

25/2017 - 10 February 2017

## National minimum wages in the EU

# Monthly minimum wages below €500 in east and well above €1000 in northwest

As of 1<sup>st</sup> January 2017, 22 out of the 28 Member States of the **European Union** (EU) have national minimum wages: only Denmark, Italy, Cyprus, Austria, Finland and Sweden do not have one. The 22 EU Member States that have national minimum wages can be divided into three main groups based on the level in euro.

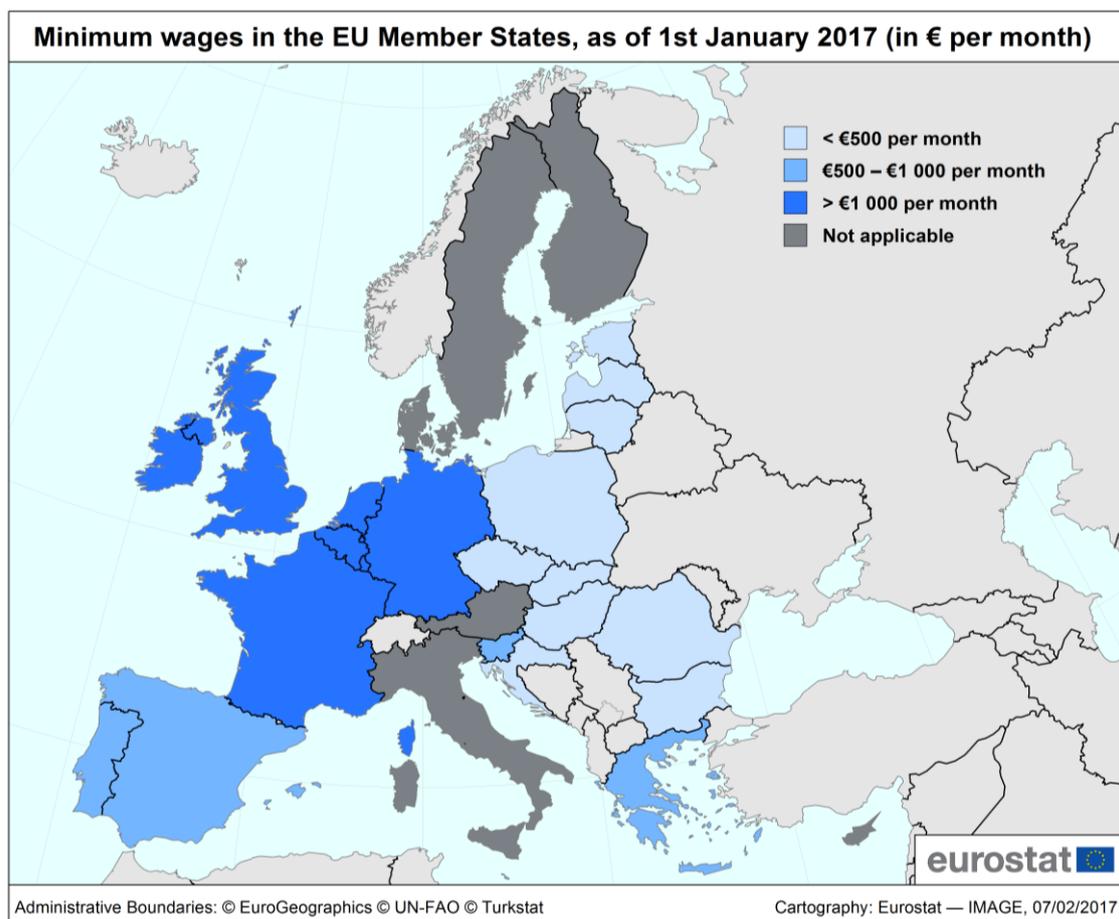
In January 2017, ten Member States, located in the east of the EU, had minimum wages below €500 per month: **Bulgaria** (€235), **Romania** (€275), **Latvia** and **Lithuania** (both €380), the **Czech Republic** (€407), **Hungary** (€412), **Croatia** (€433), **Slovakia** (€435), **Poland** (€453) and **Estonia** (€470).

