

Enhancing the Effectiveness of Social Dialogue Articulation in Europe (VS/2017/0434)

National and EU-level social dialogue articulation^{1,2}

Recent topics discussed most frequently in social dialogue committees³

- Skills, training and employability
- Health and safety, well-being at work
- Working conditions and working time regulation
- Digitalisation and work
- European minimum wage

Articulation between national and EU-level social dialogue

- Overall views of national social partners:
 - Perceive the articulation of national interests to EU-level social dialogue structures as generally **important and positive**
 - Expect **support from EU-level social partners in national policy influence** and collective bargaining in the member states
- Challenges for EU-level social dialogue – need to better address:
 - Extensive **diversity of priorities** of national social partners especially since the EU enlargements
 - Lack of awareness among national social partners about the **European Semester** processes
 - Call for greater involvement of national social partners in the European Semester, moving from information exchange to consultation (or even negotiation)
 - **Network analysis:** opportunity for **joint articulation of regional interests to the EU** level due to a strong cooperation between unions and employers from neighbouring countries (e.g. the Visegrád region, the Baltic states, Southern European countries and Scandinavian countries)

Effectiveness of social dialogue articulation

- EU-wide survey finding, based on responses of national trade unions and employers' associations from 27 EU Member States: social dialogue effectiveness is determined by the ability to **reach (binding or non-binding) outcomes**
 - National social partners rate the European Social Summit, EU-level cross-sectoral social dialogue and EU-level sectoral social dialogue with **medium effectiveness**
 - Trade unions rate the effectiveness of EU-level sectoral social dialogue and the European Social Summit higher than employers' associations
 - Employers' associations prefer **non-binding outcomes**, e.g. Guidelines, Joint Statements and Recommendations, while trade unions reveal stronger preference for **binding outcomes**, such as Directives
- Effectiveness of social dialogue articulation: **transposition of social dialogue outcomes** between the sectoral, national and EU levels
 - More **consultation and negotiation** instead of exchange of information
 - Greater attention of EU-level social partners to procedures of transposing EU-level social dialogue outcomes in the Member States
 - Increase the **funding** and promote agenda dedicated to **capacity building** at the national level
 - Facilitate more intensive dialogue between EU-level social partners and the European Commission in order to identify common priorities and challenges to be addressed by social dialogue at all levels

¹ The following country abbreviations are used in the text: Estonia (EE), France (FR), Ireland (IE), Portugal (PT), Slovakia (SK), Sweden (SE).

² For detailed information on the national context and sectoral case studies, please see the EESDA comparative report by Akgüç et al. (forthcoming) and respective country reports written by EESDA partners. These reports are available on the project website: <https://celsi.sk/en/projects/detail/28/>

³ Topics are identified based on word frequency analysis looking at social dialogue committee agendas as well as information from interviews with social partners.

Enhancing the Effectiveness of Social Dialogue Articulation in Europe (VS/2017/0434) Sectoral social dialogue articulation

Commerce

<p>Priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low pay, wage increase • Working conditions, precarious contracts, stability of jobs • Working time and flexibility, work during holidays/Sundays • Training and skills, skill development, digitalisation • Union recognition • Health and safety 	<p>Articulation at national level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No social dialogue in retail beyond company-based collective bargaining (IE) • Social partners involved in national tripartism and bipartite collective bargaining (e.g. FR, PT, SK, SE) 	<p>Articulation at EU level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Somewhat involvement with EU-level associations among • Limited (if any) involvement at European Semester process (valid for most of countries covered) 	<p>Improving effectiveness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overcome high fragmentation (EE, IE) • Decrease dependence on political preferences of government (EE, FR) • Increase the social partners' capacity (EE, PT) • Wage coordination at the regional level should be improved (SK)
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Construction

<p>Priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and safety, working conditions • Social dumping, posting of workers, migration • Lack of skilled workers • Negative image of the sector, attracting young workers to the sector 	<p>Articulation at national level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constructive sectoral social dialogue (IE) • Cooperative and independent social dialogue with direct access to policymaking (SE) • Well-functioning sectoral bipartism and tripartism with policy influence (FR, EE, PT, SK) 	<p>Articulation at EU level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of involvement in the European Semester (valid for most countries) • Active in EU-level social dialogue (FR, PT, SE, SK) • Polarized opinions on posting workers and bogus self-employment (FR, IE, SE) 	<p>Improving effectiveness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better disseminate social dialogue outcomes and ensure enforcement (FR, IE) • Strengthen involvement of sectoral partners in the national sectoral tripartism (PT, SK) • Scepticism on top-down involvement of the EU (SE)
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Education

<p>Priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working conditions and time, stress at work • Pay restoration after the crisis • Recruitment and retention of teachers • Job security, temporary jobs • Ageing workforce • Digitalisation, reforms to increase the quality of education 	<p>Articulation at national level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relatively successful social dialogue with more discussion and consultation leading (sometimes) to concrete outcomes (EE, FR, IE, PT, SE) • Part of public sector social dialogue, but recent fragmentation of unions and emergence of non-union actors gaining influence (SK) 	<p>Articulation at EU level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong interaction and involvement with EU-level, e.g. transposition of Europe2020 agenda (EE, IE, FR, PT) • Cooperation between the sectoral and cross-sectoral European social dialogue valued, but emphasise education as a domain of national competence (SE, SK) 	<p>Improving effectiveness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenges due to political influence (EE, FR) • Strengthen social dialogue institutionalisation (IE, PT) • Importance of EU-level association affiliations (PT) • Prioritize national and local level of social dialogue in education (SE) • More proactivity by social partners taking initiatives and advertise its outcomes (EE, SK)
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Healthcare

<p>Priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wages and career progression • Working time, night shifts • Labour/skill shortages, training and lifelong learning • Ageing workforce • Health and safety • Gender equality 	<p>Articulation at national level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct access to national social dialogue with various channels of articulation, but criticised for being under political control (FR, IE, SK) • National collective agreements more common in public than in private healthcare in SE as opposed to PT, where the State decides all in public sector 	<p>Articulation at EU level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides opportunities for information and consultation at the EU level (IE, FR), but face capacity constraints (EE, PT, SK) • EU-level binding outcomes viewed positively because those regulations already covered in the national legislation (SE) 	<p>Improving effectiveness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening the local unions and confederations, improve capacity building, greater political stability and closer interaction between social partners and the government (EE, IE, SK) • Facilitate more cooperation between various occupational groups in healthcare, greater cohesion in policy positions (FR, IE, PT)
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Further information

Akgüç, M., Martišková, M., Szüdi, G. and C. Nordlund (2019). Stakeholders' views on and experiences with the articulation of social dialogue and its effectiveness, Brussels: CEPS.

Kahancová, M., Martišková, M. and C. Nordlund (2019). Enhancing the Effectiveness of Social Dialogue Articulation in Europe: Conceptual and Analytical Framework. CELSI Discussion Paper 55. Bratislava: CELSI.