

Glossary:Minimum wage

Statistics Explained

The **minimum wage** is the lowest wage that employers are legally obliged to pay their [employees](#) . The basic national minimum wage can be fixed at an hourly, weekly or monthly rate, and this minimum wage is enforced by law (the government), often after consultation with the social partners, or directly by national intersectoral agreement (in the [European Union \(EU\)](#) this is the case for Belgium and Greece).

The national minimum wage usually applies to all employees, or at least to a large majority of employees in the country. Some countries have exceptions for e.g. younger workers, apprentices or workers with disabilities. Gross amounts are reported, that is, before income tax and [social security deductions](#) , which vary between countries.

Minimum wage laws contain provisions for regular reviews of the rate, often involving tripartite negotiations among government, unions and employers, to reflect changes in prices, wages and other economic factors. The minimum wage may be subject to automatic reassessment (indexed to the [consumer price index](#) or economic growth) or to discretionary increases (via legislation).

Statistical data

- [Minimum wage statistics](#)