

Minimum Wage & Collective Bargaining in Slovakia 2025

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Slovakia

Statutory Minimum Wage ✓

• Monthly Min. Wage 816.00€

• Hourly Min. Wage 4.69€

51.00%

• MW as % of Median Wage

43.00%

• MW as % of Gross Average Wage

• Gender pay gap 15.70%

24.00%

• Collective bargaining coverage

• Process of transposition:
Transposed

↔ Compare with other countries



Minimum wage system in Slovakia

The statutory minimum wage was introduced in 1991 under Act No. 99/1991 Coll., during the period of the Czech and Slovak Federative Republic. After the dissolution of the federation on 1 January 1993, the law remained in force in Slovakia. The current version of the minimum wage law was adopted in 1996 and has since undergone several reforms, however.

In the period 2002–2006, under the right-wing government led by Mikuláš Dzurinda, liberal economic policies reduced the influence of trade unions and pushed deregulation. From 2006 to 2020, however, government was dominated by the self-proclaimed social democratic party SMER or coalition governments led by SMER. During this period, some social democratic policies were aimed at prioritising wage growth and stronger labour market protections to address socio-economic disparities.

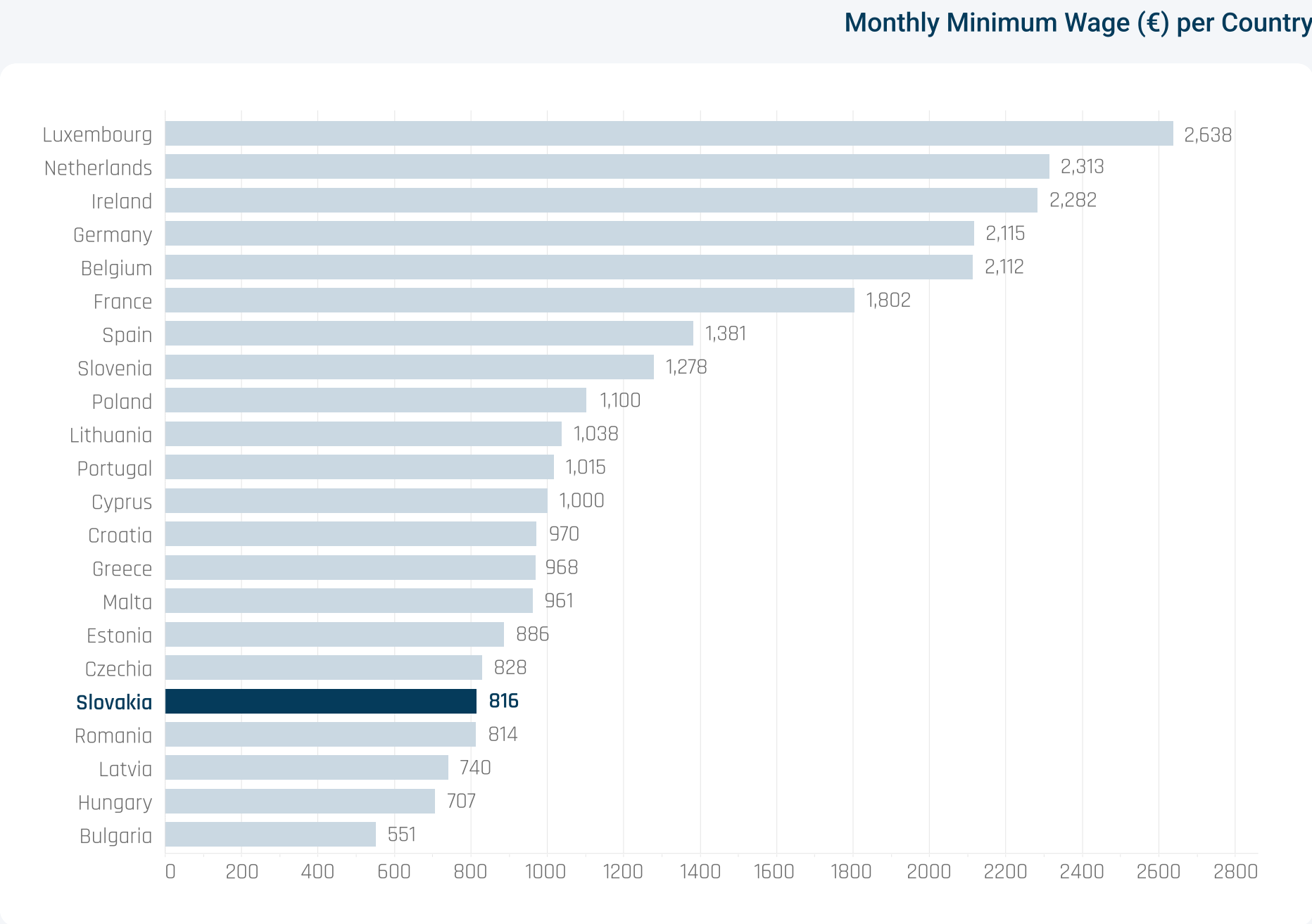
During SMER’s tenure, the minimum wage became a crucial tool for promoting wage fairness and embedding social policies in the labour framework. In 2009, amidst the financial and economic crisis, the government and trade unions signed a memorandum committing to enhance real wages through collective bargaining while sustaining employment during turbulent times.

