Law and Policy Group

Global Legislative Update

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May 2021

welcome to brighter

In this document

Mercer's Global Legislative Update covers legal developments affecting retirement, health, executive rewards, talent, diversity and inclusion, and other HR programs that affect local and/or expatriate employees. Links to developments with upcoming effective dates covered in past updates are also included to remind employers of impending deadlines. These icons indicate whether employer action is required.

Employer action required

Potential implications for employers

Developments to monitor

Please note: Mercer is not a law firm and therefore cannot provide legal advice. Please consult legal counsel before taking any actions based on the commentary and recommendations in this report.

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Highlights

Global	
Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic	Countries address workplace issues resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic
Remote working	Countries address remote working issues
Americas	
Canada	Federal budget includes employment provisions
Chile	Requirements for teleworking arrangements provided
Mexico	Employers use of outsourced labor restricted
United States	Limits of using liquidated damages for wage violations issued Model COBRA subsidy notices and forms released Federal contractors will be required to pay $15 minimum hourly wage Cybersecurity guidance for retirement plans issued Independent contractor rule withdrawn Executive order encourages union activity States, cities tackle COVID-19 paid leave Paid sick leave mandates continue to expand at state level Federal and state legislative initiatives to prohibit hairstyle discrimination Insulin cost sharing capped in Alabama

Americas (continued)	
United States	Audio-only telemedicine restrictions relaxed in Arkansas PBM reporting expanded to include TPA data in Arkansas Legislation would require PBM regulation in Montana Insulin cost sharing limited in Oklahoma Third-party Rx payments to count towards cost sharing in Oklahoma Common-law marriage filing requirement added in Utah Tight exemption timeline to long-term care law added in Washington Telehealth parity for mental health, substance abuse treatment mandated in Wyoming
Asia Pacific	
Australia	Government agrees on measures for workplace sexual harassment reforms Regulator consults on remuneration guidance Super caps, superannuation guarantee maximum contribution base increased
Hong Kong	Consultation issued on corporate governance changes, diversity and ESG
India	Top-listed companies face enhanced sustainability reporting Maximum coverage increased for health insurance
Indonesia	Regulations issued to implement labor reforms
Japan	Listed companies face more ESG, diversity disclosures
Malaysia	More sectors to pay the Human Resources Development Levy
South Korea	ERSA pension reforms enacted
Taiwan	Sanctions expanded for some labor law violations

EMEA	
European Union (EU)	New rules proposed on artificial intelligence, employment rules highlighted Sustainability measures set out by Commission
Germany	Maximum life insurance and 'Pensionsfonds' interest rates reduced Bill addresses women's underrepresentation on boards Companies could face due-diligence duties for human rights Bill addresses cross-border distribution of investment funds
Ireland	Implementation regulations issued for IORP II
Luxembourg	Financial regulatory authority issues telework guidance
Slovakia	Paid paternity leave applications eased
United Kingdom	National minimum wage record retention period doubled Consultation issued on the Pension Regulator's single code

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Global

Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic	
Status	**Ongoing initiatives**
Development	**Career — Health — Wealth** **Countries take action to address workplace issues as result of the COVID-19 pandemic** The World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 a pandemic on 12 Mar 2020, and employers continue to address the severe implications on working practices and adjust their employment and benefit policies accordingly. Countries have enacted legislation and provided regulatory guidance related to workforce protections, leave and layoff procedures, employment subsidies and changes to existing enforcement procedures. To help multinational employers continue to address worksite, economic and associated travel issues, Mercer is providing analysis on workforce and investment implications and compiling information from organizations, government websites and other resources and news articles.
Resources	Roundup: COVID-19 resources for employers (regularly updated); Stay informed on coronavirus (regularly updated)

Remote working	
Status	⚠ **Ongoing initiatives**
Development	**Career — Health — Wealth** **Countries address remote working issues** Remote working has become more of a permanent feature of the workplace for many employees and employers around the world — driven by measures introduced in many countries to address the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Remote working poses challenges and considerations for employers when devising or adjusting their policies. These include defining remote work and eligibility criteria, hybrid working arrangements, employee engagement, performance, cybersecurity, health and safety, the right to disconnect, employees who want to relocate to a different country or state, and returning remote workers to the workplace post-pandemic. Recently, several jurisdictions have introduced remote working legislative measures for after the pandemic that clarify employer and employee requirements, and others are expected to follow suit. To help employers consider the issues connected with remote working, Mercer is providing analysis and links to general information about ongoing remote working rights and trends in some countries sourced from Marsh McLennan, organizations, government websites, third-party resources and news articles.
Resources	Roundup: Employer resources on remote working rights/trends (regularly updated)

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Americas

Argentina (upcoming effective date)	
Development	**Career**
	• Remote working rights post COVID-19 pandemic clarified — Key date: 90 days after pandemic ends
Bermuda (upcoming effective date)	
Development	**Career — Health**
	• Employment and labor laws revised — Key date: 1 Jun 2021
Brazil (upcoming effective date)	
Development	**Wealth**
	• Council imposes CNPJ registration duty on pension entities — Key date: 31 Dec 2021

Canada (new)	
Status	**Proposal**
Development	**Career — Health — Wealth** **Federal budget includes employment provisions** “Canada’s Budget 2021: A recovery plan for jobs, growth and resilience” was presented on 19 Apr 2021 and includes more than 280 proposed commitments, many of which aim to address some of the inequalities exposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Other changes include federal support for provincial health systems, employment insurance increases, old age security increases, diversity reporting, a minimum wage increase and protections for gig workers. Highlights include: • The maximum period that an individual can claim employment insurance benefits would increase to 50 weeks, and the duration of EI sickness benefits would increase to 26 weeks in summer 2022 — up from 15 weeks. The government will publish a consultation on proposed EI reforms that could include changes to disability plans and the EI’s funding model. • From July 2022, individuals aged 75 years or older will receive a 10% increase in old age security benefits, and they also will receive a one-time payment of CA$500 in August 2021 if they will be age 75 or older as of June 2022. These changes could incentivize an individual to remain in employment until they are older. • Several COVID-19 income support measures were included. The budget confirmed previously announced extensions of the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS) to at least 25 Sep 2021, with certain modifications, and proposed a new subsidy, the Canada Recovery Hiring Program (CRHP), that aims to encourage new hiring. The CRHP is based on the same time periods as CEWS, and an employer could receive a subsidy under one of the two programs for each period, but not both. The budget also includes the repayment of pandemic-related wage subsidies received after 5 Jun 2021 by publicly listed companies if the compensation paid to specified corporate executives exceeds 2019 compensation amounts. • Crown corporations would have to implement gender and diversity reporting starting in 2022. Other measures announced in the budget include the introduction of a CA$15 federal minimum wage, and the protection of gig workers in federally regulated industries. Canada’s early learning and child care strategy aims to reduce fees of regulated child care facilities by an average of 50% by 2022, and to achieve an average cost of CA$10 per day by 2026.
Resources	kristin.smith@mercer.com GRIST, 30 Apr 2021

