WAGE-UP

Minimum Wage & Collective Bargaining in Hungary 2026

Hungary

Statutory Minimum Wage ✓

Monthly Min. Wage	809.11€
Hourly Min.Wage	4.68€

50.00%
MW as % of Median Wage

39.00%
MW as % of Gross Average Wage

Gender pay gap	16.90%

20.00%
Collective bargaining coverage

Process of transposition:
Transposed

Compare with other countries

Latest update on April 2026

András Pásztóy (senior expert) and Bence Havas (legal expert),
Hungarian Trade Union Federation (MASZSZ)

Minimum wage regime in Hungary

The general statutory minimum wage was introduced on 1 March 1989 during the change of regime and in the context of the dismantling of centralised state wage regulation. This was accompanied by the creation of institutional interest reconciliation. The main motivating factor for the creation of the first tripartite council (National Council for the Reconciliation of Interests) was wage policy coordination, especially the definition of the minimum wage, which since then has been set in a tripartite framework.

Since 2006, the minimum wage system has had two elements:

- (i) minimum wage;
- (ii) guaranteed wage minimum: this is compulsory for jobs requiring at least a secondary education or a vocational training qualification; it is higher than the minimum wage.

The legal basis of the Hungarian minimum wage regime is Act I of 2012 on the Labour Code. According to this act the amount and scope of the minimum wage and the guaranteed wage minimum shall be determined by the government following consultations in the National Economic and Social Council and in the Standing Consultative Forum of the Private Sector and the Government. In practice, the latter is the real framework for minimum wage negotiations. The Standing Consultative Forum has a tripartite structure and was designed on the basis of the European Minimum Wage Directive. Detailed rules for consultations are determined by Government Decree No. 308/2024 (X. 24.).

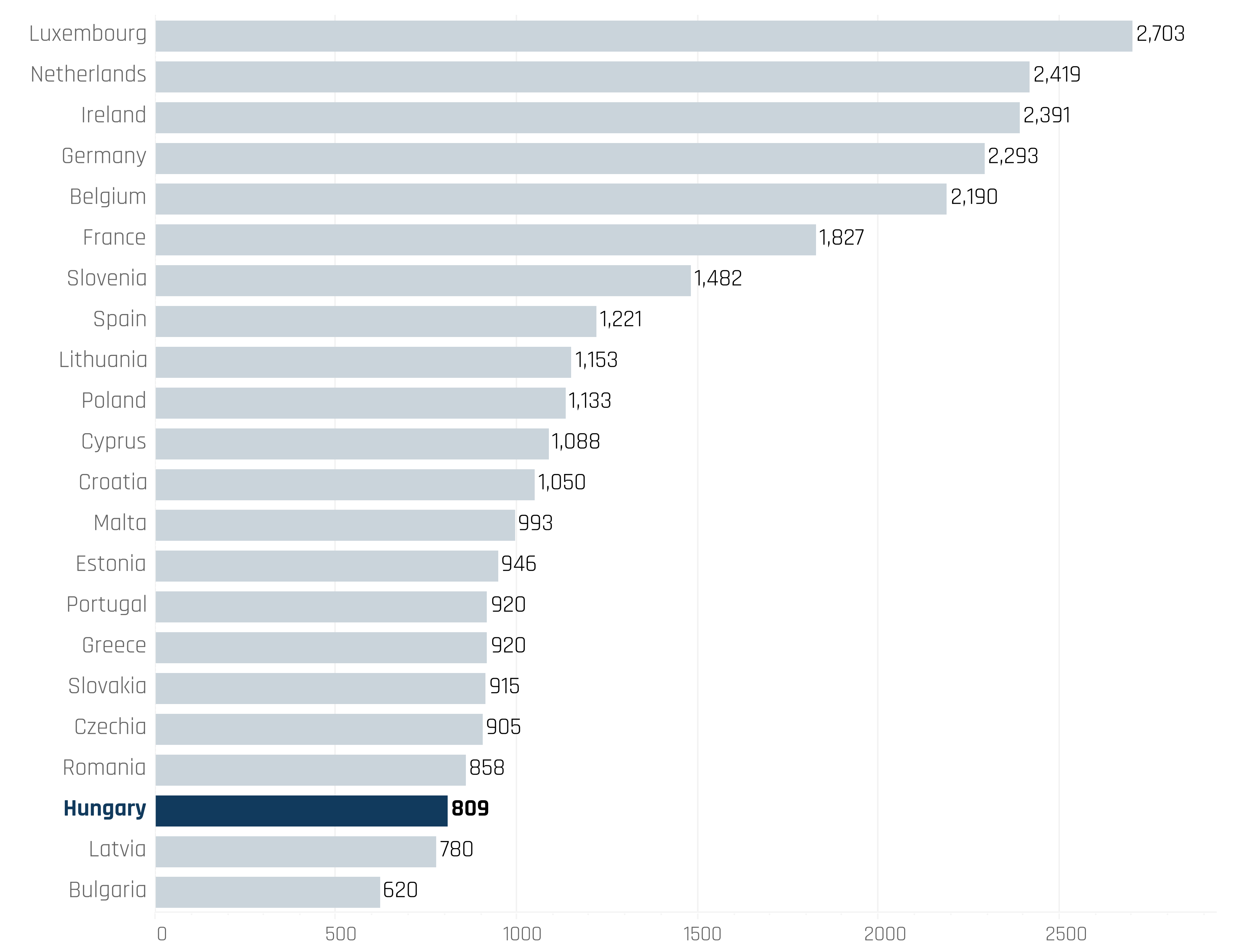
The minimum wage is legally binding for all workers, but according to the Labour Code the government may set different minimum wages for different categories of workers. In practice, the government has never exercised this option. However, one group of employees is explicitly excluded from the scope of the minimum wage.

