WAGE-UP

Minimum Wage & Collective Bargaining in Poland 2026

Poland

Statutory Minimum Wage

- Monthly Min. Wage 1133.33€
- Hourly Min.Wage 7.40€

59.00%
- MW as % of Median Wage

48.00%
- MW as % of Gross Average Wage

- Gender pay gap 4.00%

12.00%
- Collective bargaining coverage

- Process of transposition:
  Partially Transposed (Act on Collective labour agreements) + Draft Legislation published (amending Act of minimum wage at work)

Compare with other countries

Latest update on April 2026

Sławomir Adamczyk, NSZZ Solidarność

Minimum wage regime in Poland

The minimum wage has a long tradition in Poland, dating back to the mid-1950s. However, it only gained particular political significance in the course of the political and economic changes in the early 1990s and later. The statutory minimum wage was first introduced in Poland in 1956, under communist rule, and its setting was the responsibility of the Council of Ministers. Minimum wage setting was part of a complex wage grid system, affecting the wage dynamics of better-paid workers.

In 1990, at the outset of the political and economic transition and the departure from the authoritarian system, a new principle of minimum wages was adopted. It became a separate amount not linked to any wage grid. In 1997, a new Constitution was adopted, which guaranteed the existence of the statutory minimum wage in the new socio-political reality. Article 65 of the Constitution states that 'a minimum level of remuneration for work, or the manner of determining its level, shall be established by law'. The minimum wage is uniform throughout the country and is independent of a worker's age. It is not differentiated by region, industry, economic sector, occupational group or qualifications.

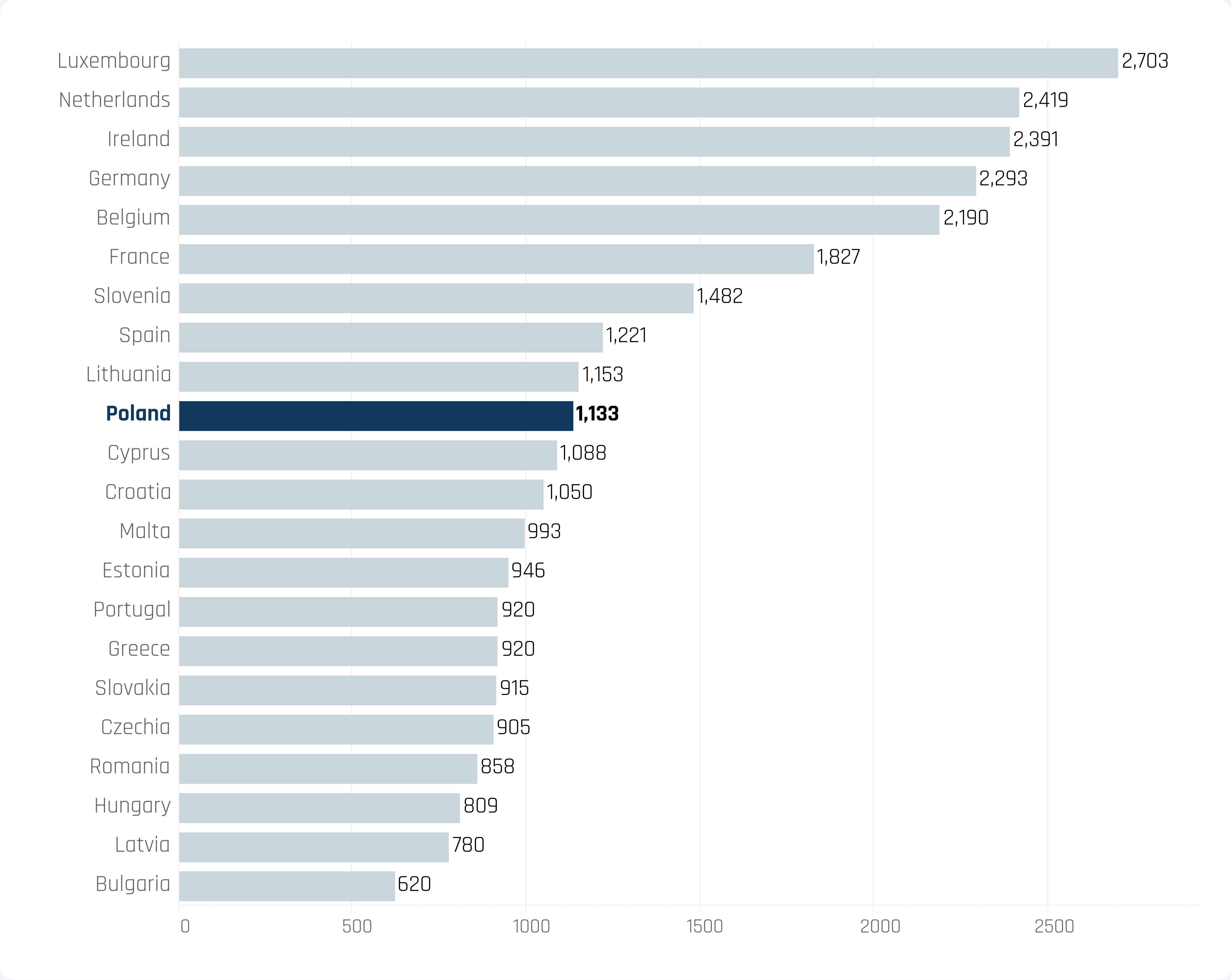
The legal basis of the Polish minimum wage system is the Act on the minimum wage for work of 10 October 2002 (Ustawa o minimalnym wynagrodzeniu za pracę). It stipulates that the minimum wage shall be set once a year. By 15 June each year, the government must submit to the Social Dialogue Council (Rada Dialogu Społecznego, RDS) a proposal for an adjustment of the minimum wage based on general economic data, such as economic growth, inflation or the development of the average monthly wage. The Social Dialogue Council then has one month to agree on an increase in the minimum wage. If the trade unions and employers' organisations represented in the Social Dialogue Council cannot reach agreement, the government shall decide unilaterally to adjust the minimum wage, which shall be the rule rather than the exception. In the absence of an agreement between trade unions and employers' organisations the government cannot raise the minimum wage less than the proposal sent to the RDS. However, it can raise it higher than that, for example, for political reasons (proximity to elections) or in response to trade union arguments. This has happened relatively often in recent years.

