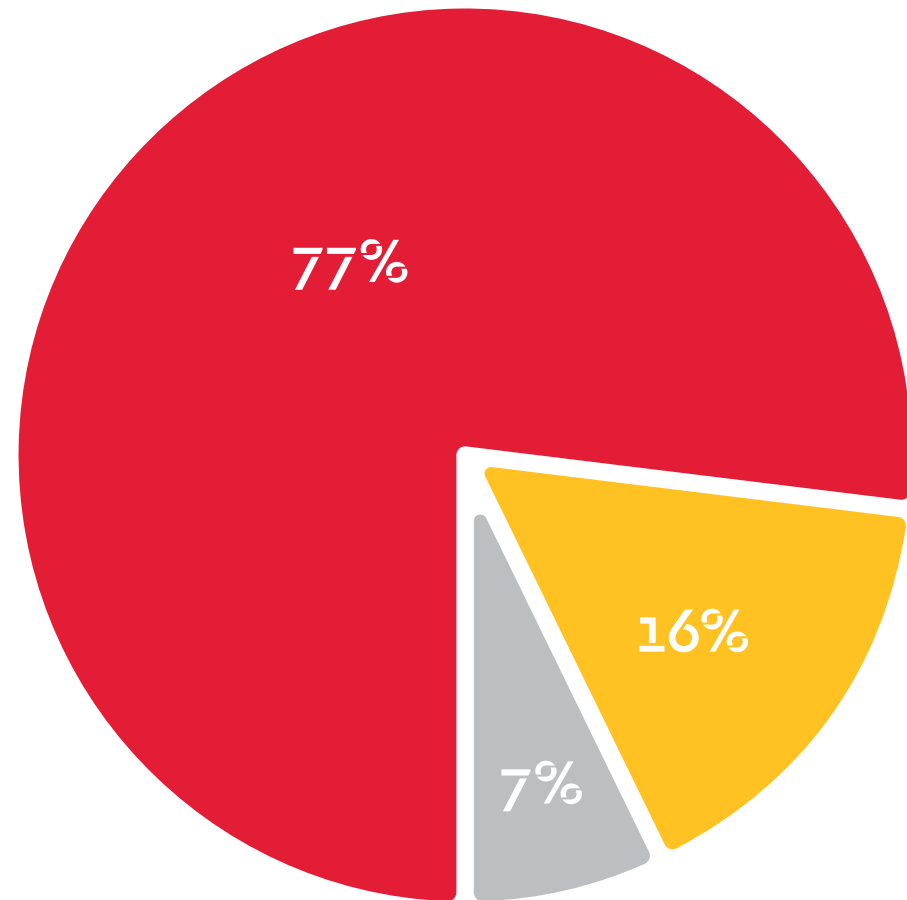
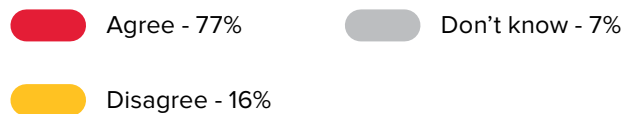
Again, there was very little difference in the level of agreement between males (76%) and females (78%). Those aged 55+ (80%) were also again more likely than young people to agree (76% of those aged 16-24. [\[CHART 5\]](#)

Chart 01 - Transparency:

All companies should make information publicly available to their customers about all the contractors and sub-contractors they use (global)

Question:

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statement - All companies should make information publicly available to their customers about all the contractors and sub-contractors they use AND To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statement – A company is ultimately responsible for and should be held accountable for the actions of their sub-contractors, including if they undertake any illegal practices (slavery, forced labour and paying below the minimum wage).



