

MINIMUM DECENT WAGE FOR 2025

PRESS RELEASE - Platform for a Minimum Decent Wage

The minimum decent wage has risen to 48,336 CZK gross, and in Prague and Brno to as much as 56,912 CZK. The biggest expense remains the high cost of housing.

Prague, 15 April 2026 – The gross minimum decent wage (MDM) for 2025 was 48,336 CZK. In Prague and Brno, where the cost of living is higher, it reached as much as 56,912 CZK. This is an amount determined annually by experts as the remuneration for full-time work, intended to cover essential costs for housing, food, transport, healthcare, education and other living expenses.

In 2025, there was a gradual improvement in employees' purchasing power in the Czech Republic. However, they are still feeling **the effects of rising prices and wage stagnation** in recent years, which have caused the sharpest decline in employees' purchasing power among EU countries. *"The fall in real wages in the Czech Republic in recent years has been so that it is only this year that an employee on an average wage is expected to be able to afford the same standard of living as in the pre-Covid year of 2019,"* said economist and co-author of the concept Jan Bittner.

2.5 million workers remain below the minimum decent wage threshold.

The fact that a significant proportion of people remain below the MDM threshold – last year this figure stood at approximately 2.5 million workers (63%) – also highlights the persistently low purchasing power. Meanwhile, almost three-quarters of women earn less than the decent minimum wage.

Insufficient wages and their slow growth mean that there is still a large group of people in the Czech Republic who are in a situation of long-term economic insecurity. *"We tend to think of poverty as a complete lack of income and an inability to meet even the most basic needs; however, by calculating the MDM, we want to highlight the financial instability and uncertainty experienced by many working people,"* explains social anthropologist Lucie Trlifajová, another of the concept's authors, on the significance of the tool.

Slow wage growth has had a particular impact on sectors where the state is the main employer, including highly qualified professions. Public sector workers have experienced a sharp decline in purchasing power in recent years; they are 9 % poorer than in 2019. Workers in the education sector have also become 7 % poorer, despite a statutory guarantee of wage growth.

Virtually no teaching assistant earns the minimum decent wage, but four out of five teachers in Prague and Brno also face wages that are too low given the high cost of living. The social care sector, too, has long struggled with

has long been a problem in the social care sector, where as many as 86% of social workers do not reach the minimum decent wage.

Four out of five teachers in Prague and Brno do not reach the minimum decent wage, primarily due to high housing costs.

In addition to policy measures that can contribute to wage growth, it is also possible to influence a decent standard of living through the cost side, i.e. by ensuring that the essentials for a decent life are more affordable. From this perspective, the issue of housing affordability has been particularly crucial in recent years, as it constitutes the largest item in the minimum decent wage calculation and, through its year-on-year price increases, regularly drives up the minimum decent wage the most.

As Trlifajová comments: *“In the housing sector, the key factor is the effect of wealth inequality, which can no longer be offset by income growth. Even with the MDM, it is essentially impossible to buy one’s own home, and even paying higher rent can pose a problem. Conversely, for those who live in their own paid-off property, or even rent out accommodation on top of that, income from work ceases to be the decisive factor. Here, public policies that improve the availability of affordable housing are key to ensuring a decent standard of living.”*