A key milestone came in 2020, when the third Fico government implemented a substantial increase in the minimum wage from 520 euros (€) to €580 and established that, starting in 2021, the minimum wage would be set at 60 per cent of the national average wage.

However, the right-wing populist government of Igor Matovič later reduced this threshold to 57 per cent and fixed additional payments for weekend and night work, effectively decoupling them from the minimum wage.

The most recent reforms to Slovakia’s minimum wage framework occurred in 2024 to align with the European Minimum Wage Directive. Governed by [Act No. 663/2007 on the Minimum Wage](#), the current system emphasises fair wage assessment (Article 5 of the Directive) and the role of social partners in the wage-setting process (Article 7). Adjustments are negotiated through a tripartite process involving the government, employers and trade unions. If consensus cannot be reached, an automatic adjustment mechanism ensures predictable and consistent wage growth. The current government led by SMER has reversed the changes introduced by the Matovič administration, restoring the automatic minimum wage increase to 60 per cent of the national average and re-establishing the link between wage supplements and the minimum wage.

As of January 2025, the minimum wage is €816 per month, and from January 2026 this will be increased to 60 per cent of the national average wage, in line with the Directive’s recommendations (the option remains in effect that the social partners can agree on a higher minimum wage; if no agreement is reached, the automatic mechanism shall apply).



<div>Statutory Minimum Wage</div> <div>Yes</div>	<div>Wage inequality (inter-decile Ratio P90/P10)</div> <div>3.10</div>	<div>Gender Pay Gap</div> <div>15.70%</div>
<div>Hourly Minimum Wage</div> <div>4.69€/hour</div>	<div>Nominal Growth rate of Wages</div> <div>4.40%</div>	<div>In-work poverty rate</div> <div>9.00%</div>
<div>Monthly Minimum Wage</div> <div>816.00€/ month</div>	<div>Real Growth rate of wages</div> <div>5.50%</div>	<div>% of workers covered by minimum wage</div> <div>5.70%</div>



Minimum wage system in Slovakia

In Slovakia, the minimum wage system includes guaranteed minimum wages, which reflect the complexity of the work being performed. Jobs are categorised into six levels of difficulty, each level having a set minimum wage based on the basic minimum wage. As of 1 January 2025, Slovakia's minimum wage was increased to €816 a month (from €750 in 2024) and €4.69 per hour. The second level is €932 and the highest, sixth, level is €1,396. These figures represent the minimum wages for full-time employees working a 40-hour week.

Historically, Slovakia's minimum wage increases have generally been modest. Alignment with the European directive has accelerated wage growth, however, particularly as the country aims to achieve the Directive's benchmarks of 60 per cent of the median wage and 50 per cent of the average wage, despite continuous minimum wage growth over the past decade. These reforms have significantly enhanced wage fairness.