Notes:

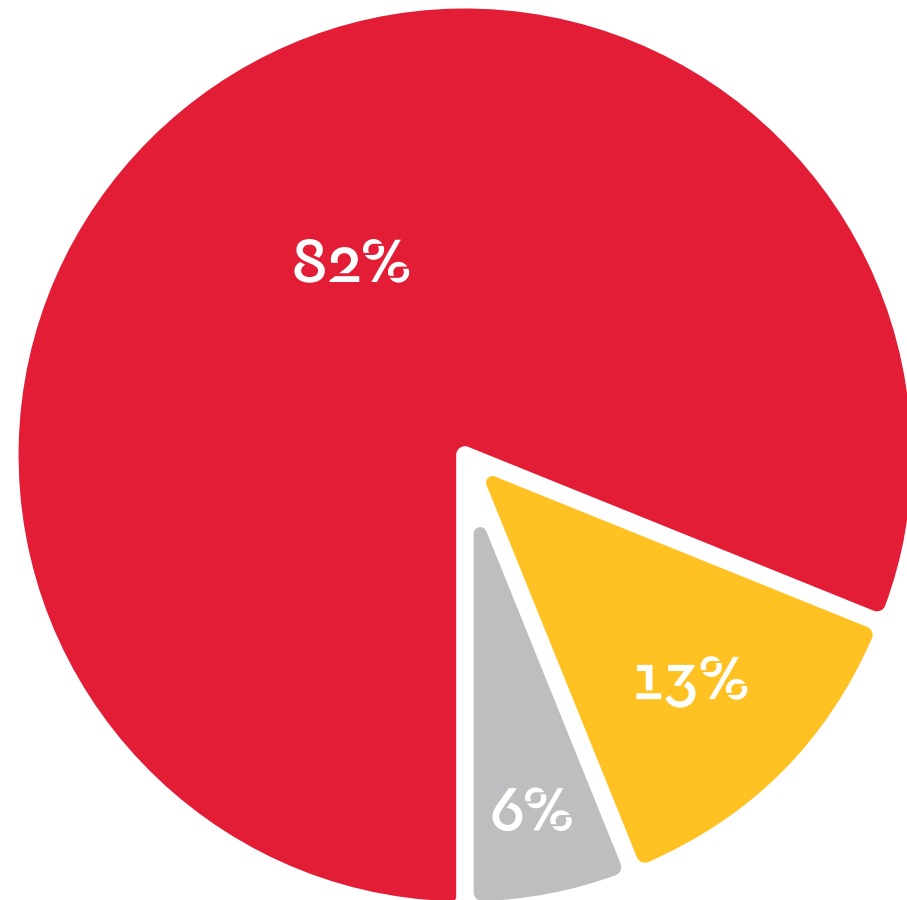
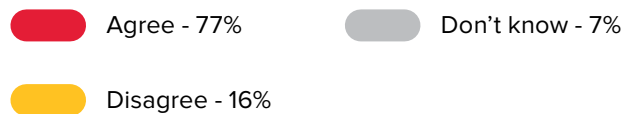
Total sample size across the 9 countries is 9187. Sample size for each country is displayed in the methodology.

Chart 02 - Responsibility:

A company is ultimately responsible for and should be held accountable for the actions of their subcontractors, including if they undertake any illegal practices (global)

Question:

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statement - All companies should make information publicly available to their customers about all the contractors and sub-contractors they use AND To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statement – A company is ultimately responsible for and should be held accountable for the actions of their sub-contractors, including if they undertake any illegal practices (slavery, forced labour and paying below the minimum wage).



Notes:

Total sample size across the 9 countries is 9187. Sample size for each country is displayed in the methodology.