Canada (upcoming effective dates)	
Development	**Career** • Revised pay equity transparency measures issued — Key date: 2021 reporting period (1 June 2022) **Wealth** • Related party investment compliance deadline approaching — Key date: 1 Jul 2021

Chile (new)	
Status	⚠ **Currently effective**
Development	**Career** **Requirements for teleworkers provided** Chile's Labor Directorate recently issued Ordinario No. 1197 to clarify the provisions that must be included in teleworking agreements between employers and their employees. Highlights include: • Employers and employees can agree on remote work either at the start of employment, or later by amending the employment contract. Changes to arrangements must be agreed to by both parties in cases where the employee started their employment as a remote worker, or unilaterally where contracts were later amended, subject to 30 days' notice. Employers must register teleworking agreements with the labor directorate within 15 days of the contract signing. • Teleworkers can work from their home or another location, and they can do so full-time or for part of their working day. • Teleworkers are entitled to the employee protections set out in the labor code, and salaries cannot be reduced. Occupational health and safety regulations applicable to teleworkers will be issued by the labor ministry. • Teleworkers have the right to disconnect from their workplace outside of working hours, and this right extends to employees who are not normally subject to working time laws. The right to disconnect means that employees do not have to respond to employer communications for a minimum period of 12 consecutive hours in any 24-hour period. • Teleworkers are allowed to access their employer's premises, and employers must ensure they can participate in collective activities. • Employers must pay for the equipment necessary for teleworkers to work, including operating and maintenance costs. • Employers do not have the right to enter the homes of teleworkers.
Resources	GRIST, 6 May 2021

Colombia (upcoming effective date)

Career

- Electronic payroll requirement introduced — 1 Jul 2021

Mexico (new)	
Status	**Currently effective**
Development	**Career** **Employer's use of outsourced labor restricted** A new decree published in the Official Gazette on 23 Apr 2021 restricts employers' use of outsourced staff. Further information on the decree will be issued this year, including guidance from the Ministry of Employment and Social Welfare, the Mexican Institute for Social Security (IMSS), and the Workers' National Housing Fund Institute (INFONAVIT). Highlights include: • In certain situations, employers may use staff provided by outsourcing agencies, for example, to provide specialized services or specialist work unrelated to the organization's core business. Employers that use and provide outsourced labor will be jointly responsible for any breaches of the applicable social security obligations. Outsourcing agencies that provide outsourced staff must be included in a public registry of the Ministry of Employment and Social Welfare — and registrations must be renewed every three years. Outsourcing agencies must also report certain information quarterly to IMSS and INFONAVIT. Employers within the same corporate group will be allowed to use staff across the group's entities to provide complementary and shared services. • Employers must extend their profit-sharing arrangements to include employees previously employed on an outsourced basis. The profit share amount — calculated on 10% of the company's pretax profits — will be capped at the greater of three months' salary, or the average profit share received during the previous three years. Some employees will be entitled to receive an increased amount of profit-sharing under current federal labor law provisions. • For the first 90 days after the decree's effective date, employers can implement a "special employer substitution" whereby they can directly hire employees from outsourcing agencies without the need to transfer assets. The new employer must respect employment rights and will become responsible for the employees' the previous five years of employment. • Fines could be imposed on employers and subcontractors for breaches of the decree — from UMA 2,000 to UMA 50,000. The value of the UMA in 2021 is MXN 89.62. • Independent companies can provide services to other independent companies. Such arrangements are not within the scope of the decree, subject to meeting certain criteria.
Resources	sofia.cruz@mercer.com and melissa.mata@mercer.com GRIST, 30 Apr 2021

US (new)	
Status	**Currently effective**
Development	**Career** **Limits of using liquidated damages for wage violations removed** The Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division has given its investigators greater discretion to seek liquated damages for wage violations in settlements instead of litigation under Field Assistance Bulletin (FAB) 2021-2. Under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), employers who violate the provisions of the FLSA concerning minimum wages, overtime compensation, and protections for employees who receive tips are liable for the unpaid wages or unlawfully kept tips and for an additional equal amount as liquidated damages. However, the use of liquidated damages was limited last year in FAB 2020-21. FAB 2021-2 rescinds FAB 2020-21 and sets out more flexible guidance for investigators on the assessment of liquidated damages.
Resources	Field Assistance Bulletin No. 2021-2 (Wage and Hour Division, 9 Apr 2021)

US (new)	
Status	**Currently effective**
Development	**Health** **Model COBRA subsidy notices and forms released** The Department of Labor (DOL) has issued model notices, FAQs and other materials for the COBRA premium assistance program that took effect on 1 Apr 2021 under the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) (Subtitle F of Pub. L. No. 117-2). Under the program, the federal government is subsidizing 100% of COBRA premiums for qualified beneficiaries who otherwise would lose employer health coverage due to involuntary termination or reduced work hours. Employers should immediately identify the different groups of qualified beneficiaries who must receive each notice and work with COBRA administrators to ensure timely distribution of these notices and accompanying forms. Employers are encouraged to use the DOL's model notices and forms, since appropriate use is considered good faith compliance with the content requirements for COBRA and ARPA election notices. Employers should look out for guidance from Treasury, which is expected to answer a number of outstanding questions related to the subsidy program
Resources	katherine.marshall@mercer.com and cheryl.hughes@mercer.com GRIST, 20 Apr 2021

US (new)	
Status	**Effective 30 Jan 2022 for new contract solicitations and 30 Mar 2022**
Development	**Career** **Federal contractors will be required to pay $15 minimum hourly wage** On 27 Apr 2021, President Biden issued an executive order that will require federal contractors to pay a $15 minimum wage to workers working on federal contracts by 30 Jan 2022 for new contract solicitations, and by 30 Mar 2022 for new contracts. For existing contracts, the higher wage must be implemented when the contracts are extended — often annually. After 2022, the wage will be adjusted annually for inflation. The executive order also eliminates the tipped minimum wage for federal contractors by 2024 and extends the required $15 minimum wage to federal contract workers with disabilities. By 24 Nov 2021, the Department of Labor will issue regulations to implement the requirements of the executive order.
Resources	Executive order on increasing the minimum wage for federal contractors (White House, 27 Apr 2021); Fact sheet (White House, 27 Apr 2021)