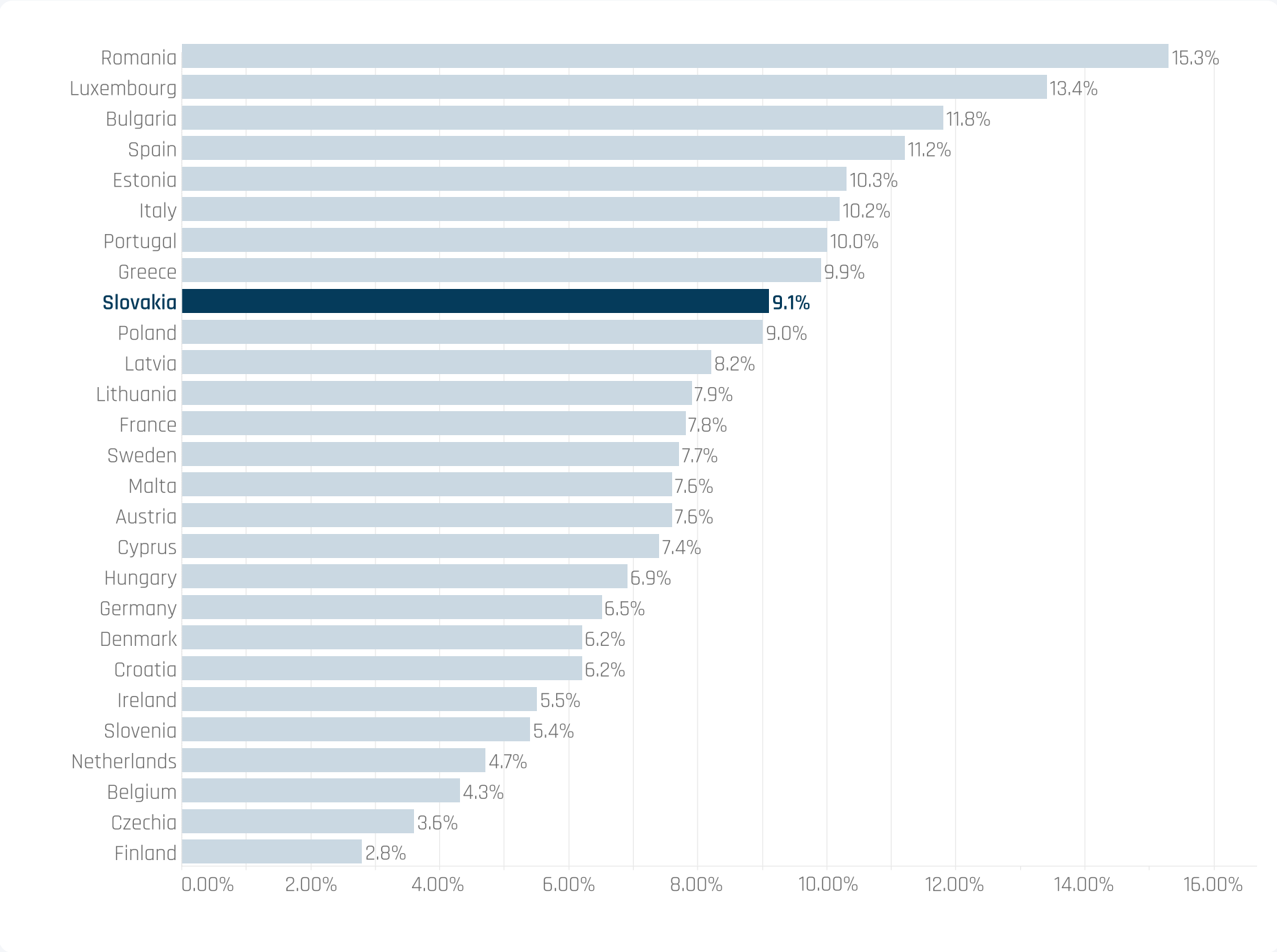
Key challenges and debates

Employers' organisations have expressed concerns not so much about the rising minimum wage itself, but about the impact of the automatic adjustment mechanism on supplementary payments (for example, for weekend, night and holiday work) and guaranteed wages, which are calculated as a percentage of the minimum wage. Despite these objections, the provisions remain in place, reflecting trade union influence.