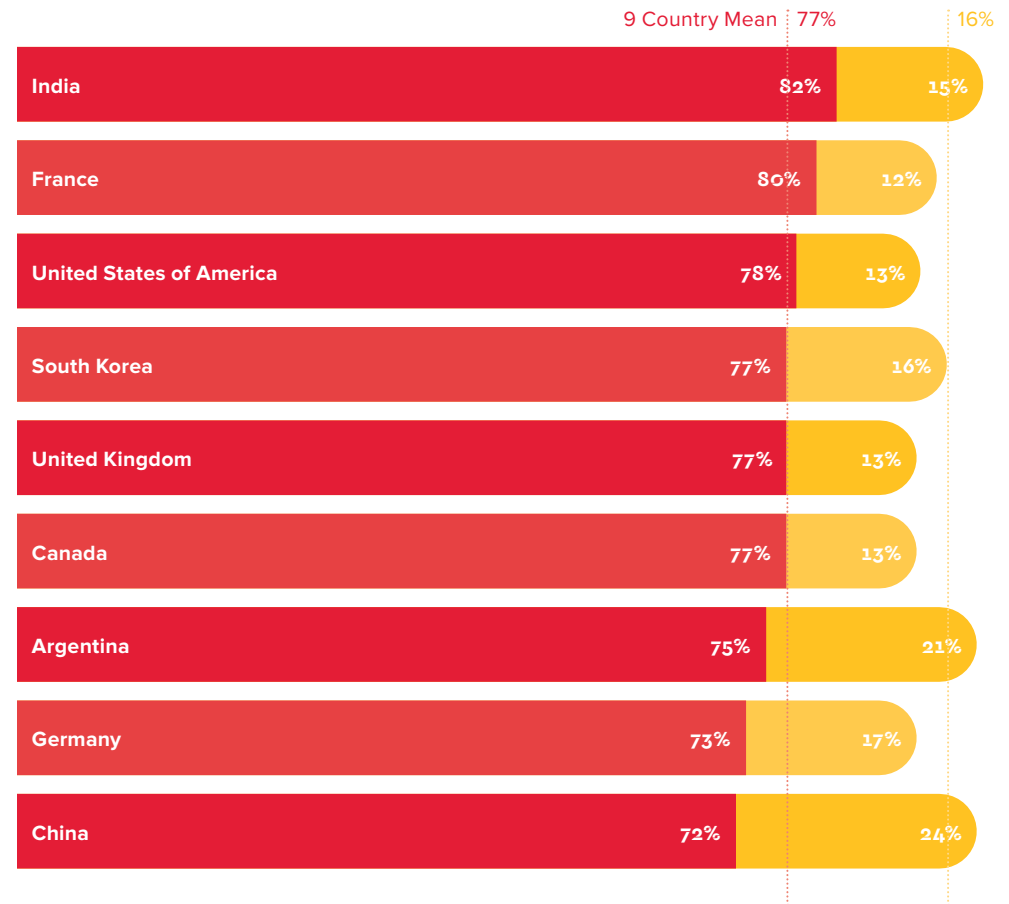
Chart 03 - Transparency:

All companies should make information publicly available to their customers about all the contractors and sub-contractors they use (by country)

Question:

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statement
- All companies should make information publicly available to their customers about all the contractors and sub-contractors they use.

Agree Disagree



Notes:

Sample size is at least n=1000 per country. Total sample size across the 9 countries is 9187. Sample size for each country is displayed in the methodology. “Don’t know” figure is not displayed for ease of reading.

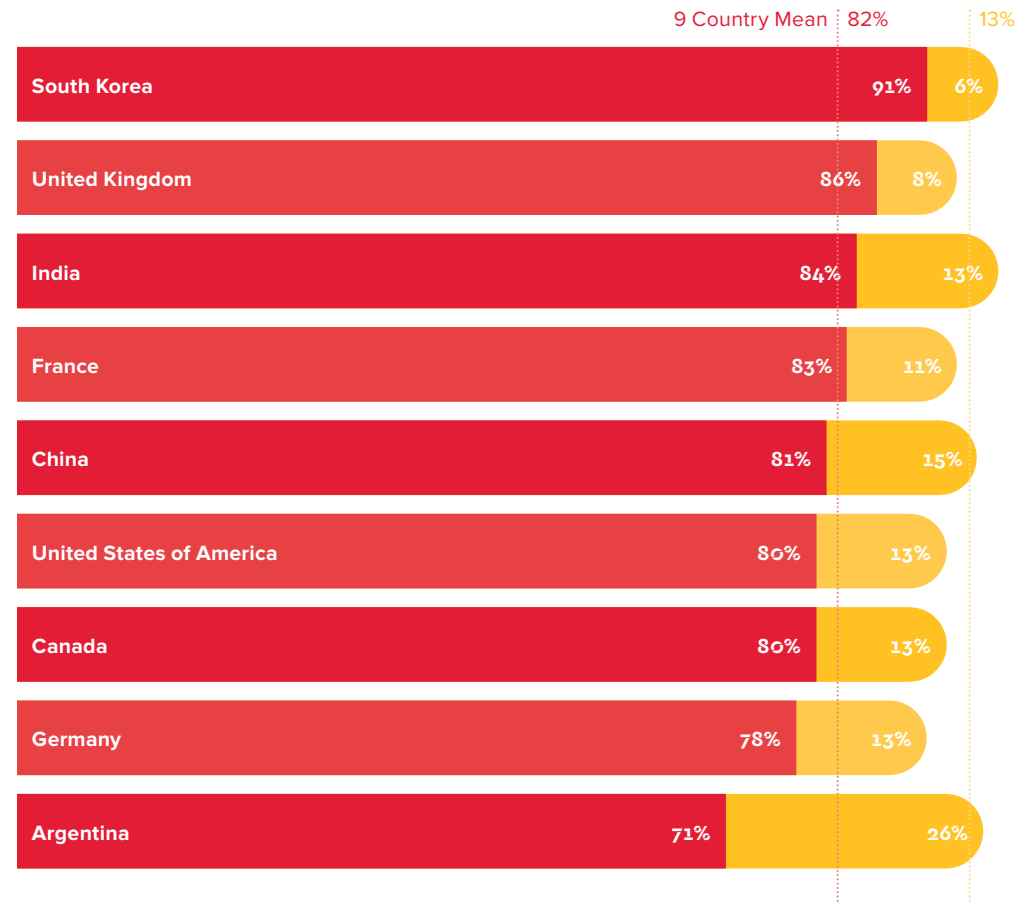
Chart 04 - Responsibility:

A company is ultimately responsible for and should be held accountable for the actions of their subcontractors, including if they undertake any illegal practices (by country)

Question:

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statement - A company is ultimately responsible for and should be held accountable for the actions of their subcontractors, including if they undertake any illegal practices (slavery, forced labour and paying below the minimum wage).

 Agree  Disagree



Notes:

Sample size is at least n=1000 per country. Total sample size across the 9 countries is 9187. Sample size for each country is displayed in the methodology. “Don’t know” figure is not displayed for ease of reading.

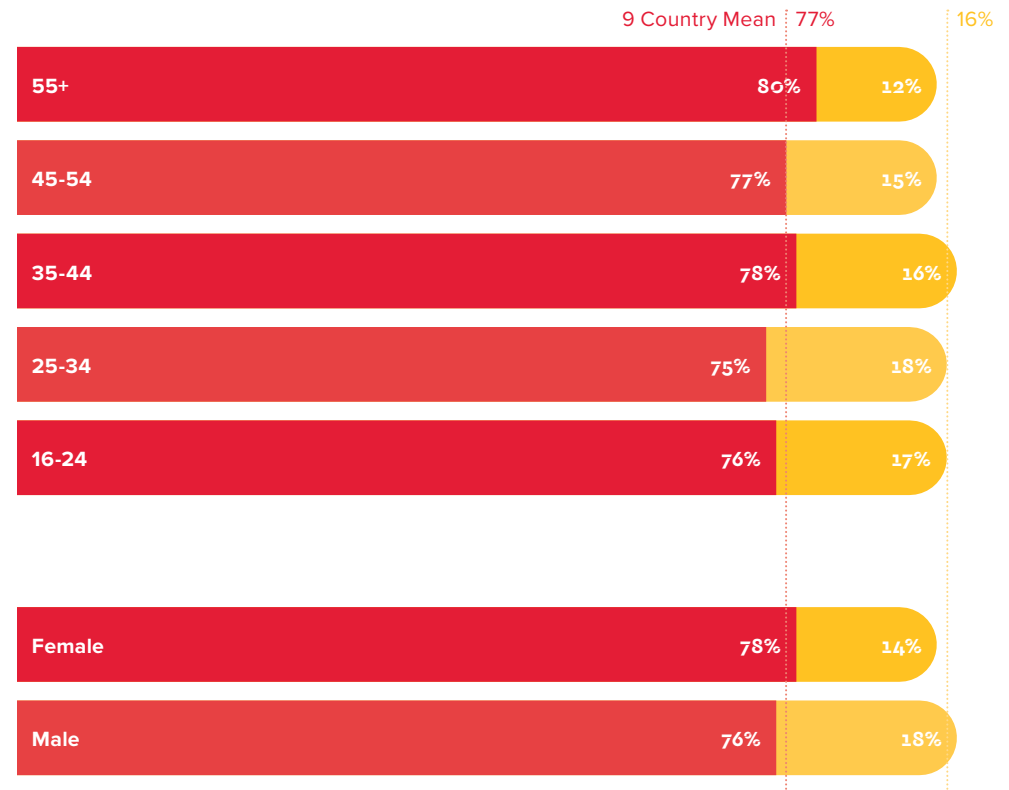
Chart 05 - Transparency:

All companies should make information publicly available to their customers about all the contractors and sub-contractors they use (by age & gender)

Question:

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statement
- All companies should make information publicly available to their customers about all the contractors and sub-contractors they use.