US (new)	
Status	⚠ **Currently effective**
Development	**Health — Wealth** **Cybersecurity guidance issued for retirement plans** In response to a recommendation by the Government Accountability Office, the Department of Labor has issued three pieces of informal cybersecurity guidance for retirement plans. One document suggests how plan fiduciaries can prudently select service providers with strong cybersecurity practices and monitor providers' activities. The second document recommends cybersecurity best practices for record keepers and other service providers responsible for plan-related information technology systems and personally identifiable information. The third document gives tips for participants to keep their online accounts secure. Plan fiduciaries should review their current practices and existing service contracts for consistency with the new guidance. Although the guidance is directed toward retirement plans, its applicability to other types of ERISA plans is unclear.
Resources	brian.kearney@mercer.com, margeret.berger@mercer.com and katharine.marshall@mercer.com GRIST, 26 Apr 2021

US (new)	
Status	⚠ **Currently effective**
Development	**Career — Health — Wealth** **Independent contractor rule withdrawn** The Department of Labor (DOL) has announced the withdrawal of the Independent Contractor Status rule under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). The DOL believes that the rule is "inconsistent with the FLSA's text and purpose, and would have a confusing and disruptive effect on workers and businesses alike due to its departure from longstanding judicial precedent."
Resources	Independent contractor status under the Fair Labor Standards Act: Withdrawal (Federal Register, 6 May 2021) GRIST, 6 May 2021

US (new)	
Status	**Policy**
Development	**Career** **Executive order encourages union activity** President Biden on 26 Apr 2021 issued the Executive Order on Worker Organizing and Empowerment. The order reminds that the National Labor Relations Act "proclaims that the policy of the United States is to encourage organizing and collective bargaining and to promote equality of bargaining power between employers and employees" but states that the federal government in the past few decades has not "used its full authority" to promote and implement support. However, the policy of the Biden administration is to "encourage worker organizing and collective bargaining." The order establishes a task force — chaired by Vice President Harris and the Secretary of Labor — to identify executive branch policies, practices and programs that could be used to support this policy and also statutory, regulatory, or other changes that may be necessary to make policies, practices, and programs more effective means of support. The task force shall consult with the relevant federal agencies, and recommendations shall be submitted by 23 Oct 2021 — 180 days after issuance of the order.
Resources	Executive order on worker organizing and empowerment (The White House, 26 Apr 2021)

US — Federal and state (new)	
Status	**Ongoing initiatives**
Development	**Career** **Federal and state legislative initiatives to prohibit hairstyle discrimination** The Creating a Respectful and Open World for Natural Hair (CROWN) Act movement in the US aims to prohibit discrimination based on natural hair texture or hairstyles that are normally associated with race, such as braids, locs, twists, curls, cornrows, afros, head wraps or bantu knots. The official campaign of the CROWN Act is led by the CROWN Coalition. Nine states have already passed CROWN Acts (California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Virginia and Washington); many others are considering legislation, and federal legislation is also being considered. To help employers ensure their employee handbooks and appearance policies are nondiscriminatory and in compliance with federal, state and local laws, Mercer is providing analysis and compiling resources from organizations, government websites, third-party resources and news articles.
Resources	Roundup: US employer resources on hairstyle nondiscrimination laws, 5 May 2021

US — States, cities	
Status	**Currently effective**
Development	**Career — Health** **States, cities tackle COVID-19 paid leave** To alleviate some of the economic strain on employees unable to work due to COVID-19, some state and local authorities have implemented new paid leave requirements. Other jurisdictions modified existing leave laws or benefit programs to accommodate employees' needs during the pandemic. Mercer has provided brief summaries of the new state and local paid leave benefits, as well as guidance addressing how current paid leave benefits apply during the COVID-19 pandemic.
Resources	katharine.marshall@mercer.com and catherine.stamm@mercer.com GRIST, 5 May 2021

US — States	
Status	**Currently effective**
Development	**Career — Health** **Paid sick leave mandates continue to expand at state level** Colorado and New York are the latest states to enact laws requiring employers to provide accrued paid leave. Beginning in 2021, Colorado requires most employers to provide employees with one hour of paid sick leave for every 30 hours worked. New York required the same accrual rate beginning 30 Sep 2020, for paid sick leave to use in 2021. These mandates are just the latest among a growing number of states requiring employers to provide paid sick and other accrued leave for employees. Mercer details provisions of these laws in each jurisdiction.
Resources	katharine.marshall@mercer.com and catherine.stamm@mercer.com GRIST, 8 Feb 2021

US — Alabama (new)	
Status	**Plans issued on or after 1 Oct 2021**
Development	**Health** **Insulin cost sharing capped** Alabama health insurance plans will have to cap covered individuals' cost sharing at $100 per 30-day supply of insulin under legislation (HB 249) that awaits the governor's signature. The cap is without regard to the policy deductible and regardless of the amount or type of insulin needed to fill the prescription. The state will annually adjust the maximum using the preceding year's Consumer Price Index prescription drug component. If signed, as expected, the measure will take effect for insured health plans issued or renewed in Alabama on or after 1 Oct 2021, and plans issued elsewhere, to the extent they cover Alabama residents.
Resources	catherine.stamm@mercer.com HB 249 (Legislature)

US — Arkansas (new)	
Status	**Currently effective**
Development	**Health** **Audio-only telemedicine restrictions relaxed** Arkansas has eased telemedicine restrictions in legislation (HB 1063) that allows use of audio-only treatment for certain patients. The measure amends the state existing law (§17-80-401 et. seq.) to allow treatment by an Arkansas-licensed healthcare professional who has access to a patient's personal health records and uses any technology deemed appropriate, including the telephone, to diagnose, treat, and if clinically appropriate, prescribe noncontrolled drugs for an Arkansas patient. A health record may be created using telemedicine if it consists of relevant clinical information needed to treat a patient, and the healthcare professional meets the same standard of care as an in-person visit. Under the existing law, insured health plans can't impose higher cost sharing or limits for use of telemedicine than in-person visits. The new provisions also prohibit a plan from requiring covered individuals to choose telemedicine-only providers rather than their regular doctor. Patient cost sharing must be equally imposed for telemedicine as network providers. To qualify for health plan coverage, audio-only communication must be in real time, interactive, and substantially meet the requirements for otherwise covered healthcare service under the health plan. The new requirements applied when signed into law on 21 Apr 2021.
Resources	catherine.stamm@mercer.com HB 1063 (Legislature)