It should be noted that the Act refers to the setting of two types of minimum wage. A monthly minimum wage is set for employees. On the other hand, a minimum hourly rate was introduced in 2017 for work performed under certain civil law contracts (mandate contracts). This applies to natural persons who do not perform an economic activity and to the solo self-employed.

The minimum wage includes not only the basic salary, but also other pay components, such as bonuses and awards. It is therefore the total remuneration of an employee for the nominal working time in a given month. The following categories of employees are exempted from the minimum wage. First, persons performing simple agricultural work, so-called 'harvest helpers' (harvest assistance contracts). The legislation does not indicate any reference point for determining their remuneration. Second, young workers (persons under 18 years of age) combining study with occupational training. The remuneration of young workers is set by regulation. In the first year of apprenticeship no less than 8% of the average wage, in the second year no less than 9% and in the third year no less than 10%. Third, people employed within the framework of active state policy measures against unemployment (traineeships for the registered unemployed). Their remuneration during the internship period is 120% of unemployment benefit.

If the minimum wage is lower than 50% of the average wage in the national economy, a special algorithm is applied, specifying that the minimum wage in a given year shall be increased at least in line with projected inflation and additionally increased by 2% or 3% of GDP growth. If the price index forecasted for the following year (that is, the average annual price index of total consumer goods and services adopted for drafting the budget law) is at least 105%, the minimum wage and the minimum hourly rate will be increased twice a year on 1 January and on 1 July.

