

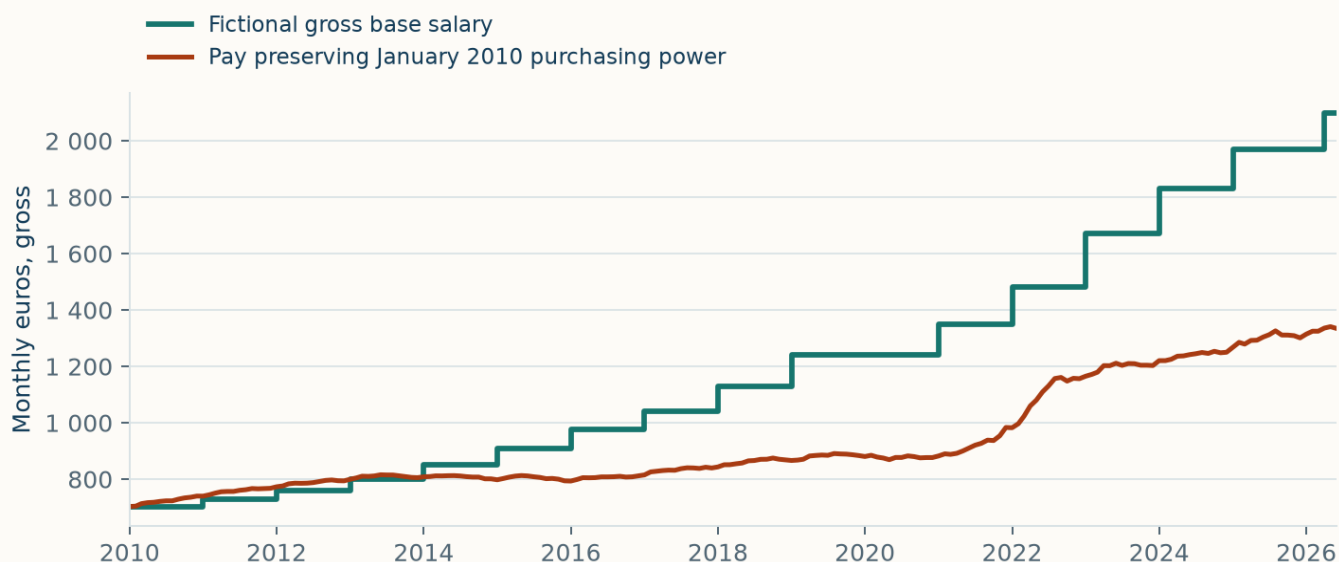
Did pay rises improve purchasing power?

January 2010 to June 2026 · End of Q2 2026

Production-machine operator · full-time · Estonia

The employee and salary history are fictional. Price and sector comparison data come from Statistics Estonia. The comparison uses gross pay, not take-home pay.

JANUARY 2010	JUNE 2026	REAL PAY CHANGE
703.03 €	2 100 €	+57.4%

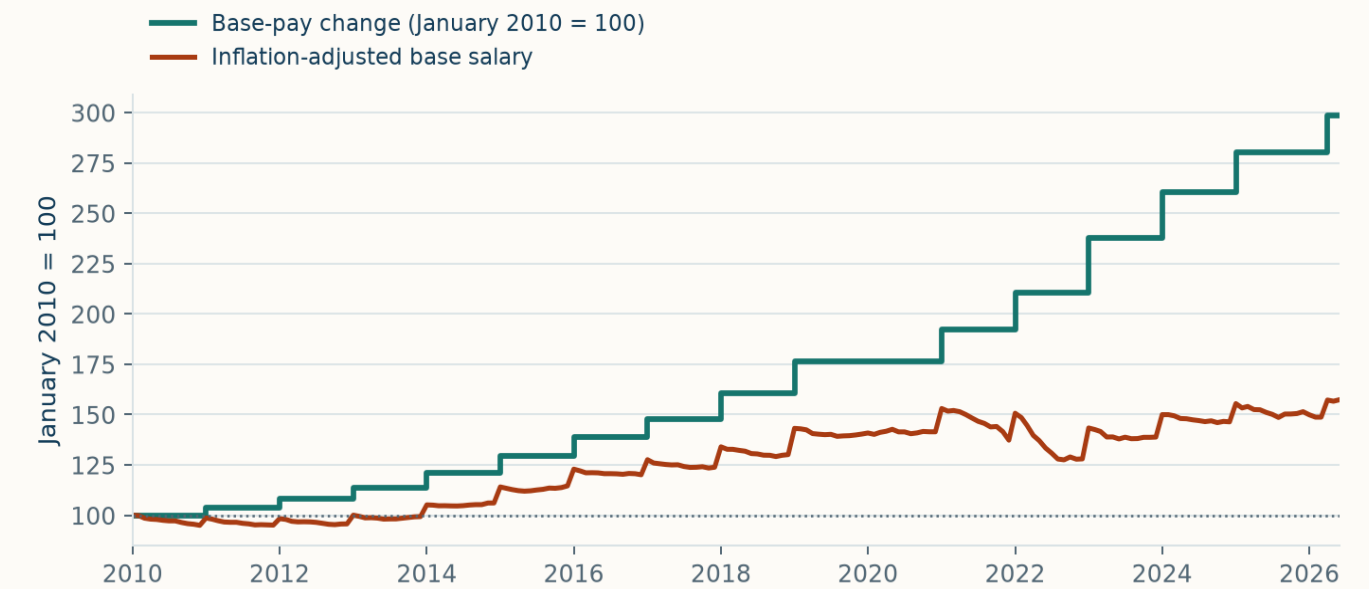


The salary line shows fictional assumptions, not checked payslips. The orange line uses Estonia's official consumer price index.