In five other Member States, located in the south, minimum wages were between €500 and €1 000 per month: **Portugal** (€650), **Greece** (€684), **Malta** (€736), **Slovenia** (€805) and **Spain** (€826).

In the remaining seven Member States, all located in the west and north of the EU, minimum wages were well above €1 000 per month: the **United Kingdom** (€1 397), **France** (€1 480), **Germany** (€1 498), **Belgium** (€1 532), the **Netherlands** (€1 552), **Ireland** (€1 563) and **Luxembourg** (€1 999).

For comparison, the federal minimum wage in the **United States** was €1 192 per month in January 2017.

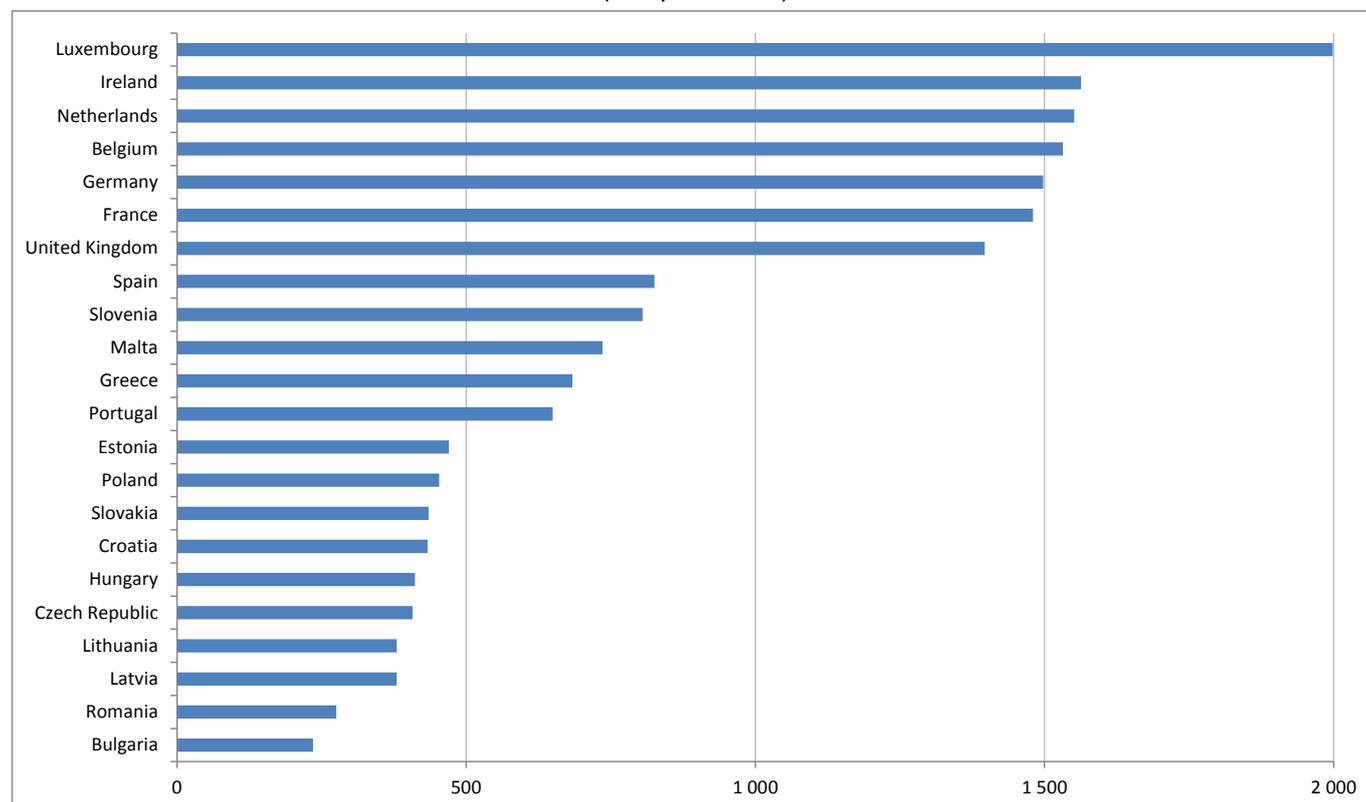
This information comes from an [article](#) issued by **Eurostat**, the statistical office of the **European Union**.