US — Arkansas (new)	
Status	**30 Jul 2021**
Development	**Health** **PBM reporting expanded to include TPA data** Recently signed Arkansas legislation (Act 665, HB 1804) expands the scope of the state's pharmacy benefits manager (PBM) law's (§23-92-501 et seq.) reporting obligations to include the data of third-party administrators (TPAs) that administer self-funded health benefit plans, including governmental plans. PBMs must quarterly report for each healthcare payor — now including TPAs — certain aggregate rebate amounts received by the PBM, distributed to the payor and passed on to enrollees. Additional information must include amounts paid by the payor to the PBM and amounts a PBM paid for pharmacist services. The measure also calls for rules establishing a PBM network adequacy standard at least as strict as the federal standards for Tricare or Medicare Part D.
Resources	catherine.stamm@mercer.com HB 1804 (Legislature)

US — Montana (new)	
Status	**Proposal**
Development	**Health** **Legislation would require PBM regulation** The Montana Pharmacy Benefit Manager Oversight Act (SB 395) has been sent to the governor for signature and would establish pharmacy benefit managers (PBM) licensure requirements; prohibit certain PBM practices; require transparency and maximum allowable cost (MAC) reporting; and mandate network adequacy standards. The measure, if enacted, would require licensing for PBMs providing services for residents enrolled in health plans and multiple employee welfare arrangements (MEWAs) in the state. Mandatory disclosures to insurers and plan sponsors would include certain rebates and fees received, exclusivity arrangements, utilization data and claim information. Annual reports also would be due to state regulators with additional information.
Resources	catherine.stamm@mercer.com SB 395 (Legislature)

US — Oklahoma (new)	
Status	**1 Nov 2021**
Development	**Health** **Insulin cost sharing limited** Oklahoma will bar health plans that cover insulin drugs from charging insured individuals more than $30 per 30-day insulin supply or $90 for a 90-day supply under a new law (HB 1019). The cap applies regardless of the amount or type of insulin needed to fill the prescription. The new law, which takes effect 1 Nov 2021, doesn't include any provision for indexing the cost-sharing limit.
Resources	catherine.stamm@mercer.com HB 1019 (Legislature)

US — Oklahoma (new)	
Status	**1 Nov 2021**
Development	**Health** **Third-party Rx payments to count towards cost sharing** Recently enacted Oklahoma legislation (HB 2678) requires health insurers and pharmacy benefits managers (PBMs) that administer pharmacy benefits for health plans when calculating the enrollee's cost-sharing requirement, to include any amount paid by an enrollee or on behalf of an enrollee by a third party. The provision amends the state's unfair claims practices law, which defines "health benefit plan" to exempt self-insured ERISA plans other than multiple employee welfare arrangements (MEWAs). The new provision takes effect 1 Nov 2021.
Resources	catherine.stamm@mercer.com HB 2678 (Legislature)

US — Utah (new)	
Status	⚠ **Effective 15 May 2021**
Development	**Health** **Common-law marriage filing requirement added** Effective 15 May, Utah common law spouses must file a petition for an unsolemnized marriage "during the relationship." Recent legislation (HB 316) signed into law modifies the state's common law marriage statute (30-1-4.5), adding the petition requirement. The provision doesn't include a timeline or outline filing procedures. Employers whose Utah employees look to add a common-law spouse to a plan may want to ask for this type of documentation once available, possibly through a local county clerk.
Resources	catherine.stamm@mercer.com HB 316 (Legislature); Code 30-1-4.5 (Legislature); GRIST, 3 Mar 2020

US — Washington (new)	
Status	**Effective dates vary**
Development	**Health** **Tight exemption timeline to long-term care law added** Beginning 1 Jan 2022, Washington's long-term care (LTC) insurance law requires employers to collect 0.58% of wages through payroll deduction from employees working — or, in certain cases, merely residing — in the state and remit those premium contributions to the state-run Long-Term Services and Supports (LTSS) Trust Program. The LTSS legislation (WA Rev. Code Ch. 50B.04) enacted in 2019 does not require any employer contributions. A recent change to the law (2021 Ch. 113, HB 1323) allows employees to opt out of the program only if they have purchased private LTC coverage by 1 Nov 2021. Employers — particularly those offering a qualifying LTC policy — should notify employees about the impending exemption deadline and prepare to collect and report employee premiums. Benefits will become available to eligible individuals beginning 1 Jan 2025. State regulators are developing draft and proposed regulations, which may provide some early guidance. Employers with Washington employees will want to monitor developments and discuss implications with LTC vendors. Given the 1 November deadline, employers will need to decide quickly whether to offer a voluntary LTC plan so employees electing that benefit can opt out of contributing to the state program. In addition, employers should notify Washington employees about the opt-out requirements well in advance of the 1 November deadline. Employers should also begin to prepare for the required payroll deductions in 2022.
Resources	catherine.stamm@mercer.com; wade.symons@mercer.com and steven.ginsburg@mercer.com GRIST, 3 May 2021

US — Wyoming (new)	
Status	**Currently effective**
Development	**Health** **Telehealth parity for mental health, substance abuse treatment mandated** A new Wyoming law (Ch. 83, SB 52) requires insured health plans subject to the Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act to cover treatments via telehealth. The plans cannot charge a covered individual a higher cost sharing, and must pay the mental health provider the same rate as treatment delivered in person.
Resources	catherine.stamm@mercer.com SF0052 (Legislature)

US (upcoming effective dates)

Development

Career

- Voters approve $15 minimum wage in Florida — Key date: 3 Sep 2021
- California requires board director from underrepresented communities — Key date: 31 Dec 2021
- Cost sharing for insulin restricted in Kentucky — Key date: 1 Jan 2022
- Washington state requires gender diverse boards — Key date: 1 Jan 2022
- Equal pay, workplace diversity disclosure laws enacted in Illinois — Key date: 1 Jan 2023

Career — Health

- Paid family and medical leave contributions in Oregon begin in 2022 — Key date: 1 Jan 2022
- Paid sick leave legislation enacted in New Mexico — Key date: 1 Jul 2022
- Colorado voters approved paid family and medical leave — Key date: 1 Jan 2023

Health

- Healthcare cost transparency rules and medical loss ratio changes finalized — Key date: 1 Jan 2022
- Insureds' insulin and supplies cost limited in District of Columbia — Key date: 1 Jan 2022
- Mental health parity aligned with federal mandate in Kentucky — Key date: 1 Jan 2022
- Third-party contribution legislation limits insurers' cost sharing in Kentucky — Key date: 1 Jan 2022
- Consumer privacy law enacted in Virginia — Key date: 1 Jan 2023

