

NEWSLETTER

ARESME

EDITION N°2 | JULY - 2025

Adapting national social partners' capacities to pursue inclusive and responsive social dialogue following crisis situations in EU



THE STATE OF THE ART IN SLOVENIA, MALTA, SPAIN, GREECE AND PORTUGAL

This edition provides an overview of the current situation in the five countries mentioned above regarding minimum wage, collective bargaining, and the gender pay gap.

The Aresme Project aimed to compile a set of recommendations as a way to promote social dialogue and present to each member state involved matters of interest for collective bargaining, with the aim of promoting better working conditions and disseminating relevant information to other EU countries as well.

In this edition we begin with the State of the Art in each country in relation to the Minimum Wage / Gender Pay Gap, going through the Collective Bargaining process and ending with the Recommendations.



ARESME
SOCIAL DIALOGUE

TOPIC 01

Minimum Wage
Collective Bargaining
Gender Pay Gap

TOPIC 02

Recommendations

Promotion of Collective Bargaining including special contribution for inclusion of social partners in collective bargaining

MINIMUM WAGE

The Numbers

Spain has the highest minimum wage among the five partner countries, at €1 381 (12 installments). Slovenia follows with €1 278, Greece with €1026.67 (12 installments), Portugal with €1 015 (12 installments) and Malta with €961.

Minimum wage adjustments in Malta are typically the result of tripartite discussions between the government, employer associations, and trade unions on an annual basis. The minimum wage is determined based on a combination of factors, including economic conditions, inflation, and the cost of living. Here's a more detailed breakdown of the criteria: Economic Conditions, Cost of Living and Inflation, Social Dialogue, Labour Market Conditions and Wage Indexation.

The Government of **Spain** regulates it annually, after consulting with the most representative trade unions and business associations. The procedure for determining the minimum wage is outlined in Spain's Workers' Statute (Estatuto de los Trabajadores) (article 27). The factors to be considered are inflation; Productivity; Employment level and Economic situatio

The Proceeds

In **Slovenia**, the minimum wage is determined based on the amount of minimum living expenses increased by 20%, along with the amount of taxes and mandatory social security contributions, assuming the worker claims no tax reliefs or other taxable income besides the minimum wage and legally defined holiday allowance.

Considering price inflation, wage trends, economic conditions, and employment rates, the minimum wage can be set higher, but must not exceed a 40% increase over minimum living expenses.

The amount is determined by the Minister of Labour after consultation with social partners and must be published in the Official Gazette no later than January 31, with decisions made annually by the Minister of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities.

In **Malta**, the concept of minimum wage is primarily governed by **national legislation** and **social dialogue mechanisms** involving both the government and trade unions. The **National Minimum Wage** in Malta is set by the government through **statutory orders** (specifically, through the **Minimum Wage Order**), which establish the minimum wage for employees based on age and work status.

In **Greece**, the Law 5163/2024, for the incorporation of the Directive (EU) 2022/2041 of the European Parliament and the Council of 19th October 2022, regarding adequate minimum wages in the European Union - Readjustment of public sector employees' wages - Settlements for the determination of minimum wage for the years 2025, 2026 and 2027 and other provisions stipulates that from 2028 there will be an automatic readjustment if minimum wage, based on a formula, with 2 indicators: inflation and purchasing power of wages. The readjustment of the minimum wage is annual.

In **Portugal**, the article 59 of the Portuguese Constitution mandates mandates the establishment and updating of the national minimum wage and the Law n.º 7/2009 (article 273) defines the guaranteed monthly minimum remuneration.

The Portuguese government has final authority to establish the minimum wage with a prior consultation with the Permanent Commission for Social Concertation. the adjustment occur yearly, considering workers' needs and economic factors.

Wages grew faster after the pandemic. Inflation pressures from geopolitical tensions peaked in 2022 at 7.8%, then declining to 4.8% in 2023.



THE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING



SI

Initiation of negotiations

Representative employer or trade union organizations.

Negotiations

Social partners negotiation

Agreement on the text

The collective agreement is drafted in writing.

Signing the agreement

The collective agreement is signed by all social partners

Extension of the agreement

Registration

Must be registered with the ministry responsible for labour

Publication

Published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia

MT

Parties to the Collective Agreement

1. Trade Unions (on behalf of employees)
2. Employer Associations (on behalf of employers)
3. The Government (in certain cases)

Signing the agreement

Typically be signed by a single employer association

Right of opposition

by employers, employees or unions
Extension of the agreement

ES

Negotiation

The workers' representatives or the employers' representatives

Written Communication

To other party

Negotiation Committee

must be established within a maximum of one month

During the negotiation

both parties negotiate and may also agree to the intervention of a mediator, designated by them

GR

Negotiation

Unions and employers (or their associations)

Agreement:

It is formalized in a collective bargaining agreement, which must be published in the Labor and Employment Bulletin

Application

Applies to workers represented by the signatory unions and, generally, to new workers who join the company during the term of the contract.

Term and Renewal

The collective bargaining agreement has a defined term, and the parties can negotiate its renewal or revision at the end of that term.

PT

Initial Proposal

Either party presents a written proposal including designation of parties, scope, and previous agreements if applicable.

