

Many European countries registered an increase in teachers' statutory salaries in 2015/16

The basic statutory salary is a component of the total remuneration teachers receive for their work. It refers to the amount that a fully qualified teacher is paid depending on the length of his/her professional experience and/or age. It does not include salary allowances or other financial benefits and takes no account of taxes and social security contributions, which vary across European countries ⁽²⁾.

In 2015/16, there was an increase in teachers' statutory salaries in the great majority of European countries, remaining at about the same level as in 2014/15 in the others. The salaries did not decrease in any country.

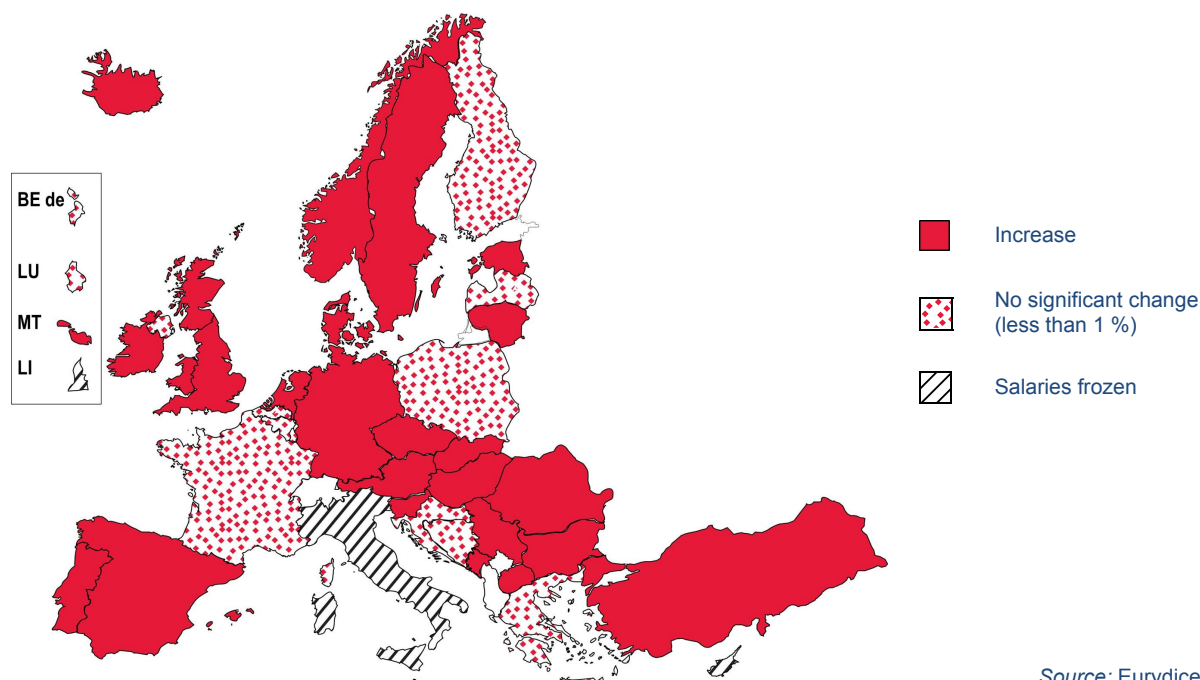
The increase was due to a general salary adjustment for all public employees in 12 countries:

- In Germany, the 16 *Länder* determine the salaries of public servants, increasing them regularly in order to, amongst other things, compensate for inflation.
- In Denmark, the 2015 general agreement included increases in basic salaries and additional fees for teachers at all education levels.
- In Spain, the General State Budget Law for 2016 established a 1 % salary increase in civil servants' salaries (including teachers) with effect from 1 January 2016.
- In Ireland, increases of 2.5 % in the rate of salary for those earning up to and including EUR 24 000 and 1 % for those earning between EUR 24 001 and EUR 31 000 were introduced as a result of the Lansdowne Road Agreement and the Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest Act 2015.
- In Lithuania, teachers' salary coefficients were updated in accordance with the salary adjustment provided for all public employees.
- In Malta, the 2012 Collective Agreement for all public service employees included a 2.5 % annual salary increase for the years between 2011 and 2016.
- In the Netherlands, a government-wide wage deal includes an increase of salaries for public servants.
- In Portugal, in 2015, the government revoked the salary cuts approved in 2014. The cuts will be eliminated progressively over 2016.
- In Romania, there was an increase of 5 % in September 2015 and 15 % in December 2015.
- In the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the gross salaries for all public servants (including teachers and school heads) were increased by 4 %.
- In Serbia, the salaries of all public employees were increased in December 2015. For teachers, school heads and other education staff in pre-primary, primary and secondary education, the increase was 4 %.
- In Turkey, the 2015 collective agreement between the government and trade unions granted public employees a 6 % increase in January 2016 and 5 % in July 2016.

