Crowd research: Wages and transparency in the garment industry

WOULD YOU LIKE TO TAKE PART IN THE RESEARCH? IN THESE INSTRUCTIONS YOU CAN FIND OUT EXACTLY HOW CROWD RESEARCH WORKS AND WHAT YOU NEED TO BE AWARE OF WHEN DOING THE RESEARCH AND ENTERING THE INFORMATION.

WWW.PUBLICEYE.CH/CROWDRESEARCH

A. What does crowd research involve?

We work together to investigate which companies are committed to paying a living wage.

Inequality and exploitation can be found throughout the global supply chains of the garment industry. Therefore, the issue of production conditions needs to be brought out into the open.

Which companies make information about their factories and the wages paid there publicly available? Which companies have a concrete action plan for paying living wages?

The crowd research database highlights to what extent clothing companies are transparent about these issues.

The special feature of this database is that the information is supplied by many different people. You can become involved too. Together we can help to make the garment industry more transparent.

The crowd research project is continuing until November 2019.

B. You will find the following information in the database

-    Does the company make any statements about living wages on its website?

-    Does the company have a concrete action plan or a strategy for paying living wages in its supply chain?

-    Does the company publish information about its factories and suppliers?

-    Does the company make available details of the wages that the workers there are paid?

The database contains information about large and small fashion brands from various countries. Other companies can be added during the course of the research project.

We accept no responsibility for the information in the database. We check the data that is entered as soon as possible, but because of the open nature of the research, we cannot guarantee that the information is correct. If you find an error, please report it via the entry form or send an e-mail to crowdresearch@publiceye.ch.

C. How crowd research works

Would you like to take part in the research? This is how it works.

Do you know of a company that is not yet in our database? Or do you want to add or correct information about other companies? Then take part in our crowd research project! You simply need some time and a talent for research so that you can track down the information you need on the websites of the companies, which are sometimes very complex and convoluted.

Sources

You must give the source of all the information you enter. The source must be publicly accessible, in other words not an internal company document or details from a private e-mail.

Read other people's research

Find the company that interests you. The easiest way is to use the search field in the top left-hand corner. All the squares without question marks indicate companies that someone has already researched. Click on the square to read the answer. If the company has provided full or partial information in reply to the question, you will also see a link to the source so that you can find out more for yourself.

If an answer seems to you to be incorrect, you can inform us about this using the "Report a problem" button.

If you cannot find a clothing company in the list, it may not be a separate company, but simply a brand that belongs to another firm (parent company). The easiest thing to do is to check on the

company website or on Wikipedia. If this is the case, you can search in the crowd research for the parent company. If you still cannot find what you are looking for, you can use the button on the left to add a new company so that you or someone else can research the answers.

Carrying out your own research

Wherever you see squares with question marks, an answer has not yet been added. You can research into the company yourself and enter information. A few tips:

1. **Give yourself plenty of time.** When you first carry out research, we recommend that you allow at least an hour or two. You won't find all the information at first glance or only on one website. Some of the questions are complex and will take some time to get used to.

2. Become familiar with the research questions. Find out why the question is important and what the possible answers are.

3. Visit the company's websites. Some businesses have only one, but in the case of many larger companies you will find the information spread over several sites. Often you will be taken first to an online shop, but the sort of information that we are looking for is generally on the corporate website. Sometimes you will find links to company information on the shop pages, for example under menu items such as "About us" or "Corporate information". These menu items are often right at the bottom of the web page in the footer. Sometimes the shop does not have a link to the company site. For this reason it is always a good idea to use a search engine too.

4. You will find more search tips at the end of these instructions.

5. Many companies publish sustainability reports or factsheets on their production processes, generally in the form of separate PDF files. Annual reports (financial reports) sometimes also contain sections with information about supply chains.

6. If you need inspiration, it can be helpful to look at the answers and, most importantly, the sources of information for companies that have already been researched. Where have other people found the information they were looking for? Does the company that you are investigating have similar information?

7. Once you have found the information or have come to the conclusion after a thorough search that the company has not published anything, enter the answer in the form to add the information to the crowd research database. Copy the link to the source into the appropriate field in the form.

8. If you want, you can enter other details in the comment field, for example the page numbers of a PDF document, a quotation from the source, a link to an additional source or other information.

Using operators in Google

If you are searching for a word or phrase on a specific website, there is a useful way of doing this in Google. Using the "site" operator, you can restrict your Google search to the specific website that you want to search. Your search will look something like this: [site:gap.com "living wage"]. As you can see, "living wage" is in inverted commas. This means that you will only see results for the entire phrase. Without the inverted commas, there would also have been results for the individual words "living" and "wage".

Use different languages and synonyms

Investigate the company's website to find out which is the main language of the site. If you are searching for information about a living wage, use the equivalent term in this language (for example Existenzlohn in German). You can also search for related terms that could be used in this context such as "sustainable", "social" etc. (also in the main language of the website). The small print on websites is not usually translated into all the languages.

Search outside the company website

Entering [site:gap.com "living wage"] into Google will not get you very far. The American fashion company The Gap has set up a separate website for its sustainability strategy. In this case you will find more information if you do not use the site operator.

Parent companies/subsidiaries

Be aware of the company's structure. For example, Banana Republic is a brand that belongs to The Gap. The URL of the website www.bananarepublic.gap.com indicates this, but the address of the website www.bananarepublic.eu does not. If you are in any doubt, read the Wikipedia entry for the brand to find out about the company structure and to identify which brands the information you have discovered about living wages refers to. You can include both the parent company and the brand in the crowd research. However, to avoid unnecessary duplication, it is best to add the parent company or the main company. Only include brands if they take action and provide information independently about the transparency of their supply chains and wages.

Ctrl + F

If you have reached a web page where you expect to find relevant information, you can search the page easily using your browser's search function. Simply press the Ctrl key (Mac: Apple key) and the letter F (for "find"). A small search field will appear where you can enter a search term.

D. What happens to the data?

The results are uploaded to the wikirate.org platform. Wikirate specialises in collective company research. The platform is used by a variety of universities and NGOs and is hosted by a non-profit organisation (WikiRate Project e.V.) which is based in Berlin. For more information, visit: https://wikirateproject.org/About_Us.

We need your e-mail address and your name to verify the research results in the event of an enquiry. Neither your e-mail address nor your name will be published.

Thank you very much for your help! Every contribution to our crowd research project helps to improve the transparency of the garment industry.

If you have questions about crowd research or technical problems, send an e-mail to crowdresearch@publiceye.ch.