The wage paid to workers employed in public works programmes is lower than the minimum wage and determined separately by the government alone, without any consultation with the social partners. In addition, a wage lower than the minimum wage may be paid in the case of simplified employment (an umbrella term for seasonal, agricultural, tourist and occasional work) and performance pay.

In the latter case, the minimum wage is mandatory upon 100% fulfilment of the normative performance requirement and based on working full time. In the case of an employment relationship established for the purpose of simplified employment, at least 85% of the statutory minimum wage, or 87% in the case of a guaranteed wage minimum, is paid as basic salary or performance-related salary.

According to Government Decree No. 308/2024 (X. 24), the minimum wage is adjusted every year within the framework of the Standing Consultative Forum of the Private Sector and the Government. The Decree sets up a timeline for consultations: the government is obliged to inform the social partners about facts and predictions concerning incomes, wages, GDP, employment rate, inflation rate and productivity. This information must be disseminated by 30 September every year together with the convocation of the forum. Consultations must commence by 15 October every year. The Decree also declares the 'ambition' or 'aspiration' of the social partners to deliver an agreement by 1 December. In case of a decision made upon a majority decision and with the approval of the government, consultations can also be conducted during the year to adjust the level of the minimum wage. The term 'majority decision' means that of the three employers' organisations represented in the Consultative Forum two need to vote in favour; by the same token two of the three trade unions represented on the Consultative Forum need to vote in favour.

Monthly Minimum Wage (€) per Country



Statutory Minimum Wage
Yes

Real Growth rate of wages
6.00%

% of workers covered by minimum wage
8.00%

Nominal Growth rate of Wages
8.40%

Minimum wage regime in Hungary

The Labour Code and the abovementioned Decree formulate a number of criteria and indicators for the adjustment of the minimum wage. The following should be taken into account:

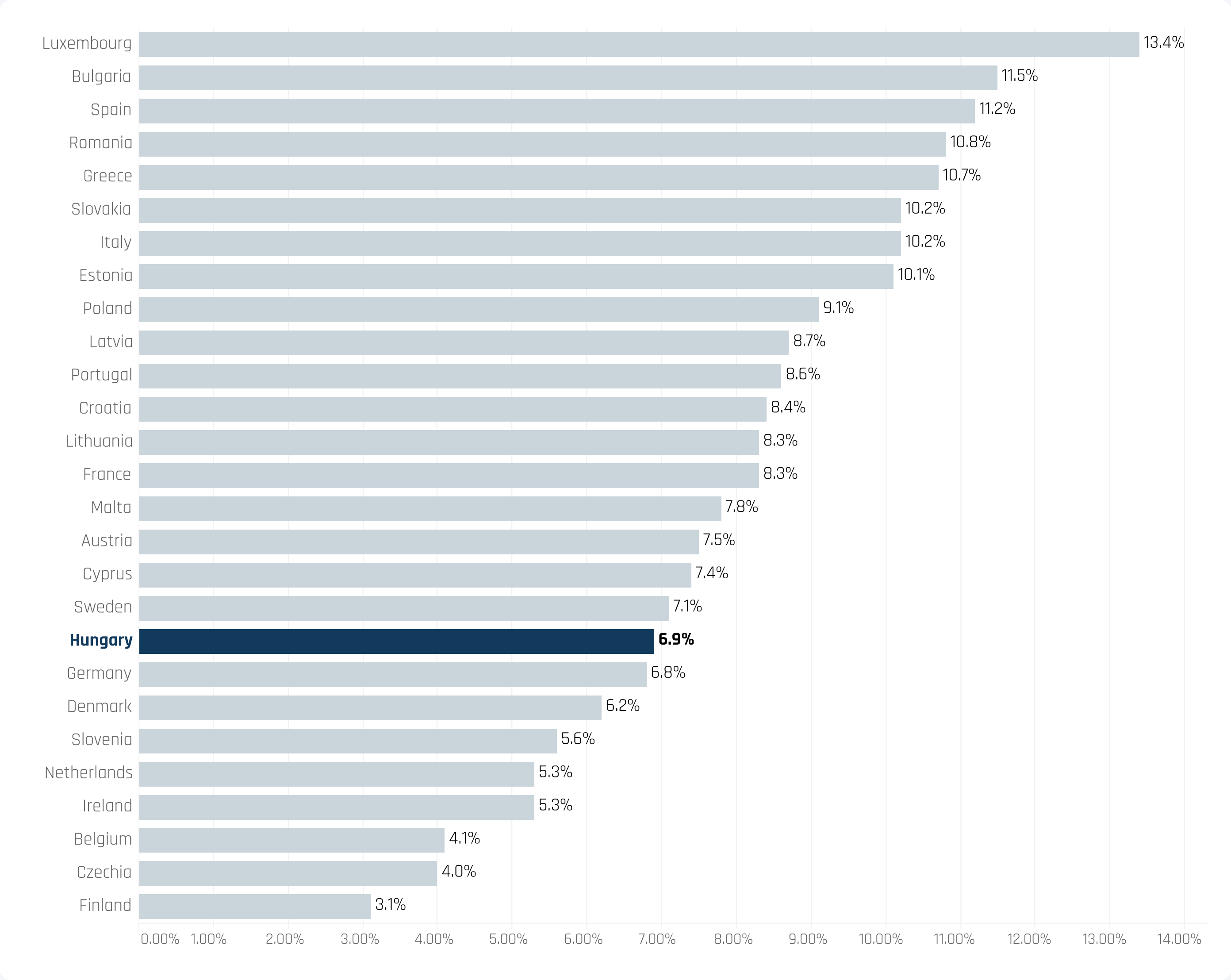
- the requirements of the job;
- the characteristics of the national labour market;
- the state of the national economy;
- the labour market specificities of each sector of the economy and of each geographical area;
- living costs;
- the overall level and distribution of wages;
- the growth rate of wages.

Despite its dynamic increase in recent years, the Hungarian minimum wage is nevertheless the second lowest in the EU. Table 1 shows the evolution of the minimum wage over the past 15 years.

During the transposition of the European minimum wage directive the government and the social partners agreed on 50% of average regular gross earnings as the indicative reference value. In order to reach this value by 2027, following the annual wage consultations, the social partners concluded a three-year agreement which sets the increases for the next three years: 9% for 2025, 13% for 2026 and 14% for 2027. It should be noted that the term ‘average regular gross earnings’ includes the gross average wage (basic wage + wage supplements, for example, for night shifts, overtime work and so on), but not ‘occasional/non-regular earnings’ (for example, premium, bonuses, 13th monthly salary).

As a result the of annual wage consultations for 2026, contrary to the abovementioned three-year agreement, the minimum wage increase was 11% in 2026, due to lower than expected GDP growth. The guaranteed wage was increased by 7%.