Agree Disagree



Notes:

Sample size is at least n=1000 per country. Total sample size across the 9 countries is 9187. Sample size for each country is displayed in the methodology. “Don’t know” figure is not displayed for ease of reading.

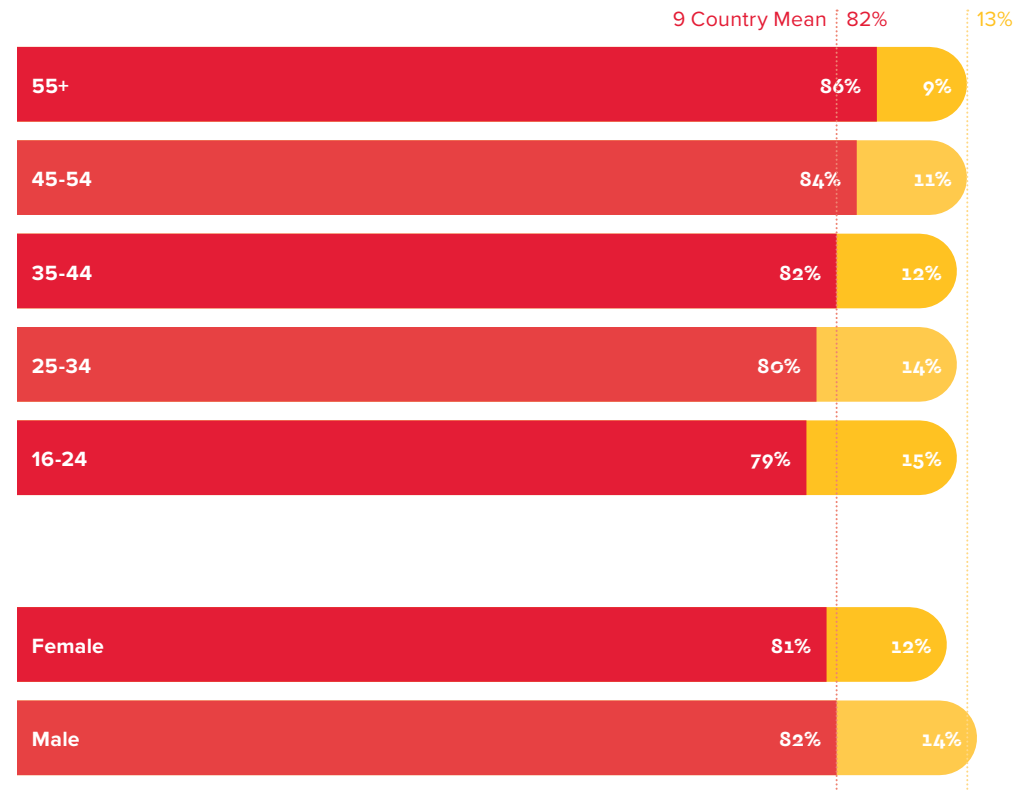
Chart 06 - Responsibility:

A company is ultimately responsible for and should be held accountable for the actions of their subcontractors, including if they undertake any illegal practices (by age & gender)

Question:

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statement - A company is ultimately responsible for and should be held accountable for the actions of their subcontractors, including if they undertake any illegal practices (slavery, forced labour and paying below the minimum wage).

● Agree ● Disagree



Notes:

Sample size is at least n=1000 per country. Total sample size across the 9 countries is 9187. Sample size for each country is displayed in the methodology. “Don’t know” figure is not displayed for ease of reading.

Table 01:

Transparency by country

Question:

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statement - All companies should make information publicly available to their customers about all the contractors and sub-contractors they use.