Monthly Minimum Wage (€) per Country



Statutory Minimum Wage
Yes

Real Growth rate of wages
-0.30%

% of workers covered by minimum wage
10.10%

Nominal Growth rate of Wages
3.00%

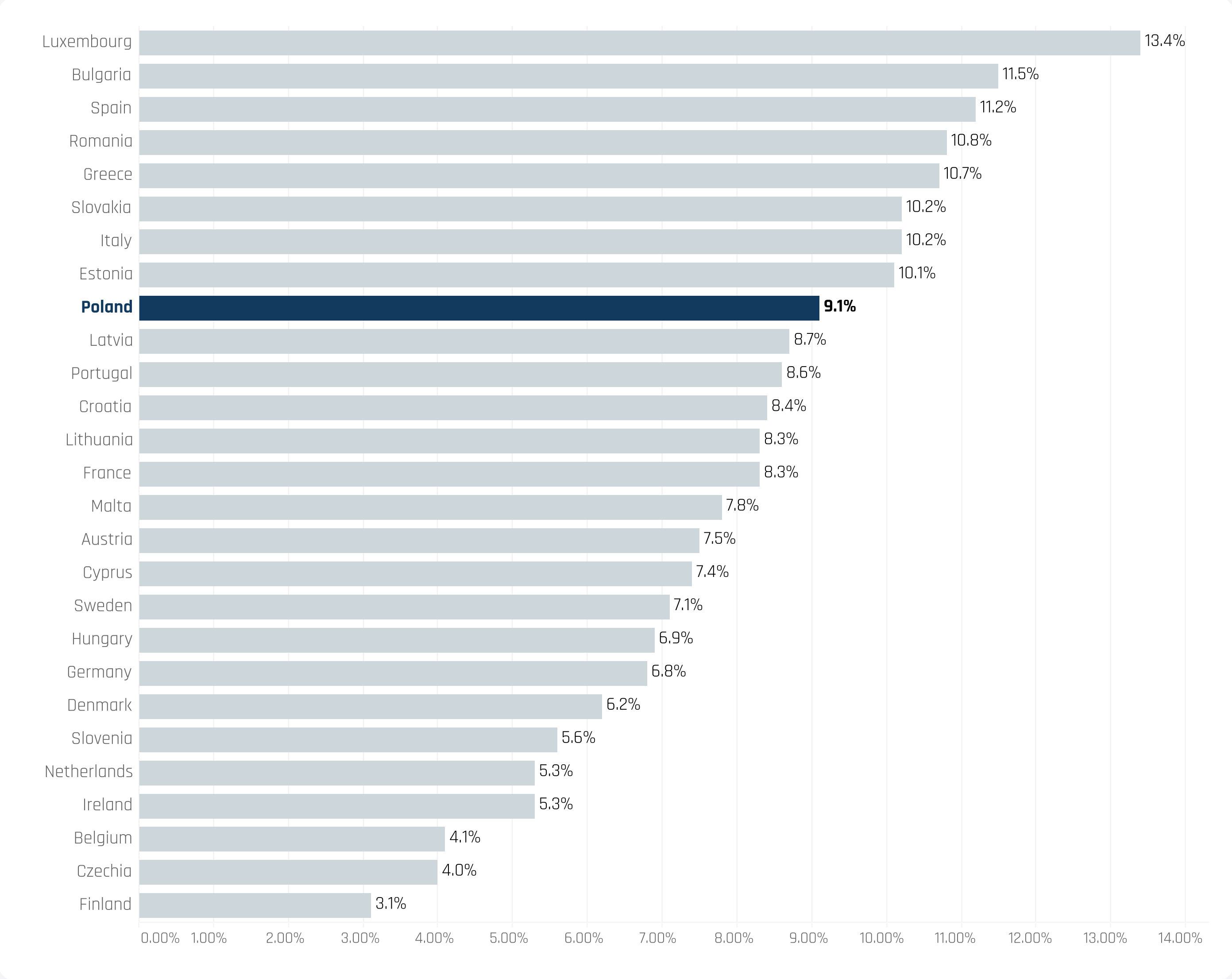
Minimum wage regime in Poland

The criteria taken into account when setting an increase in the minimum wage include: the level of inflation from the previous year, the inflation forecast, the amount of the average wages in the first quarter of the year in which negotiations take place, information on household spending in the previous year, information on national economic conditions (for example, the size of the budget), and the rate of real projected GDP growth.

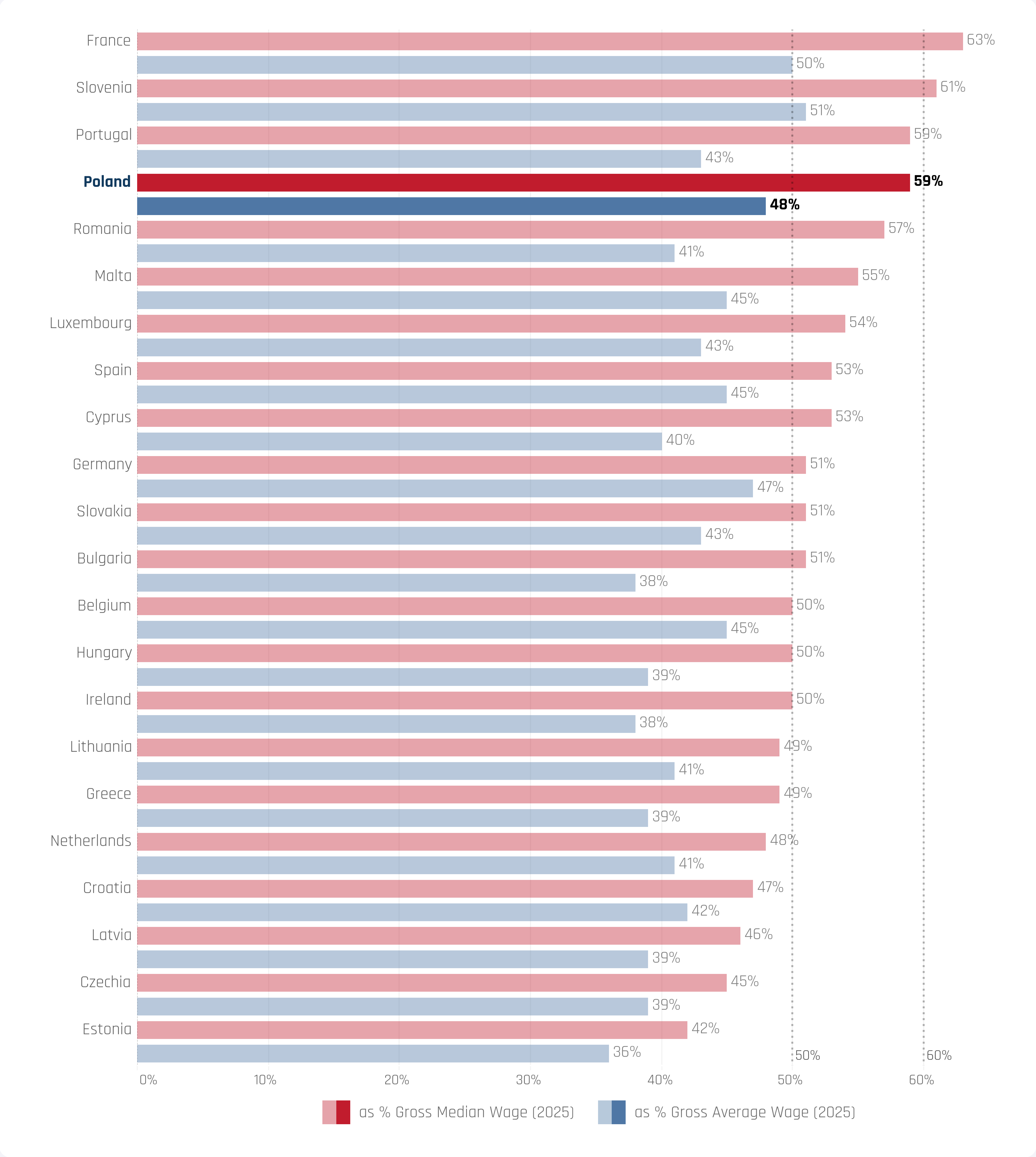
On 1 January 2026, the gross minimum wage was increased to PLN 4,806 (1,133 euros) per month. The minimum hourly rate is PLN 31.40 (€7.40). This means that it was increased by 3% compared with the previous year. In 2025, the ratio of the minimum wage to the average wage was approximately 54%, while the ratio of the minimum wage to the median wage is still unclear because the Central Statistical Office (GUS), which began systematically calculating the median two years ago, does not provide aggregate annual data.

