PCS

HR LAW BRIEF: CEE

20/2026



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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UKRAINE: PROPOSED CHANGES TO YOUTH EMPLOYMENT RULES

Ukraine has registered a draft law, proposing amendments to the Labor Code to expand employment opportunities for young people and simplify employment formalities. The proposed changes would allow electronic employment contracts, introduce probation periods for employees under 18 and increase the maximum weekly working hours for minors from 36 to 38 hours for those aged 16–18 and from 24 to 26 hours for certain younger workers. The draft would also permit weekend work, while retaining the ban on night and overtime work. In addition, it would simplify employment records, introduce remuneration rules based on hours worked subject to minimum-wage guarantees, and remove the requirement to obtain child protection service approval before dismissing a minor at the employer's initiative. Employment would also have to be terminated upon a substantiated request from a parent, legal representative, or competent supervisory authority where continued employment threatens the minor's health or interests. If adopted, the changes would require employers to review their procedures for hiring, scheduling, remunerating, and dismissing employees under 18.

LATVIA: PROPOSED ABOLITION OF THE MINIMUM SOCIAL INSURANCE CONTRIBUTION BASE

Latvia has proposed amendments to the State Social Insurance Law that would abolish the minimum contribution base for mandatory state social insurance contributions. Under the proposal, contributions would be calculated on actual remuneration paid to employees, replacing the current statutory minimum base. The reform aims to reduce employers' financial and administrative burdens and combat undeclared employment, particularly among temporary and seasonal workers. Subject to parliamentary approval, the changes are expected to take effect on January 1, 2027. Employers should review their payroll processes and prepare to adjust their systems to the proposed calculation method.

SLOVAKIA: INCREASED MEAL ALLOWANCES FROM DECEMBER 2026

From December 1, 2026, meal allowances for business trips will increase. For trips lasting 5-12 hours, the allowance will rise from EUR 9.30 to EUR 9.80; for trips lasting over 12 to 18 hours, from EUR 13.80 to EUR 14.60, and for trips exceeding 18 hours, from EUR 20.60 to EUR 21.70. The minimum value of meal vouchers will also increase to EUR 7.35. Subject to statutory conditions, employers must contribute at least 55% of the meal price, with the minimum daily contribution starting at EUR 4.05. Employers should account for the increased costs of business travel and meal benefits in their budgets ahead of the changes taking effect.

BULGARIA: MINIMUM WAGE SET TO RISE IN 2027

Bulgaria plans to raise the gross monthly minimum wage to EUR 660 from January 1, 2027, up from EUR 620.20 in 2026. This represents an increase of EUR 39.80 (6.4%), while the proposed minimum hourly rate would be EUR 3.98. The draft decree has been published for public consultation until October 28, 2026, with a shortened consultation period to ensure that the new rate can be incorporated into the 2027 state budget. The proposal follows the introduction of a new mechanism for setting the minimum wage, under which the following year's rate must be determined by August 15, within a prescribed lower and upper range. Employers should factor the planned increase into their 2027 payroll budgets and remuneration structures.

POLAND: INTERNSHIPS TO BE BASED ON EMPLOYMENT CONTRACTS

Poland has prepared a third version of the draft Act on Internships, which would require all internships to be based on fixed-term employment contracts. The proposal aims to prevent employers from replacing regular jobs with unpaid or low-paid interns. Interns would generally be covered by the Labor Code, subject to certain exceptions, and employers would be required to maintain employee records and provide paid leave. Internships would last six months, with contracts expiring at the end of that period. Unused leave of up to 10 days would have to be paid out in cash. Employers using internship contracts for purposes other than training and gaining work experience could face fines of PLN 2,000–60,000 (approximately EUR 470–14,100). Employers should review their internship programmes and assess the potential impact on remuneration, leave entitlements and HR administration.

ESTONIA: NEW REGULATIONS ON DIGITAL PLATFORM WORK

Estonia has prepared a draft bill regulating digital platform work, aimed at improving working conditions and increasing transparency in algorithmic management. Under the proposal, platforms would be required to explain how automated systems affect work allocation, remuneration and future access to assignments, including the impact of customer ratings and refusals to accept work. The draft would also prohibit automated systems from collecting sensitive personal data or analyzing workers' psychological or emotional state or private communications to infer information about their health, disability, political opinions, or religious beliefs. Key decisions, including account restrictions, suspensions or closures and refusals to pay remuneration, would be subject to human oversight. Workers would be entitled to challenge automated decisions and request a human review, with platforms required to respond within 14 days and provide reasons for their decisions. Unfair decisions would have to be corrected or, where correction is not possible, compensated. Platforms should review their data-processing practices and automated decision-making procedures to prepare for the proposed requirements.