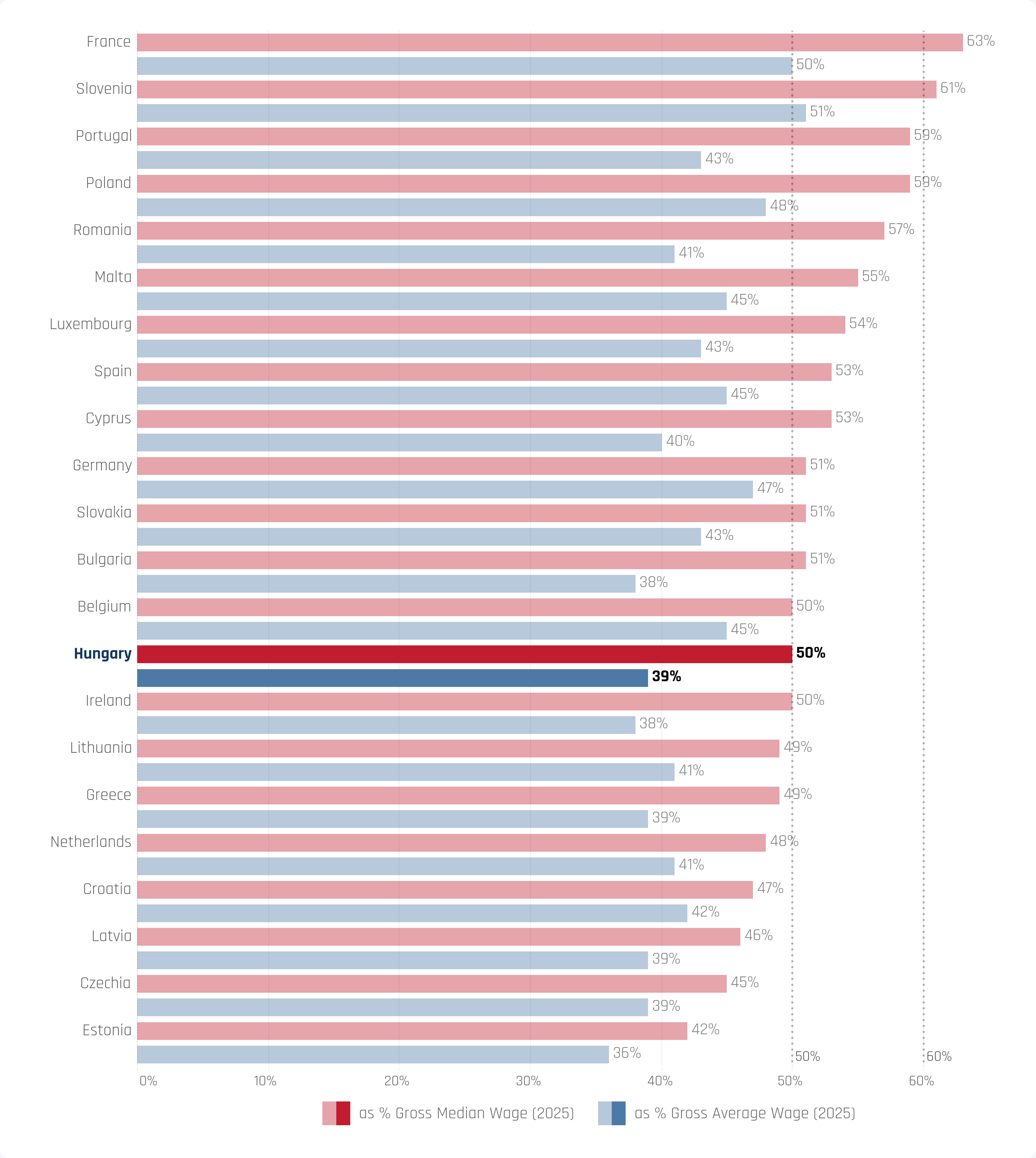
In-work poverty rate (%) per Country



Dates	Minimum wage (HUF)	Guaranteed wage minimum (HUF)	Minimum wage as a percentage of average monthly earnings	Average monthly earnings (HUF)	Monthly median earnings (HUF)
2010	73 500	89 500	36.3	202 525	
2011	78 000	94 000	36.6	213 094	
2012	93 000	108 000	41.7	223 060	
2013	98 000	114 000	42.5	230 714	
2014	101 500	118 000	42.7	237 695	
2015	105 000	122 000	42.4	247 924	
2016	111 000	129 000	42.2	263 171	
2017	127 500	161 000	42.9	297 017	
2018	138 000	180 500	41.8	329 943	
2019	149 000	195 000	41.4	359 702	278 213
2020	161 000	210 600	41.1	392 148	304 024
2021	167 400	219 000	39.2	426 144	331 354
2022	200 000	260 000	39.9	501 127	385 320
2023	232 000	296 400	40.6	571 477	447 837
2024	266 800	326 000	41.3	646 635	516 994
2025	290 800	348 800	41.2	705 014	564 203
2026	322 800	373 200			