However, estimates suggest that this ratio exceeds 65%. Thus the reference values specified in the Adequate Minimum Wage Directive are both met. Recent estimates suggest that in 2025 the growth in the share of workers earning the minimum wage slowed down, and even declined. It is estimated that this percentage will fall well below 20% in 2026 which is positive for limiting the flattening of the wage structure.

In-work poverty rate (%) per Country



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



Collective Bargaining system in Poland

The first law on collective bargaining was adopted in Poland in 1937. Despite the introduction of an authoritarian political system based, among other things, on a centrally managed economy after the Second World War, it formally remained in force until 1974, when labour law was codified. Throughout the period of the authoritarian system, collective agreements existed in name only, as they were intended de facto only to organise the working conditions of particular industries or occupations and were under the full control of the communist authorities. After the political breakthrough of 1989 and the adoption of the Trade Union Act and the Employer Organisations Act, the Labour Code (Kodeks Pracy) was thoroughly amended. In 1994, Section 11 was introduced into the Labour Code, regulating the conclusion of collective agreements at two levels: company and supra-company. At the same time, collective agreements became a source of law in their own right. Collective agreements are negotiated on the employee side exclusively by trade unions and their associations, and on the other side, by individual employers and their organisations. In the case of a sector financed directly from the state or local government budget, the relevant minister or local government, respectively, can be a party to a supra-company agreement. Collective bargaining has erga omnes effect; in other words, a negotiated and signed collective agreement covers the entire workforce, regardless of whether individual employees belong to a particular trade union. Poland is characterised by highly decentralised collective bargaining conducted mainly at the level of individual companies. Over the past 20 years, the number of sector-specific, supra-company collective agreements has declined dramatically.

Collective bargaining coverage has never been very high in Poland. This is because the majority of employees (around 70%) are employed in SMEs, and almost half of them in micro-enterprises. This means that the lack of established effective sectoral bargaining also results in low coverage of collective bargaining in general. The vast majority of the more than a dozen national sectoral agreements that emerged immediately after the system transformation were transformed agreements from the communist era. They have been gradually terminated by the newly established sectoral employers' organisations. As a result, the number of such agreements has shrunk to a minimum, leading to a decline in collective bargaining coverage from around 30% in the 1990s to 13% today. The declining number of company agreements has also contributed to this decline, with fewer than 8,000 of the approximately 14,000 or so ever concluded still in force.

