

Salary Guide for Companies: How to Set the Right Salary?

Setting the right salary is a strategic decision, not just a budgeting exercise. It's about aligning compensation with the value a role brings to your organization, the expectations tied to it, and the evolving dynamics of the talent market.

A well-calculated salary not only attracts top talent but also supports retention, motivation, and long-term business success. Get it wrong, and you risk underperformance, turnover, declining culture or missed opportunities.

To help you navigate this critical decision, we've outlined a clear, step-by-step guide to calculating a fair and competitive salary. One that considers both your business context and the unique value a candidate brings to the table.

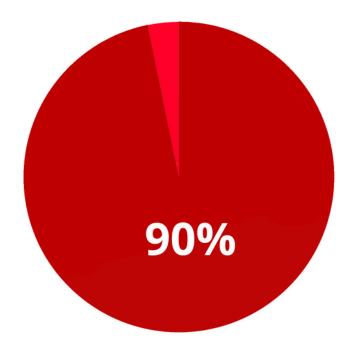
The Salary Bar | Updated Version

To keep things simple and effective, we break down your salary positioning into three zones:

- Red Zone: Below market rate the role is underpaid
- Orange Zone: At market rate competitive and aligned with industry standards
- Green Zone: Above market rate a strong offer that stands out to top talent

This approach gives you a quick, visual way to understand how your compensation compares and where adjustments might be needed.





Gen Z Job Hopping Trends in Belgium: A Generation on the Move

A striking 90% of Gen Z workers in Belgium plan to switch jobs within just three years of starting their first position, indicating a significant shift in how this generation approaches career planning and job loyalty. Even more notably, 10% of them intend to change roles within the first six months, suggesting a growing impatience with unsatisfying work environments or roles that don't meet their expectations. This behavior underscores Gen Z's focus on rapid career progression, continuous learning, and alignment with organizational values such as flexibility, purpose, and inclusivity.

1. Start with Company Revenue

Why it matters: Your ability to pay a salary should reflect the financial health and sustainability of your business. Making compensation decisions without considering your financial position can create long-term challenges, such as strained cash flow, reduced runway, or limited resources for growth.

To avoid this, it's helpful to anchor your salary planning to what your business can reasonably support. A practical way to start is by using a percentage-of-revenue model. This method ensures that compensation stays in proportion to your current income, allowing you to reward talent while maintaining financial stability.

It is not about limiting potential, but about building with intention and responsibility.

Annual Revenue	Suggested % of Revenue Towards Salaries	Notes
< \$500K	25-40%	Lean teams, hands-on roles
\$500K-\$5M	30-50%	Can afford specialists
\$5M-\$50M	40-60%	Structure for leadership and growth
< \$500K	50-70%	Mature operations, larger teams

2. Define the Role and Job Title Clearly

1. Scope of Responsibility

Evaluate the level of ownership and decision-making required for the role. Is the candidate expected to work independently as an individual contributor, or are they leading a team, managing projects, and driving strategy? Leadership roles typically command higher compensation due to their broader influence and accountability.

2. Impact on Business Outcomes

Assess how directly the role contributes to key business goals. Revenue-generating roles, such as sales, business development, or product strategy—often carry more weight in salary discussions compared to support functions. However, don't underestimate the value of operational and enabling roles that indirectly drive efficiency, culture, or scalability.

3. Rarity and Demand of the Skill Set

Consider how difficult it is to find someone with the required skills, experience, or certifications. High-demand or highly specialized skill sets—like Al/ML engineering, cybersecurity, or enterprise sales—typically warrant premium compensation due to talent scarcity and market competition.

Pro Tip:

Leverage industry benchmarks and compensation data to ensure your offer is aligned with market standards. Use platforms like Radford, Glassdoor, Levels.fyi, or Carta Total Comp to compare similar roles across companies of a similar size, stage, and geography. This provides a data-backed foundation for fair and competitive salary decisions.

3. Factor in Candidate Experience and Skill Level

Beyond the role itself, the candidate's individual experience, track record, and technical depth play a major role in determining appropriate compensation. Two people in the same position may warrant very different salaries based on what they bring to the table.

