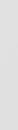
EU EMPLOYMENT HORIZON

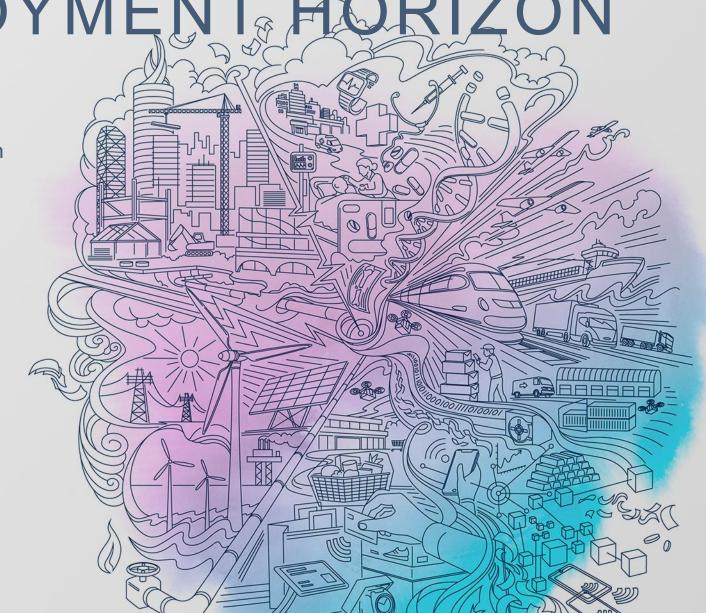
SCANNER

For Ireland, France, Germany, Spain and Poland

September 2025



ADDLESHAW
GODDARD



FUTURE KEY LEGISLATION DEVELOPMENTS IN IRELAND, FRANCE, GERMANY, SPAIN AND POLAND

JURISDICTION	ACT OR STATUTORY INSTRUMENT	SUMMARY AND IMPACTS	IMPACT DATE
Ireland	Employment (Contractual Retirement Ages) Bill 2025	Contractual Retirement Ages The Employment (Contractual Retirement Ages) Bill was published on 1 April 2025. Under the Bill it is proposed that if there is a mandatory retirement age in a contract of employment an employee can notify their employers if they do not agree to retire at the mandatory age. Under Irish law mandatory retirement ages can be included in contracts of employment provided the employer has objective reasons for this requirement. Under the Bill the employee can request to continue to work until the employee is the age at which he/she is eligible to receive the State Pension which is currently set at 66 years of age. Under the Bill the employer cannot enforce the mandatory retirement age without first responding to the request from the employee within one month and providing reasons in the response including any justifications for requiring the employee to retire as per the contract of employment. If an employee is unhappy with the response from the employer, the employee can bring the claim to the Workplace Relations Commission for adjudication.	tba
Ireland	Sectoral Employment Order (Construction Sector) 2024	Changes in rates of pay for the construction sector The Sectoral Employment Order (Construction Sector) 2024 will come into effect on 1 August 2025 to reflect higher rates of pay for craft and general constructions workers. Pay will increase by 3.4% in August 2025 and again by 3.2% in August 2026. The details of this Sectoral Employment Order have been discussed by colleagues	