There are many systemic reasons for the collapse of the collective bargaining system in Poland. The influx of FDI means that transnational corporations have become serious players in many sectors of the Polish economy. Acting in employers' organisations (sometimes several at the same time) they try to block sectoral bargaining initiatives. This approach is welcomed by domestic businesses, which generally do not take collective bargaining very seriously. On the other hand, for years no ruling political leaders, regardless of their ideological inclinations, have tried to promote the benefits of collective bargaining and, moreover, the state shows no interest in being a party to such sectoral agreements for the so-called budgetary (public) sphere, even though it is itself the employer there. This has been described by researchers as 'negative state neutrality'. The situation is not helped by the excessive bureaucratisation of the whole process of negotiating and concluding collective agreements. This is one of the reasons why the new law on collective bargaining was adopted, which is partly intended to help remedy the situation, while also contributing to the implementation of Article 4 of the Adequate Minimum Wage Directive. It should be noted that the Labour Code contains extensive and fairly comprehensive regulation of working conditions (in many cases dating back to communist times), which limits the interest of trade unions in developing collective agreements.

Validity of collective agreements after expiry

The vast majority of collective agreements are concluded for an indefinite period. According to the trade unions, this is intended to ensure their permanence. However, this does not prevent the termination of such agreements and the expiry of their provisions. Until 2002, the Labour Code provided that, once a collective agreement is terminated, its provisions shall remain in force until a new collective agreement is concluded, unless the parties decide otherwise. This provision was challenged by one of the employers' organisations before the Constitutional Court, which ruled that the provision was incompatible with the Constitution and ILO Convention No. 98, as it constituted a restriction on the principle of voluntary bargaining and violated the equality of the parties in negotiating changes to the content of the collective agreement. This jurisprudence was upheld by the Supreme Court. This means that the provisions of the collective agreement expire three months after its termination (unless the parties agree otherwise).

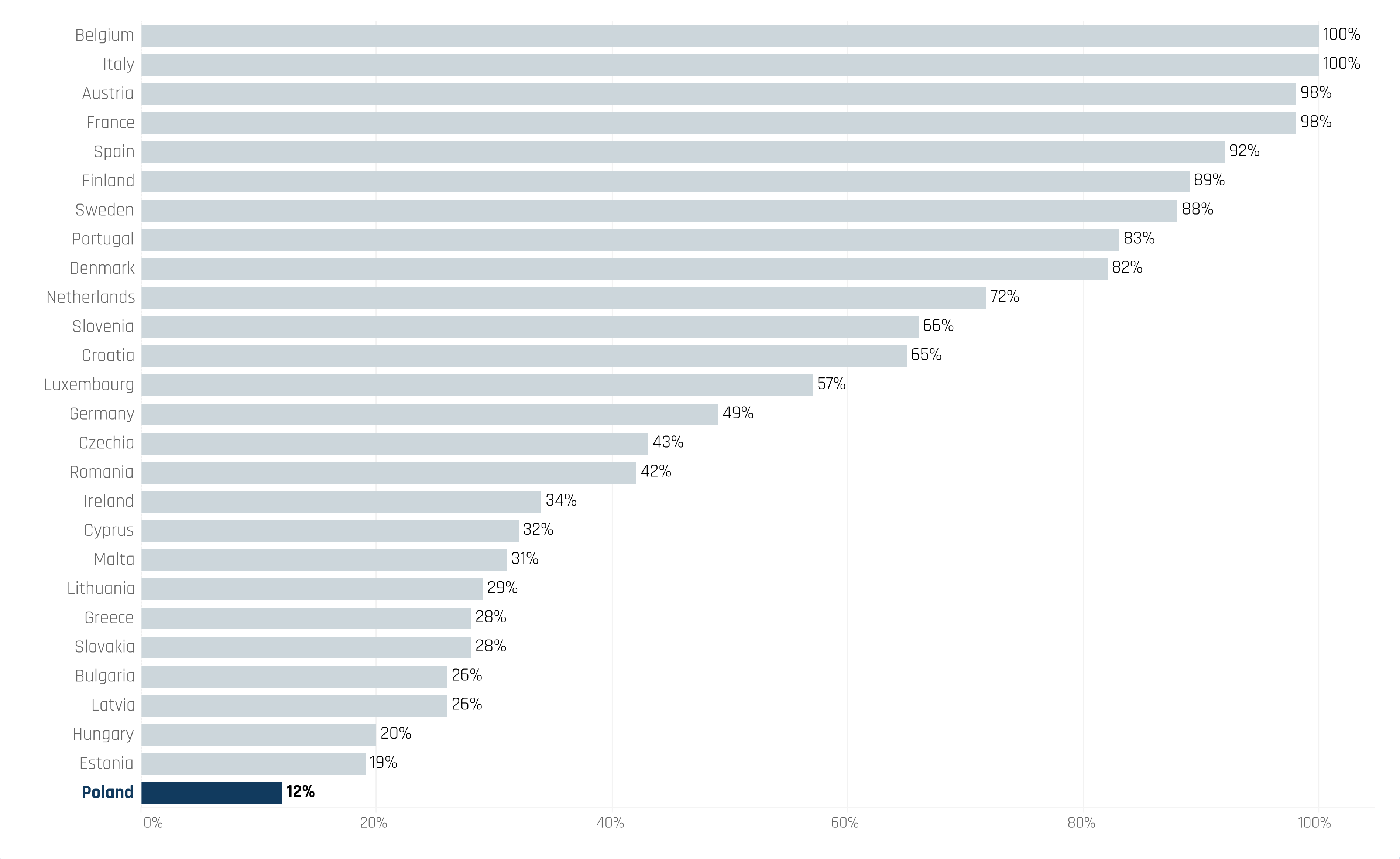
Collective Bargaining Coverage
12.00%

Trade Union Density
9.40%

Call to introduce or strengthen sectoral system of collective bargaining
Ongoing discussions