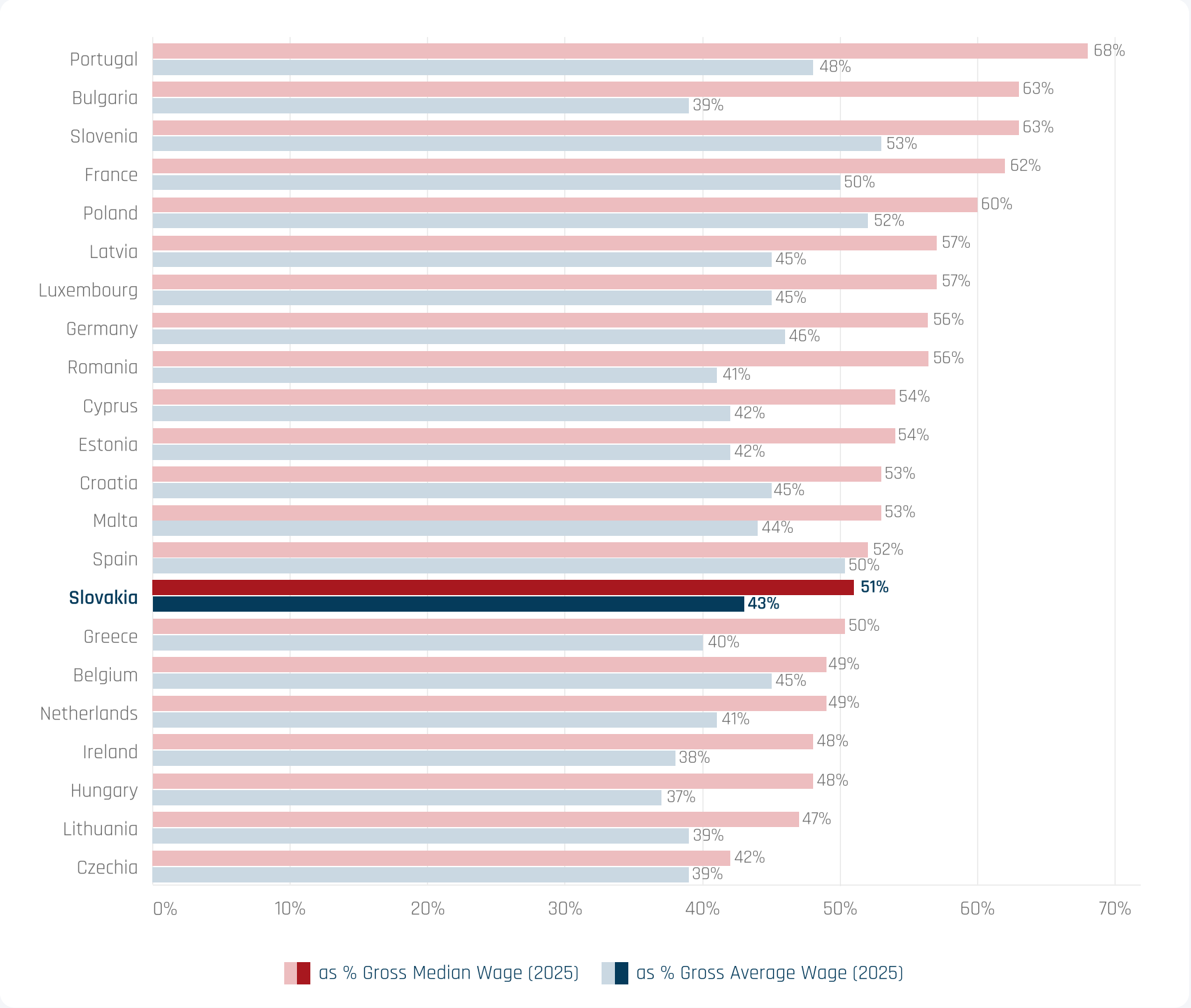
When it comes to regional disparities, economically weaker regions, particularly in the east of the country, are struggling to adapt to rising wage costs, raising fears of job losses in smaller enterprises, according to some analysts.