When evaluating this, consider the following:

Years of Relevant Experience:

- More years don't always mean better performance, but relevant, high-quality experience—especially in similar industries or company stages—can increase a candidate's value.

Depth of Skill and Specialization:

- Does the candidate bring a highly specialized skill set, proprietary knowledge, or a niche capability that's hard to find in the market? That should be reflected in compensation.

Past Achievements and Impact:

 Proven outcomes, such as leading successful projects, scaling teams, or directly impacting revenue, often justify a higher offer—even at the same job level.

Experience Level	Asjustment Range	Discription
Entry-Level (0-2 years)	Baseline salary	Typically new graduates or early-career hires. Needs more training and support.
Mid-Level (3–5 years)	+10-25% above baseline	Can work independently with growing ownership and strong execution skills.
Senior-Level (6-10 years)	+25-40% above baseline	Deep expertise, can lead projects or teams, trusted to drive strategic work.
Expert/Leadership (10+ years)	+40-60% or more above baseline	High-impact leaders or specialists with a track record of transformation, growth, or innovation.

Note: Adjust these percentages based on role type, industry norms, and market conditions.

4. Adjust for Location and Market Conditions

Geography plays a major role in salary expectations, especially with the rise of remote and hybrid work. Compensation must reflect the cost of living, local market rates, and the company's geographic pay strategy.

Local Salary Benchmarks:

- Salaries in major metro areas like Burssels, Antwerp, or Ghent tend to be significantly higher due to the higher cost of living and competitive talent markets.

Remote Work Policies:

- If your team is remote-first, will you pay based on the employee's location, or standardize pay across all geographies? Each approach has trade-offs in equity, attraction, and retention.

Talent Availability in the Region:

- In areas with less local talent supply for a specific role, you may need to offer higher compensation to attract strong candidates or relocate talent.

5. Think in Terms of Total Compensation

Salary is just one part of the value you offer as an employer. A compelling total compensation package helps attract and retain top talent, even when base pay isn't the highest in the market.

Total Compensation Includes:

Base Salery

The fixed amount paid regularly, before bonuses or incentives.

Bonuses and Incentives

Performance-based or milestone-driven pay (annual, quarterly, or project-based).

Equity or Stock Options

Especially common in startups and high-growth companies. Offers long-term upside and ownership.

Benefits

Health insurance, retirement plans, paid time off, parental leave, wellness stipends, etc.

Non-Monetary Perks

Flexibility, professional development opportunities, career growth paths, team culture, and work-life balance—all of which carry real value to today's workforce.

A well-balanced package can often make a candidate say "yes," even if the base salary isn't the highest offer on the table.

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6. Match the Role to Market Benchmarks

When defining salary ranges, it's essential to align the role with local job market benchmarks to stay competitive and transparent. Use Belgian market data and locally recognized job titles for accurate comparisons. You can also refer to Paritair Comité (PC) agreements for standardized wage scales, especially in sectors like retail, healthcare, logistics, and education.

Role Type	Avg. Gross Monthly (EUR)	Typical Experience Level
Junior Digital Marketer	€2,400 - €2,800	0-2 years (Bachelor, often marketing/comm.)
Medior Software Developer	€3,500 - €4,500	3-6 years (in Java, .NET, Python, etc.)
Senior Product Manager	€5,000 - €7,000	7+ years (often with international exposure)
Sales Executive	€3,000 + commissions	Salary varies based on target sector (B2B/B2C)
HR Business Partner	€3,800 - €5,200	SME to large enterprise, PC 200 or 218 common
Finance Controller	€4,000 - €6,000	Often with background in Big Four or audit
Customer Service Agent	€2,200 - €2,700	Entry to 3 years; often PC 200 or PC 226

When discussing compensation, always specify whether the amounts are gross or net and clarify if additional benefits such as meal vouchers, a company car, bonuses, or a 13th-month salary are included.

For startups, it's important to consider offering equity or flexible benefits to help offset potentially lower cash compensation. To ensure accuracy and competitiveness, use benchmarking platforms like Glassdoor, SD Worx, or local salary calculators to assess market standards.