In this example, base salary rose +198.7% while Estonian consumer prices rose +89.8%. Real base pay rose +57.4%. Preserving the starting purchasing power would require about €1 334 gross base pay in June 2026.

More euros do not mean the same gain in buying power.

January 2010 to June 2026 · End of Q2 2026



MEASURE	RESULT
Base-pay growth before allowing for price rises	+198.7%
Estonian consumer-price growth	+89.8%
Base-pay growth after allowing for price rises	+57.4%
Monthly pay preserving the starting value	1 334.39 €

January 2021 to December 2022

Even during long-term pay growth, purchasing power can fall for a while. The example’s real base pay changed by -16.3% during this period. This does not describe all workers.

Why manufacturing?

The largest employee count in 2025

Statistics Estonia’s 2025 wage statistics counted 100,617 employees in manufacturing, around 17% of employees covered by those statistics. It was the largest economic activity by employee count, not by number of businesses or turnover. Manufacturing remained largest in Q2 2026, with 101,085 employees.

ECONOMIC ACTIVITY	2025
Manufacturing	100 617
Trade and vehicle repair	87 591
Education	64 817
Health and social work	48 943

Is the fictional pay level plausible?

PERIOD	FICTIONAL BASE	SECTOR MEAN
Q2 2010	703.03 €	766.00 €
Q2 2026	2 100 €	2 104.00 €

The sector mean is not this occupation’s median or a fair-pay valuation. It covers different occupations and pay components, including additional payments. The fictional base salary excludes these.

The older and newer wage statistics were calculated differently. These are two separate comparisons, not one continuous record of sector pay growth. The example’s purchasing-power calculation does not depend on these sector figures.

The fictional salary history

The table shows December of each year and June for 2026. The full monthly dataset is supplied as CSV. Pay changes take effect in January, except the final increase in April 2026.

PERIOD	BASE PAY, €	PRICE INDEX ¹	2010 EUROS ²
2010-12	703.03	105.3	667.79
2011-12	730.00	109.2	668.56
2012-12	760.00	113.0	672.78
2013-12	800.00	114.6	698.25
2014-12	850.00	114.0	745.79
2015-12	910.00	113.0	805.52
2016-12	975.00	115.5	844.33
2017-12	1 040.00	119.5	870.62
2018-12	1 130.00	123.5	914.68
2019-12	1 240.00	125.7	986.29
2020-12	1 240.00	124.7	994.28
2021-12	1 350.00	139.9	965.08
2022-12	1 480.00	164.5	899.73
2023-12	1 670.00	171.1	975.86
2024-12	1 830.00	177.8	1 029.05
2025-12	1 970.00	185.1	1 064.40
2026-06	2 100.00	189.8	1 106.39

¹ January 2010 = 100. ² Base salary with the effect of price changes removed. All fictional salaries are full-time gross base pay, not take-home pay.

Example assumptions: no pay rise in 2020; machine-setting and colleague-training duties added in 2018. Shift payments, bonuses and overtime pay are not included. These are fictional circumstances, not checked events.

Where do the numbers come from?

How to repeat the calculation

Pay change after allowing for price rises = $(\text{end salary} / \text{start salary}) / (\text{end price index} / \text{start price index}) - 1$. Multiply by 100 for a percentage. Pay preserving buying power = $\text{start salary} \times (\text{end price index} / \text{start price index})$. Do not subtract the two growth percentages.

All salary amounts are shown in euros. The January 2010 fictional salary is €703.03 per month, expressed as a euro equivalent. Intermediate calculations are not rounded; report amounts are rounded for display.

What this report does not prove

There are no real contracts or payslips, and no claim to have checked any. Net pay, taxes, holiday pay and bank receipts are not calculated. National consumer prices do not match every household's spending. Being close to the sector average does not establish an individual's market salary.

Sources and dataset

1. Statistics Estonia · IA002 · Total · 1997=100

<https://andmed.stat.ee/en/stat/IA002>

2. PA001 · Manufacturing · 2010Q2

<https://andmed.stat.ee/en/stat/PA001>

3. PA111 · Manufacturing · 2026Q2

<https://andmed.stat.ee/en/stat/PA111>

4. Statistics Estonia · 2025 employee counts

<https://stat.ee/en/news/average-wages-increased-by-56-last-year>

5. ECB · Historical euro conversion

<https://www.ecb.europa.eu/euro/changeover/estonia/html/index.en.html>

6. PA101 · 2025 · Employees by economic activity

<https://andmed.stat.ee/en/stat/PA101>

Data checked: 2026-09-24. The CSV table labels fictional pay and the official consumer price index separately. It covers 198 months, January 2010 to June 2026. The same inputs give the same results.