Table 1: Evolution of the minimum wage over the past 15 years, Hungary
Source: Central Statistical Office

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



Collective Bargaining system in Hungary

The general rules of collective bargaining are laid down by the Labour Code, with some additional provisions for the public sector in the Act On The Status Of Civil Service Employees, and for sectoral agreements (for example, the extension mechanism) in the Act on Sectoral Dialogue Committees. Despite the latter legal framework, collective agreements are concluded almost exclusively at the workplace level. Only one extended sectoral agreement is in force, which covers the energy industry. According to the Labour Code, a trade union with a 10% density can conclude collective agreements. If multiple organisations reach the 10% threshold, an agreement can be concluded only if they all agree. However, any of the concluding organisations can terminate the agreement. According to the Labour Code, a request to negotiate a collective agreement cannot be refused, although there are no specific rules on such negotiations. A trade union organisation reaching the 10% threshold at a workplace in which an agreement is already in force has the right to request an amendment to the existing agreement and to take part in the negotiations on the amendment.

According to the Labour Code, collective agreements may be terminated by giving at least three months' notice. Neither of the parties shall be entitled to exercise the right of termination within six months of the conclusion of the collective agreement. Besides these limitations, fixed-term collective agreements shall cease to exist upon the expiry of the fixed term.

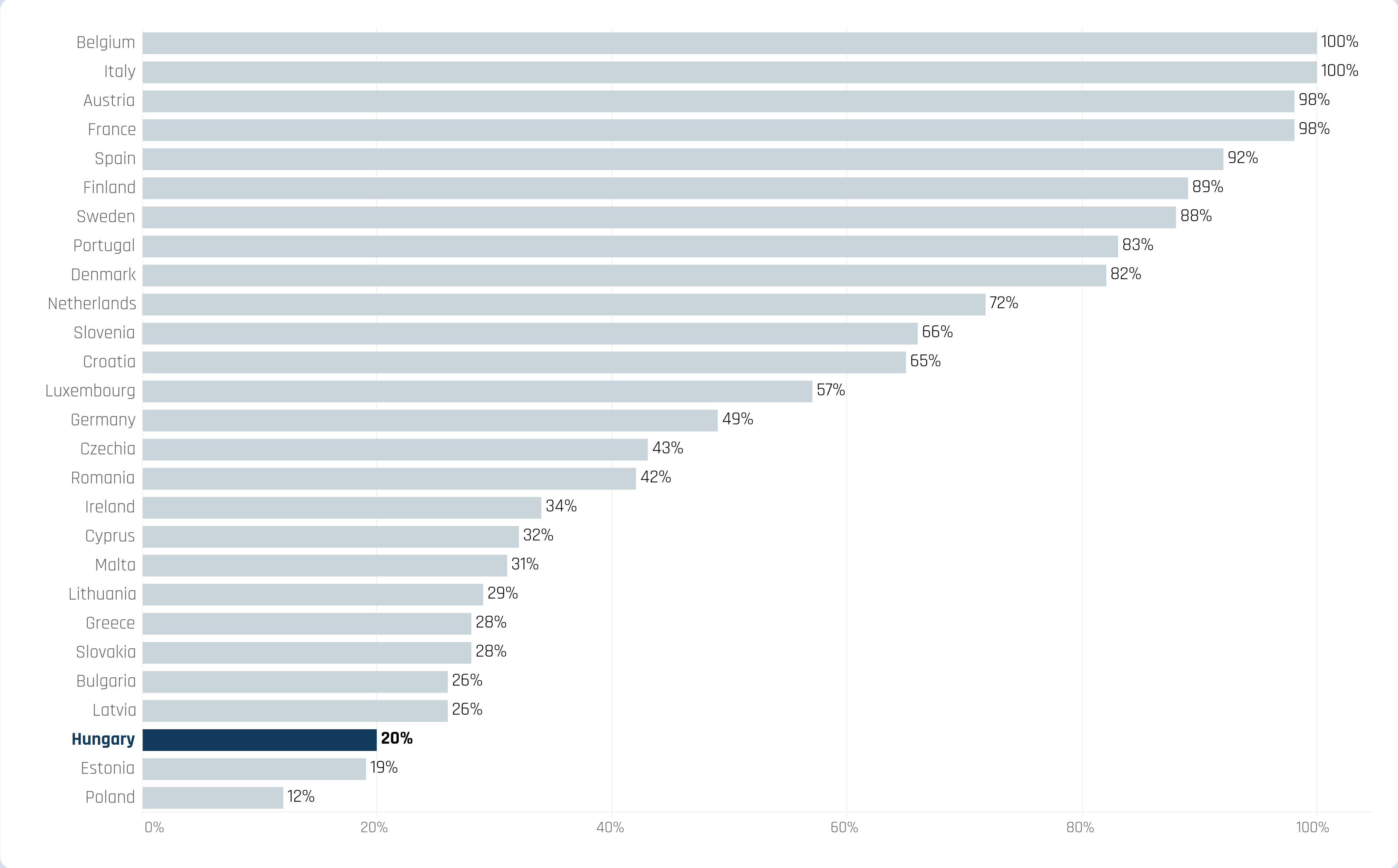
Collective bargaining coverage has been declining for decades. According to Meszmann and Szabo (2023), between 1993 and 2020, coverage dropped from 45% to 22%. This can be attributed to at least three key factors. First, public sector bargaining is being systematically undermined by direct and indirect government abuses, for example, explicit prohibition of collective agreements in some areas (health care, public administration, defence and so on), and the setting of excessive minimum service levels in strike law (public education). A second factor is the weakness of the social partners. Trade union density in Hungary is one of the lowest in the EU. At the same time, the representation of employers is also highly fragmented. Thirdly, employers' interest in starting negotiations with unions also remains questionable because of the extremely flexible individual labour provisions and the lack of public policy support (for example, lack of public procurement clauses or equivalent incentives).