7. Total Cost of Employment (TCE)

In Belgium, gross salary is only one part of the total compensation package. Employers are typically responsible for additional costs, including social contributions (ONSS) of around 25% of the gross salary.

Many companies also provide a 13th month salary, which functions as an end-of-year bonus and is often required, along with double holiday pay. Common fringe benefits include meal vouchers, eco vouchers, a company car, group insurance, and various net allowances.

To get a clear and accurate understanding of the full employer cost and employee take-home pay, it's essential to use bruto-net calculators such as those provided by Partena or SD Worx.

8. Attractiveness of the Offer

Top candidates in Belgium want more than a paycheck. Consider:

- Flexibility (telework, flex hours)
- Purpose
- Growth opportunities
- Team culture
- Training budgets

If your company is small or pre-revenue, offer value in equity, mentorship, freedom, or purpose.*

9. Internal Fairness

Maintain consistency and equity in compensation across comparable roles to foster trust and morale within the team. Establish clearly defined salary bands that reflect role scope, experience, and performance levels, and apply them systematically.

As your organization scales, invest in processes that promote transparency such as compensation frameworks or leveling guides to help employees understand how pay decisions are made and how they can progress within the company. Regularly review and update these structures to reflect market changes and internal growth.

10. Legal Compliance & Sector Regulations

Belgium has strict labor laws and sector-based agreements that can affect salary:

Joint Committees (Paritaire Comités / Paritaire Comités / Paritaire Comités): Determine minimum wages, benefits, and rules per sector. Make sure your salary offer meets or exceeds the standards for your sector (e.g., PC 200 for white-collar workers).

Seniority Increments: Some joint committees require salary increases over time regardless of performance.

Mandatory Benefits:

- Holiday pay (double pay in summer)
- End-of-year bonus (13th month)
- Eco vouchers (usually €250 per year)
- Meal vouchers (e.g., €8/day, part paid by employee/employer)

Tip: Always check with your Social Secretariat (like SD Worx, Partena, Acerta) to stay compliant.

11. Salary Types and Structures

There are multiple ways to structure compensation in Belgium:

Gross Monthly Salary: Most commonly discussed figure (excluding benefits).

Bonus Systems: Performance or company-based bonuses are tax-advantaged up to a point (CAO 90 bonus plans are especially popular).

Net Allowances: Non-taxable expense reimbursements (internet, phone, transport, work-from-home allowance).

Benefits in Kind: Company car, laptop, group insurance, meal vouchers, etc.

Why it matters: Candidates will often compare total net value and benefits over gross salary alone.

11.1 Salary Negotiation

Salary negotiations in Belgium have traditionally been more reserved compared to countries like the United States or the United Kingdom. Cultural norms tend to emphasize modesty, consensus, and fairness rather than assertive self-promotion.

However, this is starting to shift. Especially in sectors like technology, digital marketing, and creative industries, where global influence and competition for talent are reshaping expectations.

Key Cultural Insights:

Modesty Over Aggressiveness

Many Belgian candidates may not feel comfortable negotiating aggressively or asking for significant increases, particularly in early stages of their careers. However, this doesn't mean they're not evaluating your offer critically. Be proactive in explaining how you arrived at the number and where it fits within your internal and market-based salary bands.

Changing Norms in Tech & Innovation Hubs

In cities like Brussels, Antwerp, Ghent, and Leuven, or in highly skilled sectors like software engineering and UX design, candidates are becoming increasingly confident in advocating for their value. You should expect more negotiation in these contexts, especially from experienced professionals who are aware of their market demand.

Transparency and Fairness Matter

Belgian professionals tend to value clear communication, justification through data, and internal equity. They're more likely to respond positively when you share salary benchmarks, explain how compensation ties to responsibilities, and show that internal pay structures are consistent and fair.

11.2 Best Practices for Navigating Belgian Salary Conversations

Come Prepared with Benchmark Data

Use tools Jobat or regional compensation reports to support your offer. Being able to reference neutral, third-party data builds trust and credibility.