Looking at sectoral competitiveness, industries such as hospitality argue that higher minimum wages could undermine their ability to compete with larger, more profitable sectors.

In-work poverty rate (%) per Country



Minimum Wage as % of Gross Median and Gross Average Wage per Country





Collective Bargaining system in Slovakia

The Labour Code states that employees have the right to collective bargaining. Slovakia’s collective bargaining system is governed by [Act No. 2/1991 on Collective Bargaining](#), which was adopted under the Czech and Slovak Federative Republic, making it one of the first laws enacted at the outset of the political and economic transition. The law regulates agreements at both company and sectoral levels. However, the system remains highly fragmented, most agreements being concluded at the company level. This has resulted in significant wage disparities across industries, particularly between the public sector and manufacturing (which enjoy higher coverage) and private sectors such as services and retail (which lag behind). There are approximately [18 valid sectoral collective agreements](#) in Slovakia, covering various sectors. The most significant ones in the public sector include agreements for state and public service employees. In the manufacturing sector, excluding automotive industry, important agreements cover industries such as engineering, electrical engineering and metallurgy.

Collective bargaining coverage in Slovakia is estimated at about 25 per cent of employees, far below the 80 per cent threshold envisioned by the European Minimum Wage Directive. In the 1990s and early 2000s, coverage was higher but subsequently declined gradually, in line with the continuous and rapid decrease in trade union density, which had started at nearly 100 per cent as a legacy of the previous state socialist regime.

This decline in coverage was also influenced by deindustrialisation and privatisation processes, which reshaped the labour market. Additionally, the decentralisation of bargaining to the company level, along with the limited number of sectoral agreements, and structural imbalances across industries further contributed to the low coverage. Reforms in the early 2000s under a right-wing government further weakened collective bargaining by liberalising the Labour Code and restricting the extension of collective agreements.

The formation of the first SMER-led government in 2006 marked an effort to revitalise social dialogue. The establishment of the Economic and Social Council in 2007 by [Act No. 103/2007 on Tripartite Consultations at the National Level](#) provided a platform for consultations between trade unions, employers and the government (a tripartite body that existed prior to this but was reformed and legally restructured). Through this platform, trade unions advocated for enhanced labour protections and a more functional collective bargaining system. However, the Slovak collective bargaining system is, to a certain extent, caught in a cycle of frequent changes, with alternating right-wing and left-wing governments. This has led to continuous shifts in the system, with collective agreements being either strengthened or weakened, for example, through the abolition and reintroduction of agreement extension or support for sectoral agreements.

As a result, the system lacks stability. Despite these developments, structural challenges persist and employers often restructure their organisations or change legal status to avoid being bound by agreements.

Employers have long preferred company-level collective bargaining, while trade unions, especially at the confederation level and within certain federations, have sought to strengthen sectoral agreements. In some sectors, however, there is scepticism toward sectoral collective bargaining even within trade unions. Regarding trade unions’ right of access to workplaces, the [Labour Code](#) and the Collective Bargaining Act ensure that unions are able to inform and consult employees. The protection of workers and trade union representatives from dismissal and discrimination is also guaranteed by these laws.