Valididy of Collective Agreeements after expirations?
Yes

Collective Bargaining Coverage per Country (%)



Collective Bargaining system in Poland

Exclusion of certain groups of employees from bargaining

Collective agreements can cover all employees with the exclusion of certain groups of people, such as state and local government employees who are appointed, judges, prosecutors and members of the civil service corps. In the case of the latter group, NSZZ Solidarność tried (unsuccessfully) to challenge the exclusion before the Constitutional Court. The ruling was that there is a stronger right of association and a weaker right to collective bargaining in the legal system, and the latter may be subject to restrictions because a trade union is also a political organisation, and collective bargaining for the civil service would be contrary to the principle of being apolitical.Moreover, collective agreements may also cover the solo self-employed and those employed under civil law contracts, as these categories of persons were granted the right of association following the amendment of the Trade Union Act in 2018. In practice, however, these are isolated cases.

Collective bargaining clauses in public procurement

There are no clauses on collective agreements in the Public Procurement Act. The trade unions intend to take up this issue in discussions with the employers on the Action Plan to promote collective bargaining as referred to in Article 4 of the Adequate Minimum Wages Directive

Right of access to workplaces for trade unions

The Trade Union Act only guarantees employers' obligation to make available the premises necessary for union activities. The details (size, location, equipment) should be agreed through negotiations. An obvious problem at the moment is company trade unions' lack of online access to employees, which is crucial in large workplaces, for example, when a strike ballot is needed. Employers tend to refer to the GDPR as a pretext for denying access. Trade unions consider that the lack of regulation in this regard is a violation of Article 2(1) of ILO Convention No. 135. The access of external trade union representatives and experts (for example, during the negotiation of a collective agreement) to the workplace is also a serious problem. According to the trade unions , this is a violation of ILO Recommendation No. 143 indicating that trade union representatives who are not employed by the company but whose union has members therein should be granted access to such a company.

Protection of workers and trade union representatives from dismissal and discrimination

Protection against discrimination based on trade union membership or trade union activities is enshrined in Article 11.3 of the Labour Code, which states that any discrimination in employment, including on the grounds of trade union membership, is unacceptable.