Focus on the Total Package

Belgians place high value on benefits beyond salary. Be ready to explain the full offer, including:

- Meal vouchers (chèques-repas)
- Company car or mobility budget
- · Group and hospitalisation insurance
- Bonus structures
- Additional vacation days
- Remote or hybrid work policies
- Professional development budgets

Expect Role- and Region-Based Variation

For highly skilled roles, especially in Brussels or multilingual environments, expect candidates to have higher expectations and more leverage in negotiations. Adjust your approach accordingly.

12. Salary Evolution Planning

Hiring a great candidate is just the beginning—retaining and growing them over time is where the real return on investment happens. Salary evolution planning is about more than just raises. It's about building a transparent, motivating, and fair path forward for every team member.

Top candidates, especially high-performers and growth-oriented professionals, are increasingly asking smart, forward-looking questions such as:

- How fast can I grow in this role?
- What's the timeline for promotion?
- How does compensation evolve with performance and responsibility?
- How often is salary reviewed or adjusted?

Failing to address these questions can cause hesitation in the offer stage, or even lead to turnover down the line. That's something you don't want to happen.

12.1 What to Structure and Communicate Internally

1. Clear Progression Frameworks

Define role levels within your organization and what it takes to move from one to the next.

For example:

- Junior -> learning and executing under close guidance
- Medior -> independent contributor with consistent performance
- Senior -> strategic ownership, mentoring others, cross-functional impact
- Lead -> team management, decision-making authority, key driver of outcome

Each level should have:

- Defined responsibilities and expectations
- Skills or achievements required to progress
- Salary ranges tied to each level

This helps candidates and employees understand that growth is structured, not subjective or ad hoc.

2. Annual Raise Policies

Explain how and when salary increases happen, and on what basis. Common approaches include:

- Merit-Based Raises: Based on performance evaluations, business impact, or goal achievement.
- Inflation-Indexed Raises: Often used in Belgium to adjust salaries annually based on the official index (e.g. CPI). It's expected in many sectors and should be clearly outlined.
- Market Adjustments: Some companies also revise compensation based on changes in market competitiveness or role evolution.

This helps candidates and employees understand that growth is structured, not subjective or ad hoc.

3. Performance Review Cycles

Salary evolution should align with structured performance reviews, which provide the data and context for any compensation changes.

- Every 6 or 12 months is standard
- Include both qualitative feedback (e.g. soft skills, team fit) and quantitative goals (e.g. KPIs, OKRs)
- Tie performance reviews to growth conversations, not just compensation, to show long-term investment



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13. Freelancer and Consultant Rates

When hiring outside of your core payroll team, whether to fill skill gaps, accelerate delivery, or manage flexible workloads, freelancers and consultants can provide fast and high-impact support. However, setting the right rate and engagement structure requires thoughtful planning to ensure alignment with your budget, goals, and internal processes.

Typical Day Rates in Belgium (2024-2025 ranges)

	Typical Range (€/day excl. VAT)	Notes for each role type (experience, company size, etc)
Freelance Developers	€400-700	Depends on tech stack (e.g. React, Python, DevOps), experience, and seniority.
Designers / Marketers	€350-600	Includes UX/UI, graphic designers, growth marketers, content strategists.
Business Consultants	€600-1000+	Strategic roles in operations, finance, or transformation. Rates go higher for C-level advisory.
Product Managers	€500-850	Varies by industry experience, technical background, and ownership scope.
Interim HR / People Ops	€400-700	Includes roles focused on recruitment, culture, or organizational development.
IT Security / Infrastructure Experts	€600-1000	Specialized roles in cloud security, compliance, and critical infrastructure setup.
Legal Consultants	€700−1200	Typically focused on contracts, GDPR, or IP. Higher rates for niche legal expertise.
Agile Coaches / Scrum Masters	€500-800	Support agile transformations, team performance, and process alignment.
QA Engineers / Test Automation	€400-700	Varies based on experience with tools like Selenium, Cypress, and CI/CD pipelines.
SAP / ERP Consultants	€700−1200	High demand for experience with enterprise systems like SAP, Oracle, or Dynamics.
Copywriters / Translators	€300-550	Depends on language pair, industry focus, and SEO or technical writing expertise.
CRM / Marketing Automation Specialists	€450-750	Includes HubSpot, Salesforce, and custom automation setups.
Video Producers / Motion Designers	€400-800	Rates vary based on post-production skills, animation complexity, and deliverables.
DevOps / Cloud Engineers	€600-1000	High demand for AWS, Azure, GCP, and CI/CD infrastructure experience.
Interim CFOs / Finance Experts	€700−1300	Fractional finance leadership, often used during fundraising or restructuring.
Customer Support / Success Consultants	€500-800	Roles focused on building scalable support systems or managing B2B relationships.