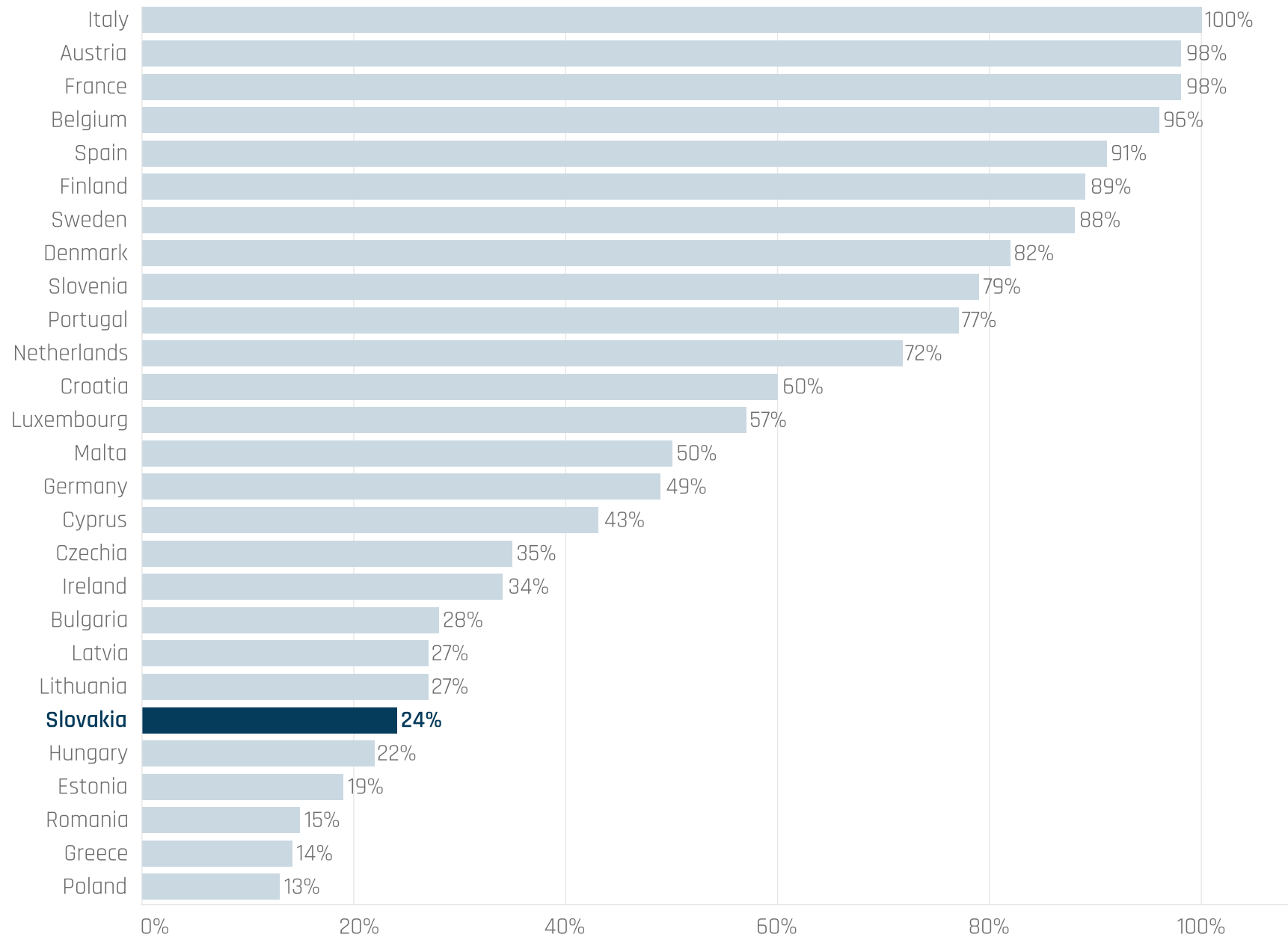
Collective Bargaining Coverage
24.00%

Trade Union Density
11.30%

Extension Mechanism
Rare extension

Valididy of Collective Agreements after expirations?
No

Collective Bargaining Coverage per Country (%)





Collective Bargaining system in Slovakia

They also protect union members from unfair dismissal or discrimination related to union activities, requiring strict legal justification for such actions. However, cases of union busting occur, and subsequent court proceedings on unlawful dismissal can last for several years. This is common in the Slovak judicial system, allowing employers to factor this into their decision-making when attempting to remove union members.