	TOTAL	Argentina	Canada	China	France	Germany	India	South Korea	UK	USA
TOTAL Agree	77%	75%	77%	72%	80%	73%	82%	77%	77%	78%
TOTAL Disagree	16%	21%	13%	24%	12%	17%	15%	16%	13%	13%
Totally agree	33%	41%	37%	21%	38%	32%	40%	22%	35%	33%
Tend to agree	44%	33%	41%	51%	42%	41%	42%	55%	42%	45%
Tend to disagree	12%	12%	9%	20%	9%	14%	10%	14%	11%	9%
Totally disagree	4%	9%	5%	4%	3%	3%	5%	2%	2%	4%
Don't know	7%	4%	10%	3%	8%	9%	3%	7%	10%	9%

Table 02:

Transparency by age and gender

Question:

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statement - All companies should make information publicly available to their customers about all the contractors and sub-contractors they use.

	TOTAL	Male	Female	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+
TOTAL Agree	77%	76%	78%	76%	75%	78%	77%	80%
TOTAL Disagree	16%	18%	14%	17%	18%	16%	15%	12%
Totally agree	33%	35%	32%	29%	32%	33%	34%	43%
Tend to agree	44%	42%	46%	47%	44%	45%	42%	37%
Tend to disagree	12%	13%	11%	13%	13%	11%	12%	9%
Totally disagree	4%	5%	4%	4%	5%	5%	4%	3%
Don't know	7%	6%	8%	7%	7%	6%	8%	8%

Table 03: Responsibility by country

Question:

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statement - A company is ultimately responsible for and should be held accountable for the actions of their subcontractors, including if they undertake any illegal practices (slavery, forced labour and paying below the minimum wage).

	TOTAL	Argentina	Canada	China	France	Germany	India	South Korea	UK	USA
TOTAL Agree	82%	71%	80%	81%	83%	78%	84%	91%	86%	80%
TOTAL Disagree	13%	26%	13%	15%	11%	13%	13%	6%	8%	13%
Totally agree	44%	47%	45%	33%	50%	43%	47%	47%	44%	37%
Tend to agree	38%	24%	34%	48%	33%	35%	37%	44%	42%	43%
Tend to disagree	8%	9%	8%	11%	8%	11%	8%	5%	6%	9%
Totally disagree	5%	17%	6%	4%	3%	2%	4%	1%	2%	4%
Don't know	6%	3%	7%	4%	7%	8%	4%	4%	6%	7%

Table 04: Responsibility by age and gender

Question:

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statement - A company is ultimately responsible for and should be held accountable for the actions of their subcontractors, including if they undertake any illegal practices (slavery, forced labour and paying below the minimum wage).

	TOTAL	Male	Female	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+
TOTAL Agree	82%	82%	81%	79%	80%	82%	84%	86%
TOTAL Disagree	13%	14%	12%	15%	14%	12%	11%	9%
Totally agree	44%	45%	43%	39%	40%	44%	48%	55%
Tend to agree	38%	38%	38%	40%	40%	39%	35%	31%
Tend to disagree	8%	9%	8%	10%	9%	8%	7%	6%
Totally disagree	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%	4%	3%
Don't know	6%	4%	7%	6%	6%	5%	5%	5%

Methodology

These conclusions are based on the 2016 International Trade Union Confederation Frontlines Poll.

The results in the document relate to one of four questions asked in this poll via an Internet omnibus survey.

This question was asked in nine countries (Argentina, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, South Korea, the UK and the USA).

The results to the questions not included in this report will be released separately.

In each of the 9 countries, approximately n=1000 respondents were interviewed. Exact sample sizes are listed below:

The sample in each country has been selected by quotas to reflect national proportions in regards to age, gender and region.

SPSS Software and Microsoft Excel were used to analyse the results.

Essential Media Communications were responsible for questionnaire design, data analysis and reporting.

TNS Opinion carried out the fieldwork between the 14th and 22nd April, 2016.

Figures have been rounded so tables may not add to 100%.

Country	Sample Size
Argentina	1015
Canada	1010
China	1041
France	1020
Germany	1029
India	1029
South Korea	1005
UK	1034
USA	1004

Copies of the ITUC Global Poll reports from 2012, 2013 and 2014 are available on the ITUC website:

www.ituc-csi.org

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