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		will be automatically enrolled in a pension scheme.	
		Under the new scheme the employer, employee and the Government will all be required to pay a certain amount into the pension fund. The employee and employer are required to contribute 1.5% of the employee's annual salary in the first year. The rates will increase on an annual basis up to 6% of the annual salary by year 10.	
Ireland	Gender Pay Gap Reporting and the EU Pay Transparency Directive	Expansion of gender pay gap reporting requirements and the EU Pay Transparency Directive The obligation to carry out gender pay gap reporting extended to employers of 50 employees in 2025. Organisations who have 50 employees or more are required to take a snapshot on a date in June 2025 and report the corresponding data before 30 November 2025.	For gender pay gap reporting, organisations who have 50 employees or more will be required to take a snapshot on a date in June 2025 and report the corresponding data before 30 November 2025.
		In addition to this change on reporting, Ireland will also be required to work towards implementing the EU Pay Transparency Directive by the deadline of 7 June 2026. The implementation of the directive may require significant changes to Ireland's current reporting regime including the reporting of pay gaps based on categories of employees and providing employees and potential new hires with an oversight in relation to information in relation to ensure transparency. The General Scheme of the Equality (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2025 (the "Bill") has been published and includes a proposal to transpose Article 5 of the Directive, but the Bill does not deal with pay progression, pay secrecy and the right to information in relation to pay levels for employees carrying out the same work. However, the Government's Legislative Programme for Summer 2025 includes reference to the preparation of the outline for legislation for the Pay Transparency Bill which is a "bill to transpose the EU Pay Transparency Directive". It is unclear at present whether this will address the balance of the Directive or whether it will incorporate the proposals set out in the General Scheme of the Equality (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2025.	EU Pay Transparency Directive to be implemented by 7 June 2026 and the outline for legislation is in preparation as noted in the Government's Legislative Programme for Summer 2025.
Ireland	National Minimum Wage and New Living Wage	National Minimum Wage and New Living Wage The living wage is set to be introduced in Ireland in 2026 which will replace the national minimum wage. It is intended that the living wage will be set at 60% of the median wage in any	2026

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		given year. The Living Wage Technical Group (the "Group") h be €14.75 per hour.	ave suggested the living wage to	
France	Accident prevention	New joint instruction from the Ministry for Justice and the accident prevention on July 10, 2025	e Minister for Labour on	July 2025
		The Labour Inspection's role in accident prevention in the work powers in doing so are improved. The new joint instruction we the judicial police officers in charge of the criminal investigation.	ill enable more cooperation with	
		The instruction encourages Labour Inspectors to make greater penalties in cases of serious breaches of health and safety at power to impose penalties, even in the absence of a workplace strengthened preventative approach and a graduated response	work legislation. The increased ce accident, is part of a	
		It also invites the French Administration to make greater use of possible. This mechanism allows for the sanctioning of violation through the opportunity to regularise the situation through additional materials.	ons while offering the employer	
France	Pay Transparency Directive (Directive 2023/970 of 10 May 2023)	Transposition of the Pay Transparency Directive (Directive) The Directive must be transposed into French law by 7 June 2 2025 following consultation with social partners. Key Provisions of the Upcoming Reform:		June 2026
		1 Revision of the Gender Equality Index for companies (increase from 5 to 7 indicators) with specific phases		
		COMPANY SIZE FIRST DECLARATION (INDICATORS)	7 FREQUENCY	
		≥ 250 employees 7 June 2027	Annual	

JURISDICTION	ACT OR STATUTORY INSTRUMENT	SUMMARY AND IMPACTS			IMPACT DATE
		150–249 employees	7 June 2027	Every 3 years	
		100–149 employees	7 June 2031	Every 3 years	
		during employment) and remuneration criteria is a second of Equal Pay for Work of Equal classification crit	qual Value: Employers must applyeria (skills, effort, responsibility). d Remedies: Complaint mechanis	ees, disclosure of object	tive
Germany	Coalition Agreement	What the Coalition Agreement	means for HR		May 2025
		and it brings significant changes outlines the key policy priorities o	on the SPD and CDU/CSU has now for HR. The agreement entitled "F on the new coalition. Key proposal	Responsibility for Germands include:	any"
		2026 is considered to be reali	eminimum wage further. A minimu istic.	im wage or up to € ro b	y
		overtime bonuses tax-free wh	weekly rather than daily maximum en they exceed collectively agree time employees to increase their	d or standard full-time h	
		_ =	g hours: To implement the obligati g hours. Trust-based working time		t")
		I and the second	o increase collective bargaining co s to paying tariff standard. To allow for membership.		ess
		_	duce various measures to reduce become more digital as well as an ex		