## Gap reduced from 1 to 9 in euro to 1 to 3 when minimum wages are expressed in PPS

Across the 22 Member States concerned, minimum wages range from less than 300 euros per month in both **Bulgaria** (€235) and **Romania** (€275) to just below 2 000 euros a month in **Luxembourg** (€1 999). In other words, the highest minimum wage in the EU is around 9 times the lowest.

**Minimum wages in the EU Member States, as of 1<sup>st</sup> January 2017**  
(in € per month)



However, the disparities in minimum wages across the EU States are considerably smaller once price level differences are eliminated: minimum wages in those Member States with relatively lower price levels become relatively higher when expressed in purchasing power standard (PPS), and relatively lower in those Member States with higher price levels. The gap is reduced to a ratio of about 1:3, ranging from 501 PPS per month in **Bulgaria** to 1 659 PPS in **Luxembourg**.

## Minimum wages closest to median earnings in Portugal, France and Slovenia

Minimum wages may also be measured in relative terms, i.e. as a proportion of the median gross monthly earnings. In 2014, among Member States concerned and for which data on median earnings are available, minimum wages were above 60% of the median gross monthly earnings in only three Member States: **Portugal** (64%), **France** and **Slovenia** (both 62%). In contrast, minimum wages were less than half of the median earnings in seven Member States: the **Czech Republic** (39%), **Estonia** (40%), **Ireland** and **Spain** (both 45%), **Slovakia** (46%), **Malta** (48%) and the **United Kingdom** (49%).

## Minimum wages decreased compared with 2008 only in Greece

Compared with 2008, minimum wages in 2017, expressed in euro, increased in every Member State having a national minimum wage, except **Greece** where they dropped by 14%. Between 2008 and 2017, minimum wages doubled in **Bulgaria** (+109%) and **Romania** (+99%). In addition, **Slovakia** (+80%) as well as the three EU Baltic Member States – **Estonia** (+69%), **Latvia** (+65%) and **Lithuania** (+64%) – also recorded significant increases.

## Geographical information

In January 2017, Belgium, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Germany (since 1<sup>st</sup> January 2015), Estonia, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Croatia, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Hungary, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, and the United Kingdom had a national minimum wage as defined below.

## Methods and definitions

Minimum wage statistics, published bi-annually by Eurostat, refer to monthly national minimum wages applied on 1 January and 1 July each year. The national minimum wage usually applies to all employees, or at least to a large majority of employees in a country. It is fixed at an hourly, weekly or monthly rate, and is enforced by law, often after consultation with social partners, or directly by a national inter-sectorial agreement. Minimum wages are generally presented as monthly wage rates for gross earnings, that is, before the deduction of income tax and social security contributions payable by the employee; these deductions vary from country to country.

## Country notes:

For those countries where the national minimum wage is not fixed at a monthly rate (for example, where minimum wages are specified on an hourly or weekly basis) the level of the minimum wage is converted into a monthly rate according to conversion factors supplied by the countries:

Germany: (hourly rate x 39.1 hours x 52 weeks) / 12 months (the value 39.1 hours results from the quarterly earnings survey and relates to mean basic hours per week for full time employees in NACE Rev.2 sections B to S). The national minimum wage is €8.84 per hour

Ireland: (hourly rate x 39 hours x 52 weeks) / 12 months. The national minimum wage is €9.25 per hour

France: (hourly rate x 35 hours x 52 weeks) / 12 months. The national minimum wage is €9.76 per hour

Malta: (weekly rate x 52 weeks) / 12 months. The national minimum wage is €169.76 per week

United Kingdom: (hourly rate x mean basic paid hours per week for full-time employees in all sectors x 52.18 weeks) / 12 months. The national minimum wage is £7.20 per hour

United States: (hourly rate x 40 hours x 52 weeks) / 12 months. The national minimum wage is \$7.25 per hour

In addition, when the minimum wage is paid for more than 12 months per year (as in Greece, Spain and Portugal, where it is paid for 14 months a year), data have been adjusted to take these payments into account.