According to the Labour Code, access to a workplace must be guaranteed to trade unions that are represented there (for example, they have at least one declared member at the workplace). However, the Labour Code does not specifically sanction employers that violate this right, which renders the rule ineffective. The example of the intense conflict at the company Dunaferr in 2020 showed how a management decision to deny access to trade union representatives can leave the local unions without an effective remedy.

Collective Bargaining Coverage	Trade Union Density
49.00%	14.10%

Extension Mechanism	Valididy of Collective Agreeements after expirations?
Rare Extension	Yes

Collective Bargaining Coverage per Country (%)

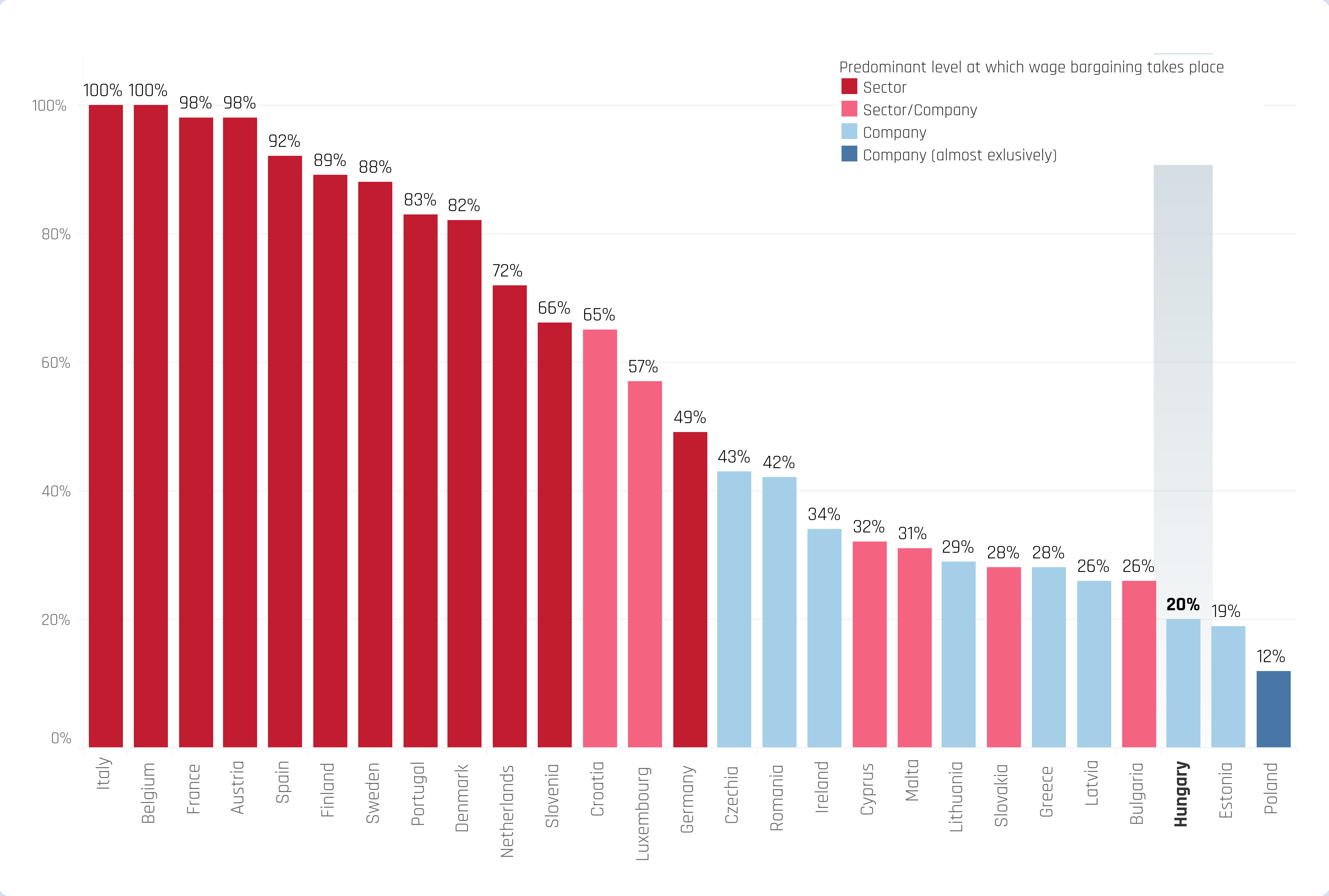


Collective Bargaining system in Hungary