Wealth

- DOL finalizes electronic delivery rule for retirement plan notices — Key date: 27 Jul 2021

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Asia Pacific

Australia (new)	
Status	**Proposal**
Development	**Career** **Government agrees on measures for workplace sexual harassment reforms** Australia's federal government has agreed on measures to prevent and address workplace sexual harassment in its response to the Australian Human Rights Commission's 55 recommendations issued in January 2020. The legislative and regulatory reforms would aim to simplify and strengthen the legal framework to address sexual harassment, and include alignment of the Sex Discrimination Act 1984 with model Work Health and Safety laws; possible revision of the current positive duty on employers to take reasonable and proportionate measures to eliminate sex discrimination, sexual harassment and victimization; and the introduction of education and training programs for specific industry sectors. The legal amendments are yet to be drafted and could be submitted to parliament later in 2021, but some experts predict the reforms would have minimal legal impact on employers.
Resources	A roadmap for respect: Preventing and addressing sexual harassment in Australian workplaces (Government, 8 Apr 2021) Respect@Work: Sexual harassment national inquiry report (2020) (Human Rights Commission)

Australia (new)	
Status	**Consultation is open until 23 Jul 2021**
Development	**Career** **Regulator consults on remuneration guidance** The Australian Prudential Regulation Authority (APRA) issued on 30 Apr 2021 a consultation on draft guidance on remuneration practices in all regulated industries that will assist entities in meeting the requirements proposed in the new prudential standard, CPS 511 Remuneration (CPS 511). Comments are invited through 23 Jul 2021, and APRA plans to finalize the guidance in the second half of 2021. The aim of CPS 511 and the guidance is to improve remuneration practices, provide stronger incentives for individuals to manage proactively risks for which they are responsible, establish appropriate consequences for poor risk outcomes, and increase the transparency and accountability on remuneration matters. The guidance will support CPS 511, providing principles and good practice examples on issues, such as defining nonfinancial measures of performance and applying a material weight to them when deciding on variable remuneration. A consultation on proposed standard CPS 511 closed in February 2021, and APRA reports that it “does not expect to make material revisions to the current proposals” before the standard comes into effect beginning in 2023.
Resources	michael.moses@mercer.com Consultation — Draft guidance on remuneration (APRA, 30 Apr 2021); Consultation on remuneration requirements for all APRA-regulated entities (APRA, 30 Apr 2021)

Australia (new)	
Status	**Effective 1 Jul 2021**
Development	**Wealth** **Super caps, superannuation guarantee maximum contribution base increased** Updated superannuation rates and thresholds have been published by the Australian Taxation Office. Highlights include: • The general concessional contributions cap will increase to A$27,500 in 2021/2022 — up from A$25,000 in 2020/2021, and is the first increase since 2017. • Individuals who are eligible to carry forward their unused personal concessional contribution caps from previous years could exceed the A$27,500 cap in 2021/2022 by making additional concessional contributions for unused amounts from previous years. To be eligible to carry forward, individuals must have a total superannuation balance of less than A$500,000 calculated on 30 Jun 2021, and must have contributed concessional contributions not exceeding A$75,000 over three financial years (2018/2019, 2019/2020 and 2020/2021). Unused contribution cap amounts can be carried over for up to five years, after which time they expire. • The general nonconcessional cap for an income year is calculated at four times the general concessional contributions cap. For 2021/2022, the cap will increase to A$110,000, up from A$100,000. Nonconcessional contributions include personal contributions which individuals have not claimed an income tax deduction. The carry forward option for individuals under the age of 65 on 1 July will be capped at A$330,000 in 2021/2022. Eligible individuals are allowed to make contributions of up to three times the nonconcessional limit in the first year of a three-year period, and also must fulfill other eligibility criteria. Individuals who have a total super balance of A$1.7 million or more calculated at 30 Jun 2021 (up from A$1.6 million) will have a zero nonconcessional cap. • The SG maximum contribution base will increase in 2021/22 to A$58,920 per quarter and A$235,680 per year, up from A$57,090 and A$228,360 respectively. The maximum super contribution base is used to determine the maximum limit on any individual employee's earnings base for each quarter of any financial year. Employers do not have to provide the minimum support for any part of the earnings exceeding this limit. Also, the SG will increase from 9.5% per year to 10% from 1 Jul 2021.
Resources	paul.shallue@mercer.com GRIST, 15 Apr 2021

Australia (upcoming effective dates)

Development **Wealth**

- Act approved on financial advice and fees for Super funds — Key date: 1 Jul 2021
- Superannuation pension reform measures in budget — Key date: 1 Jul 2021
- Financial product design, distribution rules postponed — Key date: 5 Oct 2021
- Australia revises consumer dispute resolution for finance sector — Key date: 5 Oct 2021
- Australia increases consumer protection for financial products — Key date: 5 Oct 2021
- Reporting deadline extended for superannuation funds — Key date: 31 Dec 2021

Hong Kong (new)

Status **Consultation is open until 18 Jun 2021**

Development **Career — Wealth**

Consultation issued on corporate governance changes, diversity and ESG

Proposals issued by the Stock Exchange of Hong Kong (HKEX) include a rule change that single gender company boards would no longer be acceptable. Companies also would be subject to a new mandatory disclosure requirement to set out numerical targets and timelines for increasing the gender diversity of their board and workforce (including senior management roles), and they would have to review annually the implementation and effectiveness of their board diversity policies. The HKEX intends to post information on companies' board diversity (including directors' ages, gender and directorships) on its website. The proposed changes feature in a consultation document on changes to the Corporate Governance Code and Corporate Governance Report issued on 16 Apr 2021; comments can be submitted through 18 Jun 2021. If agreed to, the changes would apply to financial years starting on or after 1 Jan 2022. Companies with single gender boards would have three years to appoint at least one board director from the other gender, but companies newly joining the HKEX should not have a single gender board. Currently, more than 32.9% (or 843) of companies on the HKEX do not have a female director. Additionally, the HKEX has proposed strengthening companies' disclosure on environmental, social and governance (ESG) matters, including mandatory climate-related disclosures.