JURISDICTION	ACT OR STATUTORY INSTRUMENT	SUMMARY AND IMPACTS	IMPACT DATE
		train employees in the use of AI and ensure fair data practices in the workplace. A digital "Work-and-Stay Agency" will streamline skilled immigration.	
		 Pensions and older workers: To strengthen occupational pensions, provide incentives to continue working rather than opting for early retirement and making fixed-term returns to a former employer possible after reaching retirement age. 	
		Occupational Health and Safety: To improve mental health in the workplace and evaluate the current occupational safety legislation.	
Germany	Pay Transparency Act	Update of the Pay Transparency Act (Entgeltgleichheitsgesetz)	Expected 2026
		Germany is preparing to update its Pay Transparency Act in line with the EU Pay Transparency Directive, aiming to enhance salary transparency and address wage disparities. While the exact implementation date is pending (expected in 2026), employers should proactively assess their remuneration systems to ensure alignment with forthcoming requirements.	
Germany	German Maternity Protection Act	Amendment to German Maternity Protection Act (MuSchG): New statutory protection in case of miscarriage	1 June 2025
		As of 1 June 2025, a new amendment to the German Maternity Protection Act (MuSchG) grants statutory protection periods to women who experience a miscarriage from the 13th week of pregnancy onward. These women are now entitled to a mandatory rest period, a temporary employment ban (unless waived), and maternity benefits, depending on the pregnancy week. Employers must ensure no work is assigned during these periods unless the employee explicitly opts to return — and even then, she may revoke that decision at any time. HR teams need to update internal maternity leave policies, ensure payroll processes include maternity pay, and respect the special four-month dismissal protection after a miscarriage.	
Germany	Holiday entitlement in settlement agreements	Federal Labour Court ruling (File no. 9 AZR 104/24): No waiver of holiday entitlement through settlement agreement	Judgment delivered on 3 June 2025.
		The German Federal Labour Court (BAG) ruled on 3 June 2025 (9 AZR 104/24) that employees cannot validly waive their statutory minimum holiday entitlement during an ongoing employment relationship — even if the end of the employment is already scheduled or the holiday cannot be taken due to illness. Clauses in settlement or termination agreements stating that holiday has	

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		been "granted in natura" may be invalid if the employee was clearly unable to take the leave.	
		The court emphasised that such holiday entitlements are not freely disposable like regular payment claims. So-called "factual settlements" (Tatsachenvergleiche) regarding holiday use are only valid if there is genuine uncertainty about the facts — which is not the case during long absences such as illness or parental leave. Employers must draft settlement and termination agreements with care and ensure clear, specific holiday clauses to avoid later claims.	
Germany	Working Time recording	Working time recording – still a state of uncertainty	Late 2025/early 2026
	J	Under current German law, employers are obliged to record employees' working hours based on a 2022 ruling by the Federal Labour Court (BAG), which confirmed that a general duty to track working time already exists under the Occupational Health and Safety Act. While there is no specific statutory framework yet detailing how time must be recorded, a legislative amendment to the Working Time Act is expected — likely by late 2025 or early 2026 — and will probably mandate electronic time recording.	
		The changes are expected to provide for exemptions for employees on trust-based working time models (Vertrauensarbeitszeit), as outlined in the coalition agreement. However, these exemptions are not yet defined in detail, and employers are advised to wait for the final law before relying on such carve-outs. Importantly, the obligation to record working hours refers to working time within the meaning of the Working Time Act — i.e. from a health and safety perspective — and is not necessarily equivalent to time that must be remunerated.	
		For employers, it remains challenging to navigate from potential interim solutions to a future legally compliant state that implements statutory requirements while also addressing the remuneration aspect or ensuring sufficient flexibility.	
Spain	Working Time	Working Time and the Right to Disconnect	tba
		On 6 May 2025, the Council of Ministers of Spain approved a draft bill to reduce the maximum working time of the employees to 37.5 hours per week instead of the current maximum of 40 hours per week. This draft bill (and its measures) still needs to be debated and approved in the Spanish Parliament. If the measure is finally approved, it will have significant implications for employers. Employers can expect to see an increase in the number of overtime hours (with	