Additional information, including country-specific information, is available on the Eurostat website [here](#).

Data on national minimum wages are submitted to Eurostat in national currency. For the non-euro area countries, minimum wages in national currencies are converted into euro by applying the monthly exchange rate as recorded at the end of the previous month (for example, the rate at the end of December 2016 was used for calculating minimum wages in euro as of 1 January 2017). It should be noted that for those EU Member States outside of the euro area that have minimum wages (Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Croatia, Hungary, Poland, Romania and the United Kingdom), as well as for the United States, the levels and developments of minimum wages expressed in euro may differ from those expressed in national currency, due to exchange rate effects.

To remove the effect of differences in price levels between the countries, special conversion rates called **purchasing power parities** (PPPs) are used. PPPs for household final consumption expenditure in each country are used to convert the monthly minimum wages expressed in euro or national currencies to an artificial common unit called the purchasing power standard (PPS).

**Median earnings** refer to the level of earnings which divides the employees into two equal groups: half earn less than the median and half earn more. Data refer to the gross monthly earnings covering the wages and salaries earned by full-time and part-time employees in the reference month (general October 2014) before any tax and social security contributions are deducted. Wages and salaries include overtime pay, shift premiums, allowances, bonuses, commission, etc. The gross monthly earnings of part-time employees have been converted into full-time units before being included in the average with the same weight as full time employees. Excluding part-time employees from the calculation of median gross monthly earnings impacts minimum wage/ median earnings. In particular, it would impact the ratio downwards by more than 5 percentage points for the Netherlands (49% instead of 56%), Germany (47% instead of 53%) and the United Kingdom (44% instead of 49%).

The 2014 annual averages of the exchange rate were used in converting national (non-euro) currencies into euro. Median earnings have been derived from Structure of Earnings Survey data (SES 2014) and calculated for all enterprises with more than 10 employees except those belonging to NACE rev.2 section O (Public administration and defence; compulsory social security). Apprentices are excluded.

## For more information

Eurostat [website section](#) dedicated to earnings statistics.

Eurostat [database](#) on earnings.

Eurostat [metadata](#) on minimum wages.

Eurostat [news release 246/2016](#) of 8 December 2016 on low-wage earners.

Eurostat [news release of 248/2016](#) 12 December 2016 on earnings distribution.

Eurostat [Statistics Explained article](#) on minimum wage statistics.

Issued by: **Eurostat Press Office**

Production of data:

**Vincent BOURGEAIS**  
Tel: +352-4301-33 444  
[eurostat-pressoffice@ec.europa.eu](mailto:eurostat-pressoffice@ec.europa.eu)

**Ines KOLAKOVIC**  
Tel: +352-4301- 32 179  
[estat-earncost@ec.europa.eu](mailto:estat-earncost@ec.europa.eu)

[www.ec.europa.eu/eurostat/](http://www.ec.europa.eu/eurostat/)

[@EU\\_Eurostat](https://twitter.com/EU_Eurostat)

 **Media requests:** Eurostat media support / Tel: +352-4301-33 408 / [eurostat-mediasupport@ec.europa.eu](mailto:eurostat-mediasupport@ec.europa.eu)

[ec.europa.eu/eurostat](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat) 