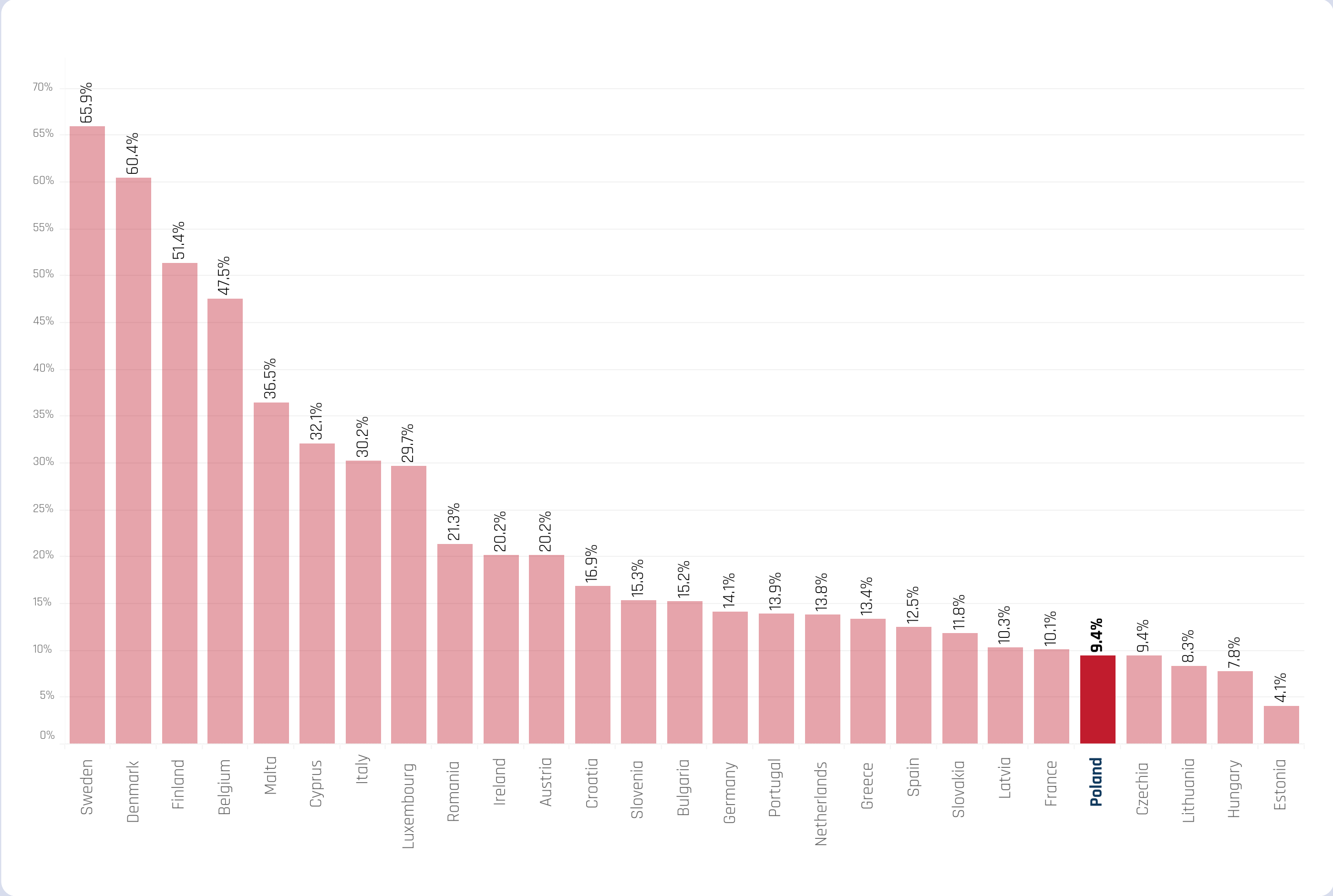
The Trade Union Act introduces employment protection (against dismissal) for a certain number of trade union activists, which depends on the size of the respective company-level union structure. In the case of employees who are union members (as well as non-unionised persons who have asked a company-level union structure to defend their rights) there is an obligation on the employer to consult the trade union before dismissing them.

Obligation for employers to engage in collective bargaining with trade unions

Such an obligation exists in the Labour Code. It applies both to the negotiation of a new collective agreement in a particular company/industry and to the re-negotiation of an existing one. None of the parties that are legally entitled to conclude an agreement can refuse the other party's request to enter into negotiations.

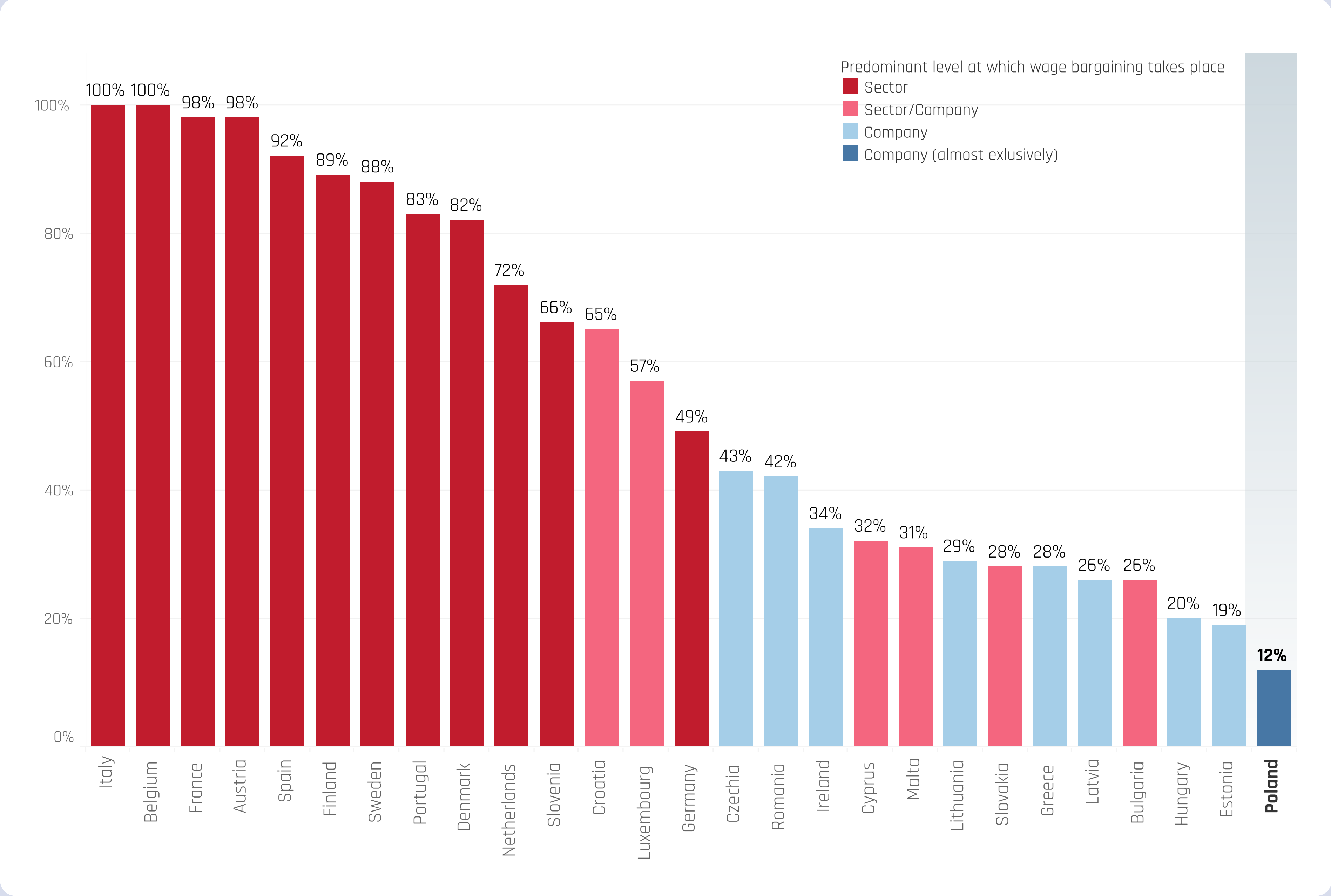
This does not imply a requirement to conclude a collective agreement and, in practice, many negotiations fail, discouraging trade unions from making such attempts. Trade unions with a small number of members do not demand negotiations leading to a collective agreement at all, on the assumption that they are not in a position to exert effective pressure, so the employer will not agree to anything 'attractive' anyway, apart from replicating the Labour Code.