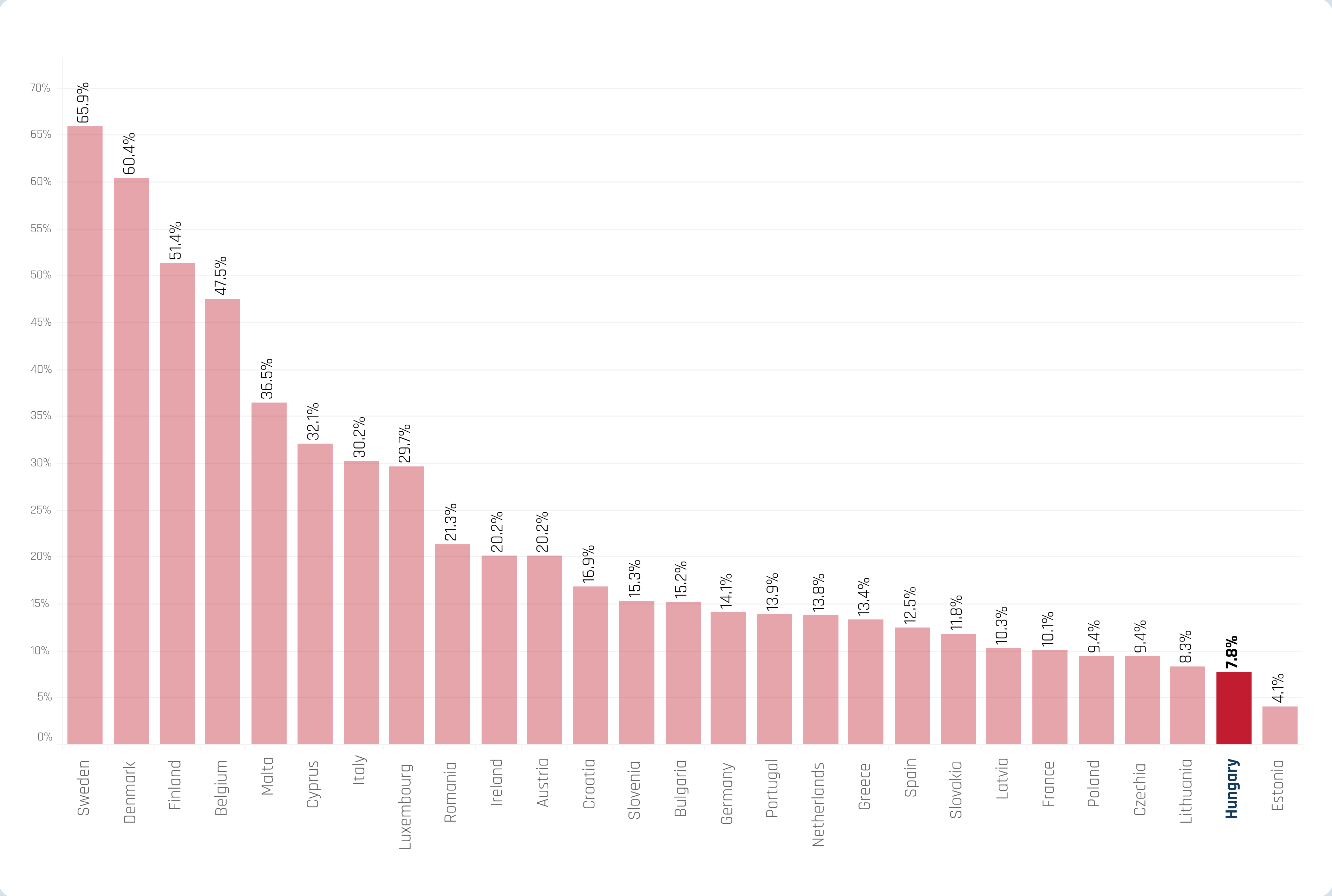
Trade union members and representatives have legal protection against abusive employer practices. On one hand, trade union members are entitled to equal treatment in various areas of employment. They are protected against direct and indirect discrimination, as well as harassment and other relevant abuses. The rights of law enforcement are the same as for gender or age discrimination. On the other hand, according to the Labour Code, trade union officials are entitled to specific labour law protection against dismissal and posting. Before 2012, there was no limit on the number of trade union officials protected, but in the current Labour Code the number of protected persons depends on the number of employees (varying from two to six protected officials).