Resources Review of Corporate Governance Code and related listing rules (HKEX, 16 Apr 2021); ESG reporting guide and FAQs (HKEX)

Hong Kong (upcoming effective date)

Development **Career**

- Anti-harassment law for breastfeeding enacted — Key date: 19 Jun 2021

India (new)	
Status	**Reporting begins on a voluntary basis for financial year 2021-2022, and on a mandatory basis from 2022-2023**
Development	**Career — Wealth** **Top-listed companies face enhanced sustainability reporting** India's top 1,000 listed companies by market capitalization will have to report against certain sustainability indicators on a voluntary basis for financial year 2021-2022, and on a mandatory basis from 2022-2023. The Security and Exchange Board of India announced the requirement on 25 Mar 2021 following a consultation in August 2020, and aims to increase the transparency of environmental, social and governance (ESG) information and enable the identification and assessment of sustainability risks and opportunities. Companies will have to prepare a new report — the Business Responsibility and Sustainability Report (BRSR) — this will replace the current Business Responsibility Report introduced in 2012 for the top 100 listed companies and later expanded to the top 1,000 companies in 2019-2020. The format of the BRSR has not yet been published, but companies will have to report against nine ESG factors, provide disclosures on mandatory and voluntary indicators, and include quantifiable metrics. Companies that already use recognized international ESG reporting frameworks (for example, The Global Reporting Initiative) will be allowed to cross-reference these disclosures in the BRSR.
Resources	Press release No. 15/2021 (Securities and Exchange Board of India)

India (new)	
Status	**Increased coverage must be provided by 1 May 2021**
Development	**Health** **Maximum coverage increased for health insurance** The maximum coverage under the standard health insurance plan (Arogya Sanjeevani Policy) issued by the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) will increase to INR 10 lakh, up from INR 5 lakh, and the IRDAI has advised that insurers must provide the increased coverage from 1 May 2021, or earlier. The Arogya Sanjeevani Policy was introduced on 1 Apr 2020 and comprises a standard health insurance plan across all health insurance companies open to individuals between the ages of 18 and 65.
Resources	Circular 051/03/2021 (IRDAI, 18 Mar 2021)

India (upcoming effective date)

Development **Career — Health — Wealth**

- Labor and employment laws reformed — Key date: Mid-2021

Indonesia (new)

Status **Currently effective**

Development **Career — Wealth**

Regulations issued to implement labor reforms

Government Regulation No. 35 of 2021, effective 2 Feb 2021, implements certain measures included in Indonesia's Job Creation Law. Highlights include:

- The amount of severance paid to employees who are not enrolled in a pension program was reduced to 1.75 times the severance pay factor — down from two times. The compensation allowance is maintained in the new regulation, but the amount paid by employers is now discretionary — the 15% amount is no longer regulated, and is now excluded from the calculation of the pension benefits formula. Overall, the cap on the statutory pension benefits paid to employees is reduced from 32.2 times wages to 25.7 times wages.
- The maximum amount of disability benefits is reduced to one times the gratuity pay, down from two times the gratuity pay. The 15% compensation allowance is no longer regulated, and is excluded from the calculation of the disability benefits formula. The maximum amount of disability benefit is 28 times wages, down from 43.70 times wages.
- The maximum amount of death benefits is reduced to 28 times wages, down from 32.2 times wages. The 15% compensation allowance is now excluded from the death benefits formula.
- The regulation sets out three types of FTCs. Employers must now pay compensation to FTC employees with one or more months of service upon the expiration date of their contract. The amount paid will depend on the duration of the FTC, extensions, and if the contract is terminated early by either party. The employment relationship between an outsourcing or staffing agency and the employee can be based on a permanent contract or a FTC, subject to meeting certain criteria.
- The maximum amount of overtime hours has increased to four hours per day, and 18 hours per week. Employment contracts, company regulations or collective agreements must stipulate the job roles for which no overtime is paid.

Resources jovita.sadrach@mercer.com
GRIST, 5 May 2021

Japan (new)	
Status	**Proposal**
Development	**Career — Wealth** **Listed companies face more ESG, diversity disclosures** Proposals to revise Japan’s Corporate Governance Code would require listed companies to increase the gender diversity of their senior managers, enhance board members’ independence, and develop and disclose their sustainability policies. The 2015 code is incorporated into the Tokyo Stock Exchange’s listing rules on a “comply or explain” basis. Also, proposed revisions of the Guidelines for Investor and Company Engagement emphasize the importance of companies setting sustainability objectives and establishing the appropriate governance of sustainability initiatives across the entire organization. First published in 2014, the guidelines supplement the code, setting out specific engagement topics for companies and investors to consider. Other proposed changes concern the diversity of boards, the skills of directors, and the procedures for evaluating boards and individual board directors.
Resources	GRIST, 15 Apr 2021

Malaysia (new)	
Status	⚠ **Currently effective**
Development	**Career** **More sectors to pay the Human Resources Development Levy** Malaysia has increased the number of industry sectors — up to 48 — that must pay the Human Resources Development Levy under an amendment to the Pembangunan Sumber Manusia Berhad (PSMB) Act that took effect on 1 Mar 2021. Employers with 10 or more Malaysian employees in any of the listed industries must have registered with the PSMB by 31 Apr 2021, and will have pay a 1% levy calculated on the monthly wages of each employee. Employers with between 5 and 9 employees and nongovernmental organizations fulfilling certain tasks must pay a levy of 0.5%. Certain employers are exempt from paying the levy until 31 May 2021. Employers that failed to register could face fines of up to MYR 10,000 and/or imprisonment of up to one year. Employers who fail to pay the levy could face fines of up to MYR 20,000 and/or imprisonment of up to two years.
Resources	danisha.sritharan@mercer.com PSMB Act (Human Resource Development Corporation)

South Korea (new)	
Status	**Provisions will generally take effect on 14 Apr 2022**
Development	**Wealth** **ERSA pension reforms enacted** Changes to the Employee Retirement Benefit Security Act (ERSA) passed parliament in March 2021, and an enforcement decree was disseminated on 22 Apr 2021. The reforms, which include increased minimum funding requirements for defined benefit (DB) plans and new reporting and governance requirements for pension providers, generally will take effect on 14 Apr 2022. Highlights include: • DB plans must be 100% funded from 1 Jan 2022 — postponed from 1 Jan 2021. The current funding requirement is 90%. Employers should review their DB asset allocation to minimize the impact of the additional funding requirements. • Pension providers will have to report at least annually on DB plan funding to employers and employee representatives. The pension provider or employer faces fines of up to KRW 10 million for breaches. • Companies with more than 300 employees will have to publish an Investment Policy Statement (IPS) for their DB plan, and a pension fund management committee should be established to oversee the IPS. The IPS should include investment objectives, target rate of return, and the performance evaluation process, etc. • A specialized pension education institution will be introduced under a presidential decree, with the aim of providing optional pension education to pension providers and plan members. • A pension fund for small companies with fewer than 30 employees has been established by the Korea Worker's Compensation & Welfare Service. Other pension reforms flagged in the original bill were not included in the final act and include the mandatory adoption of DB or defined contribution (DC) plans, the introduction of a default investment option for DC plans, linking the pension provider's fee to the services provided and plan performance, and the introduction of trust-based pension management.
Resources	julia.lee@mercer.com GRIST, 30 Apr 2021