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		associated increases in costs in terms of salary and social security contributions) and the potential need to recruit additional employees to cover the shortfall in working time which, again, will have cost implications for businesses. Alongside the reduction of working hours, the draft bill (which is still pending approval) also regulates a mandatory digital register to monitor working hours to which the Labour Inspectorate will have direct access. This measure will facilitate the imposition of sanctions by enabling the Labour Inspectorate to identify any breaches by the companies of working time regulations.	
		Furthermore, the draft bill also regulates the reinforcement of the right to disconnect, prohibiting employers from requiring work outside agreed hours (e.g., sending emails outside working hours).	
Spain	Tribunal consolidated doctrine on disciplinary dismissal	Tribunal consolidated doctrine on disciplinary dismissal The Spanish tribunals have recently changed their consolidated doctrine (from the 80's) requiring employers to have a preliminary disciplinary file which must be given to the employee before notifying them of a disciplinary dismissal. Previously, an employer could notify the employee of their disciplinary dismissal by letter, effective the same date without the need for further explanation beyond the reason described in the letter. Following this change, an employer must communicate a statement of objections (<i>pliego de cargos</i>) to the employee explaining the reason for the dismissal. If the employee appeals against those objections, the employer will need to consider the employee's complaints to determine if the company continues with the dismissal. There is currently significant uncertainty for employers around these changes. For the time being, there are no regulations providing any details of how this process will work in practice or the consequences of failing to provide a preliminary disciplinary file. It is unclear whether a failure to have a preliminary disciplinary file could mean the dismissal is a null and void or whether it would be unlawful which would have different consequences for the employer or whether it would give rise to compensation.	Already effective

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Spain	Severance compensation	Severance compensation for unfair dismissal	No change
		In September 2024, there was a non-binding resolution of the European Committee of Social Rights ("ECSR") declaring that, in Spain, the legal protection of severance compensation for dismissal for an employee was insufficient. Although a recent resolution of the Spanish Supreme Court held that Spain's system of compensation for dismissal is adequate, it did not analyse the resolution of the ECSR because the dismissal took place before the resolution was issued. Nevetheless, in a judgment issued in July 2025, the Supreme Court confirmed that the severance compensation established by the Workers' Statute is sufficient and no additional compensation for damages is required.	
Spain	Permanent incapacity	Termination of the employment contract due to permanent incapacity	1 May 2025
		On 1 May 2025, Law 2/2025 came into force, removing the automatic termination of employment contracts following a declaration of permanent incapacity and introducing a new approach based on the adaptation and relocation of workers within the company. Under the new regulation, before terminating the contract, companies must assess the possibility of reasonable adjustments or relocation to other job positions, provided that these measures do not entail an excessive burden. Only if no alternative is feasible, or if the worker rejects a compatible position, may the contract be terminated, with the obligation to justify the decision. A suspension of the contract for up to two years with the job being kept is still possible in cases of possible improvement.	
Spain	Pay Transparency	EU Pay Transparency Directive	tba
		In the case of Spain, the Directive has yet to be transposed. However, the Spanish legislator has already introduced obligations regarding pay transparency, such as the gender pay register for all companies and the gender pay audit for companies with 50 or more employees.	
		That said, while Spain is ahead of the Directive in certain areas, the transposition of this Directive will require most organisations to review their pay models and define their remuneration policies in a much more precise manner.	
Poland	State Labour Inspection – new	Draft bill on amendments to the State Labour Inspection Act – authority of labour	The draft Act is currently in the early legislative process. The proposed

