

Leading employment lawyer and senator Mirjam de Blécourt receives the new Labour Rights Index 2020 of the WageIndicator Foundation

AMSTERDAM, the Netherlands – 30 September 2020 - Leading Labour & Employment lawyer *Mirjam de Blécourt* of international law firm Baker McKenzie and Senator of the Dutch Parliament receives the new Labour Rights Index 2020 at the first official - COVID-proof - presentation. The freely accessible Index is co-created by the WageIndicator Foundation and its affiliate Centre for Labour Research. The detailed market Index provides objective legal data of the labour market in 115 countries. It is the first comprehensive and legally recognized Index and meant to function as the new comparative international qualification standard. “The assumption that only rich countries are the best-performing is a misunderstanding. And that gives hope.” According to Paulien Osse, Director of WageIndicator Foundation.

The Index shows labour standards in ranges of minimum wages, general working hours, annual leave, public holidays, parental leave, right to strike, employment of children etc. The Index is therefore a useful benchmark tool in stimulating policy debate as it can help in exposing challenges and identifying best practices.

The Labour Right Index makes it easier for employees to find the legal and minimum wages rights relevant to their situation and make well-informed decisions for the better. The use of the Index is recommended for employees, employers, international organizations, national governments, as well as national labour market institutions and civil society organizations.

Key data & insights Labour Rights Index 2020

The Labour Rights Index looks at a person’s whole working lifespan and identifies the presence of labour rights, or lack thereof, in national legal systems worldwide. In Canada employees have less than 3 weeks annual leave. In Guinea employees receive 30 paid vacation days. With 58,5 weeks maternity leave new mothers are best off in Bulgaria. The US is the only country that has no right to give new parents paid time off.

The Index shows that in 43 out of 115 countries the maximum working hours and overtime is 57 hours per week. In Thailand, working hours inclusive of overtime may extend to 84 hours per week. When you are an employee in Kenya, the general working hours is 52 hours per week, this is 17 hours per week more than in France where the general weekly working hours are 35 hours. Every worker enjoys public holidays. In Cambodia employees have a record of 27 public holidays compared to Tunisia where employees have only 6 public holidays. A difference of 21 working days. In 38 countries you have the right to strike as an employee, this means in 77 countries the right to strike is either prohibited or severely restricted.

The Index also covers provision of basic social protection to gig economy workers, especially when they are considered self-employed or independent contractors. More than 90% countries in the Index provide access to basic social protection to the gig economy workers.

Labour market and COVID-19

Labour markets worldwide have been severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. U.N. agency the International Labour Organization estimates job disruptions for more than 300 million workers in the second quarter of 2020 alone. In view of the current worldwide

labour market insecurity caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, it is opportune time to address the protection of all labour rights for all workers, irrespective of employment or contract status or sector of employment. By highlighting state of legislation on key labour rights, the Labour Rights Index serves that purpose and can be used to bring much needed reforms.

Quote Mirjam de Blécourt, Labour & Employment lawyer of international law firm Baker McKenzie and member of the Senate of the Dutch Parliament said: *'The Labour Rights Index is a groundbreaking new open resource that makes important information on labour and employment rights freely available for everyone, from employers and policy-makers to low-income workers dealing with challenging working conditions. I share WageIndicator Foundation's view that open access to objective information on for example minimum wages, working time limits and dismissal rights is the first step to a more equitable world, and highly recommend this Index.'*

Quote Paulien Osse, founder and Director of WageIndicator Foundation, said: *'Universal labour guarantees and basic labour protections should be available to everyone. There is a lack of coherent and independent labour market information with easy access in many countries worldwide. We have a clear mission to create more transparency that is freely accessible. Our dream is to create an excellent objective indicator for all countries worldwide to make sure that everybody is treated fairly and has access to all workplace rights.'*



Paulien Osse

Mirjam de Blécourt

For more information

[Labour Rights Index Heat Map](#)

Background Labour Rights Index

The Labour Rights Index is the flagship product of the WageIndicator Foundation, a Dutch non-profit, founded in 2001 (In Dutch *Stichting Loonwijzer*). The aim of the Index is to provide more labour market transparency for the benefit of employees, trade unions and employers by sharing and comparing information on minimum wages, living wages,

international comparable labour law and careers. Mapping national labour markets is crucial, especially in countries where information is not easily accessible on paper or employees do not have access to digital information. WageIndicator Foundation is a worldwide organisation, now active in 140 countries.

The Labour Rights Index is a work in progress. Each year, a new edition will be released. The future editions of the Index will include for example provision of day care/childcare centres at the workplace, fair treatment of part-time workers equivalent to comparable full-time workers. Where the first Index now covers 115 countries, WageIndicator plans to extend coverage to 140 countries in coming years.

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