**Minimum wages in the EU**  
(in € per month)

	1 <sup>st</sup> January 2008	1 <sup>st</sup> January 2014	1 <sup>st</sup> January 2017	Change 2017/2008	Proportion of the median earnings (2014)
Belgium	1 310	1 502	1 532	+17%	52%
Bulgaria	112	174	235	+109%	57%
Czech Republic	300	310	407	+36%	39%
Denmark	-	-	-	-	-
Germany**	-	1 440***	1 498	-	53%
Estonia	278	355	470	+69%	40%
Ireland**	1 462	1 462	1 563	+7%	45%
Greece	794	684	684	-14%	:
Spain	700	753	826	+18%	45%
France**	1 280	1 445	1 480	+16%	62%
Croatia	380*	396	433	+14%	:
Italy	-	-	-	-	-
Cyprus	-	-	-	-	-
Latvia	230	320	380	+65%	52%
Lithuania	232	290	380	+64%	52%
Luxembourg	1 570	1 921	1 999	+27%	56%
Hungary	272	342	412	+51%	54%
Malta**	617	718	736	+19%	48%
Netherlands	1 335	1 486	1 552	+16%	56%
Austria	-	-	-	-	-
Poland	313	404	453	+45%	52%
Portugal	497	566	650	+31%	64%
Romania	139	190	275	+99%	50%
Slovenia	539	789	805	+49%	62%
Slovakia	241	352	435	+80%	46%
Finland	-	-	-	-	-
Sweden	-	-	-	-	-
United Kingdom**	1 242	1 251	1 397	+13%	49%
United States**	689	911	1 192	+73%	:

: Data not available - Not applicable \* 1<sup>st</sup> July 2008 \*\* See country notes \*\*\* 1<sup>st</sup> January 2015  
The source dataset can be found [here](#).

**Minimum wages per month in national currency for non-euro area countries**

		1 <sup>st</sup> January 2008	1 <sup>st</sup> January 2014	1 <sup>st</sup> January 2017	Change 2017/2008
Bulgaria	BGN	220	340	460	+109%
Czech Republic	CZK	8 000	8 500	11 000	+38%
Croatia	HRK	2 747*	3 018	3 276	+19%
Hungary	HUF	69 000	101 500	127 500	+85%
Poland	PLN	1 126	1 680	2 000	+78%
Romania	RON	500	850	1 250	+150%
United Kingdom**	GBP	911	1 043	1 196	+31%
United States**	USD	1 014	1 257	1 257	+24%

\* 1<sup>st</sup> July 2008 \*\* See country notes  
The source dataset can be found [here](#).

## Minimum wages per month in purchasing power standards\* in the EU

	1 <sup>st</sup> January 2008	1 <sup>st</sup> January 2014	1 <sup>st</sup> January 2017
<b>Belgium</b>	1 211	1 425	1 453
<b>Bulgaria</b>	224	458	501
<b>Czech Republic</b>	444	579	644
<b>Denmark</b>	-	-	-
<b>Germany**</b>	-	1 436	1 493
<b>Estonia</b>	377	590	645
<b>Ireland**</b>	1 156	1 266	1 280
<b>Greece</b>	877	805	805
<b>Spain</b>	740	843	910
<b>France**</b>	1 173	1 401	1 415
<b>Croatia</b>	520***	632	663
<b>Italy</b>	-	-	-
<b>Cyprus</b>	-	-	-
<b>Latvia</b>	301	538	553
<b>Lithuania</b>	360	575	625
<b>Luxembourg</b>	1 389	1 596	1 659
<b>Hungary</b>	400	630	723
<b>Malta**</b>	797	908	917
<b>Netherlands</b>	1 304	1 408	1 433
<b>Austria</b>	-	-	-
<b>Poland</b>	476	815	881
<b>Portugal</b>	590	754	793
<b>Romania</b>	230	463	551
<b>Slovenia</b>	665	994	1 012
<b>Slovakia</b>	375	612	658
<b>Finland</b>	-	-	-
<b>Sweden</b>	-	-	-
<b>United Kingdom**</b>	1 012	1 147	1 236
<b>United States**</b>	860	1 033	1 033

\* PPS for 2014 are estimated.

\*\* See country notes

\*\*\* 1<sup>st</sup> July 2008

- Not applicable

The source dataset can be found [here](#).