In Slovakia, no specific employee groups are excluded from collective bargaining, and all workers can organise in trade unions. However, the law restricts the right to strike for certain groups of employees during disputes over collective agreements or their implementation. These include workers in health care, emergency services, the armed forces, and similar sectors in which the public interest is critical. Regarding the expiry of collective agreements, the law states that the agreement ends once the set period expires, unless specific provisions establish that the agreement should continue beyond that period. In Slovakia, the practice of requiring a collective agreement in public procurement has not been established or legally mandated.

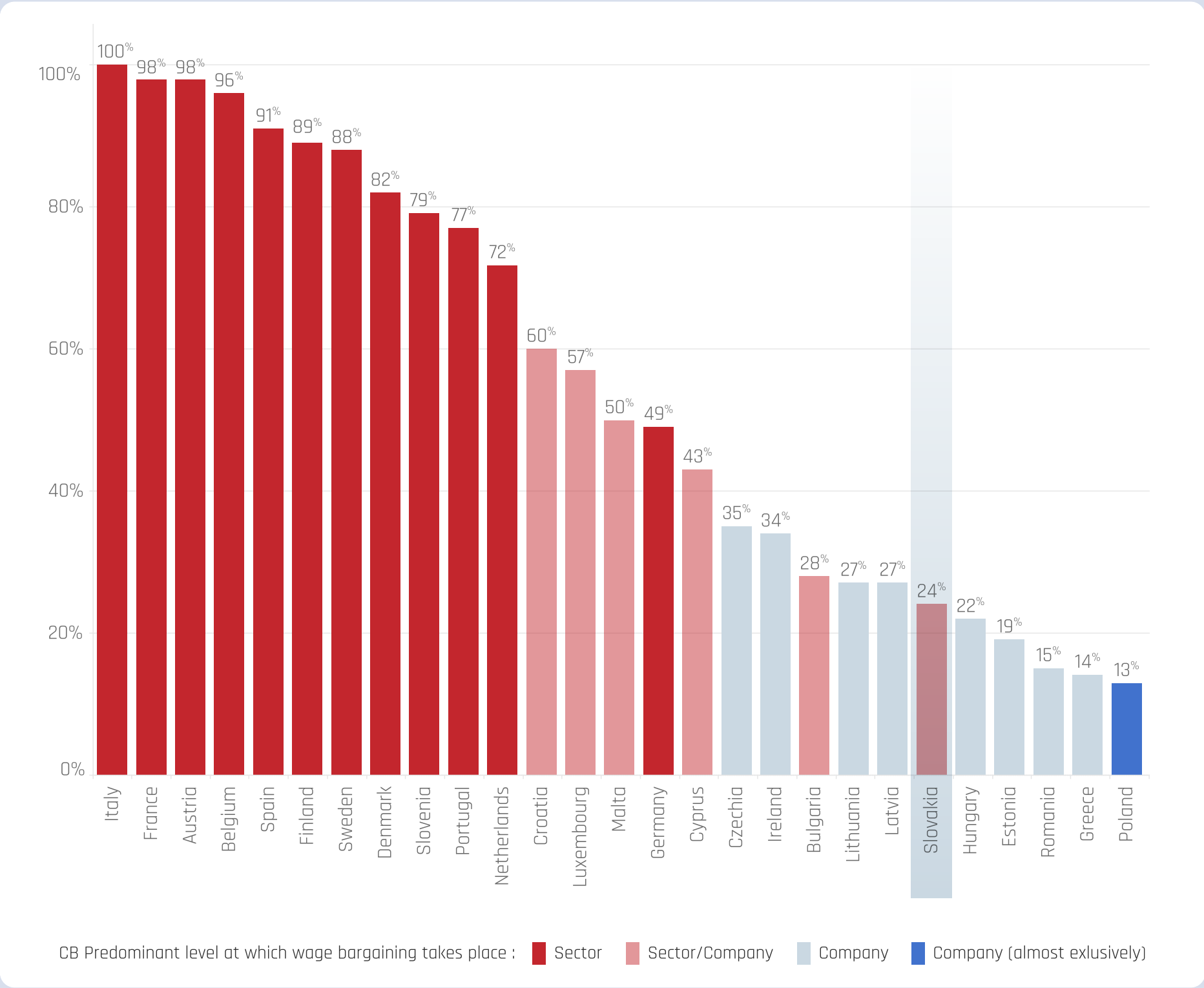
Key characteristics and challenges

Low coverage and fragmentation: Slovakia’s bargaining coverage remains one of the lowest in the EU; the majority of agreements are confined to the company level.

