

BARMETAL: Digitalization, Automatization and Decarbonization: Opportunity for strengthening collective bargaining in the metal sector (101052331) – Country Factsheet DENMARK

D-A-D in Denmark

Denmark is a small open economy dependent on exports. Of the sectors in the BARMETAL project, machinery is quite large, metal production is moderate in size, and the automotive industry is rather small – in between the periphery and the semi-periphery of European automotive industry.

Denmark has been at the forefront of D-A-D and there are strong political and social partner commitment to stay ahead in the future. Both employer organization and trade unions in the sector see further D-A-D-development as important to stay internationally competitive.

Key challenges in the metal sector

- Attain financing and competence to keep up with international competition in D-A-D.
- Implementing technologies that save and improve jobs, rather than steel or destroy them.
- Offer opportunities for education, and further education and training to meet the competence requirements of new technologies.

Role of social partners in addressing D-A-D

- With high levels of collective agreement coverage (73 % in private sector) and a strong tradition of bargaining, the industrial relations system is high-functioning.
- Sectoral employer organization and trade unions are in consensus regarding the importance of developing D-A-D.
- Collective agreements, joint social partner cooperation and the politics emphasize vocational education and further education and training for employees.

D-A-D in workplace

- Three company case studies based on interviews with management and TU representatives, as well as staff in organisations of various size.
- There are instances of digitalization in all three companies, while the degree of automation varies, and decarbonization is only nascent.
- Digitalization/automation increase productivity/quality, cost efficiency and expand businesses, to replace/release workers from monotonous tasks, and/or reduce demand for new employees.
- Decarbonization is starting to take-off because of politics and external pressure.
- Staff may be adversarial despite social partner consensus in the need for D-A-D development.

Bargaining efforts in companies

- Collective agreements do not specifically regulate DAD issues, but there are elements of relevance, concerning further education/training and employee competence development funds.
- Local level possibilities for trade union reps to be informed and consulted in issues related to D-A-D, exist through joint management-trade union fora: *samarbejsdudvalg*.
- Though, these are not active in all companies studied, and trade union influence on local level issues was low in two of the case companies.
- Further education and training of staff exists in all three studied companies, if at different degrees.
- Managements try to involve local staff in implementation.