Labour law protection means that the abovementioned measures (dismissal, posting) require preliminary agreement from the trade union. The occurrence of a dispute on such measures can result in a court case, although failing to comply with protection automatically makes dismissals and postings illegal. Even though these legal channels seem stable on paper, direct union-busting remains a familiar practice on the part of employers that can afford the costs of a lost court case in order to stop union organising. Examples of such employer behaviour include Suzuki in 2019, where after the creation of a union the company instantly fired the protected union official, and in a similar vein the company HírTV in 2024.

CB Predominant level at which wage bargaining takes place per Country



CB Trade Union Density (%) for each Country



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

Wage-related issues covered by the Directive were transposed in Government Decree 308/2024 (x.24) by the end of October 2024. As a result of this legislation, the so-called VKF, the former informal consultation body of private sector social partners and the government, has been legally allocated competence for minimum wage consultations without significantly changing its previous informal practices.

The decree contains the wage-setting criteria set out in Article 5.2(a-d) of the Directive (without touching the existing criteria of the Labour Code), as well as an indicative reference value of '50% of the average regular gross earnings calculated by the Central Statistical Office on the basis of the data available for the previous year'. As for the consultation process, a legally formalised timeline is also laid down by the decree, which however partly replaces the former practice of unanimous agreements creating a new 'majority decision' principle. In practice, this new rule means the following: the VKF is composed of three trade union and three employer organisations.

According to the new principle, a simple majority on either side will fulfil the legal criteria of an 'agreement' on minimum wages. However, because the VKF has only ever had a consultative role, the government is still entitled to determine minimum wages without any sort of agreement.

Although transposition produced relatively significant results by the end of 2024, still no action plan had been adopted by February 2026. A consultation procedure was formally started in summer 2025 with the creation of working groups within the VKF.

The Action Plan Working Group was established on 21 August and the Sectoral Wage Tariff Working Group on 19 August. These working groups have adopted their own internal rules of procedure. However, they have not been convened since the first formal meeting, which was also limited to adopting the previous document. The only substantial initiative was a request from the government for participants to share examples of good international practice in setting sectoral wages.

The three trade union organisations submitted such documents but received no feedback or follow-up from the government or employers. Work basically stopped at this point and has not resumed so far despite trade union calls to continue. Several proposals have been put forward by different members of the VKF since the adoption of the AMWD, but the government's position remains unknown.

European Trade Union Confederation
Confédération Européenne des Syndicats
Boulevard du Jardin Botanique, 20
1000 Brussels

Tel: +32 (0) 475 60 15 01
www.etuc.org

IN COOPERATION WITH

Friedrich - Ebert - Stiftung
www.fes.de/en/

European Trade Union Institute
www.etui.org

WAGE-UP

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/

See All Countries