Employer avoidance: some employers restructure their organisations to evade collective bargaining obligations. Recent legislative amendments have addressed this by clarifying that even interest associations of legal entities shall be recognised as employers’ organisations under the law.

Sectoral imbalances: public sector and manufacturing industries enjoy relatively higher bargaining coverage, while some private economy sectors suffer from critically low representation.

CB Predominant level at which wage bargaining takes place per Country





Transposition of the European Directive on Adequate Minimum Wages in the EU

Slovakia successfully transposed the European Minimum Wage Directive in November 2024, marking a significant milestone in aligning its labour policies with EU standards. The process involved amendments to both the Minimum Wage Act and the Collective Bargaining Act, aimed at strengthening the role of social partners in wage-setting and fostering greater wage fairness. Social partners actively participated in the interdepartmental review, contributing through the Economic and Social Council of the Slovak Republic.

The directive introduced a framework for extending sectoral agreements, with the ambitious goal of increasing collective bargaining coverage to the EU recommended threshold of 80 per cent. This measure is intended to increase Slovakia’s current collective bargaining coverage. While employers expressed disagreement and short-term political obstacles arose among coalition parties, the Minister of Labour, Social Affairs, and Family successfully secured approval for the legislative package and its transposition.

The interest of the Confederation of Trade Unions of the Slovak Republic is for the action plan to be developed with the participation of social partners.

Various options are on the table. Within the framework of the action plan, the trade unions will strive to further advocate for measures against union busting and the removal of various legislative barriers and ambiguities in collective bargaining (for example, the activities of arbitrators).

Key legislative changes

Clarification of collective bargaining participants

The law was amended to explicitly define that collective agreements can be concluded by trade union bodies and employers or their organisations. This includes interest associations of legal entities and civil associations, provided they are part of an employers' federation under specific regulations. These changes aim to prevent certain employers' associations from altering their legal status to avoid participating in sector-level collective bargaining.

Monitoring and transparency

The government outsourced the task of measuring collective bargaining coverage to private firms. This move, while addressing capacity issues, has raised concerns about methodology and the adequacy of state oversight.

Extension of collective agreements

A reinstated framework allows for the extension of sectoral agreements to a broader range of employers. While this aims to boost bargaining coverage, it faces significant resistance from employer organisations, who argue that the diverse needs of companies within sectors make such extensions impractical.

Future developments

In response to the European Minimum Wage Directive, Slovakia has committed to preparing an action plan by 31 December 2025 to strengthen collective bargaining. This includes additional legislative proposals aimed at enhancing coverage. While these measures aim to reduce fragmentation and improve wage standards, Slovakia is currently experiencing political turmoil, raising uncertainty about whether the government, which has been supportive of such reforms, will remain in power or face early elections before 2025. Such a development could complicate progress in this area.

The Covid-19 pandemic further exposed vulnerabilities in Slovakia’s social dialogue framework, as trade unions faced significant challenges in organising protests and maintaining influence during the state of emergency. In response, they shifted towards 'bread-and-butter unionism', focusing on public campaigns, petitions and company-level actions to protect workers’ rights, emphasising direct engagement over political affiliations.

Looking ahead, Slovakia’s reforms offer a critical opportunity to strengthen social dialogue and enhance wage fairness nationwide. The planned adoption of an action plan for collective bargaining by the end of 2025 aims to address fragmentation and expand coverage, provided political instability does not hinder these efforts.



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WAGE-UP is the ETUC Monitoring Tool presenting information on Minimum Wage setting procedures and Collective Bargaining systems in all EU countries, as well as the progress in EU countries toward the transposition and the implementation of all the provisions of the Directive on adequate minimum wages in the EU (2022/2041).

www.wage-up.etuc.org/



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