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	powers	On 1 September 2025, a draft bill amending the Act on the State Labour Inspection and certain other Acts was published. The most revolutionary change proposed is granting labour inspectors the competence to determine the existence of an employment relationship, that is empowering labour inspectors to issue administrative decisions under which apparent civil law contracts may be reclassified as employment contracts (to date such reclassification could be declared only by final labour court verdict). Such a decision is immediately enforceable with respect to the parties' rights and duties arising under the labour laws, as well as tax and social insurance obligations. Both newly reclassified employer and employee will have right to appeal against the reclassifying decision of the labour inspector to, first, the State (General) Labour Inspector (within 7 days) and then to the labour court. To this end, several other amendments to other provisions of Polish law (e.g., new court procedural provisions in the Civil Procedure Code, provisions enabling exchange of data between the State Labour Inspection, the Social Insurance Institution, and the tax authorities) have been proposed. Other than that, under the above draft bill, fines for the infringement of employees' rights will be increased (doubled) up to PLN 60,000 (approx. EUR 14,000).	effective date is 1 January 2026.
Poland	Collective Labour Agreements	New draft bill on collective labour agreements A draft Act on Collective Labour Agreements and Collective Agreements is currently being processed in the Polish parliament. The proposed new regulations aim to encourage the use of collective labour agreements (which are now rarely signed, mostly only in the former state owned entities or mining industry) by: (i) simplifying the registration procedure for collective labour agreements, (ii) introducing the institution of a mediator during negotiations, (iii) allowing for the conclusion of collective agreements for a fixed term with an extension (rolling out) option, (iv) permitting collective labour agreements to govern matters not regulated by mandatory labour law provisions, and (v) expressly admitting for the provisions of a collective labour agreements to apply to non-employee contractors.	The draft Act is currently in the early legislative process. The Act is set to come into force 14 days after its publication in the Journal of Laws of the Republic of Poland.
Poland	The amount of the minimum wage for work and minimum	New national minimum wage rates From 1 January 2026, the minimum wage would amount to PLN 4,806 gross per month (approx. EUR 1,130 gross per month), and the minimum hourly rate would be increased to PLN 31.40	The new rates of national minimum wage will apply as of 1 January 2026.

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	hourly rate	gross (approx. EUR 7.40 gross).	
Poland	Reduced working hours – pilot programme announced by the government	Enrolment to the pilot programme on reduced working hours is now closed On 15 September 2025, the application process for the pilot programme on reduced working hours organised by the Polish Ministry of Labour was closed. The initiative aims to test various models of reduced working hours, including the introduction of additional days off, shortening the working day, or reducing the number of working days per week. The programme provides that employers, both in the public and private sectors, meeting specific criteria, will be eligible to receive support for one pilot project of up to PLN 1 million (however the cost of the project per employee covered by the project may not exceed PLN 20,000). Almost 2,000 employers applied to participate in this pilot programme. The decision and publication of the list of qualified employers is expected by 15 October 2025. Outcomes of this pilot programme will be used as an argument in public discussion on introducing statutorily reduced working hours for all employees (currently, by law, full-time employee works 8 hours a day and on average 40 hours per, on average, 5-day working week).	As part of the programme, the trial implementation of reduced working hours is scheduled to run from 1 January 2026 to 31 December 2026. Participating employers have until 15 May 2027 to submit their findings of the trial.
Poland	Pay Transparency	Amendment to the Labour Code – partial implementation of the EU Pay Transparency Directive The Act of 4 June 2025 which amends the Labour Code partially implements the EU Pay Transparency Directive in Poland. It introduces provisions requiring employers to disclose to candidates the initial remuneration or its range (based on gender-neutral, objective and non-discriminatory criteria) for the given position, along with relevant provisions of the internal remuneration policies (collective labour agreements or remuneration regulations). Employers will be required to provide the information electronically or in paper form at a defined stage of the recruitment process, ensuring transparent and informed pay negotiations. Additionally, the Act mandates gender neutrality in job advertisements and position titles, as well as prohibits asking candidates about their current or past remuneration for work,	The Act will take effect on 24 December 2025. Further draft legislation is expected.
		reinforcing non-discriminatory hiring practices. Based on the unofficial information from the Polish Labour Ministry official, the draft bill to fully	

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		implement the EU Pay Transparency Directive in Poland should be published in the second half of September 2025; however, as there are certain key issues to be internally agreed yet with other authorities, this deadline is rather unlikely to be met by the Ministry. According to this unofficial information (to be confirmed when the official draft implementing bill is published):	
		(i) there will be a separate legal act to fully implement the Directive in Poland (it is not yet known whether the above-mentioned provisions on recruitment introduced in the Polish Labour Code will be further amended);	
		(ii) no additional requirements or duties, beyond what is expressly required under the Directive, will be imposed on the employers under the Polish implementing legislation;	
		(iii) the implementing legislation is expected to come in force on 1 June 2026; however, the first reporting will be only for the period after 1 June 2026 (not for the whole 2026);	
		(iv) the Labour Ministry will share tools to calculate the gender pay gap, but there will be no new tool for the purpose of reporting gender pay gap under the Directive.	

