

HR LAW BRIEF: CEE

17/2025



Dear Readers,

We are back with another edition of our HR Law Brief: CEE. Again, it's a 3-minute 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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HUNGARY: CHANGES IN THE USE OF SZÉP CARDS

From 1 September 2025, Hungary will introduce expanded employer contribution options under the SZÉP Card scheme. This tax-advantaged, non-salary benefit allows employers to enhance total compensation while supporting employee wellbeing through access to a range of services. In addition to the current limits, employers will be able to contribute up to HUF 10,000 per month (approx. EUR 25) and HUF 120,000 per year (approx. EUR 300) to a newly introduced “Active Hungarians” sub-account. This account is intended to support spending on sports and active lifestyle services. To enhance oversight, the SZÉP Card will be usable only up to the available balance, with all transactions processed exclusively through electronic payment terminals. Employers are advised to inform their employees of these upcoming changes and ensure that their internal benefits systems are updated accordingly.

ESTONIA: NEW EMPLOYMENT RULES FOR MINORS

Starting 1 September 2025, Estonia will change rules for employing minors. Compulsory schooling is extended from 17 to 18 years, which affects working hour limits. Under the updated rules, during school holidays minors aged 13-14 can work up to 7 hours per day (35 hours per week), and those 15 or older can work up to 8 hours per day (40 hours per week). The new rules also provide clarity for situations where a minor has completed their compulsory education. In such cases, the employee is still subject to the standard working hour limits, even under summarized working time arrangements. This clarification addresses previous uncertainties regarding the legality of overtime for minors no longer in school. Employers should update their policies and work arrangements to comply with the new law.

POLAND: UNPAID INTERNSHIPS TO BE PROHIBITED

Poland has initiated work on legislation to prohibit unpaid internships aiming to promote fair access to the labour market and support career development. The Ministry of Family, Labour, and Social Affairs notes that unpaid internships often disadvantage young people and career changers. Although detailed provisions of the bill are still being finalized, employers may be soon required to reassess existing internship structures, including budget planning and HR policy updates.

UKRAINE: NEW REQUIREMENTS FOR WORKPLACE ADAPTATION FOR EMPLOYEES WITH DISABILITIES

Ukraine has introduced a draft law setting new standards for adapting workplaces to meet the needs of employees with disabilities. The initiative responds to the growing number of individuals with disabilities due to the war, aiming to support their reintegration into economic life. Starting from 1 January 2026, employers may be required to assess the individual needs of affected employees, provide appropriate training, install, and maintain adaptive equipment, and regularly monitor working conditions. The regulation also calls for ongoing cooperation with employees and their representatives in workplace adjustments. Employers should begin preparing resources, procedures, and infrastructure to ensure compliance with the upcoming requirements.

CZECH REPUBLIC: NEW RESTRICTIONS ON TEMPORARY EMPLOYMENT AGENCIES FOR FOREIGN EMPLOYEES

The Czech Republic has amended regulations on temporary employment agencies, introducing new restrictions on the types of work foreign nationals may be assigned to through temporary agency employment. From 1 January 2026 agencies with repeated valid permits may mediate temporary work for foreigners in roles requiring less than secondary education. This change responds to ongoing issues with exploitation and irregular employment practices, particularly involving newly established agencies created to circumvent labour laws. As a result, employers will be able to entrust recruitment and job placement for employees with lower than secondary education to licensed agencies, provided these agencies meet the permit requirements.

BULGARIA: SIMPLIFIED ONE-DAY EMPLOYMENT CONTRACTS

Bulgaria has introduced regulatory reforms to simplify the use of one-day employment contracts in the agricultural sector. Responding to the increasing need for short-term seasonal labour, the updated rules eliminate several administrative requirements — such as the need to collect ID and address details, specify exact working hours, or restrict employment to a single crop. The reform is intended to enhance flexibility for agricultural employers, making it easier to hire workers for short-term tasks during peak periods. Employers are advised to review their current hiring practices taking full advantage of the simplified procedures.

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