

Friday 10 August, 2018

## Pay going backwards for four out of five workers

Four out of five of Australian voters either didn't receive a pay rise in the past year, or any wage increase they received failed to keep up with the rising cost of living, according to a poll of 2,453 people conducted by ReachTel for the ACTU on 2 August.

Of those surveyed, 82 percent believe low wage growth in this country is an important issue or the most important issue when deciding their vote at the next election.

The latest ABS Living Cost Index showed the cost of living for working households increased by 2.3 percent in the year ending June 2018, well above average wage growth of 2.1 percent. Private sector wage growth is lower again at 1.9 percent.

The latest Household Income and Labour Dynamics (HILDA) survey showed Australia hadn't had a pay rise since 2009. The median disposable income for an entire household adjusted for inflation was \$79,160 in 2016 dollars. In 2016, it was \$79,244.

**From 13 August, Australian Unions will be collecting stories on workers who haven't received a pay rise. Workers can call: 1300 486 466, or visit: <https://yourstory.australianunions.org.au/>**

### Quotes attributable to ACTU Secretary Sally McManus:

"Working people and their families are struggling to keep their heads above water. The cost of living is going up and people are struggling.

"Australia needs a pay rise. We need to change the rules so that fair pay rises can meet the rising cost of living.

"Working people need the tools and power to win fair pay rises. The enterprise-only bargaining system is failing with a large majority of working people reporting either no increase or inadequate increases in the past year.

"Our system is out of balance: Big business has too much power and employers can just say no to fair pay rises.

"The Turnbull Government is cutting wages through the penalty rates cuts, failing to support a living wage or address insecure work, while low wage growth is a national crisis.

"Working people across the country are worried about their wages, meanwhile the Turnbull Government is handing \$17 billion to the big four banks. This polling shows how out of touch this government is with ordinary people and the issues that matter."

**ENDS**

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