Rates vary significantly based on skill set rarity, location, seniority, and length of engagement. Shorter, high-pressure projects typically command premium rates.

14. Gross Monthly Salaries for Corporate Jobs in Belgium

The following are several examples of gross monthly salaries for a range of corporate positions in Belgium. These figures offer insight into the typical compensation levels across different roles, industries, and experience levels, helping to illustrate the earning potential.

Role Type	Typical Range (€/day excl. VAT)	Notes for each role type (experience, company size, etc)
Accountant	€2,800−3,500	Varies with experience, sector, and certifications (e.g., CPA).
Administrative Assistant	€2,200−2,800	Common in HR, legal, finance, and executive support.
Analyst (Data/Business)	€3,500−4,800	Includes financial, BI, and operations analysts.
Brand Manager	€4,000−5,500	Fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) and retail pay higher.
Chief Executive Officer (CEO)	€8,000-12,000+	Range varies by company size, sector and years of experience.
Chief Financial Officer (CFO)	€7,000−11,000+	Often includes bonuses, stock, or company car. Range varies by company size, sector and years of experience.
Chief Marketing Officer (CMO)	€6,000-10,000+	Large orgs or B2C brands offer higher packages Range varies by company size, sector and years of experience.
Compliance Officer	€4,000-5,500	Banking, insurance, and pharma are key sectors.
Controller (Finance)	€4,500−6,000	Corporate or divisional roles; strong Excel/SAP needed.
Corporate Lawyer	€4,500−7,000	Specializing in M&A, contracts, or GDPR boosts salary.
Customer Success Manager	€3,500-4,800	Especially relevant in SaaS and B2B tech companies.
Data Scientist	€4,500-5,500	Demand across banking, retail, and tech.
Digital Marketing Manager	€4,000-5,500	SEO, SEA, CRM, and automation expertise impact pay.
Financial Analyst	€3,800-4,800	Junior vs senior roles see large range variation.
General Manager	€6,000-10,000+	Typically includes full P&L responsibility.
HR Business Partner	€3,800−5,000	Strategic HR role for mid- to large-sized companies.
Internal Auditor	€4,000−5,200	Common in multinational firms, especially in finance.
IT Manager	€5,000−6,500	Infrastructure, applications, or ERP team leadership.
Key Account Manager	€4,000−6,000	High bonus potential, especially in pharma and tech.
Legal Counsel	€4,200−6,000	In-house corporate role with cross-functional exposure.

15. Salary Guide Bar | Pala Consultancy Insights | Corperate Jobs

Compensation can be categorized into three zones based on market competitiveness. The red zone indicates a salary that falls below the market rate, suggesting the role is underpaid and may struggle to attract or retain talent.

The orange zone represents a compensation level that is at market rate, which is considered competitive and aligned with industry standards. Finally, the green zone signifies a salary above the market rate, making it a strong and attractive offer that stands out to top talent in a competitive hiring environment. The salaries are all based per year.



Note: This is a general guideline and does not take into account factors such as the specific industry you're in, the size of your company, or the candidate's expertise, and proven track record of success. These corporate jobs serve as examples and guideliness to help you interpret the other roles we discussed in the previous tables. These figures represent gross annual salaries and may vary based on factors such as, company size, and location within Belgium. Additional benefits like bonuses, meal yourbers, company cars, or 13th-month payments are not included in these ranges.