KEY CONTACTS



MICHAEL LEFTLEY
Partner, Head of Employment &
Immigration Group, UK
+44 (0)20 7788 5079
+44 (0)7909 996755
michael.leftley@addleshawgoddard.com



FRANÇOIS ALAMBRET
Partner, Employment, France
+33 (0)1 84 13 49 75
+33 (0)6 29 34 52 34
Francois.Alambret@aglaw.com



MICHAEL BURNS
Partner, Employment, UK
+44(0)161 934 6398
+44(0)7801 132448
michael.burns@addleshawgoddard.com



DAVID CANTRELL

Partner, Immigration and Dispute
Resolution, Ireland
+353 (0)1 202 6437
+353 (0)86 260 0045
david.cantrell@aglaw.com



ANNA-CHRISTINA CHAVES
Partner, Employment, France
+33 (0)1 84 13 13 73
+33 (0)7 89 88 85 39
Anna-Christina.Chaves@aglaw.com



MAURA CONNOLLY
Partner, Head of Employment, Ireland
+353 (0)1 202 6505
+353 (0)87 998 4162
M.Connolly@aglaw.com



SHAKEEL DAD
Partner, Employment, UK
+44(0)113 209 2637
+44(0)7776 570433
shakeel.dad@addleshawgoddard.com



ANYA DUNCAN
Partner, Employment, UK
+44(0)1224 444 347
+44 (0)7350 409991
anya.duncan@addleshawgoddard.com



CARLOS GIL
Partner, Employment, Spain
+34 91 426 0050
carlos.gil@aglaw.com



SARAH HARROP
Partner, Employment & Immigration, UK
+44 (0)20 7788 5057
+44 (0)7595 777926
sarah.harrop@addleshawgoddard.com

KEY CONTACTS



DAVID HENEGHAN
Partner, Immigration and Dispute
Resolution, Ireland
+353 (00)1 202 6452
+353 (0)8604 12881
D.Heneghan@aglaw.com



RACHEL HILL
Partner, Employment, UAE and GCC
+971 4350 6484
+971 5 5997 1167
r.hill@aglaw.com



DAVID HUGHES
Partner, Employment, UK
+44 (0)131 222 9837
+44 (0)7740 910671
david.hughes@addleshawgoddard.com



REBECCA KITSON
Partner, Employment, UK
+44 (0)113 209 2627
+44 (0)7867 72115
rebecca.kitson@addleshawgoddard.com



DABROWSKA
Partner, Head of Employment, Poland
+48 (0)22 526 5080
+48 (0)605 125 344
monika.krzyszkowska-dabrowska
@addleshawgoddard.com

MONIKA KRZYSZKOWSKA-



PAUL MCGRATH
Partner, Employment, UK
+44 (0)113 209 4928
+44 (0)7918 648433
paul.mcgrath
@addleshawgoddard.com



ANDREW MOORE
Partner, Employment, UK
+44 (0)161 934 6412
+44 (0)7920 700877
andrew.moore
@addleshawgoddard.com



GORVINDER PANNU
Partner, Employment, Oman and
GCC
+971 4350 6437
+968 2495 0705
G.Pannu@aglaw.com



MARIJKE VAN DER MOST
Partner, Employment, Germany
+49 (0)69 566 089 870
+49 (0)173 187 4048
marijke.vanderMost@aglaw.com



RICHARD YEOMANS
Partner, Employment, UK
+44 (0)20 7788 5351
+44 (0)7747 800591
richard.yeomans@addleshawgoddard.com