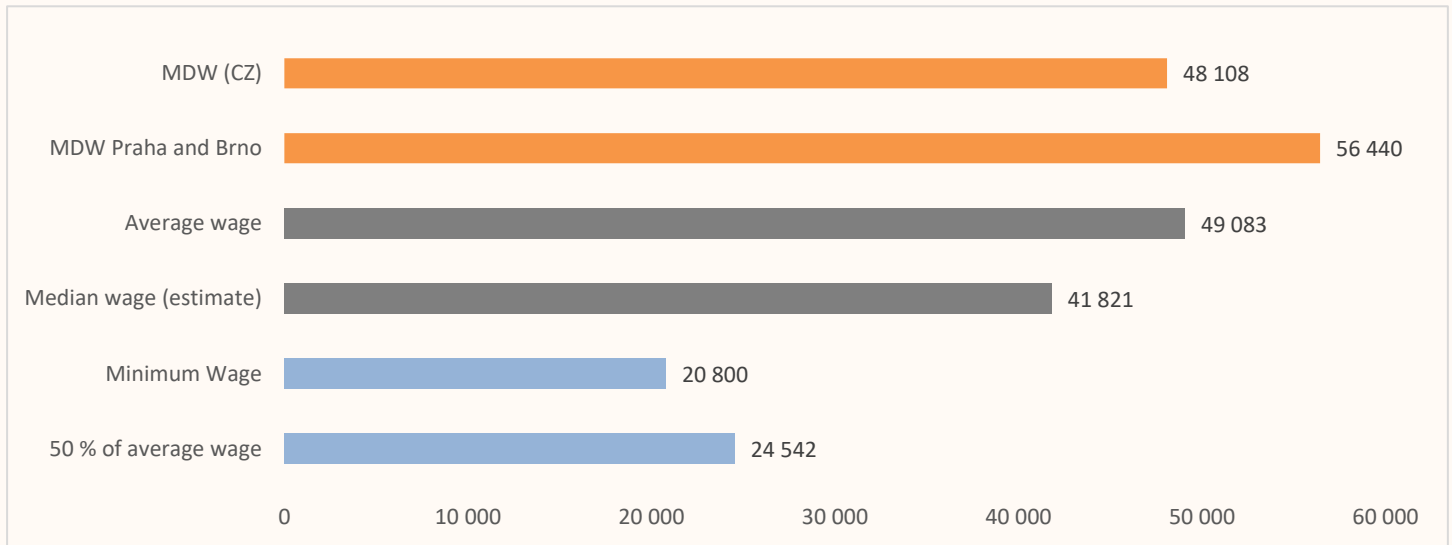
Chart 1: MDM 2025 by expenditure category:

	CZECH REPUBLIC	PRAGUE and BRNO
Housing	15,342 CZK	21,392 CZK
Food	8,286 CZK	8,530 CZK
Clothing & Footwear	1,247 CZK	1247 CZK
Transport	2,208 CZK	2,208 CZK
Health & Hygiene	1,730 CZK	1,730 CZK
Telecommunications	1,378 CZK	1,378 CZK
Leisure	4,030 CZK	4,030 CZK
Savings	5,082 CZK	5,082 CZK
Gross Salary	48,336 CZK	56,912 CZK

Low wages that are insufficient to cover basic living costs have far-reaching consequences for individuals and society as a whole. In light of the current crises, it is important to emphasise the limited resilience of households to economic fluctuations, which puts additional strain on the state, and the effect of economic uncertainty on mental and physical health, relationships, and family life.

A broader perspective is also important, as explained by political scientist and co-author of the MDM concept, Kateřina Smejkalová: *“Society operates on the basis of a certain unwritten rule: that if people go to work honestly, they should be able to secure the things that are commonplace in society – for many, this is perhaps the most important and tangible promise of a functioning democracy. If this is not the case, it is hardly surprising that some people feel the system is not working as it should, and are becoming politically radicalised.”*

Chart 2: MDM 2025 in wage distribution:



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What is the Minimum Decent Wage?

The Minimum Decent Wage is an indicator that calculates, based on current prices, what the remuneration for work during normal working hours should need to be in order to provide workers and their households with enough money to live on, which is perceived by most of society as a certain basic standard. It should be able to cover the costs of food and housing, clothing, transport, health care, education and leisure, and pay for other important expenses, including savings for unexpected circumstances.

More detailed information on the concept, its calculation, differences from other indicators, as well as illustrative stories and data from previous years can be found at <https://www.dustojnamzda.cz/en/>.

Platform for a Minimum Decent Wage

Behind the Minimum Decent Wage stands an independent and informal expert platform, which has been meeting to discuss the concept and calculations since 2016. The platform drew inspiration from the concept used abroad known as “living wage”. The Minimum Decent Wage for the Czech Republic was first published for 2019 in spring 2020.

A list of the Platform’s members is available at <https://www.dustojnamzda.cz/about-us/>.

Further information:

Website: <https://www.dustojnamzda.cz/en/>

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