Taiwan (new)	
Status	⚠ **1 May 2021**
Development	**Career** **Sanctions expanded for some labor law violations** More companies in Taiwan can now be fined for certain labor law violations in response to Ministry of Labor concerns regarding increased overtime and holiday pay violations. As of 1 May 2021, listed companies or enterprises with capital of more than NT$100 million face fines of between NT$50,000 and NT$1,500,000 for the following labor law violations: Failure to pay for overtime work (Article 24); illegal extension of working hours (Article 32); failure to provide 11-hour minimum rest period between shifts (Article 34); failure to implement ”seven-to-one policy” (one rest day for every seven consecutive working days) (Article 36); and failure to provide double pay for working on holidays (Article 39). The Ministry of Labor estimates approximately 22,000 companies could be impacted by the revision.
Resources	echo.liu@mercer.com Regulation (Chinese) (Ministry of Labor, 11 Mar 2021)

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Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA)

European Union (EU) (new)	
Status	**Proposal**
Development	**Career** **New rules proposed on artificial intelligence, employment rules highlighted** Proposed new rules on Artificial Intelligence (AI) aim to transform the European Union (EU) into “a global hub for trustworthy AI”, and will be complemented by new rules on machinery safety to increase users’ trust in AI products. The proposed EU regulation on AI would require all member states to apply the rules in the same way, and uses a risk-based methodology to identify four levels of risk (unacceptable risk, high risk, limited risk and minimal risk). An annex to the regulation classifies AI systems into their appropriate risk category — AI technology used in “employment, workers management, and access to self-employment” is classified as “high risk” It will apply to AI technology used to recruit or select individuals for job vacancies; screen or filter applicants; evaluate candidates in interviews or tests; decide about promotions or the termination of employment; and allocate tasks, monitor and evaluate performance. “High risk” AI systems would have to meet strict criteria before they could be marketed, such as adequate risk assessment and mitigation systems, the use of high quality datasets to minimize risks and discriminatory outcomes, and provisions to allow for appropriate human oversight. The proposals were published on 21 Apr 2021 and will be discussed by the EU institutions. Once they are agreed to, they will be directly applicable across the EU.
Resources	Europe fit for the Digital Age: Commission proposes new rules and actions for excellence and trust in Artificial Intelligence (European Commission, 21 Apr 2021); Proposal for a regulation laying down harmonised rules on artificial intelligence (Artificial Intelligence Act) (European Commission, 26 Apr 2021)

EU (new)	
Status	**Proposal**
Development	**Career — Wealth** **Sustainability measures set out by Commission** The European Commission published on 21 Apr 2021 "an ambitious and comprehensive package of measures" that aims to direct investment into sustainable activities throughout the European Union (EU), establish the EU as a global leader in setting sustainable standards, and support the EU's objective to become climate neutral by 2050. The measures include a proposed directive on corporate sustainability reporting that would amend the current EU directive on nonfinancial reporting which requires certain large companies to report sustainability information, including workforce and employee relations matters — around 11,000 companies are covered by the current directive. The proposed directive would apply to all large listed or unlisted companies (an estimated 49,000 companies), and would specify the sustainability information (including employment and climate matters) that must be reported. Company sustainability reports would have to follow new EU reporting standards and must be audited. Groups of companies would have to prepare a consolidated report on the group's impact on sustainability matters. The European Financial Reporting Advisory Group will be tasked with developing new EU sustainability standards. The package also includes six delegated acts on fiduciary duties, investment and insurance advice that would require financial firms to include sustainability in their procedures and investment advice to clients, and the EU taxonomy climate delegated act that clarifies which economic activities contribute to meeting the EU's environmental objectives.
Resources	Sustainable Finance and EU Taxonomy: Commission takes further steps to channel money towards sustainable activities (European Commission, 21 Apr 2021); Sustainable Finance Package (European Commission, 21 Apr 2021); Directive 2014/95/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 October 2014 amending Directive 2013/34/EU as regards disclosure of non-financial and diversity information by certain large undertakings and groups (Europa)

EU (upcoming effective date)

Development **Career**

- Directive expands whistleblower protections — Key date: End of 2021
- Revised company law rules will impact participating companies, employees — Key date: 1 Jan 2022
- Law strengthens rights of 'nonstandard workers' — Key date: Summer 2022

Career — Health

- Work-life balance measures, including leave, finalized — Key date: Summer 2022

Wealth

- ESG agenda, capital markets union progress — Key date: 10 Mar 2022

Belgium (upcoming effective date)

Development **Wealth**

- Blue- and white-collar pension harmonization approaches — Key date: 1 Jan 2025

Denmark (upcoming effective date)

Development **Wealth**

- Parliament finalizes new early retirement option — Key date: 1 Jan 2022

France (upcoming effective date)

Development **Career — Health**

- Paternity leave to increase — Key date: 1 Jul 2021

Germany (new)	
Status	**Beginning 1 Jan 2022**
Development	**Health — Wealth** **Maximum life insurance and 'Pensionsfonds' interest rates reduced** The Finance Ministry has announced the reduction of maximum interest rates applicable to life insurance contracts and Pensionsfonds in Germany to 0.25% — down from 0.9% from 1 Jan 2022. Pensionsfonds offer occupational retirement provision in the form of a funded pension scheme.
Resources	monika.oecking@mercer.com Legislation (German) (Bundesanzeiger Verlag)

Germany (new)	
Status	**Proposal**
Development	**Career** **Bill addresses women's underrepresentation on boards** A bill to address the underrepresentation of women in public and private sector management roles was presented to parliament on 5 Mar 2021. It would strengthen a 2015 law that established a voluntary 30% female quota for supervisory board members. For the first time, listed companies with executive boards comprising three or more members would have to appoint at least one male and one female board member. Companies also would have to report on the number of women in management roles and appointed to their supervisory and executive boards. Companies without at least one female member on their supervisory boards would have to provide an explanation. Additionally, stronger sanctions would apply to violations of the reporting requirements. A recent study of the 30 largest companies on the German stock index reported that women comprise 12.8% of management board members.
Resources	rudolf.glekler@mercer.com GRIST, 4 May 2021