FINANCE & ACCOUNTING











HUMAN RESOURCES









IT & TECHNOLOGY











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MR Market Rate

AMR Above Market Rate

Below Market Rate

SALES & MARKETING

Sales Representative 0-3 years Experience				
<€35,000	€35,000-€50,000	>€50,000		
BMR	MR	AMR		
Sales Repr	Sales Representative 3-5 years Experience			
<€50,000	€50,000-€65,000	>€65,000		
BMR	MR	AMR		
Sales Repr	Sales Representative 5-10 years Experience			
<€65,000	€65,000-€80,000	>€80,000		
BMR	MR	AMR		
Sales Representative 10+ years Experience				
<€80,000	€80,000-€100,000	>€100,000		
BMR	MR	AMR		











BMR Below Market Rate

MR Market Rate

AMR Above Market Rate

OPERATIONS & SUPPLY CHAIN









LEGAL & COMPLIANCE





BMR Below Market Rate

MR Market Rate

AMR Above Market Rate



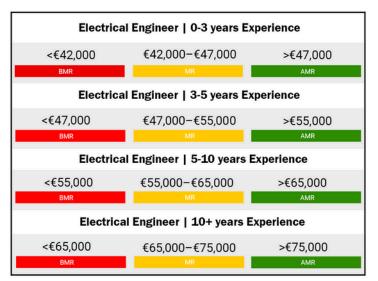






ENGINEERING

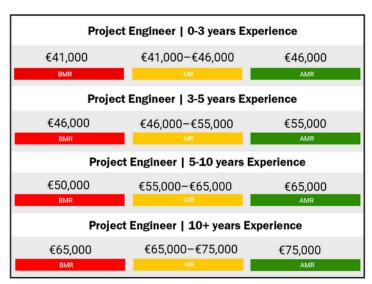
Mechanical Engineer 0-3 years Experience				
€40,000	€40,000-€45,000	€45,000		
BMR	MR	AMR		
Mechanica	Mechanical Engineer 3-5 years Experience			
€45,000	€45,000-€50,000	€50,000		
BMR	MR	AMR		
Mechanica	Mechanical Engineer 5-10 years Experience			
€50,000	€50,000-€60,000	€60,000		
BMR	MR	AMR		
Mechanical Engineer 10+ years Experience				
€60,000	€60,000-€70,000	€70,000		
BMR	MR	AMR		



BMR Below Market Rate

MR Market Rate

AMR Above Market Rate

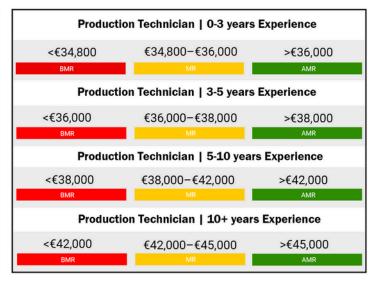




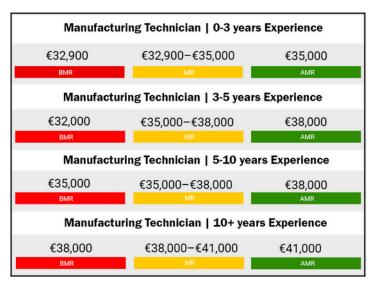


MANUFACTURING & PRODUCTION

Production Worker 0-3 years Experience				
€30,000	€30,000-€32,000	€32,000		
BMR	MR	AMR		
Production	Production Worker 3-5 years Experience			
€32,000	€32,000-€35,000	€35,000		
BMR	MR	AMR		
Production	Production Worker 5-10 years Experience			
€35,000	€35,000-€38,000	€38,000		
BMR	MR	AMR		
Production Worker 10+ years Experience				
€38,000	€38,000-€41,000	€41,000		
BMR	MR	AMR		



BMR Below Market Rate
MR Market Rate
AMR Above Market Rate



Production Supervisor 0-3 years Experience				
<€55,000 BMR	€55,000-€60,000	>€60,000 AMR		
Productio	Production Supervisor 3-5 years Experience			
<€60,000 BMR	€60,000-€70,000	>€70,000 AMR		
Productio	Production Supervisor 5-10 years Experience			
<€70,000 BMR	€70,000-€80,000 MR	>€80,000 AMR		
Production Supervisor 10+ years Experience				
<€80,000 BMR	€80,000-€90,000 MR	>€90,000 AMR		























BMR Below Market Rate

MR Market Rate

AMR Above Market Rate