

# HR LAW BRIEF: CEE

13/2024

## Dear Readers,

We are back with another edition of our HR Law Brief: CEE. Again, it's a 3-minutes read to bring you up to speed with the latest news from Central-Eastern Europe.

If you need any support in the CEE region, let us know.



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**POLAND: STILL UNCERTAIN ABOUT WHISTLEBLOWERS**

Despite the recent promulgation of belated law on whistleblowers, comments on the regulations and its inaccuracies have not quieted. The deadline to have an internal notification procedure, as well as structuring reporting channels in capital groups, are the biggest issues. Employers point to uncertainty in the legislation and difficulty in implementing whistleblower protection – especially in cases where the parent company is located outside Poland.

**CZECH REPUBLIC: MINIMUM WAGE DISCUSSION**

The discussion on the minimum wage is ongoing. According to the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the minimum wage could reach CZK 20,600 (~EUR 820) per month next year and as much as CZK 22,100 (~EUR 880) per month in 2026. The minimum wage for next year will be announced by 30th September 2024. Employers need to keep track of remuneration issues in order to manage remuneration structures, accordingly, comparing minimum and average salary levels in different CEE countries in site location projects discussions.

**SLOVAKIA: STREAMLINING FOREIGN WORKERS APPLICATIONS**

On 15th July 2024, Slovakia introduced significant changes to the employment of third-country nationals. New rules simplify the procedure for obtaining temporary residence permits, enabling third-country nationals to commence employment as soon as their application is submitted, subject to vacancy approval by the labour office. The processing period for temporary residence permits has been reduced from 90 to 60 days. Changes also affect Blue Card processes, including an extended validity period of up to five. The objective of these updates is to facilitate the entry of foreign workers into the Slovak labour market.

**HUNGARY: LABOUR MARKET CHANGES?**

New employees will be able to take advantage of the social contribution tax discount more easily. The new regulations will extend the period that will be taken into account to be considered a “new employee”. Registration of job seekers dropped to a record low level due to government-imposed labour market measures, which also contributed to further increases in employment. Declining numbers of unemployed seeking new jobs may result in a reversal of the trend and a change in the labour market to a more favourable one for employees.

**UKRAINE: SUPREME COURT: WARTIME ABSENCES ARE NOT GROUNDS FOR DISMISSAL**

During the period of martial law in Ukraine, an employee's absence from work is not automatically considered absenteeism without a valid reason. In a ruling dated 06/06/2024, the Ukrainian Supreme Court upheld the first instance court's decision that employees can perform their duties remotely. In the event of circumstances related to warfare, such as threats to life, absences from work cannot lead to sanctions against an employee.

**BULGARIA: FATHERS GAIN MORE CHILDCARE LEAVE RIGHTS**

On 25th July 2024, the Bulgarian parliament approved amendments to the Labour Code that in certain circumstances may allow fathers (and adoptive parents) to take additional leave to raise a child up to the age of two. From an employer perspective, this change offers the potential for more flexible management of parental leave. However, it may also result in staffing issues and additional costs and the adjustments to HR policies.



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