CB Trade Union Density (%) for each Country



These regulations were recently transposed to a new act adopted as a result of Article 4 of EU Directive 2022/2041 and implementation of the National Recovery Plan (KPO) under the Recovery and Resilience Facility (improving collective bargaining). The new Act on collective labour agreements and other agreements which entered into force on 13 December 2025 introduced the following key changes: (i) a National Register of Collective Labour Agreements (KEUZP), which enables the electronic submission, registration and sharing of collective agreements; (ii) a legal basis for the Action Plan for the Support of Collective Bargaining, which aims to increase the number of collective agreements concluded; (iii) a new definition of 'employer', which allows a wider range of entities to be included in negotiations; (iv) extension of the range of persons in paid employment who can be covered by a collective agreement, which now includes the self-employed who are economically dependent; (v) an employer's obligation to inform employees covered by a collective agreement of its entry into force, provisions, amendments and termination or dissolution; (vi) an employer's obligation to ensure access to the workplace (or other place of work) for external persons acting on behalf of a trade union; and (vii) the introduction of a mediator in collective bargaining.

CB Predominant level at which wage bargaining takes place per Country



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

In summer 2024, the Polish government presented two draft laws to transpose the Directive. The first was a revision of the Minimum Wage Act, as here it was considered that only minor additions were needed. With regard to Article 4 of the Directive and in connection with the general need to revitalise the collective bargaining system, a draft of a completely new legislative proposal was presented. Following consultations in the Social Dialogue Council, the new Act on Collective Labour Agreements and Other Agreements was adopted on 5 November 2025 and entered into force on 13 December 2025. As for the amendment to the current law on the minimum wage, it is still being discussed within the government, and the delay is motivated by the ruling of the Court of Justice of the European Union from autumn 2025.

As part of the transposition and in line with the new Act on Collective Labour Agreements and Other Agreements, an Action Plan to promote collective bargaining was adopted in December 2025. This Action Plan consists of the following main measures:

(i) simplification of procedures by implementing the legal changes mentioned above;

(ii) awareness-raising and educational measures to communicate the benefits of collective agreements, which includes training for the social partners (until 2027) in order to improve negotiating skills and educational programmes (until 2030) aimed at including negotiation topics in the curricula of schools and universities;

(iii) incentives for employers through a bonus system (until 2030), including advantages in public procurement, tax relief and access to training funds, as well as analysis of existing regulations (until 2027) aimed at identifying legal barriers and proposals for changes (for example, in the Labour Code and the Trade Unions Act);

(iv) institutional support measures such as reactivating the Collective Agreements Commission or creating a new advisory body and local social dialogue centres (pilot project in Katowice for the mining sector);

(v) model solutions through ready-made templates for collective agreements for companies and industries (by 2027), a code of good practice with a set of recommendations for negotiations (by 2028) and a collective bargaining handbook as a compendium of knowledge for social dialogue parties;

and (vi) financing and monitoring, including identification of external sources of funding (ESF+ fund) (by 2026). Furthermore, a requirement was introduced for an annual progress assessment aimed at adapting activities to changing needs.

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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).

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