Germany (new)	
Status	**Proposal**
Development	**Career — Wealth** **Companies could face due-diligence duties for human rights** A bill requiring companies to conduct human rights due diligence on their supply chains is under consideration in the German parliament. The proposal sets out human rights and environment-related obligations for companies, including fair and favorable working conditions, compliance with adequate living standards, freedom from child and forced labor, and protection against torture. Companies would be required to conduct a risk analysis of their supply chains, and take measures to prevent, minimize and resolve any violations, including the termination of supplier relationships where necessary. Companies breaching their due diligence obligations could face fines of up to €800,000 or 2% of turnover for companies with an annual turnover of €400 million or more. If approved, the law could take effect on 1 Jan 2023 for companies with more than 3,000 employees, and from 2024 for those with more than 1,000 employees. The 2018 coalition government agreement included a commitment to introduce supply chain due diligence if 50% of Germany's largest employers did not voluntarily introduce supply chain due diligence procedures. To date, only 13% to 17% of those companies have voluntarily met the due diligence requirements, and a further 10% to 12% were reported to be "on track."
Resources	rudolf.glekler@mercer.com GRIST, 4 May 2021

Germany (new)	
Status	**Proposal**
Development	**Wealth** **Bill addresses cross-border distribution of investment funds** Proposals to implement the European Union directive on the cross-border marketing of undertakings for collective investment would also introduce certain regulatory and tax measures aimed at strengthening Germany's position as a location for such funds. In order to reach these objectives, the proposal would grant a deferral of taxation to employees in the case of certain classes of shares, increasing the tax deferral to 100%. However, a number of restrictions on the possible deferral of taxation would have to be observed. The new regulations feature in a bill presented to parliament on 22 Jan 2021, and could take effect on 1 Jul 2021, subject to parliamentary approval.
Resources	rudolf.glekler@mercer.com Bill (German) (Legislature); Directive (EU) 2019/1160 (Official Journal of the EU, 20 June 2019)

Ireland (new)	
Status	**Generally effective**
Development	**Wealth** **Implementation regulations issued for IORP II** Measures aimed at implementing the European Union's IORP II directive — originally introduced in 2017, with a January 2019 implementation date — generally took effect in Ireland on 22 Apr 2021. The measures feature in the European Union (Occupational Pension Schemes) Regulations 2021. Ireland was the last member state to implement the directive. The regulations closely follow the directive, establishing wide-ranging governance and prudential standards applicable to all occupational pension schemes. The main IORP II requirements cover: • Enhanced pension scheme governance and internal controls • Strengthening schemes' risk management systems, including a requirement for a formal risk management function • Requirement for schemes' to carry out an internal audit and have an internal audit function • A much broader scope of member communications requirements, including provision of annual benefit statements to deferred members • New fitness and probity standards for trustees and other persons involved in running schemes • Extended powers for the Pensions Authority (PA) with respect to applying forward-looking, risk-based principles to the supervision of pension schemes and monitoring of compliance • Updated rules relating to the operation of cross border schemes and transfers between schemes in Ireland and the EU. Further regulatory guidance will be issued by the PA to clarify certain details. More detailed codes of conduct will be subject to a public consultation process over the summer, with final publication planned for November 2021. Pension scheme trustees should now consider the implications of the regulations and the required compliance steps.
Resources	james.campbell@mercer.com GRIST, 5 May 2021

Ireland (upcoming effective date)

Development **Wealth**

- Ireland updates auto-enrolment pension system implementation — Key date: Expected by 2022

Israel (upcoming effective date)

Development **Career**

- Gender pay gap reporting expanded — Key date: 1 Jun 2022

Luxembourg (new)

Status **Guidelines must be followed by 30 Sep 2021**

Development **Career**

Financial regulatory authority issues telework guidance

Companies regulated by Luxembourg's financial authority (CSSF), and which allow their employees to telework, must follow new CSSF teleworking guidelines from 30 Sep 2021. Under measures included in Circular 21/769, regulated organizations (including credit institutions, management companies and investment firms) must: Conduct a risk assessment to identify the risks connected with teleworking which fall within the management body's responsibilities; establish a telework policy and a security policy to address ICT systems, data issues, and confidentiality; ensure that one authorized manager and representatives of key functions are on site, and that employees are trained to follow teleworking procedures; confirm the security of devices enabling employees to connect remotely to ICT systems; and monitor their organization's compliance with teleworking policies and guidance.

Resources Circular CSSF 21/769 (French) (CSSF, 9 Apr 2021); GRIST, 22 Feb 2021

Oman (upcoming effective date)

Development **Health**

- Oman issues implementation rules for new health insurance scheme — Key date: Possibly later in 2021

Saudi Arabia (upcoming effective date)	
Development	**Career** • Contracting with companies with regional headquarters outside of the kingdom to cease — Key date: 1 Jan 2024
Slovakia (new)	
Status	**Currently effective**
Development	**Career — Health** **Paid paternity leave applications eased** The administrative procedures that fathers in Slovakia must follow when applying for paid paternity leave were simplified on 1 May 2021 under measures incorporated into the Social Insurance Act. Fathers who apply to take paternity leave no longer have to submit a written agreement with the child's mother regarding care of the child. Media reports say that an increased number of fathers have applied to take paternity leave in Slovakia — paternity leave payments were granted to 14,881 fathers in 2020, up from 6,533 in 2017.
Resources	Legislation (Slovakian) (Slovak official journal)
Turkey (upcoming effective date)	
Development	**Career — Health** • Date to re-enroll in auto-enrollment pension postponed — Key date: 2022
United Kingdom (UK) (new)	
Status	**Currently effective**
Development	**Career** **National minimum wage record retention period doubled** From 1 Apr 2021, employers must retain National Minimum Wage records for six years, up from three. The change features in the amended National Minimum Wage (Amendment) Regulations 2021. The longer retention period applies to records predating 1 Apr 2021 if the employer was required to keep pay records immediately prior to that date.
Resources	The National Minimum Wage (Amendment) Regulations 2021

UK (new)	
Status	**Consultation is open until 26 May 2021**
Development	**Wealth** **Consultation issued on the Pension Regulator's single code** The Pensions Regulator has issued a draft code of practice for consultation as the first phase of consolidating the 15 existing codes and transitioning to a single online code of practice for defined benefit and defined contribution schemes, with comments invited through 26 May 2021. This first phase would replace 10 of the existing codes of practice — the ones that mainly deal with scheme governance and administration. The draft also incorporates changes introduced in 2018 to reflect the governance requirements included in the European Union occupational pensions (IORP II) directive.
Resources	dina.mcdonald@mercer.com New code of practice consultation (Pensions Regulator, 17 Mar 2021)

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