

A Living Wage for South African Platform Workers

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What is a Living Wage?

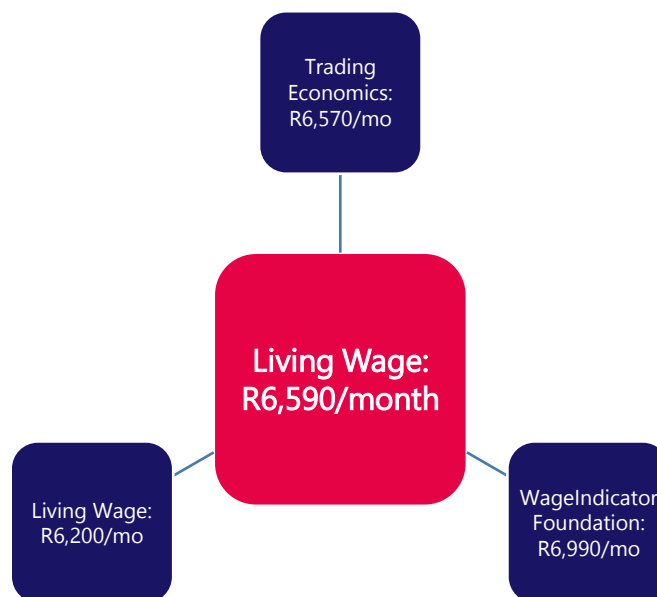
A living wage is remuneration sufficient for a basic but decent standard of living for a worker and his/her family. "Elements of a decent standard of living include food, water, housing, education, health care, transport, clothing, and other essential needs, including provision for unexpected events".¹

Why Pay a Living Wage?

Societal rationales include the moral argument of not denying workers enough to meet basic needs, and contribution to UN Sustainable Development Goals including reduction of inequality in South Africa. Platform rationales include evidence linking living wage payments to improved reputation, improved worker productivity and performance, lower worker turnover/absenteeism, and better manager—worker relations.²

How Much is a Living Wage?

There is general acceptance that South African minimum wage levels are well below those necessary for a "basic but decent standard of living".³ We propose a living wage of R6,590 per month in 2019, based on a triangulation of sources.⁴ We note the challenge that living costs differ for every worker so that a single figure represents a difficult compromise that will underpay some.



¹ <https://www.globallivingwage.org/about/what-is-a-living-wage/>;

https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C131

² E.g. <https://www.trustforlondon.org.uk/documents/125/Living-wage-costs-and-benefits-FULL.pdf>; <https://www.ethicaltrade.org/issues/living-wage-workers>; <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/j.0019-8676.2004.00370.x>

³ [https://www.pacsa.org.za/images/SUBMISSIONS/Portfolio Committee on Labour NMW PACSA 16 March 2018.pdf](https://www.pacsa.org.za/images/SUBMISSIONS/Portfolio%20Committee%20on%20Labour%20NMW%20PACSA%2016%20March%202018.pdf);

<http://lrs.org.za/media/2018/5/83c586cb-416e-43d4-8b0e-1ddd70d021da-1526638601280.pdf>

⁴ <https://tradingeconomics.com/south-africa/living-wage-individual>; <https://living-wage.co.za/> - corrected for inflation; <https://wageindicator.org/salary/living-wage/south-africa-living-wage-series-december-2018> (minimum for standard family)