⁽²⁾ The basic statutory salary is the remuneration awarded to a teacher (or school head), who is a childless, unmarried person, holding the minimum qualifications required to teach (or to manage a school) at a specific level of the education system, including general increases to salary scales, the 13th month and holiday-pay (where applicable) and excluding the employers' social security and pension contributions. It does not include allowances and other financial benefits. For more information, see Part III: Definitions.

The increase registered in teachers' salaries was due to both a general salary adjustment for all public employees and a reform of teachers' salaries in three countries. In the Czech Republic, the salary rates of public employees including education and non-education staff in schools were increased by 3 % in November 2015, with the increase being higher for teachers with longer experience. In Austria, the 2013 education reform, which became effective in September 2015, included higher starting salaries and a new salary progression scheme, based to a lesser extent on the time in service ⁽³⁾. A ruling of the European Court of Justice also obliged the government to adjust the number of years of education to be considered time in service for all civil servants, which has led to a slight increase in statutory salaries. In the United Kingdom (England and Wales), there has been a 1 % pay uplift, which reflects the government's average 1 % pay uplift policy applied across the public sector. The maximum of the main pay range has also been increased by 2 % so as to reinforce the attractiveness of the teaching profession in the early career stages in accordance with the recommendations in the School Teachers' Review Body's (STRB) 25th Report, from 1 September 2015.

Figure 1: Changes between 2014/15 and 2015/16 in teachers' statutory salaries in public schools (ISCED 0, 1, 2 and 3)



Teachers' salaries were also subject to reform in four other countries. Bulgaria passed fresh legislation increasing teachers' salaries with the objective of attracting young people to the teaching profession, motivating teachers' professional development and enhancing education quality in the long term. In Estonia, Hungary and Slovakia, similar reforms in earlier years (2013, 2012 and 2009 respectively) also resulted in an increase in teachers' salaries in 2015/16.

The increase in teachers' salaries in the United Kingdom (Scotland) and Montenegro was due to an adjustment to the cost of living only for employees in the education sector. In Iceland, the collective agreements currently in force for primary and secondary teachers include an index-based salary increase. In Sweden and Norway, where teachers' salaries are agreed through a negotiation process, they also increased.

⁽³⁾ For a transitional period of five years, starting teachers can choose between the old and the new payment scheme.

Teachers' statutory salaries hardly changed as compared to 2014/15 in Belgium ⁽⁴⁾, France, Croatia, Latvia, Luxembourg, Poland, Finland, the United Kingdom (Northern Ireland) and Bosnia and Herzegovina. In Slovenia, the government and the public-sector trade unions agreed to partly extend the wage freeze in force but restored promotions and increased the holiday payment for all public employees. In Greece, public employees (including teachers) with at least two years' work experience benefited from a small salary increase, although starting salaries remained the same.

A wage freeze for public employees remained in place in Italy, Cyprus and Liechtenstein. In order to reduce the public deficit, the Italian government froze salaries in 2010, initially up to 2013 but the measure has been extended every year since then. In Liechtenstein, performance-based and index-linked salary increases, which are subject to parliamentary decisions as part of the overall state budgetary process, have not taken place since 2010 as the result of the economic crisis and the public deficit. The wage freeze for public employees in Cyprus, which started at the beginning of 2013 and is expected to end in 2017, also had the objective of reducing government expenditure with a view to balancing the budget.

Since 2009, teachers' purchasing power has increased in the majority of European countries

As a result of the economic crisis, governments in some European countries implemented pay cuts or freezes for public employees as a measure to reduce budget deficits. In more recent years, in many of these, wage freezes have been lifted and salaries have been adjusted to the cost of living. Some countries have also passed reforms increasing teachers' salaries in order to make the profession more attractive, ensure high quality in the teaching force and ultimately improve the quality of education. But have these increases strengthened their purchasing power? This section examines how the salary adjustments implemented since 2009 have affected the value of teachers' earnings across European countries.

Before 2009, the tendency had been for minimum statutory salaries to increase in almost all European countries. Only in Greece and France had teachers lost purchasing power as compared to 2000 ⁽⁵⁾. The growth of teachers' minimum statutory salaries in PPS constant prices between 2009/10 and 2015/16 is depicted in Figure 2. The minimum statutory salary is the annual gross statutory salary received by a teacher holding the minimum qualifications required at a specific education level at the start of their career. Minimum statutory salaries have been converted to PPS in order to discount price differences between countries and improve comparability. For the reference years 2011/12, 2013/14 and 2015/16, salaries have been deflated to 2010 prices in order to identify real (not nominal) changes and show the changes in teachers' purchasing power.

⁽⁴⁾ In the Flemish and German-speaking Communities of Belgium, the fixed amount of the end of the year payment for teachers was slightly increased.

⁽⁵⁾ European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2012. *Key data on education in Europe in 2012*, pp: 129-131. [Online] Available at: https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Publications:Key_Data_on_Education_in_Europe_2012