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2021-09-16 16:43:31

Labour Minister Raluca Turcan: I am thinking of significant increase in the minimum wage

Minister of Labour and Social Protection Raluca Turcan declared on Thursday, in Oradea, that she is thinking of a significant increase of the minimum wage, which should normally enter into force by at the beginning of next year, after the idea was agreed by employers'associations, trade unions and state institutions.

"The minimum wage is a top priority for the Government and a big step forward compared to how other governments have behaved so far. The increase in the minimum wage usually takes effect early next year. From 1 January, normally we should have an increase in the minimum wage. I am thinking of a significant increase in the minimum wage as price increases are much higher than what has happened in Romania recently," Raluca Turcan told a news conference.

She stressed that in order to respond to the problems on the labour market, it is necessary to increase the minimum wage in Romania, as the current level is not only insufficient, but is also a factor generating migration.

"I am probably the minister most in favour for raising the minimum wage in Romania. Our Romanians choose to go abroad because of their salary and because of the services they receive in other countries. We can no longer accept and bear, as a society, this level of minimum wage. For the first time, in a government, in an eight-month term, at the same table, employers' associations, trade unions, state institutions, we have managed to agree that the minimum wage must increase, that this increase must be made in a predictable way and as soon as possible, so that the economic environment can prepare its activity for the next year and that it should also not be made subjectively, under the pressure of various factors, but anchored in some economic indicators so that in the following years we can assess how the minimum wage will evolve, as well," said the Minister of Labour.

She mentioned that all employers' confederations have come to the conclusion that the minimum wage must be raised and agreed, both in talks with the prime minister and in talks with employers' associations and trade unions, that by the end of October there should be a first form of negotiation of the minimum wage level.

According to the minister, the main problems are the level of wages, the lack of labour force, "acute and already chronic", the 40,00 jobs "offered on the table" and for the 200,000 job applications, but also the training of potential employees, often deficient.

The Government's response, the Minister said, refers to the following directions: education focused on qualifications and skills by strengthening dual vocational education, qualification and vocational training adapted to the needs of the labour market, as well as the digitalization and flexibility of labour relations.

Raluca Turcan also highlighted the ministry's two current priorities - vaccination and support for vulnerable people - beyond which the engines of the economy are supported, through investment, jobs and economic growth.

"These priorities are reflected concretely in our figures, which show that we have increased investment in Romania to 23 billion, 31% more than last year, that we have 120,000 jobs and record economic growth. These are the results of the Government obtained together with the Romanians," said the Minister of Labour.

On Thursday, Minister Raluca Turcan participated in an international conference to launch a cross-border project organized by AJOFM Bihor and visited the job fair organized by the same institution, where employers displayed

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an offer of over 1,000 jobs. The minister also participated in discussions with representatives of the private sector, with employers and employees, with heads of institutions, with the president of the Bihor County Council, Ilie Bolojan, and simple employees from state institutions.