Response Period

Recipient must respond within 30 days in writing, accepting, rejecting or counterproposing on all clauses.

Direct Negotiations

Representatives meet for direct negotiations, with government ministries providing requested information.

Resolution

Agreement is reached or parties may request conciliation through the labour ministry if negotiations stall.

THE GENDER PAY GAP

Which is the situation of the Gender Pay Gap in each of the five countries announced compared with European Union.

The GAP in EU

According to the latest Eurostat data on the unadjusted gender pay gap, in 2023 women in the EU-27 earned on average 12% less per hour than men. The largest disparities were observed in Latvia (19%), Austria (18.3%), and the Czech Republic (18%). The smallest were recorded in Luxembourg (-0.9%, meaning women earned more per hour on average than men - does this also qualify as a gender pay gap, but in favor of women?), Belgium (0.7%), and Italy (2.2%).



5.4%

GAP

(Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia – Art. 133 - equal pay for equal work)



10.2%

GAP

(Is set to implement the EU Pay Transparency Directive, which mandates that companies with 150 or more employees begin reporting gender pay gap data by June 7, 2027)



19.89%

GAP

(Eliminating pay inequality would help advance real and effective gender equality in society, as referred to in Article 9.2 of the Spanish Constitution.)



13.6%

GAP

(In 2024, compared to 2023, the average monthly gross wage for men paid with minimum wage as a basis increased by 7,36%, while for women by 6,98%.)



15.4%

GAP

(Law 60/2018, of 21 August (Approves measure to promote equal pay for equal work or work of equal value)

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A SOCIAL DIALOGUE

I – NEW FORMS OF WORK

Policy making/engagement recommendations

- Adoption of coordinated policy measures, in EU, that modernise labour regulations, promote inclusive social dialogue, and ensure decent working conditions across all forms of work.
- Collective bargaining must be expanded and adapted to include platform and non-standard workers who often remain excluded from conventional union structures.
- Countries must align their legal definitions with the EU Platform Work Directive, establishing clear criteria to classify workers appropriately.
- In adapting legal frameworks, there is a need to guarantee equal treatment and access to rights for all workers. Legislative reforms should aim to harmonise labour law with social protection systems
- Transparency and accountability in algorithmic management are essential to protect worker autonomy and prevent exploitation.
- Innovation in social dialogue mechanisms—supported by political will and legal backing—is essential to ensure that labour rights evolve in tandem with economic and technological transformations.

Operational recommendations (how to put in practice existing legislation) / awareness recommendations

- Modernisation of social dialogue structures to include workers in new forms of employment relationships, such as platform workers, freelancers, and part-time employees.
- Regulation and governance of telework.
- To ensure that telework does not exacerbate inequalities.
- The regulation of part-time work also requires renewed attention, particularly as it intersects with gender and income inequality.
- On the issue of occupational safety and health (OSH), the transition to remote and non-standard forms of work has highlighted numerous gaps in existing systems.
- Education, awareness, and capacity-building must be prioritised.

Capacity building recommendations

- Strengthening Technical and Institutional Capacities.
- Reinforcing the Role of Collective Bargaining.
- Fostering Inclusive Multistakeholder Collaboration.
- Promoting Rights Awareness and Ethical Labour Practices.
- Supporting Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs).
- Investing in Long-Term Structural Reforms.

II – MINIMUM WAGE / COLLECTIVE BARGAINING / GENDER PAY GAP

Policy making/engagement recommendations



- Strengthening Collective Bargaining Frameworks: A core objective in policy-making should be the strengthening of collective bargaining frameworks.
- Institutional Wage-Setting Mechanisms also require further development.
- Inclusive and Fair Wage Policies must also be embedded into the broader framework.
- Legal Protections and EU Alignment.
- Gender-Responsive Bargaining.

Operational & Awareness Recommendations

- Strengthening trade union/representation movement, its density, and capacity.
- Enforcement and Monitoring: Effective implementation requires robust enforcement and monitoring systems.
- Transparency and Accountability.
- Digital and Economic Adaptation: As work evolves, digital and economic adaptation is essential.
- Raising Social Awareness and Public Campaigns.

Capacity Building Recommendations

- Union and Employer Strengthening.
- Institutional and Financial Support.
- Training and Education must be central to capacity building.
- Modernising Bargaining Structures.

Visit us on:

<https://brand.site/aresme>

This project is Co-Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or European Commission. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

THE PARTNERSHIP



ZDOPS

(Association of employers in craft and small business of Slovenia (lead))

Website: <https://zdops.si/>



MCSMEs

(Malta Chamber of SMEs)

Website: <https://www.smechamber.mt/>



PIMEC

(Pimec Petita i Mitjana Empresa da Catalunya, Spain)

Website: <https://pimec.org/en>



GSEVEE

(Hellenic Confederation of Professionals, Craftsmen & Merchants)

Website: <https://www.gsevee.gr/>



CCP

(Confederação do Comércio e Serviços de Portugal)

Website: <https://www.ccp.pt>



SOPS

(Trade Union of Crafts and Small Business)

Website: <https://sops.si/about/>



SME United*

(Association of Craft Employers and SMEs at the European level as **associated partner**)

Website: <https://www.smeunited.eu/>